

The Jewish VOICE

Informing and Connecting Jews in El Paso-Las Cruces

ADAR/NISAN 5783
March 2023

Celebrating Purim and International Women's Day

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JEWISH EL PASO
CONNECTING EL PASO-LAS CRUCES

El Paso Holocaust Museum and Study Center's Annual FORE! UNITee Topgolf Event

El Paso Holocaust Museum and Study Center is pleased to present its 4th Annual *FORE! UNITee* Topgolf Event, Sunday, March 26th at 2:00pm.

Join us for an afternoon of golf games, food, drinks, and a fun competition for family and friends of all ages! All registrations include 3 hours of tournament game play, lunch buffet

(vegetarian options available), 1 drink ticket (beer or wine- adults 21 & older), & unlimited soda, tea, water or coffee. Cash bar is available throughout event. The fun also includes a Hole-in-One Contest, Raffle, and special Kids-only Contests and prizes. Bring your whole family, friends, or co-workers!

The cost for an individual player

is \$75. The cost for a full bay- includes up to 6 players- is \$400. Registration closes on March 18th. Check-in begins as early as 1:15pm. Practice time is allowed in your bay until the event kicks-off at 2:15pm. Contests run throughout event in designated bays. Event concludes with awards and prizes at 5:00pm.

To register:

<https://www.givesignup.org/TicketEvent/EPHMF0REUNITee>

For more information, contact EPHM: 915-351-0048

All proceeds from *FORE UNITee* directly support EPHM's mission to teach the history of the Holocaust in order to combat prejudice and intolerance through education, community outreach, and cultural activities.

Ukraine - One Year Impact

From the office of Debbie Stein, Impact & Growth, Jewish Federations of North America

Dear Small Federation Friends,

On Thursday, February 24th we mark one year since the war broke out in Ukraine.

This last year has been proof of the impact that our system has when we come together to support communities around the world.

To support Ukraine every single

Federation, in all 146 communities came together and raised \$85 million – that's nearly a quarter of a million dollars per day. These dollars ensured:

- 500,000 people received humanitarian assistance, relief, or support
- 700,000 meals distributed
- 65,000 people supported in making aliyah
- 130,000 received medical care

- 4,000 medical and mental health professionals trained
- 180,000 Ukrainian newcomers supported by our advocacy

Please use this package of materials to help you tell the story of your significant impact in Ukraine and beyond in your community. This package is robust and includes an amazing array of messaging options for you to use (pictures, videos, stories, statis-

tics, etc.)

Please use these materials to thank your community members for their support, caring and ongoing generosity. Consider using pieces for staff training. Consider sharing pieces at a board meeting. Share with your synagogues for their newsletters or bulletins.

Thank you for your engagement, involvement and support!

The Union for Reform Judaism's 150th Anniversary



The Photo depicts Rabbi Jacobs and Monika Kimball at synagogue Kol HaNashema in Jerusalem.

A Message from Rabbi Rick Jacobs, President Union for Reform Judaism

I take great joy in inviting you to celebrate an important milestone – The Union for Reform Judaism's 150th Anniversary!

From our humble founding in 1873, the URJ has evolved to match the growth of the movement and now leads the largest and most diverse Jewish community in North America, encompassing more than 1.8 million Jews and nearly 850 congregations.

As we celebrate this milestone, I am inspired by the words found in the morning prayers: "with goodness, the Holy One renews creation every day." They are a reminder that as the world evolves,

so must our work.

This milestone anniversary is an opportunity to celebrate our shared history – and, more importantly, define the path forward.

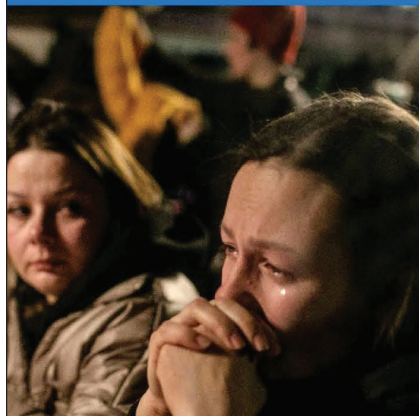
From the Editor

The Jewish Voice reserves the right to edit articles and to forbear from publishing content it deems potentially offensive. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of Jewish El Paso.

JEWISH EL PASO
CONNECTING EL PASO-LAS CRUCES



WE'VE WORKED IN UKRAINE FOR DECADES – BUT TODAY, THE NEED IS DIFFERENT



CRISIS IN UKRAINE ACT NOW!

The estimated 200,000 Jews living in Ukraine have been profoundly affected by the political and economic instability that has wracked the country.

www.jewishelpaso.org
Thousands are trapped in conflict zones

The Jewish VOICE

A publication of Jewish El Paso

The Jewish Voice of El Paso, published ten times a year, is dedicated to informing, educating, and uniting the Jewish community by providing news items of local, national, Israeli and international concern.

The Jewish Voice will consider for publication any materials submitted that support the mission of Jewish El Paso and have relevance and appeal our Jewish community. Articles are subject to editing at the editor's discretion and are subject to space limitations. Letters cannot be longer than 150 words and articles must be kept to a maximum of 300 words.

Please email to thevoice@jewishelpaso.org

Opinions are those of individual writers and not necessarily those of Jewish El Paso. The Jewish Voice is not responsible for the kashrut of any product or eating establishment advertised herein.

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Queen Esther, Wonder Woman of Her Day



Monika Kimball

These articles were originally published in the March 2022 Issue of The Voice.

As we celebrate International Woman's Day and in view of the upcoming holiday of Purim, it behooves us to pay homage to Queen Esther, our female ancestor and heroine of many a Purim Spiel. In fact, I've played her part myself and tried to transport myself into the year ca. 475 BCE to try to imagine her life at the court of the Persian king Ahasuerus (Xerxes) in Shushan. As you know, the story begins however, when Esther was put to the test by Mordechai who beseeched her to save the Jewish people who had been condemned for extermination. Esther reluctantly agreed and devised a strategy to carry out Mordechai's suggestion. Without her courage and love for our people, the Purim story would be quite different.

We must remember that just approaching the king uninvited was reason enough to be put to death. That act alone took courage, let alone her commitment to the strategy, steely will, and loyalty to our people. You can call her "action oriented" just as we describe our Jewish faith



to the world, and Esther let her faith and values guide her actions. That tenacity ultimately led the King to reverse his decree to kill the Jews, to which he had previously agreed.

This Wonder Woman of ancient times clearly stepped out of her

comfort zone and that takes courage. Modern women to a lesser degree, step out of their comfort zones every day to make the courageous decisions that are necessary for them to attain their full potential and fulfill their purpose on earth.

Let's salute them and be ever appreciative to Esther for her heroic action to save our ancestry.

*– Chag Purim Sameach,
Monika Kimball, Interim
Executive Director, Jewish El Paso*

Deborah and Jael, Two Brave Female Judges of the Bible



Debra Kanoff

In Biblical times, judges were often prophets "instructed in Divine knowledge by the inspiration of the Spirit of G-d" and civic leaders, given authority to judge "Israel as G-d's mouth to them; correcting abuses, and redressing grievances." On many occasions, the judges also served as military commanders who led Israel in battle against foreign adversaries.

Deborah in the Bible was one of these Judges. She rendered her judgments beneath a date palm tree between Ramah in

Benjamin and Bethel in the land of Ephraim.

Deborah's story is contained in the Fourth and Fifth chapters of the book of Judges. There we learn that Deborah was called to deliver the Israelites from the Canaanites as the fifth Judge. Deborah led Israel against the Canaanites, their king Jabin, and their military general Sisera, calling on a Jewish warrior named Barak to command Israel's army. To Deborah's request, Barak famously replied, "if you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go" (Judges 4:8). Deborah agreed to accompany Barak. However, she informed him that, because of his hesitancy, "the honor shall not be yours... for the Lord will sell Sisera into the hands of a woman." (Judges 4:9).

While G-d sent Deborah the prophetess to destroy the Canaanite army, the glory, however, went to another female Judge, Jael the Kenite. As Israel routed Sisera's forces at Mount Tebor, Sisera, the Canaanite general, escaped,



seeking refuge in the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite (Judges 4:17). But as Canaan's top military leader slept soundly, Jael shoved a tent spike through Sisera's head, killing him where he lay (Judges 4:21).

Acknowledged as one of the first pieces of Biblical poetry, Judges 5, contains the "song" of



Deborah and Barak. They praise G-d, the Israelite warriors, and Jael, but scold the tribes that failed to join the fight. Deborah served G-d and Israel as a judge for forty years.

*– Debra Kanoff,
President,
Jewish El Paso*

CALL FOR PAPERS

33rd Annual Conference SOCIETY FOR CRYPTO-JUDAIC STUDIES El Paso, Texas August 13-15, 2023



The Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies invites proposals for presentations at its 33rd Annual Conference, Sunday, August 13 through Tuesday, August 15, 2023, in El Paso, Texas. This event is open to regional, national, and international submissions. The conference will be “in-person” only. For more details about the Society, the conference, and exciting pre-conference activities, please visit <http://cryptojews.com>.

We invite proposals for papers on crypto-Judaism from any discipline (e.g., anthropology, history, sociology, philosophy, literature, music, etc.) and from any geographic location or time period.

We also welcome proposals for presentations on all aspects of the Sephardic experience and that of other communities exhibiting crypto-Jewish phenomena.

The 2023 conference theme is “A Crypto-Judaic Exploration of the Borderlands.” Proposals breaking new ground in research on the Texas Borderlands and in general the far northern frontier of New Spain, including Texas, Chihuahua, New Mexico, and Southern Colorado are particularly welcome.

Interested scholars and professionals, including advanced graduate students, are encouraged to submit proposals for individual research presentations or organized panels of three or four presenters. Proposals are also welcomed from individuals with personal narratives or other research related to crypto-Jews. Proposals responding to this Call should be new research, narratives, or lectures not previously presented elsewhere. Please indicate if presentation represents completed research or work in progress. Accepted proposals will have 20-30 minutes per presenter, with additional time for discussion if time allows.

Proposals should follow this format: (1) proposal title, (2) presenter name, (3) email, (4) an abstract of up to 200 words, and (5) a brief bio, including relevant affiliation and academic title if any.

*For organized panels, panel organizer is responsible for providing this information for **each** presenter in a single document, as well as a session title and organizer brief bio.*

Presenters must register to present their papers at the conference; those whose proposals are accepted enjoy a special discounted registration fee.

Submit your proposal by emailing: sward@aya.yale.edu with SCJS2023 in the subject line.

Information (and links) at <https://cryptojews.com>

Proposal Deadline: April 15, 2023

FACES & PLACES

Leeba Bat Mitzvah

We are so blessed and honored to have celebrated our dear daughter Leeba's 12th Birthday- her Bat Mitzvah- surrounded by friends and family. Leeba did an incredible job learning, researching, and giving over her Dvar Torah reminding us all of the tremendous power of the Jewish Woman. We thank all those who were able to join us and turn this joyous occasion that it was. L'chaim to many more such events, in good health and lots of happiness.

Rabbi Bery & Chenchie Schmukler and Family



**Cherry Hill School
100th Day of School,
Shabbat & Martin
Luther Kind Project**



**PJ Library Hamantaschen Bake at
Congregation B'nai Zion**



Update: Judicial Reform Debate in Israel

This Letter has been republished from Jewish Federations of North America

Dear Friends,

As you are no doubt aware, there is currently intense debate in Israel surrounding potential reforms to Israel's judicial system, especially on matters related to the relative power of the Knesset vs the Supreme Court. We have previously sent information regarding the arguments put forward by the proponents and opponents of the reforms.

There are a growing number of experts taking the position that some changes to the current system are needed, but that the bills submitted by the governing coalition are too far reaching. See, for example, articles on the matter written by the director of the Jewish People Policy Institute, Professor Yedidya Stern, as well as Dr. Shuki Friedman, the Israel Democracy Institute's Yohanan Plesner, and former US Ambassador to Israel David Friedman. The Jewish Federation system is a supporter of the Jewish People Policy Institute, and we have partnered with the Israel Democracy Institute in a series of informative webinars on the issues that the new government in

Israel have brought to the forefront (See our recent webinars on the new Government, the LGBTQ community, and the Law of Return).

This issue will also be among the topics we delve into in-depth at our Israel at 75 General Assembly in April.

Israel's President Isaac Herzog, in a public address last week, expressed deep concern over how the issue was dividing Israeli society: "This charged issue is on the verge of exploding... This is a time of emergency, and the responsibility is ours. We must strive for broad agreements and not for forced submission. Playing a zero-sum game threatens us all, because whoever demands surrender today - will be forced to surrender tomorrow."

Herzog added: "My firm position is that the foundations of the Israeli democracy - including the judicial system, human rights, and freedoms - are sacred, and we must protect them - as well as the values expressed in our Declaration of Independence... It is permissible and appropriate to criticize each of the state's authorities, and it is important to understand the depth of the frustration, anger and pain that is behind the criticism of the

judiciary... It is legitimate to discuss the boundaries and relationships between the authorities - just as democracies around the world do. But through dialogue. By listening."

Herzog said he had spent the last few weeks trying to mediate between the sides, and while he admitted that he was not sure his mediation efforts would succeed, he has said that he is not willing to give up and that he hoped that the sides would reach a middle ground.

Meanwhile, numerous other concerned voices have emerged. These have included high-tech workers, former legal officials, well-known conservative political figures, former senior government officials, traditional pro-Israel stalwarts calling for North American Jewish intervention, and the current and former governors of the Bank of Israel (equivalent of the US Federal Reserve). The Prime Minister has publicly dismissed economic concerns. At the same time, yesterday, Israel's Attorney General said that the Prime Minister could not be involved in promoting the reforms, due to a conflict of interest since he is currently on trial. Finally, the controversy is starting to reach the international arena. See the

comments by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken during his visit to Israel last week, the comments of French President Macron to Prime Minister Netanyahu during the Prime Minister's visit to Paris, and the internal report of the influential bank JP Morgan in New York.

In the coming weeks, discussions and debates on these issues will continue in Israel, as the proposed reforms take their first steps through the legislative process. Jewish Federations of North America are keeping a close watch on this issue and will update as needed. Our Board of Trustees will also be discussing this issue at our Board meeting this Sunday and Monday, February 5th and 6th. If you are a board member and have not yet registered for the meeting, please contact Adina Schwartz. For more information on the new government, see our up to date resources page.

Shabbat Shalom,

– Julie Platt,
Chair of the Board of Trustees

– Eric Fingerhut,
President and CEO
Jewish Federations of
North America

Hadassah Helps Hospice

For years, the Thanksgiving holiday has been an opportunity for Hadassah-EI Paso to help others. This tradition continued in November with many generous donations from our members to benefit Hospice El Paso. Both organizations are incredibly grateful to the following



20 turkeys
Anonymous donor

3 turkeys and assorted holiday items
Eileen Armour
Haidi Appel
Debbie Cohen
Linda Corral
Brenda Ehrlich
Judy Grodin
Patty Hutman
Audrey Lavi
Cherryll Lieberman
Lisa Mitchell
Donna Munch
Susie Schaechner
Marcia Schwartz
Lisa-Anne Waldock
Jan Wolfe



Special gratitude is extended to Audrey Lavi and the event Chair-Lisa Mitchell for their assistance with transportation from the collection site to Hospice El Paso.



Thank you all for helping brighten the holiday of others in our community!!

Presents:

FOOD FOR FRIENDS

Congregation B'nai Zion

Providing delicious, nutritious, weekly kosher meals. Available for pick up or delivery.

Funded by a grant from The Jewish Community Foundation of Greater El Paso.


OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY. FUNDING IS AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE A FINANCIAL NEED. REQUESTS WILL REMAIN PRIVATE.

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Rides, games, prizes, popcorn, cotton candy, face painting, auctions, food by Jordy's, and more!



75
YEARS

Celebrate
ISRAEL
YOM HA'ATZMAUT

Sunday, April 23, 2023 | 3:30pm
@ Temple Mount Sinai

Save the Date & Watch for Details