The tragedy of Jan. 6 and the American Jewish experience

By David M. Shribman

JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT


The first four – among many others – were dates that shall live in infamy, especially for Jews. Ferdinand and Isabella issued their order of expulsion aimed at practicing Jews on March 31, 1492. The Nazis put their bloody finishing touches on the suppression of the Jewish uprising in Warsaw on May 16, 1943. The massacre of Jews at Babiy Yar began on Sept. 29, 1941. The German anti-Jewish rampages known as Kristallnacht occurred on Nov. 9, 1938.

Then, on Jan. 6, 2021, armed marauders conducted a siege at the Capitol to stop the counting of electoral ballots, prevent the ascendency of Joe Biden to the White House, and maybe lynch Vice President Mike Pence. It was a moment of high drama and high danger, democracy itself in the balance. Insurrectionists stormed the symbol of American political culture, and in living rooms across a virus-sequestered country, sober, serious men and women cried – to borrow a phrase from Alan Paton and women cried – to borrow a phrase from Alan Paton and men cried – to borrow a phrase from Alan Paton and women cried – to borrow a phrase from Alan Paton and men cried – to borrow a phrase from Alan Paton and women cried – to borrow a phrase from Alan Paton – to prevent the ascendency of Joe Biden to the White House.

Or, when the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration in 1939 turned away the liner St. Louis with its 937 Jews fleeing certain death in Europe. Maybe when Harry Truman recognized Israel in 1948, or when Abraham Joshua Heschel marched with Martin Luther King Jr. at Selma, Ala., in 1965.

And yet in a special way – and by “special” I do not mean the word in its happy sense – Jan. 6, 2021 was an important marker for Jews.

Not for the obvious reason: The presence of 28 Jewish members of the House of Representatives and nine in the Senate – including soon-to-be Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer – on Capitol Hill that day, all of whom scrambled to find safety as the security barriers were breached. The first two Jews in the Senate, David Levy Yulee of Florida and Judah Benjamin of Louisiana, actually

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BELIEVED SHARON TEEN KILLED BY TERRORISTS REMEMBERED WITH ISRAELI BASEBALL FIELD

By Deborah Fineblum

It was evident that organizers had no idea how many people felt they just had to be at a particular park in the Israeli city of Ra’anana last month for the dedication of a baseball field in the name of Ezra Schwartz.

With every seat filled and a couple of hundred people on the sidelines, remarkably none of them – not even the youngest baby – bore any sign of impatience during the entire 50-minute ceremony.

Ezra was the kind of guy who inspired that kind of devotion.

Six years have passed since the day when the car the 18-year-old was riding in was attacked by a terrorist who opened fire on Nov. 19, 2015, killing Schwartz and two other students from Yeshivat Ashreinu in Beit Shemesh. The young men inside were stopped in traffic south of Jerusalem, on their way to beautify an area that serves as a memorial to three Israeli teenage boys who were kidnapped and killed the summer before.

Those who attended the dedication of the Ezra Schwartz Memorial Baseball Field included his parents, Ari and Ruth Schwartz, who traveled from their home in Sharon to attend the ceremony.

The new field, a project of the Israel Association for Baseball, is only the second regulation baseball diamond in the country. And it’s no coincidence that this is the sport chosen to represent country, sobers, serious men and women cried – to borrow a phrase from Alan Paton and women cried – to borrow a phrase from Alan Paton and women cried – to borrow a phrase from Alan Paton and women cried – to borrow a phrase from Alan Paton – to prevent the ascendency of Joe Biden to the White House.

Ordinarily we don’t think of civic events in American history as being particularly Jewish moments, except perhaps when Louis Brandeis was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1916, or when the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration in 1939 turned away the liner St. Louis with its 937 Jews fleeing certain death in Europe. Maybe when Harry Truman recognized Israel in 1948, or when Abraham Joshua Heschel marched with Martin Luther King Jr. at Selma, Ala., in 1965.

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Two Boston doctors say the key to stopping COVID is vaccinations

By Rich Tenorio
JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

BOSTON — Although the start of a new year is traditionally a time of optimism, two local Jewish infectious disease experts anticipate grim beginnings of 2022 due to COVID-19. "It seems like it’s going to look pretty darn bad," said Dr. Shira Doron, the hospital epidemiologist and antimicrobial steward at Tufts Medical Center, although she noted that she certainly does not give predictions. "If we follow the pattern of other countries that saw the Omicron variant a few weeks before we did, we’ll continue to see a steep rise a little longer before it starts coming down."

According to Dr. Daniel Kuritzkes, chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, "I think we’ll continue to see a surge through January." He believes it will "continue at least into mid-January if not the end of the month," after which "things are going to turn around."

The latest fear is the Omicron variant. "The danger is on a societal level," Doron explained. "It’s bad because it’s so contagious. So many people get it all at once, at the same time... It affects vaccinated and unvaccinated people."

However, he adds, "for individuals who are vaccinated and boosted, it’s not something that should keep you up at night." Before going ahead with fourth shots, she noted Israel considered not doing so because the Omicron variant is proving to be so mild.

"I think for unvaccinated people, we have to assume Omicron carries the same risk as other COVID strains," Kuritzkes said. "For people who are vaccinated, it continues to be the case that they’re much, much less severe. The risk of becoming hospitalized or worse outcomes from COVID, with Omicron even, is dramatically reduced if you have been vaccinated."

"It seems like it’s going to look pretty darn bad," said Dr. Shira Doron, describing the new surge of COVID-19. "The new year also begins in the wake of revised CDC guidelines on quarantine, which have been shortened to five days. We need to wait for details," she said. "I think the modifications make sense," Kuritzkes said. "There are some important caveats. It would be great to have the CDC show the data on which the research is based. It’s rash to not require somebody test negative before letting them out of isolation."

Doron agreed on a need for details, specifically with regard to the quarantine guidelines. "We need to wait for details," she said. "Maybe they’ll clarify or adjust. It’s a bit confusing to me."

Both doctors criticized the lack of tests available to the public. "I think there’s very clearly a testing shortage," Kuritzkes said. "I find it very unfortunate that testing is so unavailable. I hope it’s scaled up quickly," said Doron. Meanwhile, boosters continue to be administered across the United States. As of Dec. 28, the CDC reported nearly 68 million Americans had received a booster, or 33 percent of the country’s fully vaccinated population.

"[We] only started boosting in the fall," Kuritzkes said. "We don’t have good data. We know antibody levels went way up. In Israel, the third-dose boosters led to a sharp decline in the number of cases. We don’t know how durable was the effect, how long antibodies stay high, and at what point people will become a little more susceptible to infection."

Yet, he said, despite all the breakthrough cases, the vast majority of people vaccinated with breakthrough infections are going to be protected against severe disease," citing statistics of vaccinated people being 10 times less likely to be hospitalized and 13 times less likely to die from COVID-19 than unvaccinated people.

Kuritzkes suggested trying to vaccinate "all the unvaccinated people than be perpetually boosting the vaccinated" as a way of ending the pandemic, and reflected that the way things are going now, "We could end up boosting every month, every two to three months."

Doron is unsure how the current surge will play out. "Maybe we will get lucky," said Doron, or things could be "much worse before they get better. There could always be another variant on the horizon."

At the Brigham, there were 46 COVID patients on the regular floor and 14 in the ICU when Kuritzkes spoke with the Jewish Journal. The numbers on the regular floor have jumped from the high teens to the 30s to their current level.

"Not everybody is in the hospital because of COVID," he said. "We test everybody. A lot of people simply tested positive for COVID but do not have active disease... We have much higher numbers than where we’ve been."

Although the news sounds bleak, some numbers are down when compared to earlier in the pandemic. "In perspective, during the peak of the pandemic, the initial surge, we had 80 people in the ICU, almost all on ventilators, and another 80 to 180 on the regular floor," Kuritzkes said. "Those are high numbers compared to where we’ve been the last several months, the past year."

"The numbers are much, much lower than where we were in the time of the first surge. Look around the state as a whole, we’re still not quite at the levels of hospitalization as last year. We’re getting pretty close. At this time last year, we had 2,100 people in the hospital (statewide). We have 1,600 people now... 500 people less."

He added that the state has "more cases, fewer hospitalizations. That’s got to reflect, in part, the impact of vaccines."

Doron is unsure how the current surge will play out. "Maybe we will get lucky," Doron said, or things could be "much worse before they get better. There could always be another variant on the horizon."

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From ‘frog skin in a petri dish,’ Jewish scientist creates first living robots that can replicate

By Rich Tenorio
JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

When Tufts University researcher Michael Levin started working with frog skin cells, it took him in unexpected directions. Terming his creations “xenobots,” he describes them as simultaneously animal, machine, and robot. Recently, his understanding of xenobots became much more complicated when he discovered that the tiny creatures can replicate, or make copies of themselves.

“It’s never been seen on Earth before,” Levin said.

A Russian Jewish immigrant who lives on the North Shore, Levin is now fielding emails from the public since the discovery. In the past, he has been profiled in The New Yorker and The New York Times.

“Some people are absolutely terrified, which is completely misplaced,” he said. “If you want to be worried about something of that nature, there are natural and artificial pandemics, bacteria and viruses … We already have all of those things.”

In contrast, he said, “I’m experimenting with frog skin in a petri dish.”

“One thing about xenobots,” he said, “is that they point out deficiencies in lots of terms. Robots, machines, organisms — we used to think there were strict differences. There are not deep differences. They are arbitrary things … Now we have something like the xenobots. It’s completely unclear where it lands in that terminology.”

The xenobots are a combined effort between Tufts, the Wyss Institute at Harvard — where Levin holds a joint appointment — and the University of Vermont. In a separate interview, UVM researcher Josh Bongard recalled finding out that the xenobots were replicating.

“It’s definitely a first,” Bongard said. “We knew this could happen, but not to this degree.”

Less than a millimeter in diameter — barely visible to the human eye — each xenobot was called cilia, which the xenobots moved like oars in the water.

“The time four days had passed, the piles had become child xenobots. Their normal lifespan is 10 days, although this can be extended to as much as 80,” Bongard noted. “Replication is different from reproduction. A computer virus will self-replicate, for example, whereas a plant or animal will reproduce. A plant will release seeds outside itself, while a mammal will grow offspring inside itself.”

“I think what’s really useful here is not the replicating itself,” said Levine. “What the replication is telling us is what this thing can do. We could work with that.”

“Not just me and Josh. It’s us combined with the xenobots … The frog cells have an intelligence. It will enable us to do amazing things.”

“Frog cells are perfectly happy in fresh water,” Bongard pointed out. “We can create xenobots that pull microplastics out of wastewater, detect contaminated soils, work in sewer systems, water filtration plants, submarine engine inspection.”

He said that xenobots are “like the computer in the 1940s.”

Most significantly, he said, they are a “new way to investigate living systems, how things work. It lays out the potential for new growth in cancer, aging, regenerating eyes or limbs.”

Levin marveled that some members of the public are so excited about the medical possibilities of xenobots that they want him to work faster.

“People have a lot of unmet biometric needs,” he said, “all kinds of disorders, spinal cord injuries, birth defects, trauma, cancer. People see this advance and say, ‘Fine, what does it mean to me?’ … A lot of them ask, ‘What’s taking you so long? I need new eyes, a spinal cord, my kid needs a new finger.’”

Levin said he understands the potential spiritual ramifications of the discovery that xenobots can replicate. He recently spoke with several rabbis on the subject.

“I definitely think there’s a spiritual dimension to all this,” he said. “The whole business of continued on page 13
A year ago on this day, thousands of Americans attacked the U.S. Capitol in Washington. Alleged on by the former president, who told them the election had been "stolen," their goal was to take control of the building and force Congress to overturn the election. Meanwhile, a great deal of the evidence outside of the Capitol as the insurrectionists sought to hang former vice president Mike Pence.

By Yossi Kuperwasser JNS.org

JERUSALEM – There have been claims in recent years that the Israeli Defense Forces has become "overly legalistic," or in other words that the specter of prosecution and trial hampers the military's freedom of action. This claim is mainly voiced in the context of the IDF's war on terrorist organizations, which themselves flagrantly violate the rules of war, intentionally attacking civilians and hiding behind human shields.

That is why fighting armed terrorist organizations is much more complicated - less because of the militarily - fighting regular armies, and applying international laws of war that specify the rules and demands some creative thinking. This is mostly because in this type of warfare, terrorists are not bound to uphold international law, and seek to leverage the other side's commitment to it.

However, the reasoning behind the laws of war applies to clashes with terrorist entities, too. Therefore, the IDF uses their four main principles in its operations:

1. The principle of necessity, which means that military force is exercised only when there is a military purpose in doing so, the focus of which is in protecting the security of the country and its citizens and defeating the enemies.

2. The principle of humanity, which requires that unnecessary cruel and degrading means be avoided.

3. The principle of distinction, separating military and civilian persons and objects.

4. The principle of proportionality, which acknowledges that assaults on military targets can cause collateral damage to civilians and civilian objects but seeks to ensure that such damage is not excessive in relation to the military advantage resulting from it.

Despite how they are understood and portrayed by some, the laws of war acknowledge countries' need to defend themselves - against terrorist organizations, too - as a preventive or mitigate damage that is unnecessary from a military standpoint.

Moral force

The IDF always heeds these principles not only because doing so anchors its ability to defend itself against lawsuits in the International Criminal Court and other foreign courts, or out of a need for international legitimacy. The IDF upholds them, first and foremost, because they align with our own moral code, which obligates the IDF, as an army in a democratic state, to follow the rule of law.

It could be argued that in the given situation abandoning the laws of war could lead to greater success in the war on terrorism and securing democracy, but while this might reduce the danger to Israel in the short run, the IDF's conduct would be unbearable high. It would harm not only innocents, but also our ability as a people to face ourselves. The moral advantage actually increases Israel's strength in the long run.

Mistakes happen

In fighting Palestinian terrorism, especially in the rounds of violence with the terrorist groups in the Gaza Strip, the IDF has adhered to these moral principles to a impressive degree - much more so than most other Western armies. Relatively few uninvolved civilians have been killed, and this is not the majority of those used as human shields.

The head of The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in the Gaza Strip infuriated Hamas and was forced to resign after describing the IDF's precision during "Operation Guardian of the Walls" in May.

However, when it comes to Hezbollah in Lebanon, because the group has turned countless civilian buildings into military targets (using them as missile warehouses, workshops, or headquarter), the law allows the IDF to treat them as such. As a result, in any confrontation with Hezbollah, the number of civilian casualties could be much higher. The UN has said the IDF's conduct to reduce collateral damage in Gaza are unbearable in Lebanon, and that in and of itself is not a violation of international law.

In any case, there is nothing new in the application of the laws of war to the fight against terrorist organizations. Legal and political advisors have been taking part in Israel's war on terror for decades, and even if the number of their involvement changes over time, they still should be part of the process. That is accepted practice in all Western armies, and it should be. The final decision lies with the command, and it should take into account the legal counsel they receive.

Too easy

In this context, in recent years the Israeli military has faced two massive challenges. One is the enemy's increasingly sophisticated methods. Among other things, this includes activating groups that portray themselves as human rights organizations, but actually are branches of terrorist organizations (for example, some of the groups Israel recently declared to be terrorist entities with links to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine). Others operate with blatantly anti-Israeli motives.

The second goal is the ease with which the enemy is able to enlist new media and some of the media establishment to promote its cause - primarily, slandering Israel and chipping away at its legitimacy. For years, radical left-wing entities throughout the world have been investing considerable means in slandering Israel, being enabled to do so in part by the new reality in which conflict zones are replete with recording devices, offering raw material for producing manipulative reports.

The international system, motivated by political considerations, mostly accepts this double standard of morality. While Israel is required to meet stringent standards, no one truly expects the Palestinians to follow the laws of war. Moreover, according to the Palestinian narrative, the battle against Zionism justifies any form of war, including terrorism. And although the Palestinian Authority pays fat salaries to terrorists, it is seen as a legitimate partner in negotiations.

The IDF should continue to operate according to the law, but Israel must also recognize how vital it is to improve its abilities in the fight against public opinion, through an emphasis on our morality and our strong commitment to the law. The goal should be to increase the IDF's freedom of operation and restrict our enemies' freedom to operate.

IFD Brig. Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser is director of the Project on Regional Middle East Developments at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. This article first appeared in Israel Hayom.

LETTERS

Positive changes occurring at Kernwood

Thanks for the excellent story by Steve Marantz on golf clubs, "Why ‘tire time at Salem’s Kernwood Country Club isn’t just for Jews anymore,” in your Dec. 23 Jewish Journal. As a "seasoned" vet of 36 plus years at Kernwood, I have seen quite a bit of change — the big plus remains the magnificent golf course maintained by John Eggleston and his staff, and the Pro Staff headed by Frank Dully for over 35 years!

The spectacular views; the changing winds and the speedy greens make for great times for all. No matter the religion.

Mike Steinberg

Salem

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Israeli entrepreneurs bring heavenly pastry, divine pitas to Boston

By Penny Schwartz

JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

Boston, meet Uri Scheft's tantalizing babka. And get ready to say hello to Ayala Sham's world-class, Mediterranean-inspired whole roasted cauliflower.

These are the signature dishes of two of Israel's trendsetting chefs who've chosen Boston for their new North American eateries.

Scheft, the acclaimed Israeli-Danish baker, and his business partner, Or Ohana, opened Babeky (www.babekybabka.com) this past fall. They chose a bold and ambitious location for the bakery/cafe, at 151 Tremont St., across from the city's historic Boston Common, which attracts a broad swath of office workers, students, local residents, and tourists.

Later this winter, Shani will launch his latest outpost of Miznon, his hugely popular restaurant with 23 locations in Israel, Melbourne, Vienna, Paris, and New York.

Miznon will open in the Seaport District, the city's vibrant and still-evolving neighborhood along Boston's waterfront.

Scheft is the former owner and co-founder of Breads Bakery in Manhattan, where his mouthwatering, laminated dough babka catapulted him onto the world stage.

The author of "Breaking Breads" is also the owner of Lehamim Bakery, with six locations across Israel. He launched Bakey in October with Ohana, CEO of Lehamim, who relocated with his family in 2013 to helm the Boston bakery.

In scouting their first U.S. location to expand Lehamim, the pair found a passion for Boston.

"For us, it's called love," Scheft said in a conversation at Bakey. "We just in from Israel, where we live, to train bakers and help with other opening logistics." The aromas were heavenly and the airy storefront cafe is a buzz of activity. When an oven timer chimes, Ohana pulls out the chocolate babkas and brushes them with an off-set-sweetened glaze over the hot loaves laced with chocolate. The result is a sweet, flaky babka that melts in your mouth.

Other tasty menu items include sandwiches with egg salad or whitefish, among other spreads.

They've been warmly welcomed by Greater Boston's burgeoning Israeli community, including Tatte Cafe and Bakery founder Tzurit Oh and Nir Garspi, co-founder and CEO of Cafe Landwer, who have been helpful, Scheft and Ohana said. "I always felt as a welcome guest," Ohana said.

Meanwhile, Shani and the Miznon team are兴奋ly preparing for the opening of their Seaport location, at 107 Seaport Blvd., with a target to open sometime this winter, according to Mika Ziv, a New York-based spokeswoman for Miznon.

Shani is renowned for high-lighting fresh ingredients that sparkle in his pastry. He learned preparation inspired by the multicultural Israeli cuisine. His whole roasted cauliflower has gained star appeal and is now replicated worldwide.

"By all means, at the core of his kitchen, is respect for all the ingredients, meats, vegetables, and fish, to look at it in a new way. It's like a high-end meal inside a pita," Ziv said in a phone conversation.

The menu will feature items from Miznon's pita-based sandwiches including falafel, whole roasted cauliflower, and almond babkas; braid ed challahs and challah rolls; and trays of savory burekas and cheese sticks, another of Scheft's popular offerings.

The flavorful Middle Eastern rolls, hot from the oven, are dotted with cranberries and pumpkin seeds. They are promoting a pairing of their pastries with high quality coffee from Seattle roasters Cake Umbria.

Bakery goods that are not sold right out are donated to the nearby Women's Lunch Place, a daytime shelter.

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“So many people got behind this project because of Ezra’s endearing personality, his love of baseball, and his love of life,” said Yoav Schwartz. His wife, Pam Schwartz, put it this way: “When you lose someone you love, it leaves a hole. For Yoav, this project was a hole left by Ezra.”

According to Peter Kurz of the IAB, the building of the baseball field corresponds with a surge in interest in the sport among new immigrants from the United States and native Israelis alike. “We’re exported from 500 players five years ago to 1,500 today,” said Kurz. “And 500 players five years ago to native Israelis alike. Baseball is becoming a sport among new immigrants. It’s a great opportunity to have everyone come together, no matter what their background is.”

“Ezra was a boy who was very endearing personality, his love and all that missing into a hole.” For Yoav, this project was this way: “When you lose a loved one, it becomes a hole. For Ezra, this project was this way: “When you lose your brother, it becomes a hole. For Ezra, this project was this way: “When you lose your brother, it becomes a hole.”

He couldn’t draw or paint or sculpt, but he knew he wanted to be an artist. He was always calm and confident. And not only do all his brothers and sister play the game of baseball, he was a child growing up next door to the Schwartz family when Ezra was killed. “He was so much older than me, but he felt Ezra’s cool, calm support. We hope every child who plays baseball here will feel Ezra’s cool, calm support and love of baseball.”

World famous mixed media artist makes second visit to Epstein Hillel School

Hancoh Piven, left, guides seventh and eighth grade students through the portrait design process in the Sulman Innovation Center.

MARBLEHEAD — When Israeli artist Hanoch Piven visits the Epstein Hillel School on the K-8 Jewish Day School north of Boston — for the first time in 2017, Head of School Amy Gold didn’t know what to expect. Despite the uncertainty, his workshop was a huge success that students and community members raved about for days.

When the opportunity presented itself to bring Hanoch back to EHS this winter, the Leadership Team jumped at the chance to have him return. “We were thrilled to bring Hanoch back because that new students and families could have the chance to participate in this immersive and whimsical art experience that teaches many life lessons for children and adults,” said Gold.

Hanoch Piven went to a Jewish day school much like EHS in his native Israel. However, when he got a bit older and moved to Israel, he knew he wanted to be an artist. But he couldn’t draw or paint like his peers, so he started to make art out of objects, morphing everyday items into incredible portraits of famous people. As his bio states: “By reinventing the meaning and use of everyday objects, he forges associations between these and the subject at hand.” Since 1982, Piven’s work has been published in newspapers and magazines across the world, such as Time, Newsweek, Rolling Stone, London Times, Der Spiegel and Israel’s Haaretz.

Parents were asked to send in all kinds of items leading up to the workshop on Dec. 1 – bottle caps, Lego buttons, scraps of fabric, wire – almost anything can be used to create art. The items were then sorted and laid out into a “buffet” for the students to use in the school’s new Sulman Innovation Center, a STEM space unlike anything else on the North Shore. Students in grades 3-8 were given a presentation by Hanoch and then invited to create either a self-portrait or a portrait of a biblical figure. The results were astounding.

“Mr. Piven taught me to think outside the box and be more creative with my artwork.” said Eliana, an eighth grade student. Middle school students created portraits of Biblical characters including Pharaoh, Esther, and Jacob, to name a few. The younger students chose objects that had a special meaning to them to create either a self-portrait or a portrait of a biblical figure. The results were astounding.

“Mr. Piven taught me to think outside the box and be more creative with my artwork.” said Eliana, an eighth grade student. Middle school students created portraits of Biblical characters including Pharaoh, Esther, and Jacob, to name a few. The younger students chose objects that had a special meaning to them to create either a self-portrait or a portrait of a biblical figure. The results were astounding.

“It was a challenge that made me use my brain in a different way than usual,” said Oliver, a seventh-grader. Simple everyday objects were given new life and became an eye, a nose, or hair. Later that evening, families were invited into the school to create a family portrait with Piven. Parents and students explored the collection tables around the Innovation Center, looking for the perfect objects to represent their family’s interests and characteristics. At the end of the evening, families were invited to share their portraits with the group and explain why they chose each object and why they were special. As the first event in a very long time in which parents were allowed in the building, there was a closeness felt amongst the families who have not seen each other in person for a year and a half because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Parents were grateful to share this experience and be together as a community.

“It was wonderful to be in the school again for the Piven event. Community is such an important part of EHS and being together again with other families was truly special,” said Jessica Katz, class of 1995 and a current parent of an EHS student.

Epstein Hillel School hopes to host more in-person gatherings for parents and community members in 2022.

Is your child ready for kindergarten? Hear about the signs of kindergarten readiness from a panel of experienced educators and specialists. Tips on how to help your child prepare for this important transition will be provided during this informative discussion. Time will be allotted for Q&A.

DATE: Thurs. Jan. 20, 2022
TIME: 7:30 – 8:30 pm
PLACE: Epstein Hillel School, 6 Community Road, Marblehead with the option to join from home via live stream.

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Pierce, Pierce & Napolitano

“Mr. Piven taught me to think outside the box and be more creative with my artwork.” said Eliana, an eighth grade student. Middle school students created portraits of Biblical characters including Pharaoh, Esther, and Jacob, to name a few. The younger students chose objects that had a special meaning to them to create either a self-portrait or a portrait of a biblical figure. The results were astounding.

“It was a challenge that made me use my brain in a different way than usual,” said Oliver, a seventh-grader. Simple everyday objects were given new life and became an eye, a nose, or hair. Later that evening, families were invited into the school to create a family portrait with Piven. Parents and students explored the collection tables around the Innovation Center, looking for the perfect objects to represent their family’s interests and characteristics. At the end of the evening, families were invited to share their portraits with the group and explain why they chose each object and why they were special. As the first event in a very long time in which parents were allowed in the building, there was a closeness felt amongst the families who have not seen each other in person for a year and a half because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Parents were grateful to share this experience and be together as a community.

“It was wonderful to be in the school again for the Piven event. Community is such an important part of EHS and being together again with other families was truly special,” said Jessica Katz, class of 1995 and a current parent of an EHS student.

Epstein Hillel School hopes to host more in-person gatherings for parents and community members in 2022.

Is your child ready for kindergarten? Hear about the signs of kindergarten readiness from a panel of experienced educators and specialists. Tips on how to help your child prepare for this important transition will be provided during this informative discussion. Time will be allotted for Q&A.

DATE: Thurs. Jan. 20, 2022
TIME: 7:30 – 8:30 pm
PLACE: Epstein Hillel School, 6 Community Road, Marblehead with the option to join from home via live stream.

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(L-R): Judson Pierce, Daniel Napolitano, Alan Pierce

Pierce, Pierce & Napolitano

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What a Jewish editor can learn answering letters to Santa

By Linda Matchan
FORWARD.com

Here’s what they don’t tell you about bringing Santa Claus: it can be heart-wrenching.

Every year, the Boston Globe receives as many as 17,000-plus letters addressed to Santa Claus. This year, the paper put me, a Jewish journalist who was a reporter and editor there for 36 years, in charge of writing about them.

“How are you Santa?” one mother began her letter, cheerily, before outlining her woes.

“Things have been a bit difficult here.”

Her husband died two years ago. Her 14-year-old son has autism and has been hospitalized for depression. His 18-year-old brother not only lost his father “but has to deal with his older brother on a daily basis. Now he’s being treated for obsessive-compulsive disorder.”

The mother, like other writers, is interested in being the editor in charge of the program, working with a Globe Santa team who read the letters that start arriving in September by snail mail, asking for gift assistance.

“Tikun olam” – and raising money to buy toys and books for children whose par- ents or guardians can’t afford to give them, if anything, at holiday time. Seven days a week between Thanksgiving and Christmas, Globe Santa uses the paper to tell their stories, and shaping them into compelling stories.

Last summer I got an email from the paper asking if I’d be interested in being the editor in charge of the program, writing with a Globe Santa team who read the letters that start arriving in September by snail mail, and taking away jobs. It’s a bit like the Forward’s Bintel Brief column, except Globe Santa doesn’t give advice. Or understand Yiddish. A big part of the job is looking for themes in some of these letters and shaping them into compelling stories.

“I’m proud to be the first Jewish Globe Santa editor,” wrote Bill Connolly, the program’s longtime executive director. Connolly was an Irish boy from Boston’s Insular neighborhood, and

Globe Santa is the paper’s venerable 66-year-old charity, a signature program of the Boston Globe Foundation that raises money to buy toys and books for children whose par- ents or guardians can’t afford to give them, if anything, at holiday time. Seven days a week between Thanksgiving and Christmas, Globe Santa uses the paper to tell their stories, and shaping them into compelling stories.

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Samuel Bak, who paints the past so we will never forget it, to be on display in Beverly

By Shelley A. Sackett
JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

BEVERLY – Samuel Bak, the renowned international artist, speaks in a language of images, dreamscapes, and colors. A child prodigy and Holocaust survivor, Bak tells his life's stories through canvases rich in symbol, metaphor and reorientation. Recognizable objects and figures appear shattered and reglued, a pear sports a smoke stack, broken teacups become surrealist landscapes, and a ruined house sits atop a mound of books.

Bak's rich, thought-provoking works will soon be on view in Beverly: "Samuel Bak and the Art of Remembrance," an exhibition at Montserrat College of Art Gallery presented in cooperation with Pucker Gallery of Boston, brings together 37 paintings and works on paper created between the 1990s and today. The show runs Jan. 18 to March 4, with an opening reception to commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Jan. 27.

His canvasses tell the story of a world destroyed, a destruction he witnessed and survived. His work references Jewish and Holocaust history, challenging historical amnesia with difficult images of those times.

Yet, he does not consider himself a "Holocaust painter," as he is often described, and despite the fact that what he witnessed during those times is the subject of many of his paintings. "I felt I have a story to tell and I wanted to touch other people. I refer to the Holocaust because it is something I know, but it goes beyond that," he said over Zoom from his Weston home.

His paintings are meant to make the viewer wonder what happens when the world rejects equality and focuses on dehumanizing "the Other." "My paintings ask questions. They don't necessarily give answers because I personally don't have any," he said.

Despite scenes of anguish and despair, Bak also paints survivors, imbuing them with glimmers of muted hope and resilience. Rivers still run; painters still paint. The teddy bears and tea cups and humans are put back together again, but they can never be the same as our first memories of them.

"I wanted to speak about the survivors, who are people who try to rebuild something that is similar to the reality that existed once, but cannot be totally reconstructed," he said. " Somehow it is out of the bits and pieces of the horrors of the past that we can construct the sense of our being here and learn to prevent such horrors from happening again as much as it is possible."

An only child, Bak was born in 1933 to an educated, middle-class family in Wilno, Poland. At age 9, he was a recognized child prodigy painter. At age 17, on the day after his first day of school, he and his family were deported to the old Jewish quarter of the city now called Vilna. At 19, he had his first exhibition inside the Vilna ghetto. When the Russians liberated Vilna, he and his mother were among its 200 survivors from a pre-war community of between 70,000 and 80,000 Jews.

"The major subject of my paintings is: How was it possible such events happened? How is it I am still alive?" he said.

During his 85-year career, Bak has produced over 9,000 items. Since the 1960s, remembrance and education have been major themes.

"Memory is not a folder that is downloaded onto your computer and when you want to look at it, you give a click and the folder reopens exactly as it was before," the 88-year-old said.

Unlike a computer folder, Bak sees the human memory as unique and individual because it also contends with our failure to remember. "We are blessed that we have the possibility to forget. This is what keeps us alive," Bak said. "It is also why, when we want to remember, we must recreate that memory."

In his paintings, Bak is "recreating the image that I have of the world in which people live today. Images that somehow seem to belong to another world attract viewers and enable me or others who speak about my work to speak of the times they represent," he said.

His paintings have been used to educate thousands of teachers and students about the Holocaust since 1978. That year, he exhibited in a national museum in Germany that drew large groups of teachers and young students. "It suddenly opened my eyes. I thought, 'My goodness. My paintings can do that. That's absolutely wonderful,'" he said.

Since then, the PBS show "Facing History" has used his art for over 40 years to teach about the Holocaust, reaching millions of students in thousands of classrooms. In 2022, the Florida Holocaust Museum in St. Petersburg will mount a yearlong exhibit of his paintings to commemorate its 30th anniversary.

Montserrat will sponsor a virtual artist talk with Bak and – COVID permitting – other school groups plan to visit the exhibit. "What is happening with this exhibition at Montserrat College is not something new, but it is something I know works," Bak said.

By Shelley A. Sackett
JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

Samuel Bak in his Weston studio.

Photo: Pucker Gallery, Boston
How a Nazi sympathizer unleashed a wave of antisemitic violence across Boston in 1942

By Rich Tenorio
JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

When historian Charles R. Gallagher learned that a Boston-based leader of a right-wing Christian group secretly met with a Nazi intelligence official to plot against the United States joining the Allied forces in World War II, he was shocked.

"I thought, 'Gosh, now there's a story,'" said Gallagher, an associate professor of history at Boston College who is also a Jesuit priest.

This real-life spy drama is part of Gallagher's new book, "Nazis of Copley Square: The Forgotten Story of the Christian Front," published by Harvard University Press. The organization named in the subtitle had chapters in New York and Boston, with the latter branch initially operating out of the Copley Square Hotel.

With an anticommunist and antisemitic platform, the Christian Front worked to prevent the U.S. from joining the Allies, which included Great Britain and the Soviet Union. As the book details, New York group leader John Cassidy plotted an armed insurrection that was thwarted by the FBI, while the Boston leader — Francis Moran — met clandestinely with a Nazi agent, a Nazi SS officer, Gallagher said. "If he did that, he would have lost all of the financial stuff, his entire family, being the main breadwinner there, all of this has crumbled because of the Jewish boss," Gallagher said.

The FBI was able to infiltrate Moran's cell with a female operative codenamed G1 following an antisemitic explosion against Jews in Boston.

This violence "was concentrated in areas where the Christian Front had been most effective," Gallagher said, listing Mattapan, Blue Hill Avenue, Dorchester, and South Boston. "There was a kind of border war going on between Jews and Catholics. It was kept quiet for eight months. There was an explosion, finally, at the end of 1943 in terms of publicity [that] involved everyone — the governor, the police commissioner, the mayor, to the cops, to rabbinical leaders," Gallagher said.

Gallagher lamented the decisions taken by authorities against Moran, including forcing him underground. "In my view, he became almost more lethal underground than above ground," Gallagher said, adding that when the FBI infiltrated his cell, "It was too late for the Jews of Boston. The antisemitic crisis had already occurred."
THROUGH JAN. 15, 2022
BEYOND DUTY: DIPLOMATS RECOGNIZED AS RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS EXHIBIT, presented by the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. The exhibit honors diplomats who saved the lives of Jews from Nazis and were recognized as “Righteous Among the Nations” by Yad Vashem. The exhibit is free and open to the public at the Sophia Gordon Center for Creative and Performing Arts, 356 Lafayette St., Salem.

THROUGH JAN. 2022
“WITNESS” VIRTUAL THEATER EXPERIENCE; WHERE DO UNWANTED PEOPLE GO? 7:30 p.m. Presented by ArtKlin Theatre. “Witness,” the latest project from ArtKlin’s Zero Gravity (zero-G) Virtual Theater Lab, is a new documentary theater piece about Jewish immigration in the face of antisemitism. The piece is inspired by the journey of the MS St. Louis, which left Hamburg in 1939 with over 900 Jewish people on board and headed to Cuba only to be turned away, leaving the passengers stranded with nowhere to go and no escape. $25 adult; $15 student. Other dates through January 2022 available. For more information and to order tickets, go to: https://www.zerosgravity.art.

SUNDAY, JAN. 9
PJ LIBRARY JEWISH HOLIDAYS FOR LITTLE HANDS, 10:30 a.m. Presented by Temple Ahavat Achim and sponsored by the Lappin Foundation. Children up to age 5 and their caregivers are invited for stories, songs, snacks and a special art project around Jewish holidays with expert bubbles, zaydes, imas and abbas from our community. Dress in his or her outside. Registration is encouraged at: www.lappinfoundation.org/pj-library-jewish-holidays-for-little-hands-registration form. Temple Ahavat Achim, 86 Middle St., Gloucester.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 12
TU B’SHVAT FLOWER ARRANGING CLASS, 6:30 p.m. Presented by the North Shore JC. $18 per person. Registration is required by Jan. 3 at: https://nscijc.org/event/flower-arranging-class-2/. 240 Lynnfield St., Peabody.

THURSDAY, JAN. 13
THE HOLOCAUST: A MARITIME HISTORY, 7:30 p.m. Presented by Lappin Foundation. Community is invited for an engaging presentation by returning guest speaker Gregg Philipson. The presentation will examine the people, organizations, ships and events that shaped the Holocaust from a maritime perspective. It is a little-known yet fascinating and important part of the history of World War II and the Holocaust. The presentation features many rare and unusual artifacts from the extensive Holocaust collection of Gregg and Michelle Philipson. For more information and to register for Zoom link, go to: https://www.lappinfoundation.org/holocaust-education-and-commemoration.

SUNDAY, JAN. 16
Nature Hike for Tu B’Shevat, 10 a.m. Presented by the Congregation Shirat Hayam of the North Shore. Community is invited for a fun, socially-distanced, outdoor celebration of the trees around us. We will take a specific path through the Mass Audubon’s Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary. Wear good walking shoes and a mask. There is a $10 parking fee per car. Mass Audubon’s Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary, 87 Perkins Rowe, Topsfield.

MONDAY, JAN. 17
HELP YOUR AGING PARENTS THRIVE: A WEBINAR FOR ADULT CHILDREN, 12:30 p.m. Presented by Hebrew SeniorLife. Join Hebrew SeniorLife experts for an educational webinar covering a range of resources and tips to help your aging parents maximize physical wellness, social stimulation and personal fulfillment in 2022. We’ll also provide expert advice on starting the conversation, bringing supports into the home, senior living and health care options. Register at: https://hebrewseniorlife.zoom.us/webinar/register/E61401017194/ Wn_Xh0C4_Pg0D-Jxu4DfpPFXA.

MONDAY, JAN. 17
JCCNS WOMEN’S BOOK CLUB, 1 p.m. Presented by the JCCNS. Visit www.jccns.org for more information. 4 Community Road, Marblehead.

TUESDAY, JAN. 18
SAMUEL BAk AND THE ART OF REMEMBRANCE EXHIBITION, Presented by Montserrat College of Art Gallery. Exhibit open till March 5 with a public reception to be held on Jan. 21, 5 - 7 p.m. This exhibition brings together over 30 paintings and works on paper by the acclaimed artist and Holocaust survivor, from the 1990s to the present and explores the function of memory in the artist’s work. It is free and open to the public. More information and updates for the event on gallery website: https://www.montserrat.edu/galleries/23 Essex St., Beverly.

THURSDAY, JAN. 20
TEREZIN: CHILDREN OF THE HOLOCAUST, 7 p.m. Presented by Lappin Foundation. Community is invited to a discussion with the director and cast of “Terezin: Children of the Holocaust,” on Zoom. The film follows a day and night in the lives of six children imprisoned at Terezin during the Holocaust. Everyone who registers for the Zoom discussion will receive a link to view the film anytime from Jan. 14-20. The screening and discussion are free and everyone is welcome. Visit Lappinfoundation.org to register for this program.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 26
JCCNS COMMUNITY CONVERSATION SERIES, 7 p.m. Ben Freeman in conversation with Dr. Rachel Fish. Visit www.jccns.org for details.

THURSDAY, JAN. 27
INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY COMMEMORATION, 7:30 p.m. Presented by the Lappin Foundation. The community is invited to commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day. This year’s commemoration is dedicated to the memory of the 1.5 million Jewish children murdered during the Holocaust. The featured speaker will be Michael Gruenbaum, survivor of Terezin and author of “Somewhere There is Still a Sun.” The guest moderator will be Josh Kraft, President of Kraft Family Philanthropies. The program is free and everyone is welcome. For more information, contact Susan Fenster at 978-760-4431 or email sfenstein@lappinfoundation.org.

Submit your events to calendar@jewishjournal.org
Lloyd Stanley Clayman, 91, of Lynnfield, formerly of Lynn

Lloyd Stanley Clayman passed away on Dec. 28, 2021. Born on April 17, 1930, he was the beloved only child of Ruth and Nathan Clayman.

He was raised in Lynn, where he attended public school and graduated from Lynn Classical High School. The first in his family to attend college, Lloyd graduated from Boston University and served his country in the United States Army as second lieutenant in Japan, as well as the reserves until Aug. of 1954.

In the summer of 1951, Lloyd was introduced by his cousin to Joan Mendelsohn, also of Lynn, who would become his wife on March 4, 1953, upon his return from Japan. They lived happily in Lynn until they bought a home in Lynnfield, where they raised their two children. They felt fortunate to have each other for so many years, 2021 marks 68 loving years.

Lloyd had a long career in the business world, eventually joining the family candy and confectionary brokerage of Harold Young Inc. of Wellesley Hills. Then, to support his family and clients, he rose to become vice president, which he was well versed in.

Perhaps his biggest fans were the neighborhood kids from Lynnfield, who would become his wife on any given summer evening. Mr. Clayman would be greeted by all that knew him. It only took a smile for him to stop the car and pop his trunk to give out candy to whomever was around.

Years later, one of those kids, who lost his father at an early age and eventually became a Lynnfield Police officer, shared his treasured memory of Mr. Clayman and what it meant to him to be one of those lucky kids.

Lloyd was the cherished father to Cathy Clayman and her husband Neal Weinstein of Coral Springs, Florida, and Attorney Howard Clayman and his wife Glenda Smith Clayman of Exeter, New Hampshire. His Sweet “Papa” Lloyd to Harris, Hannah, Holly, and Henry Clayman and their wonderful mother … and his daughter-in-law Janet Hill Clayman.

A private graveside service was held on Dec. 31. Due to the pandemic, there will be no shiva. Donations may be made in Lloyd’s memory to Care Dimensions Hospice, 75 Sylvan St., Suite B-102, Danvers, MA 01923 (https://www.caredimensions.org), or to the charity of your choice. Arrangements were handled by Stanetsky-Hymanson Memorial Chapel, Salem. For more information or to register in the online guest-book, visit www.stanetskyhymanson.com.

Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to Yad Chessed, Magen David Adom, or Alyn Hospital Jerusalem. Arrangements were handled by Goldman Funeral Chapel, Malden. For online condolences, visit www.goldmanfuneral.com.

Gerald R. Appel, 88, of Swampscott

Gerald R. Appel, age 88, of Swampscott, died peacefully in his sleep on Dec. 23, 2021. Jerry was the beloved husband of Nancy (Miller) Appel, with whom he shared 67 wonderful years of marriage. He was the son of the late Israel and Esther Engelberg, Howard Appel, Stephen Appel (of blessed memory), Samantha Young, and Charlie Young. He was the brother of Robert Appel, Michael Appel, Stephen Appel (of blessed memory), Samantha Young, and Charlie Young. He was the brother of Joanne (Appel) Schwartz and had many wonderful nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Raised in Mattapan and Brookline, he earned a degree at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst before joining the U.S. Air Force.

Jerry was an accomplished businessman and retired as president of Premier Corrugated Box Company in Fitchburg. Jerry was an avid horseman and Boston sports fan, especially the Boston Red Sox.

Funeral services were held graveside on Dec. 26 at Sharon Memorial Park. In lieu of flowers, contributions in Jerry’s memory may be made to Temple Emanuel El of Marblehead, 393 Atlantic Ave., Marblehead, MA 01945 (https://www.emanu-el.org), or to Care Dimensions, 75 Sylvan St., Suite B-102, Danvers, MA 01923 (https://www.caredimensions.org). Arrangements were handled by Stanetsky-Hymanson Memorial Chapel, Salem. For more information or to register in the online guest-book, visit www.stanetskyhymanson.com.

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Gerald Stanley Clayman, 91, of Lynnfield, formerly of Lynn

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Selma (Kaplowlitch) Shoer, of Salem, age 87, died on Dec. 24, 2021 from complications of dementia and congestive heart failure. She was the adored wife of Sam Shoer for 63 years, and they still held hands at every opportunity.

Along with Sam, she leaves her sons and daughters-in-law: Michael Shoer and Susan Shoer, Brian Shoer and Diane Shoer, and Howard Shoer and Stacey Shoer, and the grandchildren who called her Bubbe: Alex Shoer, Liz Shoer Fachler (Adam), Mack Shoer, Carter Shoer, and Jacob Shoer, and her great-granddaughter Emery Skye Fachler.

“The little redhead from Revere” was a 50-year resident of Marblehead before moving to Salem. Selma was known throughout the community for her work with special needs children at the Glover and Bell Schools, and for her friendliness and warmth. She couldn’t go anywhere without being recognized by a former student, Temple Sinai member, one of her dozens of brothers and sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews, or one of her many friends.

Selma was a loving sister to the late Norman Kaplowlitch (Shelley) and will be missed by her nephew Scott Kaplowlitch (Melissa), their children Avi, Noah, and Jared, her nephew Ross Kaplowlitch (Tracey) and his children as well. Always positive and upbeat, over the years Selma loved to host family events and holiday dinners, because family meant everything to her. Selma was always ready, as she would say, to be “tough as nails.”

A graveside funeral service for Selma Shoer was held on Dec. 29 at the family plot at Temple Sinai of Marblehead Cemetery, 16 Buxton Road, off Cemetery Road in Denmark.

In lieu of flowers, expressions of sympathy may be made in Selma Shoer’s memory to the Special Olympics, 1133 19th St., N.W. Washington, DC 20036 (www.specialolympics.org).

Mark H. Weiss, 66, of Peabody, formerly of Lynn and Marblehead

Mark H. Weiss, 66, of Peabody, entered into eternal rest on Dec. 31, 2021. Mark was born in Lynn, son of the late Leonard and Beatrice (Jaffe) Weiss. He was raised in Marblehead and graduated from Marblehead High School Class of 1973. He worked as a sales representative in many different industries before retiring a few years ago.

Mark is survived by his devoted daughter Seana Weiss and his dear companion Valerie Buchman. He was the loving brother of the late Diane Weiss. Also, he was the beloved papa of Seana’s dogs, Lila and Prince.

Services were held at the Temple Israel Section of Shirat Hayam Cemetery, 506 Lowell St., Peabody on Jan. 3.

In lieu of flowers, expressions of sympathy may be made to the Temple Sinai Memorial Fund in the late Mark H. Weiss’ memory.

Carl Goldman, 64, of Peabody, formerly of Malden and Salem

Carl Goldman, of Peabody, entered into rest on Jan. 1, 2022 at the age of 64.

He was the beloved husband of Laurie Hyman Son. Devoted father of Hallie, Gabriel and Jesse. Brother of Harvey Goldman, Michael Goldman, Marjorie Goldman-Spaderna and Anne Goldman. Son of the late Ruth and Murray H. Goldman.

Carl grew up in Malden, and later graduated from University of Massachusetts, Amherst. In 1998, Carl also proudly graduated cum laude from the mortuary science program at the New England Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences. He married his beloved Laurie in 1993 and they raised their family together in Peabody.

Carl was a dedicated funeral director for Stanetsky Memorial Chapels for almost three decades, tirelessly serving thousands of families on the North Shore and throughout Greater Boston. He was the recipient of scores of accolades from those families for his compassion, concern and professionalism.

On a personal level, Carl was a loyal member of Temple Tiferet Shalom in Peabody; loved music and attending concerts; was a master of all things trivia (he attained his lifelong dream of being a contestant on Jeopardy! in 2000); and was an avid reader and thinker. Carl cherished his time spent with family, and was deeply respected by family, friends, colleagues and clients alike.

A private funeral service for Carl was held on Jan. 4. A celebration of Carl’s life will be held in the Spring.

In lieu of flowers, expressions of sympathy may be made in Carl’s memory to Temple Tiferet Shalom, 489 Lowell St., Peabody 01960 (www.templetiferetshalom.org/donate).
The tragedy of Jan. 6 and the American Jewish experience

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were, in a way, insurrectionists themselves. They both resigned from Congress in 1861 when their states left the Union and joined the Confederacy.

The reasons Jan. 6 has resonance for Jews are manifold, and manifest.

Because Jews did not come to America for the kind of country these corsairs of democracy tried to build (where bullies resembling Cossacks possess the approbation of national leaders); nor for replacing fact (the election of one man) with fiction (the notion the election was stolen from another); nor for violence in the political arena (the memories of that from Nazi Germany are fresh, still; nor especially for the creation of cults of personality which have had the tendency to promote state-sponsored antisemitism).

The tragedy of Jan. 6 gave perspective to the Jewish experience in America. It underlined why this country was for generations a bright beacon to Jewish immigrants, and it emphasized why Jews consider the United States a safe haven. It did all those things by undermining all those things.

From the start, Jews flocked to the United States because of its openness to new ideas, to immigrants, to diversity, to the rule of law, and above all its acceptance of Jews themselves, no matter how bedraggled, no matter how poor, or how oddly they looked, or how long they clung to Yiddish or to a special recipe for shishkes.

Jews here faced antisemitism, to be sure. They heard lacerating epithets and were summarily barred from colleges and clubs, often not even the best ones. At times they felt marginalized, though even the margins of America often seemed more felicitous than the centers of the Old Country. At times they were demonized, or preoccupied with their own demons. But seldom did they feel alien, or alienated. Jews may have written “White Christmas,” “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree,” “Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer,” and “Easter Parade” for people of other faiths, but I have always thought “This is My Country” (lyrics by Don Raye and music by Al Jacobs), was written for Jews, with this reprise line:

“This is my country! Land of my birth!
This is my country! Grandest on earth!
It is true that on Jan. 6, one rioter wore a Camp Auschwitz T-shirt and that the crowd was filled with followers of QAnon, some of whom believe that “the world is run by a cabal of Satan-worshipping pedophiles,” which to their minds of course includes Jews. But there were no anti-Jewish signs at the East Front of the Capitol on Jan. 6, no anti-Jewish chants at the West Front. As the rioters sought to replace Joe Biden as president-elect there was no cry of “Jews will not replace us,” the hate-laced slogan the Rebels’ spiritual cousins barked in Charlottesville, Va., in August 2017.

This is not to excuse or pardon the inexcusable and unpardonable. It is merely to say that even if an ugly episode is not freighted with anti-Semitism, it can be an affront to Jews, a hurt that cannot heal. For it is incontrovertible that many of the fundamental values of Jews were under siege during the Capitol siege:


Jan. 6 will remain central in our memories, a wound on our conscience, and a blot on our history.

Now, as we mark the anniversaries of this ugly episode, we – non-Jews and Jews alike – are more in need of tikun olam than perhaps at any time of our history since Reconstruction following the Civil War. We need to repair our world.

Historians have debated the causes and consequences of the Civil War and Reconstruction for a century and a half. They may debate the causes and consequences of Jan. 6 for just as long, perhaps disagreeing about whether the rebellion was a dangerous insurrection or a coup attempt; perhaps arguing about whether Donald J. Trump instigated the rioting or merely took peculiar solace from it; perhaps seeing it either as the first step in dismantling democracy or simply a diversion in democracy’s great movement forward.

But no one will minimize it. Jan. 6 will not disappear into a colorful historical footnote, like another of one of America’s numbingly populist upheavals such as the much-forgotten “Oleo Wars” of Iowa and Wisconsin in the 1880s and 1890s, when farmers fomented an uprising to prevent labels from suggesting oleomargarine was a dairy product. Jan. 6 will remain central in our memories, a wound on our conscience, a blot on our history – and the saddest Jewish moment of our time.

David M. Shribman is executive editor emeritus of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and scholar-in-residence at Carnegie Mellon University.
Jon Spack joins Camp Young Judea

The Board of Directors of Camp Young Judea (CYJ), located in Amherst, NH, has named Jon Spack the new executive director of CYJ, a nurturing, residential summer camp, where kids of all Jewish backgrounds develop meaningful relationships that last a lifetime.

Spack brings over 20 years of experience as a nonprofit executive, specifically dedicated to education and youth development. His experience in strategic planning, staff management, and development will be vital as he works with the CYJ Board of Directors, staff, campers, families, and alumni to define and deliver the future of the CYJ experience. Jon has a deep connection to CYJ, having spent nine summers there as a camp counselor, counselor-in-chief, and administrator.

“We are thrilled to welcome back Jon Spack as our new executive director,” said Jeffrey Cohen-Laurie, chair of the Board. “The combination of Jon’s professional experience, exceptional leadership skills, and deep attachment to CYJ – coupled with his visionary leadership – will propel us as we embark on a strategic plan for our future.”

In his role as executive director, Jon will manage all day-to-day operations, recruitment, programming, and fundraising for CYJ, and is already at work to ensure a smooth transition to a successful 83rd season on the shores of Lake Baboosic.

“I’m honored to have the opportunity to do the work I love, supporting an organization that has meant so much to me and my family,” said Spack. “I’m excited to bring my experience of empowering young people to be the best version of themselves to CYJ.”

Spack most recently served as chief growth officer at Coaching4Change, working with school districts and colleges to build partnerships that deliver high-quality programs complementing school-day learning. He previously served in leadership positions at organizations focused on education and youth development, including Discovering Justice, Spark, Citizen Schools, and Education Pioneers. He earned his MS in Nonprofit Leadership from the University of Pennsylvania, and a BA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Project Ezra and Temple Tiferet Shalom provide meals for over 1,300 on Christmas Day

Every year, members of Temple Tiferet Shalom of the North Shore arrive at Malden High School at 1:30 a.m. to prepare Christmas Day meals for the less fortunate. They trim the roast beef, peel potatoes, and cut up vegetables.

This year’s effort by the Peabody synagogue resulted in the delivery of over 900 pre-packaged potatoes, and cut up vegetables.

Preparation for this event each year begins in the kitchen swelled to about 70 volunteers, who assisted in assembly-line fashion in packaging the food from scratch. This year, due to increased demands for deliveries, over 700 pounds of roast beef, 500 pounds of potatoes, and more than 350 pounds of carrots and green beans were purchased and prepared. Once the cooking was underway, the kitchen swelled to about 70 volunteers, who assisted in assembly-line fashion in packaging 1,300 meals and desserts.

Temple President Bryna Misliura then coordinated a group of about 50 drivers, who delivered the 900 meals to residents in Malden and 12 surrounding communities.

For this event each year begins months in advance. All funds are raised by the Weiners and Temple Tiferet Shalom members. Donations were received from Bimbo Bakeries and Costco.
THANK YOU! We are truly grateful for the generosity and support of our community. Thank you for donating to the Jewish Journal during the months of November and December, 2021. Your support and collaboration ensures that the Jewish Journal will continue to be a special resource, now and into the future.