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INSIDE



A lesson in equality

Levine students take civil rights journey, p.10

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BEARING WITNESS, BEING UPSTANDERS

Liberators, survivors and descendants honored at local Yom HaShoah events, pp.4-5

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Photo: Nathanael Rehlander
Liberator Bill Kongable, survivor Menachem Lowy, and survivor Max Spindler connect during the Yom HaShoah ceremony April 24, 2025.

‘MUSIC IS MY CORE’

Dallas native in The Voice playoffs, p.6

Light Shabbat candles:
7:52 p.m. Friday, May. 2
Shabbat ends:
8:50 p.m. Saturday, May. 3

Jew-hatred keeps rising in U.S., per ADL annual audit

Incidents in North Texas are the second-highest ever recorded

By Jonathan D. Salant

The rise in Jew-hatred after the Hamas-led terrorist attacks in Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, showed no sign of abating, as the Anti-Defamation League reported another record year for antisemitic incidents in 2024.

The 9,354 incidents of assault, harassment and vandalism last year marked the fourth straight year that the ADL’s audit reported a new yearly high. The 2024 totals, released by the ADL on April 22, were the highest since the group began tracking such incidents 46 years ago. Ninety-two incidents in North Texas represent a 6% increase over 2023 and a 318% increase over the past five years.

“In the North Texas area, we saw an alarming number of protests cross the line into antisemitism,” said Alex Horn, regional director of ADL Texoma. “From an area college student requiring round-the-clock security for simply believing Israel has a right to exist, to an elected official’s home being vandalized, this was a trying time to be Jewish in North Texas.”

Instances of Jew-hatred in 2024 were up 5% from the 8,873 incidents reported in 2023 and represented more than 25 targeted incidents of Jew-hatred per day, the ADL said.

The incidents occurred in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The largest number took place in New York state, with 1,437 incidents (more than half, 976, in New York City), and California, with 1,344 incidents (297 in Los Angeles).

“This horrifying level of antisemitism should never be accepted, and yet, as our data shows, it has become a persistent and grim reality for American Jewish communities,” stated Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO and national director of the ADL.

“Jewish Americans continue to be harassed, assaulted and targeted for who they are on a daily basis and everywhere they go,” Greenblatt said.

The difference between 2024 and previous years is that a majority of the incidents were related to Israel, including more than 2,500 antisemitic chants, slogans, speeches and signs at

anti-Israel rallies. More than half of the rallies where antisemitic incidents occurred were organized or co-sponsored by Students for Justice in Palestine and the Party for Socialism and Liberation, according to the ADL.

Reflecting the national trend, 75% of 2024 incidents in North Texas (64) were related to Israel. Of all Israel-related incidents in North Texas, 50 took place at anti-Israel rallies in the form of antisemitic speeches, chants, signs and slogans.

The audit found that 5,452 incidents (58%) centered on the Jewish state. The incidents included expressing support for Hamas and the Oct. 7 attacks, likening Judaism or Zionism to Nazism, and classic antisemitic tropes.

The numbers did not include rallies where speakers opposed Israeli policies or supported Palestinian rights without engaging in antisemitic speech, the ADL said.

“In 2024, hatred toward Israel was a driving force behind antisemitism across the United States, with more than half of all antisemitic incidents referencing Israel or Zionism,” stated Oren

Major North Texas findings:

- **Harassment:** 77 incidents, a 13% increase over 2023, made up 84% of the total number of 2024 North Texas incidents.
- **Vandalism:** 15 incidents, including the vandalization of the home of a Jewish public official.
- **White supremacist propaganda:** 14 incidents, including several propaganda distributions across North Texas neighborhoods.

Segal, senior vice president for counter-extremism and intelligence at the ADL.

College campuses became hotbeds for anti-Israel and antisemitic activity, with almost 1 in 5 incidents (18%) taking place at institutions of higher education—the most ever recorded.

The number of antisemitic incidents on college campuses rose to 1,694—an increase of 84% over 2023. In addition, incidents at Hillel centers rose 41% to 86, and at campus Chabad centers by more than 100% to 17.

The ADL also found that assaults were up 21% to 196 incidents, with 30% involving Orthodox Jews. (According to Pew Research Center data, about 9% of U.S. Jews are Orthodox.) Antisemitic

harassment was up less than 1% to 6,553 incidents, including 647 bomb threats, and vandalism rose 20% to 2,606 incidents, with 37% involving swastikas.

“The depressing and despicable surge in antisemitism across New Jersey and our country should sound an alarm for every single American,” stated U.S. Rep. Josh Gottheimer, D-N.J.

“As we’ve seen time and time again, the safety and security of our Jewish families and communities are on the line,” Gottheimer said. “We cannot sit idly by while individuals in politics, pop culture or sports openly spew antisemitic tropes and hatred—the magnitude of this crisis demands real action.”

The TJP contributed to this report.



JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

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Celebrating Jewish American Heritage Month-Texas Style

Jewish Roots Run Deep in the Heart of Texas

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Texas marks Jewish American Heritage Month

THGAAC launches first coordinated campaign to honor Jewish life and legacy

For the first time in state history, the Texas Holocaust, Genocide, and Antisemitism Advisory Commission has launched a coordinated, statewide campaign to celebrate Jewish American Heritage Month throughout May. The vital contributions of Jewish Texans to the state's history, culture and civic life will be highlighted.

The initiative will span online storytelling, media engagement and community-led events designed to uplift Jewish voices and illuminate the depth of Jewish history across Texas.

“From Galveston to El Paso, Jewish Texans have shaped every corner of this state,” said Kenny Goldberg, THGAAC chairman. “This coordinated effort is about recognizing that legacy — and making sure every Jewish Texan sees themselves in the full story of our state.”

THGAAC will sponsor a special

online event for 15- to 25-year-olds at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 8, featuring Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz and social media influencer Lizzy Savetsky.

Jewish American Heritage Each May, the nation honors the profound impact of Jewish Americans on every facet of society — from government and the military to science, business, the arts and civil rights.

Gov. Abbott has also officially recognized May as Jewish American Heritage Month in Texas, reinforcing the state's commitment to honoring Jewish contributions.

.....

From 1579 to today: 6 facts about Jewish life in Texas you might not know

From early migration patterns to civic leadership, Jewish Texans have played a significant role in shaping the Lone Star State's past, present and future.

Here are six facts that highlight that legacy:

- **Centuries before Plymouth Rock, Crypto-Jews arrived in Texas.**

Decades before the Pilgrims landed in Massachusetts, Jewish settlers known as “hidden Jews” or Crypto-Jews fled persecution in Spain and traveled with Spanish conquistadors to seek refuge in a new land. While outwardly professing adherence to another religion, they practiced Judaism in secret.

- **A Crypto-Jew helped govern land that would become Texas.**

Luis de Carvajal y de la Cueva, a Portuguese-born officer of the Spanish Crown, was the first

governor of Nuevo Reino de León (present-day northeastern Mexico), with a land grant that extended into what is now Texas. He was a Crypto-Jew. His nephew, Luis de Carvajal the Younger, wrote the earliest surviving manuscript by a Jew in the New World before being executed in 1596 for observing Jewish practices. His narrative, lost in the 1930s and recently rediscovered, is now housed in Mexico's National Archives.

- **Jewish Texans fought in the Texas Revolution.**

During the Texas Revolution of 1835–36, Jewish Texans participated in some of the conflict's most famous battles, including Goliad, the Alamo and San Jacinto.

- **Galveston was a gateway for Jewish immigrants.**

Between 1907 and 1914, the Galveston Movement redirected

thousands of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe to Texas instead of New York, establishing a new path for resettlement.

- **Texas is home to the state's oldest operating synagogue.**

The historic B'nai Israel synagogue, originally built in 1894 in Brenham, was relocated by transport truck a decade ago to Austin, where it now houses Tiferet Israel, a modern Orthodox congregation.

- **Iconic brands trace roots to Jewish entrepreneurs.**

Major companies like Neiman Marcus and Zales Jewelry were founded by Jewish entrepreneurs in Dallas, leaving a lasting mark on Texas commerce and culture.

—Submitted by
The Texas Holocaust,
Genocide, and Antisemitism
Advisory Commission

The Legacy

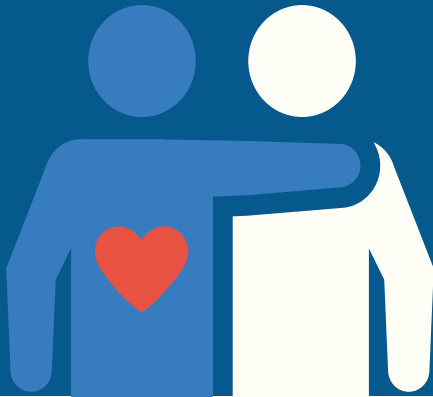
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Liberators’ memories light Dallas Yom HaShoah ceremony



Trish Ramsey and liberator Bill Kongable speak at the Yom HaShoah memorial April 24, 2025.



Rabbi Ari Sunshine speaks at the Yom HaShoah memorial April 24, 2025.



Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum Board Chair Ike Brown addresses the gathering April 24, 2025.



Judy, Jeff, and Michael Kogutt recount the story of liberator Sam Kogutt at the Yom HaShoah event April 24, 2025.

TJP Staff Report

The Dallas Jewish community gathered Thursday evening, April 24, at Congregation Shearith Israel for a powerful Yom HaShoah observance honoring the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Nazi concentration camps. The ceremony, sponsored by the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum, focused on the testimonies of liberators — both Jewish and non-Jewish — as recounted by their children and grandchildren, along with the firsthand account of 99-year-old liberator Bill Kongable.

“We must never forget — not just the darkness of antisemitism but also the light of resilience and the duty to act,” said Rabbi Ari Sunshine, who opened the evening by linking the plague of darkness in the Passover story to the darkness of the Holocaust. “As long as blood fills our veins and air fills our lungs, we have a sacred duty to call out antisemitism when we see it and build a world in which hatred cannot survive.”

Dr. Sarah Abosch-Jacobson, Barbara Rabin Chief Education Officer at the DHHRM, underscored the urgency of remembrance.

“Unfortunately, this hatred is still with us today,” she said, citing a recent ADL report showing a 5% rise in antisemitic incidents in 2024. “We cannot be complacent or silent. We must be upstanders, standing against hatred and combating prejudice and indifference.”

The program spotlighted four liberators’ stories, including two from the Dallas Jewish community. Son Mark and daughter-in-law Fran Berg shared the experiences of Lee Berg, one of the first American soldiers to enter Dachau. In his testimony, Lee Berg recalled, “You really and truly can’t imagine what has happened. I looked around me and said to myself, ‘My God, how can you treat people this way?’ That was my first realization that this war was about far more than just territory.”

Berg’s experience left an indelible mark. “I think I grew up at that point,” he later said. “It ages you, mentally and physically. Up until that time, I don’t really think I was a man.”

The family of Sam Kogutt — sons Michael and Jeff and daughter-in-law Judy — shared his story of liberating Flossenbürg concentration camp. They spoke

movingly about their father’s efforts to assist survivors and help prepare evidence for the Nuremberg Trials. “He often attended services here at Shearith Israel,” Michael Kogutt said, adding that Kogutt once discovered that local survivor Max Glauben had been at Flossenbürg as a young boy. “They shared their stories over sandwiches at a deli — an extraordinary connection between a liberator and a survivor.”

Matt Canafax recounted his grandfather, Rev. Wilson Canafax’s experiences as an Army chaplain at Buchenwald. “Dead men walking, bewildered and broken,” he said, describing his grandfather’s words. Asked to conduct a worship service for the newly freed prisoners, the young chaplain gathered survivors into a Protestant church in Weimar. “They cried. They shouted. They didn’t think they’d be alive.”

Then, liberator Bill Kongable, 99, spoke himself, describing the liberation of Ohrdruf, the first Nazi concentration camp discovered by U.S. forces. “There was a long open pit with an estimated 3,500 bodies thrown

on top of each other,” Kongable recalled. “When I saw the mass grave, there were German civilians nearby, shaking their heads, saying, ‘I didn’t know.’ But we made them see it.”

Kongable shared the lasting burden carried by witnesses. “I have to keep telling my story,” he said. “It’s my hope that future generations will learn their history and recognize the impending signs of genocide.”

As the program drew to a close, Ike Brown, DHHRM chair, reflected on the evening’s theme. “It has been just 80 years since the camps were liberated — a short time in history. Yet today, antisemitism and Holocaust denial are on the rise. What we do tonight and every day reaffirms our dedication to preserving these memories.”

Six memorial candles were lit throughout the evening, honoring the victims, the survivors and the liberators. The ceremony concluded with the Shearith Israel choir leading the singing of “HaTikvah,” Israel’s national anthem, as a final tribute to the enduring hope that emerged from the horrors of the Shoah.



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Pianist explores hidden Holocaust history

Carolyn Enger shares father's story at Fort Worth Yom HaShoah memorial

By Michael Sudhalter

The Jewish Federation of Fort Worth & Tarrant County's annual Yom HaShoah Memorial Service on April 23 at Beth-El Congregation in Fort Worth highlighted a rarely discussed aspect of Holocaust history.

Carolyn Enger, a convert to Judaism with some Jewish roots in pre-World War II Germany, is a world-renowned classical pianist who performed a unique hour-long multimedia live documentary called "The Mischlinge Exposé: Stories of Assimilation and Conversion."

Mischlinge was a derogatory Nazi term for people who were neither fully Jewish nor fully Aryan.

"It was beautiful to hear her personal story — it was very moving," Beth-El Rabbi Brian Zimmerman said.

Throughout the early portion of her presentation, Enger highlighted writers and artists such as Rahel Varnhagen, Heinrich Heine, Alexander Zemlinsky, Hanns Eisler and others.

Through the performance, Enger hopes to "erase lines that divide us and inspire people to feel at peace within ourselves and with each other."

Enger, who was born, raised and still lives in Bergen County, New Jersey, had three Christian grandparents and one Jewish grandparent. She was raised in the Methodist tradition.

Her father, Horace Joachim Enger, was considered "a Mischling," with two Christian grandparents and two Jewish grandparents. He was sent to a labor camp on the eastern front during World War II. He recorded a testimony with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on his 80th birthday in 2001 and passed away in 2013.

"My father didn't talk much about (his experiences) while I was growing up, which made me more curious," Enger said.

Wanting to honor her father's memory, Enger created "The Mischlinge Exposé." She first performed it in 2016 and has since presented it throughout the United States and Europe.

"Somebody else may have written a book, but I thought this would be a way to share music and history," she said.

While attending Molloy University on Long Island, Enger took an Introduction to Judaism course at the Catholic university. She became more interested in the Jewish faith and went through a Reform conversion in the 1990s.

Later, while considering aliyah, she completed an Orthodox conversion in 2011. Horace Enger supported his daughter's decision, though he expressed concern for her physical safety.

Enger believes her father's fears stemmed from his own experiences in Nazi Germany.

"I didn't think I had anything to worry about until the Tree of Life shooting in Pittsburgh," she said, referring to the 2018 attack that killed 11 Jewish congregants. "I didn't think I'd ever live to see such a rise in antisemitism in the United States."



Photos: Michael Sudhalter

Carolyn Enger, a Jewish classically trained pianist from New Jersey, performed "The Mischlinge Exposé" during the Jewish Federation of Fort Worth and Tarrant County's Yom HaShoah service April 23, 2024, at Beth-El Congregation in Fort Worth.



Abe Factor was one of six participants who lit a candle in memory of the 6 million Jews murdered during the Holocaust at the Jewish Federation of Fort Worth and Tarrant County's Yom HaShoah service, held April 23, 2024, at Beth-El Congregation in Fort Worth.

After Enger's performance, six candles were lit to honor the six million Jewish lives lost in the Holocaust. Laurie Fross, Cantor Monica O'Desky, Fort Worth Federation Executive Director Barry Abels, Abe Factor, Nick Van Thyn and Ed-die Kerstein lit the candles.

Kerstein, the son of Holocaust survivors, fought back tears as he spoke about righteous gentiles who showed extraordinary courage in

their efforts to save Jewish lives.

Zimmerman, O'Desky, Congregation Ahavath Sholom Rabbi Andrew Bloom and Cantor Paul Dorman, Congregation Beth Israel Rabbi Cantor Judy Greenfeld, Congregation Beth Shalom Cantor Elisa Abrams Cohn, and Beth-El Religious School Director Cantor Shoshana Abrams Kaikov also performed and delivered powerful messages during the memorial service.



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Olivia Kuper Harris reaches ‘The Voice’ playoffs

Dallas native shines with soulful sound; voting opens May 12

By Deb Silverthorn

Dallas native Olivia Kuper Harris is living her dream — touring internationally, competing on NBC’s “The Voice” and continuing to create music. Harris, a singer-songwriter, producer and performer, has made it to “The Voice” playoffs and next appears Monday, May 5. If the judges vote her through, audience votes during the Monday, May 12, finale will determine the winner.

“My heart has taken me here. Music is my core,” said Harris, a graduate of Akiba Yavneh Academy (then known as Akiba Academy), Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and Carnegie Mellon University. “My family’s support, since I was little, and the potential they saw in me, allowed me to explore and for that I am so grateful.”

Her audition for “The Voice” came after someone messaged her on Instagram after seeing a post she made over a year ago.

“I never knew where music would take me — whether it would be a hobby or my profession —



Photos: Courtesy Holly Kuper
Olivia Kuper Harris, her mother Holly Kuper, Gany Abdoul and Teddy Swims after a February 2025 concert at Le Zénith Paris.

but it’s who and what I am,” said Harris, who also attended New York’s LaGuardia High School for her sophomore year.

The daughter of Holly Kuper and Hugh Harris, of blessed memory, and sister of Dylan, Harris was raised at Congregation Tiferet Israel. She moved to Los Angeles a decade ago to pursue her music career.

Her original releases, many recorded in her home studio, include “Juicy,” “Lonestar Heart,” “Luvtrovert” and “Stylish.”

In February, Harris began performing as a backup singer for

Teddy Swims, appearing with him on “The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon” and touring in Europe and South America. She will rejoin Swims on tour May 27 at Radio City Music Hall, continuing through the end of the year, with an Aug. 7 stop at the Pavilion at Toyota Music Factory in Irving.

Harris has also toured with Postmodern Jukebox, starred in “BAZ Star Crossed Love” at The Palazzo Resort Hotel Casino, performed in “Scorsese” at the Wallis Annenberg Center in Los Angeles and joined the



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Olivia Kuper Harris, performing during NBC's "The Voice," is hoping Dallas will vote for her to win on May 12.



"My heart has taken me here. Music is my core," says Olivia Kuper Harris, shown performing at a February 2025 Teddy Swims concert in Paris.



Olivia Kuper Harris with her brother Dylan at their Dallas home in 2006.

GRAMMY Jazz Ensemble in high school. She contributed vocals to fellow Dallasite Josh Goldberg's album "ONE" and performed in "The Brat Pack" production on Norwegian Cruise Line.

Her mother, Holly Kuper, has been cheering from the sidelines since Harris's earliest performances at Akiba Yavneh.

"There's no way to describe my feelings watching 12,000

people listen to my daughter sing a solo alongside Teddy Swims in Paris," said Kuper, a professional photographer who maintains her Dallas clientele while living part-time in Paris.

"I gave my children a foundation and set an example of hard work and love of life's opportunities, but their success is their own," she added.

Kuper recalled watching Harris

perform at Akiba Yavneh and later at her bat mitzvah, where her voice impressed even longtime teachers and rabbis.

"At one of her college performances, a man told me he came to see Olivia because someday it was going to cost a lot to hear her sing," Kuper said. "She's always had it — always."

From thousands of applicants, narrowed down to 48 contestants

for season 27, Harris's jazzy voice could soon bring her a \$100,000 cash prize and a recording contract with Universal Music Group.

To vote for Harris on May 12, visit nbc.com/VoiceVote or

download "The Voice" app from the Apple App Store or Google Play.

To follow Harris's journey, visit oliviakuperharris.com or find her on Instagram at [@olivia.kuper.harris](https://www.instagram.com/olivia.kuper.harris).

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Photo: Courtesy Noa Buaron
Noa Buaron, shown at the University of North Texas’ “Mean Green Fling” on Jan. 15, 2025, shared a table with UNT Hillel, introducing students to Jewish organizations on campus.

Eliana Field, a Carroll Senior High School graduate and daughter of Marina and Brian Field, is a University of Missouri student majoring in hospitality management with a minor in business.

Raised at Congregation Beth Israel and Chabad of Southlake, Field led Speakers Circle events, hosted a remembrance table for Oct. 7, and welcomed an IDF soldier to campus.

“The Emerson Fellowship has been one of the best experiences of my life,” Field said. “StandWithUs brought me a family of Jews from different backgrounds and provided me with a community and skills I didn’t even know I needed.

“Josh has been an incredible mentor, and I know we’ll always be connected,” she added. “Israel isn’t just a faraway place — it’s our place, and we must speak for her.”

Dani van Creveld, daughter of Karen and Ashley van Creveld, grew up at the Jewish Learning Center and Chabad of Dallas. A Texas Connections Academy graduate and Texas A&M student majoring in dance science with a psychology minor, she now serves as StandWithUs’ Central and Midwest campus liaison.

Van Creveld oversees 17 FLI (Future Leaders Initiative) students and is co-president of Texas A&M’s Chabad student board.

“I came to college thinking Jewish community would just be challah bakes,” van Creveld said. “Instead, I encountered misinformation about Israel. Through StandWithUs, I’ve learned who we are, how to express it and how to advocate for peace.”

Also representing DFW in the Emerson Fellowship are:

- **Royce Brik**, a Lovejoy High School graduate studying at Texas A&M.
- **Michal Epstein**, a Plano East Senior High School graduate, also at Texas A&M.
- **Allison Perilman**, a Keller High School graduate at the University of Oklahoma.
- **Eliam Stern**, an Akiba Yavneh Academy graduate now attending Yeshiva University.

“Our goal is to inspire students to lift their voices by providing the language and information needed to make a difference,” Mitchell-Arbital said. “We love seeing them shine and grow.”

For more information about StandWithUs, its programs or to support the organization, visit StandWithUs.com or email campus@standwithus.com.



Photo: Courtesy Eliana Field
On Oct. 7, 2024, Eliana Field hosted an information table at the University of Missouri campus to bring awareness to the Oct. 7, 2023, massacre.

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Ann & Nate Levine Academy sixth graders embark on transformative civil rights journey

Class traverses South to historic sites for a firsthand view of history

Submitted

In a bid to combat today’s divisiveness, Ann & Nate Levine Academy has spearheaded a transformative experiential learning initiative for sixth-grade students. For the second consecutive year, students have delved into the intricacies of human and civil rights, culminating in an impactful civil rights trip across the American South. The program aims to deepen students’ understanding of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s — a pivotal era when courageous Americans fought to secure their civil rights. Through firsthand experiences, students engaged with the history that shaped the nation and their futures on the weeklong trip March 31 to April 4.

“Through this immersive journey, Levine Academy students gained vital insights into human and civil rights while drawing connections to current events,” said Marco Rodriguez, auxiliary programs coordinator and trip advisor. “The trip serves not only as a lesson in history but as a call to action for the next generation to continue the ongoing fight for equality and justice in their own communities.”



Levine Academy sixth graders enjoyed their trip to the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum while on a civil rights trip from March 31 to April 4, 2025. From left: Naomi Goldin, Shira Itskovich and Willow Rider.

The journey commenced in Little Rock, Arkansas, where students visited the William J. Clinton Library and Museum. There, they explored an exhibit dedicated to the Little Rock Nine, a pioneering group of African American students who were the first to integrate a public school in the South. This critical moment in history served as a poignant introduction to the struggles those fighting for equality faced.

Continuing their journey, students traveled to Memphis, where they stood at the site of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s final speech and assassination. This solemn visit offered students a powerful

connection to the legacy of one of the most influential figures in the fight for civil rights.

The following day, the group traveled to Alabama. In Birmingham, they learned about the tragic terror attack at the 16th Street Baptist Church, which claimed the lives of four young girls in September 1963. This visit highlighted the violence that accompanied the fight for justice and served as a reminder of the work still needed to ensure equality for all.

In Selma, students retraced the steps of the brave foot soldiers who participated in the three marches for voting rights in 1965, including the infamous Bloody Sunday. Local tour guide Terry Chestnut, a young boy during the marches, shared his memories of that historic day. He recounted the importance of community support and the fair



Levine Academy sixth graders visited historic civil rights sites from March 31 to April 4, 2025. From left: Lathan Kopmar, Noam Deri and Netanel Primo at the Rosa Parks Museum at Troy University in Montgomery, Alabama.



Photos: Courtesy Levine Academy

Levine Academy sixth graders visited the Rosa Parks Museum in Montgomery, Alabama, while on their Civil Rights trip from March 31 to April 4, 2025. From left, back row: Gideon Hemstreet, Sophia Krieger, Naomi Goldin, Shira Itskovich, Emily Blum, Noam Amsalem, Kahrell Leipzig, Brynn Felder, Lucy Cohen, Avery Rose Zimmermann, Benjamin Stern, Annie Grill, Willow Rider, Claire Fenster; front row: Nadav Twito, Jonah Frieden, Nadav Weissman, Mylo Behringer, Netanel Primo, Lathan Kopmar and Noam Deri.

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wages that Jewish businesses offered during a time of profound racial tension.

The educational trip continued in Montgomery, where students visited the Rosa Parks Museum. There, they stood where Mrs. Parks famously refused to give up her seat, sparking the Montgomery bus boycott and highlighting the struggle against segregation in public transportation.

The week culminated with a visit to the King Center in Atlanta, where students paid their respects at Dr. King’s final resting place. A stop at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum, where they explored the former president’s contemporary humanitarian efforts, further enriched their understanding of civil rights.

—Submitted by Levine Academy.

Julie Genecov Shrell writes first children's book

'Honoring Zayde's Memory' celebrates love and lasting presence

By Deb Silverthorn

Once upon a time, there were a couple of beautiful grandchildren whose Zayde didn't live long enough to watch them grow — in person — but whose spirit shone through everywhere and in every part of their lives.

Dallas native Julie Genecov Shrell, sister of David Genecov, of blessed memory, who passed away in November 2022, has published her first book, "Where Did Zayde Go?" Shrell will be hosted for her first book signing from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 17, at The Cutest Little children's store in North Dallas.

"I wanted to keep David here, there, wherever the kids are," said Shrell. "I haven't been able to stop thinking about how David played with his granddaughter in the morning, then died in a car accident. He was gone and didn't come back.

"How do you tell a 1-year-old someone isn't 'here' anymore? Instead of focusing on that, I wanted to write about always being able to keep someone close to you," she said. "He's with you in your dreams as you sleep, and in your memories without making a peep. He sparkles in the stars in the night sky; he shines with the moon way up high."

The book's illustrations, by Nicole Allen, are watercolor-painted designs that include a grandfather in the clouds with a little girl, floating above a young one as she sleeps. Throughout the book, a butterfly follows the main character.

"Zayde is with you wherever you go," writes Shrell, with a butterfly floating above a shadowed child walking down a path, "and he loves you more than you'll ever know."

The daughter of Sally and the late Edward Genecov, Shrell is also the sister of Jeff Genecov and sister-in-law to his wife, Lisa, and to David's wife, also named Lisa. Married to Rob Shrell for 35 years, she is the mother of Gavin, Marissa (Josh) Kaufman and Simone (Aaron) Noble. Shrell wanted her grandniece and grandnephew — and all children who have lost a loved one — to understand the idea that their person is still with them, wherever they are.

Shrell was a charter member of Sally Blum Chapter BBYO and a graduate of W.T. White High School and the University of Texas

at Austin, where she was a member of AEPhi. Raised at Congregation Shearith Israel, and with her family longtime members of Congregation Anshai Torah, she is a co-founder of the Be The Difference Foundation, along with Jill Bach and, of blessed memory, Helen Gardner and Lynn Lentscher. Since 2012, the foundation has raised more than \$6 million to create awareness and improve the lives of those affected by ovarian cancer through education, support and research.

Named Best Mortgage Professional by both D Magazine and Texas Monthly and honored with the MetroTex Association of REALTORS' Ebby Halliday Community Service Award, Shrell is a mortgage loan officer at Cadence Bank.

The book, dedicated to Lily Genecov, daughter of David's son Michael and his wife, Kenzie, and Zev Genecov, son of David's son Max and his wife, Casey, is a gift from Shrell to these children and all who read their way through her poetic trail. Lily was not yet 1 when her Zayde David died, and Zev, named Zev David in his memory, was born just 11 months after David's passing — the day after what would have been David's 60th birthday.



Photos: Courtesy Julie Shrell
"No matter where I am," says first-time author Julie Shrell, "I see my brother David, I see my dad, and I'll have memories of them always."

"Where Did Zayde Go?" ends with a "Where did your loved one go?" page, leaving storytime open for conversations that Shrell hopes will comfort children of all ages.

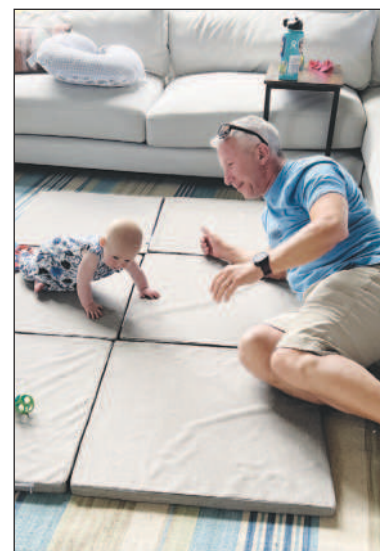
"I never knew my mother's father, and my Papaw, Monk Genecov, died when I was just 8 years old. No matter where I am, I see my brother David, I see my Dad, and I'll always have memories of them," she said. "The kids see David 'visiting' in



Zayde Ed Genecov, with his grandson Gavin Shrell, spending the kind of day together one wishes could last a lifetime. In Julie Shrell's "Where Did Zayde Go?," loved ones are always close by.

ladybugs. In the weirdest places, and then, while I was working with the illustrator, there was a ladybug on the wall. It's no mistake a ladybug makes a couple of appearances in the book. He's there — he's everywhere."

Shrell's book is available at Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com. On May 17, The Cutest Little will offer a 15% discount on all



"Where Did Zayde Go?" is dedicated to Lily Genecov, left, and Zev Genecov (not pictured), the grandchildren of author Julie Shrell's brother, David Genecov, right, who died in 2022.

items during the 10 a.m. to noon event.

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SMU Jewish tennis trio shines

Ofek Shimanov, Eli Susser and Jason Sraberg embrace tennis, faith and community at SMU

By Deb Silverthorn

Love may mean “no points” in tennis lexicon, but for Southern Methodist University Men’s Tennis Team athletes Ofek Shimanov and Eli Susser, and the team’s manager, Jason Sraberg, love and respect define their connection to Jewish identity, Israel and the campus community.

“It’s exciting to have such hardworking athletes and team representatives who are strong students and who share their Jewish identities on campus,” said Rabbi Heidi Coretz, SMU assistant chaplain for Jewish life and executive director of Hillel at SMU. “They honor us by being publicly and proudly Jewish and an active part of the community.”

Joining the SMU Mustangs men’s tennis team in January 2025 as a freshman is Ofek Shimanov, son of Marin and Ariel Shimanov of Ramla, near



Photo: SMU Athletics

“It’s been a blessing for me to be on the team, to have had this great tennis experience,” said SMU Mustang tennis team athlete Eli Susser, shown at a match at SMU’s Styslinger/Altec Tennis Complex in March 2023. “I look forward to my business career and always having tennis play a part in my life.”

Tel Aviv. His father was his first coach; later coaches included Yonathan Ehrlich and Yonatan Charovani in Ramat HaSharon.

Shimanov is the 2024 Israel National Champion, a quarterfinalist at the M25 Heraklion, a Future 25K semifinalist in Netanya and a winner of the 2024 Israel Tennis Championship Team League.

Just weeks after arriving in Dallas, he traveled to Lithuania

to represent Israel in the Davis Cup against Germany, winning his match.

“I’m glad to be here and to be a Mustang. Coach Chen promised to take care of me, and he has,” said Shimanov, who received a medical exemption from IDF service due to an allergy. “While I would have been honored to serve, I’m blessed to be here now.

“Eli and Jason became my friends right away,” said



Photo: SMU Athletics

Ofek Shimanov, a championship player for the State of Israel, is finishing his first semester as a student and member of the SMU Mustang tennis team.

Shimanov, who has been cheered on at matches by fans waving signs and chanting his name. “The whole team has been welcoming. I’ve been to their homes for dinners, and for Pesach, the coaches made sure I had food without chametz — even providing matzoh and egg noodles while we were traveling.”

Eli Susser, a Corpus Christi native, moved to Dallas for his senior year of high school and

graduated from Highland Park High School. He is the son of Catherine and Sam Susser. Raised at Temple Beth El, he is now a member of Temple Emanu-El.

Susser, who began playing tennis as a child, trained at the Corpus Christi Athletic Club under coach Konstantin Boldyrev. He is graduating this month from SMU with a major in finance and real estate and a minor in history. After



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Photo: Courtesy SMU Hillel

From left: William Kavy, Nathan Pupko Ginsberg, SMU men’s tennis team manager Jason Sraberg, and Keilah Eletu were among those participating in the March 2025 hamantaschen bake hosted on campus by Hillel at SMU.

graduation and a Birthright trip with Sraberg, he will begin his career with Goldman Sachs in Dallas.

“I wanted to stay in Texas, and SMU’s tennis program, Jewish community and strong reputation — especially after the events of Oct. 7 — made this the right place for me,” said Susser, who has been active with Hillel and Chabad at SMU. “Even in the last year and a half, I’ve seen

only one protest, and it passed quickly.

“Our team is very close, and having Ofek join us has been awesome,” he added. “He’s a team favorite and has added so much to our experience. I’m really glad I had the chance to be part of the team while he’s here. I look forward to starting my career but plan to keep tennis a part of my life.”

Jason Sraberg, a Los Angeles native and SMU senior, has

known SMU head coach Grant Chen since childhood. Following Chen to SMU, Sraberg found his niche as the team manager.

“I grew up in a tennis family, and I followed my parents’ advice to make a large campus feel smaller. Being part of the team has given me a family away from home,” said Sraberg, son of Karen and Brad Sraberg and a member of Wilshire Boulevard Temple.

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Sraberg, who is majoring in sports management with a minor in sports leadership, has been active with both Hillel and Chabad at SMU, including attending Hillel’s 10/7 Shabbat Table dedication in 2023 and Passover Seder this spring.

“I’ve been lucky not to experience antisemitism here,” Sraberg said. “SMU’s administration and campus police have made the Jewish community, and the entire

campus, feel safe.” Coach Chen praised the trio’s dedication on and off the court. “Our team is special, and Ofek, Jason and Eli are part of that,” said Chen. “Jason I’ve known most of his life; Eli stepped away from a family tradition of UT Longhorns to forge his own path; and Ofek took a leap of faith to join our team. All three have made SMU tennis — and our community — better.”



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Beth Shalom to celebrate 45 years

Congregation Beth Shalom, a small but vibrant synagogue in Arlington, will celebrate its 45th anniversary with a gala on the evening of Saturday, May 10.

“We are honored to welcome members of the North Texas Jewish community to Arlington to honor this wonderful anniversary,” said Lisa Rein, CBS president. “We pray that Hashem grants us many more years of worship, community and celebration.”

The congregation has blossomed to serve the Mid-Cities communities as well as members from Ellis and Johnson counties. Seeds were planted in 1977 when several Jewish citizens of Arlington met at the home of the Feld family.

“Beth Shalom grew out of an embryonic Jewish community in the late 1970s in Arlington and eventually became Congregation Beth Shalom in 1980,” said Janet Aaronson, a longtime member and the synagogue’s former executive director.

The gala will include dinner, music, dancing and a raffle.

Tickets are \$54.

For more information or to support the CBS 45th Anniversary Celebration, email info@bethshalom.org or visit www.bethshalom.org.

–Submitted by
Michael Sudhalter

Beth Torah to host 50th anniversary party

Congregation Beth Torah is capping off its 50th anniversary celebration with a ‘70s disco-themed party on Sunday night, May 18.

Beth Torah was founded in 1974 by six families who wanted a participatory, egalitarian, learning-focused Conservative synagogue. It has flourished in Richardson ever since.

The golden anniversary year included a special service honoring its spiritual leaders — with current Rabbi Sydni Rubinstein, the synagogue’s 10th rabbi — Rabbi Rubinstein’s formal installation, a major fundraising campaign and the upcoming celebration.

Ron Jacobs, co-chair of the May 18 event, said Beth Torah opted for a fun, festive evening rather than a formal gala.

“It just seemed more in keeping with our congregation to have a less formal, more accessible evening where we could all celebrate together,” he said. “We know some former members who have moved away are coming back for the celebration, and we’re very excited about that.”

The event, which will be held at the synagogue, will feature ‘70s-style music and dancing, comedy, historical displays, silent and live auctions, hors d’oeuvres, desserts and adult beverages. Proceeds will benefit the Beth Torah Century Campaign, a special fund to support and enhance the professional staff as the congregation embarks on its next 50 years.

Tickets are \$50 and everyone is invited.

Beth Torah is located at 720 West Lookout Drive in Richardson, near the crossroads of Bush Turnpike and Central Expressway.

For more information or to buy tickets, visit www.congregationbethtorah.org.

–Submitted by
Mike Precker

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Honoring pets in Judaism

Dear Rabbi,
Do animals have souls and does a pet need a burial?
Melissa L.

Dear Melissa,

I'm assuming that you or a friend has lost a pet, which is a very painful experience, leading to much thought and introspection.

Although animals have intelligence and can feel pain and emotions, Judaism teaches us that they do not have a "soul" as a human being does. The Torah, in the story of creation, says that only mankind is endowed with a soul, a spark of the Almighty. Only man is created in the "image of G-d," which emanates from the combination of body and soul.

However, the Sages explain that there is a degree of holiness in animals, which have a different level of "animal soul" while they are still alive. That soul doesn't give the animal free choice like a person, as an animal lives by intuition. That soul is also not eternal like a human soul, but lives only as long as the animal does. Because of this holiness, Judaism frowns upon activities that cause pain or distress to animals, such



ASK THE RABBI

By Rabbi
Yerachmiel
D. Fried

as hunting for sport, rodeos and the like.

This is known as the prohibition of "tzaar baalei chaim" — causing unnecessary pain to animals.

Therefore, strictly speaking, an animal doesn't require a burial, as burial is done as a testimony to our belief in the eternity of the soul. However, Judaism places a very high priority on appreciation and not degrading even inanimate objects from which we derive benefit, as all good is from G-d.

You may bury a pet whose love and companionship you enjoyed, to show thanks to G-d for the benefit you derived from it while it was alive. This burial should also bring you or your friends some comfort and closure.

Sincerely, Rabbi Yerachmiel Fried

Rabbi Yerachmiel D. Fried is dean of DATA-Dallas Area Torah Association.

New days, ancient traditions

Dear Families,

By the time you read this, we will have commemorated Yom HaShoah, the remembrance of the Holocaust; Yom HaZikaron, the day we remember all those who have died defending Israel; and perhaps even Yom HaAtzmaut, Israel's Independence Day.

All of these special "yoms" are new days in the Jewish calendar. We often forget that there are only six Torah holidays, and most of our other holidays are based on historical events. It is a unique challenge to add new days. All our special days have rituals that we have been doing forever — so how do you create new days and new rituals? This is actually why Judaism continues to flourish — we find new meanings and create ways to remember and share.

This year, the J will celebrate on Sunday, May 4, at our wonderful outdoor pool with the *Tsofim*, our Israeli Scouts. We hope to see many of you there! (Register at <https://www.jccdallas.org/events/israel-independence-day-pool-party>.) More than ever, we need to be together and celebrate Israel.

We are still "counting" our way to Shavuot. The practice is observed from the night of the second seder until the eve of Shavuot. We are counting



SHALOM FROM THE SHABBAT LADY

By Laura
Seymour

the days on which the *omer* offering of the new barley crop was brought to the Temple — this connects the Exodus from Egypt to the giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai. Tradition teaches that the Israelites were told that the Torah would be given to them 50 days after the Exodus. They were so eager about it that they began to count the days, saying, "Now we have one day less to wait for the giving of the Torah." The Torah text for this is Leviticus 23:15-16.

Although this period has been a sad time because of the many massacres in Jewish history — both in the distant past and in modern times — we continue to look forward. Learn more about the happy and sad times. As long as we are sharing together, we can celebrate. Create your own family rituals and join with others — now is the time to learn and grow in Jewish knowledge and experiences.

Laura Seymour is Jewish experiential learning director and camp director emeritus at the Aaron Family JCC.

Celebrating Israel's 77th birthday

This Shabbat, May 3, is the 5th of Iyar, Yom HaAtzmaut, Israel Independence Day. The day marks the 77th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel. This year, the observance of Yom HaZikaron — Memorial Day for Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terrorism — and Yom HaAtzmaut are moved back to Wednesday and Thursday, respectively, in deference to Shabbat.

What exactly do we celebrate on Yom HaAtzmaut? The day does not celebrate the end of war as Purim does. The War of Independence was followed by many wars — including the current one. Past Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau has called this war now "Israel's Second War of Independence."

So, how was the day chosen to be a special day? We recite the special prayer of "Hallel" as on major festivals. We see the day as one of deep religious significance.

Isaiah (11:11) describes what will happen in the final redemption: "On that day, Hashem will take the remnants of His people for a second time."

In Jewish history, there have already been two redemptions: the Exodus from Egyptian slavery and the return to Israel following the exile in Babylonia.

If this is the case, then the final redemption that the prophet refers to should be the third redemption. Why does he call it "the second"?

The commentator Rashi explains that the redemption during the time of the Second Temple was incomplete. The Jews were still subservient to Cyrus. This redemption was incomplete because Jewish autonomy in the Land of Israel was absent.

Maimonides writes (Laws of Kings 12:2) that there is no difference between this world and the time of the Messiah except for the fact that the Jewish people will be independent and will not be subservient to the other nations of the world.

The Maccabees strove for full independence, but they were only marginally successful in this effort.



D'VAR TORAH

By Rabbi
Howard Wolk
Tazira Metzarah

The first time since then that Jews achieved self-rule and a Jewish government in Israel was on a Friday morning in May 1948, the 5th of Iyar 5708, when David Ben-Gurion had the courage to declare a Jewish state.

This event would dramatically transform and change the entire Jewish world — and it would never be the same again.

One can accept and embrace the State of Israel or disagree with her, but it is impossible to deny that she exists and that she is a Jewish state — the only one in the world and the first for millennia.

That is what we celebrate on Yom HaAtzmaut.

That is why we rejoice.

Yes, Israel is subject to influences and pressures from others. But we have much more than we have had in the last 2,000 years.

Our march to Jewish destiny is not complete, but we are closer.

We are closer even with — and because of — the holy ones who have fallen in this war and all the previous ones.

May Hashem protect our holy soldiers and the citizens of Israel. May He return all of our hostages.

May we appreciate this gift that He has given us.

The number 77 is comprised of the Hebrew letters *ayin* and *zayin*, which spell the word *oz* — strength — as in "Hashem *oz l'amo yitain*..."

Hashem should continue to give strength to Israel.

Yom HaAtzmaut Sameach and Shabbat Shalom!

Rabbi Howard Wolk is community chaplain of Jewish Family Service of Greater Dallas and rabbi emeritus of Congregation Shaare Tefilla. He is a member of the Rabbinic Association of Greater Dallas.

Celebrating 77 years of Israel’s independence

Seventy-seven years ago, we founded an independent Jewish state in our ancestral land — a moment that forever changed the course of Jewish history. The reestablishment of the State of Israel was not merely the realization of a national dream — it was the revival of a people, a culture and a deep spiritual connection that endured for millennia.

It’s almost difficult to fathom that less than a century ago, Israel was only an idea, cherished in our prayers. For more than 2,000 years, wherever Jews lived, we turned our hearts toward Jerusalem. In joy and in mourning, we remembered our land. We whispered its name under wedding canopies and wept for it beside graves. Today, we live the answer to those prayers.

Yom HaAtzmaut, Israel’s Independence Day, is a time to reflect on the miracle of our homeland’s existence. It’s a day to celebrate the extraordinary journey of the Zionist project — a journey that unites us all and reminds us of the unbreakable bond that connects every Jew to the Land of Israel, no matter where in the world we may be.



GUEST COLUMN
By Livia Link-Raviv

This year, as we mark 77 years of independence, that celebration takes on even deeper meaning. In Jewish tradition, the number 77 corresponds to the Hebrew word *oz* (ֹז), meaning “strength.” And indeed, strength is what this year has demanded from all of us.

Israel is still at war — a war we did not choose, but one that was brutally imposed on us.

Alongside our immense pride in our nation, we carry the trauma and pain of the Oct. 7 horrors — and everything that has followed. Our country has faced the unimaginable. It has endured the unbearable. And yet, the people of Israel have shown a depth of strength and unity that offers comfort and hope.

Freedom is a tricky thing. We all know how precious it is, but we often take it for granted — just like the air we breathe — until the moment it is stolen from us. As I write these words, 59 of our brothers and sisters remain in captivity, held in the deep tunnels by Hamas, while their families live through each day with unimaginable anguish.

We need them back home now! This year, more than ever, Yom HaAtzmaut is not only a celebration, but a declaration of resilience, purpose and solidarity.

While we celebrate our homeland, we cannot ignore the alarming rise in antisemitism across the globe, reaching an all-time high. This ancient hatred has never gone away but has reemerged with boldness and fury — on college campuses, in city streets and online. It might wear new disguises, but its core is the same: Jew hatred, often masked as hatred of Zionism. But this is not our burden alone. This moment belongs to all of us, and it will define not just the future of the Jewish people, but the future of humanity.

Throughout the years, much has been said about the special bond between Israel and world Jewry. We are inseparable. We are one people with one heart. We share a homeland, a heritage and a destiny. The Jewish community in Texas is part and parcel of Israel’s resilience, and for that, we are forever grateful.

In these 77 years, Israel has become a beacon of prosperity, diversity and innovation. We’ve made peace with former

enemies, turned deserts into gardens and created a home for Jews of every background.

Today, we understand more than ever the necessity of a sovereign Jewish state. We honor those who gave their lives so we could live freely in our homeland. We renew our promise that Israel will remain a safe haven for all Jews, for all time. That is the heart of Zionism. That is our mission.

More than anything, we believe in the promise of a better tomorrow. We draw inspiration and strength from remarkable individuals like Rachel Goldberg-Polin, mother of Hersh Goldberg-Polin, who was viciously murdered in captivity by Hamas, and we remember her mantra: “**Hope is mandatory.**”

So on this 77th Independence Day, I invite you to rejoice in what we’ve built, take pride in what we’ve overcome and celebrate Israel’s beauty, strength and unwavering spirit. May we all pray, together, for brighter days of peace and healing.

Until then — and always — **hope is mandatory**, and we will never relinquish it.

Livia Link-Raviv is the consul general of Israel to the Southwest.

Honoring sacrifice, celebrating resilience



GUEST COLUMN
By Kenny Goldberg

I have had the honor of witnessing the most incredible transition of my life multiple times in Israel.

Earlier this week, at sundown, Israel commenced its Memorial Day, Yom HaZikaron. It is the saddest, most solemn nonreligious holiday of the year — when Israel honors the service and sacrifice of its fallen soldiers and murdered victims of terror.

It is a national day of grief and reflection, highlighted by moments of silence when the entire country comes to a stop and listens to the blare of sirens. Even highways become parking lots. Names of the deceased are recited, and prayers are offered for their memory and for their families’ peace of mind.

In Israel, the degrees of separation are small. Almost everyone has been

personally and emotionally impacted.

Just 24 hours later, on Wednesday night, Israel respectfully moved into its Independence Day. A huge, countrywide celebration ensued, recognizing Israel’s resilience and spirit.

The timing of these holidays is deliberate — commemorating the sacrifice of those lost, immediately followed by celebrating their lives and

the strength of a small but mighty nation in the Middle East.

I hope that someday my family and friends will be able to witness this miraculous transition personally. It has moved me to tears of sadness and joy.

Dallasite Kenny Goldberg is the co-chair of the Texas Holocaust Genocide and Antisemitism Advisory Commission.

Letter

A pragmatic case for vouchers

A recent article in the TJP reveals a split stance among Texas Jews on the \$1 billion private school voucher program. Some influential Reform rabbis caution that supporting vouchers could divert funds from public schools, potentially undermining both public education and religious freedom.

However, critics often overlook a critical point: our public school system has been failing low-income communities for decades. While affluent districts boast competitive public schools, families in poorer districts are trapped with underfunded institutions and no viable alternatives. Allowing vouchers would enable tax dollars to follow the child, thereby creating a more efficient market where competition drives improvements in educational quality.

Moreover, it is unfair to dictate how parents should allocate the tax dollars they have helped generate. When families opt for private schooling, they effectively pay twice: funding public systems they no longer utilize while meeting private tuition costs. Rather than a partisan debate, the issue calls for a pragmatic solution — one that has widespread support among low-income families. History shows that when government monopolizes education production, it often exacerbates inequality. By contrast, subsidizing education through school choice can invite innovative educational models that better serve disadvantaged communities.

Texas Jews — and indeed all community members invested in the future of our children — should consider supporting school choice as the vital path toward meaningful educational reform.

Peter Lewin
Dallas

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Norman Alan Meyer

Oct. 4, 1937 – April 13, 2025

Norman Alan Meyer, 87, passed away on the first day of Passover, April 13, 2025, lovingly surrounded by his siblings and children.

Alan was born on Oct. 4, 1937, in Dallas to Abe and Rose Meyer. He was their firstborn and a second-generation native Dallasite. The Meyer family was rooted in Oak Cliff, which was the hub of their grocery store business, Cliff Food. Alan began working in the store at the age of 4.

Alan graduated from Sunset High School in Oak Cliff. During high school, he joined BBYO and was in Henry Monsky AZA. There, he met the woman who would eventually become his life partner, Audree Jacobs.

After high school, he attended SMU, where he received his business degree in accounting. It was during his college years that he began dating Audree, the love of his life. They married on Jan. 27, 1959, at Congregation Shearith Israel, where they raised their



Alan Meyer

family and were lifelong members.

From 1959 to 1992, Alan was the owner and operator of Cliff Food stores. He was also involved with Affiliated Food Stores, a cooperative serving independent grocery stores. Alan served as secretary and then first vice president on the Affiliated board of directors for 10 years.

At the age of 54, he decided to pursue a second career in the field of commercial real estate. After receiving his license, Alan worked with Golman and Associates, enjoying nearly 25 years in real estate.

From the time the Texas Rangers baseball team was founded, Alan enjoyed watching them play. He loved taking his young children to games in Arlington during the 1970s. When the Rangers won the World Series, he was quite pleased.

Alan also loved poetry, frequently quoting poets and writers such as Robert Frost, Shakespeare and Edgar Allan Poe.

Alan was a tremendously kind, empathetic, hardworking and humble man. He tended to

his ill wife with intense devotion and love during her long illness. He was a dedicated and faithful son, brother, husband, father and friend. He had a wonderful demeanor, along with a contagious smile and witty sense of humor. He was loved by all and will be greatly missed.

Alan is survived by his sister, Anita Meyer Tobias; brother, Stuart Meyer (Harriet); and his three children, Ruth Sacks (Michael), Elizabeth Liener (Robert) and Joseph Meyer (Theresa). Alan and Audree also received tremendous joy from their eight grandchildren: Aaron Liener, Jacob Sacks, Benjamin Liener, Adam Sacks (Michelle), Rachel Sacks, Sarah Liener, Chloe Meyer and Zoey Meyer.

Alan was preceded in death by his parents, Abe Meyer and Rose Einhorn Meyer, as well as his wife, Audree Jacobs Meyer. Alan and Audree were married for 64 years.

Graveside services were held April 16, led by Rabbi Avi Mitzner of Congregation Shearith Israel.

To honor Alan’s memory, donations may be made to Congregation Shearith Israel or to the charity of your choice.

Judith Ileane Ferdinand Roffman

April 10, 1937 – April 10, 2025

Judith Ileane Ferdinand Roffman, loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, daughter and sister, passed away April 10, 2025. She was 88.

She was a wonderful mother to Shari (Steve) Goldberg, Carin (Dave) Rosinsky and Linda (Todd) Zimmerman; a wonderful grandmother to Brady (Sloane) Goldberg, Reghan Goldberg, Samantha Rosinsky, Sydney Rosinsky, Rylee (Blake) Webb and Zane Zimmerman; and a great-grandmother to Colter Blaine Webb.

Judy was predeceased by her parents, Florence and Louis Ferdinand; sister, Susan Eisner; husband, Dr. Blaine (Buddy) Roffman; and granddaughter, Kayce Lynn Goldberg.

Cantor Joanna Alexander officiated at funeral services April, 24 at Temple Israel Cemetery in Omaha, Nebraska.

Memorial donations are suggested to PJ Library, www.pjlibrary.org, or the charity of your choice.



Judy Roffman

Helene Ruth Kurtz Ray

Dec. 31, 1930 – April 24, 2025

Helene Ruth Kurtz Ray (aka Mom, Grandma and Honey), 94, passed away peacefully at her home at The Bonaventure late Thursday night, April 24, 2025. God blessed us by granting her peace and serenity so she may be reunited with her beloved husband, Sylvan, her parents and other precious loved ones.

Helene was born to Faye and Joe Kurtz on Dec. 31, 1930, in Dallas. A New Year’s Eve birthday would be the foretelling of a wonderful, exciting and fulfilling era full of beauty, glamour and sparkle. She liked to say, “Everyone celebrates my birthday.” Helene enjoyed and embraced life as if it were a big party.

Helene grew up and lived her entire life in Dallas, attending North Dallas High School and the University of Texas at Austin. At the tender age of 19, she met the love of her life, Sylvan Ray. They married in 1950 and had three children, whom she adored. She lost her cherished husband, Sylvan, to cancer when he was only 63. Even through this tragedy, she bolstered the courage to be



Helene Kurtz Ray

the strong, resilient head of her growing family. Helene found love a second time and was married to Howard Alexander of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

She spent much of her life doting on her children, grandchildren and a fun-loving brood of great-grandchildren. She is survived by her three children: Joel Ray and his wife, Terry; Cindy Ray Yablonsky and her husband, Bruce; and Harry Ray.

Helene was blessed with five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren: Joel’s daughter Brittany Feldman and her husband, Josh, and their daughter, Mara; Joel’s son Colby Ray and his wife, Paige, and their son, Hudson; and Joel’s son Collin Ray; Harry’s son Sylvan Ray, who is engaged to Maddie, and his children, Alana, Morgan, Zachary and Baby Charlie; and Cindy and Bruce’s son Ryan Yablonsky.

In addition to her parents and her husband, Sylvan, Helene was predeceased by her brother, Stanley Kurtz, and her grandson, Preston Ray.

Helene had a wonderful sense of humor, and when she laughed, she meant it. Her charm, grace, humor, beauty and gaming talents

made her the classic lady we will always remember with love in our hearts. She lived life large! For many years, one of her favorite activities was Vodka Night with her lifelong girlfriends, of which she had many. She loved to play games and never turned down a trip to Vegas. Her dear friend Adie Steinberg was still driving them both to Winstar Casino in Oklahoma several times a month into their late 80s.

Helene was a life member of Hadassah and a longtime member of the National Council of Jewish Women.

The family requests that donations be made in Helene’s memory to the Southwest Jewish Congress (www.swjc.org), Jewish Family Service of Greater Dallas (www.jfsdallas.org), or a charity close to your heart.

A Celebration of Life service will be held at noon Friday, May 2, in the Chapel at Sparkman/Hillcrest Funeral Home (7405 W. Northwest Highway, Dallas, Texas 75225), followed by a luncheon in the Lounge in Helene’s honor.

The family will gather and welcome all who would like to join them for a shiva service at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, May 1, in the Venetian Room at The Bonaventure (5200 Keller Springs Road, Dallas, Texas 75248).



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