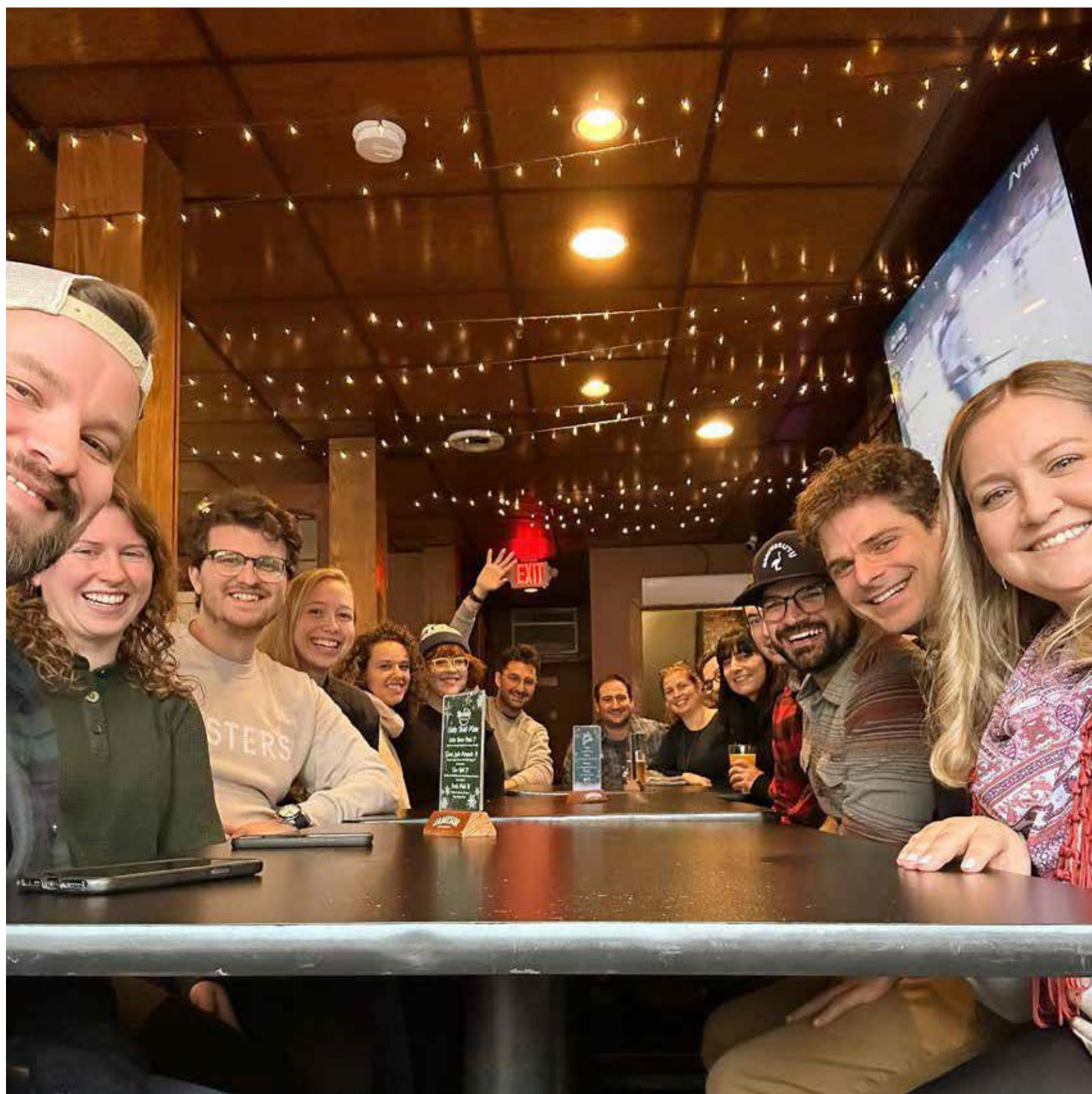




# Jewish Community Alliance Yearbook 2023-24/5784





WELCOME



Molly Curren Rowles  
Executive Director

"In the life of the spirit there is no ending that is not a beginning."  
-Henrietta Szold

Happy New Year 5784! The Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine is proud to serve as the hub of our local Jewish community, serving as Southern Maine's Federation (JFNA), Jewish Community Center (JCC), and Jewish Family Services (JFS) program.

Through this yearbook, we are proud to present information about the JCA's work, as well as the Jewish organizations and institutions we partner with throughout York, Cumberland, and Sagadahoc counties. We hope this will serve as an evergreen resource to help you navigate our community throughout the coming year.

Together, we foster a dynamic and caring community. The J is a great place to make a friend or learn something new. Join us for food, music, books, or activities, as a volunteer or as a participant. Your ideas and perspectives are valued here, and we look forward to your feedback, questions, and suggestions.

Shana tova umetukah – a good and sweet New Year – from all of us at the JCA!

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Albert Glickman z"l\*  
\*zichrono livracha  
(of blessed memory)



MISSION

To enhance and promote Jewish life and continuity locally, in Israel and throughout the world, and to generate financial resources to develop, provide and support diverse programs, education and services in order to accomplish these goals. We work with an array of organizations and local congregations, and function as the hub of Jewish programming in Southern Maine.

JCA HOURS OF OPERATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Monday - Friday from 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM

1342 Congress St., Portland, ME 04102  
207-772-1959 | [www.mainejewish.org](http://www.mainejewish.org)

Please visit us on social media or at [www.mainejewish.org](http://www.mainejewish.org) to stay up to date and sign up for our email list!

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KeyArna Basset

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Wendy Getchel

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Janel Goodman

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Alexandria Piper

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Bonnie Ryan

Adam Seigal

Tori Shoemaker

Amelia Shubert

Matthew Slipp

Chris Thurston

Meghan Warner

Siohban Whalen

Missouri Williams

Theresa Yudaken

Not Pictured:

Inna Cherednichenko  
Kevin Lumenello  
Egypt Pooler





SOUTHERN MAINE JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS

Congregations

**Beth Israel Congregation** (Reform)  
Rabbi: Lisa Vinikoor  
862 Washington Street, Bath, Maine 04530  
207-443-4606 | [www.bethisraelbath.org](http://www.bethisraelbath.org)

Beth Israel Congregation is an inclusive Reform synagogue, a center of worship, learning, culture and community that connects Judaism to our lives in today's world. Beth Israel feels alive, vibrant, relevant and evolving, while rooted in the tradition and history that make Judaism strong. It is a place where Judaism is taken seriously and practiced earnestly and where interpretations of Torah, texts and Jewish traditions from a wide variety of backgrounds and perspectives are welcomed and debated. Beth Israel is proud of its history as the center of Jewish life in the Mid-coast. We are a nourishing place where people learn, study, question, observe, and connect with God and community.

**Chabad House** (Chabad-Lubavitch)  
Rabbi: Moshe Wilansky  
11 Pomeroy Street, Portland, ME 04102  
207-871-8947 | [www.chabadofmaine.com](http://www.chabadofmaine.com)

Chabad is an Orthodox Hasidic organization. The word "Chabad" is a Hebrew acronym for the three intellectual faculties of *chochmah*—wisdom, *binah*—comprehension and *da'at*—knowledge. The movement's system of Jewish religious philosophy, teaches understanding and recognition of the Creator, the role and purpose of creation, and the importance and unique mission of each creature. Chabad of Maine is guided by the idea that there should be a place where everyone can feel at home, within a Jewish context, and offer services, holiday programming, summer camp and other programs.

**Congregation Bet Ha'am** (Reform)  
Rabbi: Jared H. Saks  
81 Westbrook Street, South Portland, ME 04106  
207-879-0028 | [www.bethaam.org](http://www.bethaam.org)

Congregation Bet Ha'am is the spiritual home for an active and growing community of Reform Jews in South Portland. With more than 300 member households, over 80 Religious School students from pre-school to high school, weekly Shabbat worship and Torah study, and opportunities each month for learning about and participating in Jewish life, Bet Ha'am plays a large role in the Jewish community of Southern Maine. From the beginning, Bet Ha'am's emphasis has been to help its members connect – or re-connect – to Judaism by providing an open, caring and energetic community. We have a large number of Jews by Choice and LGBTQ+ Jews.

**Congregation Beth Israel** (Orthodox)  
49 East Grand Ave., Old Orchard Beach, ME 04064  
207-974-2973 | [www.cbisrael.me](http://www.cbisrael.me)

Congregation Beth Israel is an Orthodox synagogue in Old Orchard Beach and is one of the oldest synagogues in Maine. Shabbat services are held year round.

**Congregation Etz Chaim** (Non-denominational)  
Cantor: Beth Strassler  
34 Bacon Street, Biddeford, ME 04005  
207-284-5771 | [www.etzchaimme.org](http://www.etzchaimme.org)

Congregation Etz Chaim, York County's only full-service synagogue, was founded in 1906 and is currently home to over a hundred Jewish families who come together to worship, celebrate, learn, and socialize in a welcoming, inclusive, community-centered environment. A non-denominational congregation, we embrace members along the entire spectrum of Jewish practice and theology. We offer a range of activities that facilitate the expression of what each individual finds valuable, including 3 Shabbat observances per month; monthly Torah study; High Holiday services; Jewish holiday celebrations; community potluck dinners; educational programming for families, kids, teens, and adults; customized B'nei Mitzvah preparation; and the Samuel Osher Memorial Library.

**Congregation Shaarey Tphiloh** (Modern Orthodox)  
President: Dr. Natan Kahn  
400 Deering Avenue, Portland, ME 04103  
207-773-0693 | [www.mainesynagogue.org](http://www.mainesynagogue.org)

Congregation Shaarey Tphiloh embraces an Orthodoxy that is open and inclusive. We are dedicated to the principles of *halakha* (Jewish law) and Jewish tradition, and believe that these teachings will lead us on the path of righteousness and toward a spiritual connection to God. We are "modern" Orthodox in the sense that we believe that the modern world should inform our religious experience and enhance our understanding of the laws and traditions of Judaism. We are "open" in the sense that we emphasize that we are responsible for serving the larger community of the Jewish people and the State of Israel. Our members believe that they have a responsibility to work to improve the lives of the people in the community around us as well as the lot of all of humanity.

**Etz Chaim Synagogue** (Unaffiliated)  
Rabbi: Gary Berenson  
267 Congress Street, Portland, ME 04101  
207-773-2339 | [www.etzchaim-portland.org](http://www.etzchaim-portland.org)

Etz Chaim is an inclusive synagogue, committed to the opportunities, challenges, and diversity of the Jewish community of Portland and all of Southern Maine. The congregation is committed to maintaining its historic roots in traditional Jewish practice, conducting many of

its services in Hebrew as it has for almost a century. The congregation also offers services in the liberal Jewish spirit, substantially in English, as a welcoming and inclusive worship experience for many of our members. We offer a special welcome to interfaith, multi-cultural, and non-traditional individuals and families who are seeking an experience of Judaism's spiritual ideals and traditions, regardless of religious background. Together we seek to be a "tree of life," by creating a community of worship, learning, and service, grounded in the timeless Jewish vision of a "house of prayer for all people," and responding to the mandate of our Hebrew Prophets to work for justice and peace in our community and the world.

**Temple Beth El** (Conservative)  
Rabbi: Carolyn Braun  
400 Deering Avenue, Portland, ME 04103  
207-774-2649 | [www.tbemaine.org](http://www.tbemaine.org)

Established in 1947, Temple Beth El has become the major regional center of Conservative Judaism north of Boston. With approximately 300 member families and active religious school, Kadima Beth El, the Temple has stood the test of time. A pioneer on issues ranging from social action to the equal participation of women, Temple Beth El made its mark under the leadership of Rabbi Harry Sky in the 1960's with its involvement in human and civil rights issues, and in the 1970's when it installed one of the first female congregational presidents in the country. With the hiring of Rabbi Carolyn Braun in 1995, Temple Beth El became the largest Conservative synagogue in the nation to be led by a woman. Today, Temple Beth El remains at the forefront of progressive Judaism.

Organizations

**Documenting Maine Jewry**  
[www.mainejews.org](http://www.mainejews.org)

Documenting Maine Jewry is a community-based history project providing information on Jewish citizens of Maine through a genealogical and historical resource reflecting the Jewish traditions of memory, remembrance, and inter-generational learning. In undertaking this task, the DMJ is preserving Jewish traditions and strands in our Maine history.

**The Cedars**  
620-650 Ocean Avenue, Portland, Maine, 04103  
207-221-7000 | [www.thecedarsportland.org](http://www.thecedarsportland.org)

The Cedars, Maine and Northern New England's most comprehensive, non-profit senior community, was founded in 1929 as the Jewish Home for the Aged to serve people of all faiths and backgrounds. With a 93-year history of innovation, The Cedars offers a full continuum of living and healthcare options for older

adults, including Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care Assisted Living, Rehabilitation, Skilled Nursing Care, and Community-Based Services.

**The Jewish Funeral Home - Chevra Kadisha**  
471 Deering Avenue, Portland, Maine, 04103  
207-774-3733 | [www.portlandjewishfuneralhome.org](http://www.portlandjewishfuneralhome.org)

The Portland Jewish Funeral Home, owned by The Portland Chevra Kadisha is a non-profit organization that has been serving the surrounding Jewish population for over 100 years. We are a licensed funeral home and proud member of The Funeral Consumers Alliance, managed by a dedicated group of Jews and a licensed funeral director. The Jewish Funeral Home arranges funeral services from the Levey Chapel, or from any synagogue or temple.

**Maine Jewish Film Festival**  
P.O. Box 7465, Portland, ME 04112  
207-523-3422 | [www.mjff.org](http://www.mjff.org)

The Maine Jewish Film Festival's mission is to provide a forum for the presentation of films to enrich, educate and entertain a diverse community about the global Jewish experience. In recent years, waves of immigration and shifting demographics have reshaped many parts of our state. MJFF regards these changes as an opportunity to create programming and events that celebrate and build community within an increasingly diverse population. Through new outreach initiatives and strategic partnerships, they will continue to expand their reach and remain at the vanguard of Maine's cultural community.

**Maine Jewish Museum**  
267 Congress Street, Portland, ME 04101  
207-773-2339 | [www.mainejewishmuseum.org](http://www.mainejewishmuseum.org)

Maine Jewish Museum, located in a restored 1921 synagogue, celebrates and honors the contributions and diversity of Maine's Jewish immigrants in the context of the American experience. Through exhibits, programming, and dialogue, the Museum seeks to build bridges of appreciation and understanding with people of all backgrounds.

**Southern Maine Jewish Cemetery Association**  
PO Box 251, Portland, ME 04112  
<https://smjca.org/>

SMJCA is a non-profit organization of Jewish community members that is concerned about the worsening state of our area's Jewish cemeteries. By refurbishing these historic sites, we aim to revitalize the memory of those passed and honor their contributions. SMJCA's mission is to honor our forebears in accordance with Jewish tradition, beliefs, and practices.



SOUTHERN MAINE JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS

**Schools and Higher Education**

**Hillel at Bowdoin College**

30 College Street, Brunswick, ME 04011  
<http://students.bowdoin.edu/hillel/>

The Bowdoin Hillel supports students in creating vibrant Jewish religious and cultural life. It serves students in helping to build community, work for justice, explore various aspects of Judaism and engage in spiritual and religious practices.

**Levey Day School**

400 Deering Avenue, Portland, Maine 04103  
207-774-7676 | [www.leveydayschool.org](http://www.leveydayschool.org)

Levey Day School is an independent elementary school, established in 1952. Northern New England's only Jewish day school, Levey welcomes and embraces families of all faiths and backgrounds. Levey provides a nurturing community and a challenging, personalized curriculum infused with Jewish values and Hebrew language. Students of all backgrounds become lifelong learners committed to *tikkun olam* (improving our world).

**Southern Maine Hillel**

1342 Congress Street, Portland, ME 04102  
[www.mainejewish.org/programs/southernmainehillel/](http://www.mainejewish.org/programs/southernmainehillel/)

Serving students at USM, UNE, SMCC, and MECA. At each campus, Hillel creates a safe and enriching environment for students who are interested in Jewish life. We offer a Jewish perspective in interfaith dialogues, respond to issues of antisemitism, and provide vibrant and dynamic links to the broader Jewish community for students.



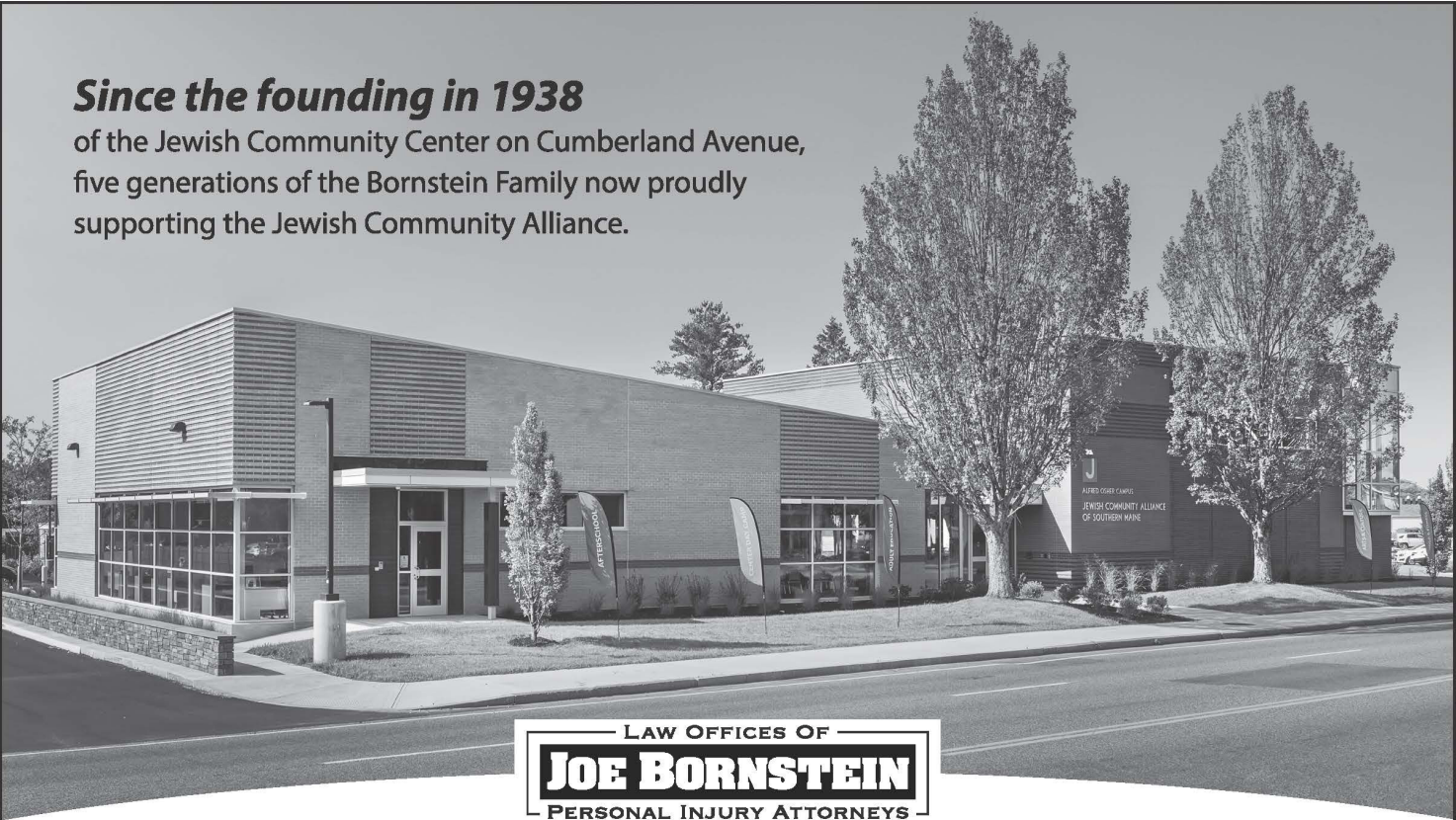
As proud parents of children who went to JCA, we are happy to support the Jewish Community Alliance.



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JCA FUNDS



An important part of the JCA's work is to generate financial support for our community. Endowed Funds at the JCA help improve Southern Maine in so many meaningful ways, and a contribution is a wonderful tribute to honor and remember friends or loved ones. To give a gift to any JCA Fund or participate in our Annual Campaign, visit [www.mainejewish.org](http://www.mainejewish.org), email Director of Development Ashley Inbar at [ainbar@mainejewish.org](mailto:ainbar@mainejewish.org), or call (207)772-1959.

**The Linda and Joel Abromson Award Fund** - Funds projects that allow adult applicants the opportunity to explore Jewish life in unique and creative ways

**The Aronson Young Leadership Award Fund** - Recognizes a promising young communal leader and funds travel and attendance to the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly

**Mildred and Ernest Baker Scholarship Fund** - Funds Center Day Camp (CDC) Scholarships

**The Cantor Kurt Messerschmidt Memorial Fund** - Dedicated to celebrating the legacy of an honored clergyman, teacher and friend by offering performances, programs and activities to further the understanding and appreciation of Jewish music, composers and performers, as well as programs in Holocaust education

**Rosalynne and Sumner Bernstein Fund** - Funds support the Gift of Israel Program

**Center Day Camp Scholarship Fund** - Funds CDC Scholarships

**Chi Chi Levine Community Relations Council Fund** - Funds benefit the JCA's Community Relations Council

**Early Childhood Education (ECE) Fund** - Funds Goldman Family Preschool (GFP) scholarships

**Gene & Madelyn Cohen Endowed Campership Fund** - Funds CDC Scholarships

**Ezra Finberg Playground Fund** - Benefits the GFP Playground

**Stephen Brent Jacobson Scholarship Fund** - Recognizes a graduating senior for all-around leadership and community commitment

**Steven Laskoff Fund** - Funds CDC Scholarships

**William Levi Arts Fund** - Supports Arts programming at CDC

**Harold P. Nelson Playground Fund** - Benefits the CDC Playground

**Jack Novick Center Day Camp Scholarship Fund** - Funds CDC Scholarships

**PJ Library Fund** - Funds Jewish-themed activities for families and a monthly mailing of a book or music to children ages 6 months to 8 years old

**Robert Willis/Nancy Winslow Helping Hands Endowment Fund** - Funds Michael Klahr Jewish Family Services (KJFS) Endowment

**Rita S. Willis Emergency Relief Fund** - Through KJFS Helping Hands, this fund supports underserved members of the community with immediate financial needs

MEMBERSHIP

The Jewish Community Alliance is dedicated to building and exploring Jewish culture and community while providing programs and services for people of all backgrounds and beliefs. Membership dues provide important unrestricted support for the J's incredible range of activities and events, from our annual Arts & Culture Series to the Michael Klahr Jewish Family Services diaper bank.

Your membership is an investment in your community. Join the J today!

Membership benefits:

- Discounted member pricing on some classes, programs and special events (like the winter Shabbat Suppers!)
- Reciprocity at JCC facilities around the country and Canada
- Special opportunities for space rental and events at both our Congress Street facility and Center Day Camp on Sebago Lake in Windham\*
- Free admission to Sunday Swim dates at the Center Day Camp waterfront on Sebago Lake (dates listed on website)\*
- 10% discount with proof of membership at the following locations:
  - Hunt + Alpine Club
  - Rose Foods
  - Dunstan Tap & Table
  - The Spa at The Francis
- Discounts at The Clarion Hotel on Congress Street
- Discounts with Maine Realty Advisors on either brokerage services, property management, asset management, or consulting fees

2023-2024 Rates

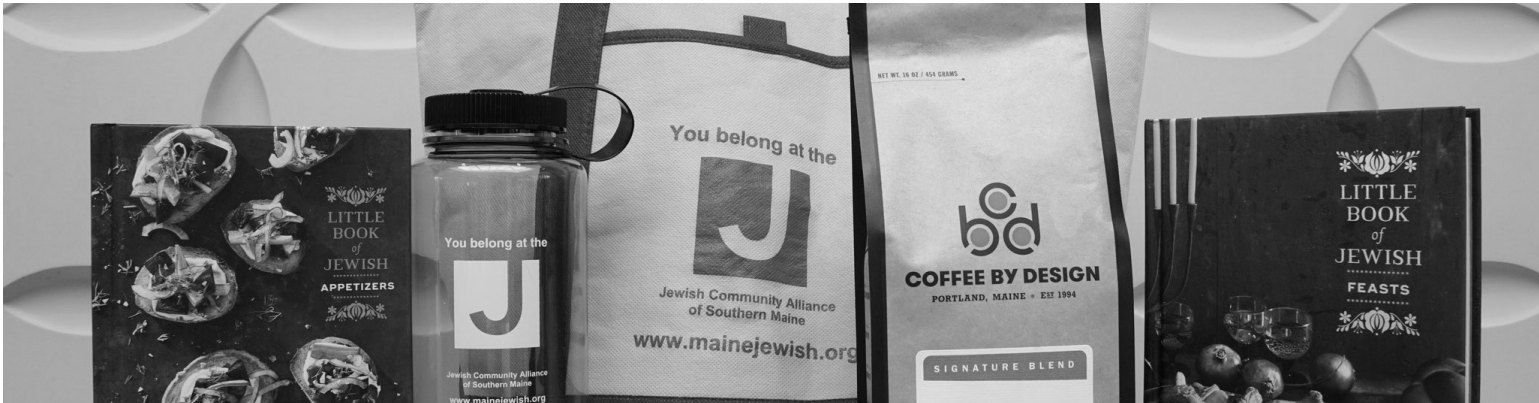
- |                                   |                |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| • Family Membership               | \$216 per year |
| • Couple Membership               | \$180 per year |
| • Single-Parent Family Membership | \$120 per year |
| • Individual Membership           | \$96 per year  |

Sponsoring Members

These membership levels contribute an additional \$50 to the membership levels listed above to provide support for reduced-fee memberships for individuals and families with financial need.

- |                                   |                |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| • Sponsoring Family               | \$266 per year |
| • Sponsoring Couple               | \$230 per year |
| • Sponsoring Single-Parent Family | \$170 per year |
| • Sponsoring Individual           | \$146 per year |

Financial need should not be a barrier to participation in JCA programming. For more info please contact Sam Cohen at [jca@mainejewish.org](mailto:jca@mainejewish.org) or call (207) 772-1959 to discuss discounted membership.





# MAINE JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL and 25th Anniversary CELEBRATION November 4-11 2023 info and tickets at MJFF.org

Thank you, JCA, for your ongoing  
support and collaboration!



## ARTS & CULTURE / PROGRAMMING

JCA programs explore the vibrant intersection of diverse cultures and ideas that make up our community, through the lens of Jewish values and shared universal principles. Together with our community partners, we aim to nurture mind, body, and spirit through a range of programming for all backgrounds, ages and interests. Over the past several years, programs have included:

- Book talks by acclaimed authors
- Contemporary and classic films, including Movies and Chinese Food on December 25th
- Adult education courses on Jewish texts, values, art, literature, history, the Holocaust, Israel, and current affairs
- "Welcome to Judaism" classes for the curious of all backgrounds
- Documentary exhibits from Yad Vashem
- Singing classes and gatherings
- Concerts and performances, including KlezMAINEia
- Cooking and baking workshops, including the Great Maine Challah Bake
- Gatherings for Yom HaShoah, Yom HaZikaron, and Yom Ha'atzmaut
- Interfaith gatherings, including an Interfaith Seder in 2019 and a Ramadan/Shabbat Dinner in 2023
- Advanced and beginner Mah-Jongg groups
- PJ Library programs and activities for kids and families
- A Center Day Camp "Fall Festival" at Camp and a "Spring Fling" overnight at the JCA
- Crafting group for quilters, knitters and sewers
- Fitness classes, including Yoga, HIIT, and several levels of Pickleball
- "J Talks" – an online interview series
- Kosher food pickup (with delivery costs covered by the JCA) from the Butcherie in Brookline, MA
- A shuttle van to the Conference for Jewish Life in June

In an effort to support accessibility, we have continued to offer a mix of in-person, hybrid, and online programs. Please visit our website at [www.mainejewish.org](http://www.mainejewish.org), subscribe to our e-newsletter, and follow us on social media for the latest information and updates. We hope you'll join us to see what's new at the J!

### Contact Information:

Ilana Gilg, Director of Programming  
[igilg@mainejewish.org](mailto:igilg@mainejewish.org) or 207-772-1959





GOLDMAN FAMILY PRESCHOOL

The Goldman Family Preschool, NAEYC accredited and beginning its 34th year, has a rich history and an outstanding reputation. Through 'High Scope' and the JCC's "Sheva" curricula, combined with a Reggio Emilia approach, we offer child-centered, family-oriented programs for children 6 weeks to 5 years old. Educated and trained professionals bring deep commitment and a love of children to our classrooms.

Our Philosophy

Children possess an innate curiosity about the universe of people, places, and things around them. We believe that education is a process, initiated through a child's interaction and investigation of their world. Through these interactions, each child is encouraged to wonder, explore, question, and discover, using their own unique learning style and interests. Our program engages children in a broad range of experiences, including meaningful Jewish values and cultural exploration. By nurturing the minds and spirits of children throughout their first school experience, we give them the foundation to be lifelong learners.

Our Mission

To deliver an excellent early childhood educational program that meets the needs of each child and promotes continuous growth in social/emotional, cognitive, physical, and creative areas of development. As a Jewish preschool, we approach our work through Jewish values, lenses, and culture which follow the JCC Association's Sheva Framework.

In addition, we provide a sense of positive identity as children explore how they fit within the broader diversity that our school's families represent.

Contact Information:  
Wendy Getchell, School Director  
wgetchell@mainejewish.org or 207-772-1959



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## CENTER DAY CAMP

Established in 1949, Center Day Camp (CDC) has offered a traditional Maine summer camp experience for campers on the wooded shores of Lake Sebago for over 70 years. Just 20 minutes west of Portland, Center Day Camp sits on 27 spectacular acres of woods, fields, and shoreline. Generations of campers have spent their days lakeside, forming life-long friendships, learning new skills, and experiencing the magic of camp. CDC is a non-denominational Jewish day camp that welcomes campers ages 5 - 14 of all backgrounds. This summer, CDC offered two 4-week sessions, with bus transportation provided from around the Portland area. In addition, we welcomed 4 Israeli Shlichim, and offered a new series of field trips and overnights. We look forward to continuing to make memories for years to come.

### Our Vision

All Center Day Camp campers will build confidence by making new friends, exploring new interests, discovering new abilities, and learning new skills.

### Our Philosophy

Center Day Camp fosters a strong sense of belonging and connection. All are welcome, and everyone at camp is valued and celebrated. Counselors stress kindness, respect, and character in everything that they do. Our grounding and history as a Jewish camp means that our programs offer a unique focus on universal values like integrity, honesty, responsibility, caring for one another and for the earth.

### Our Credentials

Center Day Camp is accredited through the American Camp Association. We are members of Maine Summer Camps and the Jewish Day Camp Network. Our staff are trained in safety, including CPR; our waterfront staff is Red Cross certified, and we have a certified Emergency Medical Technician on site during camp hours.

Our CDC facility is available for rentals and community use during the fall and spring; please visit our website at [www.centerdaycamp.org](http://www.centerdaycamp.org) or be in touch anytime for more information!

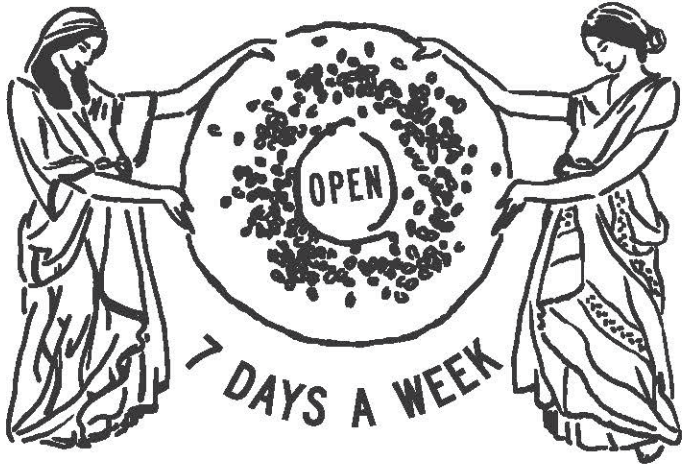
### Contact Information:

Chris Thurston, Camp Director  
[cdc@mainejewish.org](mailto:cdc@mainejewish.org) or 207-772-1959



• NOVA LOX • WHITEFISH SALAD • HOMEMADE GOLDEN BAGELS • CREAM CHEESE  
• SALAMI EGG & CHEESE • PASTRAMI ON RYE • EGG SALAD • GRAVLAX • SALMON SALAD • MATZO BALL SOUP • HEALTH SALAD • LAST COFFEE • LATKES • CHOPPED LIVER • GRIBENE

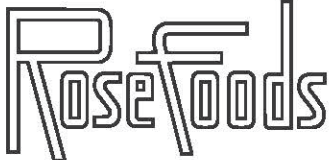
Fine Food  
and Friendly  
Service



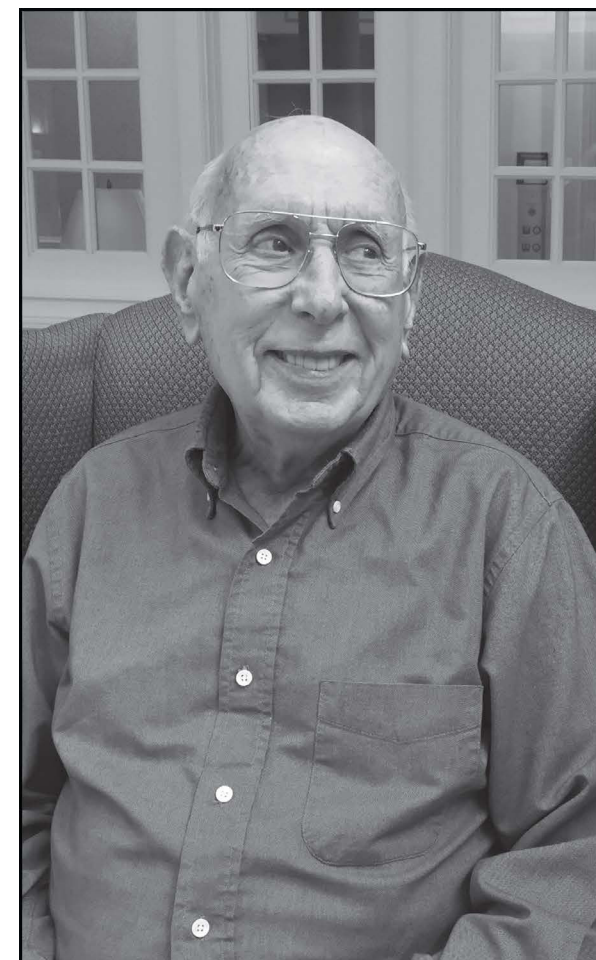
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What keeps us grounded as we branch out into new programs and services for seniors?

## Deep roots in the Jewish community.

Since opening as the Jewish Home for Aged in 1929, The Cedars has set the standard for senior care. Today, we are Northern New England's largest comprehensive, non-profit senior living community, offering independent living, assisted living, memory care, rehabilitation, skilled care, and community-based programs to older adults of all backgrounds.

**Our community helps us innovate and inspire.**



620-650 Ocean Avenue, Portland  
207.221.7000  
[thecedarsportland.org](http://thecedarsportland.org)



## PJ LIBRARY

**PJ Library®** sends free, age-appropriate Jewish children's books to families across the world every month. Families with kids ages 0 through 8.5 years old with Judaism as part of their lives, are welcome to sign up. PJ Library welcomes all families raising Jewish children.

Something magical happens when parents sit down together to read with their children. PJ Library shares Jewish stories that can help your family learn and discuss values and traditions. The stories are designed to enrich your entire family's Jewish journey, regardless of your type of observance or affiliation.

A program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF), PJ Library® in Southern Maine is a free gift to families provided with funding from HGF, PJ Library Alliance partners, the Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine, and local donors. The JCA launched our partnership with PJ Library in 2013. We also present several PJ Library family programs and engagement opportunities throughout the year.

**PJ Our Way** is the newest chapter of PJ Library for kids ages 8.5 through 12. It is a kid-driven program – kids choose their own book each month, share reviews, watch videos and answer polls. The JCA began partnering with PJ Our Way in 2018. Sign up for PJ Our Way now at [www.pjourway.org](http://www.pjourway.org) and get in on the fun! PJ Our Way is a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, with generous support from PJ Alliance partners.

Whether you are interested in learning more and celebrating Jewish holidays, traditions, and values, gathering for family volunteer opportunities, or connecting socially with others and getting to know our community, we welcome you to join us. We hope to see you and your family soon!

### Contact Information:

Marlena Lantos, Youth Programming and PJ Library Coordinator  
mlantos@mainejewish.org or 207-772-1959



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**BACK-TO-SCHOOL GROOVE: DINNER, MUSIC, & FUN**  
Join us for a delicious dinner, catered by NURA, and a live musical performance by Bondeko.  
**Thursday, Sept. 7th | 5:30-7:30 PM ET**



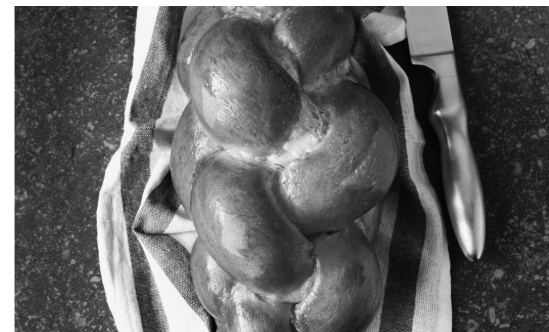
**JCA & CENTER DAY CAMP FALL FAMILY FESTIVAL**  
This family-friendly event will include bounce houses, snacks & refreshments, balloon twisting, arts & crafts, a caricature artist, and more!  
74 Hackett Rd. in Windham, ME.  
**Sunday, Oct. 1st | 1-4PM**



**BEGINNER'S MAH JONGG**  
Join Judi Slotsky for this beginner-level course which meets on tuesday mornings.  
**Tuesdays | 9-11AM**



**DEATH AND DYING IN THE JEWISH TRADITION**  
This course will explore the rites and rituals surrounding death and dying as well as general questions that relate to aging.  
**September 21st | 7-8:30PM**



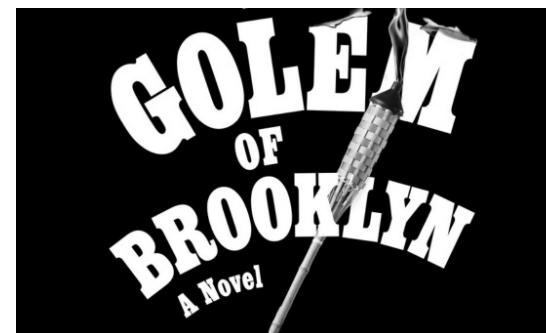
**GREAT BIG MAINE CHALLAH BAKE**  
Presented in partnership with the Rimon-The Portland Jewish Women's Group. Learn about the Jewish tradition and ritual of challah baking.  
**Sunday, Nov. 5th | 2:00-5:00 PM**



**CRAFTERNOON**  
Weekly craft sessions at the JCA  
**Wednesdays | 12-2PM**



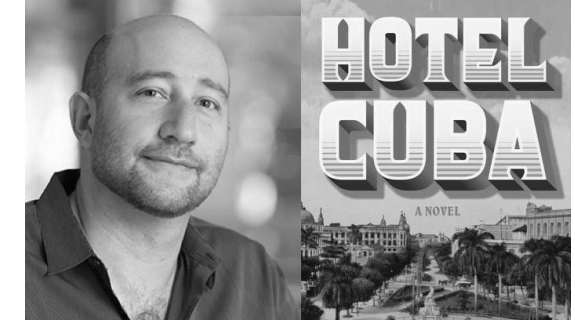
**MUSIC AT THE J: PALAVAR STRINGS PIANO TRIO**  
Palavar Strings Piano Trio performs *Homeland* from their Beehive Chamber Series. *Homeland* explores folk inspired music by a diverse group of composers playing homage to their homelands.  
**November 12th | 3-5PM**



**THE GOLEM OF BROOKLYN BY ADAM MANSBACH**  
From the best selling author of the Go The F\*ck to Sleep Series, a hilarious, satirical, and poignant reimagination of the golem, whose justice-seeking adventure takes him through modern-day bodegas, sitcoms, and fast food.  
**February 6th | 7-8PM | Virtual**



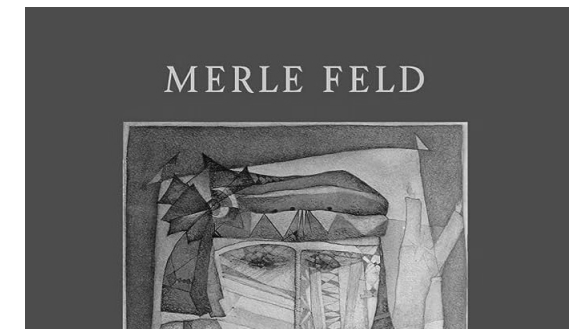
**KLEZMER OPEN JAM SESSION**  
A joyous evening of Klezmer with the Casco Bay Tummler musicians at The JCA.  
**Third Monday of Each Month | 7:00-8:30PM**



**HOTEL CUBA BY AARON HAMBURGER**  
Hotel Cuba explores the profound courage of two women displaced from their home who strive to create a new future while navigating an exciting and dangerous world.  
**December 6th | 7-8PM | Virtual**



**THE END OF BIAS: A BEGINNING BY JESSICA NORDELL**  
Weaving gripping stories with scientific research and exquisite writing, Nordell paints riveting portraits of those leading change and frankly interrogates her own biases.  
**March 19th | 6:30-8:30PM**



**LONGING: POEMS OF A LIFE BY MERLE FELD**  
Acclaimed poet Merle Feld tells her intensely personal story while naming profound human experiences.  
**April 16th | 7-8PM | Virtual**



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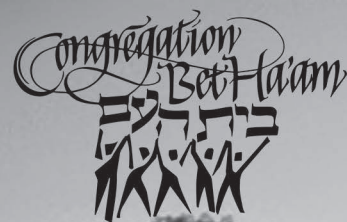
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## COMMUNITY

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[www.bethaam.org](http://www.bethaam.org)  
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## MICHAEL KLAHR JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

Michael Klahr Jewish Family Services (KJFS) proudly serves the Jewish community and beyond, reaching those in need throughout Southern Maine. Our programs are designed to meet compelling, immediate needs in ways that demonstrate our commitment to tikkun olam (repairing the world). Our programs are open to all those in Southern Maine who need help achieving stability and safety. We serve everyone in need regardless of age, race, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or any other factor. Programs include:

- Working with more than a dozen partner agencies, the KJFS Diaper Bank distributed over 300,000 diapers throughout Southern Maine in the past year. As a member of the National Diaper Bank Network, we access diapers for 40% of the retail cost.
- Our Essentials Pantry provides items such as toothbrushes, soap, laundry detergent and period products to Diaper Bank and HIAS clients.
- The annual Joe Bornstein Winter Warmth Drive provided 500 students at 9 local schools with new winter boots last year.
- As one of the newest HIAS resettlement sites in the country, we have welcomed over 150 people over the past two years. This program is a return to the resettlement work that was historically a core JFS commitment from its inception in the early part of the 20th century. Our small but mighty team staff welcomes and celebrates the involvement of community groups, synagogues, and individuals who have made the program possible, and we look forward to increasing our reach and capacity with your help in the year to come! If you are interested in becoming involved or attending a training to learn more, please visit [www.mainejewish.org/michael-klahr-jewish-family-services](http://www.mainejewish.org/michael-klahr-jewish-family-services) for more information!

Contact Information:

Director, Michael Klahr Jewish Family Services  
[jca@mainejewish.org](mailto:jca@mainejewish.org)

Siobhan Whalen, HIAS Director  
[swhalen@mainejewish.org](mailto:swhalen@mainejewish.org)

Adam Siegel, Volunteer Manager  
[asiegel@mainejewish.org](mailto:asiegel@mainejewish.org)





JCA OFFICES   2023-2024 CALENDAR						
Sep 4 Labor Day (closed) Sep 15 Rosh Hashanah (closing 12:30pm) Sep 15-17 Rosh Hashanah Sep 25 Yom Kippur (closed) Sep 29-Oct 6 Sukkot	September '23					
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Nov 10 Veterans Day Observed (closed) Nov 22 Thanksgiving break (closing 12:30) Nov 23-24 Thanksgiving break (closed)	November '23					
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Dec 25 Christmas (closed)	December '23					
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Jan 1 New Year's Day (closed) Jan 15 MLK Jr. Day (closed) Jan 25 Tu B'Shevat	January '24					
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Feb 19 Presidents' Day (closed)	February '24					
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Apr 15 Patriots' Day (closed) Apr 22-30 Passover Apr 22 Passover begins (closing 12:30 PM) Apr 23 Passover (closed) Apr 29 Passover (closed)	April '24					
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Jun 11-13 Shavuot Jun 12 Shavuot (closed) Jun 19 Juneteenth (closed)	June '24					
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Jul 4 Independence Day (closed)	July '24					
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Aug 12-13 Tisha B'av	August '24					
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# HHRC

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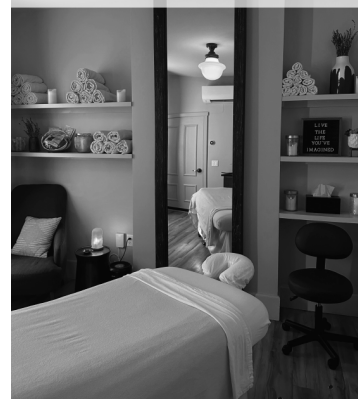
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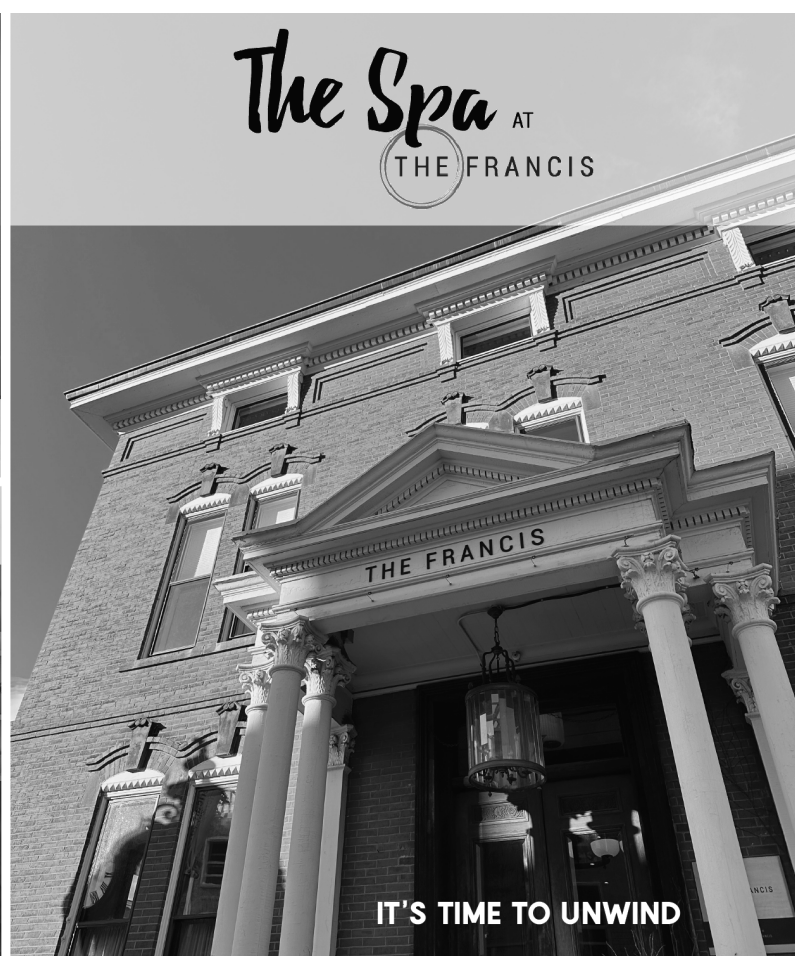
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## JEWISH HOLIDAY GUIDE

Adapted with permission from InterfaithFamily, a Jewish nonprofit that supports interfaith couples and families.  
Find more resources at [interfaithfamily.com](https://www.interfaithfamily.com)

**Shabbat:** Hebrew name means “Sabbath” - the English word actually came from Shabbat! **What’s it about?** A day of rest and enjoyment at the end of every week as a parallel to the Biblical story of creation, when God rested on the seventh day. Shabbat traditionally lasts from 18 minutes before sundown on Friday until an hour after sundown on Saturday evening. **Foods:** The rule is yummy. It’s traditional to have two loaves of *challah*, a braided egg bread. **Activities:** Shabbat begins with the lighting of candles. There are special synagogue services and blessings to say at meals. The point of Shabbat is not to work. Some use a set of rabbinic legal definitions for what does and doesn’t count as work, and don’t drive, carry money, write or use electricity on Shabbat. Others don’t use these definitions, but take the day off. Wherever one falls on the spectrum of observance, Shabbat is a great day to hang out with family and friends, eat together, take walks, study Torah, sing songs, read stories, take a nap, and chill out. **Symbols:** Candles, challah, wine, and flowers. **Greeting:** “Shabbat shalom,” which means “Peaceful Shabbat.”

**Rosh Hashanah:** Hebrew name means “Head of the year”—idiomatically, New Year. **What’s it about?** One of two “high holidays” along with Yom Kippur. A solemn holiday beginning the calendar year with repentance from sin and the hope of renewal. **Foods:** Apples and honey, round challah with raisins, honey cake, pomegranates, pumpkins and other round foods, sweet foods and foods that are gold-colored, like carrots. **Activities:** Many people attend synagogue services, during which one special activity is the sounding of the *shofar*, or ram’s horn. At home, a special activity is eating apples dipped in honey to symbolize our hope for a sweet new year. Many send New Year’s cards for this holiday throughout the month of Elul, or between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, try to repair relationships and make apologies for bad behavior in the previous year. **Symbols:** The shofar, apples and honey, pomegranates, the Book of Life. **Greeting:** “A good and sweet New Year,” or “Shanah Tovah.”

**Yom Kippur:** Hebrew name means “Day of Atonement.” **What’s it about?** A fast day of prayer, reflection, and repentance. **Foods:** None. It’s a fast day! **Activities:** There are many prohibitions: not eating, not drinking, not washing, not wearing leather, not engaging in physical intimacy. Traditionally, it is a day spent in synagogue at services. **Symbols:** White clothing. **Greeting:** You can say “have an easy fast.” Some say “Shanah Tovah”, which is Hebrew for “A good New Year.” The specific greeting for Yom Kippur is “G’mar hatimah tovah” or “A good completion to your inscription in the Book of Life.”

**Sukkot:** Hebrew name means “booths” or tabernacles. The singular is *sukkah*. **What’s it about?** In ancient times when the Temple stood in Jerusalem, this was a pilgrimage holiday to celebrate the harvest. **Foods:** No specific special food, just more big sumptuous meals. **Activities:** Before the holiday, communities and some families build a sukkah or temporary hut in their yard. The sukkah is open to the elements, and an important activity is eating in the sukkah. There is also a ritual involving blessing and waving the *etrog*—a citron—and the *lulav*—a palm branch bound with myrtle and willow. **Symbols:** The sukkah, the lulav and the etrog. **Greeting:** “Chag Sameah” or “Happy Holiday.”

**Shmini Atzeret/Simchat Torah:** Hebrew name means the eighth day, or extra day following Sukkot/Hebrew name means “Rejoicing in the Torah.” **What’s it about?** Celebrated on the same day in Israel and by US Reform groups, and as two days in Conservative and Orthodox communities in the diaspora. We celebrate finishing the reading of the Torah for the year and starting it again. **Foods:** More big sumptuous meals. **Activities:** This is a synagogue holiday with a long service, and in the middle of it, people get up, process through their building with the Torah scrolls and dance with them. It is a chance to honor people by calling them up to make blessings on the Torah, because there is a reading from the end of the scroll—the death of Moses—and another from the beginning—the creation of the world. In some congregations, the assembled people unroll the Torah scroll and stand in the middle of the parchment before they start the cycle again. **Symbols:** The Torah scroll, flags that children carry, dancing people. **Greeting:** “Chag Sameah” or “Happy Holiday!”

**Hanukkah:** Hebrew name means “Dedication.” **What’s it about?** Hanukkah is an 8-day minor holiday that commemorates the Jewish recapture and rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem in 164 BCE. **Foods:** Fried foods, especially potato pancakes (*latkes*), and jelly doughnuts (*sufganiyot*). **Activities:** The main observance is lighting the candles in a ceremonial lamp called a *hanukkiyah* or Hanukkah *menorah*. Playing with a top called a *dreidel* is another fun tradition. **Symbols:** Menorah, candles, dreidel, *gelt*. **Greeting:** “Happy Hanukkah!”

**Tu B’shvat:** Hebrew name means “15th day of the Hebrew month of Shvat.” **What’s it about?** When the Temple in Jerusalem was still standing, first fruits of the trees were offerings made on Shavuot. The trees had to be at least four years old, so you could call Tu B’shvat the official birthday of trees. It’s a great day to recommit to stewardship of the environment. **Foods:** Fruit, nuts and other things that grow on or in trees. **Activities:** Many have reclaimed the mystical practice of the Tu B’shvat Seder, or ritual meal, as an opportunity to explore environmentalist themes in Judaism. Another practice is to plant trees. This is a minor holiday in which work is traditionally permitted. **Symbols:** Trees and tree fruit. **Greeting:** “Chag Sameah” which means “Happy Holiday.”

**Purim:** Hebrew name means “Lots”. Refers to the *Book of Esther* 3:7, in which the villain Haman draws lots to set the date for the Jews’ destruction. **What’s it about?** Celebration of a narrow escape from genocide described in the *Book of Esther*. **Foods:** Triangular pastries called *hamantashen* (Haman’s pockets), named for the bad guy in the *Book of Esther*. Some eat other foods with things hidden inside, like dumplings. **Activities:** We read the *Book of Esther*, wear costumes, eat hamantashen, and use noisemakers called *groggers*. It’s also traditional to give money to charity, send anonymous packages of goodies to your friends (called *mishloach manot* or *shaloch mones*) and to drink alcohol. A minor holiday where work is permissible. **Symbols:** Masks, costumes. **Greeting:** “Purim Sameah,” which means “Happy Purim.”

**Pesach:** Hebrew name means “Passover,” in reference to *Exodus* 12:23 when the Angel of Death passed over the Israelites. **What’s it about?** Passover celebrates God liberating the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. The holiday lasts eight days. **Foods:** Traditionally, bread and leavened food are not eaten on Passover. *Matzah*, an unleavened bread, is substituted. Many food traditions spring from this, including matzah balls, gefilte fish and sponge cake. Other popular foods are cookies and cakes made out of nuts, like macaroons. **Activities:** A ritual holiday meal called a seder where the story of the Exodus from Egypt is retold. This is a major holiday, for which work would not be done at the beginning and end of the holiday, but people would work in the middle. **Symbols:** Matzah, lambs (because of the historical Passover sacrifice), eggs, horseradish root, salt water. **Greeting:** “Happy Pesach” or “Happy Passover.”

**Yom HaShoah:** Hebrew name means Holocaust Remembrance Day. **What’s it about?** Europeans commemorate the Holocaust on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, Jan. 27, 1945, but the Israeli government wanted a date that would honor Jewish resistance to the Nazi genocide of World War II. After some debate, the Jewish community as a whole agreed on the 27 of the Hebrew month Nisan, since it was during the period of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, an act of Jewish heroism and resistance, but still falls after Passover. **Activities:** In many Jewish communities, there are commemorative events. Some light special *yahrzeit* (annual memorial) candles.

**Yom Ha’Atzmaut:** Hebrew name means “Independence Day.” **What’s it about?** The modern State of Israel formally declared independence from Great Britain on May 14, 1948. Observance of this holiday is tied to the Hebrew date, Iyar 5. **Foods:** This is a good time to get falafel and other Israeli foods. **Activities:** In many Jewish communities, it’s the custom to have a fair or other celebration. Some religious Jews add celebratory liturgy to weekday prayers. **Symbols:** Israeli flags, music, foods.

**Shavuot:** Hebrew name means “Weeks” because it was traditional to count the weeks between Passover and Shavuot. **What’s it about?** Shavuot celebrates the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. It was a pilgrimage holiday when the Temple was standing in Jerusalem, when farmers brought the first fruits of their four-year-old trees. It’s a one day holiday in the land of Israel and in the Reform tradition; Orthodox and Conservative Jews in the diaspora keep it for two days. **Foods:** Dairy foods are traditional on Shavuot, like blintzes and cheesecake. **Activities:** One of the traditional texts for Shavuot is the *Book of Ruth*. Reform Judaism therefore chose Shavuot as the holiday on which to hold Confirmation ceremonies, when teenagers reaffirm their Jewish beliefs. Some follow the mystical custom of an all-night study session, called a *Tikkun Leil Shavuot*, on the eve of Shavuot. **Symbols:** Tablets, blintzes. **Greeting:** “Chag Sameah” or “Happy Holiday.”

**Tisha B’Av:** Hebrew name means “Ninth day of the Hebrew month of Av”. **What’s it about?** This fast day commemorates the Roman destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE. In the medieval period, Jews began attaching other calamities to the day, including the expulsion from Spain in 1492. **Foods:** A fast day with no food or water. **Activities:** Though this is a major fast day with no food, water or washing, it is a minor holiday in the sense that there is no requirement to abstain from work. The main activity is the chanting of the *Book of Lamentations* by candlelight in the synagogue, during which it is traditional to sit on the floor.



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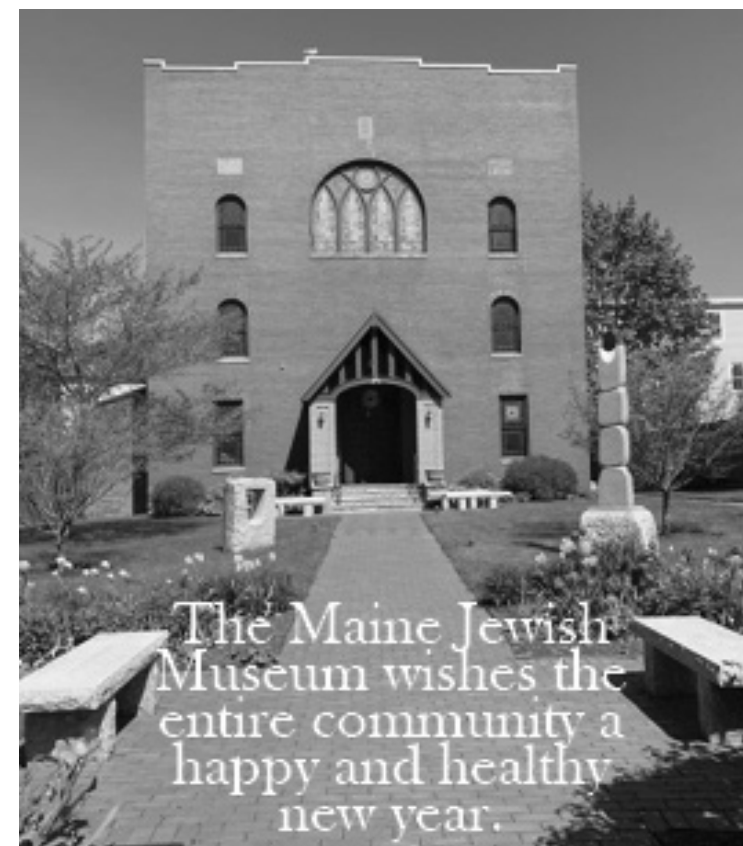
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The Maine Jewish  
Museum wishes the  
entire community a  
happy and healthy  
new year.



**Maine Jewish Museum**

THE MAINE JEWISH MUSEUM IS A 501(C)(3) NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION



### Etz Chaim Synagogue

Committed to the opportunities, challenges,  
and diversity of the Jewish Community of  
Portland and all of Southern Maine

267 Congress Street, Portland, Maine 04101  
207-773-2337  
[www.etzchaim-portland.org](http://www.etzchaim-portland.org)



# J

# 5784



The JCA Board of Directors would like to thank our staff, volunteers, and partners for their tireless efforts this past year. You have shown once again that no matter the circumstances, we can come together to forge new paths, help those in need, and become the light.

We wish our entire community a healthy, restorative, and sweet New Year!



We're proud to support the Jewish Community Alliance.

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*\*zichrono livracha*  
(of blessed memory)





**Jewish Community Alliance  
of Southern Maine**

1342 Congress St., Portland, Maine 04102

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