



**JT**  
NEWS

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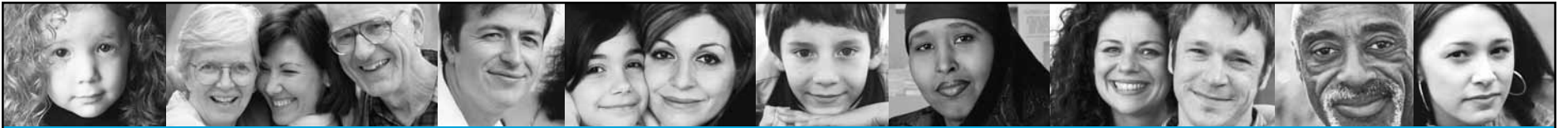
**A roundup  
of our day  
schools**

Starts on Page 9

**FOR JEWS, #BLACKLIVESMATTER PAGE 5**

**ISRAEL PROGRAMS CENTER SECTION**

**WHAT'S A JEW TO DO ON THE 25TH? PAGE 16**



## January Family Calendar



Caring for aging loved ones can be hard. Navigating family relationships can make the process harder.

Bring the family to learn strategies for managing both.

**Tuesday, January 27 • 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.**

Contact Leonid Orlov, (206) 861-8784 or familylife@jfsseattle.org.

### FOR THE COMMUNITY

#### Kosher Food Bank

■ **Wednesday, January 7**  
5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Contact Jana Lissiak, (206) 861-3174 or jllissiak@jfsseattle.org.

#### Family Relationships: Conflict & Cooperation in Caring for Our Aging Loved Ones

■ **Tuesday, January 27**  
6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Contact Leonid Orlov, (206) 861-8784 or familylife@jfsseattle.org.

#### AA Meetings at JFS

■ **Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m.**

Contact (206) 461-3240 or ata@jfsseattle.org.

#### Solutions to Senior Hunger Ongoing

JFS is helping eligible seniors sign-up for food stamps. For more information, contact Jen Mohr, (206) 461-3240 or jmohr@jfsseattle.org.

### FOR THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

#### Mindful Beginnings for Gay Men

■ **Wednesday, January 21**  
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Contact Leonid Orlov, (206) 861-8784 or familylife@jfsseattle.org.

### FOR ADULTS AGE 60+

#### ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES

A community-wide program offered in partnership with Temple B'nai Torah & Temple De Hirsch Sinai. EO events are open to the public and are at 10:30 a.m. unless otherwise noted.

#### Mary Shelley's Frankenstein: Anatomy of a Masterpiece

■ **Thursday, January 15**

#### Eagle Outing in Skagit River Area

■ **Sunday, January 18**  
7:45 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

#### The Colors of the Past: Storytelling and Memory

■ **Tuesday, January 20**

#### PFLAG Panel: Support, Education and Advocacy

■ **Thursday, January 29**

RSVP Ellen Hendin or Wendy Warman, (206) 461-3240 or endlessopps@jfsseattle.org.



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homecareassoc.org

### FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES



Plan ahead!

#### Who Knows Best?

How Preschoolers Learn from Others

■ **Thursday, February 12**  
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Contact Marjorie Schnyder, (206) 861-3146 or familylife@jfsseattle.org.

Featuring Dr. Jane Hu from the Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences.

### VOLUNTEER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Contact Jane Deer-Hileman, (206) 861-3155 or jdeer@jfsseattle.org.

#### Families Fight Hunger

■ **Sunday, January 25**

#### Friendly Visitors for Seniors

#### Family Mentors in Kent

#### for Refugees

#### Home Delivery Drivers



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## ALL IN A WEEK'S NEWS

### ■ Finally free

Five years after being arrested in Havana and charged with “acts against the independence and territorial integrity of the state,” Alan Gross was freed December 17 as part of the U.S. and Cuba’s momentous return to diplomatic relations. Gross was a contractor with USAID when he was caught providing wireless communications tools to Cuba’s Jewish community. Gross, whose health was suffering, was reunited with his wife in Washington, D.C. Wednesday.

— JTA

### ■ Not a moment too late

Seven decades after being transported to concentration camps, Holocaust survivors will reportedly get reparations — from the government of France. The country signed an agreement on Dec. 8 promising to pay \$60 million to survivors sent to the camps, where most died. Approximately 76,000 Jews were arrested in France during World War II and transported to the camps.

— VICE News

### ■ Hallmark gets a bad wrap

Hallmark recalled Hanukkah wrapping paper from its shelves and apologized after a shopper in a California Walgreen’s complained that the wrapping paper included swastikas. According to the company, the wrapping paper, which featured a pattern in intertwining silver and blue lines, was modeled after a pattern on an old Chinese vase.

— The New York Post

### ■ Cocktail, anyone?

Newly released emails reveal Wisconsin Republican governor Scott Walker confused the words “Mazel Tov” and “Molotov” in a letter to a Jewish constituent, who had requested that he display a menorah during the holiday season. Walker, who had concluded the letter with “thank you again and Molotov,” is a potential 2016 presidential candidate, with Jewish voters being a crucial voting bloc.

— MSNBC

## Thank you!

As we say goodbye to 2014, we pause to reflect on the past year, as well as the past 90 years publishing your JTNews/Jewish Transcript. During this anniversary year, we successfully negotiated and began the digitization of our archives, with 20 years already available online. We sent you a special anniversary edition paper last spring, with articles, ads, and lifecycles from every decade. And we launched the fabulous theatrical production “Letters to the Editor” with Book-It Repertory Theatre at the Stroum JCC and The Royal Room.

Be sure to see “Letters to the Editor” before it closes forever after January 31. Our next show will be held January 18 at the Seattle Public Library.

Thank you to our community partners and individuals who have joined us in celebration and support this year. And thank you for reading!

Here’s to our 91st year in print!

See you next year!

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### Hebrew hammers 5

Rabbi Marc Angel tells of the Sephardic Hanukkah tradition of remembering that we must all look out for each other, especially when people are in need.

### Marching for black lives 5

On the first night of Hanukkah, a group of local Jews marched in downtown Seattle against police brutality, in solidarity with the African American community.

### Northwest Jewish Family

The Day School Roundup — We’ve got information and more about each of the primary Jewish day schools in the region.

### The Jewish Day School 9

### Menachem Mendel Seattle Cheder 10

### Seattle Hebrew Academy 10

### Seattle Jewish Community School 11

### Torah Day School 12

### Abba Knows Best 13

For once, it doesn’t feel like being Jewish is being something “other,” as it has for so many years past.

### What’s a Jew to do? 16

Looking for something to do this December 25? We’ve got plenty of activities for those looking for some kind of fun activity.

### Israel programs pullout section Center spread

Find multiple experiences for you and your family to travel to Israel, as well as get a taste of Israel at home.

### MORE

### Community Calendar 4

### The Arts 4

### M.O.T.: The creative in our community 7

### What’s Your JQ?: Hanukkah True or False 8

### Family calendar 13

### Lifecycles 15

### Professional Services and Classifieds 14

## REMEMBER WHEN



From the Jewish Transcript, December 17, 1999.

While the rest of the world huddled in fear of the impending Y2K bug, and Seattle cleaned up from the World Trade Organization protests, the children’s choirs from Seattle Hebrew Academy and Temple B’nai Torah lit candles and sang at the Crossroads Shopping Center in Bellevue. More than 300 shoppers stopped to watch the show.

JTNews is the Voice of Jewish Washington. Our mission is to meet the interests of our Jewish community through fair and accurate coverage of local, national and international news, opinion and information. We seek to expose our readers to diverse viewpoints and vibrant debate on many fronts, including the news and events in Israel. We strive to contribute to the continued growth of our local Jewish community as we carry out our mission.

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Reach us directly at 206-441-4553 + ext.  
 Publisher & Editor \*Joel Magalnick 233  
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## THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CALENDAR

For a complete listing of events, or to add your event to the JTNews calendar, visit [jewishsound.org/calendar](http://jewishsound.org/calendar). Calendar events must be submitted no later than 10 days before publication.

### Candlelighting times

December 19.....4:01 p.m.  
December 26.....4:05 p.m.  
January 2.....4:12 p.m.  
January 9.....4:20 p.m.

### SATURDAY 20 DECEMBER

9–10 a.m. — **Shabbat Morning Torah Study**

☎ 253-564-7101 or [www.templebethel18.org](http://www.templebethel18.org)

Led by Rabbi Bruce Kadden every Saturday in the Temple Beth El chapel. Study the weekly Torah portion using the Plaut Torah Commentary. All are welcome. Shabbat services follow. At Temple Beth El, 5975 S 12th St., Tacoma.

### TUESDAY 23 DECEMBER

**NCSY's Annual Yarchei Kallah Shabbaton and New York Trip**

☎ 206-295-5888 or [thehofffather@gmail.com](mailto:thehofffather@gmail.com) or [www.seattlencsy.com](http://www.seattlencsy.com)

Travel to the Big Apple for touring and Shabbos with teenagers from across the country. Open to all 9th–12th grade teens regardless of affiliation.

### SUNDAY 4 JANUARY

3:15–4:30 p.m. — **Chai Mitzvah: Grow your Judaism**

☎ 425-844-1604 or [admin@kolaminw.org](mailto:admin@kolaminw.org) or [www.kolaminw.org](http://www.kolaminw.org)

Class 4: "Interpersonal Relationships: Part 2, Family and Friends." At Congregation Kol Ami, 16530 Avondale Rd. NE, Woodinville.

### FRIDAY 9 JANUARY

**Meditation Retreat: Be Still and Know that I Am is Elohim**

☎ 206-527-9399 or [info@betalef.org](mailto:info@betalef.org) or [www.betalef.org](http://www.betalef.org)

In the quiet space of an extended Shabbat and the meditative silence of a safe environment, discover with Rabbi Olivier BenHaim the inner dimensions of the Being that we are. Explore your personal

answers to the questions of the nature of the self. Register online. At the Whidbey Institute, 6449 Old Pietila Rd., Clinton.

### SATURDAY 10 JANUARY

2–4 p.m. — **Shabbat Unplugged**

☎ 206-232-7115 or [saraht@sjcc.org](mailto:saraht@sjcc.org) or [www.sjcc.org](http://www.sjcc.org)

Unplug from technology and plug in to your community and family. Family yoga, a gym obstacle course, swimming, and art projects. Free. At the Stroum Jewish Community Center, 3801 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island.

7–11 p.m. — **Jewish Tween Extreme: Limo Scavenger Hunt**

☎ 206-232-7115 or [saraht@sjcc.org](mailto:saraht@sjcc.org) or [www.sjcc.org](http://www.sjcc.org)

Journey around Seattle in chartered limos to find clues and prove your group is the best. Then meet

at Island Crust Café on Mercer Island for a late-night treat and prizes. \$25. At the Stroum JCC, 3801 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island.

### SUNDAY 11 JANUARY

4:30–6 p.m. — **92Y Live Stream from the J On David Ben-Gurion, Father of Modern Israel**

☎ 206-232-7115 or [saraht@sjcc.org](mailto:saraht@sjcc.org) or [www.sjcc.org](http://www.sjcc.org)

David Ben-Gurion cast an enormous shadow across his world, and his legacy in the Middle East and beyond continues to be debated to this day. Biographer Anita Shapira will be joined by The New Yorker editor David Remnick and Stanford Jewish history and culture professor Steven Zipperstein to discuss his influence. At the Stroum JCC, 3801 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island.

# SEATTLE SYMPHONY

LUDOVIC MORLOT, MUSIC DIRECTOR

JANUARY 15 & 16

# ITZHAK PERLMAN

WITH THE SEATTLE SYMPHONY

Itzhak Perlman, conductor & violin


J.S. BACH: Violin Concerto No. 2 in E major

BRAHMS: *Academic Festival Overture*, Op. 80

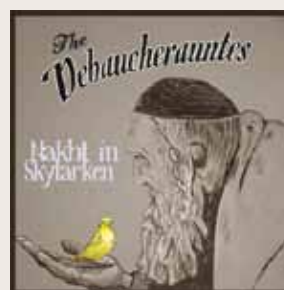
BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 55, "Eroica"

Beloved for his charm as well as his talent, Itzhak Perlman is treasured by audiences throughout the world who respond not only to his remarkable artistry, but also his irrepressible joy of making music. Hear him play and conduct in one unforgettable concert!

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Saturday, December 20 at 7 p.m.  
**Bubbe's Old-Fashioned Hanukkah Shindig Party**

The young adult shtetl-chic Hanukkah party your Bubbe would be proud of is back! The Debaucherautes, Seattle's hometown carnival ride of klezmer fusion, are putting on their annual "traditional" Hanukkah bash in epic form. Join the community Hanukkah lighting, dance to traditional klezmer and klezmer fusion, feast your ears on Jewish artists' music in other old styles, and your eyes on the performance stylings of Jewish burlesque and circus arts. \$15. At Leif Erickson Hall, 2245 NW 57th St., Seattle. For more information contact Elise at [elise@hillel.org](mailto:elise@hillel.org) or visit [www.jconnectseattle.org](http://www.jconnectseattle.org).



Sunday, January 11 at 7:45 p.m.  
**Maccabeats Concert**

The a cappella ensemble that rocked the Jewish world a few Hanukkahs back with "Candlelight" will headline at Torah Day School's annual dinner. Preceded by a cocktail reception and dinner buffet. \$75 for dinner and concert; \$25 for concert only. At Congregation Ezra Bessaroth, 5217 S Brandon St., Seattle. For more information contact Sasha Mail at 206-722-1200 or [sashamail@tdsseattle.org](mailto:sashamail@tdsseattle.org).



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Marvin Meyers

## The Hanukkah hammer

**RABBI MARC D. ANGEL** Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals

The Shabbat of Hanukkah was observed among Sephardim of the Ottoman Empire as “Shabbat Halbashah,” the Shabbat of providing clothing for the needy. Traditionally, the rabbi would deliver a sermon that day on the mitzvah of charity and lovingkindness. Beginning the following day, members of the community would bring clothing to the synagogue and it would be distributed among the poor on Rosh Hodesh Tebet, the sixth day of Hanukkah.

A practical reason for this custom is that Hanukkah occurs just as winter approaches. It is imperative that the community provide clothes for members who lack adequate clothing to keep them warm during the cold season. Moreover, Hanukkah celebrates the sense of unity that prevailed among those Jews of antiquity who fought against the Syrian-Greek oppressors, and who re-dedicated the Temple in Jerusalem. Just as our ancestors recognized their responsibility to each other and to God, so must Jews of each generation recognize our commitment to each other and to God.

A Judeo-Spanish proverb states: “el harto no cree al hambriento” — one who is full does not believe one who is hungry. When one lives in relative prosperity, it is not always easy to feel empathy for those who lack basic necessities. People become complacent. Or they say, “I worked for what I have, let the others work for what they lack. Why should I give my hard-earned money to help others?” The one who is satisfied might not feel the genuine hunger pangs of the poor, and might not respond eagerly or compassionately enough.

In his story “Gooseberries,” Anton Chekhov writes: “There ought to be behind the door of every happy, contented man someone standing with a hammer continually reminding him with a tap that there are unhappy people; that however happy he may be, life will show him her laws sooner or later, trou-

ble will come for him — disease, poverty, losses, and no one will see or hear, just as now he neither sees nor hears others. But there is no man with a hammer...”

Shabbat Halbashah serves as a “hammer,” a reminder that we are all responsible for each other, that we need to provide for others just as they will need to provide for us if we should be in distress.

The lesson surely applies to providing material support for those in need. But I believe it can be extended to spiritual, intellectual, cultural, communal life as well. The Jewish community sponsors a host of institutions dedicated to promoting Jewish life — synagogues, schools, cultural organizations, communal agencies, etc. These institutions attempt to look after our spiritual lives, and to provide services and comfort to all of us. Just as we must be sensitive to the physical needs of the poor, so we must be sensitive to the spiritual needs of our entire community. It is so easy to say, “Let others support these institutions, let others pay for these needed services, let others take responsibility for a flourishing Jewish communal life.”

Shabbat Halbashah serves as a “hammer” gently tapping on the wall, reminding us to become empathetic, involved, and sharing members of our community. There are so many challenges facing the Jewish community; each of us needs to play an active role in strengthening and advancing our goals.

As we observe Hanukkah, let us remember to provide sustenance to those in physical need, and to provide sustenance for the spiritual needs of our entire community — since all of us need and benefit from the institutions that foster Jewish life at its best.

This article originally appeared on the website of the Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals, [jewishideas.org](http://jewishideas.org).

**WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:** We would love to hear from you! You may submit your letters to [editor@jtnews.net](mailto:editor@jtnews.net). Please limit your letters to approximately 350 words. Letters guidelines can be found at [www.jewishsound.org/letters-guidelines/](http://www.jewishsound.org/letters-guidelines/). The deadline for the next issue is December 30. Future deadlines may be found online.

The opinions of our columnists and advertisers do not necessarily reflect the views of JTNews or the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle.

### Corrections

The article about the “J Street Challenge” film (“J Street Challenge’ drives down the middle of the community,” Nov. 28) incorrectly stated that no one took advantage of asking the director questions. Rather, no one asked questions critical of the documentary.

In the M.O.T. column about the actors in the production of “Letters to the Editor” (“The Jewish Transcript’s cast of characters [on and behind the stage],” Dec. 12), the name of Doris Sky was misspelled.

JTNews regrets the errors.

“We were just eager to have our kids surrounded by that particular community, which has to do with it being the Jewish community.”

— Seattle Jewish Community School parent Rachel Scherr, on why she’s happy to be sending her kids to a Jewish day school. See a roundup of all the local primary schools on page 9.

## Jews in Seattle and beyond light Hanukkah candles for racial justice

**DEBORAH GARDNER** Special to JTNews

*Against all odds, the struggle prevailed. A miracle followed something terrible.*

Is this the story of Hanukkah or the story of the Black Lives Matter movement? It’s both, said Jews in Seattle and around the country who on the first night of Hanukkah held demonstrations and actions protesting patterns of white police officers killing African-Americans — including Michael Brown, Eric Garner, and Tamir Rice — and of grand juries refusing to indict the officers involved.

Tuesday evening, I joined Seattle’s Jewish Day of Action to End Police Violence, organized by Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP). Participants lit candles, dedicating the year’s first Hanukkah light to the memory of Michael Brown, and said Mourner’s Kaddish for those killed by police in 2014. Carrying menorahs and signs reading “Another Jew For Racial Justice” and “Black Lives Matter,” a crowd of about 75 people walked from Pacific Place to Westlake Center. Candles flickered in an atmosphere simultaneously somber and celebratory, reflecting both anger

over police killings and inspiration from a national movement that has flourished in response.

Holding this event on the first night of Hanukkah felt poignant for many. Wendy Somerson, a founding member of Seattle’s JVP chapter who co-organized the action, explained, “I think people were just really excited to be able to celebrate Hanukkah this way, to come out on the first night and to celebrate in community and with other Jewish folks — but also really having a message, too. We talked about rededication as the theme of Hanukkah, and the ways we can rededicate ourselves to racial justice.”

Participant Sarah Brickman agreed. “This idea of [having it on] Hanukkah really resonated for me because Hanukkah is the holiday where we celebrate the miracle that arises out of the violence, the miracle that arises out of cultural destruction,” she said. “I think that’s what I see happening in the country right now... people waking up and the massive amount

► PAGE 6



# THE BIG CHANUKAH SHOW

Variety show for the entire Seattle Jewish Community



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Seattle Jewish Chorale & Shalom Klezmer Band

featuring Chava Mirel

Special surprise guests




Saturday Dec. 20, 2014

(the fifth night of Chanukah)

7 to 9 p.m

Stroum Jewish Community Center

3801 East Mercer Way, Mercer Island, WA 98040

\$10 for adults

\$5 for seniors & children

Tickets can be purchased through [brownpapertickets.com](http://brownpapertickets.com) at [www.brownpapertickets.com/event/809248](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/809248)

For more information, contact Rabbi James Mirel [jamesmirel@earthlink.net](mailto:jamesmirel@earthlink.net) ☆ 206-234-7600







## ◀ RACIAL JUSTICE PAGE 5

of action that's been happening; it is a kind of miracle."

There seemed a particular symbolism to holding this on the *first* night of Hanukkah, the solitary light of which will grow eight-fold during the holiday. Several participants voiced hope that the Black Lives Matter movement would continue growing, and that holding the action at the beginning of Hanukkah would remind participants of the importance of continued involvement.

"You have to nurture the flame and keep the flame alive," Brickman said. "It's really easy for us to forget about it after we get outraged and we go to protests.... I don't want that to happen this time."

"This is the beginning of Hanukkah, but it's also the beginning of making ourselves visible as Jewish folks in this struggle," said Somerson.

Jewish ideas and values inspired many of those present, even if the action was, as Somerson explained, less about a Jewish message or Jewish demands than about supporting the demands and priorities coming from Ferguson Action, the Black Lives Matter movement, and black communities in Seattle.

"I think it is absolutely a Jewish value to stand up for social justice and racial justice," Somerson noted, adding that *tikkun olam* includes healing from racial violence and racism. She cited the Talmudic concept that every person represents a whole world,

and thus killing a person — or saving a life — means killing or saving a whole world.

Beyond inspiring action, the event also felt like an opportunity to build bridges within the Jewish community — including between Jews who may disagree strongly about other issues — over the shared goal of fighting racism. JVP describes itself as "a diverse and democratic community of activists inspired by Jewish tradition to work together for peace, social justice, and human rights."

Because of JVP's anti-racist mission, Somerson felt joining the U.S. movement made sense. But JVP's work is usually focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and is not without controversy in parts of the Jewish community due to outspoken critiques of Israel's government. While JVP's organizing of the event may have been a deterrent for some and a draw for others, Somerson observed that "for the first time I've seen synagogues posting our event, and they usually won't post our events when they're about Palestine. So I think this moment of standing up for racial justice is one that can bring us all together and that we can start finding ways to disagree and still work against racism, including the racism in Israel."

Jewish involvement in this movement isn't just about solidarity, given that of course the Jewish community encompasses both white Jews and Jews of color. The shared message is that black lives matter



DEBORAH GARDNER

Lauren Spokane, left, was one of 75 Jews who marched to protest police actions against people in African-American communities.

but, as Somerson described, "Some of us who are white are here in solidarity, and some who aren't are here because it's their families who are being targeted."

For Brickman, participating was about recognizing her own privilege in a racist system.

"As a white Jew," she said, "it's important for me to stand up and think about how I do benefit from this racist system and the ways that it's something that I am complicit in unless I am doing everything I can to stop it and try to fight against it."

Somerson echoes Brickman's sentiment when considering next steps. The focus, she

says, is to support black leadership and the demands from the movements, stand up for racial justice, and refuse to be silent and complicit. What's at stake is bigger than a holiday season or an upcoming new year.

But it may be more inspirational, too. As the event drew to a close, participant Jax Hermer reflected, "I'm here because it's a beautiful opportunity...to connect with community and recognize that all of our liberation is bound together."

For now, Hanukkah serves as a reminder that racial justice shouldn't take a miracle.



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### Women's Endowment Fund grant applications available

Applications are currently available for Women's Endowment Fund grants, which support programs that empower and improve the lives of women and girls, locally and in Israel.

The application deadline for this two-year grant is January 15, 2015.

The Women's Endowment Fund, a program of the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle's Special Initiatives Fund, has supported a wide range of human service and education programs in past grant cycles. Examples include a microfinance and business development initiative for low-income Israeli women, and recording of testimony from a local female Holocaust survivor.

Organizations seeking a Women's Endowment Fund grant must meet one of the following criteria:

- Jewish organization in Western WA that is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization or presumed to be under IRS guidelines

- Israeli non-profit agency (must have an "American Friends of" partner or other fiscal sponsor)
- Non-profit arts and culture organization in King or south Snohomish counties with a "Jewish-themed" project

In addition, organizations must have been in operation for at least two full fiscal years by January 2015 in order to be eligible for funding.

Programs must serve a minimum of 15 participants each year. Applicants may seek funding for only one program per grant cycle. To be eligible for funding, a program must have been active for at least one full fiscal year and is guaranteed to continue for the two-year duration of the grant. Capital funding proposals will not be considered.

For more information,  
visit [jewishinseattle.org/womens-endowment-fund](http://jewishinseattle.org/womens-endowment-fund)



### Give your child the gift of Jewish overnight camp!

Apply now for scholarships to attend Jewish overnight summer camp in 2015.

The JFGS Camp Scholarship program helps families in Washington State defray the cost of camp tuition, ensuring children can have the life-transforming experience of Jewish camp. Scholarships are need-based.

To find out more, please visit [jewishinseattle.org/campscholarships](http://jewishinseattle.org/campscholarships).

## More from our creative tribe

**DIANA BREMENT** JTNews Columnist

**1** A couple of issues ago, I mentioned King County Metro's Poetry on Buses project and poet **Merna Ann Hecht**, whose poem about bread is one of 50 poems currently featured on the system's Ballard Rapid Ride line.

The project is managed by Bellevue native **Tamar Benzikry-Stern**, through the 4Culture arts organization. Tamar was nice enough to chat with me, despite having a touch of laryngitis.

To begin with, I was surprised to learn that Poetry on Buses, which got its start in 1992, had been on hiatus for seven years.

It's "always been about getting the word of the professional poet and the kid across the aisle on the bus," Tamar explained. "When we brought it back we really wanted to honor those sensibilities," but with some added features.

The project hired a "poet-planner" to create and facilitate a series of "writing home" workshops this past spring. Targeted to five immigrant communities from English, Russian,



**M.O.T.**  
Member of  
the Tribe

Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese language groups, the workshops helped participants write poems on the theme of "home" in their native language or English. Many were writing creatively for the first time, turning "cultural experience into an art form," as a video on the project website says.

And that's another innovation, the www.poetryonbuses.org website, which truly brings the project to the entire community. The bus poems, selected by a panel of local poets, are all available on the site, along with information about the project, bios and photos of the poets and, of course, their poetry. And one thing that has stayed the same — because of limited space on bus advertising placards — poems are still no longer than 50 words, as originally required.

Tamar began working at 4Culture in 2009. An alumna of Seattle Hebrew Academy and Northwest Yeshiva High School, she attended college and grad school in Seattle and New York. With an undergraduate degree in art history and a graduate

degree in visual art and Jewish culture, she knows she's fortunate to have a dream job at what she calls "my dream organization."

As a "project manager for public art works," she explains, "I work with artists primarily, and also with architects and engineers and others," often to make use of the 1 percent for public art that is set aside from projects in King County to purchase and display public art.

Tamar, who lives in Seattle with her husband **Ronnie** and their 2-year-old daughter **Eden**, will teach a class on graphic novels and Jewish memory during the spring quarter at the University of Washington. The class is offered through the Stroum Center for Jewish studies, which will also feature her in the "JewDub Talks" at www.jewishstudies.washington.edu on Jan. 29.

**2** "I think **Maurice Sendak** is a genius," says **Julian Stoller**, age 11, "and I'm honored to be wearing his work."

Dancing in the Pacific Northwest Ballet's "Nutcracker" — with sets and costumes designed by the late, great children's author — I'm sure Julian speaks for a generation of children and adults when he says, "I'm really sad. I grew up on them." This is PNB's last season using Sendak's work, with its accompanying **Kent Stowell** choreography.

A ballet student since age 3, this is Julian's third Nutcracker. He's been given more

responsibility this year, with a part as one of the toys in the toy theater gift Clara receives.

"They kind of build you up," over the years of performing, he says, and this year his part is "less about the acting and more about the choreography."

There are over 200 child performers in the Nutcracker, Julian's mother **Rebecca** tells me. Children dance in every other, or every third performance, depending on their parts and age. Parents help backstage with makeup and hats, costumes, the kids can't manage themselves, she says. "We get into stations and the kids just file through us."

The Sendak show "has been a huge part of [Julian's] life," she adds.

During rehearsal and performance downtime the kids knit hats for Seattle Children's Hospital patients. They also write fan letters to principal dancers in an effort to secure a souvenir pair of toe shoes, many of which are worn only once or twice. Some shoes are more coveted than others, like the Peacock's "fabulous blue shoes," says Rebecca.

Julian will get the "tiniest bit of winter break" before resuming his three-times-a-week ballet classes. The Bush School 6th grader is also a talented visual artist who also enjoys acting. He's certain he doesn't want to be a professional dancer, "but ballet's a great experience," he says. "In any performing art it's good to know ballet."



ARTHUR SHWAB PHOTOGRAPHY

Tamar Benzikry-Stern

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# True or false? Test your Hanukkah knowledge

RIVY POUPKO KLETENIK JTNews Columnist

Dear Rivy,

Two issues, both Hanukkah related. Every year we host our family's Hanukkah party, which is lovely and we are happy to do it. Issue number one: I feel as if most of my family knows nothing about what Hanukkah is really about other than latkes and presents. Second, once we all do this party — serve the food, pour the drinks — then there is really nothing to do but sit around and talk. What could we do that would maybe help folks know what Hanukkah is and at the same time not be heavy handed and even maybe fun?

My friend, you have come to the right place. It's time for the all-time family favorite game — "Hanukkah True or False!" where players are read eight (yes, eight!) short "facts" and must then determine if the Hanukkah information is true or false!

Let the games begin! See below for answers.

**1. True or False?** The Maccabees were the first in Jewish lore to observe a wintertime



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**2. True or False?** The story of how Judith, the pious widow who beheaded Antiochus IV when he was about to lay siege to Jerusalem, is recorded in the Book of the Maccabees. Ultimately, this led to the victory of Judah Maccabee over the Greco Syrians. Go Yehudit!

**3. True or False?** The Maccabees, heroes of the Hanukkah story, though celebrated in the songs and prayers of the holiday, have a complicated legacy.

**4. True or False?** According to the Book of the Maccabees we celebrate Hanukkah on the 25th of Kislev because of the miracle of the oil and the Maccabean victory on the battlefield.

**5. True or False?** The ancient culinary custom most clearly connected to Hanukkah is the eating of cheese.

**6. True or False?** The Mitzvah of Lighting the menorah can be fulfilled by lighting one candle each night.

**7. True or False?** The dreidel is a Jewish version of the teetotum, a European gambling toy.

**8. True or False?** Early Zionists embraced the Hanukkah story in building up the Zionist ideal of physical strength and might in the hearts of the young fighters in the early years of the state.

The Answers:

**1. False.** Adam, the first human, and Eve were the first. According to the Talmud, Avodah Zara, as the first humans experienced the first calendar year they thought the world would be dark forever. They were distraught.

Our rabbi taught that when primitive Adam saw the day getting gradually shorter, he said, "Woe is me, perhaps because I have sinned the world around me is being darkened and returning to its state of chaos and confusion; this then is the kind of death to which I have been sentenced from Heaven!" So he began keeping an eight-day fast. But as he observed the winter equinox and noted the days getting increasingly longer, he said, "This is the world's course," and he set forth to keep an eight-day festivity. In the following year he appointed both as festivals. He fixed them for the sake of heaven, but the heathens appointed them for the sake of idolatry.

Connection to Hanukkah? Your call!

**2. False.** The story of Judith is captured in

the Greek apocryphal work called, not surprisingly, The Book of Judith. Its setting is actually earlier, though anachronistically depicted, and the general she slays is a Persian commander named Holofernes. In the Hebrew, midrashic and Jewish versions, the story is set in the Hasmonean period with Judith slaying an unnamed general. The Book of the Maccabees tells the story of the Hasmonean battles against the Greek conquerors for Judea from 175 BCE to 134 BCE. It describes the salvation delivered by Mattathias and his five sons.

**3. True.** Though they are of course, the heroes of the Hanukkah story, as per this classic depiction in the Al HaNisim prayer:

*In the days of Matityahu, the son of Yochanan the High Priest, the Hasmonean and his sons, when the wicked Hellenic government rose up against Your people Israel to make them forget Your Torah and violate the decrees of Your will. But You, in Your abounding mercies, stood by them in the time of their distress.*

But the story does not end in 165 BCE. Though the Maccabees started out as leaders pure of heart and singular in mission, their

► PAGE 15

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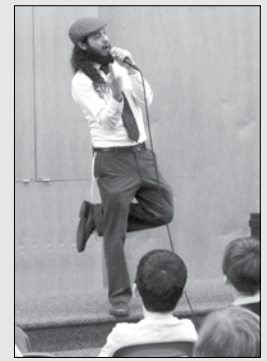
A JTNEWS SPECIAL SECTION • FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2014

# NORTHWEST JEWISH FAMILY

## The day school roundup

As the year draws to an end, parents are beginning to think about how they will educate their kids in the fall. Private school application deadlines are looming, so JTNews has met with each of the primary Jewish day schools in the Seattle area to learn about what they offer, including class size and tuition rates, and how they differentiate themselves. Note that the base tuition, that is the amount families would pay for a single student after the school receives tuition assistance from the Samis Foundation and the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle. We will cover the high schools in early January.

— Joel Magalnick, Editor, JTNews



No, he's not doing his imitation of Hillel by standing one foot. Jewish hip-hop performer Ari Lesser, who on Wednesday did a concert at Seattle Hebrew Academy for all of the area's elementary day schools, raps a rhyme about flamingos for SHA's early childhood school. Lesser's visit was made possible through an Ignition grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle.

JOEL MAGALNICK

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## Jewish Day School: Jewish values in small classes remain an integrated part of core programs

By Dan Aznoff

### The Jewish Day School of Metropolitan Seattle

**Denomination:** Not affiliated

**Grades taught:** Early childhood–8th grade

**Base tuition range:** \$6,266–\$18,900 (early childhood–junior kindergarten);

\$17,761–\$22,377 (kindergarten–8th grade)

**Percentage of families on financial aid:**

Approximately 40 percent; last year, tuition assistance accounted for 33 percent of tuition revenue

**Student body size:** 190

**Average class size:** 17

The smaller class sizes at private schools do not necessary translate into a superior education or higher test scores, according to the new administrator at the Jewish Day School in Bellevue.

Fewer students often translates into the need for more individualized attention, which can distract from the basic lesson plan a teacher may have prepared for the classroom that day. But that reality is just fine for Hamutal Gavish, who began her duties as head of the school this academic year.

“A teacher with 30 or more children in the classroom is forced to forge ahead with a lesson plan as long as long as the majority of the students are keeping up,” Gavish said. “Fewer students means if even one child does not understand the lesson, that child is given the attention he or she needs to understand and move forward with the rest of the class.”

Gavish emphasized that the curriculum at JDS, which sits on a quiet residential street in north Bellevue, is primarily inquiry-based, giving students the opportunity to work independently (or in small groups) on projects that address the inquisitive minds of young people. Hebrew and religion are part of the lesson plans each day at every grade level.

“Inquiry-based learning is teacher facilitated and learner driven, and emphasizes the process of learning that often requires the need for different assignments based on the interpretation of each child,” Gavish said. “Smaller class sizes that answer individual needs help to provide

each student — and parents — the outcome they expect from a Jewish private school education.

“Judaics are integrated into everything that we do, with a stress on community and tikkun olam,” she emphasized. “We teach 21st-century skills with academics at a very high level. There is no separate program at the JDS for gifted students because we allow each to explore subjects at the level he or she deserves.”

Access to the STEM lab for science and math is part of each school day for students in the upper grades. Electives for students in the upper grades includes robotics, astronomy, pottery, computer coding, dance and drama as well as independent electives of their choice.

One group of students this year has



COURTESY JDS

► PAGE 11



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## MMSC: A 'haimish' place to learn

By Tori Gottlieb

### Menachem Mendel Seattle Cheder (MMSC) Day School

**Denomination:** Orthodox (Chabad Lubavitch)

**Grades taught:** Early childhood–high school

**Base tuition range:** Early Childhood Center: \$9,100 for half days, \$12,100 for full days. Elementary and high school: \$11,800.

**Percentage of families receiving financial aid:** 80-85 percent. Those who receive financial aid typically have almost their entire tuition bill covered, paying on average between \$1,000-\$2,000 out of pocket per student annually.

**Student body size:** 80

**Average class size:** ECC: 18. Upper schools: 10.

The Menachem Mendel Seattle Cheder (MMSC) Day School was founded in 1974 to provide a meaningful Jewish education to the families of Seattle in a setting that encourages understanding, leadership, and deep relationships. The private school is open to Jews from every denomination, but is based in the religious teachings of the Chabad movement.

Tziviah Goldberg, who works in MMSC's business office, explained the Chabad movement as being concerned with the underlying spiritual benefits of why people do what they do.

"From a psychological standpoint, it's a commitment that everything that happens to a person is for his benefit," explained Goldberg. "Whether it seems good or bad to a person is not relevant; God sees it's good for you even if you yourself cannot see that it's good for you."

To support this cultural and religious learning, MMSC offers speakers and religious programming throughout the year. Students spend half the day in general studies, and half



COURTESY MMSC

► PAGE 11

## Seattle Hebrew Academy: Embracing technology and empathy for a positive learning environment

By Boris Kurbanov

### Seattle Hebrew Academy

**Denomination:** Modern Orthodox

**Grades taught:** ECC, K-8

**Base tuition:** \$16,000

**Percentage of students that receive financial aid:** 65 percent

**Student body size:** 226

**Average class size:** 24 per class (lower and middle school)

On Dec. 12, in Balika Haakanson's classroom at Seattle Hebrew Academy, the students gladly set aside their pencils, paper and books to partake in a lesson that would likely confuse most of their parents: Algorithms and binary.

The lesson, part of the week-long global effort titled "Hour of Code," challenged lower and middle school students to redesign visual features in a game called "Flappy Bird." The "Hour of Code," now in its second year, brings coding to the classroom with the goal of demystifying computer science and getting kids to become comfortable with computer programming, said Bev Falgione, the school's director of institutional advancement.



COURTESY SHA

"We're always looking for the most advanced way to bring knowledge to our kids, and to keep them as current as possible, not only in the general studies, but also in their Judaic studies," Falgione said. "The technology is upgrading our Hebrew studies as well, so that it's a full integrated and blended learning process."

The campaign, a part of Computer Science Education Week, allows kids to truly understand what goes into the technology they use on a daily basis.

At SHA, that process starts early. Coding is the 21st-century language, and since modern life runs on code, the school's educational technology coordinator Liz Ebersole wants to make sure that all 226 students learn how to use it. The hope, she said, is that students will become excited about coding and the new tools they have at their disposal, and that this will inspire them to become future creators instead of just users.

At 65 years old, Seattle Hebrew Academy is the city's oldest Jewish elementary day school. In recent years the school has increased its focus on technology. SHA offers students a personal laptop program, shared iPads for the younger children, and giant touchscreen computers in classrooms. The money for this technology comes from Seattle's Samis Foundation, the primary granting agency for K-12 Jewish day schools in the greater Seattle area. Samis is working to slowly shift the educational system at the six Jewish day schools it funds. Earlier this year, Samis launched a decade-long, \$2.5-million technology initiative to improve students' learning experiences "by leveraging the integration of technology."

"This initiative is about school change, not about plunking computers down," said Amy Amiel, senior program officer at the Samis Foundation. "It's about saying to school faculty that education has changed, and we're here to support you."

The Hour of Code and the availability of cutting-edge tools are just a couple of reasons parents are excited about what SHA, which is nestled into an urban forest on north Capitol Hill, has to offer. For many parents, it's the programs and extracurricular activities SHA boasts, not just the inspired scenery, that can be the deciding factor. SHA offers numerous extracurricular programs outside the classroom, which strengthens students' friendships as well as develops their strengths and abilities. They include a basketball program (both boys and girls), a soccer club, volleyball, track and field, a chess club, and an after-school robotics and engineering program.

SHA, which offers a preschool through 8th grade curriculum, is open to Jewish families from across the Orthodox spectrum and caters to students of all learning abilities. Classrooms average approximately 24 students in both Judaic and secular tracks, and the school has been named the nation's best Orthodox elementary school — among 600 schools — by the National Association for Hebrew Day Schools, in part for its "child-centered" program that aims to graduate respectful, well-behaved students. Six years ago, SHA implemented "Project SHAlom," an evidence-based program that emphasizes and rewards good behavior and teaches the right way to handle conflicts, resulting in improved academic achievement while fostering better student behavior.

The school accepts students from all Jewish backgrounds, and does not turn away students because their families are unable to pay.

Falgione credits SHA's head of school, Rivy Poupkov Kletnik, for creating an environment where compassionate educators challenge and nurture each child.

"You see so much learning, so much stimulation, so many activities going on," Falgione said. "This is all a tribute to Rivy. The teachers don't hear 'no' — they hear, 'How can we make this happen?'"

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# Seattle Jewish Community School: Bringing in the whole family

By Janis Siegel

<b>Seattle Jewish Community School</b>	<b>Percentage of families on financial aid:</b>
<b>Denomination:</b> Not affiliated	Approximately 50 percent
<b>Grades taught:</b> Kindergarten–5th grade	<b>Student body size:</b> 92
<b>Base tuition range:</b> \$19,150	<b>Average class size:</b> 16

It was a subtle, perhaps imperceptible shift many parents might not detect, but last year, Rachel Scherr noticed her then-4th grader Jordan's loss of excitement and a waning connection toward his classwork at a North Seattle public elementary school.

That's when she and her husband took action and switched their sons, Jordan, 10, and Aaron, 7, into the Seattle Jewish Community School.

The 92-student, dual-curriculum kindergarten-through-5th-grade day school splits the school day into two parts: A half day of general studies, including language arts, reading, math, science and social studies, and a half day of Judaic studies that includes Hebrew, Torah study, prayer and religious ritual knowledge, Jewish history, and life cycle and Jewish values.

"At SJCS, we approach exceptional education through the lens of the Jewish experience," says Shoshi Bilavsky, SJCS's head of school since 2010. "We graduate learners who are consistently at the top of their academic level, but who can also find joy in shared traditions, form lifelong relationships and enrich their communities."

"It was a big deal," said Scherr about the switch. "They were both doing fine in the sense that they were happy, but although he [Jordan] was socially comfortable, we were feeling like his academic needs were not being met."

In public school, Scherr noticed that Jordan wasn't getting the kind of extra support he needed with his writing skills, even though the school made an effort to provide it. The teacher, she said, just didn't seem equipped to take it on.

Her boys had to adjust to a daily and more intensive focus on Hebrew in the classroom, which was a whole different experience, according to Scherr.

"We were a little concerned about our 5th grader starting in with other 5th graders who already had five years of Hebrew," said Scherr, who hired a summer Hebrew tutor for Jordan to make the transition easier.

"He's fine," she said. "There's a wide range of Hebrew abilities in the 5th grade so it's not hard to fit in. We were just eager to have our kids surrounded by that particular community, which has to do with it being the Jewish community."

Scherr also noticed that many of her friends from the North Seattle campus of the Stroum Jewish Community Center preschool, located at Temple Beth Am, where her children attended, chose to send their kids to SJCS.

"Families choose SJCS because they value our approach to 'whole child' learning," said Jessica Graybill, director of admissions and marketing at SJCS. "Excellent academics are

central to what we do, but to focus on a child's academic successes or struggles is to miss the whole of their being — their social, emotional, behavioral and cultural development is as important as their ability to succeed in the classroom."

The average class size at SJCS is 16 and the student-to-teacher ratio is one to five.

In addition to learning specialists who can give students individual attention, and two teachers in each classroom, a typical week at the SJCS also exposes students to an array of highly accomplished specialists in art, music, creative dance and movement, library skills, and physical education.

Elizabeth Davis-Jacobs and Rob Jacobs are the parents of three children who went through SJCS — two graduated and their youngest, Sammy, 7, attended SJCS for kindergarten and 1st grade.

"SJCS doesn't just teach to the test even though the children must meet these milestones," said Davis-Jacobs. "Instead it's really focused on fostering learning both from a textbook and experiential standpoint. For example, last year Sammy's class was learning about wheat. They studied breads from around the world and used it as a way to understand how wheat grows, is cultivated."

Parents are an essential part of the school's operations and may serve in the parent association, on the board of trustees, and various board committees. Davis-Jacobs served on the SJCS board for two, two-year terms.

"They do a fair amount of board development and reach out to community resources to help build board competency," said Davis-Jacobs. "The board works hard to balance many competing needs — making tuition affordable, raising funds, ensuring academic excellence, and bringing in the best teachers."

The tuition assistance committee considers a family's Jewish expenses, such as summer camp and synagogue membership as pre-need expenses. SJCS helps families get connected to each other through its community outreach program, Jewish Junction, which holds events at the school or at outside venues.

SJCS parents can also take advantage of its before and after-school enrichment program, where kids sign up for classes like cooking, gymnastics, kung fu, games, or a homework club while waiting to be picked up.

Learn more at [www.sjcs.net](http://www.sjcs.net).



COURTESY SJCS

## ◀ JDS PAGE 13

dedicated its independent project to explore options to help more Jews emigrate from Russia. Third and fourth graders from JDS have gone out into the community to visit senior centers, while some of the older students have collected toys for families in need.

One of the most popular extra-curricular activities at JDS each year, according to Gavish, is the student production of a play written and produced entirely in Hebrew.

"We try to teach with the use of open-ended questions that promote asking additional questions to promote critical thinking," she said.

In addition to core academics, students in the lower grade levels are given regular access to the art studio, the music room, and physical education on the seven-acre campus.

Construction of a new gymnasium on campus a few years ago allowed the school to add volleyball to the list of after-school sports options that include cross-country, basketball, golf and tennis. The old gym has been converted into a meeting place for students.

Unlike public schools, Gavish said parents are rarely called upon to volunteer in the classroom. That decision, she said, has given members of the parent association time to volunteer in the library, the art room and help coordinate festival celebrations. Parents have also been recruited to lead the technology committee to serve in an advisory panel to the administration.

"This is a rich curriculum," said Gavish. "The trip to Israel by students during the summer after they complete the 8th grade is a reward for all their hard work. But it also helps solidify the lessons in life, in community and with our religion."

The administrator summed up her philosophy in simple terms: "JDS is a community school that does not affiliate with any movement. Our campus community is Jewishly diverse. Our families range in all levels of affiliation within the greater Seattle area.

"At JDS, curiosity leads to discovery."

Learn more at [www.jds.org](http://www.jds.org).

## ◀ MMSC PAGE 11

the day in religious education.

MMSC's programs are split into three schools: The Montessori-based Early Childhood Center (ECC), which serves children from ages 2-1/2 through kindergarten; the elementary school, which serves children from grades 1 through 8; and the high school, which is girls only, and serves grades 9 through 12. All three programs offer multi-age classroom settings, and classrooms are segregated by gender beginning in grade 5. The small class sizes help teachers easily identify and help struggling students, though the school does not have support staff for students with special needs.

Though there is no dedicated science lab on campus, MMSC does have science equipment and offers general science classes as part of its secular curriculum. The school also has a small library. In their current location in Greenwood, MMSC students take daily trips (weather permitting) to a park and a playfield at the Boys & Girls Club.

MMSC encourages students to use their education to help others through service and charity. That messaging is worked into MMSC's entire curriculum. Families are also expected to be involved in the school and their children's education — they ask parents to commit at least 25 hours of volunteer time per year.

Chava Edelman drives her 8-year-old son from Olympia to attend classes at MMSC, and is looking forward to her daughter starting MMSC's kindergarten program next year. She cited the school's strong academics in both Judaics and secular subjects and its ability to balance education and a "haimish" quality — the Yiddish word for a homey, family-oriented feeling — as the most important things to her family, and the reason they make the trek to Seattle.

"The staff always exemplifies that loving, caring, family-type of feeling," Edelman said. "And the kids have these really close, comfortable friendships. It's a very hard thing to find a balance between the professional and haimish, and they have that balance."

For more information about MMSC and the programs they offer, visit [mmscdayschool.org](http://mmscdayschool.org).

## Torah Day School: Teaching children according to their ways

By Emily K. Alhadeff

### Torah Day School

**Denomination:** Orthodox

**Grades taught:** Pre-K–8th grade

**Base tuition:** \$14,000 per year

**Percentage of students that receive financial aid:** Around 75 percent

**Student body size:** 118

**Class size:** About 10

Rabbi Yona Margolese doesn't quite know how to describe it, but he has noticed a palpable sense of happiness among the students at Torah Day School.

"They genuinely look forward to coming to school," Margolese, the new head of school, said. Only half a year into his new job running the Orthodox day school on Seattle's Beacon Hill, Margolese is excited about what he sees, right down to the physical education program.

"Our P.E. instructor is phenomenal," he raved. "It's not just about the physical. She works with them to use as much of their entire being as possible.... In addition to the physical workout, she has a lot of games and activities that help the kids think about what they're doing and to push themselves to think differently."

Working with students' entire beings is part of TDS's holistic approach to education, where the goal is to develop each individual child intellectually along with the values of character development, love of Jewish studies and the Jewish people, and proper behavior.

"The kind of kid that excels at TDS is interested in an Orthodox lifestyle and character development, secular studies, and Torah growth," Margolese said.

Jewish studies and general studies are split down the middle of the day. Michelle Kaufman, who has 20 years of experience working in special education, is on hand for support. The school, which is renting a former church, has a library and librarian, two playgrounds, a playfield, and an indoor multipurpose room. Margolese hopes the school will be able to eventually buy the property and look at more options for growth. The school is also taking advantage of a Samis technology initiative, and the 6th-grade class is producing stop-motion videos about ancient Greek history.

Margolese notes it's challenging to integrate technology with the curriculum so students truly can apply what they're learning — and not learn technology for technology's sake.

"The kids are learning patience," he said with a laugh.

Margolese also praised the early childhood school, run by Sharona Hassan, who is trained in the Reggio Emilia philosophy.

"Sharona really teaches the whole child," he said. "When she was teaching the kids about music, they had their own little musical concert and they talked about the power of music."

Where Torah Day School excels most, Margolese believes, is in differentiated learning. The philosophy, in Hebrew, is "hinuch al pi darko," or "education according to his way." "The teachers plan their lessons that will connect to their individual learning style and level," Margolese explained. "It's almost as though when a teacher goes home at night they create 10 lesson plans for 10 students."

This individualized approach is how kids learn best, Margolese said.

"We also believe in a k-n-o-w homework policy," he said. "It should be very clear why this homework is going to benefit the kid."

The school believes that family time is crucial, and any time spent on homework should be intentional. Parents are heavily involved in the school, even aiding or filling in for teachers when needed.

"Kids do best when they're happy," Margolese said. TDS is "a happy place to be."

Learn more about the Torah Day School of Seattle at [www.tdsseattle.org](http://www.tdsseattle.org).



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# Maybe we're finally fitting in. Maybe.

By Ed Harris



**Abba Knows Best**

Is it just me, or has the sense of not completely fitting in, which Jews traditionally experience at Christmas, been a bit lacking this season in the Pacific Northwest? As a child growing up in suburban New Jersey in the 1960s and '70s, a palpable Yuletide atmosphere wafted in the air every December, perhaps felt even more keenly by Jews, as it reinforced our status as outsiders.

People in that simpler era could be rather easily sorted into distinctive ethnic and religious categories. Over 90 percent of the local population was neatly classifiable along a mere two dimensions: Jew or Christian, and white or black. Admittedly, in the Bronx, where my grandparents lived, you also could add Puerto Rican.

I had a chance to revisit this ethnic taxonomy a few years ago in the Windy City when the youngest and most demanding of our flock, Izzy, trained for a summer with the Chicago Ballet and lived in a downtown dorm. During our visit he needed to be taken by a parental unit for a haircut. I found a nearby African-American barbershop open on a Sunday, and called to make an appointment. I was told to "ask for Manny, the Puerto Rican guy" when we arrived. My heart immediately filled with nostalgic joy.

In 3rd grade, despite a complete and utter lack of singing ability, I joined our elementary school choir. For the Christmas assembly, we sang all the traditional religious standards, such as "God Bless Ye Merry Gentlemen" (I prefer the Allan Sherman version, "God Bless You, Jerry Mandelbaum") along with a sop to the 20 percent of so or us from that other Judeo-Christian faith, "I Have a Little Dreidel." The version our choir teacher taught us differed from what I simultaneously learned in Hebrew school. One day I explained to that her version of the song was incorrect. I expected gushing gratitude, but instead was met with an icy glare. Grownups.

At the Christmas assembly that year in grade school, I joined in for the non-denominational portions of songs and then in my own small civil rights protest version of demanding service at the lunch counter, remained silent when we reached sections which praised the birth of the son of God or proclaimed his divinity. And of course, as commanded in the Torah, our family went to the Chinese restaurant to celebrate the big day. Bottom line: Christmas was distinctive and memorable, to Jews and Gentiles alike.

Out here in the Emerald City, if you blinked then you might have missed the arrival and

departure of Santa. First of all, the rise of e-commerce, led by local giant Amazon.com, has made the entire ritual of schlepping to the mall for holiday shopping obsolete. Members of every new generation look at the habits and cultural practices of the past and shake their collective head in wonder ("How did people ever entertain themselves before video games and the Internet?"). While the economy is humming along, mall sales are down precipitously from last year. Seems reasonable to me: Why burn gas and fight crowds when you can get everything you want delivered to your front doorstep at no extra charge?

Even more importantly, the old ethnic categories no longer apply, at least not in Puget Sound. Determining who is white or Christian is an exercise in subtle judgment. My friends and neighbors hail from every corner of the globe, and many of those who are nominally Christian rarely, if ever, set foot in a church. Right in our own little family, we've got two Latin American children as brown as caramel. However, I insist you should at least speak a little bit of Spanish to be classified as "Hispanic."

Fortunately, there is one thing we can all agree on. Christmas should be celebrated in a Chinese restaurant. It says so, right in the Bible, in Ecclesiastes: "There is nothing new under the sun." If that isn't a reference to the obligation to eat lo mein, as our forefathers did, then I don't know what is. A station wagon loaded with newly purchased toys and clothing may be passé, but some traditions are worth preserving. Who wants some hot-and-sour soup?

*Ed Harris, the author of "Fifty Shades of Schwarz" and several other books, was born in the Bronx and lives in Bellevue with his family. His blog, Fizz-Ed, and additional information about his books are available at [www.edharrisauthor.com](http://www.edharrisauthor.com).*

## Family Calendar

### EVERY MONDAY

**Parenting Class: Creative Beginnings** —  
9:30–10:45 a.m. or 11:15 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

☎ Laura Selby at [lauraselby@comcast.net](mailto:lauraselby@comcast.net)  
Children with adults explore the richness of the ECC through art, sensory experiences, and creative play. At the Stroum Jewish Community Center, 3801 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island.

### EVERY TUESDAY

**Mommy Matters: Moms, Getting Real about What Matters** — 10–11:30 a.m.

☎ Melissa Benaroya, LICSW at [melissa@growparenting.com](mailto:melissa@growparenting.com) or 206-226-6707  
An opportunity for moms to get support and learn about what matters most as your child moves through the toddler and preschool years. Childcare available. At the Stroum JCC, 3801 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island.

### EVERY WEDNESDAY

**Listening Mothers** — 10–11:30 a.m.

☎ 206-275-0104  
[info@communityofmindfulparenting.com](mailto:info@communityofmindfulparenting.com)  
A unique opportunity for parents of babies, birth through 6 months of age, to discover the joys of parenting. At the Stroum JCC, 3801 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island.

### EVERY THURSDAY

**PJ Library Neighborhood Song and Story Time at Temple Beth Am** — 10–11 a.m.

☎ Alexis Kort at 206-525-0915 or

[alexis@templebetham.org](mailto:alexis@templebetham.org)

With snacks and an art project and a chance for parents and caregivers to connect. Free. At Temple Beth Am, 2632 NE 80th St., Seattle.

### EVERY FRIDAY

**Seattle Jewish Cooperative Playschool** —  
Age 18 months–3 years: 9:30–11:30 a.m.  
Age 3–4: 12–2 p.m.

☎ Contact Dana Weiner at [DanaW@sjcc.org](mailto:DanaW@sjcc.org) or 206-388-1992.

Hands-on parent-toddler classes include playtime and exploration, songs, projects, music, and snacks. At the Seattle Jewish Community School, 12351 Eighth Ave. NE, Seattle.

**Tot Shabbat** — 9:45–10:30 a.m.

☎ Sarah at 206-232-7115 or [saraht@sjcc.org](mailto:saraht@sjcc.org)  
Celebrate Shabbat with songs and challah on Friday mornings. Free. At the Stroum JCC, 3801 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island.

**Northeast Tot Shabbat at Congregation Kol Ami** — 10:30–11:15 a.m.

☎ 425-844-1604 or [admin@kolaminw.org](mailto:admin@kolaminw.org)  
Celebrate Shabbat with prayer, songs, challah, juice and candles. Holiday celebrations. Monthly crafts. Ideal for babies, toddlers, and pre-K. At Congregation Kol Ami, 16530 Avondale Rd. NE, Woodinville.

**PJ Library Song and Storytime Jewish Junction Style** — 11–11:30 a.m.

☎ Contact at 206-384-6020 or [info@jewishjunction.net](mailto:info@jewishjunction.net)  
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## LIFECYCLES

## RITA RUTH ROSEN

January 29, 1921–December 7, 2014

Rita Ruth Rosen, born January 29, 1921, passed away peacefully at her home in Seattle, surrounded by her family, devoted caregivers, and her dog Tootsie. She was born in Austria/Poland to Grace (Gitche) and Jack Feuerberg, who immigrated with Rita when she was 9 months old to escape anti-Semitism in Europe. They settled in Vancouver, BC, a city that Rita loved growing up in and visiting after she left. Six months later they welcomed Rita's late brother, Alfred Feuerberg, to the family.

Rita met Herbert Rosen at a BBYO function before the war, but she was not initially impressed with him. However, when Herb returned, he persevered and won her heart. She and Herb married in 1948 and he persuaded her to leave Vancouver for Seattle.

Rita's interests were strongly political and she was one of the top Washington State Democratic supporters until her death. She was a proud liberal and put her beliefs into action by supporting candidates and hosting caucuses and other fundraising events in her home. She was one of the oldest delegates to the 2004 Democratic Convention for presidential candidate John Kerry.

At a young age she had a talent and eye for art and beautiful things. She attended the Chicago School of Art and later Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle, after her children were born. Her love of the arts continued over the years and she was one of the founding members of the Bellevue Arts Museum, and was involved in the Seattle Opera and Pacific Northwest Ballet. She loved to travel to enjoy art and different cultures in other countries.

Rita was a wonderful homemaker and you could always expect both delicious meals and lively political discussions when visiting her home. One of her favorite pastimes was celebrating life events, both big and small, with the infamous "Birthday Club" consisting of nine of her lifelong, fabulous and fun friends.

She is survived by her two children and their spouses: Stan and Michele Rosen and Judy and Krijn de Jonge. She was also a proud Grandma of Mimi (and Nathan), Leslie, Jack (and Ana), Saskia and Anneke, and great-grandma to Sadie, Matilda, Hannah, and one on the way.

Remembrances may be made to The Bellevue Arts Museum, Jewish Family Service, and Hillel at the University of Washington.

Funeral services were held at the chapel at Herzl-Ner Tamid cemetery on December 9, 2014.



## ◀ FAMILY CALENDAR PAGE 13

great PJ Library picture books. At Ravenna Third Place Books, 6504 20th Ave. NE, Seattle.

### Tots Welcoming Shabbat at Temple B'nai Torah — 11:15 a.m.–12 p.m.

☎ Irit Eliav Levin at 425-603-9677, ext. 209 or ILevin@templebnaitorah.org  
Singing, prayer, and challah and grape juice, led by Cantor David Serkin-Poole and Chava Mirel. At Temple B'nai Torah, 15727 NE Fourth St., Bellevue.

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20

#### 10–11:30 a.m. — Family Shabbat Morning

☎ Kate Speizer at 206-384-6020 or kspeizer@tdhs-nw.org or www.tdhs-nw.org  
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### MONDAY, DECEMBER 22–FRIDAY, JANUARY 2

#### 9:30 a.m.–4 p.m. — SJCC Winter Break Camp

☎ Daliah Silver at DaliahS@sjcc.org or 206-388-0839 or sjcc.org  
Different themed activities every day, plus swimming, playing, and arts and crafts. Monday, 12/22: Sugartopia; Tuesday, 12/23: Dino Day; Wednesday, 12/24: Field trip; Thursday, 12/25: No camp; Friday, 12/26: Science Day; Monday, 12/29: Winter Wonderland; Tuesday, 12/30: Field trip;

Wednesday, 12/31: Magic Day; Thursday, 1/1: No camp; Friday, 1/2: Wild and Crazy Kids. Full and half-day options. SJCC members \$60 per day, guests \$70 per day. At the Stroum JCC, 3801 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island.

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 6

#### 9:45–11:45 a.m. — Parenting Class: Mindful Interactions with Your Baby

☎ 206-232-7115 or saraht@sjcc.org or www.sjcc.org

Topics include developmental stages, positive discipline, play and learning, and sleep. Runs through March. Ages 6-12 months with parent/caregiver. SJCC members \$180, guests \$216. At the Stroum JCC, 3801 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island.

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

#### 5–10 p.m. — Parents Night Out

☎ 206-232-7115 or saraht@sjcc.org or www.sjcc.org

It may be called Parents Night Out, but it's really for the kids. Superhero Night: Superheroes, super challenges, and super strength. Includes dinner. Five years-5th grade. SJCC members \$40 for the first child, \$20 for siblings (ages 5-plus). Guests \$45 for the first child, \$25 for siblings (ages 5-plus). Younger kids can participate through drop-in babysitting program: SJCC members \$50 per child, guests \$60 per child. At the Stroum JCC, 3801 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island.

## ◀ WHAT'S YOUR JQ? PAGE 8

appointing themselves as kings along with their own familial priesthood left a bitter taste in the mouths of later Jewish authorities. The Hasmonean rule that lasted for approximately 130 years began with noble intent. Leaders such as Yehudah, Yonatan and Elazar ended with, ironically, more Hellenistic-influenced leadership under the likes of Hyrcannus, Menalaus, and Aristobulus.

Sometimes a name can tell a tale. Torah rule mandates the strict separation of leadership families: Davidic dynasty for kingship and Aaronic dynasty for priesthood. Never the two shall mix — hence their legacy is mixed. There is no Talmudic Tractate Hanukkah and their kings' names were not used as were other kings in legal documents for dating purposes.

**4. False.** Though the miracle of the oil is center stage in the Talmud Shabbat and the miracle of the battle in the Al HaNisim prayer, according to the Book of the Maccabees we celebrate Hanukkah, meaning dedication, on the 25th of Kislev, because of the rededication of the Temple. There is no mention of the miracle of the oil or a miracle on the battlefield. From Book of the Maccabees, Chapter 4:

*Then Judas appointed certain men to fight against those that were in the fortress, until he had cleansed the sanctuary... And when, as they consulted what to do with the altar of burnt offerings, which was profaned...and made*

*up the sanctuary, and the things that were within the temple, and hallowed the courts. They made also new holy vessels, and into the temple they brought the candlestick, and the altar of burnt offerings, and of incense, and the table...Now on the five and twentieth day of the ninth month, which is called the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and eighth year, they rose up betimes in the morning...And so they kept the dedication of the altar eight days and offered burnt offerings with gladness, and sacrificed the sacrifice of deliverance and praise...Moreover Judas and his brethren with the whole congregation of Israel ordained, that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their season from year to year by the space of eight days, from the five and twentieth day of the month Casleu, with mirth and gladness.*

**5. True.** Not potato latkes! Oy vey! Cheese it is — fed to the beheaded general by Judith to induce thirst and then drunkenness and sleep. Pull out your Shavuot cheesecake recipes.

**6. True.** Though not the best possible way, it is acceptable.

**7. True.** We added the Jewish flavor, reminding us of the tradition that though forbidden by the Greco Syrians, Jewish children persisted in learning Torah. When discovered by the enemy, they swiftly replaced a demeanor of study with that of play, employing the use of tops in the service of their commitment to learn Torah.

**8. True!** Early Zionists identified strongly with the Maccabees, who fought heroically to maintain a Jewish State more than 2,000 years before. Consider even our current worldwide youth Maccabiah games! And don't forget this less-than-subtle poem by Avigdor Hameiri;

*Awaken youth and straighten your head  
Open your eyes sleepy head,  
Know, our future is hidden in your blood,  
The should of the nation is in your fresh body,*

*Maccabee, Maccabee,  
Strengthen the muscles and make the blood courageous.  
Maccabee, Maccabee.  
Be the leader for the glory of the nation.*

Rivy Poupko Kletenik is an internationally renowned educator and Head of School at the Seattle Hebrew Academy. If you have a question that's been tickling your brain, send Rivy an e-mail at rivy.poupko.kletenik@gmail.com.

## 2-for-1 "Happy New Year" Cards

When you let JFS "Tribute Cards" do the talking, you send your best wishes and say you care about funding vital JFS programs here at home. Call Irene at (206) 861-3150 or, on the web, click on "Donations" at [www.jfsseattle.org](http://www.jfsseattle.org). Use Visa, MasterCard or American Express.



JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE

## How do I submit a Lifecycle Announcement?

EMAIL: [lifecycles@jtnews.net](mailto:lifecycles@jtnews.net)  
CALL: 206-441-4553

Submissions for the January 9, 2015 issue are due by December 30.

Download lifecycles forms at [jewishsound.org/lifecycles-forms/](http://jewishsound.org/lifecycles-forms/).

Please submit images in jpg format, 400 KB or larger.

*Thank you!*



## What's a Jew to do?

It's that time of the year again. "All I Want for Christmas is You" has been stuck in your head since Thanksgiving, your bank account balance is frighteningly low, your pants don't fit, and every time you enter a public space you get mauled by cheer. But who's calling me a Grinch?

As the day creeps near, you stare into the abyss and wonder: What's a Jew to do on Christmas?

Fear not. While a chubby man in a red suit is flying through the skies delivering XBoxes to children the world over, you, too, can be merry.

And if you do celebrate Christmas, well, Merry Christmas.

### THROUGH DECEMBER 24

#### Classic Hanukkah Specials at Golden Beetle

☎ 206-706-2977 or golden-beetle.com/main  
Golden Beetle's menu features potato latkes with house-made applesauce, crème fraiche, green onion; matzoh ball soup with smoked chicken, carrot, parsley; roasted root vegetables with parsnip, rutabaga, fingerling potato; and stuffed donuts with persimmon filling and powdered sugar. Order any of these dishes as a side to your main meal or try them all together. At Golden Beetle, 1744 NW Market St., Seattle.

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

#### 6-10 p.m. — NCSY's Chinese Food and Movie Night

☎ 206-295-5888 or thehoffather@gmail.com or www.seattlencsy.com

Kids watch "The Lego Movie" at SBH, and adults watch "Million Dollar Arm" at BCMH. Ticket includes dinner and the movie. Free childcare. \$15 per person, \$50 per family. Purchase tickets by December 23 online. At Bikur Cholim Machzikay Hadath, 5145 S Morgan St. and Sephardic Bikur Holim, 6500 52nd St. S, Seattle.

#### 9 p.m. — Latkepalooza

☎ Elise at elisep@hilleluw.org or www.jconnectseattle.org  
Jconnect brings you the largest Jewish party of the year. They're taking over the Baltic Room with drinks and music all night long. \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door. At the Baltic Room, 1207 Pine St., Seattle.

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

#### 10 a.m.-3:15 p.m. — Kollel on Ice!

☎ 206-722-8289 or seattlekollel@aol.com or www.seattlekollel.org  
Morning of learning 10 a.m.-12 p.m. for adults and children, and then onto the ice 1:45-3:15 p.m. All ages welcome. \$10 adults, \$7 children. At Seattle Kollel, 5305 52nd Ave. S, Seattle, and Highland Ice Arena, 18005 Aurora Ave. N, Shoreline.

#### 12 p.m. — "Fiddler on the Roof" Singalong

☎ www.siff.net/cinema/fiddler-on-the-roof  
Sing along to America's favorite Jewish musical. Beforehand, Leah's Catering will serve Chinese cuisine during a klezmer concert by Orkestyr Farfeleh. Doors open at 12, film begins at 1. With intermission. \$20-\$25. At SIFF Uptown, 511 Queen Anne Ave. N, Seattle.

#### 5-7 p.m. — Chinese Food on Christmas

☎ david@hillel.org or www.jconnectseattle.org  
While there may be some debate as to how this tradition got started, one thing is for sure: You won't want to miss out on Chinese food on Christmas! Check out the menu beforehand at www.allmenus.com/wa/seattle/302459-red-lantern/menu. RSVP to David. At Red Lantern, 520 S Jackson St., Seattle.

#### Kosher Chinese/Asian restaurants

##### Bamboo Garden

Kosher, vegan Chinese in the tradition of China's early imperial dynasties, using techniques and

ingredients that make their dishes taste like meat and seafood. 364 Roy St., Seattle. For reservations, take-out, and questions contact 206-282-6616 or chinesevegan@gmail.com or visit www.bamboo-garden.com.

##### The Teapot

Pan-Asian vegan cuisine inspired by China, Japan, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia, with everything from wonton soup to curries. 15230 NE 24th St., Redmond. For reservations and take-out, call 425-747-8881 or 425-373-1888 or visit www.teapotvegetarianhouse.com.

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**SUNDAY, JANUARY 25 · 10:30 AM - 1 PM**  
Meydenbauer Center · 11100 NE 6th Street, Bellevue  
**Women's Philanthropy Chair:** Lisa Brashem  
**Connections Chairs:** Trea Diamant & Judy Schocken

Register at [jewishinseattle.org/connections2015](http://jewishinseattle.org/connections2015)  
or call 206.774.2246



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