

The background of the entire cover is a photograph of the interior of the Oklahoma State Capitol dome. The image shows the grand architecture with its high vaulted ceiling, ornate columns, and large murals depicting historical scenes. The lighting is warm and golden, highlighting the details of the building's interior.

TULSA *Jewish Review*

Tamuz/Av 5785
July 2025

STANDING FIRM:
HOW OKLAHOMA TOOK A STAND
AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

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CONTENTS

- 5 Director's Corner by Joe Roberts
- 6 Jewish Federation of Tulsa Upcoming Events
- 8 Welcome Michael Sachs
- 10 Standing Firm: How Oklahoma Took a Stand Against Antisemitism by Jacob Parra
- 12 Charles Schusterman Jewish Community Center Upcoming Events
- 14 What I Saw at the Tzomet Games: Choosing the Jewish Future by Joe Roberts
- 16 The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art
- 18 Reflection and Resilience by Sarah Howman
- 20 The Power of Peer-Led Education by Xander Loosvelt
- 21 Judaic Education Returns to the University of Tulsa
- 22 Mizel JCDS Advances Teacher Growth Through Innovative Professional Development by Amanda Anderson
- 23 Farewell Morah Alin Avitan
- 24 The History of the Mezuzah® by Phil Goldfarb
- 25 Simchas
- 27 Zarrow Pointe Butterflies
- 28 Congregation B'nai Emunah - Events Calendar
- 30 Temple Israel - Events Calendar
- 31 Welcoming Our New Interim Rabbi: Rabbi Appel Joins Temple Israel by Brina Reinstein
- 32 Honey Sales Fundraiser!

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Front Cover



How Oklahoma Took a Stand Against
Antisemitism

JEWISH FEDERATION OF TULSA

MISSION:

The mission of the Jewish Federation is to preserve and enhance Jewish life and well-being in Eastern Oklahoma, Israel, and the entire world. The mission is being addressed by pursuing charitable, humanitarian, cultural, educational, health, and social service needs of the Jewish community as well as by engaging in community relations, outreach, and providing a variety of services to the broader Tulsa community. The Jewish Federation supports the Charles Schusterman Jewish Community Center, The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art, and Mizel Jewish Community Day School.

VALUES:

Kehila – Community

Fostering a connected and collaborative Jewish community, characterized by respect, empathy, and understanding.

Tzedek – Justice

Continuously improving the quality of life of all Tulsans, as well as our partners in Israel and abroad, through philanthropic giving of our resources and time.

L'Dor V'Dor – From Generation to Generation

Sustaining the culture, traditions, and collective memory of the Jewish people, through innovative intergenerational programming that is meaningful, educational, and fun.



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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

CELEBRATION IN A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY

by Joe Roberts, Executive Director

There's a line that Max Nordau delivered to the First Zionist Congress in 1897 that's been rattling around in my head these past few weeks. He said, "We are not beggars. We do not ask for mercy. We demand what is ours by right."

It's a statement of pride, of defiance, and of belonging. And in a time when Jews are being told—again—that we do not belong, it feels like the right place to begin.

This issue of the *Tulsa Jewish Review* is about antisemitism. And G-d knows, there's enough to write about. The ADL reported that 2023 was the worst year for antisemitism in American history. The number of incidents jumped by 400% after October 7 alone. 2024 was worse. And 2025 is on track to surpass even those numbers. Perhaps what's most devastating of all is that many of us are realizing that the safe, accepted Jewish life we believed in may have been more fragile than we thought.

So yes, I could use this space to sound the alarm. But instead, I want to do something radical: I want to celebrate.

I want to celebrate the joy, the unity, the stubborn resilience of the Jewish people—of our people, right here in Tulsa.

Because while antisemitism is real and rising, so too is something else. Our strength. Our togetherness. Our peoplehood.

That word—*peoplehood*—is central to who we are. We are not only a religion, though we share one. We are not only a culture, though ours is rich and beautiful. We are not just a set of traditions, laws, or customs. We are a people, linked not only by faith, but by fate. That's why what happens in Tel Aviv matters in Tulsa. That's why a 20-year-old college student in Norman feels shaken when protesters target Jews on a campus in Manhattan. That's why a Jewish child in Bixby lights a menorah and somehow feels connected to a child in Paris doing the same.

It's not rational. It's not explainable. It's something deeper. Something older than most nations on earth. That's what we mean when we say *am Yisrael chai*. The people of Israel live.

Here's something you may not have heard in the midst of all this ugliness: 2025 is shaping up to be one of the most engaged years in Jewish communal

life in a generation. Federation giving is up across the country. Synagogue membership is growing in many cities for the first time in decades. In our own community, events are packed. Young families are showing up. Teens are stepping up. People are choosing to be Jewish more—not less—because of this moment.

Maybe it's our innate contrarianism (there's a reason the old joke goes, "Two Jews, three opinions, four committees..."), or maybe it's something more profound.

We've been through worse. We've survived worse. And not just survived—but *flourished*. We've studied Torah in Babylon. We've written poetry in Spain. We've founded states and won Nobel Prizes and raised families in places where we were told we didn't belong.

I believe in that story. I believe in that peoplehood. And yes, I believe in America too—a country, like the Jewish people, founded on an idea. An idea that all people are created equal. That we have the right to worship freely, to live in peace, to stand proud in our identities.

Are we perfect? Of course not. Neither is the United States. But both the Jewish people and America have something rare in common: we do not give up on ourselves. We keep striving toward our promise.

So today, in the shadow of pain and uncertainty, I say: let's keep building. Keep singing. Keep holding each other close. Let's light candles, tell stories, and make our grandmothers' kugel even if it's not *as good as hers*. Let's teach our children what it means to be part of something ancient and beautiful and still unfolding.

Let's choose joy. Let's choose hope. Let's choose each other.

Because we are not beggars. We are builders.

And the future is ours to shape. ■



UPCOMING EVENTS



From Tulsa to the Frontlines: Journey Between Two Worlds | Thursday, July 10 | 6:30 pm Nosh | 7 pm Program | JFT

What compels a young Israeli-Tulsa to leave the comfort of his American life to stand with his friends in defense of his homeland? Over the past two years, Matan Poler has been living between two worlds—his career and community in Tulsa—and his roots and family in Israel. In this intimate conversation, Matan will share his powerful personal journey and the complex reality of navigating dual identities during a time of conflict. His stories offer a rare and deeply human perspective—one you won't hear in the headlines. We'll begin the evening with a Mediterranean dinner at 6:30, followed by Matan's talk at 7 pm.

RSVP: jewishtulsa.org/matan-poler



PJ Pool Day | Sunday, July 13 | 10 am | Sharna and Irvin Frank Aquatics Center

Join our PJ Library families for some fun in the sun! We will have the Sharna and Irvin Frank Aquatics Center all to ourselves this morning. Brunch foods, sweet treats, free swim, play, and schmooze with other families raising their children Jewishly. This program is \$10/family.

RSVP: JewishTulsa.org/pj-july2025



Advocacy Training Series | Sundays: July 13, 20, 27 | 2 pm | JFT

Join us for "Advocacy in Action", presented by the Community Relations Committee. This dynamic three-part learning series is designed to empower individuals with the tools, strategies, and confidence to be effective advocates for change. Whether you're new to advocacy or looking to sharpen your skills, this interactive series will guide you through the essentials of impactful advocacy work—from understanding policy and power, to crafting compelling messages, to building strong coalitions. We strongly encourage attendance at all three sessions if possible.

RSVP: JewishTulsa.org/advocacy



YJP Torah on Tap | Tuesday, July 15 | 7 pm | Nothings Left Brewing

Join us for a thought-provoking evening of learning and conversation with Rabbi Weg from Chabad as we dive into a taboo topic in Judaism. This session's topic will focus on the common question "is G-d male or female?" Rabbi Weg will pull from various sources in our texts to provide insight and get you thinking about this fascinating topic.

YJP's are ages 21-40.

RSVP: JewishTulsa.org/torahtap-Jul2025

UPCOMING EVENTS



Investing Wisely in a Prestige Economy: A Model for Defeating Antisemitism | Wednesday, July 23 | 7 pm | Sherwin Miller Museum

We've tried using logic, data, and education. We've taught about the Holocaust and explained what constitutes antisemitism—again and again. Maybe we need to think differently. Dr. Pamela Paresky will discuss a new possible paradigm for conceptualizing the current increase in antisemitism and how to combat it. Dr. Paresky is a social psychologist and Associate in the psychology department at Harvard University. Her work on antisemitism has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Jewish Journal*, *Politico*, and more.

RSVP: JewishTulsa.org/paresky



JMoms Movement | Tuesday, July 29 | 7 pm | Barre3

Join fellow JMoms, Tina Whitler, as she leads you in a one-hour Barre3 class. Barre combines ballet, Pilates, yoga, and strength training into a low-impact, highly effective workout. Through small controlled movements and targeted muscle engagement, it builds strength, flexibility, and long, lean muscles. Perfect for all levels. Wear comfortable workout clothes, bring a water bottle, and Barre3 provides the rest! Keep the fun going with post-class refreshments at R Bar.

RSVP: JewishTulsa.org/JMoms-July2025



Lunch Bunch: Laws from The Torah Adopted into U.S. Law | Wednesday, July 30 | 12 pm | Burnstein Auditorium @ ZP

We will learn about the incredible number of laws from the Torah that were adopted into U.S. law, shaping who and what we are as a people and society. Presenter Stephen D. Tick is a retired, senior member of the oldest and one of the most prestigious law firms in Denver. Stephen has been researching, writing, and lecturing on this subject for over 20 years, and has taught in synagogues, churches, a mosque, and at US and Israeli military bases. You will see the Torah in an entirely new light, significant to the foundation of our society, rather than an ancient document without relevance. Optional lunch for \$13.

RSVP: JewishTulsa.org/lb-July2025

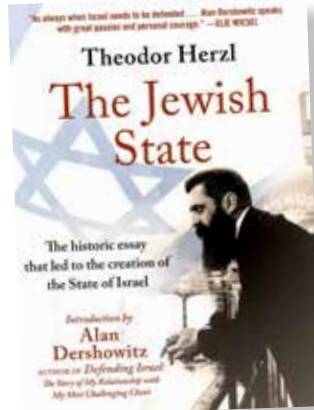


Women's Philanthropy: Knead a Night Out?! | Thursday, July 31 | 6:30 pm | Sherwin Miller Museum

Ladies! Join us for a special Women's Philanthropy challah baking workshop celebrating Jewish Tulsa women who give \$180 or more to our annual campaign. We'll enjoy wine and schmoozing before the class begins at 7 pm. Braiding expert, Kathy Sandler, will guide us through making beautiful challah to bake for Shabbat. Each participant will leave with a ready-to-bake challah and instructions for future baking fun. Connect with community and celebrate women's giving—because every Jewish Tulsa woman who gives is a philanthropist!

RSVP: JewishTulsa.org/knead

UPCOMING EVENTS



New! Zionist Book Club – Part 1 | Wednesday, August 7, 7 pm | JFT

We're launching a bold new series to rediscover the foundational texts of Zionism—not as dry history, but as living ideas that shaped the Jewish future and still shape us now. Led by Executive Director, Joe Roberts, we'll examine the book that started it all: *The Jewish State* by Theodor Herzl. In 1896, Herzl wrote that the Jews must “will” their own future—that only by seizing our own destiny could we survive as a people. He wasn't writing a dream. He was writing a plan. Now, in 2025, we'll read it together—and ask: what do we will now? Whether you're steeped in Zionist history or just beginning to ask big questions about Israel, peoplehood, and Jewish purpose—this is the place to be.

RSVP: JewishTulsa.org/book-club-1



SAVE the DATE ~ August 23

Summer Soiree & Havdallah | Saturday, August 23 | 7:30 pm

- Havdalah, Apps and Drinks by Catering by Orr
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- Evening Swim Time and Community!

WELCOME NEW JFT STAFF MEMBER MICHAEL SACHS



Michael Sachs

Michael A. Sachs is an accomplished Jewish community leader and philanthropy professional with extensive experience in organizational leadership, advocacy, and strategic development. Beginning in July 2025, Sachs will join the Jewish Federation of Tulsa as Senior Director of Strategic Philanthropy, where he will lead major gift development, donor engagement, and strategic funding initiatives to advance the Federation's mission and impact.

Prior to his appointment in Tulsa, Sachs served as the inaugural Director of Western Canada for the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center (FSWC), where he led regional efforts to combat antisemitism, advance Holocaust education, and promote human rights. Previously, as Executive Director of the Jewish National Fund (JNF) Pacific Region, he oversaw

major philanthropic campaigns and community programs, including the widely recognized Covid Challah Initiative, which delivered thousands of challahs across Metro Vancouver during the pandemic as an act of community care.

Sachs has also held numerous leadership roles within the Vancouver Jewish community, including serving as President of The Bayit Synagogue in Richmond, and on the boards of the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver, Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), Tikva Housing Society, and the Kehila Society of Richmond. His leadership has been recognized with the Jewish Federation Young Leadership Award and inclusion in the Jewish Independent's 18 Under 36. ■

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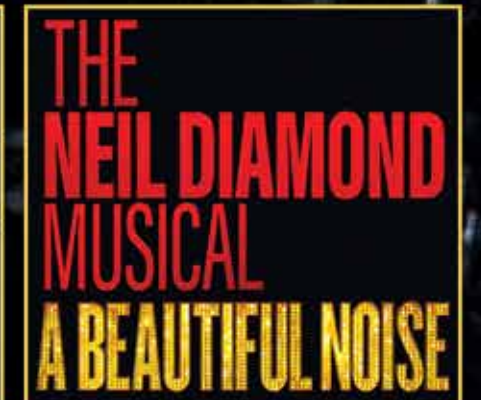
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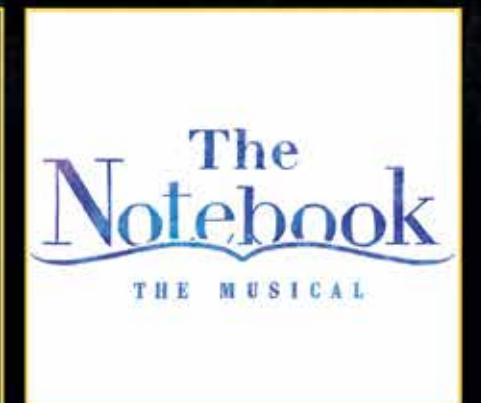
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STANDING FIRM: HOW OKLAHOMA TOOK A STAND AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

by Jacob Parra, Young Jewish Professional/Political Strategist

At least three times a day, I recite *Oseh Shalom*. It's a meaningful prayer, added at the end of every *Amidah* and every *Kaddish*, a plea for peace in the heavens and then here, on us, and on all of Israel. It's a quiet yet powerful plea that has anchored Jewish hope across generations of exile, persecution, and war. We say it still, knowing peace is both promised and painfully distant.

Since October 7th, I've watched antisemitism shift from fringe ignorance to mainstream rationalization. Suddenly, our existence was treated like a political problem. Our pain was seen as conditional. And in some circles, our removal was floated as a solution.

I spent the first few months angry, not just at the hatred itself, but at how quickly people I once considered allies made excuses for it or simply stayed quiet. I heard Jewish fear dismissed, mocked, or blamed. It became clear we were back in a place that felt hauntingly familiar: misunderstood, misrepresented, and alone. Eventually, I realized the mindset to battle antisemitism had to change. We could no longer assume the world had learned anything permanent from history. That era, if it ever truly existed, is over.

I knew the only response was action. The rising indifference, the double standards, the silence—it made one thing clear: we needed new policy, not just new outrage. So I stepped forward. I joined a nationwide task force to push for real legislative change. When our task force first began advocating for Senate Bills 991 and 942—measures designed to define antisemitism in Oklahoma law and require schools to take action on that definition—the most common response wasn't outright opposition. It was a dismissal. Lawmakers, some in good faith and others not, questioned why we needed them at all. "Is antisemitism even a real problem in Oklahoma?" "Aren't Jews already protected?" "Isn't this just about Israel?" Some had never even met a Jew. Others thought the word "antisemitism" was too vague or complex to legislate. Many did not see the urgency. Some simply did not see the issue at all.

Then came the pushback—beyond ignorance, into accusation. One senator claimed the bills would criminalize Christianity. Another accused me personally of trying to make Jews "untouchable," suggesting I was advancing a global conspiracy. A senator from Tulsa said I was pushing the bill for political reasons and claimed, "Jews are the most protected group in world history." On the Senate floor,



JFT staff, lay leaders, and students from Oklahoma universities attend lobby day.



one lawmaker said, "Jesus didn't kill himself—the Jews killed him." A representative from Norman expressed concern that students might be prevented from accusing Jews of dual loyalty or creating antisemitic art projects as class assignments. This was framed, astonishingly, as a matter of free speech.

In these moments, I felt belittled—treated as if I was being dramatic for naming what was plainly in front of us. I was shocked by how much energy it took just to get people to legislate antisemitism. During my eight trips to the Capitol, I walked the halls of what's called the "People's House," yet I often felt like a stranger in it. I served this country for six years as an infantryman in the Oklahoma Army National Guard—responding to riots, disaster relief, and anything else I could do to protect my community. I gave my time, my energy, and even helped some of these legislators get into office. And now I was coming home drained, lying in bed, repeating their words in my head, wondering how standing up for us could ever be this hard. Yet in those same halls, I began building real relationships. Each exhausting conversation was also a step toward helping lawmakers understand who I am and who we are.

But I also knew: this was the work. These lawmakers needed to see me—not a headline, not a statistic, but a person. A Jew who loves this state and believes we deserve to be protected in it. I wasn't just lobbying. I was educating, pushing them to think harder, to see clearer. And as tiring as it was, it strengthened my resolve.

"But I also knew: this was the work. These lawmakers needed to see me—not a headline, not a statistic, but a person."

Despite these challenges, we were not alone. We built a taskforce that held firm: the Jewish Federation of Tulsa, the Jewish Federation of Oklahoma City, Stand With Us, the Combating Antisemitism Movement, OU Hillel, ORU's Eagles for Israel, ADL, End Jew Hatred Movement, JFNA and Christians United for Israel. Our legislative champions, Senator Kristen Thompson and Representative Emily Gise, didn't merely author the bills. They actively fought for them, addressing every concern, taking every phone call, and responding to every attack. Their consistent dedication gave the legislation the political momentum it needed.

Behind the scenes, the work never stopped. We coordinated messaging, organized back-to-back meetings with lawmakers, prepared informational materials, and tracked committee agendas to secure votes when it mattered most. Passing legislation in Oklahoma requires coordination across both chambers of the Legislature. Bills must be introduced, assigned to committee, heard and accepted in committee, then passed by the full chamber—first the Senate, then the House (or vice versa)—before reaching the Governor's desk. Each step includes its own risks: deadlines, vote counts, amendment threats, or political interference. We tracked opposition, provided briefings, and stayed in contact with staff. Behind every success was a series of strategic calls, drop-in visits, and

floor management efforts to keep things moving.

We also organized Oklahoma Jewish Advocacy Day at the Capitol—a full day of direct engagement. Nearly two dozen legislators met face-to-face with advocates from across the state. For many lawmakers, it was their first genuine conversation with Jewish constituents. For many volunteers, it was their first time stepping into the Capitol to advocate. That day mattered. It moved votes. Young voices, in particular, gave a human face to a problem our community has long understood.

We had a private sit-down with Governor Kevin Stitt, who spoke warmly of Oklahoma's Jewish community and shared about learning Shabbat traditions from a rabbi in Oklahoma City. He described blessing his children on Friday nights with Birkat HaBanim, placing his hands on their heads to recite the traditional blessing before dinner. The Speaker of the House personally committed to seeing the bills through. These weren't just gestures—they were political signals. And they told us we had a real shot.

Still, even with political momentum on our side, the fight was far from over. Committee rooms remained tense. Misinformation circulated frequently—claims that the

bills would criminalize Easter, ban free speech critical of Jewish people, or that the bills were funded and directed by foreign entities tied to the Israeli government. Others insisted these bills were Islamophobic or a covert step toward banning Christianity

outright. These distortions weren't just isolated—they were echoed in hearings and private meetings, casting doubt on legislation that was, at its core, about civil rights and equal protection. Still, the legislation advanced. Senate

(Continued, p. 26)



L to Rt: Jacob Parra (Board Member/JFT), David Soffer, Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM), Representative Emily Gise, Joe Roberts (Executive Director/JFT), Chloe Chappell (Director of Community Relations and Outreach/JFT), Sarah Howman (Director of Community Engagement/JFT).

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Fitness Challenge: Jump into July**

This month, we're jumping into wellness—literally! The Jump into July Challenge is all about powering up your heart rate and your happiness. Each week features different types of jumping or dynamic lower-body exercises—think jump squats, jumping jacks, jump rope, or even dance-based workouts. No impact? No problem. Modify with step-outs and reach-ups. Each completed “jump session” earns you a firework sticker on the bulletin board. Light up the sky with your consistency!

**Dive-in Movie | Saturday, July 19 | 7 pm | Sharna and Irvin Frank Aquatics Center**

Splash into summer fun with a family-friendly evening at the pool! All CSJCC members and their families are invited to our July pool party and Dive-In Movie. Splash around under the evening sky, enjoy snow cones, a glow party, and the featured movie, **Despicable Me 4**, at dusk. Join us for an unforgettable blend of fun, film, and family time! Free to CSJCC members; \$20/family for non-members.

RSVP: csjcc.org/July-pool

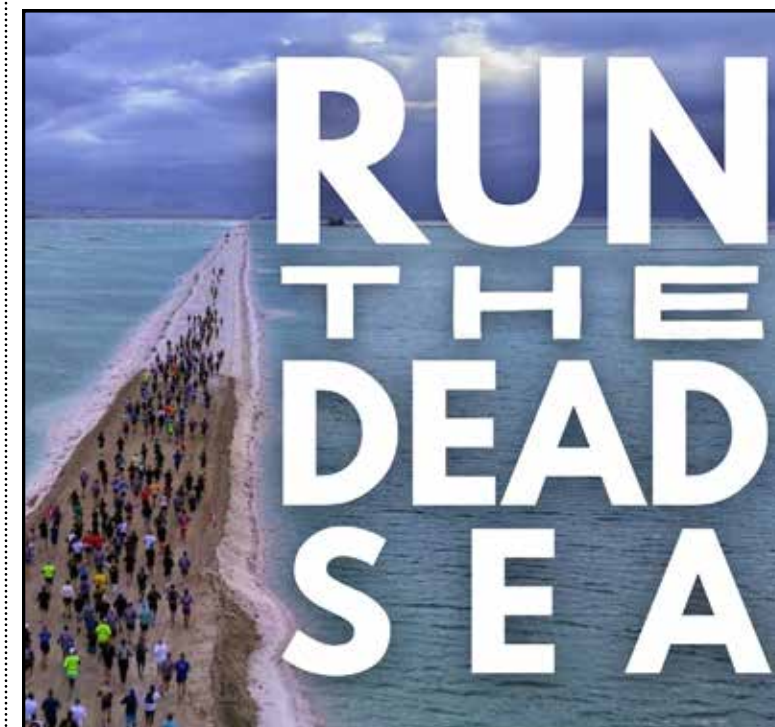
**Tzedek: Meals on Wheels | Friday, July 11 | 10:30 – 12:30 pm**

Join us as we help stuff and seal envelopes for important mailings to go out. Please meet a little before 10:30 at Meals on Wheels, and we will volunteer until 12:30 pm. We will be off our feet and seated the majority of the time. 12 spots available.

RSVP at: csjcc.org/tzedek-july2025

**Self-led: H2O Hustle Tuesdays/Thursdays 4 – 5 pm**

Build community and get your “steps” in this summer! Our two lanes in the outdoor pool are dedicated to lap swimming and water walking. This summer, we are creating a self-led community of water walkers at the outdoor pool every Tuesday and Thursday. Throw on your swimsuit and get moving and grooving in the outdoor pool. Lap lanes will be open from 4 – 5 pm for H2O Hustle (Water Walking). We will turn up the Jukebox Jams and create a fun space for water walking. Movement in the water is beneficial for everyone, especially for those seeking zero to low-impact exercise. The more people who attend, the more current will be generated to increase your resistance in the water. Grab a friend, get your water steps in, and hang out poolside!



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WHAT I SAW AT THE TZOMET GAMES: CHOOSING THE JEWISH FUTURE

by Joe Roberts, Executive Director

A few weeks ago, I sat in a room that I haven't stopped thinking about since.

Fifty Jewish leaders, thinkers, and activists gathered in New York City for something called the Tzomet Games—an experiment in radical honesty and bold imagination. We weren't there to review balance sheets or share best practices. We weren't there to recite talking points or paper over divisions. We were there for one purpose: to confront the Jewish future.

In Hebrew, the word tzomet means “intersection.” That's exactly where we stood—at the intersection of past and future, fear and hope, decline and renewal.

The assignment was simple and impossible: imagine what American Jewish life could look like 25 years from now. But instead of predicting the future, we were asked to work backward from a set of vivid scenarios designed by bestselling author Dara Horn. Some were frightening. Some were strangely hopeful. None were far-fetched.

There was a future where Jewish life flourished, co-opted by American culture writ large. Another where Jewish communities, wealthy and technologically sophisticated, drifted into cultural isolation. One vision was far darker: Jews driven into both digital and physical ghettos, harassed by antisemitism from both the far right and far left, retreating into smaller and more fortified enclaves. And finally, a scenario in which adversity sparks spiritual

revival, led by a rapidly expanding Haredi population as broader economic and social decline takes hold.

As I sat with these scenarios, one thing became painfully clear: None of these futures are impossible. Some of them are already starting.

But here is what struck me most, and what stayed with me long after the formal exercises ended: We are not helpless.

For all the threats we face—and there are many—the Jewish people still possess something rare: extraordinary talent, immense agency, and the capacity to shape our destiny. I looked around that room and saw people who could just as easily be running Fortune 500 companies, top universities, or world-class think tanks. But they are choosing to build Jewish life. And that choice matters.

We are not simply passengers on history's train. We can lay the tracks.

And that is what made this gathering so powerful, especially at this moment. Because let's be honest, since October 7, many of us have felt trapped between heartbreak and exhaustion. We've seen institutions that failed to rise to the moment. We've watched friends and allies turn away. We've confronted not only the ancient hatred of antisemitism but also the terrifying modern forms it has taken: sophisticated, systemic, and often cloaked in the language of progress.



Tzomet Games participants

This is the crisis of our time. But the danger is not only external. The danger is that we begin to see ourselves only as victims. That we let the world define us by what happens to us rather than by what we are building.

The Tzomet Games was a refusal of that posture.

It was a call to think differently, to break the patterns and paradigms that no longer serve us. To stop waiting for permission. To stop assuming the old models will save us.

Among the remarkable people in that room was Barak Sella, one of the inaugural Elson Israel Fellows at the Jewish Federation of Tulsa. Watching Barak contribute to this national conversation was more than just a proud moment—it was a reminder that even from communities like ours, far from the largest Jewish centers, we are producing the leadership that will shape what comes next.

Because that is the truth: the future of the Jewish people is not being written in New York or Jerusalem alone. It will be written wherever Jews choose to step up with courage and clarity—in Tulsa, too.

Since returning home, I've been asking myself hard questions. Are we as bold as we need to be? Are we building institutions nimble enough to serve the next

generation? Are we preparing our children not just to inherit the Jewish world—but to lead it?

The great charge of Jewish history is not simply to survive. It is to live with purpose, with mission, with covenant. As the Tzomet Chair, Rabbi David Wolpe reminded us: Judaism is not a hobby. It is a calling.


The Tzomet Games gave me no easy answers. But it left me with something far more valuable: a sharpened sense of urgency. The work of building the Jewish future won't happen by inertia or default. It will happen if we make it happen. If we are willing to choose.

And if we do, perhaps we will be worthy of the words that echo through every generation: “Lo alecha hamlacha ligmor, v'lo ata ben chorin l'hibatel mimena”—it is not upon you to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it.

The crossroads are here. The choice is ours. At the Jewish Federation of Tulsa, we're embracing it with eyes wide open. ■



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TRACEY HERST-WOODS NOMINATED TO JOIN BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF CAJM

Mazel Tov to Tracey Herst-Woods, who has been nominated by the Council of American Jewish Museums (CAJM) Board of Directors and Executive Director, Christine Beresniova, to join their Board of Directors, beginning July 1, 2025.

The Council of American Jewish Museums (CAJM) is an association of institutions and individuals committed to enriching American and Jewish culture and enhancing the value of Jewish museums to their communities. It offers programs, networking, and learning opportunities to the Jewish museum field, and highlights issues pertaining to the presentation of Jewish culture. It is the leading forum for Jewish museums in North America, and connects well-aligned colleagues across related sectors.

"It is with great pride and honor that I have been voted to sit on the board of CAJM," stated Herst-Woods. "This opportunity to have a seat at the table to learn, grow, and contribute with some of the best leaders in the museum field is humbling and a privilege. I look forward to bringing new ideas and opportunities and sharing them with The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art staff and supporters."

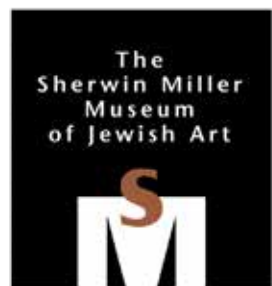
The mission of CAJM is to strengthen, position, and champion America's Jewish museums as invaluable public and Jewish resources. ■



Tracey Herst-Woods

SAVE THE DATE

OCTOBER
26, 2025



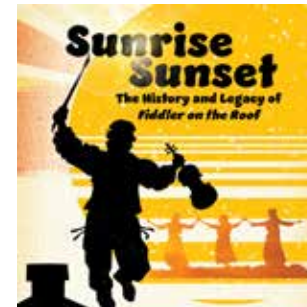
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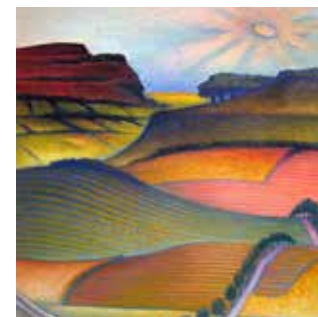
Sunrise Sunset: The History and Legacy of *Fiddler on the Roof*

Tradition! *Fiddler on the Roof* is an international classic that has made its way into the hearts and homes of generations of people—and not just theater kids! This exhibition has a little bit of everything—history, Judaica, art, and even set pieces and costumes from the Tulsa Performing Arts Center's most recent production of *Fiddler*. Join us for a celebration of this much-loved story and be prepared to learn a thing or two about this timeless classic.



Bashert: The Art of Jewish Love

Love is in the air! Grab your sweetheart and join us for a celebration of love as depicted by works in our permanent collection. This multi-media exhibition includes prints, oil paintings, sculpture, and Judaica. The opening reception includes the sharing of Jewish love stories from local couples.



Theodore Fried: Art in Hiding

This exhibition is a celebration of the survival of art in dark times with Theodore Fried's work that was hidden in Europe during the Holocaust. SMMJA is honored and privileged to house the largest collection of Fried's work.



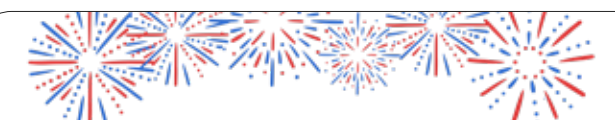
Temple Israel Songbook Illustrations

Ready for a trip down memory lane? Revisit the charm of Sunday school at Temple Israel with these delightful, vibrant illustrations by Tulsa native Carmelita Avery. Created in 1945, these pieces capture the playful spirit of the era. Donated to the Museum in 2002 by the artist's daughter, Sharon Avery, these works are proudly on display for the very first time.

TO SCHEDULE A GROUP TOUR



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HOLIDAY HOURS

Friday, July 4 CLOSED



REFLECTION AND RESILIENCE

by Sarah Howman, Director of Community Engagement

As I stand still in silence, the wind ruffling through the leaves on trees, making my black dress flutter, picking up loads of dirt and dust, surrounded by sobbing families of the dead and tourists, I am transported back to years before this moment. I am shivering in multiple layers of clothing, winter coat, gloves, and boots as the snow falls on me. I watch tourists take photos, read signs, stand in shock at the sheer size of this compound that killed 6,000,000 innocent. 80 years standing in between the liberation of Auschwitz in Poland and the site of The Nova Festival Massacre in Re'im, Israel.

I have been to both, just 8 ½ years apart. One in the blazing heat, the other in the freezing cold. One surrounded by local school kids on their Holocaust education trip, the other surrounded by IDF soldiers on their October 7th education/remembrance tour. One trip as a freshman in college with Olami, the other as a Jewish Professional with the Jewish Community Center Association. The difference is astonishing. I am a completely different person, but is the world different? Just a few months after my Holocaust trip, we hosted wounded IDF soldiers to tell their story of their service, and we were boycotted and forced out of our reserved room in the main building on campus. In the two weeks since I've been back from Israel, there have been two domestic terror attacks on Jewish communities in the United States.

Before going to Israel, I was nervous. I was worried about missiles from Gaza and Yemen, rightfully so, but I was

assured that we wouldn't be going if it wasn't safe. While I did spend a decent amount of time in the bomb shelters and apartment stairwells (the designated safe space in these buildings), nothing on the itinerary changed throughout the entire trip. Israelis are resilient. Israel is resilient. The country continues on, people go to work and take their kids to school. I attended a Lag B'Omer first birthday BBQ party, two home-hosted Shabbat dinners, and watched an English-speaking Zumba class in the middle of the market as I ate dinner with my cohort. Every single person and organization we met thanked us over and over again for coming and praised us for getting on the plane the day that the Houthi missile hit and shut down the Ben Gurion airport. They were grateful for our dedication to learning about the ongoing war and learning about the perseverance of Israeli society even with the danger of being under constant missile strikes.

The overall theme of this trip was focused on a shared society. As Americans like to say, the country is a melting pot. We met with people of all different racial and socio-economic backgrounds. One that stood out to me was meeting with a Bedouin woman, Bachita, with translation help from Debbie Golan, founder of Atid B'midbar, a nonprofit organization that strives to enrich conversation by featuring voices of Israel's unheard communities. On my Birthright trip, we went to the stereotypical "Bedouin tent" which was basically the equivalent of glamping in the US. This is not how most Bedouins actually live, but

they know college kids visiting don't want to sleep in a non-air-conditioned tent in the middle of the summer, so they make it more accommodating with running water and electricity.

Walking into Bachita's 'hosting tent,' I experienced culture shock. This was the nicer of her spaces because it was for hosting, and yet it still didn't have a floor. The structure was made from wooden beams stuck in the ground to hold up fabric as walls and a roof made out of locally found scrapped metal. She served us sugary tea that she made on a wood fire in the middle of the tent. She was born to a polygamist family and was married off in her early teen years. At the time I was graduating from high school, she already had two children with her husband 20 years older than her. This didn't stop her from realizing her potential to better her and her children's lives. She took initiative and went into the closest city, Yerucham, a small town in the Negev, about 30 minutes south of Be'er Sheva. She found a community center, which in Tulsa, we would call the JCC. She started learning Hebrew, because in order to work outside of her home, she needed to learn the most common language in Israel. Bachita became an advocate for women in the Bedouin community, empowering them to go to the local community centers in town to educate themselves and become independent thinkers from their fathers and husbands. It was inspiring to hear what she



Group photo of Martin Pear Israel Fellows (Sarah 4th from left in back row)

has accomplished! Just like everyone else we met with, she thanked us for coming to visit and learn.

Another place representing a shared society that we visited is the Community Center of Bet Shemesh. The city is predominantly Jewish, but there is a huge range of the residents. From Haredi to religious Zionists to secular Jews, this is also considered an element of a shared city. Bet Shemesh is the youngest city in Israel with 30 babies born a day. Due to the massive influx of people living there plus being on the poorer end of the economic scale in Israel, the residents need many social services. The community center is a hub for activities, social services, education, and more. We toured a small section of the centers including the ninja gym and the music rooms where 24,000 kids come for after school programs daily! The numbers were truly staggering. This system of community centers in Bet Shemesh reminds me so much of our Jewish Tulsa community, especially during the summer as kids are running through the halls of the CSJCC at Camp Shalom.

As I think about all the places I visited in just 17 days, I am filled with gratitude for this experience. I think about my previous Jewish education trips. The biggest difference between my Poland trip and my recent Israel trip? The orthodox rabbi on my Poland trip didn't wear his kippa without a hat overtop while traveling through the country. In 2025, for the first time in my adult life, I bought and wore a Jewish star necklace. I wouldn't work in the Jewish communal world if I didn't feel proud to be Jewish. I wouldn't go to Shabbat dinners every week and other Jewish events throughout college without being proud to be Jewish. I wouldn't have a ketubah hanging in my home if I didn't feel proud to be Jewish. In a time that can be scary to be Jewish, I choose to show up proudly day in and out. I am thankful that this trip enhanced my feeling that I am meant to be where I am in life: as a Jewish professional. ■



Orthodox Men at the Western Wall



Nova Festival site

THE POWER OF PEER-LED EDUCATION

by Xander Loosvelt

When the opportunity to join Tulsa's Student to Student Program was first presented to me in the Spring of 2024, there was no other answer than yes. Since I had moved to Tulsa in the fall of 2021, it became very clear to me that there was a growing importance for education on Judaism in a place where the Jewish population is so small. In the wake of October 7th, the severe lack of knowledge about Judaism became crystal clear. I spent many days wishing people would come to understand the truth. When the chance arose for me to teach and share my Judaism with teen peers in Oklahoma, I gladly joined the Student to Student Program.

When I first started, although I was excited and understood the importance of the presentations, I was petrified of presenting. The thought of talking about Judaism in front of many people I didn't know, who may already have a negative opinion of Jewish people due to the widespread misinformation in mainstream media, was scary for me. I worried about the first impression I might make for those who didn't know a lot, or possibly knew nothing, about Judaism. Despite my fears of all that could go wrong, what kept me motivated and encouraged was thinking about the impact these presentations would have on students and the increased importance of combating antisemitism.

Over the two academic years that I was a part of Student to Student, we presented at a wide variety of schools including: Bishop Kelly, a private Catholic school; Jenks High School, a public school; Mounds Middle School, a rural school; and Street School, an alternative education school. Our presentations started off with an introduction to the basics of Judaism, followed by teachings of the Jewish Life Cycle and Shabbat. We then moved on to impactful sections on Antisemitism and the Holocaust; Israel from a historical, cultural, and religious perspective; and then Kashrut. If time permitted, we also would discuss a recent or upcoming Jewish holiday such as Rosh Hashanah, Hanukkah, or Passover. In my group, the main topic I presented on was the section about Antisemitism and the Holocaust. When speaking about these difficult topics, I could see the shocked faces and realization for many students across the room when hearing some of the horrible stories, statistics, and realities we face. While these were difficult and sometimes sad subjects to speak about, these reactions from the class indicated to me that they were listening, learning, and understanding more about Judaism and Jewish people.

The questions students asked were incredibly insightful, and it became clear that quite a few of them genuinely

wanted to learn more and understand Judaism in a new light. One of the more popular questions asked was about the Jewish belief in the afterlife, which allowed me to learn more about the concept from some of my peer presenters. There also tended to be a variety of questions about Kashrut and the Jewish Life Cycle. The question I still remember the most, however, was

not related to some of the facts we talked about in our presentation. One student at Street School asked us after the conclusion of our presentation, "What can we do to help with antisemitism and support the Jewish people?" The memory of this student asking that powerful question serves as a continuous reminder to me that teaching about Judaism can make a huge impact on others and creates key foundations for building bridges with our peers.

The Student to Student Program has helped and enlightened me in more ways than I can describe. Managing to overcome my fears and help create understanding in our community through these presentations has taught me so much about the influence



Xander Loosvelt



A Student to Student Presentation at Bishop Kelley High School

of dialogue and discussion. These presentations have helped me prepare for promoting understanding and being truly comfortable with my Jewish identity when I go off to college this Fall. I now have the confidence to have the at times difficult, but always important, conversations with others. I am able to speak publicly about what matters to me, and continue to keep strengthening my proud Jewish identity. I have really enjoyed getting to speak openly about my religion and help garner understanding that promotes inclusion in my community. Every presentation ended with a message of our intent to build bridges and cultivate empathy with others. I am proud to say we left every presentation having done just that. ■



THANK YOU

to our Student to Student Ambassadors for an incredible 2024-2025 school year!

Adam Arbital

Pacey Brody

Ogden Farr

Sydney Gebhardt

Jillian Lieberman

Xander Loosvelt

Jaden Sloan

To nominate a teen or to apply for the Student to Student Program's 2025-2026 Cohort, visit: JewishTulsa.org/STS

JUDAIC EDUCATION RETURNS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA

For the past 10 to 15 years, the University of Tulsa (TU) has not offered Hebrew as a foreign language or a minor in Judaic Studies. However, beginning in Fall 2025, Hebrew will be reintroduced as a foreign language, taught by distinguished visiting professor **Dr. Danielle Gurevitch**.

In addition, TU will launch a minor in Judaic and Near Eastern Studies. This minor will require students to complete four courses, each worth three credits, with at least one course in Judaic Studies and another in Near Eastern Studies. While many classes relevant to the minor have been offered at TU across various departments throughout the years, they have not previously been organized into a cohesive program. **Dr. Miriam Belmaker**, associate professor of anthropology, will oversee the program. She is also working on plans to develop new courses dedicated to this minor and establish a study abroad program in Israel.

Dr. Belmaker, an archaeologist with a focus on Israeli and Near Eastern archaeology, serves as the faculty advisor for the TU chapter of Oklahoma Hillels and the Jewish Student Cultural Association (JSCA), both of which play a significant role in supporting a growing number of students interested in Jewish topics. The new academic



Dr. Danielle Gurevitch



Dr. Miriam Belmaker

offerings, including the minor and Hebrew courses, are essential for enhancing Jewish visibility on campus.

This fall, in addition to Hebrew classes taught by Dr. Gurevitch, Dr. Belmaker will offer *Archaeology of the Lands of the Bible* as one of the new courses in the minor. Both classes will be available for auditing through the Lifelong Unabridged Program.

Contact Dr. Belmaker with your questions at miriam-belmaker@utulsa.edu. ■

MIZEL JCDS ADVANCES TEACHER GROWTH THROUGH INNOVATIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by Amanda Anderson, Executive Director, Flo & Morris Mizel Jewish Community Day School

At Mizel Jewish Community Day School (JCDS), our commitment to exceptional Jewish education extends beyond the classroom and into the professional growth of our teachers. For the past two years, I have had the incredible opportunity to participate in the Mandel Teacher Educator Institute (MTEI) Cohort 11, a distinguished leadership program that brings together Jewish educators from around the world.

MTEI is a transformative experience that connects educational leaders who share a passion for continuous learning, collaboration, and community building. One of the most powerful aspects of MTEI is how it nurtures lasting professional friendships and a shared commitment to improving Jewish education globally.

Inspired by my MTEI journey, I chose to bring a dynamic professional development practice to our staff—Learning Walks. This approach encourages our teachers to visit each other's classrooms with curiosity and openness, observing how meaningful learning experiences unfold for our elementary learners.

Over six weeks, Mizel JCDS teachers engaged in Learning Walks guided by the question: *How is meaningful content represented for and by early childhood and elementary learners?* Using a structured, non-evaluative protocol, teachers collected evidence by noting what they "saw," "heard," and "wondered" during brief classroom visits.

"The Learning Walks gave us a chance to see our school through each other's eyes," said one teacher. "It sparked conversations that have already influenced how I plan my lessons."

For myself, leading Mizel JCDS means fostering a culture where every teacher feels empowered to grow, innovate, and reflect deeply on their practice. I believe that great teaching flourishes in communities of trust and shared learning. My leadership vision centers on building such a community—one that models curiosity, respect, and kindness—reflecting the Jewish values at the heart of our school.

The Learning Walks are an extension of that vision: they promote collaboration without judgment, foster professional dialogue, and ultimately strengthen our collective ability to provide rich, meaningful Jewish learning experiences for every student.

The process includes thoughtful debriefings after each observation and a team meeting to analyze the data collected. This collaboration will directly shape our instructional goals and curriculum planning for the 2025-2026 school year.

As I reflect on this work, I am reminded of one of the core MTEI principles: *There is moral meaning in the work we do.* Our commitment to nurturing meaningful Jewish learning experiences is not just about teaching facts—it's about fostering identity, values, and connection.


At Mizel JCDS, we are proud to be part of a global community of Jewish educators striving for excellence and innovation. Through initiatives like the MTEI Learning Walks, we are creating a vibrant, reflective teaching culture—one that embodies the values we seek to instill in every student. ■




Amanda Anderson on right discussing strategies at the conference.



Below Participants at the Mandel Teacher Educator Institute (MTEI) Cohort 11



Farwell for Now



It is with both joy and bittersweet hearts that we share some news with our Mizel JCDS community: our beloved Morah Alin Avitan has decided to extend her stay in Israel through late fall and will then spend some time with her family. While this isn't goodbye, it is a heartfelt "see you later" to someone who has truly been the heart and soul of our school. More than a Hebrew & Judaic Studies teacher, Morah Alin has been the heartbeat of Mizel, while infusing every moment with warmth, tradition, and love. She is the fairy godmother of our community, bringing the essence of Judaism to life through mitzvot, Israeli cuisine, and song. Her presence has been life-changing for so many. Others have shared, "She supported every teacher, uplifted every student, and helped me personally in ways I'll never forget." Another added, "Planning events with her was always a joy—her presence brought passion, care, and inspiration." Morah Alin, you will be deeply missed. Your impact is etched into the fabric of Mizel JCDS, and we look forward to the day we say "welcome back."

We love you always!



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THE HISTORY OF THE MEZUZAH®

by Phil Goldfarb

A mezuzah (Hebrew: מְזוּזָה “doorpost”; plural: מְזוּזוֹת “mezuzot”) is a piece of parchment inscribed with specific Hebrew verses from the Torah which Jews affix in a small case to the doorposts of their homes. These verses are the Biblical passages in which the use of a mezuzah is commanded and also form part of the Shema prayer. The concept of a mezuzah comes from the Torah, where we read, “*And you shall inscribe them on the doorposts (mezuzot) of your house and on your gates.*”

According to traditional Jewish law, a mezuzah must be placed on every post-and-lintel entrance to a residence, courtyard, or city. Religious Jews have increasingly also placed mezuzot on the entrances to non-residential buildings such as synagogues and offices, and on each internal doorway of the home or building, with the exception of bathrooms (where the name of G-d is forbidden) and small closets.

The klaf is prepared by a qualified scribe (“sofer stam”) who has undergone training, both in studying the relevant religious laws and in the more practical parts such as carving the quill and practicing writing. The verses are written in indelible black ink with a special quill pen made either from a feather or, now quite rare, a reed. The klaf is then rolled up and placed inside the case.

In the Bible, the word mezuzah only refers to the two ‘doorposts’ or ‘doorjambs’ of a door, the upright posts on either side of it which support the lintel, and appears in various contexts unrelated to any religious commandment or parchment. The word later acquired the modern meaning of a piece of parchment in post-Biblical Hebrew due to the Deuteronomy commandment above requiring writing verses on doorposts.

In the biblical verses where the mezuzah command is found, the purpose is educational, to constantly remind a person of G-d’s commandments. In the past, they placed a stone plaque inscribed with the Ten Commandments above the house door, some examples dating back to the Byzantine (4th–7th century) and Early Muslim (7th–11th century) periods.

In later generations, the mezuzah began to be interpreted as a symbol, protecting the house from forces of evil. Some early Rabbinic sources

explicitly witness the belief in the anti-demonic function of mezuzot. According to various pieces of sociological research, approximately three-quarters of adults in Israel believe the mezuzah guards their houses.

Many mezuzah cases are also marked with the Hebrew letter ש (Shin), for Shaddai. The box that holds the scroll can be decorated in a variety of ways, and often has a Hebrew letter shin on it, which is the first letter of one of G-d’s names, Shaddai.

“כוזו במוכסו כוזו” is a Caesar cipher—a one-letter shift—of the third, fourth, and fifth words of the Shema, “Adonai, Eloheinu, Adonai”, “The Lord, our G-d, the Lord”; it is written on the back of the case, opposite the corresponding words on the front. This inscription dates from the 11th century and is found among the Hasidei Ashkenaz (medieval German Jewish mystics).

While the most important part of the mezuzah is the klaf, or the parchment, and not the case, designing and producing mezuzah cases has been elevated to an art form over the ages. Mezuzah cases are produced from a wide variety of materials, from silver and precious metals, to wood, stone, ceramics, pewter, and even polymer clay.

According to halakha, the mezuzah should be placed on the right side of the door or doorpost, in the upper third of the doorpost (i.e., approximately shoulder height), within approximately 3 inches of the doorway opening. Care should be taken not to tear or damage the parchment or the wording on it, as this will invalidate the mezuzah.

Where the doorway is wide enough, many Ashkenazi Jews tilt the mezuzah so that the top slants toward the room into which the door opens. This is done to accommodate the variant opinions of Rashi (1040–1105) and of his grandson, Rabbeinu Tam, as to whether it should be placed vertically (Rashi) or horizontally (Rabbeinu Tam), and also to imply that G-d and the Torah (which the mezuzah symbolizes) are entering the room. The compromise solution was suggested by Rabbi Jacob ben Asher (1269 – 1343).

Most Sephardi Jews, Mizrahi Jews, and other non-Ashkenazi Jews affix the mezuzah vertically, though



Dr. Jennifer Airey

Mazel Tov to **Dr. Jennifer Airey**, named Provost at the University of Tulsa! A graduate of Brandeis and Boston Universities, Jennifer came to the University of Tulsa as faculty in English in 2008. She subsequently published three books—*The Politics of Rape: Sexual Atrocity, Propaganda Wars*, and *The Restoration Stage, Religion Around Mary Shelley*, and an edition of *The Passions by Charlotte Dacre*—before joining TU’s administration. She has served variously as Special Assistant to

the President, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Academic Initiatives, and Dean of the Graduate School prior to her appointment as Provost. Jennifer is also Secretary of the Board of Congregation B’nai Emunah. As provost, she leads the University’s academic enterprise, facilitating innovation in academic policy and curriculum. She also seeks to foster both student success and faculty career development.

CELEBRATE SIMCHAS!

Share your simchas with the entire community! Send us your b’nai mitzvah, wedding announcement, birth of a child, graduation, or other milestone for our “simchas” section each month.

Send submissions for the Tulsa Jewish Review to Sandy Sloan, sandy@jewishtulsa.org



Spanish and Portuguese Jews living in countries where the majority of Jews are Ashkenazim usually place it slanting.

Generally, halakha requires Jews living in the diaspora (outside of the Land of Israel) to affix a mezuzah within 30 days of moving into a rented house or apartment. For a purchased home or apartment in the diaspora, or a residence in Israel (owned or rented), the mezuzah is affixed immediately upon moving in. The reason for this difference is that there is an assumption that when a Jew lives in Israel, Israel shall remain their permanent residence, whereas a home in the diaspora is temporary.

The procedure is to hold the mezuzah against the spot upon which it will be affixed, then recite a blessing: “*Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the Universe, Who sanctified us with His mitzvot, and commanded us to affix a mezuzah.*” After the blessing, the mezuzah is attached.

Whenever passing through the doorway, many people touch a finger to the mezuzah as a way of showing respect to G-d. Many people also kiss their finger after touching it to the mezuzah. Some people believe that the mezuzah provides special protection over the residents of the home where it hangs, and when they pass by a mezuzah some people have the custom of

kissing it (usually touching the mezuzah with their hand, then kissing their hand).

Many observant Jews from all Jewish denominations have a qualified scribe check the mezuzot parchments for defects (such as small tears or faded lettering) at least twice every seven years. This job can be done by a sofer (scribe) or by anyone with similar training. A sofer can also make new mezuzot parchments which are in accordance with Jewish law. ■

The Jewish Genealogical Society is housed under The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art. To learn about the benefits of joining the JGS visit: JewishMuseumTulsa.org

Phil Goldfarb is the president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Tulsa and can be e-mailed at: phil.goldfarb@cox.net.



(Standing Firm continued from p. 11)

Bill 942 was introduced in February and assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee, where it passed without amendments. It cleared the full Senate in March by a vote of 31–15, and later passed the House 62–24. Senate Bill 991 followed, passing the Senate 27–15 and the House 56–29. On May 6th, Governor Kevin Stitt signed both into law. It marked the first time Oklahoma formally defined and addressed antisemitism in statute.

Senate Bill 991 adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, which states: Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. The bill provides Oklahoma's public institutions with a shared framework for identifying antisemitism, including eleven contemporary examples such as Holocaust denial, accusations of Jewish dual loyalty, and holding all Jews collectively responsible for the actions of Israel. Importantly, Senate Bill 991 does not create new criminal penalties or restrict free speech. Instead, it establishes a common language to help institutions recognize antisemitism for what it is: a form of hate.

Senate Bill 942 puts that definition into practice across Oklahoma's public schools and colleges. It requires every public education institution to incorporate the IHRA

definition into their codes of conduct. Schools must treat antisemitic incidents with the same seriousness as racial discrimination, and they are encouraged to include antisemitism awareness training and Jewish American history in their programming. Title VI (Civil Rights Act of 1964) coordinators are now mandated at the state level to monitor complaints. If a school fails to address a credible antisemitic incident within 30 days, state authorities escalate the case to the federal level. State agencies must submit annual reports to the legislature. Lawmakers can investigate noncompliant institutions and impose consequences, including potential state funding cuts.

These bills won't solve everything, but they make it harder to look away. Most importantly, these bills are more than policy; they're a statement that our community is no longer willing to be dismissed. For the first time, Oklahoma law recognizes antisemitism as a specific threat and gives institutions the tools to address it. That change didn't happen automatically; it happened because people stepped up and stayed with the work until it was done.

I'm deeply grateful to Joe Roberts, Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Tulsa, for bringing me into this effort and trusting me to help lead it. His steady hand and clear vision helped turn frustration into strategy and strategy into law.

His leadership reminded me that Jewish advocacy is never just about reaction; it's about responsibility. Justice—*Tzedek*—is not just a value in Jewish life; it's a mandate, repeated twice in the Torah to demand urgency and insist that our pursuit be active, not abstract.

Passing these laws was one such pursuit of *tzedek*—justice not as a concept, but as a collective responsibility. And it's a win worth honoring.

I'm deeply thankful I had the chance to volunteer my time in this effort. In the quiet moments, I thought about you, my friends in Young Jewish Professionals, my mentors in synagogue, the little ones at Mizel JCDS and Camp Shalom, and our elders at Zarrow Pointe. I reminded myself how much each of you—and those who came before us—have sacrificed to build a community strong enough to stand, speak, and act. A community that gives young voices the chance to become part of history.

These laws are only the beginning. Our children and grandchildren deserve to grow up in a state that protects their dignity, not just in word, but in action. The work ahead will still demand our courage. But we don't walk into it empty-handed—we walk with our values.

Oseh shalom bimromav—may the One who makes peace in the heavens bring peace upon us. And may that peace rest on justice—*tzedek*—rooted in memory, lived through action, and carried forward by all of us who refuse to stay silent. ■



David Dopp



Levi Olsen



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Sue and David Halpern
Dr. and Mrs. Myron Katz
Myrna Lubin
Paula and Malcolm
Julie and Brent Morse
Gail and Kip Richards Family
Ann and Stan Shapiro
Marilyn Smith
Barbara Sylvan
Judee Weinberg
Mindi Silver-Weiss and Fred Weiss

HONORING:

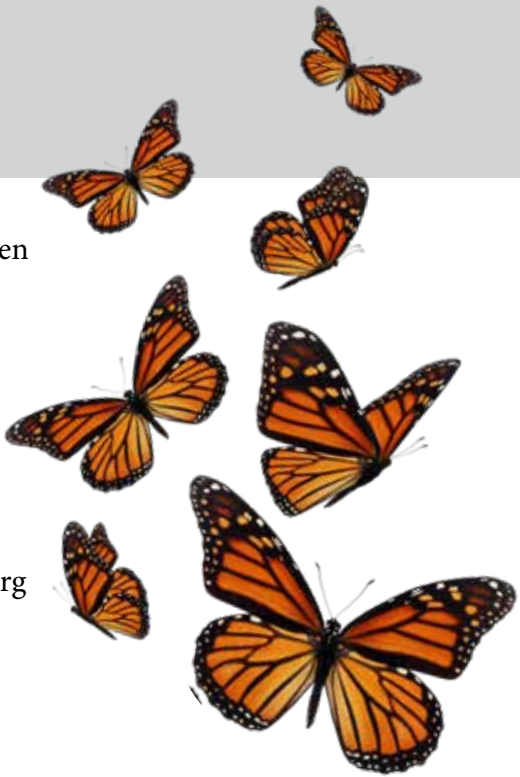
Paula and Malcolm Milsten

BIRTHDAYS:

Sallye Mann
Vernon Mudd

IN MEMORY:

Marjorie G. Lubin
Barbara "Bobbi" Rotenberg
Isabel Sanditen
Marjorie G. Lubin
Barbara Rotenberg



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Sacred Speech: Jewish Wisdom for Life's Hard Conversations with Morah Sara Levitt
Wednesdays, July 9, 16 and 23 | 12:00 p.m.

Join Morah Sara Levitt for our annual summertime lunch and learning series. This summer we'll explore how Jewish texts and values can guide us through compassionate conversations with our friends and community members during moments of transition or vulnerability. Whether you're a Bikkur Cholim volunteer preparing for a visit with a bereaved community member or talking with a friend who just had a baby, this class will offer tools for showing up with empathy, attentive listening and kindness when it matters most. Classes meet at noon on July 9th, 16th and 23rd. Please feel free to bring a dairy lunch! Visit www.tulsasynagogue.com/events to hold your spot.

Blatt + Blue: Let it Be Morning
Thursday, July 10 | 7:00 p.m.

Let It Be Morning, an Israeli film by director Eran Kolirin, is the story of Sami, a Palestinian-born Israeli citizen living in Jerusalem, who is invited to his brother's wedding. He returns to the Arab village where he grew up only to find his hometown under a military blockade lockdown. The film is now available on Amazon Prime for a modest fee. Please let us know

if you have any difficulty locating the program. Join the moderated discussion in the Synagogue Zoom Room. The Zoom meeting ID is 918 583 7121, and the session will conclude at 8:00 p.m.

ShulSchool at the Pool
Sunday, July 20 | 10:00 a.m. at the Charles Schusterman Jewish Community Center

Missing your ShulSchool and Synagogue friends? We're excited to get together for a morning of connection, food, and fun. We'll meet by the pool at 10:00 a.m. and wrap up the day with lunch together. You can hold your spot by visiting the Synagogue website or by being in touch with Morah Sara at slevitt@bnaiemunah.com.

Booksmart: Midnight on the Potomac with Scott Ellsworth
Wednesday, July 23 | 7:00 p.m.

Magic City Books and The Synagogue welcome Tulsa native Scott Ellsworth for a free event to celebrate his latest book, *Midnight on the Potomac: The Last Year of the Civil War, the Lincoln Assassination, and the Rebirth of America*. From the author of *The Ground Breaking*, longlisted for the National Book Award, comes a riveting saga of the last year of the Civil War—and a revealing new account of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. Scott will be in conversation with local historian Russell Cobb, author of *The Great Oklahoma Swindle* and *Ghosts of Crook County*. For more information about this free event, please visit magiccitybooks.com/events.

Shabbat Shalom: Musical Circle, Dinner and Shabbat Talks
Friday, July 25 | 5:30 p.m.

Experience a musical Shabbat evening with songs and storytelling starting at 5:30 p.m. This inclusive and accessible event is an ideal introduction to Shabbat traditions, welcoming participants of all ages and backgrounds. After services, we'll enjoy a beautiful Shabbat dinner together at 6:15 p.m. The

evening will conclude with a special Shabbat Talks speaker at 7:00 p.m. to discuss a relevant topic of interest to our community. Reserve your spot at the Shabbat table by registering at tulsasynagogue.com/events.

Afternoon/Evening Services
Join us on Wednesdays and Fridays at 5:30 p.m.

in the Davis-Goodall Chapel for traditional prayer and community Mourner's Kaddish. Both in-person and Zoom participation are available. Please register for in-person attendance on our website.

Shabbat Morning Services

Every Saturday at 9:30 a.m., we celebrate Shabbat through song, Torah study, and fellowship. These services, available both in-person and via Zoom, offer a chance to mark anniversaries, celebrate milestones, and engage in our congregation's ritual life. ■

The General Assembly

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www.GeneralAssembly.org

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For more information contact Isabella Silberg, isilberg@jewishtulsa.org, 918.495.1100

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S I N C E 1 9 6 2



All services and events will be held on the campus of the Jewish Federation as Temple Israel transitions to its temporary space.

Jewish Federation of Tulsa
2021 E. 71st St, Tulsa 74136

Visit our Temple Israel website www.templetulsa.com and our events page for details about all we offer!

Shabbat Service • Fri., July 4 • 6:00 p.m.
Join us as we welcome in Shabbat. Come at 5:30 p.m. for our joyous pre-oneg.

Birthday Shabbat Service • Fri., July 11 • 6:00 p.m.
Join us as we welcome in Shabbat and celebrate July birthdays. Come at 5:30 p.m. for our joyous pre-oneg

Zamru L'Shabbat in person, on Zoom & Facebook Live • Fri., July 18 • 6:00 p.m.
Join us as we celebrate Shabbat with Elijah's Minor Prophets. Come at 5:30 p.m. for our joyous pre-oneg. We will also celebrate July birthdays.

Anniversary Shabbat Service in person, on Zoom & Facebook Live • Fri., July 25 • 6:00 p.m.
Join us as we welcome in Shabbat and celebrate significant July anniversaries. Come at 5:30 p.m. for our joyous pre-oneg.. ■

WELCOMING OUR NEW INTERIM RABBI: RABBI APPEL JOINS TEMPLE ISRAEL

by Brina Reinstein, President

On June 30th, after 7 years of service to Temple Israel, Rabbi Michael Weinstein will be stepping away from his role as Senior Rabbi as he begins a sabbatical year. The community is invited to Shabbat services at Temple Israel on Friday, June 27th at 6:00 PM for what will be their last Shabbat service in the existing Temple Israel sanctuary, followed by a special farewell oneg in recognition of Rabbi Weinstein.

Temple Israel is delighted to welcome Rabbi Betshava Appel as their interim rabbi beginning July 1st. Rabbi Appel joins Temple Israel at a meaningful moment in their journey, bringing a compassionate heart, a thoughtful voice, and a deep commitment to the values of Reform Judaism. Rabbi Appel is a native of Seattle and the rainy Pacific Northwest. She graduated from Wellesley College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biological Sciences and Economics. After college, she entered the corporate world, first working in a research laboratory and then in sales and marketing. Rabbi Appel was an active layperson in her congregation, singing in the choir, taking classes, and serving on the Board of Directors, when she decided to become a rabbi. She attended Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, and was ordained from the New York campus, where she also received her Doctorate in Divinity.

She is a trained Mussar facilitator and is part of the national faculty for teaching the Union of Reform Judaism's Online "Introduction to Judaism" course. Rabbi Appel is certified as a professional interim rabbi. She has served several congregations since 1996, as a sabbatical rabbi, rabbi educator, assistant rabbi, associate rabbi, rabbi, and interim rabbi, including serving as Director of Rabbinic Services for the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, located in Jackson, Mississippi. Rabbi Appel is currently finishing her term as an intentional interim rabbi at Congregation Ahavath Beth Israel in Boise, Idaho.

Rabbi Appel is passionate about community and is highly collaborative, with the unique perspective as first an active synagogue board member and now an experienced rabbi in a variety of settings. Rabbi Appel leverages the innovative possibilities of technology, yet still uses a fountain pen. Rabbi Appel enjoys reading, walking, going to the theater, playing Spelling Bee and Wordle, as well as playing Dungeons & Dragons.

Rabbi Appel's first Shabbat service at Temple Israel will be on Friday, July 4th at 6:00 PM at their new, temporary home in the Barbara and Dave Sylvan Auditorium at the Jewish Federation of Tulsa (2021 E 71st St, Tulsa, OK 74136). In 2023, Temple Israel announced that it would be embarking on an exciting chapter in its 110+ year history, building a new, vibrant, and inclusive building that will serve the Reform Jewish community in Tulsa for generations to come. ■

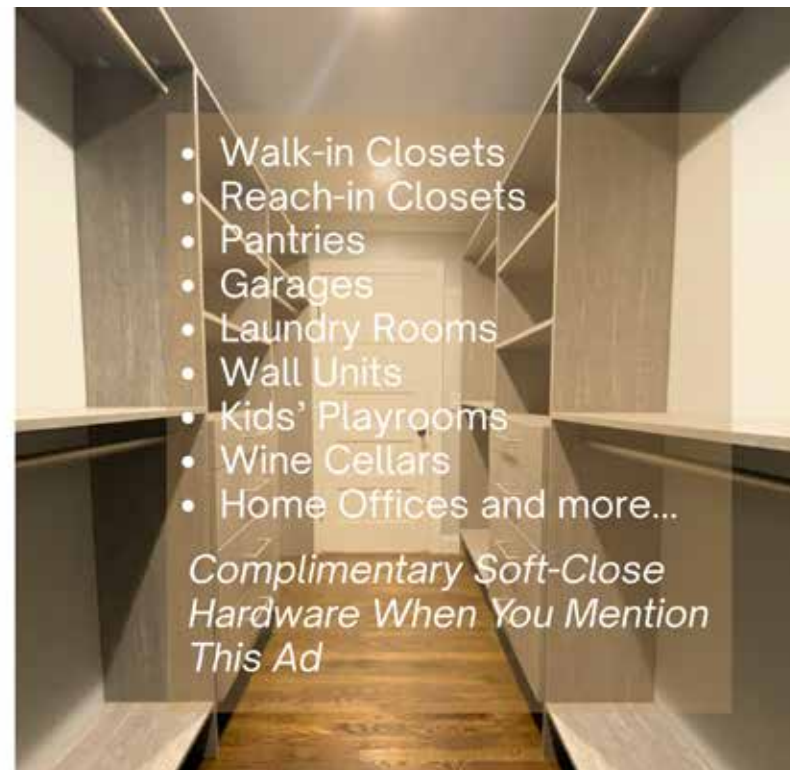


Rabbi Batsheva Appel

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Questions?
Laura Allen, llallen@jewishtulsa.org, 918.495.1111



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