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**Janet L. Alexander, MD**
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**Jana Bregman, MD**
Fellowship Training:
Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus

**APPOINTMENTS & INFORMATION**
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— Marco, Age 11

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— Greg, Marco’s Dad

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Your Health & Wellness Partner

With a reputation for excellence as well as industry leadership, Keswick provides individualized, quality care to restore, renew and revitalize adults ages 50+ through healthy living initiatives both on-campus and in the community. Located on West 40th Street in Baltimore, Keswick offers the following services:

**The Wise & Well Center for Healthy Living & Community Health Services:**
In fall 2018, The Wise & Well Center for Healthy Living opened as a dedicated space for people ages 50+ to pursue their health and well-being goals. This membership-based Center offers classes, coaching and personal training across multiple dimensions of wellness. Keswick’s team is dedicated to empowering people to be engaged in their own health and well-being. By offering programs such as Yoga, Zumba, Mindful Movement, Nia, MELT, diabetes prevention, falls prevention, brain health, and community art studio classes, along with our Home & Healthy® care transition program, we engage people in improving the way they approach physical, mental and emotional wellness allowing them to stay in their homes longer and continue doing the things they love.

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**Adult Day Services**
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**Short-Term Rehabilitation**
Keswick’s Inpatient Rehabilitation programs help guests recover quickly, comfortably and with the support they need in their private rooms. At Keswick, our therapists specialize in treating adults recovering from cardiac, orthopedic, pulmonary, wound management and other medical events that require some form of rehabilitation after leaving the hospital.

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It's time for our long national nightmare to end. It's time we had a president who respected science and led a commonsense approach to the pandemic.

It's time that we had a president who didn't think locking children in cages apart from their mothers was acceptable.

It's time we had a president who respected the basic tenets of democracy — voting rights, election sanctity, the separation of powers, etc.

It's time we had a president who didn't try to use the apparatus of government — Justice Department, the Postal Service, the CDC, etc. — to further his own political and personal objectives.

It's time we had a president who wasn't a liar and a cheater — does anyone need the 20-page list for this item?

It's time we had a president that knows that everyone in our society deserves equal opportunity, safety, respect, and protection under the law.

It's time we had a president who pays his taxes, is transparent to the people about his finances, isn't stealing from his own political donors, didn't lie to avoid Vietnam, and didn't pay another student to take his SATs.

We could go on and on with this list. Clearly, electing a dishonest man with a congenital personality disorder was a huge mistake. As Jews, let us not make the mistake of being paid off with a few trinkets directed at our support of Israel.

Joe Biden is a decent man with vast government experience. He will return to a more normal style of government. The issues around his son are real but not criminal and the father is not responsible. Biden has suffered in many ways and will show compassion to the poor, suffering, elderly, etc. He will be a president in the style of Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. He will support Israel because America supports Israel and he has always done so in the past.

Jmore endorses Joe Biden for the presidency of the United States. Let's make America great again and elect Mr. Biden. Let's end this national nightmare.
Better never stops. University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center has been recognized for the second consecutive year as a Best Hospital for 2020-21 by U.S. News & World Report. Named #3 in both the state and the Baltimore Metro area, UM St. Joseph is the highest-ranking community hospital in Maryland.

We owe this recognition to our staff and physicians’ relentless commitment to providing high-quality, safe and compassionate patient care for all those we serve. We are most proud because of what this accomplishment means for our patients: excellent outcomes, improved health and wellness, and greater access to the very best care.

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The Healthy Pursuit of Listening

I'm not trying to pat myself on the back. But over the years, I've developed a capacity for something that my younger self would never believe possible: I can listen to someone rant and rave about nearly anything, and still keep my big yap shut. For the most part.

As a budding journalist, you're constantly reminded by mentors that objectivity is a hallmark of the craft. You are not the story, just the conduit, the vessel, the messenger. Keep your views to yourself, unless you're writing an opinion piece or column.

There were times early on when I wasn't too adept at that. Over time, I've gotten better at it. A prime example was several years ago when those wacko folks from the Westboro Baptist Church were hurling anti-Semitic epithets at me and others during their protest in front of the Jewish Museum of Maryland. That wasn't easy.

Not long ago, I had another experience, not anywhere near as bad, when I managed to contain my inner hothead, much to the surprise of my colleagues. A very pleasant but outraged and outspoken 78-year-old woman called to complain about Jmore's recent cover story on the Black Lives Matter movement.

"How could you? What were you thinking?" she asked. "Why in the world was that on your cover?"

After identifying herself as a native of a small town in the South who moved here at the age of 10, the woman also kvetched bitterly about Chizuk Amuno Congregation's recent decision to post a Black Lives Matter sign on its property.

"I am the daughter of Holocaust survivors," she said. "Nobody helped us during the Holocaust. Why are we trying to help anyone?"

I bit my lip. Hard.

"I wouldn't give [Chizuk Amuno] a nickel," she said. "People are quitting in droves, did you know that?"

I bit my lip again but said I actually heard that while some congregants were dismayed, many expressed pleasure with the synagogue's decision regarding the sign. They felt it was a bold stand.

"Yes," she shot back, "those kind of people are known as dumb Jews." Yet again, I bit my lip. Hard.

She went on to condemn Black Lives Matter as "an anti-Semitic, Marxist movement that hates Israel," as well as Democrats who "are burning down and destroying our cities." She also had harsh words for the protesters who've taken to the streets around the country to rally against racial injustice and police brutality.

"They're not protesting, they're rioting and destroying!" she said, working herself into a frenzy. "They're horrible people who want to destroy this country. Look, I grew up in the South and remember the Black people who protested back in the ’60s. They were good people. These are not the same kind of people."

At this point, I tried to remember that my parents taught me to always respect my elders. I'm not going to start bickering with someone who remembers when Jack Benny was a radio star.

Realizing there was no point in trying to discuss or debate this matter in a reasonable fashion, I simply thanked the woman for calling and offering her feedback. She seemed satisfied that she got everything off her chest and was heard, and wished me well.

Sometimes that's all it takes, to simply listen to a person and be civil and not let yourself get drawn into a vitriolic exchange, something that's increasingly rare these days.

A worthy, healthy goal for the new year. But I must admit, it ain't always easy.

Sincerely,

Alan Feiler, Editor-in-Chief
Here’s to making every day in Baltimore the best it can be.

Today, thousands of our neighbors will live their lives in ways that make Baltimore a great place to call home. Thank you for making PNC a part of it all.

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Trump’s Signals to his Faithful

By Michael Olesker

Democrats make a mistake when they describe President Donald Trump’s loyalists as a bunch of idiots. They are not. The Trump true-believers have heard the same appalling stories about this president as everyone else, and they’re just as shaken by them. Who wouldn’t be? They know all about this president’s 20,000 catalogue lies, and many can spot the emptiness in Trump’s denials when he called America’s military warriors “losers” and “suckers.”

Trump can feign outrage and deny these claims (reported in The Atlantic) all he wants. But he can’t erase his past. His history is right there on tape — audio and video — for all to see and hear, going back to his record on Vietnam and his unconscionable slander of the late Sen. John McCain.

Trump’s true-believers know all of this, but they’ve decided to brush it off. They know, too, about the various ways Trump conspired to rig the last presidential election: the sucking up to Vladimir Putin, the secret campaign dances with Russian spies, the six-figure hush money payments to Trump’s ladies of the night.

They know about the countless working people Trump has ripped off. They know about the business failures and frauds, and all those naïve, trusting students cheated by the phony Trump University, and they know about the insidious ways he and his family have cashed in on his presidency as no one ever previously imagined.

They know he’s bungled the coronavirus plague, so that hundreds of thousands have paid the price with their lives. They know this bungling led to the collapse of the U.S. economy. And they know that millions of Americans spend sleepless nights terrified they’ll lose their homes.

They saw him go to Kenosha, Wisconsin, and say not a word about Jacob Blake, the Black man shot in the back seven times by a police officer. And they knew Trump’s silence was a signal to them. They heard Trump open his last campaign talking about Mexican rapists and Muslim travel bans. They heard him boast about building a wall to keep desperate immigrants from coming here, and they watched him separate sobbing children from their frantic parents at America’s southern border.

They heard him call bigots marching in Charlottesville “fine people” in the early months of his presidency. And now, in its closing months, they’ve heard him describe demonstrators whom he says want to “destroy” America’s suburbs.

They know all of this, and the Trump true-believers know all of this. They’ve known where he stands from the start. The one consistent Trump message has been his willingness to tear the country apart at its oldest fault line — skin color.

It won’t matter to Trump’s true-believers. They’ve known where he stands from the start. The one consistent Trump message has been his willingness to tear the country apart at its oldest fault line — skin color.

His supporters knew this going into this relationship, from his real estate days when the government went after him for refusing to rent to people of color. They knew it from his eagerness to execute the “Central Park Five,” innocent in the eyes of the law but still guilty in Trump’s eyes. And they knew it from Trump’s phony birther issues with Barack Obama.

Am I calling all of Trump’s supporters racist bigots? No. Some are racist, and some aren’t. That’s America for you; that’s human nature for you. And that’s Trump’s sales pitch.

Some of his supporters are reminiscent of post-war Americans, who bailed out of all-White neighborhoods at the first hint of Blacks moving in, and created the mid-20th century exodus to the suburbs. Some were bigots. Some were just frightened. They looked at all their White neighbors bailing out, and worried they’d be the last White people on their block. They worried their homes would lose financial value. They worried history was leaving them behind. They worried they’d be unsafe, that Black people might treat them the way Whites historically treated Blacks, which was truly a terrifying thought.

Trump is sending out signal after signal that he’s the last man who can somehow hold back the tide. It’s Trump trying to cash in on America’s historic anxieties over race. He watches street demonstrations and focuses on the tiny percentage of cretins doing damage, instead of the overwhelming thousands who are out there to protest police violence against Blacks.

He tries to block the changing of U.S. Army bases named for Confederate generals. He criticizes NASCAR for banning the Confederate flag. He calls Black Lives Matter a “symbol of hate.” He threatens to strip funding from “Democrat cities.”

The Trump faithful know all of his character flaws. They aren’t dumb. But they hear his signals on race, as clearly as he senses their anxiety and anger, and he’s ready to exploit it, whatever the cost to America.  

A former Baltimore Sun columnist and WJZ-TV commentator, Michael Olesker is the author of six books. His most recent, “Front Stoops in the Fifties: Baltimore Legends Come of Age,” was reissued in paperback by the Johns Hopkins University Press.
My favorite subject is probably math because I love word problems. My friend also loves word problems and our teacher will give us challenges we can work on together. It’s really fun to think with two minds. I like seeing the way another person thinks — they might have a better idea or a different way to solve a problem. They might get a different answer, and you get to collaborate to figure it out.

During distance learning, it still feels like a community with your classmates even though we are not together in the same room. It really helps that we have strong connections — kids and teachers really help each other through a different way to learn.

I really like sports. My favorite sport is baseball, but at Park, we get to try so many things. I think that doing all kinds of sports makes you a better athlete overall.

The best thing about Park is you can be your own person.

—Dylan, 6th Grade

The Park School of Baltimore is a Pre-K through 12 school with the mission of supporting young people in becoming confident questioners and responsible citizens of the world. www.parkschool.net
Why I’m Concerned About Our Future

By William Z. Fox

Let me be clear, notwithstanding the headline of this article, I am very hopeful for our future. However, not too many years ago I would have used the word optimistic. And while I am an eternal optimist, I would be remiss in not saying I’m concerned about our future.

Why? Quite simply because of what I see before my eyes. Yes, we still have racial discrimination, injustice and unfairness in our country that must be addressed and eliminated. Nevertheless, we have come a long way in our 244 years of existence, and as we must work hard to continue making change happen, we must also celebrate what we have accomplished and how far we have come.

Remember, our country has had a Black president! There are many Black governors, mayors and legislators at every level of government. There are thousands of successful and wealthy African-American businessmen, entertainers, doctors, lawyers, accountants, teachers, corporate executives, scientists, artists — the list goes on. There’s a growing Black middle class that lives well and leads happy, peaceful and productive lives.

There is opportunity for all, and this very real evidence proves it.

Growing up, I was taught that you get educated, work hard, keep your nose clean, respect authority, have dreams and make them happen.

That formula was available to every minority person out there when I was coming up. Yes, in some cases it might have been harder for them. But you know what? That’s part of life. The harder something is, the more rewarding it is when you attain it. Yes, African-Americans are easily recognizable because of the color of their skin, but so are Asians, Hispanics and Native Americans.

When I started my business career, a very wise man said to me there are only three kinds of people in the world — those who make things happen, those who watch things happen and those who don’t know what’s happening. I have found that to be 100 percent true.

The solutions implemented to address our social problems of the past 70 years have cost taxpayers literally trillions of dollars. And what have we gotten for it? Rotting inner cities, terrible crime rates, horrific and growing drug problems, public schools that don’t educate, uninhabitable public housing and a mindset of entitlement that somehow causes minorities to destroy their own businesses, neighborhoods and communities when they get angry at injustices — real or perceived.

Remember Einstein’s definition of insanity — doing the same thing over and over again but expecting a different result? If he was right, then we are all insane. It’s time for society to wake up, see the reality of what the investment of our time, effort, energy and money has wrought and change what we’ve been doing.

The drumbeat from the far left appears to be getting louder and louder, bent on taking us down the road to socialism.

Unfortunately, what we see happening in the streets of our major cities today — the horrific destruction, the obvious socialist goals of the extreme left and the pandering to them by liberal local and state governments — raises the possibility that it may be too late for us to change our “insane” ways. The drumbeat from the far left appears to be getting louder and louder, bent on taking us down the road to socialism.

So just what is wrong with socialism? Well, for starters it has failed miserably wherever it has been instituted — politically, socially and economically. Politically, it often has led to repressive, ruthless, tyrannical governments. Socially, it creates dependency, stifles innovation, destroys initiative and lulls people into a false sense of security. Economically, it has always been a disaster.

Today’s leading proponents of economic socialism, Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and numerous others, often point to the “shining” example of Sweden and other Nordic countries where supposedly it has fulfilled all of its promises. The truth is that Sweden’s experiment with socialism failed years ago. In reality, socialism stopped creating jobs in the private sector. Businesses stopped producing goods and services to be traded in the world markets. Successful companies, Swedish celebrities and entrepreneurs fled to free economies across the world to escape debilitating taxes and regulations.

Incentive to innovate, create and grow ceased. These and numerous other contributing factors eventually led to the collapse of Sweden’s economy in the 1990s.

We have been traveling down the road to socialism for years, and today we are closer than ever before to going over the edge of the socialist precipice. Will we go over and self-destruct or will we recognize the warning signs and bright red flashing lights before our eyes? Can we turn away from the precipice and avoid disaster?

The answers to these questions will decide our society’s fate and impact generations to come. And this, my friends, is what causes my concerns for the future.

The election is just weeks away and might be the most important one we have ever faced. Our future is at stake — I implore all of us to consider that carefully before casting our votes.

William Z. Fox is founder, chairman and CEO of Fox Residential Auctions, LLC and Fox Commercial Auctions, LLC. He is an author, public speaker and pro-Israel activist.
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Mercy’s Maine Man

Last July, Dr. David N. Maine became president and CEO of Mercy Health Services. A Pikesville resident and father of two, Dr. Maine, 43, is the son of Jewish refugees who fled Iraq in 1972 due to religious persecution. Dr. Maine graduated from the University of Rochester School of Medicine in 2002. He completed his residency in anesthesiology and his fellowship in interventional pain medicine at the Johns Hopkins Hospital.

1 What’s it like to be the first physician to serve as Mercy’s president in its 145-year history? I am truly honored and humbled to be in a position to lead this wonderful, mission-driven institution. Mercy has felt like a home to me dating back to when I was an intern in 2002, and is a special place of hope and healing for the people of Baltimore. Since the Sisters of Mercy first arrived here in 1874 to care for those in need, Mercy has consistently maintained that commitment while expanding to become a regional health system with a broad array of clinical services and a strong reputation for quality. As a physician, I am very proud to be part of that history and help further Mercy’s mission to provide excellent clinical services within a community of compassionate care.

2 What’s it like to be the Jewish head of a Catholic-based health system? Very natural. Faith was a cornerstone of my upbringing and continues to play a central role for my family here in Baltimore. Being the head of a faith-based health system is a special and unique opportunity. We have a spiritual conviction in how we deliver care that is demonstrated everyday through our values — dignity, hospitality, justice, excellence, stewardship and prayer — and it is through that lens that we make decisions for the good of our patients.

3 How does your Sephardic background inform you and your work as a medical professional? I am very proud of my Iraqi Jewish Heritage and what it took for my parents to get me to this point. As an extension of that, the concept of tikkun olam, or repairing the world, has always resonated with me. I am grateful for every day, and I try my best to make a difference, be kind, give back, listen, and set an example. (Plus, my mother would get mad at me if I did not do those things.)

4 How is the pandemic changing the nature of work at Mercy? It has really sharpened our focus to make Mercy the safest place to receive health care and ensure that all our patients have immediate access to the services they need, when they need them. The entire Mercy family — our staff at all levels of the organization — are focused on patient and staff safety, 24-7. At the same time, we have had to reinvent our supply chain, physical spaces, patient flows, and expand alternative care solutions such as telemedicine and video consultations. It has been an incredibly challenging time, but also a time of great pride as I have witnessed numerous acts of heroism and tremendous resilience within the Mercy family throughout this pandemic.

5 What direction do you see Mercy going in under your leadership? Mercy will continue to grow and thrive as an independent, Catholic health system, drawing patients from throughout the region. Our growth will be driven by our Centers of Excellence in Women’s Health, Orthopedics, Cancer, Digestive Health, and more. We will continue to invest in our primary care physician network, broadening our reach and providing services for our patients closer to home at community sites around the beltway and beyond. In addition, Mercy will be a leader in quality and value, offering integrated, cost-effective care across the continuum. And while we continue to grow, we will strengthen Mercy’s unique culture of compassionate, patient-centered care and provide a consistently outstanding patient experience. —Alan Feiler
Chesapeake Employers helps you protect your employees and your bottom line. For 2020-2021, we declared a $20 million corporate dividend for qualifying policyholders. We’re also reducing our rates—nearly 7%—which means Maryland businesses of all sizes can benefit from the services of a workers’ comp specialist, for less.

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Lindsay and Ryan Luterman-Sevel say they subscribe to that classic line from the 1989 film, “Field of Dreams” — “If you build it, they will come.”

In the case of Lindsay and Ryan, that meant renewing their wedding vows on Sept. 13 before 70 to 80 family members and friends on a makeshift bimah at a newly improvised drive-in theater in Harford County’s Fallston community.

“I hope people will be inspired by our story,” says Lindsay, a yoga instructor and novelist. “People should get married if they want to. The pandemic shouldn’t stand in anyone’s way.”

It’s been a long, bumpy journey for Lindsay and Ryan, a video editor who like his bride grew up in Northwest Baltimore attending Temple Oheb Shalom.

Both 24 and residents of Mays Chapel, they were first set up by their fathers three years ago.

“We were both a little resistant, but my dad said we were the same exact person with the same interests,” Lindsay recalls. “I met Ryan and saw he was just like me. We’re both typical Baltimore people. We like to talk a lot and have loud Baltimore voices.”

After getting engaged, Lindsay and Ryan planned to hold their wedding on Mar. 21, 2020, at Historic Acres of Hershey, an events venue in Elizabeth-town, Pa.

But by early March, they and their families realized that the COVID-19 pandemic was going to render that simcha impossible to hold at the venue.

Still, Lindsay and Ryan refused to let the coronavirus stop them in their tracks. “I just really wanted to get married to him,” Lindsay gushes. “I wanted to call Ryan my husband and get married in front of God.”

Because they had a Pennsylvania marriage license, the couple scrambled to find another venue in the southern or central portions of the Keystone State. Most places, however, were already turning away bookings at that point.

They wound up getting hitched on Mar. 15 at the historic Gettysburg Hotel in downtown Gettysburg, with Lindsay’s 83-year-old grandfather, Cantor Melvin Luterman, Oheb Shalom’s cantor emeritus, officiating.

Less than 20 family members and close friends were able to attend, while others watched the wedding via Facebook Live. The ceremony was followed by a luncheon at the hotel’s restaurant.

Nonetheless, Lindsay and Ryan wanted
to have another wedding at a later date to allow more of their friends and family members to celebrate with them in person.

“We weren’t able to have everyone there, and not all of our grandparents were able to come,” Lindsay says of the Gettysburg nuptials. Says Ryan: “We would’ve gone the virtual route, but I think a fair amount of Jewish grandmas would not be able to do that on Zoom.”

They originally planned to hold the renewal wedding on May 31 but scrapped that date when they saw life was not returning to normal so fast. They opted for September.

“We started brainstorming and one day I said to Ryan, ‘Hey, let’s just do it at a drive-in theater,’” Lindsay says. “He said, ‘That’s a great idea!’”

The next day, one of Lindsay’s yoga students mentioned that the Horizon Cinemas Fallston had created a drive-in theater in its parking lot due to the pandemic. Lindsay immediately called the owner, who offered the venue.

“It’s a family-owned business and he just wanted to help in any way he could,” says Lindsay. “He’s just a good guy with a good heart, and it took a lot of weight off our shoulders.”

At the wedding, which was again officiated by Cantor Luterman, guests sat in their vehicles and listened to the ceremony and reception on their radios through the theater’s piped-in sound system. Fittingly, grandparents’ cars were afforded a front-row view, and a big surprise of the ceremony was a trained hawk that delivered the wedding rings to the couple on the chuppah.

The ceremony was held on a bimah made by Ryan consisting of wood pallets. He also made the chuppah, on which the couple enjoyed their first dance as (renewed) husband and wife.

“We were so blessed to be able to have [the first wedding], so this is just a bonus,” says Lindsay.

Music at the ceremony and reception was performed over a microphone by a string quartet, and boxed vegetarian lunches — mozzarella, pesto and tomato sandwiches, with homemade potato chips and pasta salad — were provided.

Always adhering to social distancing guidelines, the bride and groom walked among the cars during the reception, waving and talking to guests from a safe distance. Among the wedding’s party favors were special face masks created by Ryan bearing the couple’s initials.

All of the proceedings were documented for posterity by a wedding photographer and videographer. In addition, guests were asked to take selfies on their phones and send them to Lindsay and Ryan. The photos will be transformed into a commemorative collage.

“I know it’s unique, but in a way it’s the new normal,” Ryan says of the wedding. “We decided to make the best of it all and make it an event, while following all of the safety guidelines.”

Says Lindsay: “We just feel this is the way it was meant to be, so why not make it a unique wedding? We’re just happy to be married.”
Harnessing the Resilient Spirit

D.C. rabbi hailed as an innovator spoke at the recent Cardin Leadership Symposium.

By Alan Feiler / Editor-in-Chief

Throughout her life, Rabbi Shira Stutman admits she’s always been somewhat of “a Jewish community nerd.” That’s why serving as the keynote speaker at the second annual Shoshana S. Cardin Leadership Symposium was so meaningful to her.

“Shoshana Cardin was someone who was larger than life to me and made it possible for women to be powerful leaders in the Jewish community,” said Rabbi Stutman, who is the senior rabbi at the Sixth & I Historic Synagogue in Washington, D.C.

The symposium, named in memory of the Baltimore-based international Jewish communal leader who passed away in 2018, was recently presented virtually by Na’aleh: the Hub for Leadership Learning, an agency of The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore.

A Philadelphia native who grew up in the D.C. area, Rabbi Stutman was named one of “America’s Most Inspiring Rabbis” by The Jewish Forward and a “Woman to Watch” by Jewish Women International.

Located in Washington’s Chinatown neighborhood, Sixth & I is hailed as one of the nation’s most innovative Jewish centers of worship and programming.

A 2007 graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Rabbi Stutman serves as scholar-in-residence for the National Women’s Philanthropy Program of the Jewish Federation of North America. She also serves on the board of Jews United for Justice and the rabbinic cabinet of J Street.

Jmore recently spoke with Rabbi Stutman, who lives in the nation’s capital with her husband, Russell Shaw, and their three children.

Jmore: How has the pandemic impacted Jewish life?

Rabbi Stutman: We’re all so siloed right now because of COVID, but we also have different opportunities to meet people that we would’ve never met before. We need to have conversations about how we can harness the Jewish resilient spirit at this particular time.

Jews have never really had the luxury of despair. We’ve had to rise from the ashes over and over and over again. So we want to have conversations about Jewish moments of resilience and how we remain resilient.

Sixth & I is unique in that it’s a synagogue but also a venue for entertainment and lectures by authors and thought leaders. Can that be replicated at other congregations?

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Sixth & I is unique in that it’s a synagogue but also a venue for entertainment and lectures by authors and thought leaders. Can that be replicated at other congregations? There are parts of it that would be difficult to replicate, like our book talks, because not as many [authors] come through Baltimore and other places. But other parts are replica-
ble, such as the deep belief that Judaism can be relevant to the times we live in.

Sometimes, synagogue leaders forget that it’s our job to bring the Torah to the people, instead of having the people come to the Torah. Sometimes, synagogue leadership can become set in their ways. They can think they’re catering to the community, but really catering to themselves. Synagogues today have to decide who they want to serve — the people who always come to services or those who usually don’t come? It’s very hard to do both. But I do believe that people are still looking for different forms of religious and spiritual encounters.

How would you describe Sixth & I from a denominational perspective? Your services run the gamut between the movements. It’s incredibly important to us to be post-denominational and have a range of different options for people. We like to say we’re ‘just Jewish,’ but there are many ways to practice Judaism. Some of us prefer to simply observe Judaism and not use the boxes.

Our services look somewhat similar and somewhat different, but we talk about Judaism that is something we do and not something we are. We concentrate on the doing, like observing Shabbat. So many people are still in services by rote, and we’re going to lose them over time. Judaism has to compete in the marketplace today.

How do you reach and inspire today’s generation of young Jews? I think people are still looking for meaning, so we have to capitalize on that. But a great way to do that is through non-Jewish partners. That might sound counterintuitive but for a lot of young Jews, Judaism is almost like having brown hair or being five-foot-four. It’s just part of who they are. But a non-Jewish partner can bring real meaning and connection, so we have to be fully welcoming to interfaith families.

We have to meet people where they are. A lot of people come to Sixth & I for book talks and other events, but it’s the first time that they have really felt comfortable in a synagogue setting. That’s so important.

What do you say to congregants and others experiencing so much pain and anxiety right now due to the pandemic? What I talk about, of course, is resilience and what community is for. We can reach out to each other and say, ‘This is going to be over one day and we will get through this.’

There is going to be a new normal, but what will it look like? We have to start building it now, with matters like racism in our society. We know we have to move forward and can’t go back. So we can get to work now.

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JMORELIVING.COM 27
Cantor Randy Herman strives to combine vintage and new traditions at Chizuk Amuno.

By Aliza Friedlander / Senior Writer

Cantor Randy Herman never expected to start his new role at Pikesville’s Chizuk Amuno Congregation outside of the synagogue. But that’s the reality as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

“It’s tricky getting to know a community virtually, but that’s what I’m doing,” says Cantor Herman. “We’ve had an incredible welcome.

“When we first got here and pulled up to our new house, there were signs all over the door that said, ‘Welcome home, Randy, Nicole and Kaya.’ We cried when we saw those signs, especially since one of the things that struck us most about Chizuk Amuno was the community.”

The Herman family moved to Baltimore from Mount Kisco, N.Y., in July, with Cantor Herman getting right to work focused on the High Holiday services.

While he officiated at other services since his arrival at Chizuk Amuno, Cantor Herman made his official debut on Sept. 12 at Selichot services titled “Opening the Heart.”

“Selichot is the start of the spiritual process of the High Holidays and a way to turn our attention, hearts and souls toward the High Holiday process and season,” says Cantor Herman. “There is this tradition of cantors doing all kinds of musical things since the service is on a Saturday night. My Selichot service is very different. I have a four-piece band that includes musicians on the bass, percussion and guitar. The service is based on traditional liturgy and traditional sounds, combined with contemporary and secular songs that connect with the themes of Selichot.”

Cantor Herman says he is excited to integrate both new and old traditions at Chizuk Amuno.

“I believe in making change cautiously and slowly, and feel the only right way to do so is by getting to know the community and organically move things in a new direction,” says Cantor Herman.

Cantor Herman’s Selichot service speaks to who he is as a person and his love of music. His grandparents on his father’s side were a singing Vaudevillian team, while his maternal grandparents were Orthodox Jews who fled Eastern Europe after World War II.

“When I was in nursery school, the teacher called my parents and told them I needed to take piano lessons,” says Cantor Herman, 56. “That’s because when my preschool music teacher called in sick and I was told there was going to be no music class. I volunteered to play the songs, and we had music. I was composing songs, playing by ear and taking lessons in elementary schools. I love show business, music and am committed to Judaism, so I put those things together when I became a cantor.”

Prior to becoming a cantor, he was a musician and spent years touring in the United States and abroad. It wasn’t until his 30s that he rediscovered his love for Judaism and began taking classes in Chicago. From there, he went to going to the Jewish Theological Seminary.

For 12 years, Cantor Herman, a native of Grand Rapids, Mich., served Bet Torah in Mt. Kisco before making his way to Baltimore with his wife, Nicole, and 2-year-old daughter, Kaya.

“We felt something magical when we visited,” Cantor Herman says. “There was something special in the water at Chizuk Amuno and Pikesville, and my wife pointed that out to me on our first visit. [Chizuk Amuno’s] Rabbi [Joshua Z.] Gruenberg was another big reason for the move. He is a special individual and a true rabbi. Rabbi [Deborah] Wechsler and the rest of the Chizuk Amuno clergy are also incredible. There is really no weak link here.”

Cantor Herman is optimistic about his tenure at Chizuk Amuno and proud to follow in the footsteps of such illustrious predecessors as Hazzan Emeritus Emanuel C. Perlman, Farid Dardashti and Abba Yosef Weisgal.

“I’m most looking forward the first Shabbat we are all gathered together in person,” Cantor Herman says. “For me, to meet this community in person that I have gotten to know virtually, and to feel the spiritual energy, I am yearning to hear the community singing with me.”
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For many years, members of the Kappa Guild — a Baltimore-based group that raises approximately $10,000 annually for children’s health causes — have known all about the good work they do in the community.

But the coronavirus pandemic has inadvertently offered a chance for members of the 68-year-old guild — founded by 10 altruistically minded Jewish women in Baltimore — to see the fruits of their labors firsthand in an unusual way.

Using Zoom, the members now have the opportunity to sit in on virtual tours/presentations of the hospitals that receive their donations. The group recently “visited” both Sinai Hospital of Baltimore and the University of Maryland Children’s Hospital. By seeing live-streaming, videos and images of the equipment and supplies purchased with their donation money, Guild members could see up close the impact of their work.

For decades, the organization has donated funds through mahjong tournaments, private contributions and other fund-raising events to children’s hospitals throughout Maryland. But with the restrictions of COVID-19 on their meeting times and events, they needed to adapt to the constraints of the pandemic.

“We were able to get a group of nurses and doctors together who use this equipment … and have each clinician explain what the piece of equipment is used for,” says Carly Foland, director of annual and special giving at the University of Maryland Medical System Foundation.

During the presentation, Kappa Guild members were able to see the impact of their work.

Said Sheila Mentz, the guild’s president: “As far as my members are concerned, they know what we do, basically. But for them to actually see it is a completely different thing.”

Among the 25 organizations that benefit from the guild are the University of Maryland Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Sinai Hospital’s Herman and Walter Samuelson Children’s Hospital, the Mount Washington Pediatric Hospital and Mercy Medical Center.

According to Mentz, Kappa Guild has also funded equipment for pediatric and/or NICUs at local hospitals such as St. Agnes, St. Joseph Medical Center, Greater Baltimore Medical Center, as well as the Rose of Sharon Equestrian School.

In addition, funds send needy children to summer camps like the Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation of America’s Camp Oasis and Lions Camp Merrick, which is primarily for children with diabetes.

The guild builds its coffers through fashion shows, gift-wrapping services at The Shops at Kenilworth each holiday season, mahjong card sales, fireball savings cards, contribution cards and the organization’s signature “Annual Donor,” a fundraising event at a local hall.

Mentz says the guild’s “annual donor shows” are among the events for which the group is most well-known.

In 2017, the guild was honored for its efforts over the decades on National Philanthropy Day with an Unsung Hero Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Maryland Chapter.

When seeing what their work has accomplished, Mentz said, members feel proud of what they have done and are inspired to continue donating and giving.

Foland agreed, adding, “For people, especially during this time, who want to feel directly connected to their giving, this is a great method for relationship building.”

The relationships between hospitals and those who donate to them are strong. In fact, the University of Maryland hospital has even added a wall thanking their donors — including Kappa Guild members — that will be unveiled soon.

Gillian Blum is a Jmore editorial intern.
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The Jewish Federations of North America’s leadership development program, National Young Leadership Cabinet, educates the next generation of global Jewish leaders and philanthropists from across the United States.

The Baltimore Jewish community has always been an incredibly engaged one, and so, it comes as no surprise, that there are six incredible individuals who are participating.

We recently spoke with some of these rising, young professionals to learn more about their experience and commitment to making the world a better place.

**HOW HAS THE PANDEMIC CHANGED WHAT’S IMPORTANT TO YOU?**

**Zack Garber**

The pandemic has shown everyone the fragility of life and the importance of health. We have to remember to be thankful every day for our health and the health of our friends and family around us. The pandemic has also shown the importance of connectivity and the role that having internet access plays in our lives. I run a podcast on my free time, Charm City Dreamers, and have dedicated my recent episodes to focus on race equity and digital access, as these two issues have become extremely apparent in the recent pandemic.
WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING A LEADER?

Hirsh Ament

When I think about leadership, I’m reminded of the saying, “managers move armies from place to place, leaders take armies where they never thought possible.” Leadership gives an individual the opportunity to inspire others, to communicate a vision of what is possible and motivate others to achieve a goal. With those as guiding principles, I think the importance of being a leader is clear: it enables me to effect change beyond what I could accomplish alone. Being a leader allows others to prosper and grow, and to continue to make a positive impact on their immediate community and beyond.

HOW DOES YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE ASSOCIATED INFLUENCE WHAT YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT?

Isaac Pretter

Being part of The Associated Board of Governors and Associated Jewish Charities’ board has allowed me to see firsthand how proactive and thoughtful our Federation is in handling the numerous challenges resulting from the pandemic. It is critical, now more than ever, that we have a central planning system for our Jewish community (unlike most Federations that compete with Jewish agencies in their communities).

I realize how important planning is and I am proud to be part of this community which is looked up to by other communities from around North America.
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A salute to the scientific and medical trailblazers

“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.” — Charles Darwin

Let’s face it: our lives have been forever changed since Mar. 11, 2020, when the World Health Organization officially classified the spread of COVID-19 as a global pandemic.

Since the arrival of the coronavirus on American shores shortly before that declaration, we’ve all come to recognize the paramount importance of scientific and medical research to our lives, arguably more than ever before. It’s almost as if someone punched the pause button for the entire planet until a vaccine is discovered.

Fortunately, we live in a golden era of health care and research, particularly here in the Baltimore metropolitan area with its renowned medical institutions, schools, centers, labs and health systems.

At Jmore, we salute the trailblazers and heroes in our midst. On Tuesday, Oct. 27, from 4:30-5:30 p.m., Jmore will hold its second annual celebration of health innovators at a virtual, business-to-business networking event and panel discussion, moderated by George Nemphos of Nemphos Braue LLC. Among the panelists will be Dr. Bruce E. Jarrell, the recently selected president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore. (For information, visit jmoreliving.com/2020/09/23/jbiz-2020-innovation-in-health-care-virtual-event)

Please join us for this informative and illuminating event, and please enjoy these stories about some of the awe-inspiring health care innovators in our area and elsewhere. ➔
The world remains in the grips of the COVID-19 pandemic, taking nearly a million lives and wreaking havoc on economies and virtually every facet of our lives.

But fortunately for all of us, Dr. Matthew B. Frieman has spent his entire career studying Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and related strains of the coronavirus.

Now more than ever, we can all be grateful for that expertise as he is one of countless researchers around the world working nonstop to develop a vaccine that will protect us from the current incarnation of COVID.

Dr. Frieman — who earned a doctorate in genetics from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine — is an associate professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology and an affiliate member of the Center for Vaccine Development and Global Health at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore.

Dr. Frieman has studied viruses for years, but he says until this year “no one really cared or worried. Now, of course, it's a much bigger deal.”

Dr. Frieman is a member of five University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) research teams to be awarded funding to respond to COVID-19 and beyond. The seed grants were awarded by the Joint Steering Council of the University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: MPowering the State, or MPower, a formal collaboration of UMB and UMCP.

The Steering Council issued the call for proposals to mobilize researchers at both institutions to bring solutions that would offer immediate action to address the pandemic and to prepare for future pandemics.

The winning teams capitalize on the research expertise of UMB and UMCP, and showcase collaboration across multiple colleges and schools, including faculty from UMCP’s College of Arts and Humanities, School of Public Health and College of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences, partnering with researchers from UMB’s School of Medicine, School of Pharmacy and School of Nursing.

After a review and ranking of 50 submissions by faculty peer representatives from both UMB and UMCP, the Steering Council awarded $500,000 in funding to five teams: two to support vaccine development; one to develop a rapid testing method; one to study psychological factors of vaccine acceptance among African-Americans; and one to explore the use of an artificial intelligence tool for delivery of child behavioral health services via telemedicine in rural communities.

Being able to build on previous SARS research means that Dr. Frieman has a jump-start just when it’s been needed most.

“The progression of science in the research is as rapid as anything I’ve ever seen before,” he says, pointing out that he is working not only with researchers at UMB and UMCP but with personnel from various universities, as well as government-based researchers such as the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and pharmaceutical labs such as Novavax, Regeneron and AstraZeneca.

To date, Dr. Frieman says he is encouraged by the findings, saying that “so far, Phase 1 research is very pretty.” Dr. Frieman says he also is optimistic that 2 billion doses of an effective vaccine will be available before the end of 2021.

“A lot is going on and we haven’t really stopped since January,” he says. “It’s important to get things out of the lab and to clinical trials as soon as possible.”

That doesn’t mean safety isn’t paramount, Dr. Frieman says, observing that “warp speed” doesn’t mean corners are being cut in the development and testing phase. Instead, he says, time is being compressed in the midpoints of the vaccine development process, such as funding and manufacturing. Many drugs already are being tested, Dr. Frieman notes, and there will continue to be even more people in clinical trials as the research goes on.

**Technology and Engagement**

Dr. Gloria M. Reeves, a child and adolescent psychiatrist and an associate professor of psychiatry in the University
of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore, is another grant recipient. Her research will focus on the study of artificial intelligence-based technology strategies to help child behavioral health providers improve caregiver engagement in rural Maryland communities.

“With the recent pandemic, most of these services are provided virtually through video-conferencing platforms,” says Dr. Reeves, who is co-principal investigator with Dr. Aniket Bera, an assistant research professor at the University of Maryland Institute for Advanced Computer Studies in College Park.

While telehealth has its advantages (not having to travel to the health care provider, for example), there are downsides, too, such as being unable to have eye contact between the patient and provider.

Dr. Reeves and Dr. Bera will collect and analyze information — such as speech patterns and facial expressions — from videotaped sessions and use artificial intelligence tools to assess how well the provider and the patient (or as is so often the case with children in a behavioral health setting, their parents) are interacting.

“We want to learn how to use technology to better engage people,” says Dr. Reeves, adding that this is especially important now as more people are taking advantage of telehealth to avoid social interaction, and because rural areas generally have fewer health services.

Reeves sees the end goal of the research as helping to support parents in working with their children as an “agent of change.”

The project is in its early stages and Dr. Reeves and Dr. Bera do not yet have any preliminary findings, but they expect that their research will have effects long after the pandemic is over.

“I expect that telehealth will continue to grow,” says Reeves. We still likely have a long way to go before the pandemic is behind us, but Dr. Reeves sees the end goal of the research as helping to support parents in working with their children as an “agent of change.”

Frieman says he believes we’re heading in the right direction, and UMB and UMCP’s collaborative focus on innovative research is an important part of that.

“I am very optimistic about where we are now,” he says.

A former Baltimorean, Carol Sorgen is a Portland, Ore.-based freelance writer.

spreading the word

Hopkins seeks area volunteers for antibody trials for COVID-19

By Aliza Friedlander / Senior Writer

With schools reopening, the weather getting chillier and more people forced to spend time indoors, many wonder how this will impact the spread of COVID-19. In particular, the big question is will there be a fall and winter surge?

According to current guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one must quarantine for 14 days if exposed to someone with the coronavirus. Those who actually have the virus must stay isolated for at least 10 days after symptoms first appear. But what if there was the potential to short-circuit the virus immediately after exposure but before you were symptomatic? Or if there were a way to prevent those with mild symptoms from getting critically ill?

Physicians and researchers at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine are conducting a pair of COVID-19 clinical antibody trials for patients who have been exposed to the virus but do not exhibit symptoms, and for patients who have tested positive and have symptoms that have not required hospitalization.

These are the first multi-center, double-blind, randomized clinical trials in the nation to assess the effectiveness of convalescent blood plasma as an outpatient therapy.

Dr. David J. Sullivan, a professor of molecular microbiology and immunology at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and Dr. Shmuel Shoham, an infectious disease specialist and associate professor of medicine at the JHU School of Medicine, are leading the nationwide trials and looking for area participants to volunteer.

Jmore recently spoke with Dr. Shoham about who is eligible to participate and what the research could mean for the future.

Jmore: Can you explain what these two trials entail?
Dr. Shoham: We suspect plasma, which is the part of the blood that has antibodies, will be effective in preventing the development of the infection or stopping the progression of the infection. We are using plasma from...
COVID-19 survivors that have viral antibodies and regular plasma with no antibodies to test that theory.

Who's eligible?
Currently, we are working with two groups of people for two different trials. The first trial is looking at whether plasma can be used as a prophylactic or preventive treatment. For that one, we want to enroll people who don't have any symptoms but were exposed to the virus within a three-day window.

The second trial is an outpatient treatment for those who have the virus. For that one, we are looking for people who tested positive within a five-day window and have symptoms that don't require hospitalization.

Right now, we have 130 people signed up, but we are looking for a total of 1,100.

What's the purpose of these trials?
If we find out plasma is effective as a preventative treatment, there are diverse ways in which we can use it. For example, if you're going to synagogue and find out someone at the service tests positive for COVID-19, those sitting around the infected person could get the plasma treatment to prevent themselves from getting the virus.

Or if you go to a wedding and someone at your table tests positive, theoretically, you could get plasma and prevent the virus. If found effective, this is a way to shut down the spread.

We have evidence from the 100,000 people who received plasma in the hospital that this is a safe treatment, but if plasma works as an early-stage treatment it also can start being used in outpatient settings.

What are the pros and cons of participating in the trial?
Taking part in this trial will help advance our knowledge about the virus. And for the person who gets the plasma with COVID-19 antibodies, there's a chance they could be protected from the virus altogether.

That being said, we are using a blood product, meaning this is a low-risk, not a no-risk, procedure.

For those who want to participate, we bring in the patient to check their blood type, the following day we do the transfusion and then there are a few follow-up visits over the course of a 90-day period.

We are all hoping for a vaccine. Why are these trials needed?
An effective vaccine will be great. But there are certain populations of people who may not respond to the vaccine, so it's important to have this crowdsourced material available in the event of a vaccine shortage or for those who get the vaccine but also still get sick.

Plasma could also be an option for transplant patients or patients undergoing chemotherapy who may not have a good response to a vaccine. If plasma works as a preventive and/or outpatient treatment, there are a lot of situations where it will be complimentary to a vaccine.

You can watch this information video to learn more about the clinical trial. For those interested in participating, visit the COVID Plasma Trial website or call 888-506-1199.

As a result of the pandemic, Sheppard Pratt has created a virtual walk-in clinic offering accessible mental health care services.

By Simone Ellin / Associate Editor

If the pandemic has got you down, you're not alone. A recent report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revealed that “symptoms of anxiety disorder and depressive disorder increased considerably in the United States during April-June of 2020, compared with the same period in 2019.”

Making matters worse, COVID-19 has made it more difficult for many people to access mental health care. Fortunately, Sheppard Pratt Health System's new virtual walk-in crisis clinic is meeting the mental health needs of Marylanders “from the comfort of their own homes,” says Dr. Deepak Prabhakar, medical director of outpatient services for the Towson-based psychiatric hospital.

“In the beginning of the pandemic, there was a lot of disruption to day-to-day life, schedules and access to health care,” says Dr. Prabhakar. “Along the way, loss of employment also caused disruption to health care access since so many people in this country receive their health insurance through their jobs.”

These concerns were intensified by the feelings of isolation that so many people experienced due to the lockdowns in their communities, says Dr. Prabhakar.

“We wanted to be a place where they could receive quality mental health care. We wanted to be part of the community response, to be a solution,” he says.

To address the increased need for mental health services during the pandemic,
Sheppard Pratt created the virtual walk-in clinic in April. Designed to serve individuals with mental health symptoms who were unable to travel to the hospital’s in-person crisis clinic, the virtual clinic also helped to reduce emergency room visits to area hospitals struggling to keep up with the influx of COVID-19 patients.

The virtual clinic offers telehealth services including evaluation, psychotherapy, medication management and referrals to Sheppard Pratt’s other virtual and in-person care services for people throughout the state. “It is really helpful that people can receive services without leaving their homes,” says Dr. Prabhakar, who notes that patients who require in-person services for one reason or another are still seen in the hospital’s pre-existing walk-in clinic.

Dr. Prabhakar says he is especially pleased that the virtual clinic makes it easier for underserved populations that traditionally have greater difficulty accessing health care to receive services. “I think the clinic is unique in the country,” he says.

Since the clinic opened, Dr. Prabhakar says the hospital has seen better appointment and medication compliance. That’s due to the fact that it is much easier for patients to keep their appointments when they don’t have to worry about finding transportation or taking time off from their work days.

“We hope to keep going with this, but the health care system has a lot of rules,” says Dr. Prabhakar. “Many of these regulations [such as technology specifications and policies regarding where services can be delivered] have been relaxed due to the pandemic. If those regulations stay relaxed, we will continue.”

Dr. Prabhakar urges Marylanders experiencing symptoms of mental illness to seek help. “That is the most important thing,” he says. “The pandemic causes anxiety, depression and disruption in our lives. At the end of the day, the community is responding and we do have resources.”

To schedule an appointment with Sheppard Pratt’s virtual crisis walk-in clinic, visit sheppardpratt.org/care-finder/virtual-crisis-walk-in-clinic/ or call 410-938-5302. Appointments are available Monday – Friday from 10 a.m.–9 p.m. and Saturdays from 1-4 p.m. Telehealth care is provided through a secure, online platform and delivered by licensed therapists and clinicians in the Sheppard Pratt Health System.

Beyond the Sheppard Pratt Hospital System, individuals experiencing a mental health crisis can call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255.

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“We wanted to be a place where they could receive quality mental health care. We wanted to be part of the community response, to be a solution.” — Dr. Deepak Prabhakar, Sheppard Pratt

**pandemic pressure**

Israel researchers discover how stress affects the body’s fight against COVID-19

By Larry Luxner

Shoshana, 48, the single mother of a teenager, recently completed three years of chemotherapy for breast cancer. But the treatment compromised her immune system, which is why Shoshana, terrified of COVID-19, didn’t send her teenage daughter back to school even after the schools reopened in her hometown of Jerusalem. Unable to leave her apartment, Shoshana says being indoors and isolated has left her feeling depressed.

Yossi, 32, is a haredi elementary school teacher in the Israeli city of Beit Shemesh. A father of four, he was treated for lymphoma not long ago. But the “brain fog,” or cognitive impairment, caused by chemotherapy has affected Yossi to where he can’t remember his daily schedule.

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ings anymore. They’re more depressed and less occupied because they can’t participate in meaningful activities.”

Gilboa’s “occupational-based tele-rehabilitation” study, which began two years ago, has taken on added urgency in the age of coronavirus. The study compares how cancer survivors respond to cognitive training and targeted functional rehabilitation with those who receive no additional therapy at all.

A study by Asya Rolls of the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology is investigating whether all the added pandemic-related stress actually reduces the ability of cancer patients to fight COVID-19.

Both scientists’ projects are financed by the Israel Cancer Research Fund, which raises millions of dollars in North America to support the work of scientists working on cancer-related research across more than 20 institutions in Israel.

The work of Gilboa and Rolls seeks to better understand how the central nervous system, which affects cognition and depression, is either affected by the pandemic or can contribute to the body’s response to it, said Dr. Mark Israel, executive director of the ICRF, which is based in New York.

“It’s gratifying and exciting to see that ICRF-funded scientists have developed, based on their cancer research, broad, conceptual approaches that can be adapted to meet novel, emerging research needs such as COVID-19,” Israel said.

Gilboa, whose study is receiving $230,000 from ICRF over a four-year period, said about 75 percent of cancer patients report subjective cognitive decline that was not present before the disease. The effects often linger long after the cancer itself is in remission.

“Some physicians don’t agree that ‘chemo brain’ exists, but most patients do complain,” Gilboa said.

“Many cancer survivors also suffer from mild to moderate depression because they’re in a continual situation of not being able to participate in what matters most for them.”

Gilboa’s study includes cancer survivors who have been in remission for at least two years. Ultimately, it will involve 75 people divided randomly into three groups of 25 each.

The first cohort, the control group, will receive no treatment and be seen only at the beginning of the study and again after three months. The second group will have computerized cognitive training three times a week for 15 minutes each. Afterward, both groups will be measured on attention and memory skills.

The third group will be given two kinds of intervention: cognitive training as well as functional rehabilitation, with specific training tailored to the patient’s personal goals.

“Many people complain about cognitive impairment after their cancer treatment, but most of what’s given to them is computerized training, which doesn’t really address their daily functional needs,” Gilboa said. “A lot of them have trouble reintegrating into social roles.”

Rolls, a neuroscientist, is experimenting with mice to study how stress may affect the body’s ability to fight off disease, whether from bacteria or virus. The coronavirus pandemic has been accompanied by a significant rise in stress and depression, according to health care experts, making Rolls’ research relevant to the battle against COVID-19.

“We’re going to see the outcomes of this outbreak way beyond the direct effects of the virus on those who were infected,” she said.

With cancer, nerve fibers are present in tumors. So it’s likely that stressful situations, which affect nerve fibers, impact the development of tumors.

“We are working on the connection between one’s mental state and how the immune system fights bacteria and tumors,” Rolls said. “In recent years, it has become clear from various epidemiological studies that one’s mental state actually affects the body’s ability to cope with cancer. The question is how.”

Rolls, whose 15-person lab is funded by a two-year ICRF grant totaling $70,000, said she aims to “translate this big psychological question into a physiological one, something we can actually measure in biological terms, so we can quantify how the brain — the source of our emotional state — can affect a tumor that develops somewhere else in the body.”

Rolls’ and Gilboa’s research could prove crucial to understanding how COVID-19 affects the nervous system and how the nervous system affects COVID-19. That could help millions.

This article was sponsored by and produced in partnership with the Israel Cancer Research Fund, whose ongoing support of these and other Israeli scientists’ work goes a long way toward ensuring that their efforts will have important and lasting impact in the global fight against cancer. This article was produced by JTA’s native content team.
Please join Jmore for our 2nd annual celebration of Baltimore’s Health Care Innovators. This is a virtual, business to business networking event, centered on the topic of innovation in the health care field.

**Tuesday, October 27**

4:30 PM - 5:30 p.m.

**Moderator**

George Nemphos  
Nemphos Braue Attorneys at Law

**Featured Speakers**

BRUCE E. JARRELL, MD, FACS  
President of the University of Maryland, Baltimore  
*Vaccines*

DR. TODD E. PETERS  
Chief Medical Officer and Chief Medical Informatics Officer, Sheppard Pratt  
*Innovating Mental Health Care Delivery During COVID-19*

ANDREA R. LEVINE, MD  
Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Maryland School of Medicine  
And Critical Care Physician at the University of Maryland Medical Center  
*Health Care After COVID – Continuing the Recovery*
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Brought to you by the Gordon Center for Performing Arts

NATAN SHARANSKY & GIL TROY
Authors of Never Alone: Prison, Politics, and My People
November 8 | 1:00pm

JOAN LUNDEN
Author of Why Did I Come Into This Room?
In conversation with Holly Firfer
November 8 | 8:00pm

Tickets online at GordonCenter.com/Words-Ideas

Questions? Call 410.559.3510

These virtual events will showcase our community’s love of reading and writing, while covering a wide range of topics, literary genres and interests.

Gordon Center for Performing Arts
November 8 | 1:00pm
Natan Sharansky & Gil Troy, authors of Never Alone: Prison, Politics, and My People

Gordon Center for Performing Arts & Har Sinai/Oheb Shalom
November 8 | 8:00pm
Joan Lunden, author of Why Did I Come Into This Room?

The Soul Center
November 11
8:00pm
Casper Ter Kulie, author of The Power of Ritual

Baltimore Hebrew Institute
November 16
4:00pm
Judaism and Heresy: The case of Spinoza, Freud, and Tchernichovsky

Myerberg Center
November 18
5:00pm
Morey Kogul, author of Running Breathless: An Untold True Story of WWII and the Holocaust

Beth Am Synagogue
November 22
11:00am
Poet Michael Salcman, author of Shades & Graces

Macks Center for Jewish Education & PJ Library
November 22
4:00pm
Amy Meltzer, author of Harvest Blessings

Additional Community Partners with Events Coming Soon
- Enoch Pratt Free Library
- Jewish Museum of MD
- Chizuk Amuno Congregation

LOCKET
THE POWER OF RITUAL
TURNING EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES INTO SOULFUL PRACTICES

November 11 | 8:00 p.m.

A CONVERSATION WITH AUTHOR CASPER TER KUILE

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Rachel Siegal
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Spicing Up the Season

Few flavors scream fall like pumpkin, cinnamon and cardamom. These unique and delicious dishes from Libya, Greece and Ethiopia feature many of the spices you’ve come to associate with autumn.

Libyan Jewish Pumpkin Spread

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
7 cloves garlic, minced  
½ teaspoon cumin  
Pinch red pepper flakes  
2 cups pumpkin puree canned or homemade  
3 tablespoons harissa  
1 tablespoon honey  
1 lemon juiced

Heat the olive oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the garlic, cumin, paprika and red pepper flakes. Season with salt and stir to combine. Cook just until garlic begins to turn golden. Add pumpkin, harissa and honey; stir to combine. Cook gently, just until pumpkin is warmed through.

Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice. Taste and adjust seasoning. Dip should be tangy and spicy.

Serve with Greek yogurt and warmed pita, or as a garnish for couscous.

Doro Wot

6 bone-in, skin-on chicken legs, separated into thighs and drumsticks  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
2 tablespoons kosher salt, plus more as needed  
¾ cup canola oil  
2 large onions, finely diced or chopped  
3 garlic cloves, smashed  
1 teaspoon ground cumin  
1 teaspoon ground ginger  
1 teaspoon ground cardamom  
1 teaspoon ground turmeric  
1 teaspoon paprika  
1 teaspoon ground fenugreek seed or leaf  
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more as needed  
6 hard-boiled eggs, peeled  
2¼ cups homemade or low-sodium store-bought chicken stock, or water

Rub the chicken with the lemon juice and 1 tablespoon salt. Let it sit for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat the oil in a heavy-based wide skillet or Dutch oven (large enough to hold the chicken in one snug layer) over medium heat, add the onions and the remaining 1 tablespoon salt, and saute gently until fragrant, golden brown and sweet, about 20 minutes. Do not let the onions actually brown.

Add the garlic, cumin, ginger, cardamom, turmeric, paprika, fenugreek and pepper, and stir for a minute so the spices bloom in the oil. Nestle the chicken pieces and the eggs into the pan and pour in the broth.

Cover the pan and adjust the heat to a solid simmer. Cook for about 30 minutes. Then remove the lid (so the sauce will reduce and thicken a bit) and continue to simmer until the chicken is very tender when poked with a knife and the juices run clear (or until the thickest part of the thigh or drumstick reaches 165 F. on an instant-read thermometer),
45-60 minutes.
Taste and adjust with more salt or pepper.
Serves 6-8.

**Baklava with Honey and Cardamom**

16 ounces raw pistachios, walnuts, blanched almonds, or hazelnuts (or a mix, like 8 ounces raw pistachios and 8 ounces raw walnuts)

2 teaspoons cinnamon, ground

2 teaspoons cardamom, ground

1/4 cup honey or brown sugar

1 pack frozen phyllo dough sheets, thawed

1 cup oil (coconut or olive oil work well) or melted butter

**Syrup:**

1 1/2 cups honey

1/4 cup water

2 tablespoons lemon juice

Rind of 1 lemon, peeled

Cinnamon stick

5 cardamom pods

2 tablespoons rose water

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

First, add the nuts to a food processor. Pulse until the nuts are chopped finely but not ground into powder. Transfer to a bowl, and add cinnamon, cardamom and honey. Stir to combine.

Next, prepare the dough. Gently take the roll of phyllo dough out from its package, taking care not to rip or tear the sheets. Unroll the dough and place a damp tea towel or paper towel over the top sheet to keep the dough from becoming dry and flaky.

Place your bowl of melted butter or oil and the bowl of chopped nuts next to the stack of phyllo dough. Place your baking pan (9 inches x 12 inches x 2 inches) nearby.

Using a pastry brush, oil the bottom and sides of the pan. Then carefully remove the top sheet of phyllo dough and place it in the pan. Lightly brush oil over the entire top of this sheet. Place another sheet of phyllo dough on top of the first sheet, brush oil on top, and add another sheet. Continue layering phyllo dough and oil until you have a stack of 10 sheets.

On the next sheet, spread 1/2 of the nut mixture on top with your hands. Try and make sure that the nuts are covering the entire sheet.

Cover the nuts with another layer of phyllo, and brush oil on top. Continue layering phyllo and oil until you have 5 more sheets. On top of the 6th sheet, add the rest of the nuts.

Add 10 more layers of oiled phyllo dough. Brush oil across the top sheet, too.

With a chef’s knife, make 6 long rows across the long side of the pan. Then cut diagonally across the pan from one corner to the other, and make cuts parallel to that diagonal line across the rest of the pan. Set in the oven and bake for 35-45 minutes, until the top is crisp and golden.

Meanwhile, make the syrup. Combine all syrup ingredients except for rosewater in a saucepan and boil for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Take off the heat, and stir in the rosewater. Let cool for at least 10 minutes, then strain.

When the baklava is done baking, let it cool for at least 30 minutes. The baklava will hold its crisp layers better if you let it cool down a bit before adding the syrup. When both the syrup and baklava have cooled, drizzle the syrup over the baklava. Don’t be afraid to use it all! Refrigerate for an hour before serving. Baklava can be enjoyed the day of, but its flavors really sink in after a day. You can store in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

These recipes originally appeared in *The Nosher.*

Search for recipes or submit your own in our recipes database at jmoreliving.com/recipesdatabase.
Charm City just got even more veggie-friendly! Baltimore restaurateur Ginny Lawhorn and her husband, Ronnie Pasztor, recently opened **Friends and Family**, a new, sustainability-minded, plant-forward restaurant. It’s located in their former Sticky Rice restaurant location, at 1634 Aliceanna St. in Fells Point.

For now, Friends and Family’s food and craft cocktails are available for carryout service. The all-day menu allows you to decide when you want to enjoy breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Lighter menu options include protein-rich vegan and vegetarian salads such as “Avocado Hold the Toast,” “It’s Not Easy Being Green” and artfully crafted sandwiches with amusing names like “What the Cluck?!” and “AGT” (avocado, greens and tomato).

Heartier dishes include egg or tofu scrambles, vegan biscuits and gravy, breakfast burritos and the “Don’t Have a Cow” Beyond Burger.

There’s also an extensive cocktail menu, and even a mimosa kit using craft spirits from such regional partners as Don Ciccio & Figli and New Columbia Distillers.

A vegan restaurant, **Dodah’s Kitchen** opened at 1210 N. Charles St. Dodah’s features vegan soul food — think mac & cheese, collard greens and candied yams — and desserts.

You may be familiar with Dodah’s products because they’re sold at Mom’s Organic Markets, Graul’s and other fine Maryland markets. [dodahskitchen.com](http://dodahskitchen.com)

**Nice Guy Finishes First!**
What started in March as a temporary pop-up cocktail bar established to help unemployed bartenders, Canton’s **Mr. Nice Guy Cocktails** has evolved into a popular, contactless, reservation-only cocktail bar.

Located at 800 S. Kenwood Ave., Mr. Nice Guy is the brainchild of owner Anthony Nastasi Jr., formerly of **Wicked Sisters** and **Huck’s American Craft**.

And now it has a scratch-made menu...
COVID-19 procedures I’ve seen from any restaurant. And their salads are so 2021! No lettuce in sight. I love the Tropical Quinoa Salad with mango & black beans. Quirky and fun. Can you say Donut & Cocktail platter for brunch?! Need another reason to go? Anthony Nastasi Jr. and crew really are Nice Guys!"

Visit www.mrniceguycocktails.com

Mayhem at Max’s
Ron and Gail Furman, the owners of Max’s Taphouse at 737 S. Broadway in the heart of historic Fells Point, recently rolled out a new takeout/dine-out menu in time for Oktoberfest.

Max’s menu was redesigned to emphasize their carryout barbecue and beer business during the pandemic, and especially during the colder months.

The menu featured really good pub grub, including “Apps for Your Tummy, Not Your Phone” — crab pretzels (gargantuan soft pretzels smothered in crab and artichoke dip) and jumbo wings with Max’s BBQ, Buffalo, Honey Old Bay or Nashville Hot sauces. There’s also “Between Two Buns” — smoked pit beef, turkey and pulled pork (by the pound, too) and smoked rockfish.

They also have a humongous and thoughtfully CRAFTed selection of “to-go” beers, cocktails and wines.

For this Oktoberfest, the focus was on local Maryland breweries making German-style beers, with a few true Deutschland beers on draft for the purists.

Max’s recently added a walk-up window for ordering (safety first, folks!), expanded their outdoor seating and added an outdoor sound system.

And check out their cool online shop. https://shop.maxs.com

Remember: #ShopLocalEatLocal.

Randi Rom is president of RJ Rom & Associates. She is a freelance columnist and writer who represents some of the region’s top restaurants and food-related events. Contact her at randirom@comcast.net.

with former Sagamore Pendry chef Justin Spivak at the helm in the kitchen. The fan favorites on the menu include elevated versions of tacos, brisket and pineapple salsa.

There’s a who’s-who of B-more bartenders, including Scott Hose of La Barrita Restobar, Greg Mergner of r. bar Spirits Academy, Heath Gorenflo of The Elk Room, and Shaun Stewart of The Elk Room and Gunther & Co.

Top-selling libations are the pineapple margarita and the vanilla pecan old-fashioned made with Sagamore Rye. For the individual, outdoor booths, you must reserve a two-hour time slot, and the Nice Guy folks are looking into ways to winterize the outdoor seating.

Carryout — order on their website — will be the main focus during the colder months, although they plan to open inside as well, with 15 socially distanced tables.

And they cater!

Among those singing the praises of Mr. Nice Guy is Baltimore influencer @TheGoddessCraves: “Mr. Nice Guy Cocktails is killing it! They have the best..."
Giving Voice To Women’s Health

Now is the time to focus on your health. Join us for a Zoom program to hear Johns Hopkins physicians speak about women’s health.

Presentations include COVID-19, intermittent fasting, memory, new early screening for eight cancers, health disparities, fibroid tumors, inflammation, heart disease in women, Blue Zones and stress/anxiety. These topics will enrich your knowledge and, for some, may be lifesaving.

Saturday, November 7, 2020
10 a.m.–noon
From the comfort of your home.

Register today! Visit hopkinsmedicine.org/awomansjourney to register and read about the speakers, keynote addresses and program or call 410-955-8660.
$25 (sponsorships, virtual tables and scholarships available).

#hopkinsawj
Seeking your next good read?

Emma Snyder, owner of The Ivy Bookshop at 5928 Falls Road in Baltimore, offers recommendations for must-read titles for adults and children.

**FICTION**

“The Boy in the Field”  
By Margot Livesey  
HarperCollins, 272 pages, $26

Margot Livesey provides a tender, reflective family novel set in a British village. Three siblings find a wounded boy on their walk home from school one day, and this brush with violence and vulnerability ripples through their lives.

**FICTION**

“Transcendent Kingdom”  
By Yaa Gyasi  
Knopf, 288 pages, $27.99

A layered novel about a Ghanian family in Alabama grappling with addiction, grief, and religion. This beautifully written follow-up to 2017’s “Homegoing” will make you feel. And think.

**NONFICTION**

“The Antiracist: How to Start the Conversation about Race and Take Action”  
By Kondwani Fidel  
Hot Books, 192 pages, $22.99

Everyone should read this new book by Baltimore’s own Kondwani Fidel. Weaving personal experience with thorough research, he powerfully describes systemic oppression and speaks to real, human-oriented ways we can move beyond.

**FICTION**

By Adam Waytz, Norton, 272 pages, $17.95

We’re living in a world that is less human-driven all of the time, which has only been exacerbated by the pandemic. That makes this smart book by an organizational psychologist very timely reading as he makes a compelling case for how we can rehumanize many aspects of our work and lives.

**YOUNG ADULT**

“The Black Kids”  
Christina Hammonds Reed  
Simon & Schuster, 368 pages; $18.99  
(Ages 14 and up)

Ashley Bennett is about to graduate from high school in 1992 Los Angeles. But when Rodney King is beaten by the police and protests erupt across the city, Ashley’s identity, her family, her friendships are all changed. A story about young, black identity, which feels incredibly important right now.

**CHILDREN**

“I Talk Like a River” (Picture Book)  
By Jordan Scott and Sydney Smith  
Neal Porter Books, 40 pages, $18.99  
(For 4-8 years old)

The beautiful story of a young boy with a stutter, and a compassionate father who helps him see that his voice moves with its own rhythms.
The Exurban Rabbi?

Not so fast! Cities are still the backbone of American life.

Alas! Lonely sits the city once great with people! She that was great among nations is become like a widow.” (Lamentations 1:1)

I’ve dedicated my career to the celebration of urban living and, in particular, urban Judaism. In my adult life I’ve gravitated toward cities, attracted to their racial and cultural diversity, museums, restaurants and population density. But lately, cities feel like they’re under siege. COVID-19 has led to a rethinking of proximity as a way of life. Home purchases in remote settings are booming. Space, away from others, has become a more coveted residential choice than any time perhaps since post-war suburban migration and white flight.

And then there’s politics. Progressive policies take root more easily in urban settings. Even in the most conservative of states, cities are blue enclaves surrounded by a sea of red.

As a rule, the further you are from urban centers, the more conservative you tend to be. With the presidential election looming, some who prefer a different administration are wondering whether they ought to abandon cities for exurban settings where electoral math means open vs. fortified cities. The 16th century Italian exegete Ovadiah Sforno says open cities suggest “a sign they felt secure, not expecting any war,” whereas walled or fortified cities means “the inhabitants were afraid of being invaded.”

Sforno points out that great military leaders preclude the necessity of fortification. According to Judges (5:7), Deborah the warrior-prophet was the harbinger of both victory and open society: “Deliverance ceased, ceased in Israel, till you arose, O Deborah, arose, O mother, in Israel!” (The Hebrew word for “deliverance” in this context can also mean “dwellers of unwalled cities.”)

The ultimate goal of war is not simply armistice but a society no longer under siege, so it no longer behaves like it is. Peace is about peace of mind as much as anything else.

The pandemic will end, but the isolation that it has foisted upon us is a reminder of just how much we need community.

But peace of mind is in short supply these days. City-dwellers feel under siege. The president punishes urban enclaves for welcoming refugees, threatens to withhold federal funding from cities he deems “anarchist jurisdictions” because of their citizens’ ongoing fight for racial justice, and dog whistles to militant rural white supremacists to defend the White House against a legal and legitimate outcome of the election.

It may be enough to make some lose hope in cities, but not me. My resolve, my faith in the importance and promise of urban life is only strengthened by these developments.

The pandemic will end, but the isolation that it has foisted upon us is a reminder of just how much we need community.

Abandoning the density and diversity of urban settings for electoral reasons is a Faustian bargain that may only serve to reinforce the very phenomena (e.g., institutional racism) that those voting for progressive policies wish to dismantle.

Greater diversity (of race, culture and ideology) in exurban settings may serve to soften some hearts and minds, but cities are designed for proximity as much as variety. Cosmopolitanism is tough to maintain beyond the metropolis.

So instead of losing hope, I pray for the restoration of urban life. In the words of Jeremiah (33:10-11): “... Again there shall be heard in this place, which you say is ruined ... in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate ... the voice of bridegroom and bride. ... For I will restore the fortunes of the land as of old.”

Rabbi Daniel Cotzin Burg is spiritual leader of Beth Am Synagogue in Reservoir Hill, where he lives with his wife, Rabbi Miriam Cotzin Burg, and their children, Eliyah and Shamir. This column and others also can be found on The Urban Rabbi. Each month in Jmore, Rabbi Burg explores a different facet of The New Jewish Neighborhood, a place where Jewish community is reclaimed and Jewish values reimagined in Baltimore.
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“It was surreal to be inducted,” said Kowitz, 50. “You play college baseball and just hope to make the team. Then, you just want to prove you belong. I just worked my tail off and always prepared myself to be in the lineup.”

Kowitz, who lives in Owings Mills, is considered one of the greatest baseball players in the university’s history. He had a career .319 batting average at Clemson with 53 doubles, 11 triples and 124 RBIs from 1987-1990.

An outfielder from 1987-1990, Kowitz was named the 1990 Atlantic Coast Conference Player of the Year. That season, he batted .403 with 102 hits, 60 RBIs and 87 runs. He also had a team high of 22 doubles and 34 steals that season, to go along with a 37-game hitting streak.

Kowitz — who attended Jemicy School and Randallstown High School before graduating from Boys’ Latin in 1987 — soon caught the attention of Major League Baseball scouts. In 1990, he was a ninth-round selection of the Atlanta Braves.

He joined the Braves just as they began an historic run of success, which beginning in 1991 included 14 straight division titles, five World Series appearances and a world championship in 1995. Kowitz was called up on June 3, 1995, when outfielder David Justice was placed on the injured list.

Kowitz made his MLB debut the next day when he was used as a pinch hitter in the fifth inning in a game against the Houston Astros. He doubled down the leftfield line, but the Braves lost the game, 6-2.

Kowitz only appeared in nine other games for the Braves before being sent back to the Triple-A Richmond Braves.

“It wasn’t until I walked into the clubhouse with the [Atlanta] Braves and saw my name on the locker that everything sunk in for me,” he recalled. “My locker was right next to [first baseman] Fred McGriff. Then, the first person to greet me was [Hall of Fame pitcher] Greg Maddux. He even offered me the chance to stay at his house if I didn’t have a place to stay. That team was so special. There were future Hall of Famers all over the place like Tom Glavine, John Smoltz and Chipper Jones. There was a star at every position.”
Following the 1995 season, Kowitz signed with the Detroit Tigers. He played spring training with the team before being sent to the Triple-A Toledo Mud Hens.

Kowitz was released in May 1996 and signed with the Toronto Blue Jays. He finished the season with Triple-A Syracuse Mets before retiring from professional baseball, in part due to injuries.

“It wasn’t until I walked into the clubhouse with the [Atlanta] Braves and saw my name on the locker that everything sunk in for me.”

As a player, Kowitz, who attends Pikesville’s Beth El Congregation, said he knew he was one of the few Jewish players on the field each night, but felt like the sport was a melting pot.

“Baseball unites communities,” he said. “In the clubhouse, there were Jewish players, whites, African-Americans, Latinos, Asian players and players from all types of faiths. Baseball was the common denominator for all of us.”

Today, Kowitz is a general partner at Heller Kowitz Insurance Advisors, a Lutherville-based insurance agency operating in the mid-Atlantic region. But baseball continues to play a major role in his life. A married father of three, Kowitz coached his son’s team and he remains a fan of the Orioles, even during this restructuring period.

“[Orioles general manager] Mike Elias and company have a plan,” Kowitz said. “They are rebuilding the entire organization and I think they will get there, but it will take time. They have so much information available today that wasn’t around when I was playing, thanks to analytics, and they would be crazy not to use it. It’s just different today. The game is evolving, and teams that hope to succeed need to evolve with it.”

Ron Snyder is a Baltimore-based freelance writer.
Fear Beneath a Curtain of Harmony
The races in America have become so estranged that we are deeply afraid of each other.

By Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin

I was walking around my neighborhood the other morning, as I often do, especially during these days of COVID. It is a good to be able to connect personally, physically, with neighbors as they go by.

As I was passing one particular driveway, a car approached and started to slow. Eager to see which neighbor it was (we have a small neighborhood and tend to know everyone), I took out my earbuds, stopped walking and turned toward the car.

The driver’s window slowly lowered and an unfamiliar face appeared. At first I thought they must be stopping to ask directions; but then a newspaper came winging out. Now, our previous newspaper delivery man retired last winter. This one was new. Which is important to paper delivery man retired last winter.

And scared. Not because of my stature, or weapons. But because of my color. I was White, and we were in a White neighborhood.

And in that moment, I came to the horrifying realization that this is what America has come to. The races have become so estranged that we are deeply afraid of each other. Perhaps we have really always been this way, and it is just during some halcyon moments we were able to cover over it and begin to believe that things were changing. Or perhaps there are pockets of genuine equality and we falsely extrapolate from them to the whole. But in the hyper-polarized America we are living in today, that curtain of harmony is pulled back and we see the fear underneath, rising to the surface.

This summer was a revelation. While we are all reeling from the threats of COVID and hurricanes and fires and joblessness and evictions and the inability to gather easily at schools and games and funerals and restaurants and congregations, while our hearts are open to pain and loss and injustice, White America is finally coming to terms with its toxic legacy of racism.

The question is, what do we do now?

There is no easy answer. But we know that words are no longer enough. Professing our support is essential but it is no longer sufficient. What is needed now is a true, deep-seated change of attitude and the actions to match.

Before this summer, whenever I had to fill out a form asking what nationality or race I belonged to, I would defiantly pass over “White.” As a Jew, whose people were oppressed for thousands of years by “Whites” (whatever that means), and as a Jew whose ancestors here in America were cast as “non-White,” I certainly did not see myself, nor would declare myself, White. Nor did I see myself as contributing to the racial problem. I opposed inequality, spoke against it, voted against it. But I was an outsider, neither Black nor White.

No longer. Through my brief encounter with my newspaper driver, plus reading and listening to narratives and teachings about race in America, I see that we have a “White body supremacy” problem, as author Resmaa Menakem calls it. That is, by having a White body, I am part of the equation. I have privilege from the get-go because when people see me, they see White.

Yes, anti-Semitism still exists. Yes, even in America, Jews are still occasionally singled out for hatred and violence, as we have seen too tragically these past few years. Yes, we still have to be vigilant against hatred toward Jews and Israel. But when I am walking down the street, visiting a neighborhood other than my own, bird-watching in a public park, driving my car, applying for a job, applying for a loan, shopping in a store, standing in an elevator, my White body does not alarm or disturb other [White] people, people who assume authority, or supremacy. Which says to me, if we enjoy the privilege, we must be part of the solution. We cannot sit on the sidelines or think it isn’t about us. Otherwise, we are part of the problem.

Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin is the director of the Maryland Campaign for Environmental Human Rights. She lives in the neighborhood where she grew up.
In Memoriam
The following is a listing of recent deaths in the Greater Baltimore Jewish community. May the memory of the departed always be a comfort to their families, friends, and the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

August 14
Ellen Renee Rivkin
August 21
Roserma Cohen
Marilyn Furman
Marcia Hoffman
August 22
Celeste Kurland
Tobey Lisker Lintz
Michael Monias
Dr. Alan Rosenfeld
August 23
Judith Ann Heimann
August 24
Dr. Ira T. Bloom
Howard Goodman
Miriam Magat
Kathryn Ressin
Gloria Savadow
August 25
Theodore Levin
August 26
David F. Cohen
Melvin Gurwitz
Sheldon R. Pazornik
August 28
Albert Chaban
Melvin Wachs
August 29
Linda Aviles
Barry Haar
Aug. 30
Rabbi Marvin Pachino
Shirley Lorraine Slovsky
August 31
Stephen Arnold Karp
September 1
Zelda Lottie Schwarz
September 2
Kirk McKinley Donovan
Mason Leigh Moldoven
September 3
Elaine Hirsh Jandorf
Elise M. Josephson
September 4
Stuart J. Newman
Ernest Silversmith
September 5
Frank Rachanow
September 6
Adolph “Ed” Baer
Annette Bernice Lafferman
Helene Malinow
Shirley Messing
Alan Jeffrey Stein
September 7
Ronald Breckon
Jill L. Golditch
A. Howard Levy
Erica Rubinstein
Helen Kravetz w
Martin Howard Zaben
September 8
Arlene J. Lann
Dr. Jonas Rappeport
September 9
Adele Friedman
September 10
Norbert F. Berman
Joan Cohen
Monica Anne Jankowitz
Seymour Rosenthal
Sam Yuditsky
September 11
Herbert Press
September 12
Alan Robert Kobin
Mildred “Mitzi” Swan
September 13
Perry Kunin
Marvin Earl Renbaum
Sandra Rice
September 14
Fred M. Halberstadt
Martin Alan Mitnick
Jerry Zaben
September 15
Alan Paul Friedman
September 16
Melvin Raymond Jacobs
September 17
Lenard Feldman
Judith Robinson Hoffberger
Barry Levin
September 18
Joyce Rosenfeld
David M. Weiner
September 19
Esther Rosalie Fox
Barbara Stricker Herman
September 21
Abraham Greenberg
Linda S. Halpert
Harry H. Lazarus
Sylvia Nudler
Beverly Harriett Rothenburg
Ira Singer
September 23
Laurie Hope Mindek
Florence Paul
Robert Reinhard Wolfson
September 24
Evelyn Alberts
Alia Popok
September 25
Ruslana Krupnik
September 26
Stanley Cooper
Leona Stern
Sevelyn Wassel
September 27
Doris Caplan
Phyllis Cavalier
September 28
Sylvia B. Levine
Elizabeth B. Shurkin
September 29
Rivka S. Elling
Sidney Goren
September 30
Gertrude Freedman
Richard Pardise
Mona Wood
October 1
Herbert Friedman
Sylvia Rose
Richard Barry Schreibstein
October 2
Minna Katz
Jonas M. L. Cohen
Sue-Ellyn Wolfson Hantman
Ruth Gail Levy
October 3
Dorothy Rodbell
Shlomo Manfred Straus
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APPRaisalS
I'm a complete sap. Name the maudlin, tear-jerking film, song, book or even TV commercial, and you'll find me weeping.

Maybe this should be embarrassing, but I also fall completely for whatever idealistic or perhaps even naïve plotline unfolds. I'm thrilled when Harry finally gets together with Sally. I cry every time Clarence gets his wings.

It's why I'm still moved to tears when just hearing the opening bars of John Lennon's “Imagine,” because I truly can “imagine all the people sharing all the world.”

So when all the world was infected with an insidious virus, I expected a “Happy Feet” response. In that animated film, when the dancing penguin tells humans they are overfishing and killing all the animals in his homeland (spoiler alert!), all the world joins together to put an end to the problem.

It didn't happen that way with the coronavirus.

While hundreds of thousands died and countless more suffered and will continue to suffer unknown long-term problems from contracting COVID-19, leaders around the world failed. Including the leader of the United States. Bigly.

Superman did not reverse the planet's rotation. Wonder Woman did not defeat Ares the God of War. There is no yellow brick road leading us safely home.


Last May, Germany, France, England, Japan and Israel held a virtual vaccine summit, pledging to raise funds and develop vaccines and drugs to combat the coronavirus. The U.S. was conspicuously absent.

It's especially perplexing to me that the POTUS not only failed to confront the coronavirus, he actively downplayed the seriousness of the virus. More than 200,000 Americans have died so far.

Our president is a man who desperately covets attention and recognition, to the point of inventing stories about distinctions he's won. Recently, he rejiggered a 2016 endorsement by a small group of veterans into the “highly honored Bay of Pigs Award.” He also claimed to have refused the last Time magazine “Person of the Year,” a claim flatly refuted by the editors who actually choose that cover.

COVID-19 was the president's opportunity. He could've finally stepped into the role of “leader of the free world.” He could've shown he has the tiniest fraction of concern for the people he was (sort of) elected to serve. The POTUS could've legitimately acted in a way that put him in line for a Nobel Peace Prize (or “Noble Prize,” in his words).

He didn't do those things.

Every U.S. president falls short. But never before have we lived under a president who blatantly governs solely to his own self-interests. Never before have we been led by a man whose contempt for the law of the land, its civil liberties, its scientists and its people has directly resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands.

As the character Sydney Ellen Wade said in the film “The American President,” “How do you have patience for people who claim they love America but clearly can't stand Americans?”

A president should be, at the very least, inspirational, hopefully even aspirational. If the current president's term were a film, I would demand my money back.

Here's how my movie fantasy would play out: Justin Trudeau calls the POTUS, the POTUS calls Russia (because I understand there's currently a direct, private line), Russia calls Japan and so on and so forth, right down to Monaco, Liechtenstein Lichtenstein — the little ones. All the world agrees to share their very best virologists, epidemiologists, pharmacologists, facilities and all of their findings, focusing to find a viable vaccine.

Together, all the world figures out how to produce and distribute this vaccine everywhere. Together, all the world agrees to maintain this scientific body for the next plague, because there will be a next one.

If the current president’s term were a film, I would demand my money back.

And when this project is finished, all the world agrees that working together would ultimately be ridiculous if the next day countries return to their weapons, hatred and distrust, and resume trying to kill one another. The film ends with a rolling shot of a giant Zoom meeting screen full of world leaders, smiling as the music plays. My yet-unmade film is a documentary. Imagine.

A former Baltimore resident, Deborah Walike is a self-described lapsed journalist living in upstate New York.
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