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RHODE ISLAND

AUGUST 2026 | AV/ELUL 5786
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JEWISH RHODE ISLAND

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ON THE COVER: PHOTO | ROBERTA SCHNEIDER **Lonsmen bikers Scoops and Roberta Schneider showing Jewish American pride.**

The Voice of Greater Rhode Island's Jewish Community
JEWISH RHODE ISLAND

@JewishRhody

The tapestry of the Jewish people

GROWING UP in an Irish and Italian neighborhood, I didn't have many Jewish role models outside of family and some friends. Popular culture didn't provide many either: There were the weak and nerdy kids, as in Stephen King's "It" (the first novel I ever read) or a host of Hollywood comedies, always tormented by the bullies. Then there were the nebbish characters, especially in Woody Allen movies.

I don't know what others thought (though I hope they agree), but I never saw myself as a Hollywood-style weakling, and I just couldn't relate to the sort of humor Allen did; I was too young. As I happily learned from Adam Sandler's "The Chanukah Song," a lot of my favorite actors were Jewish—but I had no way of knowing before.



I learned from tradition that there were (at least) four types of Jews: the four types represented by the etrog, the four types of children in the Haggadah and the several different lists of types in Pirkei Avot. All of those "fours" add up to a diverse community. I knew that intellectually, but I didn't feel it. Putting together this issue of JRI, I felt in a profound way the tapestry of the Jewish people.

I always thought it was an oddity that my father was a Jew who was also, as my childhood friends describe him, a cool guy with a motorcycle—nothing like Woody Allen, thankfully. But then a story on the Lonsmen, a whole group of cool Jewish bikers, came across my desk.

There's the stereotype that Jews don't serve in the armed forces. My father tried to enlist, and I'm named after his best friend Danny Manzaro, an (Italian) Marine who died in Vietnam, so that slander has always been especially galling to me. I was therefore glad to read this issue's article on Jewish war vets, and I was touched talking to a woman named Sharon on the phone. She called about her brother Kenneth's obituary, and we had a lovely conversation about him, a proud Marine who asked that donations be made to the Wounded Warrior Project in lieu of flowers.

And then there's culture. This is our arts issue, so it highlights the amazing contributions of Jewish artists, including Irving Guyer, whose work will be on display at a local synagogue. The list goes on, as varied as farmers and filmmakers.

I hope that each issue of JRI will continue to provide that, a look at the vibrancy of the Jewish community – and I hope that you will see your story reflected.

Editor,
Daniel Margolis

NOTE: This issue features political advertisements. Our ad team solicited ads from all candidates for office, with each offered the same pricing.





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THE MISSION OF JEWISH RHODE ISLAND is to communicate Jewish news, ideas and ideals by connecting and giving voice to the diverse views of the Jewish community in Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts, while adhering to Jewish values and the professional standards of journalism.

ALL SUBMITTED CONTENT becomes the property of Jewish Rhode Island. Announcements and opinions contained in these pages are published as a service to the community and do not necessarily represent the views of Jewish Rhode Island or its publisher, the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island. We reserve the right to refuse publication and edit submitted content

UP FRONT

The Jewish Alliance welcomes new chief executive officer

DANIEL MARGOLIS

In June, Steven A. Baker relocated from Minnesota to Rhode Island. Having been the Minneapolis Jewish Federation's chief philanthropy officer, he came here to serve as chief executive officer of the Jewish Alliance. We sat down with Baker to learn more about his background, motivations and plans for the Alliance.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Jewish Rhode Island: Welcome to Rhode Island.

Steven A. Baker: Thank you. Happy to be here.

You were in Minnesota. What made you decide to come here?

I have friends who have either gone to school here or lived here before, and they all rave about it. So, when the opportunity presented itself, I looked into it. After living in landlocked states for most of my life, to live near the ocean and eat a lot of fresh fish is very appealing!

[The Alliance] is a statewide organization. Even though this might be a smaller state, running the Alliance is still doing things on a bigger level. That was actually very interesting to me.

Now that you're here, what are your impressions?

The first month has been very welcoming, and every person I have met here has been friendly. I noticed that in Minnesota there are very long goodbyes; here people get to business and then move on. That doesn't mean they're not warm and friendly. It means they know what they want.

What are your impressions of the local Jewish community?

It is lovely. I think there is a big craving here for involvement in Jewish communal life. This is not an easy time to be Jewish, and the older generation recognizes that and wants to see a Jewish community here that is safe and provides learning and the good life that they have lived. The younger generation, I think, craves that. And that's what we can help provide. We are providing it through the Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC and the physical space that we have here, and we have a ton of opportunity to provide that outside of the walls of the JCC.

People are craving a safe, secure Jewish life filled with more of the joy that Judaism and community can bring. I think culture is a big part of what people crave even if it's not formal. The memories that that [creates] and the friendships and the *neshamah* (soul) are what people look for.

What have you noticed in terms of security and the atmosphere here?

We are doing everything we can to make sure that Jewish communal spaces in Rhode Island are secure. I'm happy to report that [I've found] through talks with some of our security professionals that we have fantastic relationships with local, state and federal law enforcement. There are a lot of things happening behind the scenes to help make us as secure as possible.

What plans do you have for the Alliance?

I'm on a listening tour to learn the history and needs of the community, which might be different than what they were even three years ago.

I have a very strong affinity towards security and to making sure that we have relationships with other faith communities and the broader community that we are a part of. I also have a strong desire for Jewish culture and programming, be it camp, teen programming, adult education.

A goal is to continue making the Alliance an organization of choice that professionals want to work at, lay leaders want to volunteer at, donors want to fund and other organizations want to partner with.

Moving to the personal, what made you want to work in the Jewish community, and what does Jewish life mean for you personally?

I grew up in Arizona where not many folks knew Jews. I was fortunate to go to Jewish summer camp, Camp Charles Pearlstein back then, Camp Daisy and Harry Stein now. But probably the biggest formative experience growing up was in BBYO, from eighth grade through senior year. That was basically my life outside of school. [It provided] some of my best friends, leadership development and feeling safe in community.



Steven A. Baker, the Jewish Alliance's new chief executive officer. PHOTO | LUCAS BOTZ

After college, I moved back to Arizona and went to lunch with my regional director from when I was in BBYO, and she said she needed a part-time Phoenix BBYO director. I said, "Of course, happy to do it."

While I was there, they applied for a grant to send a cohort of us BBYO professionals to get an MBA in nonprofit management, a certificate in informal Jewish education from Hebrew College in Newton, Massachusetts, and some other professional development.

[After five years,] I did some consulting and worked for an environmental nonprofit. I missed working in the Jewish world, the community, the bigger purpose of the work and the cultural aspects of it. I applied for a job at the Colorado Federation and was offered the job a few days before the Tree of Life shooting in Pittsburgh. To me, that was a sign to move back into the Jewish world. Within a month, I 100% knew my path was to work in Jewish nonprofits.

Transformative for me has been Israel and global Jewish travel and experiences, particularly since Oct. 7th, but also before. That is a big part of my identity and value system.

Is there anything about yourself that we might not guess?

I have an amazing dog. He brings me the most joy I could ever have… as well as some frustration. He is a lab boxer mix.

And I love reality TV, particularly reality competition shows, so "Survivor," "The Amazing Race" — I would love to go on "The Amazing Race" someday — those types of shows.

So, if there are any Jewish contestants from Rhode Island on any of these shows, maybe you'll write something for JRI.

Maybe!

DANIEL MARGOLIS *is editor of Jewish Rhode Island.*

Re'eh: The Blessing of Listening

RABBI JEFFREY GOLDWASSER

AT THE HEART of the book of Deuteronomy there is an assumption about the relationship between God and humanity that, frankly, we might find difficult. The book tells us repeatedly that God rewards the good and punishes the bad.

In last week's Torah portion, we read, "If you listen to [God's] rules and obey them well, the Lord your God will keep the covenant and the love that God promised to your ancestors. God will love you and bless you…" (Deuteronomy 8:12-13). We also read, "If you forget the Lord your God and follow after other gods and worship them…, you shall perish" (Deuteronomy 8:19).

Why is it hard to accept this idea? What's wrong with thinking that God rewards people who obey God's commandments and punishes those who do not? Simply put, we find it difficult to believe it because it does not appear to be true.

All around us, we see good people who have pain and difficulty in life, and we see bad people who appear to have comfort and pleasure. Clearly, a strict and literal belief in a God who rewards the good and punishes the bad in this world is not acceptable.

In the opening of this week's Torah portion (Re'eh), though, we see some small indications that the Torah's view on reward and punishment is more nuanced than the simple caricature we might imagine. The portion begins with these words:

See, I am placing before you today blessing and curse: the blessing that you will listen to the commandments of the Lord your God that I have commanded you today, and the curse if you do not listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn from the path that I command you today to follow after other gods that you have not known. (Deuteronomy 11:26-28)

D'VAR TORAH



RABBI JEFFREY GOLDWASSER

Since ancient times, readers of Torah have noticed an oddity in the wording of this passage. Moses says here that there will be "the blessing *that* you will listen" and "the curse *if* you do not listen" (emphasis added). The shift from "that" *(asher)* to "if" *(im)* must be intentional and it must have meaning. What is that meaning?

It could be that Moses is saying that God does not offer blessings as a *quid pro quo* for listening to and obeying the commandments. Performing acts that God has commanded is itself a reward. The blessing you get for listening to the commandments is that you are able to listen to the commandments.

That, of course, is a paradoxical statement. But, I think, it is a paradox that makes spiritual sense. When you do something that is good and right – something that God wants you to do – your understanding of what makes it good deepens and it becomes a source of joy to you in your life.

For example, I have seen people who show up for a social action project – making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for people with food insecurity, for example – who come the first time because they have some abstract notion that it is "the right thing to do." After doing it once, though, their reasons for volunteering change. They come a second and a third time because they realize that it is not just an intellectually and morally laudable choice. They see that helping others is deeply rewarding on a personal and emotional level. It does not just make them feel good about how they have chosen to spend an hour of their time. They discover that they feel good about their whole being and about the world around them in a way they had not anticipated. Performing a "good deed" becomes a reward in and of itself greater than any material gain or comfort.

This is what the rabbis mean when they say, "The reward of a mitzvah is a mitzvah" (Pirkei Avot 4:2). There is no promise of material wealth and comfort for those who do what is right and just. There is no "pie in the sky when you die" for the righteous. If you want to see the reward for doing what God wants, look within yourself. You will see it in the way that your sense of connection to other people grows and in the way that your connection to God grows. That is the reward.

So, why does the Torah say that there is a curse if you do not listen to God's commandments? Why is the curse for the wicked portrayed as a literal *quid pro quo* when the reward is more ambiguously phrased as a paradox? Should we believe that God will curse us for doing what is wrong?

I don't think so, but I also think that the Torah is wise not to present the result of wrongdoing as an absolute parallel and opposite to the benefit of good behavior. Think of it this way: If there were a strict parallel, then the punishment for bad behavior would be the opposite of the reward for good behavior. Instead of God blessing us with the ability to listen to what God wants from us, God would punish bad behavior by removing our ability to hear God.

I don't want to think that God gives anyone a curse that prevents them from listening. No matter what we have done, no matter how far we have strayed from doing what God wants, God still wants us to be able to open our ears and our hearts to turn back to God. That is why the Torah could not use the same word to explain how God rewards us and punishes us. Doing a mitzvah is a blessing in itself, but not doing a mitzvah does not cut off our access to hear what is good and right.

This, more nuanced way of reading Deuteronomy's theology of reward and punishment is comforting to me. I cannot believe in a God who showers the good with comfort and joy and punishes the wicked with sorrow and pain. It's not the way the world works in my experience. But I can accept a reading of the book that allows for the possibility that the blessing given to the good is an awareness that doing what is good enriches our inner lives more than we could have imagined.

RABBI JEFFREY GOLDWASSER *is the spiritual leader of Temple Sinai in Cranston. A version of this d'var Torah appears on his blog, RebJeff.com.*

Candle lighting times
August 2026



Greater Rhode Island

August 7	7:36pm
August 14	7:27pm
August 21	7:16pm
August 28	7:05pm
September 4	6:54pm

TAKE ACTION:
REPORT an INCIDENT



JEWISH ALLIANCE of Greater Rhode Island

At the Jewish Alliance, we believe all people should be treated fairly and justly. If you have experienced or witnessed an incident of antisemitism or extremism, please report it. Antisemitic activity includes overt acts or expressions of anti-Jewish bigotry and hostility. Many incidents are not crimes but are still considered antisemitic and should be reported.

This initiative is meant to help track antisemitic incidents in the state of Rhode Island. Experiencing any type of antisemitism may be traumatic for you or your loved ones. *If you need additional support, please contact Jewish Collaborative Services at 401.331.1244 for guidance.*

www.jewishallianceri.org/report-it/

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CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

FOR COMPLETE MONTHLY LISTINGS, VISIT JEWISHRHODY.ORG

Ongoing

Kosher Senior Café and Programming. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday – Thursday* at the Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence; Fridays* at Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. In-person (and usually on Zoom Tuesday –Thursday) programming 11 a.m.-noon followed by lunch and discussion noon-1 p.m. *On Friday, 9/4, the "Senior Prom: Hawaiian Style" will be held at the Dwares JCC; see separate listing below for more information. No café on Labor Day, 9/7. On Wednesdays, programming is chair yoga. For seniors aged 60 and older as well as younger adults with a disability; all faiths and backgrounds are welcome. Suggested donation: $3 per lunch. The Kosher Senior Café is a program of Jewish Collaborative Services and is generously supported by the Jewish Alliance of Greater RI and Blackstone Health. Information and RSVP, Neal at neal@jcsri.org or 401-421-4111.

TSF Newport Colonial Jewish Walking Tours. Sundays, Mondays, Thursdays & Fridays (in August) 11am-noon. Loeb Visitors Center, 52 Spring St., Newport. Follow in the footsteps of Newport's colonial-era Jewish community. This guided walking tour goes through the historic Touro Synagogue neighborhood. Limited to 18 people; not appropriate for young children. Cost: $18. RSVP and information, tsfn@tsfnewport.org (include your name and number of people).

Mahjong at Temple Torat Yisrael. Tuesdays 11 a.m.-1 p.m. 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. Drop in and play Mahjong with us. Beginners and experienced players welcome. Free. Information, Michelle Birman at michelle@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Summer Hebrew Classes. Tuesdays twice per month thru 8/18. Introduction to Prayerbook Hebrew 5-5:45 p.m. Other levels 6-7 p.m. Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Ave., Providence. Classes offered: Introduction to Prayerbook Hebrew, Advanced Beginners for Spoken Hebrew, Intermediate and Advanced. Offered jointly with the Jewish Alliance of Greater RI. Upcoming dates: 8/11, 8/18. Information, Toby Liebowitz at tobyaane@gmail.com.

Temple Torat Yisrael Virtual Minyan. Tuesdays 5:30 p.m. Via Zoom. Information, temple@toratyisrael.org.

Cape Cod Synagogue Family Shabbat Services and Dinner. Second Friday of the month 5:30 p.m. 145 Winter St., Hyannis, Mass. In-person and livestreamed services on website, Facebook, Cape Media, YouTube and Community Television Comcast channel 99. Followed by Community Shabbat Dinner. Information, 508-775-2988 or capecodsynagogue.org.

Temple Beth-El Shabbat Service. Fridays 5:45-7:15 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Please join us. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

United Brothers Synagogue Shabbat Services. 7 p.m. 205 High St., Bristol. Shabbat services first Friday evening of every month. Information, Bradford Louison at bradlouison@gmail.com or 617-512-1978.

Cape Cod Synagogue Shabbat Services. Fridays 7 p.m. 145 Winter St., Hyannis, Mass. With Rabbi David Freelund. In-person and livestreamed on website, Facebook, Cape Media, YouTube and Community Television Comcast channel 99. Information, 508-775-2988 or capecodsynagogue.org.

Temple Beth-El Torah Study. Most Saturdays 9-10:30 a.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Join us in the library. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Temple Sinai Breakfast and Torah Study. Saturdays 9:15-11 a.m. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Breakfast followed by weekly Torah study (also on Zoom) at 10 a.m. Information, Templesinairi.org, admin@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

Temple Torat Yisrael Shabbat Service. Saturdays 9:30-10:30 a.m. 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. Shabbat service with Torah Reading and Kaddish. In-person service with Zoom available. Information, Michelle Birman at michelle@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Temple Habonim Torah Study. Some Saturdays 10-11 a.m. When Shabbat morning services are not scheduled, Torah Study (currently online) is usually held. Information, Adina Davies at office@templehabonim.org or 401-245-6536.

Cape Cod Synagogue Shabbat Services. Saturdays 10:30 a.m. 145 Winter St., Hyannis, Mass. With Rabbi David Freelund. In-person and livestreamed on website, Facebook and YouTube. Information, Cape Cod Synagogue at 508-775-2988 or capecodsynagogue.org.

Temple Sinai Morning Service. Saturdays 11 a.m.-noon. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Join us either in the Chapel or on Zoom. Information, Templesinairi.org, admin@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

Friday | August 7

Temple Torat Yisrael Kabbalat Shabbat Service. 5:45-6:15 p.m. Via Zoom only. Information and Zoom link, Michelle Birman at michelle@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Temple Sinai Shabbat Service & Potluck Dinner. 6-7:30 p.m. Goddard Memorial State Park, 1095 Ives Road, East Greenwich. Join us at the picnic shelter for our potluck dinner service. Feel free to bring a dairy/pareve dish to share as we enjoy an evening service outdoors. Information, Templesinairi.org, admin@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

Friday | August 14

Temple Torat Yisrael Kabbalat Shabbat Service. 5:45-6:15 p.m. Via Zoom only. Information and Zoom link, Michelle Birman at michelle@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Temple Sinai Evening Service. 6-7 p.m. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Join us in the chapel or on Zoom. We will have guest speaker Dr. Joanna Brown from Rhode Island Jews, Loving Justice speak to us. Information, Templesinairi.org, admin@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

Temple Habonim Shabbat by the Sea. 6:15 p.m. Barrington Town Beach, 87 Bay Road, Barrington. Bring your own chair or blanket and welcome Shabbat on the beach. In case of inclement weather, the services will be moved inside to Temple Habonim (165 New Meadow Rd, Barrington). Information, office@templehabonim.org.

Sunday | August 16

79th Annual George Washington Letter Reading. 1-2 p.m. The Old Colony House, Washington Square, Newport. TSF Newport (formerly known as Touro Synagogue Foundation) hosts this annual event honoring our nation's heritage of religious diversity and history of separation of church and state. Limited in-person seating; live-streamed via link at facebook.com/TSFNewportRI. Information and in-person RSVP, Meryle Cawley at tsfn@tsfnewport.org or 401-847-4794, ext. 207.

Thursday | August 20

Lonsmen Jewish Motorcycle Group Trip. Part of the Jewish Motorcyclists Alliance, this group will be riding to New Hampshire with overnight stays. This follows the R2R (Ride to Remember), which raises funds for Holocaust Centers. This ride thru 8/23; rides are held all summer long. Cost: $300+. Information, Roberta Schneider at rkschneider33@gmail.com.

Friday | August 21

Hattie Ide Chaffee Home presents Fishel Bresler. 2-3 p.m. 200 Wampanoag Trail, East Providence. Join us as we welcome the talented Fishel Bresler for a special performance with our residents. We would love to have you be part of this wonderful community gathering filled with music, joy and connection. Free. RSVP and information, Susie Adler at Susie.Adler@hattieidechaffee.org or 401-486-3890.

Temple Torat Yisrael Beach Shabbat. 5:30 p.m. Goddard Memorial State Park, 1095 Ives Road, Warwick. Come experience Kabbalat Shabbat with an informal, interactive family service led by Rabbi Saks. Service will be followed by a potluck dairy dinner. All are welcome. Information, Michelle Birman at michelle@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Temple Sinai Evening Service. 6-7 p.m. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Join us either in the Sanctuary or on Zoom for our evening service. Information, Templesinairi.org, admin@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

Sunday | August 23

Temple Torat Yisrael BBQ and Open House. Noon. 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. Come meet Rabbi Saks and eat great food at our open house and BBQ. Non-members welcome. Free. Information, Michelle Birman at michelle@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Monday | August 24

Temple Sinai's 11th Annual Golf Tournament. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Valley Country Club, 251 New London Ave., Warwick. Scramble format with prizes for team low score for a men's team, a ladies' team, and a mixed team and closest to the pin and longest drive plus a putting contest. Sponsorships $300-$5000. Don't golf? Come for lunch. Cost: $190 and up. Information, admin@templesinairi.org.

Tuesday | August 25

Young Professionals Happy Hour. 5:30 p.m. Topgolf Rhode Island, 120 Sockanosset Cross Road, Cranston. Join us for a "hole" lot of fun. Cost: $12 (includes one drink). Information and RSVP (by 8/24), Samantha Kaufman at skaufman@jewishallianceri.org.

Friday | August 28

Jewish Alliance Hosts Blood Drive. 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Donations by appointment. (Use sponsor code 1528.) Walk-ins welcome if availability permits at time of arrival. Eat, drink and bring photo ID. Donors age 21 and older will receive a voucher for a Pint for a Pint voucher at a participating venue. Information, ribc.org or 401-453-8383.

Temple Torat Yisrael Kabbalat Shabbat Service. 5:45-6:15 p.m. Via Zoom only. Information and Zoom link, Michelle Birman at michelle@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Temple Sinai Evening Service. 6-7 p.m. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Join us either in the Chapel or on Zoom for our semiannual "Ask the Rabbi" service. Information, Templesinairi.org, admin@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

Temple Habonim Shabbat by the Sea. 6 p.m. Barrington Town Beach, 87 Bay Road, Barrington. Bring your own chair or blanket and welcome Shabbat on the beach. In case of inclement weather, the services will be moved inside to Temple Habonim (165 New Meadow Rd, Barrington). Information, office@templehabonim.org.

Friday | September 4

Senior Prom: Hawaiian Style. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Tropical celebration for our senior community featuring lively music, delicious food and a fun and welcoming atmosphere. Cost: Free, but donations greatly appreciated. Information and RSVP (by 8/28), Neal Drobnis or Dorothy Richardson at 401-421-4111.

Temple Emanu-El BBQ, Fair and Kabbalat Shabbat Services. 5:30-9 p.m. 99 Taft Ave., Providence. Join Temple Emanu-El's Brotherhood for a BBQ before Shabbat evening services. Temple Emanu-El will also be hosting an affinity group fair so people can see all we have to offer. Stay for Kabbalat Shabbat Services and dessert. Information, Shoshana Jacob at shosh@teprov.org or 401-331-1616.

Saturday | September 5

Temple Emanu-El Slichot. 7-11 p.m. 99 Taft Ave., Providence. Musical program with Shelly Katsh followed by Slichot services. Information, Shoshana Jacob at shosh@teprov.org or 401-331-1616.

FOOD

From a Tel Aviv restaurant, a book that stirs memories

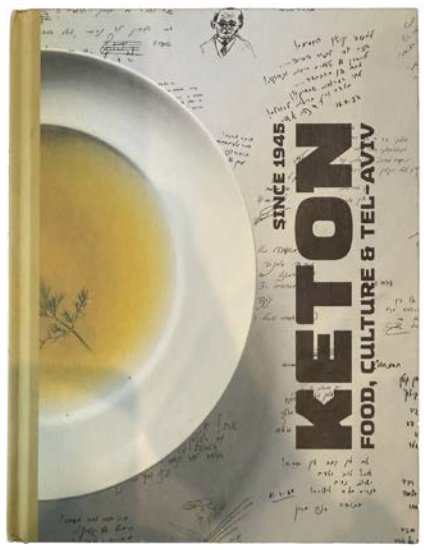
BY M. CHARLES BAKST

Here's a beautiful book you can eat. Well, at least you can appreciate the recipes and dine on the history of Keton, a Jewish bistro that has graced Tel Aviv for 81 years. It's run by cousins of cousins of mine.

THIRD-GENERATION owner Orna Raskin and her daughter, Gal, who also works there and wrote this book, would love for you to stop by at 145 Dizengoff Street. I've been there at two stages of my life.

Its fare is Eastern European/ Ashkenazic – borscht, chopped liver, pierogi, knishes, schnitzel, stuffed cabbage, *tzimmes*….

"Keton: Food, Culture & Tel-Aviv" tells you about the restaurant's history and its customers — many of them from the arts — and reproduces sketches and messages they have left in a guest book.



It includes color pictures of varied dishes and historic black and white photos of the restaurant's founders, Polish emigres who moved to Tel Aviv in the 1930s and started the business in 1945.

I met them when I was 16 on a Young Judaea summer trip to Israel in 1960. Their names were Zvi — or Harry — Rozenberg and his wife, the former Sarah Friedman. A branch of the Friedman family had settled in Newport. Sam Friedman, a cousin of Sarah's, married my cousin, Chickie Horvitz of Fall River, and for decades, along with sons Bobby and Jimmy, they would be prominent in Newport's Touro Synagogue.

Before I left for Israel on that 1960 trip, Sam said I should stop by what was then called Cafe Keton (small cafe) and say hello to Harry and Sarah. One Friday, the kids in our Jerusalem-based program were set free for the weekend. I took the bus to Tel Aviv to meet up the next day with a friend from another program, but my original lodging plan fell through. It was now getting late in the afternoon.

My clunky hand-written travel journal picks up the story: "Bewildered, I entered the Cafe Keton on Dizengoff Road and asked the proprietor if he knew Sam Friedman of the USA, and I must have looked hungry, and he gave me roast beef. Upon finding out about my predicament, he (Mr. Rozenberg) & his wife (Mrs. — obviously) insisted that I remain with them, which I did." Over the weekend I would flit in and out. These hosts couldn't have been nicer.

There was a post-script of sorts. The following autumn, when I was in the 11th grade at Phillips Academy in Andover Mass., Harry was in the United States, and my father brought him up to school and we went for a fancy dinner at the Andover Inn.

Now it's 2016 and I am 72, on an Israel vacation with my wife Elizabeth. Ahead of time, via email, I introduced myself to Keton owner Orna Raskin, granddaughter of the founders, and said I'd be stopping by. She and daughter Gal were glad to see me.

At a seat at a patio table I perused the menu. Beyond the chopped liver, the schnitzel, the stuffed cabbage, it included such items as veal tongue, goose leg goulash and kasha. And yes they still offered roast beef.

Gal, waiting on me, urged me to try what was listed as "**Helzel** — Stuffed Throat." I asked, "Whose throat is it?" She replied, "A chicken." Well, why not? I added it to the Israeli salad, matzo ball soup and gefilte fish I was already having. The helzel, which in the book is called stuffed neck, was unquestionably one of the most luxurious — albeit not heart-healthy — things I ever ate.

Look at the menu on the Keton web site today and you'll see it: "Helzel chicken neck skin stuffed with goose fat, potato and onion sewed up with thread just like mother used to sew it."

(My mother didn't do helzel. However, she did make schmaltz — rendered chicken fat — and gribenes — chicken cracklings. You can find recipes on Page 18 in this book.)

Back to my 2016 lunch. I finished the meal with cold fruit soup and coffee. Gal gave me what she labeled the "bill." On it was written "0" — that is, zero. Now that's my kind of restaurant!

Keton's 1945 origins were modest — at first, it was only a kiosk selling such things as watermelon and ice cream. But this book tells us, "Sarah began cooking stews in the style of her father's home on kerosene stoves at the venue. Cholent with stuffed intestines (kishka), soup with kreplach or kneidlach, stuffed fish (gefilte fish), and appetizers like chopped liver and herring." The fare was comfort food for a clientele of Holocaust survivors who had moved to Tel Aviv.

Here's an interesting item: "What do David Ben-Gurion and Menachem Begin have in common? Both received deliveries over the years from Keton. Paula Ben-Gurion would send their driver once a week to pick up soup, kreplach and stuffed fish from Keton during the period they lived on the nearby boulevard.

"For Menachem Begin, who was living in hiding as the leader of the Zionist militant group Irgun, Zvi would regularly bring chicken soup to the secret apartment of the man who would eventually become the sixth Prime Minister of the State of Israel."

One passage in the book stands out to me because Orna talked about it online at the time. In the immediate aftermath of Oct. 7, 2023, the book says: "Keton became a beehive of activity. Regular customers, neighbors, and friends came to Keton to help. We packed thousands of meals for soldiers and evacuees. When siren after siren sounded, everyone hurried into the back kitchen, waited for the muffled explosions of the interceptions, and returned to work.

"Without planning it, the restaurant became a place of strength for those who need help, and for those yearning to help."

Orna, who took over Keton after her own mother died, is quoted in the book as saying she does not pressure daughter Gal, or other daughter, Dana, to keep Keton in business. "It has to be their choice," says Orna, who is 61.

Well, how about it? Gal, 30, who wrote the book, declares, "I know that Keton will continue; I just don't know how. Maybe within the family, maybe a change will be required, or maybe the city will decide for us. But one thing is clear: three generations of strong women, against all odds, turned this place into a home and a cultural anchor for many generations of strangers, in a reality that changes without surcease, in a city that never sleeps."

To order the book ($45), google Keton Tel Aviv. There also is a Hebrew edition.

M. CHARLES BAKST *was the Providence Journal's political columnist.*



Founder Zvi (Harry) Rozenberg with his wife, the former Sarah Friedman.



M. Charles Bakst with Keton owner Orna Raskin.

PHOTOS | M. CHARLES BAKST.

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COMMUNITY VOICES

A surprising conversation

GEORGE M. GOODWIN

When our kids were young, our family enjoyed belonging to the JCC. For more than 15 years, however, I've belonged to the East Side YMCA. It's a short walk from my home, and I go there primarily to exercise. Inevitably, I also enjoy chatting with numerous friends from both sides of Hope Street.



A FEW WEEKS AGO, a session of my senior aerobics class was abruptly canceled, but several friends and I did not receive the email. Having arrived on time, we decided that moving our jaws up and down could resemble a healthy endeavor.

While standing on the Y's front lawn, I began a conversation with Hope, a retired Providence teacher from New Orleans. She graduated from the Isadore Newman School, which was founded in 1903 by the Jewish philanthropist to provide manual skills for Jewish orphans.

Hope feels like my neighbor because she belongs to St. Martin's Church, which is adjacent to Beth-El. Both of us are curious about our sister congregations and have attended interfaith, Thanksgiving services and other programs.

Then Hope mentioned the new Obama Presidential Center in Chicago. She was intrigued by a sculpture commissioned from Martin Puryear. Hope commented that she enjoyed a recent Puryear retrospective at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, that Betsey and I also went to see. As a former Peace Corps volunteer in Sierra Leone, Hope once met Puryear at a Peace Corps reunion because he served there too.

I explained that for many years I have enjoyed a monumental Puryear sculpture, perhaps 50 feet high, that stands atop a plaza at the Getty Center in Los Angeles. Hope, who enjoys many art museums, plans to see it one day.

Then I mentioned that, quite by chance, Betsey and I saw a Puryear exhibition at the Museum Voorlinden, near The Hague, about eight years ago. Hope said that she'd ask her dear American friend, who lives in the vicinity, if she had also seen the show.

While growing up in New Orleans, she was aware of a quite eccentric sculptor, George Rickey, who gradually acquired recognition for his mobile, steel abstractions. Hope was surprised how quickly Rickey achieved national and then international renown.

I told her that an ideal place to view Rickey's sculpture is on Naoshima Island, where Betsey and I were privileged to spend a few days during a thrilling group tour of Japan a decade ago.

My reference to Japan led to a digression about Japanese food, which I so much enjoyed compared with much Japanese American fare. Then I shared with her how much I learned to enjoy the Japanese custom of bowing. The conversation eventually led to my admiration for the Japanese American sculptor, Isamu Noguchi, whose magnificent studio and museum our group visited on the island of Shikoku before taking a ferry to Naoshima.

By this time, Hope was eager to explain that she has another dear American friend who is married to a Japanese diplomat. They met while studying at Honolulu's East-West Center, which was established by Congress in 1960, but have lived in numer-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

COMMUNITY VOICES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

ous countries. Indeed, the couple served many years at the Japanese embassy in Beijing. Hope added that the Japanese government still defends its occupation of parts of China during World War II.

At this juncture, while still standing on the Y's lawn, I told her a story about one of my high school classmates in Los Angeles. Bob's father, the son of American Methodist missionaries, was not only born in Nanking, but lived there until he went to an Ivy League college. After graduating from medical school, Bob's father returned to Nanking, where he became the only foreign surgeon there for the year following the Chinese siege in 1937. Inspired in many ways, by his dad, Bob also became a physician.

Around 1995, I read an article in The New York Times about a Chinese American, Iris Chang, who was writing a book about the siege. So, I told Bob to get in touch with her, and he eventually did. The result was nearly an entire chapter about the Wilsons in her book, "The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II," which was published in 1997.

But I also pointed out to Hope that, during World War II, the Japanese sheltered thousands of European-born Jewish refugees who were able to flee to Nanking. In fact, she is acquainted with a Jewish Rhode Islander who spent part of her childhood there, and I know another one.

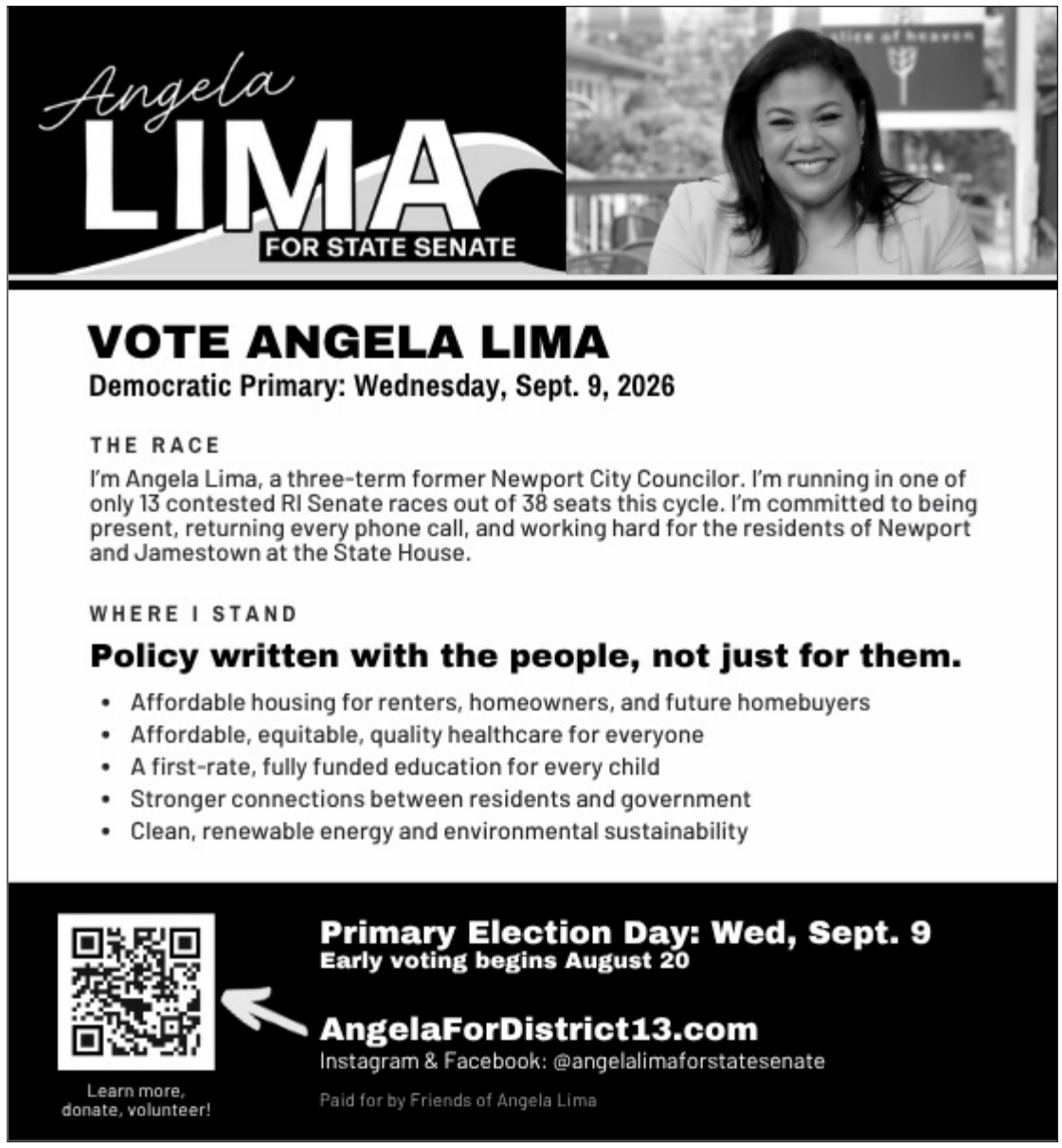
Then Hope told me that her parents, who were native-born Americans, met while teaching at an Episcopal missionary school in the Philippines. They too were forced to return home during World War II.

Hope went on to tell me that her father remained in touch with one of his favorite students, John Eisenhower, who was Dwight and Mamie's son. So, I mentioned that I heard and met John's son, David, and his wife, Julie Nixon Eisenhower, while on a trip with Betsey to visit Normandy's D-Day beaches and the nearby American military cemetery, which includes many Jewish graves.

After I referred to my mother's Jewish ancestry in Cincinnati, Hope then informed me that her father also grew up in Ohio. Although he had a Jewish sounding name, her grandparents were Christian. And here was another coincidence - a dear relative of mine from San Francisco had a maternal grandfather with the same, uncommon name!

This friendly and surprising conversation on the Y's front lawn led to a further Jewish dimension. Hope's father was a professor at Tulane University, and a Jewish alumna, Macie Fain, a Mississippi native, became prominent in Rhode Island's civil rights struggles with her husband, Irving, a native Rhode Islander. And this brought us back to thinking about Martin Puryear, the successful Black artist whose work we both admired, which began this chance conversation that led to so many connections.

GEORGE M. GOODWIN, *of Providence, is the editor of Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes.*







COMMUNITY VOICES

From Budapest to Bucharest: synagogues, cemeteries, the arts and artists of Jewish memory

PATRICIA RASKIN

On a recent Eastern European river cruise I had the opportunity to visit synagogues and cemeteries in both Budapest, Hungary, and Bucharest, Romania, with outstanding guides.



PATRICIA RASKIN

THE SYNAGOGUE in Budapest was part of a general tour offered to all passengers on the cruise. Budapest's Dohány Street Synagogue is a place of remarkable grandeur. Built in a richly ornamented Moorish style and able to seat nearly 3,000 people, it is the largest synagogue in Europe and one of the great landmarks of Jewish history and architecture. Walking through its extraordinary soaring space, I was struck by its beauty and the way it blends worship, memory and culture.

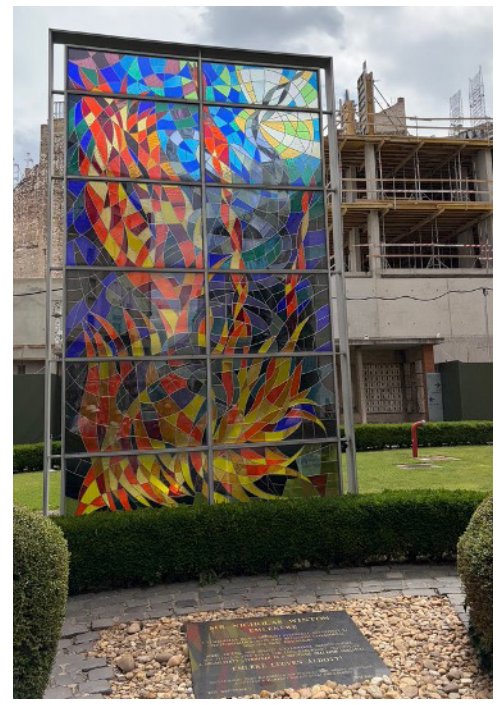
The synagogue is not just a historic monument, but a living place of remembrance. The graves of Holocaust victims and the Memorial Tree stand as solemn witnesses to Budapest's Jewish past. That heritage is also linked to artists and entertainers, including Hungarian Jewish painters and designers as well as internationally known figures such as Tony Curtis, Gene Simmons, George Cukor and Adolph Zukor.

We met wonderful people on the cruise from all over the world including New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, England, Canada, Tokyo and the U.S., mostly from the West Coast.

One of the couples we met are Barbara Winnik and Bob Siegel from the Washington, D.C., area. Barbara arranged a private tour of the cemetery, synagogue and museum in Bucharest, and we were able to join her. Barbara's paternal grandmother, who later settled in Pittsburgh, came from Focsani. Barbara believed her last name was Issacson.

Between 290,000 and 360,000 Romanian Jews survived the Holocaust, one of the largest surviving Jewish populations in Europe. In the decades that followed, communist rule, lingering antisemitism and the establishment of Israel helped drive a mass emigration that reduced a once large community to a small remnant. There is still a small but active Jewish presence, including community institutions in Bucharest.

At the Ashkenazi Filantropia Jewish Cemetery in Bucharest, Barbara looked for the Issacson name in the cemetery record book. This cemetery is notable for its monumental gates and for the grave of Mihail Sebastian, a major Jewish writer and dramatist. Sebastian died young in 1945, and his resting place links the city's Jewish heritage to Romania's wider literary history. Bucharest's Jewish burial grounds also preserve large, expressive gravestones and memorials, making them part of the city's artistic landscape.



Stained glass window honoring Sir Nicholas George Winton at Memorial Park of the Great Synagogue in Budapest, Hungary.



PHOTOS | PATRICIA RASKIN

Mihail Sebastian's grave in the Filantropia Jewish Cemetery, Bucharest. Sebastian authored Romania's most famous play, "Star Without Name."

This sense that memory and visible, vibrant Jewish life is still alive in both Budapest and Bucharest made the visits unforgettable. Jewish history in Europe lives on not only in numbers, but in spirit, architecture and remembrance.

I recalled my own Eastern European roots. In my book "Pathfinding," I quote my father Avshalom:

Your grandfather, as a youth, traveled all over Siberia. He was an entrepreneur and a salesman, . . . when he faced the draft he decided to leave Russia and go to America…At that time there was an underground that operated throughout Europe, and it was able to spirit Jewish boys from town to town westward until they got to the German border. Once they got to Germany, they could board a ship that was bound for America.

So much of our Jewish heritage comes from these Eastern European regions. I am grateful and honored to have this opportunity, and my pride in being a Jew is strengthened by the history, resilience and contribution of our people.

Writing this column for over a decade has been a truly wonderful journey. I am so grateful for everything I have learned and for the incredible people I have met along the way. While I am stepping back from my regular monthly column, I will be contributing to Jewish Rhode Island in new ways moving forward. I look forward to staying in touch.

PATRICIA RASKIN, *owner of Raskin Resources Productions, is an award-winning radio producer, business owner and leader. She has served on the board of directors of Temple Emanu-El, in Providence. Her "Positive Living with Patricia Raskin" podcast can be heard on voiceamerica.com.*

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JRI at the Israel-Lebanon border

LAWRENCE AND MARILYN KATZ hold a copy of JRI near Israel's border with Lebanon. With them is Providence native and current Times of Israel diplomatic correspondent Lazer Berman.

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OPINION

E Pluribus Unum

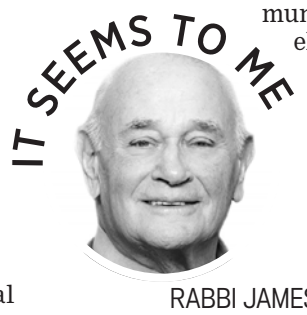
JAMES B. ROSENBERG

DURING THE 33 YEARS, 1974-2007, that I was rabbi of Temple Habonim in Barrington, I took it for granted that I was a citizen of one of the most stable democracies in the world. Of course, we Americans have continued to grapple with such deep-seated issues as race and class and economic insecurity. Nevertheless, I remained confident that the problems of our American democracy were being addressed by our political leaders in ways which, though flawed like all human effort, would lead to improvement and hopefully resolution.

My generally sunny sense of being an American was reinforced during each of Barrington's annual interfaith Thanksgiving worship services; they were held at a different location every year – rotating among the Protestant and Catholic churches as well as Temple Habonim. At first, we gathered on the Wednesday evening and in later years on the Monday evening prior to the Thursday of Thanksgiving itself.

I must confess that for me the high point of our community worship was our singing of "America the Beautiful," our *de facto* and easily singable national anthem. When participating in each of our community Thanksgiving worship services I experienced a surge of American patriotism as well as more than a touch of Jewish pride. Protestant, Catholic, and Jew: we came together, we sang together, we worshiped together.

During my almost two decades of retirement, I have been gradually shedding my sense of certainty that our nation is still on the right path; like many of my fellow Americans, I am beginning to feel that our body politic is becoming increasingly fragile: we have become a house divided. Both Democrats and Republicans have forgotten how to work together to help form a more perfect union. We can no longer even agree upon the proper processes for conducting our municipal, state and federal elections; this vital core of our democracy – our elections – has been thrown into a confusion of deep doubt and discontent.



RABBI JAMES ROSENBERG

In recent years, America seems to have lost its way as a major force in preserving and protecting our global order. Our leaders, on and off, continue to mull over the multiple absurdities of annexing Greenland, absorbing Canada as our 51st state and abandoning NATO. In his July 11 opinion piece, "The Next Civil War" in the New York Times," Stephen Marche, writing from Toronto, states despairingly, "But as for the entity known as the United States of America, there is no there there. There is no America to deal with. An increasingly isolationist America is no longer leader of the free world. How can it be? When it is no longer leader of itself?"

Our founding fathers understood well that democracy is extremely demanding of its citizens. For 174 years, *E pluribus unum* – Latin for "Out of many, one" –was our national motto; then, in 1956, Eisenhower's administration changed it to "In God we trust." *E pluribus unum*: it takes all our nation's collective energy and tenacity and wisdom to bring us together – given our diversity of language, race, religion and birthplace; let us not forget our abundance of varying human talents. Truth be told, our collection of complex particulars which we call America is always threatening to tear us apart. Our Civil War, from Fort Sumter in 1861 to Appomattox in 1865, is a tragic reminder of how quickly our democracy can fall apart, how easily the center of our government can fail to hold.

Ideally, those men and women who are our political leaders should be wise, compassionate, broadly knowledgeable and possess the intellectual flexibility to respond creatively to the nuances and ambiguities of our daily lives. But, and this is a BUT with capital letters, our leaders need to be electable; they need to earn the votes of most of our electorate. Adlai Stevenson was one of the most intelligent, knowledgeable, and well-educated men ever to run for presidential office. Nevertheless, Dwight D. Eisenhower defeated him in landslides in both the 1954 and 1958 elections. Of course, in many ways, General Eisenhower, hero of D-Day, was a formidable candidate; while, to many voters, Stevenson seemed to be a bit of an egghead.

In his 2023 "Profiles in Ignorance: How America's Politicians Got Dumb and Dumber" (Avid Readers Press), Andy Borowitz has written a laugh-out-loud but frightening book about the plunge of all too many of our country's politicians into the depths of ignorance – into that dark reality in which certain well-known politicians' abysmal ignorance of such basic subjects as spelling, world geography and the history of the United States has become a badge of honor. Borowitz suggests that there were three overlapping stages in our politicians descent into this intellectual emptiness: from the public's ridiculing of politicians for not knowing what they ought to know, to the blasé acceptance of their obvious lack of appropriate knowledge, to the absurdity of the third stage in which our politicians are actually celebrated for their ignorance.

Borowitz concludes his introductory chapter by assuring his readers that "[i]n this book, I've made nothing up. All the events I'm about to describe actually happened. They're a part of American history. Unfortunately."

However, in his conclusion, Borowitz does offer up a ray of hope:

"One of the worst stories in our nation's history happened on January 6, 2021. But one of the best happened a day earlier. On January 5, Georgia elected two Democrats to the U.S. Senate. Making the outcome even more improbable, the two winners were an African American, Raphael Warnock, and a Jew, Jon Ossoff."

The 2023 edition of Borowitz's book ends with a single word: "correction." Which goes to suggest that despite all the downs of our nation's journey during the past several years, we still hold in our hands the possibility for a much-needed CORRECTION.

JAMES B. ROSENBERG *is a rabbi emeritus at Temple Habonim in Barrington. Contact him at rabbiemeritus@temple-habonim.org.*

Temple Habonim to present New England 'Reunion' premiere at Avon in memory of Ruth Oppenheim

BY ADINA L. DAVIES

TEMPLE HABONIM will present the New England premiere of "Reunion" Tuesday, Sept. 15 at the Avon Cinema in Providence. Doors open at 6 p.m., and the film begins at 6:30 p.m.

The screening will honor Ruth Oppenheim, a Holocaust survivor and valued member of the Temple Habonim community. Organizer Hilary Rosenfeld met Buth when she attended Temple Habonim's Thursday Lunch and Learn. There she heard Ruth's reflections on the antisemitism she experienced before leaving Germany with her family.

"Ruth spent her life shining the light on her experiences," Rosenfeld said. "The whole purpose of this event is to continue to tell the stories that Ruth and her generation experienced."

Directed by Jerry Schatzberg, with a screenplay by Harold Pinter based on Fred Uhlman's novel, "Reunion" follows the friendship of two teenage boys in 1930s Germany as the rise of Nazism and antisemitism begins to divide them.

The film was nominated at the Cannes Film Festival in 1989 and received only a brief theatrical release in the U.S. It was shown again during a 2025 Museum of Modern Art retrospective of Schatzberg's work. Rialto Pictures subsequently acquired the rights and commissioned a new print, recognizing the film's renewed relevance at a time of rising antisemitism.

Ruth's life, story and steady presence were deeply woven into the Temple Habonim community, and her absence is felt throughout the congregation since her March 12 passing.

Hilary Rosenfeld contributed to this article.

ADINA L. DAVIES *is the administrator at Temple Habonim.*

A question-and-answer session is planned following the screening. The film is recommended for middle school students and older and may be especially meaningful for families to experience and discuss together.

Tickets are $25 each. Advance purchase through the Temple Habonim website is recommended, although tickets will also be available at the Avon Cinema box office on the night of the screening.

Net proceeds will support educational programming at Temple Habonim in memory of Ruth Oppenheim.

Jewish Rhode Island publishes thoughtful and informative contributors' columns (op-eds of 500 – 800 words) and letters to the editor (300 words, maximum) on issues of interest to our Jewish community. At our discretion, we may edit pieces for publication or refuse publication. Letters and columns, whether from our regular contributors or from guest columnists, represent the views of the authors; they do not represent the views of Jewish Rhode Island or the Alliance.

OPINION

Learning across religious difference

RUTH MARRIS MACAULAY

If you happen to be at T.F. Green airport on a Tuesday night, you'll hear him playing the piano. Rabbi Lex Rofenberg, Jewish educator, activist and podcast host is best known for his work with Judaism Unbound where he oversees the digital learning center UnYeshiva. Among his areas of interest is inclusive Jewish practices, particularly with interfaith families. On Sunday, May 31 he was found at the First Baptist Church in America preaching a sermon on the Book of Ruth.

HIS INTEREST IN INTERFAITH discourse aligned with that of Pastor Jamie Washam of First Baptist and they have engaged in monthly meetings to practice *chavruta*, the traditional Jewish method of studying texts with a partner. They are committed to learning across religious difference. They have made a point of studying texts that are problematic in one way or another. As she introduced him to her congregation Pastor Jamie made an interesting point, saying, "We felt we wanted to share the discomfort we've had with these texts."

I never really thought of Chapter 1 of the Book of Ruth as an uncomfortable text. In fact, I have always related to it, not just because my name is Ruth. Like the book's protagonist, I left my native land (England) and came to a new people in the United States 48 years ago. The first time I arrived at Logan airport and went through passport control the official looked at my passport, saw my name, and asked, "Do you know who Ruth married in the Bible?" When I calmly replied "Boaz," he was suitably astonished and said so – and let me in. I'm a U.S. citizen now and your people have become my people. I was curious to hear what Rabbi Lex was going to say.

The first point he made is that rabbis are teachers and he upheld Roger Williams, the founder of First Baptist in 1638, as such a teacher. Indeed, on his ordination day, Rabbi Lex prayed at the rock in Fox Point where Roger Williams allegedly landed. This immediately built a bridge toward the First Baptist congregation. He confessed that a possible sermon title might have been "Hanging Out with Roger and Ruth," adding that the highly literate and multilingual Williams was likely to have read the Book of Ruth in the original Hebrew.

"God requireth not an uniformity of religion to be inacted and inforced in any civill state," stated Williams, who advocated for the complete separation of church and state, long before James Madison wrote it into the Bill of Rights, and he demanded equal civil rights and protection for Jews, Muslims and pagans. And, like Ruth, Roger Williams moved from a familiar home to a strange new country.

But then Rabbi Lex presented the congregation with some "what ifs." What if Ruth had agreed to go with Naomi but still be a proud Moabite? Would that have made the story more powerful? Are we charmed by her willingness to follow Naomi, despite Naomi's urging her not to? Roger Williams spoke strongly against any kind of forced uniformity, but perhaps Ruth managed to balance both Israelite and Moabite identities? She is consistently referred to as the "Moabitess" – was she fully accepted, or unkindly reminded of the past she discarded? But could she have taken on Israel's religious identity and customs in addition to her Moabite culture and just be recognized for doing so in a positive way? Her marriage to Boaz would mean both David and, in the Christian faith, Jesus were descendants of an interfaith family.

He went on to say that raising such questions can help us gain empathy for other non-Jews by teaching us acceptance beyond difference. Ruth is obliged to keep proving her loyalty: She's a model convert, but when someone wants to belong, are we required to aggressively test their intentions? In a world where immigrants and different religious groups are often reviled, can we not open the gates of our hearts a little wider? Both Ruth and Roger Williams were immigrants and religious outliers, Rabbi Lex pointed out.

And speaking of gates, the rabbi drew an analogy with the opening of the Van Wickle gates at Brown's graduation when graduates of many nations and faiths march through them to the First Baptist Church in America.

By welcoming strangers, we find they are not strangers at all.

RUTH MARRIS MACAULAY *is a historian, writer, editor and tutor, as well as a congregant at First Baptist Church.*

Iran and peace

MOSES MORDECAI TWERSKY

IN A WASHINGTON Times article, Brandon Williams of the National Nuclear Security Administration said that Iran was engaged in an attempt to develop nuclear weapons, though unlike the WWII-era Manhattan Project in the U.S. it was not secret and involved a slow process of reaching "threshold" status that fell just short of nuclear capability. The main purpose of the U.S.-Israel war against Iran is to destroy the Iranian nuclear threat. The assessment currently is that it arises from a militarized Iranian Shiite faction within the Islamist government, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The IRGC has hijacked the Western-backed nuclear energy program instituted by the Shah in 1957 in order to develop a weapons program.

The Iranian regime is spreading terror and violence in the Middle East and has increased its effort to spread its nihilistic philosophy to the American region. There are as yet unverified reports of 300 Shahed Iranian drones in Communist Cuba which are being investigated. That country is a natural ally: Iran's 1979 constitution has Marxist elements. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who died in 1989, established the Quds Force to spread what the constitution called "ideological jihad" outside Iran's borders.

An official of the Iranian regime bragged that Iran is even developing drones right now. A drone with a nuclear warhead could be unstoppable. (This is a problem with a potential Palestinian state in the West Bank; their possession of drones could significantly increase the threat potential against Israel).

Iran's constitution envisaged a worldwide revolutionary movement to liberate the oppressed, based on their understanding of the Koran, which sees Muslims as a "single community." Like the Chinese and former Soviet Communist parties, Khomeini attacked the "calculations of imperialism." The results have been the same: hundreds of thousands of people murdered.

A similar ideology to these is gaining ground in the U.S. In New York, where Democratic Socialists, who rely on economic improvement for most of their support, also preach a global anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist ideology that appears to sympathize with Iranian proxies Hamas and Hezbollah. When they cry "free Palestine," some see it as a subterfuge for destruction of Israel.

It was disturbing to see Democratic Socialist Dariaiza Avila Chevalier, the Democratic nominee for the House in New York's 13th district, attend an anti-Israel rally Oct. 8, 2023 – a day after the Hamas assault on southern Israel, and the same day that Hezbollah in Lebanon, in concert with Hamas, opened an attack on Israel's northern region.

Despite what the Democratic Socialists say, given Iran's control of Hamas and, especially, Hezbollah, if Iran is not dealt with, the Palestinian situation seems unlikely to be solved. Iran is also attacking Sunni Arab states in the Gulf, as well as even Jordan. Their rationale for this is the American bases in these countries.

President Trump's Board of Peace, set up to deal with the Palestinian situation in Gaza, has not been able to advance into the second phase because of the Iranian war.

At press time, Trump has reimposed a naval blockade on the Strait of Hormuz. It is important that the reportedly mediating Muslim nations of Pakistan, Turkey and Qatar convince their Iranian counterparts to step back and agree to American negotiation, with the purpose of ending Iran's military nuclear development.

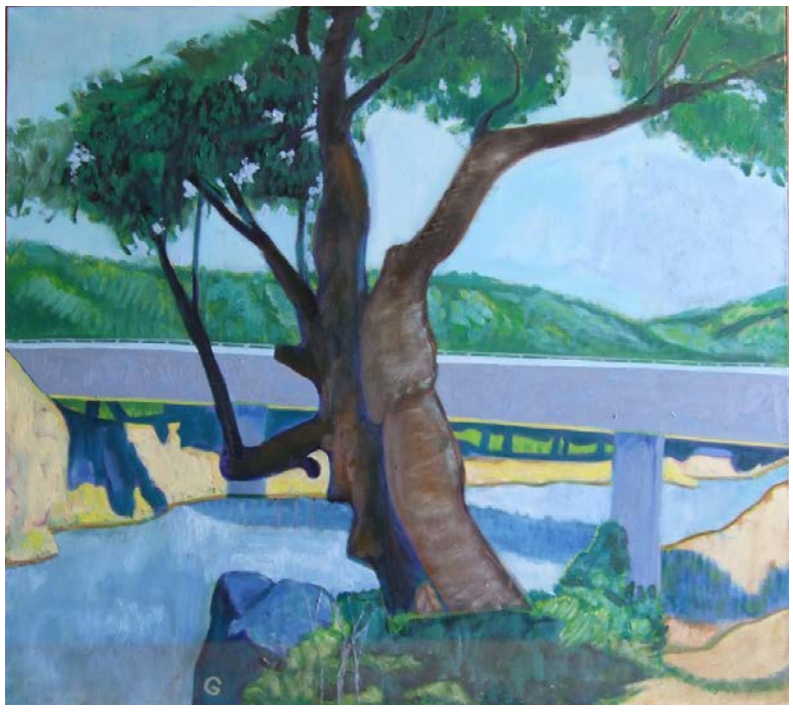
A reformist Iranian administration might be possible with current Iranian president Masoud Pezeshkian. That could transform the dynamics in the Middle East, if it allowed the ideology of jihad to be set aside and focused on economic trade routes and uplifting the Abraham Accords. Sunni-Shiite peace could permit normalization of relations with Israel, and the settlement of the Palestinian question.

Turkey, Qatar and Egypt, as Muslim countries, were helpful in influencing Hamas in Gaza. Hamas disarmament is highly important. Morocco has already sent a few troops to Israel for the International Stabilization Force in Gaza. Indonesia is considering the same. With the Iran war over, reconstruction could begin in Gaza.

Peace builders will prevail.

MOSES MORDECAI TWERSKY *of Providence has a master's degree in American history from Providence College. His novel "Love Story in Greenwich Village: New York Iranian Adventure," was published in January 2021 by Omniscriptum and is available from Amazon and other booksellers.*

Energy and innovation: the art of Irving Guyer





Twin Oak at Bridgeport.

PHOTOS | MARK GUYER.

The work of Irving Guyer (1916–2012), a painter whose art spanned eight decades, will be featured at the Bunny Fain Gallery at Temple Habonim. Reflecting his evolution from 1930s figuration to the New York School to landscape-based abstraction, his paintings are stunning and the collection is remarkable. The show opens with a reception Thursday, Aug. 27, from 5:00–7:00 p.m.

BORN IN PHILADELPHIA, Guyer studied at the Art Students League and was employed by the Works Project Administration (WPA) Federal Art Project as a painter and printmaker. He served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps during WWII, providing illustrations for technical manuals. After the war, he worked as an art director, graphic designer and illustrator.

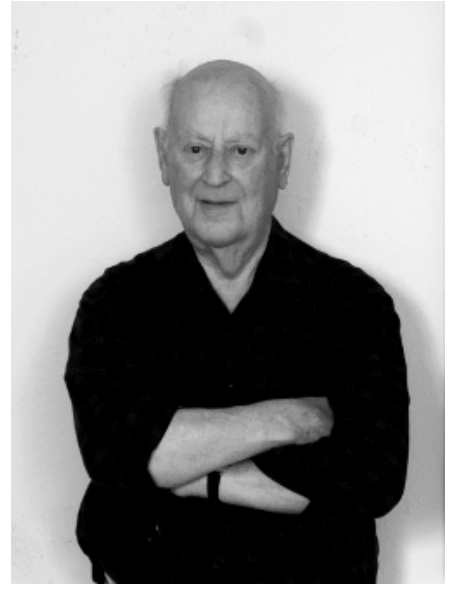
Guyer returned to painting in the 1960s and produced gestural abstract paintings related to the New York School that integrated figurative elements within their overall compositions. "New York School" was a phrase coined by the artist Robert Motherwell to describe a group of abstract expressionists who painted in Manhattan after the war. There was no actual school; it was more an informal exchange of ideas through gatherings that reflected a movement away from the social realism of that time.

After moving to San Francisco with his wife in 1975, Guyer's work changed significantly, reflecting his response to the Pacific coast landscape. Influenced by Henri Matisse's cut-out compositions, Guyer's work during the late 1970s and early 1980s is characterized by simplified, abstract shapes in dynamic compositions and a deep engagement with color and light.

The couple moved again in 1985 to the Sierra foothills of California, where Guyer continued his exploration of landscape and abstraction. His daily observation of the forest, skies and geology inspired his work as he progressed through a range of formal approaches. His mantra was to explore a given style of painting until he felt he had exhausted what he wanted from it and then to try another, very different style. In his nineties in the mid-2000s, with eyesight compromised by macular degeneration, Guyer continued his daily practice of painting with great energy, creating several bodies of innovative work.

Guyer's work is held in numerous public collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Smithsonian American Art Museum, National Gallery of Art, Brooklyn Museum, Baltimore Museum of Art, UC Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive, New York Public Library Print Collection and others. Many of his works are also in private collections, and several of these will be on exhibit in this show. Other works are currently housed in the Providence home of his son Mark Guyer, available for viewing upon request. Mark Guyer will make a few remarks about his father and his work at the Aug. 27 reception.

The gallery at Temple Habonim at 165 New Meadow Road in Barrington is open Tuesdays–Thursdays 1:00–4:00 p.m., and 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. on Fridays, and by appointment.



Irving Guyer.



Rose, Glass Vase.



Red Rose, Blue Vase.

HaZamir teen choir recruiting singers, rehearsals begin in fall

PROVIDENCE – The local chapter of HaZamir: the International Jewish Teen Choir is recruiting young people entering grades nine through 12 for the fall, with rehearsals taking place at Temple Emanu-El under the guidance of Cantor Dr. Brian Mayer, the temple's cantor emeritus.



Members of the HaZamir choir perform. PHOTO | ZAMIR CHORAL FOUNDATION

HAZAMIR GROUPS around the U.S. and in Israel will rehearse throughout the 2026-2027 season, which will culminate in April with a gala performance by hundreds of HaZamir teens at New York City's David Geffen Hall in Lincoln Center.

"This is a transformative opportunity for these teens as they express their Jewish identities through their love of music as they work towards a common goal," HaZamir Director Vivian Lazar said. "The camaraderie and healing power of choral singing also boosts mood and self-confidence, which fosters success in all areas of their lives." Lazar added that the group provides teens with a "safe space to build leadership skills and strong connections to peers from a range of backgrounds."

Throughout the program, the teens meet weekly in their local chapters, where they are guided by experienced conductors, like Cantor Mayer in Providence. In addition, there are regional, national and international gatherings. Leading up to the NYC gala is a three-day festival bringing together Israeli and American teens to rehearse, socialize and "participate in facilitated encounter groups that allow for cultural exchange and understanding."

The choir was created by Maestro Matthew Lazar, founder and director of the Zamir Choral Foundation, to provide an opportunity for accomplished young singers to perform Jewish music. "Now, more than ever, this supportive community is crucial to teens," he said.

To learn about the organization, visit www.hazamir.org, and for information on joining the Providence chapter, email bjmayer@teprov.org.

Interview with Sarah Greenleaf, filmmaker

BY JRI STAFF

PROVIDENCE – You don't have to go far to find a local artist in this city. At Jewish Rhode Island, we only have to go across the office, where we find Sarah Greenleaf, a Jewish Alliance staffer who is also a filmmaker.

Greenleaf's short, "I'd Like to Thank My Husband," screened July 16 at Cambridge's Brattle Theatre as part of a New England short film retrospective by the Boston-Berlin Grrl Haus Cinema. Greenleaf made the film with archival footage, doing voice-overs herself.

The inspiration for the film came in 2016, when Greenleaf read an article about how much wives contributed to their husbands' work. "One of his examples was of an academic, and his wife had done all the research," Greenleaf said. "But for an academic, the research is the work." The film pokes fun at the discrepancy, which the crowd at the Brattle enjoyed.

Greenleaf enjoyed seeing the audience respond to her work. "You get to hear all the people in the theater laughing," she said, arguing that, at least for many films, public viewing – rather than watching streaming on TV or, worse, your phone – is a necessity.

Of the festival itself, she said, "I was just very heartened that people are still making short films just for the joy of making something." She added that she thinks not enough people are making shorts, and the people who do make them are most often creating a teaser in hopes of getting a feature film deal.

'I was just very heartened that people are still making short films...'

"I just want you to do something different," Greenleaf said. "I want to be interested. I want to look into somebody's life in a way that is authentic or strange in some way. I just want to see stuff I haven't seen before."

Aside from making films, Greenleaf has taught film to high school students at "a fancy private school."

On learning how to make film, the perennial question is: should you go to film school? Greenleaf did at Temple University, but she says, "You do not need to go to film school. I went to film school, and I had a fun time, but I don't think it's necessary to make films." She added that, in film school, students spend a great deal of time trying to perfect their projects, "but the way that you really get better at anything is not to labor over a single thing, but to make a ton of stuff."

Greenleaf is more interested in the practicality of filmmaking than the theory. "If you want to shoot on film, you might want to go to film school," she said. There is only a finite quantity of film, so shooting on that medium requires getting everything just right in a few takes. Digital video, she says, allows an unlimited number of re-takes and thus more room for experimentation.

Still, she says, "If you're watching something shot on film, I do think you can tell."

Sarah Greenleaf's work can be found at her website: sarahgreenleaf.com.

Jill DAVIDSON
JillDavidsonRI.com



It's truly my honor to serve as the Providence City Councilor for Ward 2, representing the College Hill, Blackstone, and Wayland Square neighborhoods.

To stay connected, please sign up for the Ward 2 Letter, a weekly email from me sharing community events, news from City Hall, local public safety info, notice of monthly Ward 2 Community Meetings, and more. Visit jilldavidsonri.com/ward2letter or scan the QR code to subscribe.

Be in touch!
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‘One of the most violent years’: ADL urges Magaziner on Jewish safety

BY JRI STAFF

PROVIDENCE – Leaders and supporters of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) met with U.S. Rep. Seth Magaziner, D-R.I., in June, urging him to support legislation that would protect Jews, as well as others, at religious institutions and community centers.

IN THE MEETING, ADL urged Magaziner, who represents the state’s second congressional district, to support three pieces of legislation: the Jewish American Security Act, Safeguarding Access to Congregations and Religious Establishments from Disruption (SACRED) Act and Pray Safe Act.

“These asks are grounded in an urgent reality,” said Samantha Joseph, ADL’s regional director for New England.

According to ADL statistics, more than 300 people nationwide were victims of antisemitic assaults in 2025, marking the need for increased security.

The bipartisan Jewish American Security Act would enhance the federal government’s ability to prevent and respond to antisemitic acts. The SACRED Act would establish a 100-foot buffer zone around places of worship, like those already in place around women’s health clinics.

The Pray Safe Act would create a hub at the Department of Homeland Security that would help nonprofits and religious institutions access safety and security support and resources.

At the meeting, the group shared data from their recently released 2025 Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, a yearly report that aims to be a comprehensive listing of all antisemitic incidents in the U.S.

While 2024 broke the record for most incidents reported nationwide, ADL found a decrease in 2025. In Rhode Island, incidents fell from 52 in 2024 to 26 in 2025. According to ADL, this was driven by a much lower number of incidents on college campuses as federal investigations forced administrations to take antisemitism seriously and demonstrations against Israel lessened.



From left to right: Yasmin Ben Shir, Mark Feinstein, U.S. Rep. Seth Magaziner, ADL New England Regional Director Samantha Joseph and Alex Schuman. PHOTO | ADL

Still, ADL found, the number of incidents is dramatically higher than it was before Oct. 7, and, more troubling, assaults have continued to climb. Nationally, assaults with a deadly weapon rose 39 percent.

“2025 was one of the most violent years for American Jews on record,” Joseph said.

In the seven countries that represent more than 90 percent of the Jewish diaspora, 20 people were murdered in antisemitic violence – the most since the 1994 AMIA bombing in Argentina, according to a July 29 report by J7. Across those countries, antisemitic incidents are up 136%, and violent incidents are up 97% compared to 2022.

J7, a coalition that includes ADL, represents Jewish organizations in those seven countries, which include the U.S.

ADL’s meeting with Magaziner was part of its national lobby day. In New England, the organization also met with Rep. Maggie Goodlander, D-N.H., and a representative of Rep. Lori Trahan, D-Mass. The group is planning another lobby day in August.

Chai or die: Lonsmen motorcycle club unites local Jewish bikers

ROBERTA SCHNEIDER

SOME PEOPLE can’t believe in the existence of a Jewish motorcycle organization, picturing riders only as tough, rugged bar hoppers instead of law observers who raise funds for charity, enjoy the open road and have social events.

The Lonsmen are a chapter of the JMA — the Jewish Motorcyclists Alliance, a diverse group hailing from all corners of the country and the world. You’ll recognize them by their intimidating appearance, decked out in leathers, chaps, doo-rags and, of course, their distinctive cuts. They roar down the highways on two and three wheels, with the wind in their faces and a shared passion for motorcycling.

The JMA boasts 50 clubs and nearly 1,000 dedicated members. The clubs sport names that range from the formidable, like the Mazel Tuffs, Chai-Way Riders, Hillel’s Angels and The King David Bikers, to the intriguing, such as the Mountain Menschen, Shalom and Chrome, The Wandering Twos and the Lonsmen.

Motorcyclists, in general, share a unique camaraderie that can be hard for non-riders to grasp. However, when you add common heritage and a shared mission, that bond becomes truly exceptional.

The Lonsmen Boston chapter, which branched out into Rhode Island, has thrived for 13 years, celebrating the sport of motorcycling, fostering new friendships and connections within the club.

But there’s more to being a part of the JMA than love of the open road, the wind in their hair (and the occasional bug in their teeth) and the joy of riding alongside fellow Jews.

There’s a profound reason to join them: the Ride to Remember (R2R). Since 2005, JMA members have embarked on annual rides from various cities, including Providence, Boston, Baltimore, Cleveland, Pittsburgh,

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St. Louis, Chicago, Kansas City, Atlanta, San Diego and Phoenix, as well as Toronto; Montreal; Melbourne, Australia; and Israel, among others.

These rides have a vital purpose — raising funds for Holocaust awareness and education. Over the years, the JMA has supported numerous causes, including the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; Whitwell (Tennessee) Middle School's Paper Clips Project (twice); the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center in Providence; the Safe Haven Holocaust Refugee Shelter Museum in Oswego, N.Y.; and the Maltz Museum in Cleveland, which raised over $80,000 through the Shul Boys Motorcycle Riding Club.

The June 2025 R2R event was held in Charlotte, N.C. Hundreds of Jewish motorcyclists showed up, and the organization raised over $60,000 for the Stan Greenspon Holocaust Education Center.

The annual ride serves a critical purpose — to ensure that the world never forgets. This generation has the privilege of meeting and conversing with Holocaust survivors while they are still here, hearing their firsthand accounts and renewing their collective determination to remember the unspeakable atrocities committed against our people. A weekend of music, wind and remembrance, participants ride to ensure that the world never forgets. Cleveland hosts the next R2R, July 30 – Aug. 2.

The site, "We will ride again, we will dance again," is located at www.ride2remember.com.

The Boston/R.I. chapter will be hosting the 2027 R2R. The event will raise funds for the newly built Boston Holocaust Museum. Beyond the annual R2R, member clubs organize meet-and-greets throughout the year. Sometimes it's just about hitting the road and spending time together, while other times it's about showing support. In August 2019, several clubs joined forces with the Mazel Tuff's of Pittsburgh to stand in solidarity with the Tree of Life Synagogue following the tragic shootings that occurred there the previous October. Members are always there for their fellow Lonsmen.



Lonsmen jacket. PHOTO COURTESY OF AUTHOR

Combining love for motorcycling with Jewish heritage while promoting Jewish values and pride is a unique and immensely fulfilling experience, members say.

There's a sense of satisfaction in being part of a powerful, formidable group of bikers thundering down the road, all united as Lonsmen, and all working together to ensure that the world never forgets.

Members include riders, their spouses and/or significant others. Whether you're a rider yourself or know someone who is, the Lonsmen ask that you help spread the word. The group would be thrilled to have you join!

For more information, reach out to Ken (Scoops) at Kenschneider33@gmail.com.

ROBERTA SCHNEIDER *is secretary of the Lonsmen Motorcycle Club.*

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BRETT
SMILEY
MAYOR OF PROVIDENCE
We've made tremendous progress over the last four years. I would be honored to receive your support on September 9th.
smileyformayor.com

COMMUNITY

Franklin Foer, mandolin ensemble and more: fall cultural highlights

This fall is full of cultural events from talks on Jewish American life to mandolin music. If making is more your style you can sign up for the Crafternoon miniseries in September.

THE FIRST SERIES will be diamond painting, a simple relaxing hobby that is easy for all to enjoy, no matter the experience level. Over the course of three afternoons, September 16, 23 and 30, participants will create coasters using tiny resin drills and little gems. The total cost is $15 and registrations are open now. www.jewishallianceri.org/events/crafternoon-diamond-painting.

Join us on Oct. 22 for a performance by the Mandolin Elite Ensemble at the URI Guitar & Mandolin Festival. This free performance will showcase classical works and a chamber repertoire by early-career mandolinists from around the world. Presented by the URI Hillel and the Alliance, this intimate program will be hosted at the Norman M. Fain Hillel Center and feature solo, duo, and small ensemble performances curated under the mentorship of URI faculty: Jacob Reuven, Ekaterina Skliar, Dor Amran and Ian Coury.

Admission is free, but registration is required to reserve your seat: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mandolin-community-outreach-concert-tickets-1989793415670

That same day, Franklin Foer will be at Temple Beth-Emmanuel to speak about the future of American Judaism. A staff writer at The Atlantic, Foer argues that historically American Jews have embraced and helped shape liberal democratic institutions. He believes that the long-standing assumption that antisemitism is a fringe phenomenon and that those very liberal institutions will safeguard Jewish life is being undermined by rising antisemitism and weakening liberal institutions. This talk is part of a larger series about American Jews which will include speechwriter and author Sarah Hurwitz in April.

On Nov. 7 at 6:30pm An Evening of Jewish Renaissance is back with the theme "Reimagining the Past." It will be hosted by the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island and is generously supported by The Judge Marjorie Yashar and Dr. James Yashar Fund. This evening will bring the community together to explore and celebrate Jewish life, culture, and history through diverse workshops, thought-provoking discussions and interactive experiences. The keynote presentation will be by the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Society.

A few days later in Cranston there will be a presentation "Unlikely Partners for Peace: Roots/Shorashim/Judur." On Nov. 10 from 6:00-8:00pm, join Rabbi Hanan, an Orthodox Israeli settler, and Khaled, a Palestinian activist, who are among the leaders of Roots/Shorashim/Judur. Based on mutual recognition of each People's national identity and connection to the Land, they are challenging the assumptions their communities hold about each other, building trust and creating a new discourse around the conflict in their respective societies. Location will be sent upon registration: www.jewishallianceri.org/events/unlikely-partners-for-peace.

Honoring Jewish soldiers, correcting old mistakes

BY RABBI WAYNE FRANKLIN

Three and a half weeks before the end of World War I in 1918, a 25-year-old American soldier named Maurice Akabas was killed in northeastern France by a German shell. Buried three times, he eventually came to rest in the Meuse Argonne American Military Cemetery near Verdun, France. He was my great uncle; I learned of his existence only a year and a half ago.

IT ALL BEGAN with an email from Shalom Lamm, one of the co-founders of Operation Benjamin. This organization's mission is to identify American Jewish soldiers whose graves are inadvertently marked with Latin Crosses rather than Stars of David. My Uncle Maurice was one of those soldiers. Shalom shared surprising information about my great uncle, as well as his sister, my grandmother, Lillian Franklin, and their family. He asked if I would like Maurice's *matzevah* replaced with a Magen David. My brother, Gordon, and I, plus 13 cousins, some of whom I know and some of whom I have never met, all signed a letter to the American Battle Monuments Commission requesting the replacement of the marker. On June 2 of this year, the cross was respectfully removed and a Star of David replaced it to mark the grave.

Four relatives of Uncle Maurice, my brother, two cousins, our wives and I, participated in the ceremony. The event reconnected Uncle Maurice with our family, as well as the Jewish people and the country he served. We anticipated sharing the ceremony with the families of four other GIs whose markers were also corrected. I had not expected that nearly 100 other activists and supporters of Operation Benjamin and its German partner organization, Operation Levi, would choose to witness this milestone. Their supportive presence was moving.

The change of marker ceremony was dignified and inspiring. I was deeply touched to see how handsomely the American cemetery was designed and cared for. I appreciated Shalom Lamm's comments as the crosses were removed. He said they were not being discarded with any disrespect or animosity; they were, instead, greatly appreciated for having identified and watched over our loved ones for a century. Uncle Maurice was not abandoned; this Lithuanian immigrant was at peace far from his adopted home in Boston.

The marker change was more than a symbolic act. It recognized who he really was; it connected him to family members who are committed to preserving his memory in our lifetimes. We said Kaddish for him in France and are now sharing the memory of his service to our country with our children and grandchildren. Far from being forgotten within the family, Uncle Maurice's memory is now very much alive; we'll observe his *yahrzeit* every year.

The battles near Verdun were among the costliest in human lives, and they caused American and German Jewish soldiers to fight against one another in WWI. American Jews, those born in the USA and those who had recently immigrated, were committed to safeguarding the security and freedoms that America offered. German Jews fought for their country as patriotic citizens. Their service was also meant to demonstrate their loyalty and full emancipation in German society.

The day after the monuments were replaced in the American cemetery, Operation Levi hosted the entourage at the German Military Cemetery at Consenvoye. There, the graves of 12 Jewish soldiers which had been marked with crosses were honorably distinguished with Stars of David.

I was impressed with how forthright and confessional the German officials were about how Jews were treated in Germany after WWI. General Dirk Backen, the Secretary General of the German War Graves Commission, wrote that "Jewish soldiers who gave their lives for their German homeland during World War I were not only denied recognition. They were betrayed, and their families were persecuted and wiped out. Honoring their memory is the least we can do today.... Today, we commemorate Josef Leiter and 11 other Jewish soldiers and their families here, who represent so many others: those who lost loved ones in WWI, those persecuted under National Socialism and those who were expelled and murdered. We will not forget them."

At that same ceremony, we heard from Dr. Ottilie Klein, a member of the German Bundestag, who echoed General Backen's words and affirmed her personal commitment to counter antisemitism through her work in the Parliament. She acknowledged that "it is no less than a miracle and invaluable gift that the two countries involved, France and Germany, have become close allies and friends, that representatives from both countries can stand here today and remember the fallen of both sides, that the German flag and the French flag stand side by side as a reminder and sign of the German French friendship." That spirit of mutual respect pervaded our four days together. Jews and Christians, American,

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COMMUNITY

Where Providence mayoral candidates stand on Jewish issues

SPECIAL TO JEWISH RHODE ISLAND

In an effort to inform our readers about where Providence mayoral candidates stand on issues pertaining to the Jewish community – specifically antisemitism – we asked each the following question:

Jews are feeling increasingly marginalized, as if they must pass a litmus test to be included in civic spaces. What will you do to make sure Providence's thriving Jewish community feels included at a time of rising antisemitism? Relatedly, what will you do to combat antisemitism?

BELOW ARE their answers to our questions. For reference, incumbent Mayor Brett Smiley and David Morales will face off in the Democratic primary in September. The winner will compete with Republican David Talan on the November ballot.

David Morales

I'M PROUD to live in a city with Jewish neighbors of all ages, genders, beliefs, and backgrounds. But I know from speaking to my Jewish neighbors that, right now, many of them are experiencing fear. In just the past year, we have seen incidents involving hazing, vandalism and intimidation all designed to make our Jewish neighbors feel afraid. This is unacceptable. Religious freedom and tolerance have played a critical role in our city's rich history, and everyone must be welcome to express the fullest version of themselves and their faith in Providence. As Mayor, I will not tolerate antisemitism or bigotry of any kind.

On combating antisemitism specifically, the honest answer is that the greatest threat to Jewish Rhode Islanders comes overwhelmingly from the armed far-right. If we are serious about keeping our Jewish neighbors safe, we have to be serious about confronting that threat. That means real protection for synagogues, Jewish schools and community centers, coordinated with those institutions rather than imposed on them. It means a police department that treats a bomb threat to a JCC with the urgency it deserves. And it means a mayor who does not go quiet when antisemitism shows up inside coalitions he is part of.

I am running for Mayor to deliver a Providence for All, not a Providence for the people who agree with me on every issue. I know there are members of our Jewish community who disagree with my position on U.S. and Providence taxpayer money being sent to the Israeli government. I want those neighbors to know that no matter who they vote for, my door will always be open to them.

Brett Smiley, incumbent

ANTISEMITISM IS on the rise around the country, and our community is feeling that here in Providence. No one should ever have to ask if it's safe to put a mezuzah on their door or display a menorah in their window, and yet these conversations are happening more and more often in our city.I am proud to be a member of Providence's Jewish community and a congregant of Temple Beth-El. In my darkest days as mayor, I have found strength and resilience through my faith and my community, and I will continue to work every day to ensure that Providence Jews are able to gather, worship and celebrate safely and free from hatred and discrimination. That's why I have spoken out against antisemitism, supported efforts to protect Jewish institutions and participated in conferences focused on understanding and combating antisemitism - conferences that my opponent has repeatedly condemned. I currently chair the Advisory Council of the Combat Antisemitism Movement and was honored to receive the organization's 2024 Advocacy Award. I was also proud to visit Israel last year with the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island.As both a mayor and a member of our city's Jewish community, I will always continue working to ensure that we feel safe, respected and fully included in every aspect of life in Providence.

David Talan

I AM A LEADER in our Jewish community. I am on the boards of Temple Torat Yisrael (and run our speakers' program) and the URI Hillel. I've served on the Community Relations Council of the Jewish Alliance. I am the Administrative Assistant to State Representative Ramon Perez, one of the strongest supporters of Israel, at the State House.

I am a leader in the R.I. Coalition for Israel, a group of Jews and Christians who work to support Israel and fight against antisemitism. We do a lot of work to show support for Israel and to let the local Jewish community know they are not alone.

We demonstrate at major intersections with signs and flags supporting Israel. We have publicly opposed display of the Palestinian flag at City Hall. We work with students at Brown University who are under attack. On graduation day, we hire a plane to fly a large pro-Israel banner over the commencement ceremonies.

Under my administration, the large Jewish community on the East Side can feel safe. I believe the same can be said about Mayor Brett Smiley, who is also Jewish.

Unfortunately, we cannot say the same about the third candidate, Rep. David Morales. He has engaged in activities that border on antisemitism.

Morales publicly supports a divestment resolution for the November ballot, which basically condemns Israel for hitting back first.

Morales recently held a fundraiser in New York, hosted by a Democrat Congressional candidate, who condemned Israel the day after 1,200 Jews were murdered by Palestinian terrorists, but before Israel had even retaliated.

Morales also condemned Mayor Smiley for attending a pro-Israel mayors conference in Louisiana at his own expense.

Check out my Facebook page 'David Talan' for more details.



COMMUNITY

A legacy of commitment: Planned gifts strengthen our Jewish future

Over the past year, the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island and its endowment, managed by the Jewish Federation Foundation, has been honored to receive more than $654,700 through planned gifts – lasting expressions of generosity arranged by donors to be distributed after their passing. All but one of these gifts was given without restriction, allowing them to be used where the need is greatest. Each contribution reflects a donor's commitment to ensuring that Rhode Island's Jewish community remains strong and supported for generations to come.



Herb Sackett (center) with his family, 2015. PHOTO | RONNEE WASSERMAN

THESE MEANINGFUL GIFTS come from a diverse group of individuals. Some were longtime community leaders, while others were dedicated supporters who quietly donated for decades. Though their stories differ, they are united by a shared vision: to invest in the future of Jewish life. The Alliance and JFF are proud to recognize and honor the following planned gifts received over the last year:

Barbara D. Feldman
Walter Feldman
Herbert Sackett
James Winoker
Gloria Winston
Janet Zurier

We are grateful to Shelley Sackett for sharing her thoughts about her father's gift:

My father treasured his family and he treasured his faith. These core values, along with a deep belief in giving back and paying forward, were the bedrocks of who he was and how he will be remembered.

A lifelong Rhode Islander and supporter of countless Jewish organizations, he considered the community to be his extended family. We couldn't be prouder or more pleased that his legacy will live on in perpetuity through his helping to fund the many programs the Alliance supports to keep Judaism vibrant and relevant now and in the future.

The Jewish Alliance's *Dor L'Dor* Society recognizes and honors individuals who have informed the Alliance of their intention to include the organization in their estate plans. The phrase *"dor l'dor,"* Hebrew for "generation to generation," reflects the values of continuity, legacy and shared responsibility that these planned gifts embody.

Community members who have made this meaningful commitment are encouraged to notify the Jewish Federation Foundation so they can be recognized as part of the *Dor L'Dor* Society. To share your plans or learn more, contact the endowment team at endowment@jewishalliance-ceri.org or call 401-421-4111.

Submitted by the Jewish Alliance development team.



Rebuilding lives with JCS

BY KRISTINE CONTRERAS FOX

"I never thought I would need help."

At Jewish Collaborative Services, staff and volunteers often hear this sentence from people who need services.

These are neighbors and friends. They are caregivers, retirees and working families who spent years supporting others. Yet, many now face rising household costs, health challenges and other unexpected life changes that feel isolating and overwhelming. Even people who never expected to need assistance now look for guidance, resources and support.

At JCS, they see it every day: a senior deciding between groceries and a prescription, someone grieving the loss of a spouse while dealing with hospital bills, a caregiver balancing their job and the needs of an aging loved one or a family unable to pay for utilities.

The encouraging news is that help exists. Through a full spectrum of social services including food assistance, elder services, housing and counseling, JCS helps Rhode Islanders overcome challenges and rebuild their lives. Recently, for example, an older gentleman new to the area was connected to JCS by a neighbor. Today, he frequents the JCS Senior Café, welcoming newcomers with the same sense of connection he experienced when he first arrived. His story is a reminder that kindness and community transform lives.

If you feel passionate about helping others, JCS encourages you to get involved. To learn more about JCS, support its mission with a donation or to volunteer, visit www.jcsri.org or contact kristina@jcsri.org.

One act of kindness can change the course of a life.

KRISTINE CONTRERAS FOX *(she/they/ella) is the outreach and donor steward at Jewish Collaborative Services.*

COMMUNITY

Roger Williams and the Jews

"I DISAPPROVE of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

This is not a statement from Roger Williams, but one written by Evelyn Hall about Voltaire's strong belief in free speech. However, it perfectly expresses how Williams felt about Jews (and lots of others, too).

David Adelman, a founder of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association (RIJHA), wrote about Williams in volume 1.3 (June 1955) of the RIJH Notes. According to Adelman, time and time again Williams referred to "Jews, Turks, Papists, Protestants and pagans," a strange mixture, as by "Turks" he means Muslims, "Papists" are Catholics, "Protestants" refers to those European Christians who separated from the Catholic church and pagans, well, are pagans. Adelman paraphrases another author when he says that while Williams believed these were "false religions," he defended their rights to their own beliefs (of course, they could change their minds!).

But, Adelman continues, as for Jews in general, Williams worked to have them readmitted to England (they were expelled in 1290). In addition, he quotes many of Williams' speeches, where he advocated for the rights of Jews. This example is especially strong:

Is there not more danger (in all matters of trust in this world) from an hypocrite, a dissembler, a turncoat in his religion (from the fear or favor of men), than from a resolved Jew, Turk or Papist, who holds firm unto his principles?

The RIJHA focuses on the history of Jews in Rhode Island, and, as its mission states:

To procure, collect and preserve books, records, pamphlets, letters, manuscripts, prints, photographs, painting and any other historical material relating to the history of the Jews of RI; to encourage and promote the study of such history by lectures and otherwise; and to publish and diffuse information as to such history.

Since 1951 the association has followed that mission, and in this, its 75th year, it continues to honor its founders and their vision. Visit them at the JCC or on its website, rijha.org

Submitted by the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

French and German citizens and soldiers shared ceremonies, meals, thoughtful conversations and meaningful programs in harmony and mutual respect. It was a model of people at their best.

Operation Benjamin and Operation Levi have much work ahead of them. There are many other soldiers whose stories are yet to be told and graves to be marked correctly. Their collaboration and their respective work in American and German cemeteries are exemplary and transformative. As the organizations' leaders lamented that war has returned to Europe, they repeatedly spoke of the pointlessness and tragedy of war. They affirmed that the values of peace and mutual respect point to a better future for all of us.

The gathering thoughtfully hosted students from Yeshiva University, the Virginia Military Institute, the University of the Bundeswehr Munich and the Bund Judischer Soldaten (the Union of German Jewish Soldiers) to convey these values to the next generation.

Uncle Maurice didn't live to experience any positive outcomes of his service to his new homeland. In honoring him 108 years after his death, we celebrate how he has connected our family to him and to each other, and we gratefully acknowledge that his service helped to create the world we inhabit today.

Rest in peace, Uncle Maurice.

WAYNE FRANKLIN *is senior rabbi emeritus of Temple Emanu-El, in Providence.*





COMMUNITY

The work that raised me

SHARON MESSINGER NERY

MINE WAS NOT your typical first job. Growing up as the daughter of a small contract egg farmer in Connecticut, my employment teeth were not cut at a part-time retail post or performing waitress duties. No, I learned about the satisfaction of a job well done while in my single digits, working directly beside my parents and brother after school and weekend mornings in the basement of our home where "Operation Candling and Packing" was always in full swing.

For a bit of historical perspective on my entry into the working world, we must travel back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries when many recently arrived Jews from Eastern Europe settled in Connecticut – primarily due to its relative proximity to New York City. While the state's rocky soil did not lend itself to most crops, the recently arrived immigrants turned to poultry and dairy farming in several southeastern Connecticut towns, including Norwich, Colchester and Lebanon. By 1928, Connecticut was home to more than 5,000 Jewish farm families and roughly 1,000 farms, producing eggs and dairy products for local markets. Many of these farmers supplemented their income by working part-time in local industries.

My paternal grandparents were one of the thousands of Jewish families supported by poultry and dairy farming in the early 1900s, an arduous and often challenging vocation that both my father and uncle took on as their primary life's work – this despite obstacles, such as harsh winters and variable market prices.

Parenthetically, Zayde had a true entrepreneurial spirit; in addition to running a farm, he operated a small mercantile store. While I cannot vouch for its authenticity, family lore has it that Thomas Edison, while visiting family in Connecticut, stopped at Zayde's store!

Daddy and Uncle Harold worked alongside Zayde in Lebanon, Conn., for several years, including 1938 when the Great Long Island-New England Hurricane battered the Northeast coast, going down in history as the deadliest hurricane to ever strike New York and New England. In fact, my father, who was a teenager at the time, was milking a cow in the barn when the roof flew off – but that's a story for another time!

When I was three, my parents moved to Brooklyn, Conn., a small community in the northeast corner of the state where they raised egg-producing hens under a multi-year contract with a large distribution company. On occasion, representatives from the University of Connecticut Agricultural College and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture would visit our farm, providing regulatory oversight and technical assistance.

Fortunately, we didn't have visitors on the day of "the great escape" when a flock of hens literally flew the coop! I don't recall how it happened or how long it took to shoo the escapees back behind closed doors, but I do recollect helping to prevent the chickens from crossing the road!

Looking back. I now realize how fortunate I was to see both my parents every day after school. Occasionally my father would share a late afternoon snack with us before heading back to the coops. That opportunity for a break is not meant to downplay the 24/7 description of life as a farmer. No matter if a blizzard was raging, the humidity index registered at 100 percent, or if he was weathering a temperature of his own, there was no such thing as a day off for my father. The same goes for my mother, whose household duties were many – both upstairs and downstairs.

While I "candled" eggs, checking for interior blood spots, then packing them in neat cartons and boxes in the relative comfort of our warm-in-the-winter and cool-in-the-summer basement, my father's shoulders, knees and often his spirit were put to the test as he toiled in the coops, endlessly bending to retrieve the eggs from which he made our family's living.

It may not have been a standard first job, yet some 65 years later my days as an egg packer on the family farm continue to shape who I am and how I view the fruits of all labor.



PHOTO | SHARON MESSINGER NERY

Frank Messinger flanked by son Ron and daughter Sharon.

SHARON MESSINGER NERY *is a resident of Mansfield, Mass. A former newspaper reporter, columnist, and editor, she is presently head writer at PR First in Hanover, Mass.*

Newport: George Washington Letter reading

NEWPORT – On Sunday, August 16, TSF Newport will host the George Washington Letter Reading, an annual event honoring our nation's heritage of religious freedom and diversity. This year marks the 79th annual reading of the famous letter and the second consecutive year the event has been held at Newport's Old Colony House.

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– *A. B., Barrington,* **BMW X5**

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GEORGE WASHINGTON'S 1790 letter "To the Hebrew Congregation in Newport" was written after his first trip to Rhode Island as President. In his eloquent reply to a letter by Moses Seixas, warden of the local Jewish congregation, Washington affirmed the new government's commitment to religious liberty, an entitlement he regarded as an "inherent natural right." The federal government, Washington stated, "gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance" — borrowing the now-famous phrase from Seixas' letter that expressed their shared vision for America's government. The program will begin at 1:00 p.m. at the Old Colony House at the head of Washington Square in the heart of Colonial Newport. While in-person seating is limited, the event will be live-streamed, and all may attend virtually via a link on TSF Newport's Facebook page, Facebook.com/TSFNewportRI.

The annual event has a long tradition of distinguished keynote speakers and letter readers, including U.S. Supreme Court Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Elena Kagan.

This year, the George Washington Letter will be read by Keith Stokes, Vice-Chair of TSF Newport, Associate Director of the Rhode Island Division of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, and Rhode Island Historian Laureate.

Sam Shamoon, longtime TSF Newport board member, will read Moses Seixas' letter to President Washington, which inspired the President's famous response.



Old Colony House in Newport, R.I. PHOTO | NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Rachel Laser, President & CEO of Americans United for Separation of Church & State, will deliver the keynote address.

To learn more about President Washington's 1790 letter to the congregation that worshiped in Touro Synagogue—the nation's oldest surviving synagogue, dedicated in 1763—visit TSFNewport.org/Religious-Freedom.

For more information or to inquire about attending in person, contact Meryle Cawley at tsfn@tsfnewport.org or (401) 847-4794, ext. 207.

Submitted by TSA Newport.

The Voice of Greater Rhode Island's Jewish Community

JEWISH RHODE ISLAND Business & Professional Directory

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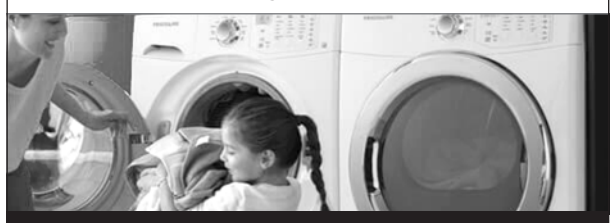
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OBITUARIES

Andrew C. Abrams, 67

PROVIDENCE – Andrew C. Abrams, 67, passed away Thursday, July 30, at Rhode Island Hospital. Born in Providence, a son of the late Victor and Leah (Eisenstadt) Abrams. He lived in Bristol, R.I., for two years but had spent most of his adult life in Pawtucket. For over 20 years, Andrew was a treasured member of The Arc of Blackstone Valley, where he cultivated bonds and friendships with housemates and staff alike.

Andrew is described as an enthusiastic and easy-going person. He was as happy to go for walks with his housemates as he was to visit concerts and play basketball. Prior to COVID, Andrew was a devoted volunteer with the Blackstone Valley gardening project at Daggett Farm. He proudly tended to the plants: Watering and weeding were his specialties, and, when given the opportunity, he would make very involved and beautiful arrangements that would later be sold to the community. Andrew sought out new experiences and eventually he, along with his dearest friends, Jim and John, would be known as the Three Musketeers. They bowled together, painted pots together and participated in Best Buddies and attended the Special Olympics. Andrew was non-verbal, but his enthusiasm and joy were contagious. He followed the flow of life and made sure to stop and appreciate it in his own ways.

A devoted best friend of Jim and John, a dear friend Ryan, who has been consistently by his side for many years, and Angela, as well as the entire community of The Arc of Blackstone Valley. Dear brother of Marlene Miller, her husband Stephen, of San Francisco, Calif. Beloved uncle of Joseph (Nabat), Aaron and Lee. He was also the great uncle of Leah and Nathan.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory may be made to The Arc of Blackstone Valley, 500 Prospect Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860.

Ernest Chernick, 94

WARWICK, R.I. – Ernest Kramer Chernick, former long-time resident of Providence, died July 5, 2026, at 94. He was the son of the late Faye and Joseph Chernick, of Providence, and was the soulmate and life partner of the late Elena Sacks, of Warwick, for over 35 years. He was the stepfather to Jonathan and Marla Sacks and a grandfather to Amanda, Jeremy, Eliana, Benjamin and Rachel Sacks.

Ernie graduated from Hope High and then Bryant College, majoring in accounting. He found his niche in his K. C. Insurance Agency for 30 years. He had a mathematical mind and a good head for sought-after advice.

He was a founding member of Crestwood Country Club and a member of Ledgemont and Metacomet Country Clubs. His final months were spent at Allegro Living in Harrington Park, N.J., where he enjoyed card games with his family close by.

Together Ernie and Elena enjoyed worldwide travel. And most importantly, they were a happy, loving couple.

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Pauline Cohen, 93

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Pauline



Estelle Cohen, 93, died on Friday, July 3, 2026, at Rhode Island Hospital. She was the beloved wife of the late Barry Cohen for 67 years. Born in Providence, a daughter of the late Dr. Harry and Martha (Bezan) Dress, she lived in Providence, previously living in Cranston and Narragansett.

An honors graduate of Hope High School, she worked as a bookkeeper in her youth. She was a life member of The Miriam Hospital Women's Association and the ACBL and a devoted Temple Sinai member. A card shark, Pauline loved tournament bridge all her life. Known by her family as "the General," she was the driving force propelling the whole family through a life of adventure, travel and the best of family times.

Devoted mother of Lawrence Joel Cohen and his wife, Maryann (Sowa) Cohen; Holly Jane Cohen; Mitchell James Cohen; and Sharon Diane Cohen and her wife, Jennifer Zanelli. Dear sister of Jeffrey Dress and the late Samuel I. Dress. Loving grandmother of Benjamin, Edward, Liberty (Devin) and David (Camille). Sister-in-law of Charlotte Cohen and the late Harold Cohen, and aunt to Andrew, Peter and Jason.

Sondra B. Comen, 90

WARWICK – Sondra (Sandy)



B. Comen, 90, of Warwick and formerly Providence, died Monday, July 28. She was the wife of the late Hyman "Hy" Comen and the late Howard Bass.

Born in the Bronx, a daughter of the late Irving and Lillian (Lankowitz) Priest, she moved with her young family to Rhode Island in 1967, first to East Greenwich and later to Providence. Before moving to the state, she was a resident of Rockland County, New York.

Sandy received a bachelor's degree in education in 1957 and a master's degree in 1962 from New York University. Thereafter, she taught in the Yonkers public school system for six years before moving to Rhode Island.

In Providence, Sandy taught nursery school and senior adult programs at the Jewish Community Center. She was also involved in coordinating birthday parties for children.

She is survived by two children, Steven Bass, of Pawtucket, and Karen Bass, of Bellevue, Washington; two grandchildren, Cooper and Marisol Valenzuela; and several nieces and nephews. She is also survived by her late husband Hyman's son, James Comen.

She was predeceased by her sister, Iris Finkelstein, and her brother, William Priest.

Memorial contributions in her honor may be made to the American Cancer Society or the American Heart Association.

Bob Corin, 84

SUN CITY CENTER, FLA.



- Warren Corin, 84, who was nicknamed Bob, passed away on May 3, 2026. A loving husband to his devoted wife Janet of 56 years; father to Stacy (Marc) Olswang, of Chicago, and Matthew, of San Francisco; grandfather to Dassie, Bentzy and Heelie, all of Chicago; brother to Alan (Shiela), of Cumming, Georgia; and son to Ben and Bella. The focus of his life was his family, and he always found engaging conversations with others. Raised in Pawtucket, Bob graduated from Bryant College and the University of Rhode Island. He had a strong passion for business and, along with his father and brother, created Office Appliance Co., a successful family business in Cranston that spanned over 25 years and included dozens of employees. He further built another family business that coupled his son's interest with sports memorabilia. This became a winning combination, pursuing his own drive for dealmaking while teaching many lessons and sharing lasting memories together with his son. Bob grew up, worked and raised his family in Rhode Island, but he and Janet also shared deep curiosity, loved to explore new cultures and traveled, including several trips overseas. Upon retirement, they RV'ed, crisscrossing America and experiencing the beauty throughout over several years while always meeting new faces. Great friendships continued when settling into their new home and building community in the Tampa Bay area. Bob looked for opportunities to be kind and welcoming to strangers and was also eager to help others in need. He embraced leadership roles within his community while at school, at Temple Am David in Warwick, and upon his arrival to Temple Beth Israel in Sun City Center, Florida. In their new residential development, Valencia Lakes, he started and developed their buying club to provide a network of discounted services to be shared for all residents. He found joy and made it his mission to personally welcome as many of those relocating newcomers as possible. Bob will be deeply missed by his loved ones and those who knew his energetic personality. To see memorial Bob's memorial service, click on the Beth Israel of Sun City Center livestream YouTube channel @bethisraelsuncitycenterfl or the recording.

Doris Stearn Donovan, 88

PROVIDENCE - Doris Louise Stearn Donovan, 88, died at peace, surrounded by family in her home in Providence on May 2. Dodo, as she was known, was proud to have lived life just the way she wanted, with optimism, a wide array of interests and a constant passion for fairness and equity. She succeeded in her stated goal of living life well while serving as an example for her children. Dodo was a loving daughter, wife, mother, grandmother, mentor and friend. In all endeavors, she demonstrated a keen intellect, wry sense of humor, deep well of knowledge and insatiable curiosity.

Dodo was born in Stuttgart, Germany, as Dorothy Luise Stern. At eight months old, Dodo escaped the Holocaust with her parents and

OBITUARIES

grandparents. Upon arriving in the United States, a government employee "Americanized" each of their names. Dodo grew up in Ayer, a small town in northern Massachusetts, and graduated from Pembroke College as valedictorian. At Brown University, Pembroke's coordinate college, she met her life partner, Bruce Donovan – although they enjoyed telling their children that they fell in love when their eyes first met while performing on a circus trapeze. After one year in Bristol, England, and six in New Haven, Connecticut, Bruce and Dodo returned with their young children to Providence, where they remained.

Having received a master's degree and pursued further studies in administration, Dodo was groundbreaking in assuming a series of leadership roles with Progress for Providence, Providence Public Schools, Rhode Island College and the Rhode Island Foundation. She culminated her career as an independent consultant providing organizational development to entities nationwide with a strong emphasis on evaluation and nurturing consensus. Active in her community, she served on a wide variety of boards of directors and was honored for her efforts by Children's Friend, Senior Agenda Coalition, United Way of Southeastern New England and Potter League, among others. Her many volunteer efforts included being a founding member (with Bruce and others) of Lippitt Hill Tutorial and sharing her personal and family history in schools and the community as a member of the Speakers' Bureau of the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center.

Dodo is survived by her daughter, Erika Donovan Estades (Jaime); son, Greg Donovan (Liane); granddaughters, Sara Donovan, Gabriela Estades and Jazmin Estades; grandson, Reid Donovan; and her beloved feline, Fritzy. Dodo wanted to highlight her immense appreciation for the outstanding support she received from HopeHealth Hospice and Right at Home RI and their amazing staffs, as well as her many cherished friends. In lieu of flowers, Dodo requested donations be made to: Centro de Recursos Educativos para Adultos, Inc., ACLU or HopeHealth Hospice.

Adele Espo, 101

PALM BEACH GARDENS, FLA. - Adele Goldberg Espo, 101, who spent her life educating the young, died peacefully on July 7, 2026, after a brief illness.



She was the wife of the late Harlan Joel Espo. They met when they were eight years old and had been married 44 years at the time of his death in 1990. She was the daughter of the late Alfred J. and Eve (Medoff) Goldberg.

Born in Woonsocket, she lived in Springfield, Massachusetts, with her family until they moved to Rhode Island in 1939. Adele graduated from Pawtucket West High School and received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Early Childhood Education and Child Psychology from the University of Rhode Island, then called Rhode Island State College, in 1946. Twenty-five years later, she returned to school and earned a Master's Degree in Special Education/Learning Disabilities from what was then Rhode Island College.

She taught in the Pawtucket School System for two years, at the Jewish Community Nursery School when it was on Benefit Street, then in the Providence Public school system, all in the elementary grades. She then taught at the Moses Brown School in Providence mornings and the Windmill Street School afternoons in the school year 1947/48. Beginning in the fall of 1948, she taught elementary school full-time at Moses Brown for 36 years. She left in 1984 to move to West Palm Beach, Florida, with her husband. She continued her teaching career at Saint Joseph's School in Boynton Beach, Florida, until her retirement in 1991. Following that, she continued substitute teaching and tutoring for several years.

She was active in her condominium association, serving on the board for more than a decade, including more than six years as president. She volunteered at the Kravis Cultural Arts Center in West Palm Beach for 28 years, including 11 years as head usher, and The American Lung Association and Palm Beach Drama Works. She was a member of educational and reading organizations for over 40 years.

While in Providence, she and her husband were members of the Jewish Community Center, where Harlan served as president. Adele belonged to the sisterhood at Temple Emanu-El and was a life member of Hadassah. After moving to Florida, she was a member of Temple Beth El in West Palm Beach, where she volunteered for 20 years.

She leaves four children: David M. Espo (Andi Kasarsky), of Arlington, Virginia; Caryn S. Espo (David Gold), of Los Angeles, California; Hal Espo (Ree DeDonato), of New York City, New York; and Joseph B. Espo, of Catonsville, Maryland. Grandchildren include Rachel S. Stacy (Brad Stacy), Shira Rose Espo, Joshua Harlan Espo (Amanda Espo), Daniel Harlan Espo and Hannah Claire Espo; and one great grandchild, Eva Stacy. She is predeceased by her sister Sybil G. Shapiro, of New York. She leaves many nieces, nephews, cousins and godchildren.

Edward R. Feller, 80

PROVIDENCE – Edward R. Feller, MD, 80, of Providence, passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday, July 21, 2026, at his residence. He was the devoted husband of the late Wendy (Levins) Feller, a beloved actress and member of the Rhode Island theater community. Their remarkable and vibrant relationship could light up a room.



Born in Brooklyn, New York, a son of the late Abraham and Emma "Ginny" (Tannenbaum) Feller, Dr. Feller had been a resident of Providence since 1978.

He earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1967 and Doctor of Medicine from New Jersey Medical School in 1973. He completed residency in Internal Medicine in 1975 at McGill University Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal, Canada, and his fellowship in Gastroenterology in 1977 at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Dr. Feller was Clinical Professor of Medical Science at Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University for over 40 years. He previously served as co-director of the Community Health clerkship and as director of the Division of Gastroenterology at The Miriam Hospital. He was co-editor of the Rhode Island Medical Journal from 2018 to 2021.

Throughout his career, Dr. Feller was passionate in his commitment to medical students and their education. He mentored generations of medical students who were devoted to him. He received the Faculty Award for Teaching on 14 occasions, and he was awarded the Senior Citation, Alpert Medical School of Brown University's highest honor seven times. Dr. Feller also authored or co-authored well over a hundred journal articles, book chapters and op-eds, the majority of which involved collaborations with medical students.

In his personal life, Dr. Feller was an avid ultramarathon runner, completing 50-mile and 100-mile races in the wilderness. He was also a connoisseur of the arts, with a deep appreciation for theater, music and literature. Finally, he loved his family and his friends.

Dr. Feller is survived by his two children, Dr. Alexander Arthur Feller, of Manhattan; and Dr. Sophie Claire Feller, of Los Angeles; his brother, Dr. Joseph Feller; his nephews, Dr. Ross Feller, Dr. Reid Feller and Jonathan Shecter; and his niece, Jane Saul (Shecter). He also leaves behind his treasured companion, his Goldendoodle Oliver.

Stuart R. Golde, 82

MANSFIELD, Mass. – Stuart R. Golde, 82, of Mansfield, Massachusetts, passed away at home on Friday, June 26, 2026, after a long and courageous battle with cancer. He was the loving husband of Bonnie-Dee (Willgoos) Golde, with whom he shared 40 years of marriage.



Born in Elizabeth, New Jersey, he was the son of the late David and Evelyn (Goldstein) Golde.

A veteran of the United States Navy, Stuart served as a lieutenant and Navy flight officer from 1969 to 1972. He earned a B.S. and an MBA from California State College at Long Beach. Before retiring, he built a 41-year career as a senior retail executive and business banker, working with companies including Ann & Hope, Swezey's Department Store, Miller and Rhodes, Meier and Frank, and Santander.

In addition to his wife, Bonnie-Dee, he is survived by his brother, Robert; nieces, Staci (Lisa), Sarah (Tom) and Rachel (Darrin);



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nephew, Robert (Bonnie); and great-nieces and great-nephews, Katleyn, Alex, Tyler, Megan, Emma, Erik, Madeline, Jack, Katie and Ethan.

Burton W. Goldstein, 94

JOHNSTON, R.I. – Burton W. Goldstein, 94, died Tuesday, June 30, at Cherry Hill Manor. He was the beloved husband of the late Fay Goldstein. Born in Providence, a son of the late Louis and Sadie (Blazer) Goldstein, he was a lifelong Providence resident.

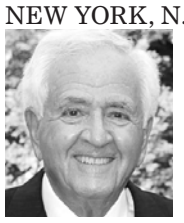
Burton was the owner of the former Goldstein Electric and East Side Electric, retiring after 2000. Burton was a Korean Conflict Navy veteran, serving stateside. He was a member of Temple Beth-El, Touro Fraternal Association and the Masons, and he was also a Shriner.

Devoted father of Brent Goldstein and his partner, Dale Damewood, of Holiday, Fla.; Estelle Laborio and her husband, Joseph, of Johnston, R.I.; Pamela Caito of Cranston, R.I.; and Beth Myers and her husband Ed, of Lincoln, R.I. Dear brother of the late Irvina Katz and brother-in-law of Stephen Petti of Lincoln, R.I. Loving grandfather of Fay and her husband Nick. Cherished great grandfather of Ella.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory may be made to Fay Goldstein Memorial Fund c/o Temple Beth-El, 70 Orchard Avenue, Providence, RI 02906. For online condolences, please visit ShalomMemorialChapel.com.

Charles Bernard Kahn, 87

NEW YORK, N.Y. – Charles "Bud" Bernard Kahn, MD, 87, passed away Monday, June 29, 2026.



He was the beloved husband of Susan (Segal) Kahn; they were married for almost 54 years before her passing in 2020. Born in Denver, Colorado, he was the son of the late Maxwell Mathis Kahn and Ruth (Launberg) Kahn.

Bud's was a life well lived. He graduated from the University of Colorado for both undergraduate and medical school, where he was first in his medical school class. He completed his residency at the Brigham & Women's Hospital and fellowship at the Deaconess Hospital, both in Boston, Massachusetts, where he met Sue. He served as a major in the Army and worked at the Joslin Clinic in Boston, Massachusetts, before founding Rhode Island's largest diabetes and endocrinology practice. Over his 50+ years of medical practice, he was a clinical professor at Brown University Medical School, the first physician elected chairman of The Miriam Hospital board of trustees, a member of the Lifespan Board of Trustees, president of the Rhode Island Medical Society and volunteer and Physician of the Year at the Rhode Island Free Clinic. He also volunteered at the Moi University School of Medicine in Eldoret, Kenya, four times and served on the Board of Trustees at the Wheeler School.

He was an avid photographer, golfer, skier and runner and loved to travel. Most importantly, he was a beloved member of the community and an amazing husband, friend, father and grandfather.

He is survived by his son, Maxwell Kahn, and his wife, Deborah Weinswig, of New York, New York; his daughter, Sheri Kahn, of Wellesley, Massachusetts; his sister, Susan Gersten; and his grandchildren, Ezra, Zahava and Madeleine "Maddy" Kahn. He was predeceased by his sister Vicki Ross.

Kenneth E. Kaplan, 79

PROVIDENCE – Kenneth E. Kaplan, 79, died Wednesday, July 29, at HopeHealth Hulitar Hospice Center.



He was the beloved husband of the late Susan (Darcy) Kaplan. Born and raised in Providence, a son of the late Nathan and Mary (Coppola) Kaplan, he had lived in West Warwick for 15 years, previously living in Cranston, and was a lifelong resident of R.I.

Kenneth was a correctional officer at the ACI since 1982, retiring in 2015. Kenneth was a Viet Nam Marine veteran. He was a graduate of Mt. Pleasant High School Class of 1965, a member of Foster Pine Tree Gun Club and a former member of Temple Emanu-El. He earned a business degree from Roger Williams University.

Devoted father of Kendra Kaplan and her friend Dr. Daniel Collins, of West Warwick, R.I.; Leanne Kaplan and her husband John Wood of Johnston, R.I.; and Sherry Kaplan of West Warwick, R.I. Loving grandfather of Woody.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory may be made to HopeHealth Hulitar Hospice Center.

Ruth Kasten, 79

EAST GREENWICH, R.I. – Ruth L. Kasten, 79, died Sunday, July 5, 2026, while on vacation in Kamiah, Idaho.



She was the beloved wife of the late Gerald Kasten (z"l) and later, the cherished partner of Bob Feldman, of Framingham, Massachusetts. Born in New York City, a daughter of the late Henry and Evelyn (Licht) Rahm (z"l), she had lived in East Greenwich for 51 years.

Ruth was Controller of Pilgrim Title Insurance Company, in Providence, for many years, cutting back on hours more recently, though never quite managing to fully retire.

Nothing was more important to Ruth than family. She spent happy days preparing for big family gatherings, and the harder it was to fit everyone in her home, the happier she was. Thanksgiving and Mother's Day were her favorites, bringing her so much joy to get the entire extended/blended (always her words) family together.

She lived every moment for her grandchildren and would do (and did) absolutely anything for them. Plans were arranged around every special occasion. She refused to miss a single one and cherished every moment she spent with them. Ruth loved to travel and was always excitedly planning her next adventure. She loved to hike, take walks and stay active and moving all the time. She loved the theatre, whether taking trips to New York with her grandchildren (where she also loved showing them where she grew up), organizing big family groups to see shows at PPAC or watching her grandchildren onstage and behind the scenes.

Devoted mother of Adam Alper and his wife, Kim Sinclair, of Randolph, Massachusetts; Jen Zinno and her husband, Matt, of Sharon, Massachusetts; Sheryl Caissie and her husband, Brian, of Alva, Florida; Larry Kasten and his wife, Jill, of Worcester, Massachusetts; and Susan Abrahams and her husband, David, of Austin, Texas. Dear sister of Alan Rahm, of Sewickley, Pennsylvania, and Maxine Solomon, of Raleigh, North Carolina. Loving grandmother of Elizabeth, Jacob and Aster Zinno; Daniel Caissie and Sarah Lewis; Joshua, Hannah, Avery and Levi Kasten; and Samuel and the late Harry Abrahams (z"l). In lieu of flowers, contributions in her memory may be made to the National Alliance on Mental Illness or the Providence Performing Arts Center.

Anthony Joseph Lewis, 83

NEW BEDFORD, Mass. – Anthony "Tony" Joseph Lewis, 83, of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, passed away unexpectedly Tuesday, July 7, 2026, at St. Luke's Hospital in New Bedford. He was the devoted husband of Rachel (Klein) Lewis, with whom he shared 62 years of marriage.

Born in the Bronx, New York, he was the son of the late Carlton H. and Lillian (Dashefsky) Lewis. The family then moved to Beacon, New York.

Tony graduated from Beacon High School in 1960 and went on to attend Rutgers University, graduating in 1964. Following Tony and Rachel's marriage, the couple moved to Wisconsin, where Tony received his Ph.D. in English from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Tony was a United States Army veteran and served during the Vietnam War at the U.S. Military Academy Prep School in Fort Belvoir, Virginia, for two years before being honorably discharged as a captain.

The family moved to Buffalo, New York, where Tony was a professor of Shakespeare in the English Department at Buffalo State University for 32 years before retiring to South Dartmouth, Massachusetts. After retirement, he continued to teach. He taught Shakespeare for Second Half Learning and comedy at the Dartmouth Council on Aging. Tony also wrote feature stories for the New Bedford Standard Times and book reviews for the Providence Journal. Tony was a former president of the Southcoast Chamber Music Society. Tony was a lifelong learner, teacher and performer. He was a stand-up comedian and avid gardener and also found joy in reading, writing and building projects. However, his greatest love was spending time with his family.

In addition to his wife, Rachel, he is survived by two children, Miriam Elizabeth Sabin, of New York City, and Raphael Jacob Lewis and wife, Rachel Reagan, of Boston; four grandchildren, Joseph B. Sabin, Margalit L. S. Sabin, Celo F. Lewis-Reagen and Miranda R. Lewis-Reagan; one sister, Barbara Trecker and her husband, James; as well as several nieces and nephews.

Howard Mayer, 95

PROVIDENCE – Howard M. Mayer, 95, died Monday, July 20, 2026, at home, surrounded by his family. He was the beloved husband of the late Judith (Daly) Mayer. Born in Brooklyn, New York, a son of the late Edward and Leah (Chefer) Mayer, he had lived in Providence for four years, previously living on Sanibel Island, Florida. He was the owner of Carpet World in Bridgeport, Connecticut, retiring 33 years ago.

Howard was a proud sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps, serving during the Korean Conflict. He was a member of Temple Emanu-El, Providence; Temple Bat Yam, Sanibel Island, Florida; Temple Judea, Fort Myers, Florida; and Temple Beth El, Fairfield, Connecticut. He graduated from Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan, New York.

Devoted father of Jonathan Mayer and his wife, Maureen, of Wesley Chapel, Florida; and Cantor Brian Mayer and his wife, Cantor Lynn Torgove, of Providence. Dear brother of the late Gary Mayer. Loving grandfather of Eric, Katie, David, Raphael, Daniel, Jonah and the late Ryan. Cherished great grandfather of Grayson, Maverick, Franklin, Julian and Morgan.

Contributions in his memory may be made to the HaZamir Fund, c/o Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Avenue, Providence, RI 02906 or Providence VA Medical Center, 830 Chalkstone Ave., Providence, RI 02908.

Florence Joyce Nachbar, 86

PROVIDENCE – Florence Joyce (Shindler) Nachbar, 86, of Providence passed away Tuesday, July 21, 2026, at HopeHealth Hulitar Hospice Center in Providence.



She was the wife of the late Leon Nachbar, whom she married

OBITUARIES

in 1963.

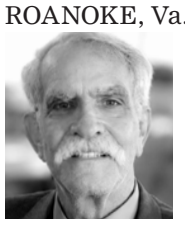
Born and raised in Providence, a daughter of the late Samuel and Helen Shindler, she lived with her family in Pawtucket before moving back to Providence.

A graduate of Hope High School, class of 1958, Florence was an active member of the Jewish service organization B'nai B'rith. One of her annual acts of volunteerism was to help answer phones at the Pawtucket Police Station on Christmas so that those who worked there could spend time with their families. She also enjoyed volunteering at the Samuel Slater Middle School in Pawtucket. She loved gardening, taking care of her yard and spending time with her family, especially when hosting them for Rosh Hashanah and Thanksgiving.

She is survived by her two sons, Neil Nachbar and his wife, Jennifer, of West Warwick; and Harris Nachbar, of Providence; one grandson, Samuel Joseph Nachbar; and several nieces and nephews. She was the younger sister of the late Phyllis Weiner.

Kenneth Resnick, 77

ROANOKE, Va. – Kenneth H. Resnick, 77, of Roanoke, Virginia, where he was a proud resident for 46 years, passed away Monday, July 13, 2026.



Born June 27, 1949, in Providence, Kenneth "Kenny" (also affectionately known as "Ken" and "Redneck") was the son of the late Earl J. and Gilda J. Resnick. He was a devoted son, brother, husband, father and grandfather.

Kenny was raised in a Conservative Jewish home and celebrated his Bar Mitzvah at the age of 13. At just 18 years old, he bravely enlisted in the United States Marine Corps during the height of the Vietnam War. He served with honor during the Battle of Khe Sanh and the Tet Offensive, earning the Vietnamese Service Medal with two stars, the Presidential Unit Citation and the Purple Heart with one star. Following his military service, he earned his bachelor's degree in Business Management from the University of Northern Colorado.

Although he was a decorated Marine, Kenny's greatest pride was marrying the love of his life, the late Claudia C. Resnick. Together, they shared more than 50 years of marriage, building a life centered on love, family and unwavering devotion to one another. Their greatest joy was raising their three children: Victoria S. Volpe, Ana G. Resnick and Eddie M. Resnick. Together, they built a life in Roanoke, where Kenny would remain for more than four decades.

Kenny loved coaching his children's recreational baseball and softball teams and teaching them military traditions by waking them to reveille, marching in cadence and instilling a deep sense of patriotism. He cherished summers spent with family, cooking, entertaining friends and hosting gatherings. Known for his unmistakable booming laugh and larger-than-life personality, Kenny was always the life of the party and faithfully hosted a weekly guys' night with his closest friends.

He was an active member of Temple Emanuel, served with the local Marine Corps Honor Guard and generously supported numerous charitable organizations within the Roanoke community he called home for 46 years.

A lifelong entrepreneur, Kenny was self-employed and became well known throughout Virginia's gun show community. A dedicated firearms enthusiast, he later opened a firearm store in Boones Mill. Even after retiring, he refused to slow down, continuing to attend gun shows and enjoying monthly breakfasts with fellow Marines.

In retirement, Kenny treasured time spent with his family, especially his beloved granddaughter, Adrianna C. Volpe, and with the many friends he made throughout his life. He inspired fierce loyalty, unwavering patriotism and an enduring sense of friendship in all who knew him.

Kenny was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Claudia C. Resnick, and his parents, Earl J. Resnick and Gilda J. Resnick.

He is survived by his children, Victoria Volpe (Glenn), Ana Resnick and Eddie Resnick; his cherished granddaughter, Adrianna C. Volpe; his sisters, Deb Cicero (Fred), Sharon Gilstein (Andy) and Frima Palumbo (Peter); and his nieces, Amy Gilstein and Amanda Young (Jeff).

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made to the Wounded Warrior Project in honor of his deep devotion to our country and our service members.

J. Richard Rose, 77

PROVIDENCE – J. Richard "Rich" Rose, 77, passed away peacefully at Rhode Island Hospital on June 24, 2026, with his loving wife, Francine, by his side. They celebrated their 20th Anniversary in May 2026 vacationing in Virginia.

Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., Rich was raised by his parents, Harry and Martha (Karp) Rose, in Queens and Westbury, New York, where he treasured the lifelong relationships he formed with his relatives and friends. He graduated from Hicksville High School and earned a B.S. from the University of the State of New York.

Rich's career in health care started when he was a psychiatric attendant at Creedmor Psychiatric Center and in a laboratory in a hospital in New York. In the early 1990s, Rich moved to Rhode Island, where he was a supervisor of the blood bank at Rhode Island Hospital. He also volunteered in a soup kitchen in Providence. In the 2000s, Rich worked at Bay State Medical in Springfield, Massachusetts; Sturdy Memorial in Attleboro, Massachusetts; and Brockton Hospital in Brockton, Massachusetts as a laboratory supervisor. He taught clinical laboratory at Bristol Community College in Fall River, Massachusetts, and Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts. He took pleasure in mentoring students and employees. He obtained an M.S. in Labor Relations and Human Resources from the University of Rhode Island in 2006. His seminar research paper "Condition Critical: American Hospitals Face a Severe Undersupply of Allied Health Professionals" is published in DigitalCommons@URI. Rich was a lifetime learner and obtained Master's Degrees from Seton Hall in South Orange, New Jersey, and University of Pittsburgh Law Schools, Pennsylvania.

Rich was an avid Mets fan and was proud to be a URI alumni. His interest in jazz music started when he was young and listening to John Coltrane. With Francine he attended numerous music festivals and travelled through the U.S. and Europe to numerous art museums. During summers, Rich and Francine relished in a picnic lunch and listening to classical music on the lawn at Tanglewood in Lenox, Massachusetts.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his brother, Steve, and his wife, Karin, of Charlottesville, Virginia; his sister, Faren, of Los Angeles; his nephew, Quinn; his niece, Molly; and great nieces, Lola and Ramona Boothman.

Rich's caring and warm demeanor, his devotion to his wife, his brilliance and humor will be missed.

Lois Korman Fine Sargeant

REHOBOTH, Mass. – Lois Korman Fine Sargeant passed away Wednesday, July 15, 2026. She died peacefully in her sleep, in the comfort of her home. Lois was loved by a broad and deep family and shall be missed. She is survived by three sons, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Lois was well known in the community and shall be remembered as a joyful, friendly person with a robust sense of humor.

Jeffrey N. Shapiro, 76

MARLBOROUGH, Mass. – Jeffrey N. Shapiro, 76, died Monday, Aug. 3 with his loving wife of 52 years, Susan, by his side. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, he was a son of the late Jack and Ethel (Berman) Shapiro. He had lived in Marlborough, Mass., for 41 years. He travelled often for work, living in many places, like Huron, Ohio; Syracuse, N.Y.; Vermont and New York City. Jeffrey graduated from Boston University in 1972 with his Bachelor of Science and from New York University in 1974 with his Master of Public Administration.

He was a manager for nonprofit agencies for 30 years, specializing with vulnerable communities suffering from drug and alcohol abuse, retiring in 2008. Jeff was a dedicated collector of stamps, and he dutifully belonged to and served as an officer of the United States Stamp Society and the American Philatelic Society. Part of his duties to these groups was to serve as an accredited judge of collections and appraiser for the other collectors during stamp shows. When Jeff was able to, he would unwind with romantic classical music, like the compositions of Gustav Mahler. He also just appreciated being able to spend his life alongside his loving wife, Susan (Schiff) Shapiro. Together they built a beautiful life devoted to their joys and traveling.

In addition to his wife, Jeffrey is survived by his siblings, Stephen Shapiro and his wife Deborah of Orlando, Fla., and Marilyn Hazen and her husband Jack of New Smyrna Beach, Fla.; his in-laws Barry and Pam Schiff of Cranston, R.I.; his nephew Bennett Schiff, as well as his other seven nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory may be made to the World Central Kitchen.

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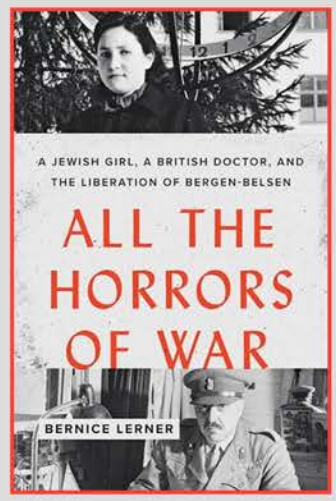
Wednesday, October 7th

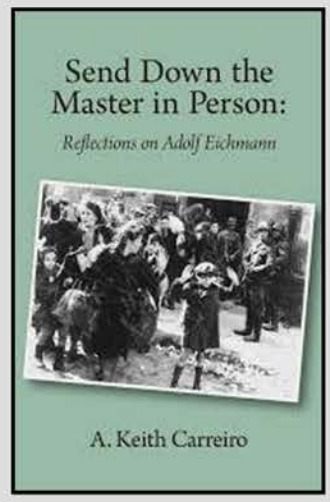
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