Hanukkah celebrations to spread light, joy, and pride throughout the North Shore

Services will include singers, magicians, public figures, and enough food to feed a battalion of Maccabee warriors. There will be an assortment of remarkable menorahs, ranging from one that is 12 feet high built from 100,000 Legos to one commemorating the region’s connection to the sea that features 22 lobster traps.

The joys of the holiday will be tempered by sermons connecting the Festival of Lights’ story of bravery and sacrifice in Biblical times to the challenges of antisemitism today.

“Hanukkah is a holiday to remember the amazing miracle of the Maccabees and G-d giving them the opportunity to survive. It is about faith, not about gift-giving,” said Rabbi Richard Perlman of Temple Ner Tamid in Peabody.

“It is about the miracles we experience every single day by having a relationship with G-d. Our message will be one of togetherness and loving our neighbor. Hanukkah is a holiday of thankfulness.”

By BARRY WANGER
JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

HANUKKAH CELEBRATIONS AMIDST COLORFUL menorah lightings throughout North Shore communities will reflect the strength and growth of the Jewish community, as events featuring latkes and sufganiyot, music and games of dreidel, will be held at more than 25 sites.
A Chanukah Tradition
Since 1882
CHELSEA — Plenty of filmmakers have returned to their roots to make films as a way of exploring their childhoods.

But Los Angeles filmmaker Matt Aaron Krinsky has taken this idea a lot further. He has literally returned to his roots – his great grandmother’s old apartment – to direct a full-length indie feature he calls a “dark comedy” about an Irish Catholic family with a complicated past.

It’s called “All Saints Day,” and filming began earlier in December, most of it in a cramped two-bedroom apartment on the first floor of an old brick triple-decker at the corner of Essex and Shurtleff streets, near the massive Chelsea salt pile on the industrial waterfront. (Another scene will be filmed outside his parents’ home in Peabody.) The apartment has remained in his family all these years.

Films shot in Chelsea aren’t particularly uncommon. “Black Mass,” for example, about South Boston mobster Whitey Bulger, was shot around Essex Street in 2014. “But Chelsea is always substituting for a different location, ” Krinsky said in an interview. “I believe this may be the first film to actually set the story in Chelsea.”

Ironically, the film started life as a stage play set in South Boston’s Old Colony Housing Project.

The play was written by Julianne Homokay, whom Krinsky had met at a 2015 directors’ workshop in Los Angeles. They discovered they both had ties to the Boston area.

“We hit it off almost immediately,” Homokay said during a lunch break last week on the set, “probably because of the New England connection.”

Homokay grew up in Connecticut but spent a lot of time in Boston, including a short stint at Emerson College (“great school, wrong program.”) Her sister lives a half block from the Old Colony Housing Project. Krinsky is from Peabody, went to Hillel Academy (now Epstein Hillel School) in Marblehead and to Peabody Veterans Memorial High School, and graduated Brandeis University in 2000.

But he has deep roots in Chelsea. His maternal grandfather, William Waxman, owned Waxman Insurance Agency on Broadway (now run by his uncle Steven); and his grandmother, who owned the building on Essex Street, was on the Chelsea School Committee. His mother Debra was a teacher at the Shurtleff School and the Frank M. Sokolowski Elementary School. His father Marty, originally from Hyde Park, is a speech pathologist.

Homokay told Krinsky about her play, which she’d called “All Saints in Peabody filmmaker explores his roots in Chelsea-fied ‘All Saints Day’

Matt Aaron Krinsky (bottom right) filming on location in Chelsea.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9
Eight new Hanukkah books to brighten the holiday

By PENNY SCHWARTZ
JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

A PAIR OF SHOW-STOPPER GIFT books are among eight new Hanukkah books for kids and older readers.

Two others have local resonance – a Sephardic tale about chocolate and the Boston Tea Party, and a rare rom-com for teens by a local author, set on Nantucket during Hanukkah.

Eric Kimmel’s classic “Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins,” with original illustrations by the late Trina Schart Hyman, is out in a special boxed gift edition that includes a poster of one of Hyman’s magnificent illustrations. More than 30 years after its first publication, the Caldecott honor book continues to enthral a new generation of readers.

Another enchanting keeper is Lisa Royaj’s stunning “Hanukkah Pop-Up Menorah: An 8-Day Celebration of the Festival of Lights.”

Hannah Reynolds, the Cambridge author of “Eight Nights of Flirting” for teens, told the Journal she wanted Jewish readers to feel seen during the winter holidays.

“There’s so much festiveness and joy, but sometimes it can feel lonely when you don’t see your own experiences and identity reflected in the stories and movies surrounding you,” she said in an email.

May these books brighten the Hanukkah celebration.

“Hanukkah Nights”
Amalia Hoffman
Kar-Ben; ages 1-4

YOUNG ONES will enjoy counting the colorful, glowing candles for each night of Hanukkah in Amalia Hoffman’s beautifully illustrated board book with its simple rhyming verse.

“Hanukkah in Little Havana”
Jude Anna Blais
Illustrated by Carlos Vélez Aguilera
Kar-Ben; ages 4-9

A LIVELY STORY with large, colorful illustrations about a sister and brother and their family who travel on an overnight adventure to Florida to celebrate Hanukkah with their Nonna and Nonno, their Sephardic grandparents.

“Tizzy The Dizzy Dreidel”
Allison Marks and Wayne Marks
Illustrated by Francesca Assirelli
Kar-Ben; ages 4-9

POOR TIZZY. It’s hard being a spinning dreidel that gets dizzy.

In the family’s dreidel contest, Tizzy surprises young Sarah and impresses her skeptical family by spinning around the house for eight days, just like the miracle of the oil in the Hanukkah story.

“Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins”
Eric Kimmel
Illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman
Holiday House; ages 4-10

A SHERSHEL of Ostropol makes his way into an Old World shtetl on the first night of Hanukkah, the humble wanderer discovers that the village is dark. Mean-spirited goblins have frightened the Jews from lighting their menorahs and celebrating Hanukkah. Hershel is determined to light the synagogue’s menorah on each of Hanukkah’s eight nights.

The rabbi warns Hershel that on the eighth night, the menacing goblin king will try to frighten him. Night after night, the intrigue builds as the clever and courageous Hershel outwits the goblins. Trina Schart Hyman’s glorious illustrations capture the mood.

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some with cartoonish style goblins and the darker goblin king. But, the menorah’s radiant candles glow with Hanukkah’s triumph of light over darkness.

"Hanukkah Pop-Up Menorah: An 8-day Celebration of the Festival of Lights"
Lisa Rojany
Insight Editions; ages 3 and up

AS READERS open this stunning, hardbound book, a large nine-branched paper cut Hanukkah menorah pops up and stands tall on the flat book surface. A paper candle is tucked into eight separate pockets that kids can pretend to light on each night. Another pocket reveals a paper dreidel and another pocket holds a 28-page booklet with the story of Hanukkah, songs, recipes, and a “how to” for playing the dreidel game.

"The Boston Chocolate Party"
Tami Lehman-Wilzig
and Rabbi Deborah R. Prinz
Illustrated by Fede Combi
Apples & Honey Press; ages 5-9

"A Donut in Time: A Hanukkah Story"
Elana Rubinstein
Illustrated by Jennifer Naalchigar
Apples & Honey Press; ages 7-10

THIS IS the latest in the chapter book series about Saralee Siegel, a Jewish girl with a magical sense of smell. In this lighthearted time travel caper for Hanukkah, Saralee discovers that her great-grandmother Gigi shares her superpower.

"Eight Nights of Flirting"
Hannah Reynolds
Razorbill/Penguin Random House; ages 14 and up

SHIRA BARBANEL is the proudly Jewish 16-year-old unlikely heroine in this entertaining Jewish-themed teen rom-com by award-winning Cambridge-based writer Hannah Reynolds. The endearing and sometimes maddening Shira desperately wants to up her flirting skills to attract a serious crush. But beneath the surface, there’s serious soul searching in Reynolds’ authentic characters. Set on Nantucket, the story, enlivened by a large cast of characters, includes a subplot involving Nantucket history and a shipwreck. Jewish teens will spot many of their own families’ traditions – from cooking Hanukkah dinners to lighting the menorah, exchanging gifts (and a tamer version of a dreidel game involving sips of alcohol). They’ll also recognize the ups and downs of navigating relationships with friends and romantic interests.

May you and those you love be surrounded by beauty, light and love. And always, the warmth of home.

Happy Hanukkah!

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Sagan Sotheby’s International Realty
ARKNESS GREET US at dawn in December. The morning winds begin, the trees sway, the birds hover above the frozen ground and we carry on, adjusting — ignoring the chilly gusts that seem to whisper something new each morning. There is much to ponder in winter's glare and shadows.

We can't do much without light, and the gray sky that appears in November and often lasts until April sometimes feels like a steel trap. Where is the light, we wonder? The question will linger through the winter, but is never quite answered.

But for eight nights in December — starting this Sunday — the light finds us after sunset. It's in our homes, our synagogues, in public displays in malls, and stores, and even on City Hall lawns. The memo-

rah, which is rarely mentioned throughout the year, suddenly takes center stage during Hanukkah. We light the candles, say the blessings, and then stop and stare at the mystical flames.

If we take a moment, and focus on the radiance, the moment can be powerful. The light can seemingly transport us anywhere our soul desires.

In the quiet of the darkness, the light brings us hope. It is a modest set of flames. And sometimes when we stare, another miracle can occur. If we are quiet for a few minutes, and look at the light long enough, our thoughts can cease — at least for a second or two.

At that point, we're left with an inexplicable, otherworldly feeling. If we hold onto it, perhaps the light can continue on the darkest winter days.

‘Never again’ means actually demanding zero tolerance of antisemitic stereotypes

By DAPHNE MERKIN
FORWARD.COM

THERE IS SOMETHING sad, verging on tragic, about the Jewish need for validation from people outside the tribe — like the proverbial playground outcast who smiles shyly when the class bully gives him the time of day.

This attitude is manifested in the unctuous delight that is taken when a celebrity or politician or artist is discovered to be Jewish or even half-Jewish — whether it is Madeline Albright, Paul Newman, or Cardinal John O'Connor, the late Archbishop of New York, whose mother was born Jewish and converted to Catholicism. That Jews revel in this slightly puerile sense of pride, after centuries of being discriminated against in both subtle and extreme ways, is not surprising.

But the fact remains that it is hard to know what to call this other than an exercise in collective self-abasement.

I have been thinking about this phenomenon for a long time, and it was underscored in the wake of former President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago deplorable dinner with West, the rapper-turned-philosopher who has made a habit of spouting antisemitic remarks “good things about Hitler;” or Fuen-

Over the years, some Jews had mistaken Trump's daughter Ivanka's marriage to Jared Kushner and conversion to Judaism or his largely transactional and, in some cases, purely gestural relationship with Israel — moving the embassy to Jeru-

Conveyed in Leopoldstadt was that our blood. It's not as though we're incapable of putting up a powerful defense: it took the Nazis longer to conquer France.

As we have seen over the last decade, the further away we get from the Holocaust, the more brazenly antisemitism shows itself, such that that cloak has finally been thrown off to reveal an abiding hatred that has never gone away. One can speculate about the reasons for this abject reality — envy, an ingrained disdain, an allergy to what is perceived as a Jewish style of communication — but its roots lie deep in history and have cemented us in genocide.

The Jewish response until now has been to appease the cultural hatred aimed at us — or to know to anyone, however problematic, perceived as being on our side — instead of fighting it head on. Even Benjamin Netanyahu, the former and future prime minister of Israel — who has positioned himself as the great protector of the Jewish people inside and outside of the Jewish state, and is, whatever his shortcomings, a verbal straight shooter known to call it as he sees it — had only the meekest reaction to Trump's dinner, referring to it as "a mistake."

I would suggest that it's high time for us Jews to stop turning the other cheek in a desperate attempt to be accepted in a world club that does not want us as members. Just as mainstream discourse no longer tolerates racist expressions or tropes, we should demand that same level of scrutiny be applied to the use of Jewish stereotypes with rigorous consistency and force.

We have slid by on a certain attitude of pacific accommoda-

Happy Hanukkah

By STEVEN A. ROSENBERG
JEWISH JOURNAL.ORG

Last month, the Zionist Organization of America greeted Trump with a standing ovation and awarded him its Theodore Herzl Gold Medallion.

Then, too, we Jews would be wise to stop pinning our hopes on the by-now hackneyed phrase “Never again.” The bravado that lies behind this rallying cry is thin and, in the worst instance, can only lead to a naively conviction that we are safe. The message Tom Stoped conveyed in Leopoldstadt was that the very act of assimilation — of trying to “pass” — is a delusional one, a temporary resolution of an age-old enmity at best.

Jews, lest we forget, are a tiny minority, despite our relative influence and power (which is usually attributed to devisus and suspect means). We are a minority that has been vulnerable to a galling prejudice and animus that has thrived for centuries and is re-emerging with ever-growing selfishness. When Ken Burns spoke in New York about his reasons for creating a docuseries about the U.S. response to the Holocaust, he said that he and his team had worked overtime to rush the project out in response to the antisemitic tenor of the times. “Never again” is indeed, hollow to the point of meaninglessness if we continue to politely sit on our hands in the face of an alarming rise in overt antisemitism rather than dare to risk public disfavor by raising our fists. Put plainly, history has shown us that it is dangerous to do otherwise.

Daphne Merkin is an essayist, literary critic and novelist. This story was published by the Forward. Sign up at www.forward.com/newsletters to get the latest stories from the Forward delivered to you each morning.
The struggle against antisemitism has gone mainstream

By DAVID M. SHRIBMAN

Look hard at the last few weeks, squint for a few moments, maybe put on some rose-tinted glasses. But there – if you strain a bit, if you peer beyond the shadows, if you focus on the rays of sunlight streaking and sneaking between the clouds – you may see an unfamiliar, unanticipated, and unalterably agreeable sight.

The struggle against antisemitism has gone mainstream. For centuries, that struggle was an underground one. In the past few years it has surfaced for a few moments – kind of like a koen on a remote Maine lake, visible for a while and then diving out of sight. It flared at junctures of true outrage, such as after the massacre at the Tree of Life in Pittsburgh or the hostage situation in Congregation Beth Israel synagogue in Colleyville, Texas.

But as late autumn leaned into early winter, there was unmistakable evidence that the cause that was confined to Jewish publications like this one, to Shabbat pulpits and synagogues, was being prompted by an event at the top cause. Though no less welcome – not a thing like having drinks with Ye and Nick Fuentes – not his execrable judgment – and a condemnation of white supremacy – they got half of that.

We are experiencing a moment when even the cowardly come out and say that expressions of hatred against Jews are intolerable. "There is no room in the Republican Party for white supremacy and antisemitism," said Mr. Scott, who is contemplating a presidential campaign. "It's wrong. I think Republicans should all condemn white supremacy."

But unnoticed in all of this is that the cup is half-full.

Everyone – really, everyone, except for a handful of fringe figures in the throes of the Internet and the usual suspects in the roundup of habitual haters – came out and denounced antisemitism. That wasn't a case merely of saying that slaying 11 people at prayer in Pittsburgh was a tragedy, or deploring the taking of hostages or deploring the Kiddish cup of disapproval was half-empty. Republican political figures still fear the lash, and backlash, of Mr. Trump and an avowal that he was unfit to be president again.

We all know why the Kiddish cup of disapproval was half-empty. Republican political figures still fear the lash, and backlash, of Mr. Trump and an avowal that he was unfit to be president again. We all know why the Kiddish cup of disapproval was half-empty. Republican political figures still fear the lash, and backlash, of Mr. Trump and an avowal that he was unfit to be president again.

There is an inherent problem, of course, is whether it is consequential.

There are plenty of reasons to reject complacency, and they are reasonable and real. The ADL audit for 2021 (the latest figures) showed a 61 percent increase in attacks on synagogues and Jewish Community Centers over the previous year. The 2,717 incidents of assault, harassment and vandalism is the highest number ever, one-third of which was by white supremacists. The 2,717 incidents of assault, harassment and vandalism is the highest number ever, one-third of which was by white supremacists.

So, the question must come from Thomas Jefferson: eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, especially for Jews. But that admonition comes with a related notion, which might make the vigilance a little less lonely: Antisemitism is anti-American.

David M. Shribman, who won a Pulitzer Prize as Washington bureau chief of the Boston Globe, is executive editor emeritus of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and teaches at Carnegie Mellon University and McGill University.
Together We Bring Light

SWAMPSCOTT
CHABAD OF THE NORTH SHORE - 12/18 - 11:00 A.M.
LYNNFIELD
MARKET STREET LYNNFIELD - 12/20 - 4:30 P.M.
TOWN COMMON - 12/21 - 5:00 P.M.
DANVERS
LIBRARY PAVILION - 12/21 - 6:30 P.M.
PEABODY
CHABAD OF PEABODY - 12/18 - 5:00 P.M.
CITY HALL - 12/19 - 12:00 NOON
NORTH SHORE MALL - 12/21 - 4:30 P.M.
CHELSEA
WINNISIMMET PARK - 12/18 - 6:00 P.M.
Malden
CITY HALL - 12/18 - 6:00 P.M.
READING
TOWN COMMON - 12/19 - 5:30 P.M.
NORTH READING
MIDDLETOWN GREEN - 12/18 - 3:00 P.M.
BOXFORD
THE PD - 12/20 - 6:30 P.M.
LYNN
CHABAD LYNN CAMPUS - 12/21 - 2:30 P.M.
WAKEFIELD
TOWN COMMON - 12/18 - 4:30 P.M.
BEVERLY
CITY HALL - 12/19 - 6:00 P.M.
ROCKPORT
BARLETTA PARK - 12/18 - 4:30 P.M.
REVERE
CITY HALL - 12/20 - 4:00 P.M.
SALEM
LAPPIN PARK - 12/21 - 12:00 NOON
LAPPIN PARK - 12/24 - 6:30 P.M.
IPSWICH
BOTTOM OF TOWN HILL - 12/20 - 5:30 P.M.
SAUGUS
CITY HALL - 12/19 - 12:00 NOON
EVERETT
CITY HALL - 12/19 - 4:30 P.M.
MIDDLETON
MIDDLETOWN GREEN - 12/25 - 1:00 P.M.
CHARLESTOWN
BUNKER HILL MONUMENT - 12/19 - 5:00 P.M.
GLOUCESTER
CHABAD OF CAPE ANN - 12/25 - 7:00 P.M.

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For more information and to RSVP for local events visit:
Www.northshorechanukah.com
Peabody filmmaker explores his roots in Chelsea-fied ‘All Saints Day’

Matt Krinsky (Director) discusses a shot with Joshua Leonard (B-Cam Operator)

Matt Krinsky (director) and Sam Kreuger (director of photography) set up a shot with actor Chad Dorek.

FROM PAGE 3

the Old Colony." She asked him if he’d direct its first staged reading. "I loved the story so much," said Krinsky, who has made several previous films, including "An Eye for an Eye," a short film starring Academy Award nominee and Golden Globe winner Sally Kirkland; and "Playdate," which was acquired by the streaming platform IndieFlix.

While he is also a theater director, the filmmaker in him saw strong potential for a low-budget indie film. "It had a small cast, incredible dialogue, and was mainly in one location," Krinsky said. But with his Jewish upbringing, a story about a Catholic family in South Boston didn’t quite speak to him. So, after doing research to ensure the story could authentically still unfold outside of Southie, he and Homokay "Chelsea-fied it," he said, reworking the story to be set in Chelsea.

Audiences will recognize references to such local landmarks as Katz’s Bagel Bakery, the Beacon Café, the Newbridge Café, and Arthur’s Deli. There’s a cameo by Boston actor and comedy legend Lenny Clarke, who plays a character known as The Captain who drinks the night away at a dive bar. "In a drunken haze, he ran aground on the rocks and lost his boat, his license, everything. The only thing he has left is his captain’s hat," Clarke said in an interview. Krinsky "called me out of the blue and I thought: ‘I gotta do this movie.’ I’m thrilled to be in it."

The story takes place on Nov. 1 – All Saints’ Day – in 2014, and it’s about the splintered relationships between four estranged siblings who return to Chelsea to check on their troubled brother, who still lives in their childhood home. At the center of the story is Kier Connolly (played by Don Swayze, brother of Patrick), who has hoarder tendencies and is on the verge of drinking himself to death in a filthy apartment, filled with mounds of cigarette butts, nicotine stains on the walls, and overflowing trash bins.

His brother Ronan is his caretaker, though an unwitting enabler, and finally becomes so worried about Kier he summons their estranged brother Mickey, formerly a Catholic priest and now an Episcopal priest. "A sister who’d been given up for adoption years early suddenly materializes," said Krinsky, 44. "And while the characters are not Jewish, ‘it feels authentic to me,’” he said. “The script touches on a lot of elements – alcoholism, gentrification, the immigrant experience. What speaks the most to me is seeing how, with the pandemic, the role of the caretaker is often overlooked. I see it in this story – that people need to communally grieve for the people they lost. ‘There are too many stories out there of what I call rich people behaving badly,’ he said. ‘That upper one percent who are richer than rich, and doing bad things. I like the idea of shining a light on a different socio-economic class.’

Linda Matchan can be reached at matchan@jewishjournal.org.

We Wish You and Your Family A

Happy Hanukkah

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Hanukkah menorah lightings and celebrations calendar

Sunday, Dec. 18
9:30 a.m. Help build the tallest Lego menorah at Congregation Shirat Hayam, Swampscott
10 a.m. Annual Run-a-Latke Family 5k and Klezmer Concert at Chabad of the North Shore, Swampscott
11 a.m. Chabad Pre-Hanukkah menorah ceremony, Chabad of the North Shore, Swampscott
12 p.m. Live Klezmer Concert and Pre-Hanukkah Family Fun Day at Chabad of the North Shore, Swampscott
3 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at North Reading Middle School
4:30 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Wakefield Town Common
4:30 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at corner of Broadway and Mt. Pleasant Street, Barletta Park, Rockport
5 p.m. Community menorah lighting, at Temple Emanuel, Marblehead
5 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Chabad of Peabody
6 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Malden City Hall, Malden
6 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Chelsea Square/Winnissimmet Park, Chelsea

Monday, Dec. 19
12 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Peabody City Hall
12 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Saugus City Hall
4:30 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Everett City Hall
5 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Bunker Hill Monument, Charlestown
5:30 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Reading Town Common
5:30 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at North Andover Common
6 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Beverly City Hall

Tuesday, Dec. 20
4 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, Revere City Hall
4:30 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, Hanukkah on Ice at Market Street, Lynnfield
5 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Lynnfield Town Hall Common, Lynnfield
5:35 p.m. Hanukkah Celebration, at Temple Ner Tamid, Peabody
5:30 p.m. Menorah lighting at Temple Ahavat Achim menorah lighting, Gloucester
5:30 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at bottom of Town Hill, Ipswich

Wednesday, Dec. 21
12 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Lappin Park, Salem
2:30 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Chabad of the North Shore Lynn Campus, 151 Ocean Street, Lynn
4:30 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at North Shore Mall, Peabody
6:30 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at the Library Pavilion, Danvers
7 p.m. Ladies, Latkes and Libations, Sisterhood program, Temple B’nai Abraham, Beverly

Saturday, Dec. 24
6:30 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Lappin Park, Salem

Sunday, Dec. 25
1 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at Middleton Green, Middleton
7 p.m. Chabad menorah lighting, at 37 Main St., Gloucester

Updated information on Chabad events can be found at www.northshorehanukkah.com
Hanukkah throughout the North Shore

CONGREGATIONS FROM PEABODY TO MALDEN WILL CELEBRATE THE STORY OF HANUKKAH, THE MIRACLE OF LIGHT, WHEN ONE VIAL OF OIL – JUST ENOUGH TO LIGHT A MENORAH FOR ONE NIGHT – LASTED EIGHT DAYS.

Traditional holiday food, including hot latkes with apple sauce, Hanukkah cookies, and doughnuts, will be offered at most celebrations, along with chocolate gelt (dropped from the aerial ladder of a Peabody Fire Department truck at Chabad of the North Shore).

Chabad of the North Shore will conduct 25 community menorah lighting events in shopping malls, parks, and town halls throughout the North Shore, many in collaboration with local synagogues. The ceremonies are expected to attract more than 2,000 people, according to Rabbi Yossi Lipsker, regional director of Chabad of the North Shore.

Chabad put together a 10-member team – including four rabbis – who have been working since last summer to coordinate the events. Each rabbi will be racing around to four different celebrations to lead the lighting ceremonies.

“Our objective,” Lipsker said, “is to instill Jewish pride in as many people as possible and bring together Jews who are affiliated with temples and those who are not, as well as remind one another of the goodness that we carry.”

Malden Mayor Gary Christenson said the lighting ceremony conducted by Chabad in the City Hall lobby “will bring us together as a community and enable us to learn and appreciate the significance of what Hanukkah means and represents.”

“The annual celebration is needed more than ever given the recent antisemitic incidents across the country. The message of Hanukkah is one of the most important themes of the day,” the mayor said.

One of the more creative services will be at Gloucester’s Temple Ahavat Achim, where the Jewish community will be invited to participate in the lighting of its 20-foot-long menorah constructed of lobster traps, which are a tradition in Gloucester.

The Temple first checked with the Council of Conservative Judaism to determine if there would be an issue with the menorah since lobsters are considered non-kosher. They were told that while lobsters are treif, lobster pots are fine.

“A big issue is also considered a day’s work, which is about eight hours,” Rabbi Meir S. Perlman, director of Chabad of Peabody Jewish Center, who emphasized that in the face of adversity, the Hanukkah message is to “bring light to the situation, when there is darkness.”

“Chabad of Peabody works on the first night of the holiday. The menorah lightings can be viewed on Facebook and YouTube,” he said.

Peabody’s Temple Tiferet Shalom will join a number of other synagogues in the area to raise funds for gift cards for struggling families to be distributed by Jewish Family & Children’s Service of Greater Boston.

At Temple Ner Tamid in Peabody, congregants will continue a new tradition started during the early days of COVID where each night a different Temple family will share their candle lighting service with members and others via Zoom.

On Dec. 18 – the first night of the holiday – at Temple Emanu-El in Marblehead, families will bring their own menorahs and light the first candle and recite the blessings together. As in virtually all the celebrations, the services will be followed by dreidel games and traditional foods.

Rabbi Tamid’s Perlman will light the menorah from his home on the first night of the holiday. The menorah lightings can be viewed on Facebook and YouTube.

Perlman and a number of other rabbis said that despite inspiring messages of rededication, heroism, and miracles, they were particularly concerned about the increase in antisemitism.

“Hanukkah reminds us that no matter how difficult things get in our world, we must band together as the Maccabees did and not only survive but with the help of G-d guiding us, we must and will defeat hate,” he said.

“One of the themes of the holiday,” said Rabbi David Meyer of Temple Emmanu-El in Marblehead, “is that despite the prevalence of a hatred of Judaism and Jews throughout history, the fact is that Jews have refused to give in and surrender their culture and faith.”

“Even in the face of antisemitism today, we need to remain strong and proud of our Jewish identity and faith.”

His remarks were echoed by Rabbi Nechemia Schusterman of Chabad of Peabody Jewish Center, who emphasized that in the face of adversity, the Hanukkah message is to “bring light to the situation when there is darkness.”

“When there is antisemitism, the response is not to lay down and cover our head with a blanket but bring light to the situation. That means not covering in fear but coming out loudly and proudly as a Jew!”

Added Lipsker, “If people have a problem about who we are, our response must be to vociferously and emphatically celebrate our Judaism more than ever before.”

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Get to Know The Mariner
featuring Sales Director, Jill Rhodes

Jill is a local Marblehead resident and is excited to be opening the very first senior living community in her hometown. Learn more about Jill, her desire to share all about the future of The Mariner and why she loves calling Marblehead home!

Why are you excited to bring senior living to Marblehead?
I’m excited because there is no place in town for our seniors to live outside their own home as they age. The Mariner will allow residents to stay in Marblehead and maintain the lifestyle they are accustomed to.

Tell us more about the building and what future residents can expect?
The community is going to be amazing! Residents can expect exceptional quality and attention to detail. So many details in the building have a story, for example the two columns in the front of the building are from the original structure. Our building, similar to many Marblehead homes will have character. Each apartment is a little different and will have top of the line accessories.

Why do you find Marblehead such a special place?
Marblehead is an amazing community! I was fortunate enough to grow up in town. I moved away for a few years after college but found myself coming back repeatedly which was when I bought my first home. In Marblehead you can shop small in downtown or in a matter of minutes be close to Boston. You can easily walk around town and see history, art and character. The beach and harbor offer many a sense of calm even when they are bustling in the Summer.

Any advice you would share with families or future residents thinking of making the move to The Mariner?
The Mariner will be a place you call home. It will be the place you meet new people or reconnect with old friends. The associates are dedicated and love working here because we are passionate about our community and our families. Our goal is to make this experience memorable and meaningful for everyone.

What are you most excited about for when The Mariner opens?
I’m most excited to see the construction come to an end and an amazing senior living community begin!
What’s your Jewish background?
Both my parents are Israeli Jews who immigrated to Massachusetts in the 80s. My mother is Ashkenazi and my dad is Sephardic, so growing up in our house we had a blend of many different Jewish cultures mixing together. Judaism is a pivotal aspect of my identity and is a part of my life that I greatly appreciate. Belonging to the same temple – Temple B’nai Abraham – that I grew up with, and love going to temple with my husband and family for Shabbat services and holidays.

My closest friends are Jewish and growing up in a small Jewish community really helped strengthen my connection with my Jewish peers and Hebrew school classmates. Celebrating Shabbat almost every Friday with my family and friends connects me culturally and spiritually to Judaism. I love being Jewish and wish I have kids I plan to raise them Jewish.

How has your temple changed/stayed the same since you were a kid?

When I was a kid, temple was a way for me to connect with my friends. As an adult now, the temple has become a way for me to enjoy time with my family and close friends while connecting us together in a way that's hard to describe. Growing up at Temple B’nai Abraham I was able to see the temple have its 100 year anniversary. Every time I walk into my temple, I only have good memories and I create awesome new ones. Even recently I was able to help my husband celebrate his bar mitzvah at there. Temple B’nai Abraham slowly changes with its congregation, but the wonderful warm community feeling always stays the same.

How did that blended Jewish upbringing influence you growing up?
Having parents that were Ashkenazi and Sephardic and Israeli has made Judaism more exciting. There are so many rituals and customs that I’ve been exposed to that has allowed me to pick and choose the aspects of Judaism that spark the most joy in my life.

My parents’ connection to Israel also strengthened the important role that Israel plays in my Jewish life, and it has deepened my love for the Jewish state and how important it is for Israel to exist.

How does your Jewish identity impact your work?
Growing up in a Jewish household, I was always taught to do good in this world, and I feel as though I’m able to do this directly through my career. Being a dentist, it’s my job to help others. Since I graduated from dental school, I was able to work side by side with my parents and serve my hometown community through dentistry. I’m able to help people of all cultural and all socioeconomic backgrounds who are in pain and seeking help. I feel as though I’m able to contribute to tikkun olam (the Jewish idea of repairing the world) on a person-to-person basis. Similarly, my father, my brother and I have gone on dental mission trips to help those in need in countries abroad that don’t have existing healthcare systems.

Epstein Hillel School hosts Family STEM Night

On Dec. 8, Epstein Hillel School hosted its Family STEM Night, an annual event that is open to the community. Over 100 children attended and participated in interactive, hands-on STEM experiments inspired by the theme, Shomer Adamah (Caring for the Earth).

Activities included a build-your-own wind turbine challenge; a simulated oil spill cleanup; a candy erosion experiment; a robotics recycling challenge; a microscopic air quality analysis; and much more.

Second grade student, AJ Jasilli, said his favorite activity was the ocean cleanup challenge. Participants used recycled materials to create an original tool that would remove trash of all shapes, sizes, and densities from a large bucket of water. “I like to build stuff and it was fun to scoop the trash out of the water,” said Jasilli.

STEM Night participants each got a “passport” that provided locations, descriptions, and age-recommendations for the various activities, so students and their families could plan out their own routes and choose the activities that seemed most exciting to them.

“Some participants preferred to spend their time doing a deep dive into a single STEM activity. They stuck around in one space until they mastered that particular challenge,” said EHS STEM Coordinator Lea Winkler. “Other participants wanted to complete as many of the activities as possible, so it was a fast-paced, active event for them.”

Wishing your family peace and light this holiday season.
‘Torch Song’ revival burns bright on Boston stage

By JULES BECKER
JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

HAVREY FIERSTEIN

WAS pioneering respect and understanding
for gays and same-sex
relationships years
before Tony Kushner (“Angels in
America”) and Richard Greenberg
(“Take Me Out”). In fact, even
before he authored the book for
the ground-breaking 1983 Tony
Award-winning musical “La Cage
Aux Folles,” he performed in
his own play, “Torch Song
Trilogy” (1983, 1985-Broadway) –
winning Tonys for best play and
lead actor.

The decades since have not only
made this wise drama more reso-
nant than ever but also made its
singular message of love in the face
of hate and prejudice all the more
timely. The Moonbox Productions
revival – through Dec. 23 at the
Nancy and Edward Roberts Studio
Theatre at the Boston Center for
the Arts Calderwood Pavilion –
under the inspired direction of
company associate artistic director
and founding partner Allison
Choat – beautifully captures the
play’s emotional richness and
warmth in what is arguably the
finest staging of 2022.

In her director’s notes, Choat
speaks of the play as “a love letter –
a complex, vibrant and relentless
love letter to relationships in all
their dysfunction and glory, to
every shade and shape and sense
of love.” Her description is both
accurate and insightful – partic-
ularly for gay Jewish protagonist
Arnold Beckoff. Fierstein, who once
worked as a drag queen in Green-
wich Village clubs, has described
his stage counterpart as a “kvetch of
great wit and want.” Beckoff seems
to defend himself from rejection
and disappointment with witty
kvetching during various scenes in
this well-made three-act play, yet
never really gives up searching for
his ideal man.

That search for not only love
and a family with a partner but
also acceptance by his judgmental
widowed mother – here identified
simply as Ma – ties together the
parts of this trilogy (originally enti-
tled “Torch Song Trilogy”).

In the opening “The Interna-
tional Strat” (June 1974), Arnold
makes it clear that he wants a real
lasting relationship and love with
a caring mate – not brief, loveless
encounters. A Brooklyn man
named Ed could be the one, but the
seemingly closeted bisexual teacher
admits to being confused about his
identity.

The middle act, “Fugue in a
Nursery” (Summer 1975), finds
Ed’s thoughtful but uncertain wife
Laurel inviting Arnold and young
boyfriend Alan to the couple’s farm
in what becomes a revealing test of
relationships and desires – sharply
paced by Choat and smartly played
out in Cameron Mceachern’s set
design.

Fierstein brings Arnold to a
pivotal moment of truth about
his own identity in the final act,”Widows and Children First (June
1980),” after five idyllic years with
Alan, the victim of gay-bashing. Will
Arnold – adopting a gay former
foster child and high schooler
named David – embrace returning
to Ed as a partner and co-parent?
Will grieving Arnold be able to find
empathy from his mother – who
never really gives up searching for
his ideal man.

Who says kids should have all the fun? At The Baldwin — an all-new
Life Plan Community (CCRC) — we say this is your time. Make a splash
in the pool. Dance, stretch, lift, and box in the fitness center. Learn
for the love of it. Take to the nearby trails, then top off your day
at the local brewery. Define life on your terms and do whatever
you choose — whether that’s everything or nothing at all.

The Baldwin is approaching sold-out status with opening planned
for fall 2023. Call 603.404.6080 or visit TheBaldwinNH.org today!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20
Wishing All
A Joyous Hanukkah
~ Allison Goldberg & Ted Stux ~
Julian & Chloe

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Candy Challenge
Free and open to everyone. JCCNS, 4 Tamid, 368 Lowell St., Peabody. Wednesday, 5 – 6 p.m. Presented by Temple Emanuel. For more information, email: info@templeemanuel.org. Women’s Health Club and on Zoom, Wednesdays, 7 p.m., in-person at the Jewish Community Center of New England (JCCNS), 9 Tucker St., Swampscott. For more information, contact Karen Siegel, director of admissions, at KarenS@jccns.org or call 781.395.8888 x3. To register, go to: https://www.raceentry.com/2023/hubreveningwalk/entry/registration. Free and open to everyone. JCCNS, 4 Community Road, Marblehead. Sunday, December 18, 3:55 – 4:30 p.m. Vaccination for those 18 and older only. Walkers welcome. Join us for the annual Hanukkah Run-A-Latke 5K. Details to be announced. For more information, go to: https://www.hanukkahrun.com. New Hanukkah decorations will be on display. For ticket purchases and more information, contact Temple Emanuel. For more information, go to: https://www.templeemanuel.org. Free and open to everyone. JCCNS, 4 Community Road, Marblehead. Saturday, December 17, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. Presented by Emmanuel Temple Emanuel. For more information, go to: https://www.templeemanuel.org.

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HALLELUJAH from a variety of tradi-
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sion about the biggest news stories of the moment. Includes Hanukkah games and Free and open to everyone. JCCNS, 4 Community Road, Marblehead. Thursday, December 22, 6 – 7 p.m. Presented by Temple Emanuel of Newton. “Hallelujah!” – a combi-
nation of music, dance, food, Jewish and Christian, and a panel of leaders from around the world. For more information, go to: https://www.templeemanuel.org.

MASS HANUKKAH PRESENTATION
This year finding Hanukkah music can be a little tricky. It is a complex holiday that has so much to offer. Gossamer State has compiled its top picks of Hanukkah music. To view, go to: www.gossamerstate.com.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22
Hanukkah Happens: Hazzan Elias Rosenblum with Zelma Chorale of Boston. 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. Presented by Temple Emanuel of Newton. “Hallelujah!” – a combination of music, dance, food, Jewish and Christian, and a panel of leaders from around the world. For more information, go to: https://www.templeemanuel.org.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 2023
Neshama Carlebach Concert. Presented by Temple Israel. Brotherhood of Sharon. This will be Neshama Carlebach’s first Boston area concert since before the pandemic. Join her and her musical team for an evening of joyful music and fun. For tickets, go to: https://neshamaconcerts.com.

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Knitting Knights at the JCCNS. Wednesdays, 7 p.m., in person at the Jewish Community Center of New England (JCCNS), 9 Tucker St., Swampscott. For more information, go to: www.jccns.org.

Hanukkah Party. 12 – 1:30 p.m. Presented by Temple Shalom of Medford. There will be games, crafts, make your own menorah and lots of homemade latkes. Please bring something non-perishable to add to our food pantry. Temple Shalom, 475 Winthrop St., Medford. For more information, go to: https://www.templeshalom.org.

Hanukkah Celebration. 4 p.m. Presented by the Temple Tifereth Israel in Winthrop. Bring your own Hanukkah for candle lighti-
g. Potato latkes, pasty and other goodies. $10 admission. Make your reservations before December 15th at: tiferethwinthrop@gmail.com or call 617. 534-0328. Temple Tifereth Israel, 91 Veterans Road, Winthrop.

Zucker’s Bakery Wishes You A Very Happy Hanukkah!
Today in Israeli History

Dec. 16, 1922
Hebrew advocate Ben-Yehuda dies

Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, credited with advancing modern Hebrew, dies of tuberculosis at 64 in Jerusalem. His 1879 article, “A Burning Question,” called for a spiritual center in the Land of Israel as the territorial anchor of Jewish nationalism.

He and his wife made Aliyah in 1881 and spoke only Hebrew to their children at home. He founded the Va’d HaLashon, the forerunner of the Academy of Hebrew Language, and was working on a Hebrew dictionary when he died.

Dec. 17, 1975
Kissinger discusses Israel with Iraqi envoy

Henry Kissinger and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin discuss the possibility of an Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula in exchange for recognition of Israel. Rabin seeks to negotiate a permanent peace settlement with Egypt.

Dec. 18, 1911
Health Care Fund is created

At the urging of Berl Katznelson, one of the intellectual founders of Labor Zionism, a special convention of Jewish agricultural workers in Ottoman Palestine approves a proposal to create Kupat Holim Clalit (General Sick Fund) to handle the health care needs of immigrants to the Land of Israel. The Histadrut labor federation takes over the fund in 1920. Its modern successor, Clalit Health Services, covers the health care for 60 percent of Israelis.

Dec. 19, 1903
Nordau survives assassination attempt

Max Nordau, who founded the World Zionist Organization with Theodor Herzl, escapes unharmed when two shots are fired at him at close range during a Hanukkah party in Paris. The would-be assassin, Russian student Chaim Zelig Luban, 27, is angry at Nordau’s support for the Uganda Plan, which would establish a temporary Jewish homeland in East Africa.

Dec. 20, 1936
Toscanini arrives in Palestine

New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra conductor Arturo Toscanini, considered one of the virtuoso conductors of the 20th century, arrives at the airport in Lod to conduct the opening performance of the Palestine Philharmonic on Dec. 26, 1936.

Max Nordau’s Uganda Plan was rejected by the Seventh Zionist Congress in 1905. Nordau, who founded the World Zionist Organization with Theodor Herzl, escapes unharmed when two shots are fired at him at close range during a Hanukkah party in Paris. The would-be assassin, Russian student Chaim Zelig Luban, 27, is angry at Nordau’s support for the Uganda Plan, which would establish a temporary Jewish homeland in East Africa. Luban is found to be mentally ill and is not prosecuted.

Listen to community leader Jim Shainker and guests discuss current events, literature, holidays, politics, Israel, music, Halacha, and more.

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ISRAEL
17
Michael Edward “Baiz” Baizen, 74, of Marblehead

Michael Edward “Baiz” Baizen, of Marblehead, passed away unexpectedly on December 5, 2022, at the age of 74. Beloved husband for 46 years of Audrey (Kaplan) Baizen, devoted father to Melissa Moskowitz, and brother of the late Gerald Baizen, Philip and Miriam Baizen, and Ziggy and her husband, Jared Finkel, and loving Papa to his grandchildren Dylan, Spencer and Paige.

Born in Winthrop to the late Philip and Miriam Baizen, and brother of the late Gerald Baizen, Michael began his career developing residential properties throughout the North Shore. He was a staple in the Marblehead community for almost 40 years, where he raised his girls and built his business. Michael radiated positivity and joy, and always had a smile on his face. He was compassionate, kind-hearted, and adored by all who knew him.

Michael was a true kid at heart with endless energy – he was always on the move and no task was ever too difficult for him. He was happiest around his family and friends and could often be found at home cooking up a storm, taking trips to New York to visit his kids and grandkids, and enjoying anything by the water.

Michael lived for his family, and his love and memory will forever be treasured.

Arrangements were handled by Stanetsky-Hymansons Memorial Chapel, Salem. For more information or to register in the online guestbook, visit www.stanetskyhymansonsalem.com.

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The Jewish Journal prints obituaries up to 200 words for $150; longer obituaries will also be posted online at www.jewishjournal.org. Photographs are $36 each; emailed submissions will be charged accordingly. Paid obituaries will also be posted online at www.jewishjournal.org.

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Sherman Peter Gorshel, of Malden, Lynnfield and Middleton

Sherman Peter Gorshel entered into rest on December 5, 2022, Late of Lynnfield, Lynnfield and Middleton. He leaves his beloved wife, Sylvie (Stopper) of 61 years; his daughter, Donna (Temima) Cohen and her husband, Jonathan Cohen of Brookline; his son, Paul of Boston; and his grandson, Uriel Menachem Cohen. He was predeceased by his loving parents, Alried and Mildred (Green) Gorshel; and his brother, Arthur.

Peter graduated from UMass Amherst in 1954 and from Harvard Law School in 1957. He practiced law until his retirement in 2003. He represented the Town of Lynnfield as its Town Counsel for close to 40 years. Both of his children also became lawyers, with Peter serving as a mentor and role model.

Peter was born in Malden, but he always called Lynnfield “home.” He was involved in town government, and often said that it was a hobby, more than a job. His mind was laser sharp, and he was highly regarded among the Massachusetts bar.

He was a proud Mason and Shrin-ner and was master of his lodge. Peter was a voracious reader. He loved fishing and boating, and he adored his dogs.

Funeral services were held at Levine Chapel, 470 Harvard St., Brookline, on December 8. Interment followed at Knights of Liberty Cemetery, Woburn.

Donations in Peter’s memory can be made to Chabad of Merri- mack Valley, 310 North Main St., Andover, MA 01810, or the charity of one’s choice.

Holocaust survivor and painter Frederick Terna dies at 99

By NEW YORK JEWISH WEEK

Holocaust survivor and painter Fred- erick Terna, whom the New York Jewish Week honored as one of their “36 to Watch” this year, has died at 99. Jewish Week as honored as one of their “36 to Watch” this year, has died at 99. Jewish Week 

By NEW YORK JEWISH WEEK

Terna moved to New York in 1952 and began to infuse his art with ten- tural elements. “Most of my work has some biblical reference,” Terna told the New York Jewish Week, “including stained glass windows in a syna- gogue in Panama and our own shul, the Kane Street Synagogue.” In a 2019 New York Times review of “Place/Imagery,” a three-per- son exhibition at the Jack Barrett Gallery on the Lower East Side, Terna’s work — a series of percep- tive ink drawings of trees, boats and buildings — is characterized as the “fulcrum” of the show. “Though the style varies widely, Mr. Terna’s zeal in gathering visual details is leavened by the obvious joy he took in recording them,” the reviewer wrote.

Over the years, Terna’s work was collected by a variety of museums and institutions, including the Smith- sonian Institution in Washington, D.C., the Albertina Collection in Vienna and Yad Vashem in Jerusa- lem.

Terna, who continued painting in Brooklyn into his late 90s, was also a speaker on the Holocaust in high schools and an active participant in Witness Theatre.

Terna is survived by his second wife, Rebecca Shiffman — whom he met in 1982 at an event for second-generation Holocaust survivors and married shortly thereafter — and their son, Daniel Terna.

His funeral was held at the Kane Street Synagogue in Brooklyn.

Legacy

Honor your friend or loved one with a donation to the Jewish Journal. Your gift supports the continuity of Jewish life in our communities. Donate online at www.jewishjournal.org.
‘There are no favorites on Hanukkah!’

By RABI TZEV HERSH WEINREB

NYV IS SURELY ONE of the most insidious of human emotions. It is a self-destructive emotion, because it often leads a person to act against his own best interests, as he attempts to redress the situation that caused him so much envy. It is also damaging to relationships with others and can have disastrous social effects.

Our sages include envy, along with lust and hatred, as one of the lessons of Jewish history. This week’s Torah portion describes the deterioration of a family brought about by the envy that Joseph’s brothers had toward him. This envy led to the hatred which motivated them to sell him into slavery. Hated between brothers, and the consequences of this hatred, is sadly at the root of Jewish history. Disenfranchised, unwarranted hatred, remains a stubborn problem in the ongoing story of our people.

Interestingly, the Talmud blames Jacob for the brothers’ treacherous deed, and for the course of the history of his descendants. It comments, “One should never favor one child over his other children, for it was the mere two shekels of oil, which Jacob gave to Joseph over and above that which he gave to his other children, that caused the brothers to be envious of him, leading eventually to our forefathers’ descent into Egypt.”

The multicolored garment, with which Jacob showed special favor to his son Joseph, provoked the envy of the other brothers, and the rest is Jewish history. Can we discern any connection between the favoritism demonstrated by Jacob, and condemned by our sages, and the festive holiday of Hanukkah? I think we can, and I share this admittedly novel idea with you, dear reader.

This week’s Torah portion describes the deterioration of a family brought about by the envy that Joseph’s brothers had toward him.

The central mitzvah of Hanukkah is, of course, the lighting of candles each of the eight nights. Strictly speaking, this mitzvah can be fulfilled by the head of the household lighting a single candle on behalf of the entire family — not a mitzvah for the master of the house on behalf of the entire household. However, the present custom is that every member of the family, every child, every boarder, and every guest kindles his or her own menorah. No favorites here. Everyone gets to light a menorah.

Can it be that this custom arose as an antidote to the tendency some parents have to play favorites among their children? Can it be that the central mitzvah of Hanukkah is that all children have an equal role to play in this holiday, and, moreover, in the very destiny of the Jewish people?

I have no source in our literature for this interpretation. But nonetheless, it feels significant that on the very Sabbath in which we read of how Jacob singled out Joseph from his other children, we also celebrate Hanukkah and light candles in a manner in which no one child is singled out as superior, in which all have an equal share.

The lessons of Hanukkah are many, and perhaps in future columns I will explore some of them with you.

But here is a novel lesson, and a very important one. Envy can wreak havoc in a family. One way for parents to avoid this poisonous emotion is by treating all their children fairly and equally, and not by playing favorites.

One of the wise sayings of Ben Sira, the Jewish sage whose work did not quite make it into the Bible, which but which has much to teach us, is that “envy and wrath shorten life... ” Wise parents will take this lesson to heart and not discriminate among their children. Instead, they will learn the lesson of Hanukkah and give all children an equal role in celebrating this beautiful holiday, the “festival of lights.”

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Hanukkah! ☘

Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb is the executive vice president, emeritus of the Orthadix Synagogue.
‘Torch Song’ revival burns bright
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14
One of the year’s finest casts makes that examination both heartfelt and haunting. Peter Mill is commandingly moving and impassioned as Arnold – particularly in his dressing room soliloquy and during his declaration of self-respect in heated exchanges with Bobbie Steinbach, forceful as Earnest if tough-loving Ma. Mill and Steinbach’s escalating confrontation is the kind of fully realized acting that theater students should study.
Crashbina Mancina-Garcia captures Ed’s emotional conflict and sexual confusion as well as his essentially loving concern for Arnold. Janis Hudson makes Laurel properly grounded and tenacious yet fair. Jack Manning catches Alan’s exuberance and vulnerability, Jack Mullen has all of David’s appealing energy and striking outspokenness, though he may look older than his character to some theatergoers.
Songs by such seminal artists as Billie Holiday and Dinah Washington – with thematically connected lyrics – effectively punctuate scene changes.
Moonshoe’s vibrant “Torch Song” has the kind of fearless and loving delivery that makes it a must-see for all audiences.

Toric Sander’s comments.

Adam Sandler to receive Mark Twain Prize for American humor

BY JACKIE HAJDENBERG / JEWISH JOURNAL
The eight crazy nights of Hanukkah came early for Adam Sandler when the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announced that the comedian and actor would be honored with the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor at a ceremony in March.
Adam Sandler’s performance of “The Chanukah Song,” “originally an ‘SNL’ bit in which he name-checks dozens of Jewish celebrities, his 2002 animatored comedy “Eight Crazy Nights” takes place during the Hanukkah season. Sandler, 56, got his start as an actor on “The Cosby Show” and was cast member on “Saturday Night Live” for five years, before eventually starting in a slew of blockbuster comedy movies in the 1990s and early 2000s, including “Happy Gilmore,” “Big Daddy,” “The Wedding Singer,” “50 First Dates” and “Click.”
Sandler has also given critically acclaimed dramatic performances, such as one in 2019’s “Uncut Gems,” in which he played a frenetic Jewish jeweler with a gambling addiction. Others include roles in Paul Thom- as Anderson’s “Punch-Drunk Love” (2002), Noah Baumbach’s “The Meyerowitz Stories” (2017) and Jeremiah Zagar’s “Hustle!” (2022).
Perhaps unusual for comics of his generation, the Brooklyn-born Sandler often places his Jewishness front and center, as in his portrayal of an Israeli fish out of water in “Don’t Mess With the Zohan” (2008), and especially in his performance of “The Chanukah Song,” originally an “SNL” bit in which he name-checks dozens of Jewish celebrities. His 2002 animated “Eight Crazy Nights” takes place during the Hanukkah season.
Sandler’s wife Jackie and their two teenage daughters are set to star in a bit in a movie themed for Netflix based on Fiona Rosserblom’s 2005 novel “You Are So Not Invited To My Bat Mitzvah.”
Previous Jewish winners of the Mark Twain Prize include playwright Neil Simon, Lorne Michaels of “SNL,” actors Carl Reiner and Billy Crystal, and comedians Jon Stewart.
There was no Mark Twain Prize in 2020 or 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The previous two winners before Sandler were 2019’s Dave Chappelle and 2020’s Jon Stew- art. Chappelle was recently the sub- ject of controversy when he focused part of his “SNL” monologue on Kanye West’s antisemitic comments and cracked jokes that suggested Jews run Hollywood. Stewart, a personal friend of Chappelle’s, weighed in on the monologue and defended Chap- pelle’s comments.

Holocaust educator to be honored on Dec. 20
Tuesday, Dec. 20 at 7 p.m. at a New England Friends March of the Living (NEFMOTL) virtual tribute event called “Voices from the Past … Lessons for the Future.”
Cohen, the former head of school of the South Area Solomon Schechter Day School, is the daughter of the late Holocaust survivor Naffi Taubenfeld.
As an educator, she has pioneered ground-breaking Holocaust education projects including the “I Chaim Project,” designed to allow students to learn the life stories of Holocaust Survivors, including how they rebuilt their lives after the horrors they had endured.
She will be honored with the Stephan Ross Excellence in Holo- caust Education Award. Ross was a Holocaust survivor and activist who founded the New England Holocaust Memorial in Boston, and dedicated his life to telling the story of loss and survival, commitment and per- servance.
The March of the Living brings high schoolers to Poland and Israel to retrace the steps of their Jewish ancestors and grapple with the roots of antisemitism. This year’s trip marks the 35th anniversary of March of the Living and the 75th anniversary of the state of Israel.
The tribute event is free and open to the public. Donations to the NEFMOTL commitment to provide $2,500 scholarships to all qualifying New England high schoolers to attend the trip. To RSVP, go to: https://www.wizevents.com/nemotl2022.

Jane Taubenfeld Cohen
Holocaust educator Jane Taubenfeld Cohen of Sharon will be honored on Dec. 20.

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Дорогие читатели и друзья!

В этом номере мы поздравляем вас с Ханукою! Это время торжеств, радости и восторга, когда мы с нетерпением ждем восемь дней — восемь чудесных ночей, которые символизируют восстановление света в святилище Иерусалимского Храма. Святое для всех евреев, Ханука — время зажигания свечей, обмена поздравлениями и совместных праздничных обедов.

Праздник, начатый в 164 году до н. э., вспоминает стремление евреев вернуть свою независимость от Римской империи, после того как Царь Селевк II декретировал запрет на использование еврейского языка в синагогах и на искусственное осветление святилища. Восстание привело к победе над Римским войском в 160 году до н. э., и в честь этого события евреи зажигают Меноры — восемь свечей, которые будут гореть весь период праздника.

Приглашаем посетить наши страницы и узнать больше о традициях Хануки, ее символах и значении в контексте истории еврейства.

Блаженного Рождества и Нового года всем!
Family Table needs volunteers to pack and deliver groceries

For many, Hanukkah conjures images of the light of the menorah and tables overflowing with delicious food. Yet for those in our community facing food insecurity, celebrating with such a bounty may be out of reach. Family Table, the kosher food pantry at Jewish Family & Children’s Service, fights food insecurity year-round by providing families in need with fresh and nutritious groceries.

At Hanukkah time, Family Table includes special holiday items, including Chanukah candles, special recipes, and ingredients to make traditional Chanukah treats. Family Table is proud to serve the North Shore Jewish community from our location at Temple Sinai in Marblehead. Our North Shore distribution is in great need of new volunteers to pack and deliver groceries to our clients one Sunday morning each month.

In a Hanukkah emergency, puppets save the day

News Flash: A fuzzy troll stole the Rabbi’s menorah. Will it ever be recovered?

“The Troll That Stole Hanukkah,” a proudly silly puppet story about the “monstrous” challenges involved in the menorah’s recovery, will be presented at Puppet Showplace Theater in Brookline, on Saturday, Dec. 17 at 1 and 3 p.m., and on Sunday, Dec. 18 at 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.

The interactive show, for ages 3 and up, was written and directed, and will be performed, by Chad Williams, with puppets by Lindsey ‘Z’ Briggs. Williams’s company, Wonderpark Puppets, is a New York City-based puppet company which has performed worldwide.

Puppet Showplace Theater, founded in 1974, is one of the few dedicated puppetry centers in the United States. A special Hanukkah-themed illuminated mobile art exhibit, Brighter Ignited, will be on display outside the theater on Dec. 17 from 3:30 – 6 p.m., presented by Jewish Arts Collaborative.

New marketing position for Merken

Katie Merken

Katie Merken recently started a position as Associate Influencer Marketing Manager at DMI Partners, a boutique marketing firm in Philadelphia. She assists in growing brands’ influencer strategies and relationships within the affiliate industry.

Previously working at Marketing Associate at Marquis and Co., the parent company of a group of vegan restaurants and bars in Philadelphia, New York, and D.C. She graduated in 2021 from Syracuse University with a Bachelor of Arts degree, magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, double majoring in Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition; and Psychology.

Katie is a granddaughter of Elaine Merken of Peabody, formerly a volunteer proofreader for Jewish Journal, and longtime teacher at Hillel Academy in Swampscott, and the late Henry Merken. She is the daughter of Gary Merken, who became a bar mitzvah at Temple Israel in Swampscott, and the late Merken of Peabody, formerly a volunteer proofreader for Jewish Journal.

Harris named religious school director

Mindy Harris

Temple Emanu-El of Haverhill has named Mindy Harris as its religious school director. Harris will oversee the pre-k through high school program, working with teachers, lay leaders, and Cantor Vera Brodsky-Husney, spiritual leader of Temple Emanu-El, to nourish, supervise, and grow the temple’s religious school. This marks a return to Temple Emanu-El for Harris, who previously served as cantorial soloist.

“Being part of the Temple Emanu-El community again is a great joy and honor for me,” said Harris. “This community is so warm and caring. It has never been more important to be part of an extended network of folks with shared values and experiences. I hope I can share my love of Judaism in all its historical richness, diversity, and complexity with our students.”

“We are thrilled to welcome Mindy Harris back to our congregation,” said Temple Emanu-El President Jennifer Lampron. “We are confident that her leadership will create exciting opportunities that will engage and inspire our students and their families.”

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Pride of Lynn Cemetery

Pride of Lynn is one of the few remaining independent Jewish and interfaith cemeteries in Massachusetts. Temple or synagogue affiliation is not required.

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Judy Mishkin

“I chose a career in public education because I wanted to inspire others to learn and fulfill their academic, self-discovery, and career goals…”

by Judy Mishkin

UDY MISHKIN GREW UP in Swampscott. She is the daughter of Harriett and the late Ralph Kaplan, and has three sisters, Anne Selby, Roz Moore, and Susan Kaplan. She attended the University of Pennsylvania both for undergraduate and graduate school, has worked as a teacher in Malden and Lynn, and now tutors college-bound high school students. Judy served as a president of Temple Emanu-El in Marblehead from 2007-09. She is married to Bill Mishkin, and they have two children, David and Amy.

Tell us a little about growing up in the Kaplan family as one of four daughters of Ralph and Harriett? As the youngest of four girls with only a five-year age span between my oldest sister and myself, the Kaplan household was clearly very busy. My mother was and continues to be very organized, keeping track very adeptly of our various schedules and activities. My dad partnered with her in raising us, especially at night and on Sundays. My parents instilled in all their children the core values of lifelong learning, a strong Jewish identity, and giving back to the community in a variety of ways. Two sisters and I pursued careers as educators, and one sister is a lawyer. I have lived on the North Shore my entire life, and that is why this community and all its Jewish agencies are so central to who I am. Four generations of my family gather for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and how schools have changed in the past 30 years.

What was your Jewish education like growing up? My Jewish education began at Temple Israel in Swampscott, where I went to Hebrew School three days a week. It was a traditional education in many ways. I learned how to read and write Hebrew, and studied Jewish customs, rituals, and holidays. On Saturday mornings, I attended Shabbat services on a regular basis. After Hebrew school on Sunday mornings, my father took my sisters and me for a fun afternoon. One of my fondest places to go was Revere Beach, where we would go on the amusement park rides. My Jewish education continued at Temple Emanu-El, where I went to Hebrew School three days a week. It was a wonderful experience to visit Israel from both a Jewish and non-Jewish perspective.

You’re an educator. Please tell us about your professional life and why you continued in this career for so long, and how schools have changed in the past 30 years. I chose a career in public education because I wanted to inspire others to learn and fulfill their academic, self-discovery, and career goals as I was inspired by many incredible teachers. Since I enjoy studying and speaking languages, I majored in English in college with a minor concentration in French and Spanish. My first job right out of graduate school was as an English teacher at Malden High School. I taught in Malden for five years, but Proposition 21 cut my career short at that time. When I went back to teaching, I became a middle school French and Spanish teacher in Lynn. During my last 13 years in public education, I taught English at Lynn English High School. The biggest change in education, I believe, is the advancement in technology as it integrates with the foundations of teaching and learning. When I first started teaching in 1976, I wrote on a classroom chalkboard, then a white board, and most recently a smartboard connected to my computer. From a young age, all students now incorporate technology in their learning, which has broadened the scope of access and understanding of information along with opening up countless avenues of communication. Nevertheless, the influence of the classroom teacher remains vital to every student’s success. The focus of learning today is on collaborative, hands-on cooperative participation by students who are actively engaged with each other. The demographics in the communities where I taught have changed significantly in my career. I loved the diversity of my students; it was a pleasure to be in a classroom with students from all over the world. When I retired in the summer of 2020, it was bittersweet. My last class of students are now freshmen in college or have pursued careers outside of college. I still keep in touch with many former students and relish their accomplishments.

Your son and daughter both attended and graduated from Cohen Hillel Community School in Marblehead. How has that experience and commitment remained part of your life? My family has had a long history of connections to Cohen Hillel Community School (now Epstein Hillel School). My two children—David and Amy—went to Hillel from kindergarten through eighth grade. In addition to my own children, I have had many other members of my family, including generations that attend the school. The vision of the school then and now aligns with my own about the role of education. Students are taught not only content material but also how to be upstanding citizens in their community, nationally, and even internationally. Hebrew and Jewish Studies are integrated into daily life at the school, so students have a comprehensive education about Judaism and secular studies. The devotion of the lay leadership is extraordinary. I helped out with many galas, and looked forward to the annual concerts, entertainers, and plays that serve as fund-raisers and community-building for the school.

What drew you to become a part of the Temple Emanu-El family and what has kept you so involved for so many years? From 2007-2009 you served as president of Temple Emanu-El in Marblehead. How has that experience and commitment remained part of your life? I was initially drawn to Temple Emanu-El because of its affiliation with the Reform movement and meeting Rabbi David Meyer. My father still had season tickets to Red Sox baseball in Marblehead for many years in the 1990s; David and his wife Marla were on the same team—and still play! From that association, I became more involved in the annual fund-raising events, as editor of the monthly newsletter, and then as a member of the board of directors. My two-year presidency of the Temple from 2007-2009 was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I had a great professional and lay-leader support system. The one “known” about this position was to “expect the unexpected.” Despite a recession in 2008, we remained a strong, vibrant congregation. A mission statement was created during my presidency, along with professional and lay leadership on how to foster personal relationship-building rather than a transactional relationship with members.

You now tutor high school students looking to enter college. Do you find this work as fulfilling as a classroom teacher? Tutoring high school students one-on-one with SAT/ACT and the Common Application is rewarding for me. Standardized testing is one part of a student’s submission for colleges, and it can be a determining factor when colleges compare a student against others from all over the world. Being part of the team with the students while they are accepted to attend is one of the most important decisions a student makes. Therefore, I want to ensure that the student’s application provides colleges with a true, comprehensive picture of who the student is. I am thrilled when students tell me that they have been accepted to college!

You now work with your husband Bill, who runs Home Instead in Melrose, a company that provides in-home services to seniors. Tell us a little about what work you do together. We work together over 60 hours a week with over 600 clients in Boston and another 400 internationally, the agencies allows older adults to remain independent in their homes. I work in the office in case management and they have teams of nurses, home health care, physical therapists, and the Home Instead franchise is a wonderful family business for our new care professionals, and a specialized class on Alzheimer’s care that I demonstrate in many ways, this line of work correlates with my teaching career.

What are some of your hobbies? I try to pursue an active lifestyle. For over 35 years, I have been running with the same woman around Swampscott, Marblehead and Lynn. In the summer of 2020, I traveled to Spain and Portugal, a trip with other North Shore Jews coordinated by the Marblehead JCC that highlighted Jewish history and landmarks in these countries. In addition to running, I enjoy bike riding in the summer, skiing in the winter, and taking Zumba classes all year round. I also love to spend time with my family and friends. My 3-year-old granddaughter is due to arrive any time now, and I can’t wait to welcome her to the world. I look forward to the birth of another grandchild very soon.”
HAPPY HANUKKAH

DECEMBER 15, 2022  ○  21 KISLEV 5783

HANUKKAH ESSAYS BY:

Rabbi Alison Adler  |  Rabbi Marc Baker  |  Rabbi Max Chaiken  |  Rabbi Idan Ireländer
Rabbi David Kudan  |  Rabbi Yossi Lipsker  |  Rabbi Howard Mandell  |  Rabbi David J. Meyer
Rabbi Richard Perlman  |  Rabbi Michael Ragozin  |  Rabbi Nechemia Schusterman  |  Rabbi Michael Schwartz

Jewish Journal
Sustaining light through the darkness

By RABBI IDAN IRELANDER

In his final song, “You Want It Darker,” Leonard Cohen summarized a famous Jewish mystical doctrine that had contained the phrase, “There is a crack in everything, that’s how the light gets in.” There is a Jewish tradition that teaches that each person is a unique small light and that this light shines when we are nice to each other, and when we care for one another.

For thousands of years, our people have valued life and have made it our mission to extend the quality and length of lives. In Israel, doctors, nurses and hospital staff from a variety of religious and ethnic backgrounds work together, under the Israeli organization Save a Child’s Heart, to give free lifesaving surgery to children from all over the world, including from the disputed territories. More than 6,000 children and their families have benefited from the generosity and ingenuity of the Israelis. And the Israel foreign ministry, MASHAV, has mitigated food insecurity and water impurity by sharing lifesaving technology with several countries. Israel has a long-standing tradition of extending aid outside of its borders, including to countries that have been hostile to it.

In the United States, Jews have taken our ancestral understanding of what it has felt like to be an outcast in so many places we’ve called home, that we have sought to make lives easier for people here too. In the 1960s, Jewish leaders worked with Black leaders to demand basic human rights that were most egregiously denied to those with dark skin in this country.

Two weeks before he was murdered, Martin Luther King Jr. said, “I see Israel as one of the great outposts of democracy, the Israelis. And the Israel foreign ministry, MASHAV, has mitigated food insecurity and water impurity by sharing lifesaving technology with several countries. Israel has a long-standing tradition of extending aid outside of its borders, including to countries that have been hostile to it.

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The Late American Holocaust scholar Yaffa Eliach shared this story of Hanukkah in Bergen-Belsen:

“It was time to kindle the Hanukkah lights. A jug of oil was not to be found, no candle was in sight, and a Hanukkah belonged to the distant past. Instead, a wooden clog, the shoe of one of the inmates, became a Hanukkah; strings pulled from a concentration camp uniform, a wick; and the black camp shoe polish, pure oil."

Not far from heaps of dead bodies, the living skeletons belonged to the distant past. Instead, a wooden clog, the shoe of one of the inmates, became a Hanukkah; strings pulled from a concentration camp uniform, a wick; and the black camp shoe polish, pure oil.

As soon as the Rabbi of Bluzhov had finished the ceremony of kindling the lights, a leader of the Warsaw Bund, Mr. Zamietchkowski, elbowed his way to the rabbi and said, “Spira, you are a clever and honest person. I can understand your need to light Hanukkah candles in these wretched times. I can even understand the historical note of the second blessing, ‘Who wroughtest miracles for our fathers in days of old, at this season.' But the third blessing, the Shehecheyanu? Thanking G-d for bringing us intact to THIS moment in time is beyond me. How could you say it when hundreds of dead Jewish bodies are literally lying within the shadows of the Hanukkah lights, when thousands of living Jewish skeletons are walking around in camp, and millions more are being massacred? For this you are thankful to God? For this you praise the Lord? This you call ‘keeping us alive’?”

“Zamietchkowski, you are 100 percent right,” answered the rabbi. “When I reached the third blessing, I also hesitated and asked myself, what should I do with this blessing? I turned my head in order to ask the Rabbi of Zanier and other distinguished rabbis who were standing near me, if indeed I might recite the blessing. But just as I was turning my head, I noticed that behind me a throng was standing, a large crowd of living Jews, their faces expressing faith, devotion, and concentration as they were listening to the rite of the kindling of the Hanukkah lights. I said to myself, if God, blessed be He, has such a nation that at times like these, when during the lighting of the Hanukkah lights they see in front of them the heaps of bodies of their beloved fathers, brothers, and sons, and death is looking from every corner, if despite all that, they stand in throngs and with devotion listening to the Hanukkah blessing ‘Who wroughtest miracles for our fathers in days of old, at this season?’ if, indeed, I was blessed to see such a people with so much faith and fervor, then I am under a special obligation to recite the third blessing.”

You may ask the question in reverse. Why, on the eve of one of our most enjoyable holidays do I feel compelled to share this depressing and gruesome story? Because it is inspiring and uplifting! Yes and No. It is inspiring and uplifting, and it NEEDS to be told, so that a new generation is aware of our history and knows what it means to live a life illuminated by a light that is larger than life – but does it have to be told NOW? Can't we wait till after we spin the dreidel, eat some hot latkes, and unwrap the gifts?

When I wrote this article I, too, hesitated in light of these reasonable questions. And then I read the news, in which a famous man wearing a stocking over his face expressed admiration for Hitler and the Nazis as casually as if it were a conversation about the Americans competing for the World Cup. And as I felt the color draining from my face, I realized that it's now or never to share this story and many others, both internally and externally. The Shehecheyanu that we recite over the candles encompasses the stories that must be shared NOW, precisely at this time.

Our recalling the atrocities that occurred by Bayameem HaBayam, in those days, “is our most important weapon, Bismah Hazeh, in THESE times. Our silence would be our Magenot Line, allowing haters to simply bypass reality with fictional revisionism and grotesque statements. My beloved brothers and sisters, we can ill-afford to remain silent. And Hanukkah IS the perfect time to speak up.

Date I say, that it is also the time for the Million Jews March in Washington?

Much Love,
Wishing you all
A Freilichen Hanukkah

Rabbi Yossi Liposker is the spiritual leader of Chabad of the North Shore.

Warm Wishes for a
Happy Hanukkah

The Swartz Family
- Allison, Matthew & Jesse -

The Shalom Family
- Debbie & Neal -
Hanukkah’s unexpected inspirations

By RABBI MICHAEL SCHWARTZ

THERE IS MUCH ABOUT Hanukkah that is expected for a Jewish holiday ... and much that is unexpected.

Lighting candles and eating holiday-related foods is expected. We expect to say blessings over candles, sing holiday songs, and celebrate.

We expect the great backstory to the holiday, about the Jewish People’s survival and salvation. Now, the unexpected: Unexpectedly, there are no formal “holy day” restrictions for Hanukkah as there are for other holidays. On Hanukkah you can drive, turn on lights, cook and carry to your heart’s content! Unexpectedly, the story of Hanukkah does not appear in any book of the Tanach [the Hebrew Bible]. So, unexpectedly again, there is no special book (like Ruth or the Megilah) that we read in the synagogue for this holiday.

Unexpectedly, the holiday starts on the 25th day of the month of Kislev, making Hanukkah the only holiday not connected to a new moon (first day of a month) or the full moon.

But Hanukkah has one particular quality that is BOTH expected and unexpected: It lasts eight days.

Eight days seems odd and unexpected because the number 7 – not 8! – is the number of completion. A week lasts seven days and the ultimate Jewish holiday – Shabbat – is sanctified as “Yom haShevi’I,” the seventh day.

Eight is the number of “Yom Tov” holy days in a year [in Israel]. Eight is the number of days between the Levites in their sacred music and – this is a stretch – 8x8 (64) indicates eight poles for carrying the sacred vessels of the mishkan.

There are eight days counted until circumcision: Eight is the number of days, as noted earlier, the holiday day itself is also the first day of the eighth week after the Omer.

The Tanach records eight places in which the Divine Presence dwells, notes eight spices contained in the Temple oil and incense, details eight poles for carrying the sacred vessels of the portable mishkan in the desert, specifies eight garments worn by the High Priest to officiate, names eight instruments played by the Levites in their sacred music and – this is a stretch – 8x8 (64) is the number of days between Parshim and Lag B’Omer.

While Shavuot is arrived at by counting seven weeks of seven days, as noted earlier, the holiday day itself is also the first day of the eighth week after the Omer.

The number 8 has an additional spiritual significance. In his book, “The Wisdom in the Hebrew Alphabet,” Rabbi Michael L. Munk notes:

“The number seven symbolizes the complete purpose of human existence, combining the spiritual level of the Sabbath with the physical effort of the week. Going beyond seven, the number eight symbolizes [the hu]man’s ability to transcend the limitations of physical existence. Thus, with a gematria of eight, [the letter cheit] stands for that which is on a plane above nature, i.e., the metaphysical Divine.”

As a holiday based on “8,” Hanukkah is an opportunity for us to celebrate the “expected” delights of this holiday – the beautiful candles lit, family and community togetherness, food and fun, salvation and triumph over enemies, an opportunity for “rededication.” Yet we should be prepared to encounter the “unexpected” on this holiday as well:

May our celebration of Hanukkah this year help us to transcend the material delights of the holiday to encounter a spiritual dimension of Hanukkah. May we begin to see and focus on all the miracles, large and small, that surround us and preserve us and keep Creation alive and renewing each day. May we rededicate ourselves to igniting and spreading light where there is darkness, education where there is ignorance, and tzedakah and chessed – kindness – wherever they are most needed.

Rabbi Michael Schwartz is the spiritual leader of Temple Sinai in Marblehead.

“In addition to the victory parades of the ancient Maccabees that celebrated their political independence, the original holiday also took the form of a Temple rededication ceremony. In the Second Book of the Maccabees … the holiday is called "The festival of lights celebrated in the month of Kislev" rather than Tishrei, which usually falls in September. Since the Jews were still in cases fighting as guerrillas on Tishrei in 164 BCE, they could not properly honor the eight-day holiday of Sukkot (and Shemini Atzeret), which is a Temple holiday; hence it was postponed until after the recapture of Jerusalem and the purifi- cation of the Temple…”

“Long before, King Solomon had dedicated the first Temple during the eight-day Sukkot festival, so it was perfectly apt for the Maccabees to rededicate the Temple during their beloved Sukkot observance. Thus, the eight-day rededication/ delayed-Sukkot celebration that year became the inaugural Hanukkah event.

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Chag Sameach

Warm and Bright Wishes for a Happy Hanukkah

Karen and David Rosenberg

Shelby, Amanda, Whitney and Andrew
Choose hope

By RABBI MARC BAKER

ANY OF US HAVE heard the light-hearted explanation of how most Jewish holidays share the same basic structure: “They tried to kill us, we won, let’s eat!”

In my family, on each night of Hanukkah after we light the candles, we (more precisely, I) sing a different verse of the of 13th-century liturgical poem Maoz Tzur (Rock of Ages). Each verse describes a different generation in which an evil tyrant tried to oppress or persecute the Jewish People, only to be thwarted in the end. It reminds me of the line in the Passover Haggadah that “in every generation they stand against us to destroy us, but God rescues us” – we are instructed that our telling of the Passover story should begin with degradation and conclude with glory.

For a person who have built thousands of years of resilience by refusing to be defined by victimhood, we certainly have not forgotten our darkest, most perilous moments and the tragedies of our past. Especially during times of celebration, joy and gratitude for our survival, why do we also recall how close we were to destruction and those who have tried to destroy us?

You could see this as a form of catharsis, a way of coping with thousands of years of Jewish collective, generational trauma. But in his recent book, “Choosing Hope,” psychologist David Arnow suggests that “Judaism can be understood as an enormous reservoir of hope … [and] hope finds expression in efforts to build a world despite all the obstacles and setbacks along the way.”

For a person who have built thousands of years of resilience by refusing to be defined by victimhood, we certainly have not forgotten our darkest, most perilous moments and the tragedies of our past.

No obstacles, no setbacks, no hope.

Arnow quotes the 20th-century French philosopher and theologian, Gabriel Marcel, who defines hope as an individual’s or society’s response to a time of trial. Trials – such as illness, separation, exile, slavery – can cause despair, which can in turn lead a human being to give up on himself or others, or on the world. Hope, in Marcel’s words, “is the act by which this temptation [to despair] is overcome.”

In other words, it is only when we are brought to the brink of despair that we can truly embrace and live out hope. Hope is not blind faith that things will get better, but rather choosing to believe that, through my actions and with the help of others (including, from a spiritual perspective, God, or a higher Power), I can make any situation, and the world, better.

As we emerge from years of cascading and intersecting crises into a time of continued crises and new challenges that we have yet to fully comprehend, I can understand the temptation to despair. To ignore that there are real threats – to health and well-being, to the safety of vulnerable minorities including Jews here and around the world, to the environment, to democracy – would be to bury our heads in the sand. The midrash says that God originally called out to Abraham because Abraham walked by a palace, saw that it was on fire, and cried out. Seeing the brokenness of the world and feeling pained by that brokenness are our moral and spiritual obligations, as well as an enormous reservoir of hope. But in order to be able to embrace hope, precisely when despair would have been natural and understandable.

Rabbi Marc Baker is president and CEO of Combined Jewish Philanthropies.
Brisket is a Hanukkah tradition!

By SYBIL KAPLAN

Brisket is the boneless meat on the lower chest of beef or veal. It worked its way into Jewish cuisine because of the location of the meat and the low cost. In the 1900s, it appeared on Jewish deli menus, particularly in Texas where the butchers, who emigrated from Germany and Czechoslovakia, had trouble selling the slow-cooking cut and created a way to dry smoke it and preserve it.

The beef brisket is one of the nine beef primal cuts, though the precise definition of the cut differs internationally. The brisket muscles include the superficial and deep pectorals. As cattle do not have collar bones, these muscles support about 60% of the body weight of standing or moving cattle. This requires a significant amount of connective tissue, so the resulting meat must be cooked correctly to tenderize the connective tissue.

The term is derived from the Middle English brusket which comes from the earlier Old Norse brjósk, meaning cartilage. The cut overlies the sternum, ribs, and connecting cartilages.

In traditional Jewish cooking, brisket is most often braised as a pot roast, especially as a holiday main course. For reasons of economics and kashrut, it was historically one of the more popular cuts of beef among Ashkenazi Jews. Brisket is also the most popular cut for corned beef, which can be further spiced and smoked to make pastrami.

Cranberry-Onion Hanukkah Brisket
8-10 servings

8 cups fresh or thawed frozen cranberries
1 ½ cups sugar
1 ½-inch lemon peel strip
3 T. fresh lemon juice
salt and pepper to taste
2 1-ounce envelopes kosher pareve onion soup mix
1 7-pound trimmed beef brisket

Day before serving:
1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Layer two sheets foil in a large roasting pan, letting foil hang over 8 inches past each end. Repeat with 2 additional sheets of foil to form an X. Top with a sheet of parchment paper.
2. In a saucepan, combine cranberries, sugar, lemon peel strip and lemon juice. Cook crushing cranberries with a wooden spoon until mixture thickens, 10-14 minutes.
3. Remove from heat and stir in onion soup mix. Let cool for 15 minutes.
4. Spread a quarter of cranberry sauce on parchment. Place brisket, fat side up on top. Spread remaining cranberry sauce on top, top with parchment, wrap foil around brisket.
Place in oven 3 to 3 ½ hours. Uncover. Let cool 1 ½ hours. Cover and refrigerate 8 hours.

Day of serving
1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Uncover brisket. Discard any fat. Scrape off cranberry sauce and place in a bowl.
2. Slice brisket on carving board. Arrange in ovenproof dish. Spoon cranberry sauce over top, cover and bake 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Beer-Braised Brisket with Root Vegetables
4-6 servings

This recipe is good for a small family and a small brisket. It comes from Ian Knauer, former Gourmet Magazine editor, chef, food writer and owner of The Farm Cooking School.

1 2 ½-3 pound brisket
2 T. olive oil
1 chopped medium onion
5 ounces sliced shiitake mushroom tops
3 finely chopped garlic cloves
3 large sliced carrots
3 sliced parsnips
1 rutabaga, peeled and cut into wedges
12 ounces beer of your choice
2 T. Worcestershire sauce
2 cups chicken stock
2 T. flour
1 T. dill

1. Heat oil in a pot. Sear the brisket 3-4 minutes, turn, and continue searing 3-4 minutes more. Transfer to a plate.
2. Stir onion, mushrooms and garlic in to pot. Cook, stirring occasionally 6 minutes. Place brisket and juices back in pot.
3. Stir in carrots, parsnips, rutabaga, beer, Worcestershire sauce and stock. Cover and simmer 6 hours until meat is tender.
4. Meantime, stir flour and 2 T. cold water in a bowl then whisk into pot. Simmer until sauce thickens, about 10 minutes. Place on plate, sprinkle with dill and slice.

Sybil Kaplan is a journalist, author, compiler/contributor/editor of 9 kosher cookbooks and food writer. She lives in Jerusalem where she has led weekly walks of the Jewish food market, Machaneh Yehudah, in English since 2009.
Applesauce and sour cream with latkes

By SYBIL KAPLAN

WE’VE ALL been there: trying to get the younger set to eat more vegetables, especially at holiday time.

Here’s a recipe from a kid-friendly organization – PJ Library – to add a dash of vitamins to their plates.

In fact, have children lend a hand in the measuring and mixing, so they’re more invested in the tasty results. Hanukkah begins this year on the evening of Dec. 18 and ends the evening of Dec. 26.

Veggie Latkes

Makes 6 medium-sized latkes

Ingredients:
1 large russet potato, peeled
1 large zucchini, peeled
½ head of cauliflower
½ yellow onion
1 clove of garlic, finely minced
½ cup all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon pepper
vegetable oil for frying

Directions:
1. Grate together potato, zucchini, cauliflower and onion. Use a food processor to make this step faster.
2. Wrap the vegetable mixture in a cheesecloth or a lightweight kitchen towel and squeeze out as much liquid as possible.
3. In a frying pan, heat ½ inch of oil on medium-high. Carefully drop a heaping tablespoon of latke mixture into the oil.
4. Fry for roughly 2 minutes, then flip and fry the other side.
5. Transfer each latke to a paper towel-lined platter.
6. Serve while warm with applesauce or other fruit.

历年来,有些人问我,为什么苹果酱和酸奶油用于-latkes?我写信给我的美国犹太食品专家朋友Joan Nathan,但她也不清楚,所以我用搜索引擎查了latkes和苹果酱,发现了一个博主提出了一个想法,我觉得这有道理。

另一个来源说tapuach在《犹太人的食物百科全书》中被误读为Apple,并用于庆祝Rosh Hashanah。印度犹太人将苹果酱用于Rosh Hashanah；印度犹太人将苹果酱与蜂蜜蘸在苹果中；塞法迪犹太人制作苹果酱；阿什肯纳齐犹太人用苹果酱为Sukkot；孩子们在Simchat Torah时将苹果放在国旗的末端。

至于酸奶油,嗯,它是在发酵过程中制成的,它在斯拉夫地区很受欢迎。如果他们在做-latkes时发现了替代品,他们可能会用酸奶油作为配菜。

Wishing you & your loved ones
A Joyous Hanukkah
Filled with good health, happiness & peace.

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Sagan Harborside

Sotheby’s INTERNATIONAL REALTY

W\E’VE ALL been there: trying to get the younger set to eat more vegetables, especially at holiday time.

Here’s a recipe from a kid-friendly organization – PJ Library – to add a dash of vitamins to their plates.

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Greening of the latkes

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Recently, someone asked me, why the applesauce and sour cream for latkes? I wrote to my American Jewish food expert friend, Joan Nathan, but she didn’t know, so I googled latkes and applesauce, found a blogger who voiced an idea, and I thought that made sense.

He suggested that maybe one year before Hanukkah, a shopkeeper, somewhere in Eastern Europe, placed his annual order for potatoes to his dry goods provider. He wrote potatoes in Hebrew as tapuah adama. Somehow the word adama was inadvertently erased and ended up being tapuach, the Hebrew word for apple. The supplier read the order and scratched his head, wondering why the shopkeeper didn’t want potatoes for Hanukkah. But, due to the limits of communication back in those days, he couldn’t check with him in time, so he went ahead and filled the order, sending a bushel of apples.

When the shopkeeper saw the apples instead of potatoes, he wondered what to do with them, but then figured surely they would be a treat for Hanukkah.

Somehow he was able to sell the idea to the townspeople to buy apples, and some clever women decided to cook the apples – hence, applesauce.

By the end of the holiday, everyone was raving about the apples and apple dishes.

In the “Encyclopedia of Jewish Food,” Gil Marks wrote that Greek Jews had a tradition that the Maccabees ate duck with apples to celebrate their victory. This was extended to serving apple rings, apple fritters and applesauce.

John Cooper, in “Eat and Be Satisfied,” reasons that the only fat for frying latkes was schmaltz, so the only topping could be applesauce.

Another source says the word tapuach in the Bible was translated as apple and was used on Rosh Chodesh (start of the new month). The Hungarian Jews made apple cake and strudel or tart for Rosh Hashanah; Indian Jews dip apple in honey and rose water; Sephardi Jews make apple compote; Ashkenazi Jews serve apple strudel on Sukkot, and children place apples at the end of the flag stick for Simchat Torah.

As for sour cream, well, made in its fermented form, it was popular in the Slavic region. The idea of boiled potatoes eaten with sour cream was associated with Eastern European Jews, so if they found a substitute for the schmaltz when frying their latkes, they could well have used sour cream as an accompaniment.

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Happy Hanukkah!

From Bob Goldman
and colleagues
Elizabeth B. Drake, Esq.
Jill Weiner, Esq.
Frank Hannigan, Esq.
Carly Himmelstein, Assistant
Leigh Ann Olivieri, Assistant

• Proud former president and board member, Epstein Hillel School (formerly Cohen Hillel Academy).
• Proud past board member of North Shore Alliance of GLBTQ Youth.
• Proud board member of Essex County Community Foundation. See ImpactEssexCounty.org.

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Have a Happy Hanukkah

TED BETTENCOURT
Mayor
City of Peabody

On behalf of the City of Salem, I would like to extend my warm wishes to the Jewish Community of the North Shore for a very Happy Hanukkah!

Rhonda and John Gilberg
and Family

Wishing you and your loved ones a Happy Hanukkah!

From Senator Brendan Crighton and Family

Happy Hanukkah!

Warm wishes to you and your family for a safe and happy Hanukkah!

Seth Moulton
Representative, 6th District of Massachusetts in Congress

www.sethmoulton.com

From Senator Brendan Crighton and Family

Happy Hanukkah!

from
Rhonda and John Gilberg and Family
How to be a Hanukkah hero

By RABBI DAVID J. MEYER

“Great Miracle Happened There”

The first candidate as the “Hero” of Hanukkah would be the Almighty One, as expressed by the beloved Hanukkah hymn, “Mozz Tzur.” The traditional Hebrew tune is often rendered with the English lyrics: “And Your word broke their sword, when our own strength failed us.” The story of the miracle of the oil doubles down on the role played On High in the regaining and re-dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem. Who is the hero of this beloved Hanukkah celebrated festival? Who among our cherished faith traditions, as if concealing that single jar containing the eternal flame to burn above the holy altar, would be the Almighty One, as expressed by the Jew and the pagan Assyrian forces taking control of our sacred spaces? – nameless Israelite found the courage and foresight to hide just a bit of purified oil. Just in case…Just in hope…Perhaps in faith.

As a second candidate for our Hanukkah hero, we also might consider another anonymous soul, a survivor of the war who, instead of decreeing the lack of fuel at the ready for rekindling the sacred flame, chose to set fire to one portion of oil alight, hoping beyond hope in whatever might happen next. It was an act of irrational determination and unbridled conviction. It was heroic. Were it not for these two nameless people, our Hanukkah story would never have come to pass; would not be our inheritance, and would not be our own inspiration to lead into the future. Of course, the Divine intervention for which we might hope will always be beyond our human powers. But perhaps we can emulate those anonymous Jews from more than two thousand years ago, who against all odds chose to preserve the oil and to light that flame in hope and in faith, which lasted far beyond any expectation or even hope. Indeed, it is within our power to show courage in preserving the essentials of our cherished faith traditions, as if concealing that single jar of consecrated oil ready, to be passed down to future generations. May their example inspire us all to keep the light burning in hope and faith.

“Maoz Tzur”

“Who can recount the mighty deeds of Israel…for in those days as in our own. The story of the miracle of the lights to our entire community!

“Mozz Tzur”

Celebrate in Style!

Casual Daytime Wear
To Suit All Party Wear

Selma’s

May your light shine bright this Hanukkah!

Send your Warmth and Happiness During the Festival of Lights

HANUKKAH

Representative Elect Jenny Armini and Family

Happy Chanukah!

Warm and Joyous Wishes for a Happy and Healthy Hanukkah!

Rabbi David J. Meyer is Senior Rabbi of Temple Emanuel in Marblehead.

RABBI DAVID J. MEYER

Senior Rabbi of Temple Emanuel

Rabbi David J. Meyer is Senior Rabbi of Temple Emanu-El in Marblehead.
Hanukkah: hizuk for dark times

By RABBI MICHAEL RAGOZIN

TEMPERATURES ARE DROPPING. A chill is in the air. The days grow shorter and the nights grow longer. It is the season of darkness. Nature’s transformation is expected, but the darkness of our world – rising antisemitism and inflation, the direction of our country, changes to the climate – creates unexpected worries.

While the reality of current events inspires us, as the old adage goes, to plan for the worst, Hanukkah inspires us to hope for the best. Hanukkah is the triumph of good over evil, the weak over the strong, the few over the many. It is a story of possibility, the unexpected, and miracles. As Malden native and World War II Navy chaplain Rabbi Jacob Philip Rudin wrote of his war experience, “It was night but atop that distant mountain and in the midst of war, all the lights of Hanukkah gleamed through the darkness and made it bright with their golden message of courage and faith and hope.”

In the darkest of times, the miracle of Hanukkah has brought light to Jewish souls. Moshe Prager tells the story of Rabbi Efraim who arrived at Auschwitz on the first night of Hanukkah. Despite seeing the flames of the ovens and having no candles or menorah, the rabbi was committed to lighting the Hanukkah candles. To his fellow Jews who scoffed at his religious observance was committed to lighting the Hanukkah candles. To his fellow Jews who scoffed at his religious observance, he spoke passionately, “In the soul of every Jew there is a cruse of oil sealed with the divine Word and reserved for a time of need. When the time comes the cruse opens, shaken by the holy command, and the treasured light is kindled in every Jewish soul, and the flame, the divine flame, begins to rise!”

We hope you will join us. You may register by scanning this code, and if you have any questions, please call us at (978) 281-0739.
Hugo protested to his father, that they should have eaten the butter, rather than burn it in a ceremony. But Hugo's father responded, "You have seen that it is possible to live three weeks without food. Once we went three days without water. But you cannot live for even three minutes without hope."

Indeed, the lights of Hanukkah are meant to inspire hope in those who see them. Even a single flame in a darkened room can shed enough light to transform the space and show a way forward.

Hope comes in many colors – like our cheerful Hanukkah candles. As we add to the lights on each night of the festival, let us lift up a new shade of hope, of inspiration, of illumination to help us find a way forward in our troubled world. The readings here are meant to be shared with young and old as we gather on each of the nights of Hanukkah. May these words remind each of us of the power we hold to bring light into the world, to inspire others, to brighten our homes, schools and workplaces. May each tiny flame encourage us to consider how each of us may respond to the challenge of Hanukkah – to rededicate ourselves to that which is most sacred and affirming in our lives. Wishing all a very joyous festival of lights.

Readings for the eight nights of Hanukkah

First Night: This is the candle of home and of loving relationships. Let us give thanks for the light we shed on our family members and on our dear ones as we speak words of kindness and show appreciation to one another.

Second Night: This is the Candle of Torah. When we say, "Torah Orah," we describe Torah as light, a symbol of knowledge. May this light encourage us to study and to be open to learning something new every day of our lives.

Third Night: This is the candle of liberty. The Maccabees fought for the right to practice our religion in freedom. May this light encourage us to hold fast to our traditions as we fight for the rights of all people and work toward an end to oppression and intolerance. As our Torah teaches, "you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land, and to all who dwell in it."

Fourth Night: This is the candle of courage: We need strength to face the darkness around us, to be brave in meeting our personal challenges and to find the courage to overcome the obstacles that stand in our way. As Moses said to Joshua, "be strong and of good courage!"

Fifth Night: This is the candle of fairness. A good society must provide justice for all and treat each person with compassion. Our tradition teaches us to "seek justice and pursue it." May we work to provide food, shelter and fair treatment to everyone.

Sixth Night: This is the candle of faith. May the candles we light on this night renew our faith in our fellow human beings and in our ability to reveal sparks of God in every act of goodness.

Seventh Night: This is the candle of holiness. The Jewish people were commanded to be a holy people, and to be a light to all the nations of the world.

Eighth Night: This is the candle of Shalom. May these candles inspire us to create wholeness and healing in the world around us. May God’s light shine upon us and help us to bring blessings to our dear ones, to our community, and to our entire world.

Happy Festival of Lights – Chag Sameach!

By RABBI DAVID KUDAN

RABBI HUGO GRYN, OF blessed memory, was a Holocaust survivor who lived through his teenage years in a concentration camp. On the eve of Hanukkah 1944, Hugo's father took out a clay bowl, and placed in it a bit of string that had been soaked in the precious bit of butter that they had somehow been able to obtain.

Blessings to you & yours at Hanukkah and always

Happy Holidays

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Best Wishes for a Joyful and Healthy Hanukkah

AMY AND MARK FARBER

Wishing our entire extended community a Chag Hanukkah Sameach

May this year be filled with light and brightness!

Warmest Wishes For A Happy Chanukah

JCCNS.org
I’m always surprised when friends say they can’t be bothered to make homemade latkes for Hanukkah. Takeout latkes or latkes from the frozen foods section or a mix never taste as good as latkes made from scratch. There’s nothing like a golden potato pancake served hot and crispy right out of the frying pan.

Besides, what’s so complicated? You shred 2½ pounds of potatoes (Idaho russet potatoes are ideal) and a yellow onion or two; combine with three eggs, a teaspoon or more of salt, pepper and ¼ cup of matzo meal or flour; then form the patties and fry.

But the prep and frying are time-consuming, and there are many pitfalls on the path to latke perfection. I should know: I learned the hard way – by screwing up. My mistakes also led me to discover four secrets to making great latkes. Here they are.

The worst latke mistake of all time

Pro tip No. 1: Don’t peel or shred those potatoes until you are ready to cook them.

Once when the first night of Hanukkah fell on a weeknight, I did my latke prep in advance. I figured that would make it faster to get dinner on the table for my hungry family when I got home from work. So I grated the potatoes the night before and refrigerated them overnight.

Unfortunately, once you peel, shred and expose a potato to air, it oxidizes and turns a sickly gray. My potatoes had a gray tinge the next day.

Four secrets for making great homemade latkes for Hanukkah

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22B
The Best Hanukkah Cookie Recipe

By SHERI SILVER

O F ALL THE treats associated with this time of year, the most iconic seasonal bake is surely the sugar cookie. Which, personally, is my least favorite cookie to bake.

Between the rolling, the chilling, the cutting and all the flour everywhere, I always found these cookies to be super stressful and not fun at all. And we haven’t even gotten to the decorating. Though I consider myself a skilled and confident baker, those treats reach a hard stop when it comes to decorating.

So, years ago, I resolved to figure out how to eliminate the stress, the mess and the hassle of making decorated sugar cookies, while still creating delicious, festive and easy to execute cookies.

Some expert tips: The secret is to roll the dough right after you mix it and THEN chill it. It’s much easier to roll out when warm, and you’ll get perfect, crisp edges when you cut out the chilled dough. Rolling it between parchment paper means no flour, no sticking and no mess. And you can use the paper to bake the cookies on! Winning! You can use any sugar cookie dough that you like; I’ve included my easy, tried and true recipe here.

As for decorating, I use a simple, two-ingredient glaze, some food coloring and sprinkles to create three different looks that will fit right in on your holiday table.

Note: The yield for this recipe is two and a half dozen cookies, but this will vary depending on the size cookie cutter you use.

Ingredients

For the cookies:
- ½ cup (8 Tbsp) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp kosher salt

For the decorations:
- 2 cups confectioners’ sugar
- 2-4 Tbsp milk, water or lemon juice
- blue food coloring, blue and white sprinkles

Directions:

Cut 4 pieces of parchment paper to fit a standard size baking sheet (or have 4 pre-cut sheets at the ready).

Beat the butter and sugar till light and fluffy. Add the egg and vanilla extract and beat again. Add the flour, baking powder and salt and beat once more.

Divide the dough in half. Working with one half at a time, roll the dough ¼” thick between two sheets of parchment paper. Repeat with the remaining dough and parchment sheets. Stack the dough, still between the parchment sheets, on a baking sheet and refrigerate for at least one hour (you can freeze for longer storage; wrap in plastic wrap to maintain freshness).

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Take one of your dough sheets and place it on a baking sheet. Remove the top piece of parchment paper and set aside. Use cutters to cut out as many shapes as you can, and then gently remove the trimmings, leaving the cookies on the parchment. Use a thin spatula to gently lift and place the cookies in neat rows on the baking sheet. Gather up the trimmings, re-roll, and cut shapes as above.

Bake for 8-10 minutes or till lightly golden around the edges. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Do the same with the second dough sheet, until all of the dough has been rolled and cut.

Decorating technique: Place the confectioners’ sugar in a large bowl. Add 2 Tbsp of liquid and whisk. Add more liquid, a bit at a time, till a thick yet pourable consistency is reached. Place the sprinkles in a shallow bowl. Set a wire rack over a piece of waxed paper.

Work with one cookie at a time, dip the top into the icing, pull it up and shake gently till all the excess has dripped off. Immediately dip into your sprinkles, then place on your wire rack. Repeat with the remaining cookies and let set completely before serving.

SHERI SILVER
Yes, it is true. The researchers studied 630 Americans and asked them to rate their general happiness, their annual income, and their monthly spending. They were to include bills, gifts for themselves, gifts for others, and charitable contributions. Researchers also measured the rate of happiness for people who received profit-sharing bonuses from their employers of $3,000 – $8,000. The results were conclusive. The statisticians found that it was not how much money the participants received that figured out happiness levels, but how the recipients spent their money. Those who donated more of their bonuses to charity or used it for gifts for others proved to be much happier than those who did not.

In yet another view, the researchers gave participants a $5 or a $20 bill and asked them to spend it before 5 p.m. on the same day. Half were told to spend the money on themselves; half to spend it on others. The half who spent their money on others proved to feel much better at the end of the day than those who did not. The researchers say that even spending a small amount on someone during the day can significantly improve our own feelings of happiness.

In this context, is it not fortuitous that Hanukkah is here? Yes, as we light the candles on this Festival of Lights, and as we light up the lives of those, we give gifts, gelt and tzedakah, too, it is true that we will be lighting up our own lives. Give this year with joy in our hearts, let us give to others to feel the joy of the holidays as we will celebrate together.

Oh yes, and let us not forget this great message. Luckily, we have endless opportunities well beyond Hanukkah to improve our own happiness by giving to others throughout the year. So go ahead. Let us all spend as much money as we want so that we can buy happiness. Feels good, doesn’t it?

Chag Hanukkah Sameach to all – Healthy and Happy Holidays to everyone who celebrates together in our wonderful community!
Happy Hanukkah!

May this year's lighting of the menorah illuminate our way toward an even brighter future, together.
Wishing You and Yours

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Warmest Wishes

Rabbi Nechemia Schusterman

The untold story of Hanukkah

By RABBI NECHEMIA SCHUSTERMAN

HANUKKAH, OH HANUKKAH … ahhh, the sweet sounds of singing and the delicious tastes of latkes, the twinkling lights, joy and pleasure all around.

We celebrate the miracle of the jug of oil lasting eight days instead of one and the military victory of the few over the many. There is, however, another entire component to the Hanukkah story, as important as the things we celebrate today – if not more so.

That is the story of Hellenism. Throughout the years of Jewish history there have been many times when we were threatened, from the Holocaust, in recent memory, to the pogroms, Spanish Inquisition, and general Jew-hated that goes back millennia.

Each time we were singled out for abuse and destruction had its own flavor. Some simply wanted us dead. They didn’t much care about how “Jewish” we were. To the Nazis, every Jew – from the long-frocked Chasidic to the entirely secular, integrated Hungarian – needed to be eradicated.

Other times in history, such as the Spanish Inquisition, renouncing your faith was enough to have your life spared, even given positions of power within government and beyond.

Each time we faced danger was terrible and no one time worse than the other, but the Hellenism of the story of Hanukkah held a particular danger that we Americans know better than most in history.

Did you ever wonder why the jug of oil, so central to the story of Hanukkah, HAD to be “pure” with the seal of the High Priest? And if some Greek soldier touched it and contaminated it, so what? It would still light, and isn’t a flame on the Menorah from contaminated oil better than no flame at all? I’ll get back to this in a second.

I recently read an unusual book, “The Book Of Tziril,” by Bess Waldman, from Micah Publications. It tells of the struggle of a family, led by Tziril, during the years 1840 – 1890 as they struggle against oppression in Imperial Russia and slowly emigrate to America, the Goldeneh Medina, to start new lives.

You read how Tziril tries to retain some of the Old World Orthodox traditions and standards competing with a generation of youth who have discovered and are founding the American Haskalah (Enlightenment) Movement in which her daughter Hinda is swept up.

The profundity of this book is that you feel the struggle from all sides. Tziril’s need to hold on to the original ancient traditions – for if not us, it will be lost forever – and Hinda’s need to no longer struggle with “Citizen-Homelessness” and finally be accepted in a country fully, the entry fee being assimilation. Adopting American values and norms and not sticking out socially or spiritually in dress and beyond.

On a very deep level, this was the question facing Jews during Hellenistic times, and is key to the Hanukkah Story. Do we discard the ancient and fit in, or do we maintain our very rich gift, a history and future of spiritual connectedness?

Thus, the incredible importance and insistence that the only oil that could be lit in G-D’s home, the only light that we will gift to the world, must be pure, holy, spiritual, clean divine oil. Even the hint of influence from the outside was a threat to the eternal continuity of authentic Judaism.

This, too, is what we struggle with today here in America. Often it is simply easier to compromise and fit in, better, even at the cost of using a little contaminated oil. Let’s just be American as possible and they will finally leave us alone!

Rabbi Nechemia Schusterman leads Chabad of Peabody.

JEWISH JOURNAL.ORG
DECEMBER 15, 2022
By RABBI ALISON ADLER

Remember that child’s toy called Lite Brite? It looks like a mini-TV. We cover the TV “screen” with a totally black piece of paper with tiny markings indicating which translucent color peg goes into which hole to make the desired boat, flower or animal.

On that darkest night of a page we poke holes and fill them with shining reds, pinks, yellows and blues that are illuminated from behind. Sometimes when I am lighting Hanukkah candles, I remember this toy, as each little flame pokes light through the darkness over eight nights.

There is a midrash, a rabbinic story, that describes Adam, the first human, in absolute darkness. He sits as the world grows darker and colder, feeling more and more alone and more and more responsible for this darkness. He sits that way for eight treacherous, gloomy days and fasts, mourns and weeps at all that might have gone awry and the ways in which he might be implicated for such events. Finally, there is a solstice. Literally, the world, the light, dawns anew and slowly the days become more luminous. The midrash tells us that Adam, this first person, celebrates with joy and dancing, eating latkes (oh wait, that came later) for another eight days.

This story describes a lone creature so deeply connected to the cosmos as to be totally impacted by the ebb and flow of nature. Adam isn’t simply reacting to the increased darkness (like many of us do with seasonal affective disorder), he feels responsible that his behavior somehow controls the amount of darkness and light in the world.

What of this consciousness do we carry with us? When darkness is increasing – literal darkness or metaphorical darkness – do we feel guilty? Powerless? Empowered? Angry, depressed? Something else? Or maybe we block it all out.

Now imagine the moment when Adam sees that first bright star beginning to rise, and the world brightening. The moment when Adam is drying his tears and rising to dance. That is the moment of the Hanukkah miracle. It is the solstice, a turning point, and a return to the One Light.

What is it like to strike the match and bring in this light, this year? As individuals, families, communities – Jews around the world? It teaches us that whether we feel responsible or not for what is going on, we can always bring light. We have the power and responsibility to light candles, reach out to the lonely, raise the downtrodden, bring solace and increase joy.

May you and your families be blessed with much light and health this holiday season. Hag Urim sameach! – Rabbi Alison Adler

Rabbi Alison Adler leads Temple B’nai Abraham in Beverly.
Partners in bringing light to the world

By RABBI MAX CHAIKEN

EACH YEAR, ON THE 25th day of the darkest month of the year, we gather to celebrate a sacred miracle. No, no, not the 25th of December – that’s somebody else’s miracle. I’m writing, of course, of the 25th of the Jewish month of Kislev, when Hanukkah begins and we celebrate the miracles of our Festival of Lights. As the lights of our chanukiot shine brightly, and grow in their warmth and brilliance on each night of our holiday, they remind us of miracles, past and present.

The candles remind us of the miracle of our ancestors’ unlikely victory over oppressive forces; of the Maccabees who fought and won the unlikely battles over the Seleucid Greek empire, which sought to prevent them from living as Jews. And they remind us of the legend and the miracle of the oil lasting far longer than it should have, when those same ancestors came together to re-dedicate the ancient Temple.

Our chanukiah, which we often lovingly call a menorah is a little different from the ancient Menorah, which only had seven lights, as opposed to the nine found our chanukiah. Yet the act of bringing light into the world, as one of the sacred obligations, the mitzvot of Jewish life, remains a meaningful thread connecting us to our ancestors even long before the Maccabees walked the hills of the land of Israel. And so I also focus my gratitude during this season of Hanukkah on the miracle of our ability to kindle light, and to bring light to the dark corners of our world.

One of my favorite teachings about the act of kindling light comes from a mishnah about the instructions for kindling the Menorah found in the book of Numbers. Bamidbar Rabbah 15 teaches as follows:

“When you kindle [lit. ‘raise up’] the lights ...” (Num 8:2). The people of Israel said to the Holy One, “When you kindle the lights, we want you to offer light to me.”

The teaching underscores the way that our kindling of Hanukkah lights can illuminate and refocus our attention on our sacred partnership with the Divine. Just as the Holy One can bring light and enlightenment into the world, so too must we strive to do so. Our Hanukkah lights remind us of that. Where we see hatred and evil, we must be forces for kindness, goodness, and love. Where we see the scourge of antisemitism growing, we must be the bearers of the light and joy that our Judaism and our Jewishness bring to this world. Where we see oppressive forces in our own day and time, like the Maccabees we must light the flame of resistance, perseverance, and pride; insight, wisdom, and reason.

Hanukkah literally means dedication, and our Festival of Lights gets its name from the rededication of the Temple that we honor and commemorate through the kindling of our Hanukkah lights. On this Hanukkah, may we remember that kindling light itself, and our ability to do so in partnership with the Divine Goodness of the World, is one of the many miracles of these sacred nights.

Rabbi Max Chaiken is the spiritual leader of Temple Emanuel in Andover.

RABBI MAX CHAIKEN

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Wishing You Peace and Happiness this Hanukkah!
The story of Hanukkah

by CHABAD.ORG

MORE THAN 2,000 years ago there was a time when the land of Israel was part of the Syrian-Greek Empire, dominated by Syrian rulers of the dynasty of the Seleucids.

In order to relate the story that led up to Hanukkah, we shall start with Antiochus III, the King of Syria, who reigned from 312 to 280 B.C.E. He had waged war with King Ptolemy of Egypt over the possession of the Land of Israel, Antiochus III was victorious and the Land of Israel was annexed to his empire. At the beginning of his reign he was favorably disposed toward the Jews and accorded them some privileges. Later on, however, when he was beaten by the Romans and compelled to pay heavy taxes, the burden fell upon the various peoples of his empire who were forced to furnish the heavy gold that was required of him by the Romans. When Antiochus died, his son Seleucus IV took over, and further oppressed the Jews.

Added to the troubles from the outside were the grave perils that threatened Judaism from within. The influence of the Hellenists (people who accepted idol-worship and the Syrian way of life) was increasing. Yochanan, the High Priest, foresaw the danger from the penetration of Syrian-Greek influence into the Holy Land. For, in contrast to the ideal of outward beauty held by the Greeks and Syrians, Judaism emphasizes truth and moral purity, as commanded by G-d in the holy Torah. The Jewish people could not give up their faith in G-d and accept the idol-worship of the Syrians.

Yochanan was therefore opposed to any attempt on the part of the Jewish Hellenists to introduce Greek and Syrian customs into the Land. The Hellenists hated him. One of them told the King’s commission- er that in the treasury of the Temple there was a great deal of wealth.

Antiochus then enacted a series of laws aimed to force the Jews to give up their faith in G-d and accept the idol-worship of the Syrians.

In vain did Yochanan, the High Priest, beg him not to do it. Helyodros did not listen and entered the gate of the Temple. But suddenly, he became pale and faint. The next moment he fainted and fell to the ground. After Helyodros came to, he did not dare enter again.

The Martyrs

ANTIOCHUS RETURNED from Egypt enraged by the Roman interference with his ambitions. When he heard what had taken place in Jerusalem, he ordered his army to fall upon the Jews. Thousands of Jews were killed.

Antiochus then enacted a series of harsh decrees against the Jews. Jewish worship was forbidden; the scrolls of the Law were confiscated and burned. Sabbath rest, circumcision and the dietary laws were prohibited under penalty of death. Even one of the respected elders of that generation, Rabbi Eliezer, a man of 90, was ordered by the servants of Antiochus to eat pork so that others would do the same. When he refused they suggested to him that he pick up his staff. Antiochus was a tyrant of a rash and impetuous nature, contemptuous of religion and of the feelings of others. Desiring to unify his kingdom through the medium of a common religion and culture, Antiochus tried to root out the individualism of the Jews by suppressing all the Jewish Laws. He removed the righteous High Priest, Yochanan, from the Temple in Jerusalem, and in his place installed Yochanan’s brother Joshua, who loved to call himself by the Greek name of Jason. For he was a member of the Hellenist party, and he used his high office to spread more and more of the Greek customs among the priesthood.

Joshua or Jason was later replaced by another man, Menelaus, who had promised the king that he would bring in more money than Jason did. When Yochanan, the former High Priest, protested against the spread of the Hellenists’ influence in the Holy Temple, the ruling High Priest hired murderers to assassinate him.

Antiochus was at that time engaged in a successful war against Egypt. But messengers from Rome arrived and commanded him to stop the war, and he had to yield. Meanwhile, in Jerusalem, a rumor spread that a serious accident had befallen Antiochus. Thinking that he was dead, the people rebelled against Menelaus. The treacherous High Priest fled together with his friends.

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 24B
Glossary for the holiday of Hanukkah

By CHABAD.ORG

A

ntyochus IV EpiPh-A
anes: The Syrian-Greek emperor (2nd century BCE) who desecrated the Holy Temple and enacted laws against Jewish practices during the Second Temple era.

The Maccabees fought, and miraculously defeated his armies. The miracle of his defeat, and the subsequent rededication of the Temple, is commemorated on the holiday of Hanukkah.

Beit Hamakdah: the Holy Temple that stood in Jerusalem.

Hanukkah: (lit. “rededication”); the eight-day festival of Hanukkah, beginning on the Jewish date of 25 Kislev, celebrating the Maccabees’ recapture of the second Temple from the Greeks, and its rededication. Marked by the kindling of lights on a candelabrum called a menora or chanukiah.

Hamakka Hola: (lit. “Hanukkah money”); monetary gifts given on Hanukkah.

Hanukkah Samech: (lit. “happy Hanukkah”); traditional holiday greeting.

Chashmonaim: Hasmonaean, priestly family who led the Maccabees’ armies in the battle against the Greeks. They later became the kings of the Kingdom of Judea.

Channukah: The nine-branched candelabrum kindled on Hanukkah commemorating the miracle of Hanukkah.

Dreidel: spinning top marked with the Hebrew letters nun, gimel, shin, and pe, an acronym for Nes Gadol Hayah Sham, “a great miracle happened there.”

Halak: (lit. “praise”); a portion of Psalms (119-118) recited in the prayer service on festivals.

Haneirot Halalu: (lit. “these flames”); traditional prayer sung after the lighting of the Hanukkah lamps.

Hallel: (lit. “praise”); a portion of Psalms commemorating the miracle of Hanukkah.

Haneirot Halalu: (lit. “these flames”); traditional prayer sung after the lighting of the Hanukkah lamps.

Hallel: (lit. “praise”); a portion of Psalms (84-86) recited in the prayer service on festivals.

V’Al HaNissim: (lit. “and for the miracles”), the opening phrase of a passage added to the daily prayers and the chanukiah,

Shemen Zayit Zach: pure, pressed olive oil.

Maoz Tzur: (lit. “mighty stronghold”); traditional song from the verse in Psalms (60:8), “Mi tamshu ve’shanu maidor, ‘who is likened unto You amongst all powers, O GD.’

Man Tzur: (lit. “mighty stronghold”); traditional song sung after the lighting of the menorah.

Matityahu, Mattathias ben Johanan: father of the Maccabees (d. 139 BCE), led the rebellion against the Syrians-Greeks, culminating in the miraculous victory which is celebrated on the festival of Hanukkah.

Menora: The seven-branched gold candelabrum in the Temple, also refers to the nine-branched candelabrum kindled on Hanukkah commemorating the holiday miracle.

Shamash, The: The Jewish army that revolted against the Syrian-Greek occupation in 139 BCE, whose miraculous victory culminated in the festival of Hanukkah.

Shamen zayit zach: pure, pressed olive oil.

Sufganiot: Fried potato pancake, traditionally served on Hanukkah.

Sufganiot: Fried potato pancake, traditionally served on Hanukkah.

Maccabee, The: The Jewish army that revolted against the Syrian-Greek occupation in 139 BCE, whose miraculous victory culminated in the festival of Hanukkah.

Victory in the battle cry, whose Hebrew words from the verse in Psalms (86:8), “Mi tamshu ve’shanu maidor, ‘who is likened unto You amongst all powers, O GD.’

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Menora: The seven-branched gold candelabrum in the Temple, also refers to the nine-branched candelabrum kindled on Hanukkah commemorating the holiday miracle.

Shamash, The: (lit. “attendant”); the candle used to light the Hanukkah lamps.

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Sufganiot: Fried potato pancake, traditionally served on Hanukkah.
Four secrets for making great homemade latkes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Preventing a common latke problem

Prep tip No. 2: Squeeze the moisture out of your potatoes and onions to keep them from falling apart.

The first time or two I made latkes, it was hard to keep them in one piece in the frying pan. But there’s an easy solution. Just squeeze the potatoes and onions out.

That’s right – after shredding the potatoes, before adding other ingredients, take the potatoes and onions a handful at a time and squeeze them over the sink as if you were wringing out a wet sponge. You won’t believe how much liquid comes out. Some recipes say you need cheesecloth or a fancy bag or gadget to do this. You don’t, just use your hands. Put a colander in the sink to catch any bits of potato that pop out as you squeeze.

The eggs and matzo meal also help keep the latkes from falling apart. So after you’ve squeezed out the liquid and added the other ingredients, give the mixture a couple of minutes to bind.

By the way, there’s no secret to peeling and grating; not much room for blunder there. Most people use a peeler, but I’m faster with a small, sharp paring knife. (Some cooks don’t peel at all, but I don’t like dirty potato skins.)

As for shredding: box grater or food processor? If the potatoes are hand-grated, the shreds are coarser and the latkes will be lacier. (Perhaps you’ve heard it said that latkes aren’t authentic unless the cook nicks a knuckle or grates a fingernail along with the potatoes. OK, gross! But it happens.)

Using a food processor takes less time than grating by hand. I often use my Cuisinart (with the shredding disk), especially if I’m making a double batch of latkes for a party. If you have folks offering to help, slicing the potatoes and putting them in the machine is an easily delegated chore. Food-processed latkes turn out denser than hand-shredded, but I like them just as much.

Frying the perfect latke

Prep tip No. 3: Getting the oil and the heat right matters – a lot.

I can’t say that I ever fried latkes in olive oil, but that’s because I’d already made that mistake frying chicken cutlets, so I knew it was a bad idea. Olive oil smokes and burns food at a lower temperature than other oils, and you don’t want to trigger the smoke alarm. (Been there.) So use canola, corn or other neutral vegetable oil, and turn the heat up to moderately high. The oil must be hot enough to crisp the latke exterior while at the same time cooking the inside through.

Once you get going and you’ve got all the latkes in the pan, that oil should be so hot that it bubbles. You’ll also have better, faster results in a stainless steel or coated fry pan than a heavy cast-iron pan. Again, I know this from experience. I often have one batch going in my cast-iron pan and another in my trusty old Farberware pan. The results taste the same to me; it’s just trickier with cast iron because the pan is heavier and takes longer to heat up.

Heat the pan on high for a few seconds (count to 10) before you pour the oil. And don’t just coat the pan. Put in enough oil – maybe a quarter-inch deep – so that your latkes are about halfway immersed. The oil is hot enough when a droplet of water flicked into the pan sizzles.

If the oil isn’t hot enough, the latkes will take too long to cook, becoming greasy instead of crispy. (Yup, I’ve done that, too.)

Don’t flip until they’re golden brown on the bottom. If you can’t see the edges browning, they’re probably not ready; take a peek before you turn them over. Flip them too soon, and they could fall apart. And don’t crowd them. You might also have to notch the heat up a tad once the pan is full. Give yourself room to slide the spatula under each pancake without disturbing the others.

To shape the latkes and get them in the pan in one piece, I use a big serving spoon. I clear a serving spoon to scoop the mixture from the bowl. Sometimes I pat them with my hands before carefully sliding them into the hot oil.

From stove to table: Every minute counts

Prep tip No. 4: Degrease and serve those latkes as fast as you can.

Set up a degreasing station in advance. Spread newspaper or a brown paper bag out on a counter, then cover with a layer of paper towels. As each hot, cooked latke comes out of the pan, lay it carefully on the paper towels. Press another paper towel on the top of each latke to sop up grease from that side, too.

Set the table (or have someone else do it) before you start cooking so you can serve the latkes immediately. You don’t want to be running back and forth for drinks, plates, applesauce and sour cream at this point. Trust me: Latkes taste better piping hot than when they’ve been sitting around for 15 minutes.

But there have been times when I couldn’t serve the latkes right away: guests were running late or some other problem needed fixing. So always preheat the oven to 375 and have a cookie sheet ready in case I need to keep them warm.

If I’m making more than one batch, I try to serve the first batch and make the second batch while the first batch is being eaten, rather than waiting until both batches are done. I usually have enough time to enjoy one latke myself at the table before that second round needs-degapping.

By the way, I love latkes so much that I make them year-round, often with recipes that use sweet potatoes or other vegetables. There are vegan (eggless) versions as well. Putting latkes into your regular meal rotation is also a great way to practice your technique. That way when Hanukkah rolls around, you’ll have mastered all the secrets to potato pancake perfection. ☺

Best Wishes for a Joyous & Peaceful Hanukkah

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Happy Hanukkah from GOVERNOR CHARLIE BAKER LT. GOVERNOR KARYN POLITO
WHILE THERE IS A part of me that wishes that I fell were in the latter second group, above, I must confess to having been – for most of my adult life – an inveterate rationalist, believing that the “miracles” in our sacred texts and in life either have rational explanations or are mythical in nature.

And by “mythical,” I mean, while perhaps offering universal and timeless truths, they were never intended to be factually or historically accurate.

Let me explain why I feel the way I do as we take a look together at the “miracle” most closely identified with the holiday of Hanukkah:

“When the Greeks entered the Temple, they defiled all the oils in it, and when the Hasmonian Dynasty prevailed over them, and defeated them, they searched and found only one bottle of oil sealed by the High Priest; it contained only enough for one day’s lighting. Yet, a miracle was brought about with it, and they lit with that oil for 8 days.” [R.T. Shabbat 21b]

Whether this “miracle” described by the Rabbis actually occurred, however, is strongly open to question. In their discussion of Hanukkah, the Rabbis ask the following question, “What is Hanukkah, anyway?” This is a rather puzzling question for the Rabbis to ask for the reason that, at the time they asked this question, the Jewish People had already been celebrating Hanukkah and the Maccabean victory over the Syrian Greeks for more than 500 years.

It appears that the Rabbis asked this question because they did not particularly like the Maccabean family and the Hasmonaean dynasty, whom they felt had sold out to the Romans, and because they did not want a military victory to serve as the underpinning for the holiday. They thus wanted to shift the focus of Hanukkah from the Maccabees and their military victory to God and God’s having performed a miracle with the vial of oil.

Whether this “miracle” actually occurred is further called into question by “The Book of Maccabees” a text that was written almost contemporaneously with the Maccabean Rebellion, and by the writings of other historians, like Josephus, who wrote about the origins of the holiday centuries before the Rabbis’ description of the miracle. Curiously, none of these earlier books and writings makes any mention of the “miracle” involving the vial of oil.

Thus, while unquestionably inspiring in nature, the story of the vial of oil lasting 8 days appears to be more myth than “miracle.”

I noted at the beginning of my article that part of me has always wanted to believe in miracles. Something occurred this past month that has shaken my Maimonidean rationalism to the core. My son and his wife had been trying unsuccessfully for years to have a child. As a result of the pain and disappointment that they have experienced and of my daughter-in-law’s having now passed her prime child-bearing years, they had pretty much lost hope of ever having a child.

A voice within told them, however, to give it one last try. Even when they became pregnant, their physician cautioned them not to get their hopes too high and to just take it day by day. In early November, their prayers, the entire families’ prayers, were answered, and they gave birth to a healthy little boy.

While the birth of my grandson caused a crack in my Aristotelian armor, I still needed something more to be persuaded. The Torah portion for the Sabbath immediately following my grandson’s birth was lach lecha. Toward the end of the parasha, Abraham asks God, how he is going to be the father of a great nation, when he and Sarah are childless, and he is now 99, and Sarah is beyond child-bearing years? Like my son and daughter-in-law, Abraham and Sarah had pretty much given up hope of ever becoming parents together.

When God tells Abraham that Sarah is going to bear a child within a year, Abraham laughs in disbelief. God then reaffirms that Sarah shall bear him a child and instructs Abraham to call him Isaac. Sarah does give birth to a son, and they name him Isaac, for as Sarah said, “God has brought me joy and laughter.” My son and daughter-in-law named their son Isaac.

When I asked them, why they selected this name, they said that they wanted their son to be a source of joy and laughter in the world.

A coincidence that my son’s and daughter-in-law’s experience so closely parallels that of Abraham and Sarah, right down to the name of their child? Perhaps, but I now prefer to believe that Isaac’s presence in the world is a true miracle.

Rabbi Howard Mandell leads Congregation Beth Israel in Andover.

By RABBI HOWARD MANDELL

‘Miracles’ have a place at Hanukkah and in daily life

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A Happy Hanukkah!

May this holiday season bring us all light through love, friendship and acts of kindness.

Joyous Chanukah!
the meat to his lips to appear to be eating. But Rabbi Eliezer refused to do even that and was put to death.

There were thousands of others who likewise sacrificed their lives. The famous story of Hannah and her seven children happened at that time. Antiochus’s men went from town to town and from village to village to force the inhabitants to worship pagan gods. Only one refuge area remained and that was the hills of Judea with their caves. But even there the Syrians pursue the faithful Jews, and many a Jew died a martyr’s death.

Mattityahu

O N E DAY the henchmen of Antiochus arrived in the village of Modin where Mattityahu, the old priest, lived. The Syrian officer built an altar in the marketplace of the village and demanded that Mattityahu offer sacrifices to the Greek gods. Mattityahu replied, “I, my sons and my brothers are determined to remain loyal to the covenant which our G-d made with our ancestors!”

Thereupon, a Hellenistic Jew approached the altar to offer a sacrifice. Mattityahu grabbed his sword and killed him, and his sons and friends fell upon the Syrian officers and men. They killed many of them and chased the rest away. They then destroyed the altar.

Mattityahu knew that Antiochus would be enraged when he heard what had happened. He realized that only by sending a powerful army could he hope to defeat Judah and his brave fighting men.

An army consisting of more than 40,000 men swept the land under the leadership of two commanders, Nicanaor and Gorgiash. When Judah and his brothers heard of that, they exclaimed: “Let us fight unto death in defense of our souls and our Temple!” The people assembled in Mizpah, where Samuel, the prophet of old, had offered prayers to G-d. After a series of battles the war was won.

The Dedication

N OW THE Maccabees returned to Jeru-salem to liberate it. They entered the Temple and cleared it of the idols placed there by the Syrian vandals. Judah and his followers built a new altar, which he dedicated on the twenty-fifth of the month of Kislev, in the year 3622 (139 B.C.E.).

Since the golden Menorah had been stolen by the Syrians, the Maccabaeans now made one of cheaper metal. When they wanted to light it, they found only a small cruse of pure olive oil bearing the seal of the High Priest Yochanan. It was sufficient to light only for one day. But by a miracle of G-d, it continued to burn for eight days, till new oil was made available. That miracle proved that G-d had again taken His people under His protection.

In memory of this, our sages appointed these eight days for annual thanksgiving and for lighting candles.

After Hanukkah

T HE BRIGHTNESS of the first Hanuk-kah light had dwindled down. But the holy fires on the altar burned again in the Beth Hamikdash, from morning to morn-ing, as prescribed by the Law. The priests were again busily officiating in the old customary ways, and day in, day out they prepared the offerings. Order and peace seemed established.

The Jewish farmer longed to return to his land after two years of hardship, privation and danger in the victorious Jewish army. It was high time to break the ground and to till the soil, if the barley was to grow and ripen in time for “Omer-offering,” on Passover. The Jewish farmers had left their ploughs to rally about the heroic Chashnomaim. The first victories had drawn even the hesitant into the ranks of the enthusiastic Jewish rebels, led by the sons of Mattityahu. Farmers had forsaken their land, merchants and tradersmen their stores and shops. Even Torah students had emerged from the four walls of the Beth Hami- drash to join the fight against the oppressors.

But the songs of victory, which had filled the reclaimed Holy Temple with praise and gratitude for the merciful G-d, had ceased. The goal of the battle seemed reached, and Torah and, again business law and trade. The messengers found Judah Maccabi already at work. Fortifications had to be thrown up around Zion. Towers, walls, battlements and moat had to be constructed opposite the fort still held by their worst enemies, the Hellenistic Jews, under the leadership of the false priest Menelaus. These hatred everything Jewish, and lived in the hope of the return of the Syrian masters. Judah Maccabi prepared Jerusalem against them and against imminent assault by the troops of Antiochus. Under his supervision the Jewish people worked fever-ishly to refill their arsenals and turn the whole country into a stronghold.

Once this most important task was accomplished, Judah Maccabi led his freshly trained troops to the aid of the regions and villages harassed by the spiteful neighbors of Judea. He drove the Idumeans from Hebron, which they had annexed, and he punished the people who had acted with hostility towards the Jewish settlers. Then he led his army across the Jordan River against the Ammonites. Their capital fell before the furious onslaught of the Jewish troops, and so did their fortress, Yaros. Judah’s brother Shimon led an army north to aid the plague-stricken Jews of Galilee. He defeated the enemy and cleared the Jewish land.

At his urging, a great many of the Jewish settlers who had fled to Jerusalem, returned to rebuild in safety what had been destroyed during the years of weakness, Judah Maccabi and Yonatan joined forces and marched against Gilead, where they were met with the toughest resistance. By Shavuot, this campaign was successfully concluded. Judea was again free, and all parts captured by the neighboring nation had been recov-ered. Celebrations and festivity transformed Jerusalem and the Holy Temple, hardly half a year after the victories over the Syrian armies. The Jewish people expressed their joy and gratitude to G-d in the form of palms and other symbols of national glory and liber-ty to the Jewish land.  

Happy Hanukkah!  
Sending Love, Light & Peace!