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JACK M. BARRACK HEBREW ACADEMY

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Misinformation on Social Media

Catie Broker, Staff Writer

User @flyingkikii's argument is captivating; "Israel wants Palestine's entire territory, so they kick out or kill Palestinians for it," she claims in a comprehensive cartoon slideshow on TikTok, which reduces Israel's thousands of years of history to a mere 22 slides and has garnered over one million likes. Amongst the propaganda masquerading as fact is the user's claim that Hamas—who are recognized by the U.S. Department of State as a terrorist organization—is a resistance movement created solely to protect Palestine. The anonymous user, who provides no credentials that recommend an ability to educate others

al" post under TikTok's "freepalestine" hashtag. One user on @flyingkikii's post claims that "my teacher printed this slideshow and hung it up in their classroom to educate us." According to Pew Research Center, almost one-third of U.S. adults under 30 years old and one-half of U.S. teens get their news from social media.

Misinformation in the form of propaganda has existed throughout history in order to muster support for one cause or the other, and often targets people's preconceived biases, the ethos of current social climates, and fear, while eliciting emotional responses. In our history classes,

do more research since they didn't seek out the information in the first place). Others identify with the girl (based off of age, level of education,



etc.) and enjoy the idea of people like themselves having all the answers. Whatever the cause, the concept that any person who speaks on an issue is well-versed in it has created a doom-cycle of actual history and facts being debated. Debated? Debated?! What happened to

the Faith in Knowledge pulse of the progressive era? With so many people claiming expertise, facts can be muddled and the constant spinning of histories can make you sick.

Ultimately, misinformation thrives on social media. People can create anonymous accounts claiming to be professionals, and share harmful rhetoric without any consequences. This also provides an outlet to twisted individuals who will use political crises as a rationale for their hatred. Recently, Cornell University junior Patrick Dai used the student forum "Sidechat" to anonymously make threats against Jews as the Israel-Palestine conflict raged

onward, and was less-than-promptly arrested. Platforms also use algorithms to pump users full of more and more one-sided information,

based upon the kind of content they interact with. These algorithms give users—especially young people, who have experienced little diversity of opinion and environment be-

yond the sentiments of their hometowns—a false sense of the world, and encourages polarization, as issues are conveyed to be increasingly black-and-white and often hail back to partisan issues.

Misinformation surrounds us constantly, especially as we increasingly rely on social media and the internet for everyday tasks. It's often difficult to distinguish fact from fiction, and to resist societal pressures to conform with the opinions of the masses, but we can find solace in education. I urge you to consult your history books, your teachers, and even grandparents who may have witnessed the birth of Israel and were living in parallel to relevant events. Only through truth can we dispel hatred and restore rational discourse.

It's often difficult to distinguish fact from fiction.

on Middle Eastern conflicts, nor any indication of higher education, also throws around the internet's latest buzzword: genocide.

The most unsettling aspect of @flyingkikii's post is its unoriginality. The same lies it's perpetuating are plastered all over TikTok, Instagram, and every other social media platform. Moreover, the misinformation online is so overwhelmingly prominent, that it has become the baseline information for people without an ounce of prior education on the Israel-Palestine conflict. "Thank you for this, I was so confused about what Hamas is," says a commenter on another "education-

we analyze the propaganda created by American Imperialists, and then at lunch time, indulge in the online conspiracy theories amplified by our favorite Instagram "influencers." One reason that misinformation has found so much success in the 21st century is the belief in the "wisdom of the masses." The blatant disregard for facts offered by experts in favor of the wisdom from a girl doing her skincare routine as she misconstrues a complex and multi-layered topic is a phenomenon whose cause is hotly debated amongst theorists. For some, the video is preferable since it is easily accessible (most people stumble upon it, and never

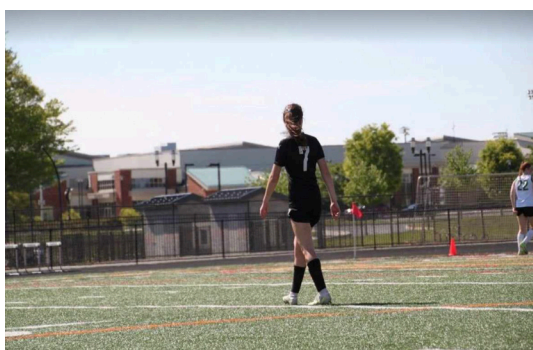
Athlete of the Issue - Gabby Thomas

Benny Scheinmann, Sports Editor

Gabby Thomas's senior soccer season was nothing short of spectacular, leaving a mark on the field and on the hearts of her teammates. Gabby's ability to score goals, set up plays, and lead the team as team captain has been the driving force behind her memorable season.

Gabby Thomas proved to be a force to be reckoned with on the field, consistently finding the back of the net throughout the season. Scoring 15, her goal-scoring ability not only showcased her individual skill but also played a crucial role in the team's wins. With a keen eye for the goal and a precise finishing touch, Gabby emerged as a top scorer for the Barrack Varsity soccer team.

Along with her goal-scoring, Gabby also showed herself as a playmaker, setting up goals



for her teammates, and tallying a total of 21 assists. Her vision on the field and ability to read the game allowed her to create scoring opportunities, showcasing a selfless approach. Gabby's passing and decision-making were able to elevate the team's overall performance and lead them to Barrack's first Quaker Cup Championship.

As the captain of the team, Gabby Thomas embodied leadership both on and off the field. Gabby has "been playing soccer ever since [she] could walk. It is a large part of who [she is]. Stepping on to the field is [her] favorite part of the day". Gabby's love of the game served as a source of inspiration for her teammates, instill-

ing a sense of unity and determination. Gabby led by example, displaying a relentless work ethic and a commitment to excellence. Her ability to motivate and uplift her teammates in challenging moments was a testament to her exceptional leadership qualities.

Gabby's impact extended beyond the soccer field, as she acted as a positive influence on the team's spirit. Whether it was through mentoring younger players, or representing the team with sportsmanship, Gabby demonstrated the qualities of a true role model.

Gabby Thomas's senior soccer season has been nothing short of phenomenal. Although being snubbed from the Friends League Honorable Mention, Gabby's success was widely recognized by her coaches and teammates. Congratulations Gabby on a terrific senior season!

Why Kids Should be Allowed to have a Social Media Presence

Jillian Shweky, Opinion Editor

Due to the recent events in Israel, many people have taken to social media to express how they are feeling. This expression of outrage includes anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. In a world filled with hate and misinformation, it is understandable for a parent to be nervous about their children's presence on social media. Despite this communal concern, many of today's youth are heavily invested in social media like Instagram, TikTok, X, and Snapchat. Even with there being some risks on social media, there are many positive things kids can learn from it as well.

First, kids being exposed to different perspectives on the current situation in Israel can allow them to become better educated on the history. I have seen countless posts about the history of the Israeli- Palestinian, and from those posts, I have learned facts I never would have been exposed to otherwise. Of course, I do my research and verify if these facts are true, and

a solid portion of them are.

This leads to my next point, there is tons of misinformation on social media. This is dangerous as many people on social media are gullible and believe the misinformation. If parents prepare their kids to check their sources on everything, kids can educate others and equip themselves with facts to combat libel. In a time full of concern for our Israeli brothers and sisters, social media is a crucial part of staying connected with them.

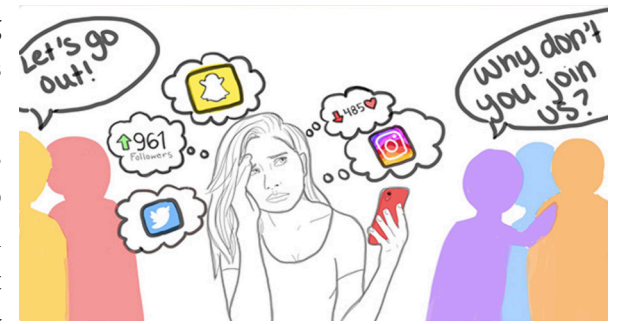
Not only because we can communicate with them directly through these programs. But also, them being able to see us post our support for Israel and Jews across the world provides them and all of us with a feeling of comfort, knowing we are not alone. Social media is a very powerful tool that can be used for the good. If parents educate their children on the correct way to use it, social media can be used to spread love in such unsettling times.

Why You Should Take A Break From Social Media

Aviva Markowitz, Arts & Entertainment Editor

Parents all around the world are concerned about the rise in anti-Semitism TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, FaceBook, and X. TikTok, a social media platform that once used to be a place for fun dancing and lip-syncing videos, has now become an unsafe place for children to be on. Since the Israel-Hamas war started, people have been posting gory photos and videos of what is going on. After hostages were taken, warnings went out to parents of children with social media saying that Hamas will start posting videos of these hostages begging for their lives. Though the minimum to be on TikTok is 12, there are many kids who are younger seeing these videos and becoming victim to misinformation. Social media is already an unhealthy en-

vironment for teens' mental health, causing them to compare themselves to each other, feel left out, and increase depression and anxiety. Adding a war to the mix filled with very complicated topics does not help. Scientists found that people who deleted social media felt more free and able to focus. Their time was spent on more productive activities, and their men-



tal health improved tremendously. This study was done without the added stress of the Israel-Hamas conflict. Taking even a small break from social media is one of the best things to do right now to reduce anxiety and depression.

Donor Backlash in the Face of Campus Antisemitism

Rachel Loeb, Editor-in-Chief

It has been more than two months since the initial October 7th terrorist attack on Israel by Hamas. Since then, the intensity of public reactions has increased as the war has become a source of controversy, sparking arguments online and in-person protests both in support and opposition to Israel's actions. This divide has extended to college campuses, and as it has become

not as positive as it may initially appear as it may lead to universities putting even more weight on their donors' preferences.

There is danger in allowing donors to dictate school responses on controversial topics.

At Harvard, the catalyst was an anonymous letter from a coalition of 34 student organizations placing sole blame on Israel for the Hamas attacks. Harvard received significant backlash especially after its President Claudine Gay and senior leadership did not address the letter in their public statement. This led to numerous alumni criticizing Harvard leadership's failure to respond. In a letter to the school, Senator Mitt Romney, hedge fund manager Seth Klarman, and three other Harvard business school alumni criticized the school

del Ken Griffin, CEO of Pershing Square Capital Management Bill Ackerman, and CEO of Sweetgreen Jonathan Neman, all demanded to know

which students signed the letter so that their company would never hire them.

After Griffin called on President Gay for a more supportive statement on the crisis, she issued a stronger condemnation of the terror attacks, but still refused to name the students.

The University of Pennsylvania was already facing criticism weeks before the Hamas attack, for hosting speakers at the Palestinian Writes Literature festival that openly expressed anti-Semitic beliefs. Alumni then became increasingly angry with the school after their delayed response, which they believed did not express enough support for Israel. Marc Rowan, the chief of Apollo Global Management halted his donations after claiming that Penn was overlooking the concerns of the Jewish community, and called for alumni to cut their donations down to one dollar and join his demand for the resignation of President Liz Magill and the chairman of the board of trustees, Scott L. Bok.



more heated, it has shifted from debate to overt anti-Semitism and threats. As a response, donors at multiple colleges have pulled their financial support, citing the reason to be the school's inability to fully condemn the Hamas attack and draw clear lines between reasonable discourse and anti-Semitic hate speech within their student body. However, the withdrawal of these donors is

for allowing Jewish students to be harassed. The Wexner Foundation has stopped their donations, and Former Governor Larry Hogan announced Monday that he will no longer partner with Harvard's Kennedy School and the Chan School of Public Health. Additionally, Israeli billionaire Idan Ofer and his wife resigned from the executive board. Also, the founder of Billionaire Cita-

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Donor Backlash - Continued

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Since then, many of Penn's benefactors have pulled their support including philanthropist Ronald S. Lauder, former Utah governor Jon Huntsman, "Law & Order" creator Dick Wolf, cofounder of Differential Ventures David Magerman, founder of HighSage Venture Jonathan Jacobson, founder of EMU Health Daniel Lowy, and founder of AQR Capital Clifford Asness. In response to this backlash, the university released another statement referring to Hamas' violence as a "terrorist" attack for the first time, emphasizing

that the university does not share the opinion of speakers at the festival, and reaffirming their stand against antisemitism.

The withdrawal of support from these universities by donors carries significant implications as these funds contribute to the financing of facilities, faculty research, student aid programs, and various other essential aspects of the university. This financial backing holds particular importance for universities, for example, at Harvard, where philanthropy is the single largest

contributor to revenue. These donors absolutely have the right to retract their financial support and disassociate from the universities if they believe them to not represent their values. In some ways, this is positive, as it holds the schools accountable for their actions. However, the concern arises when schools alter their public stances on issues under the influence of their financial backers, which isn't always in the best interest of academic integrity.

Was Israel given more funding and supplies than Ukraine?

Brandon Rosen, Assistant to the Editors

Both Ukraine and Israel are currently experiencing terrible wars. Ukraine was invaded by Russian forces on February 24, 2022, starting a long battle that continues to rage. On October 7, 2023 Hamas attacked Israel and Israel immediately responded by declaring war on Hamas. Many people are comparing the two countries' situations, especially focusing on whether the United States is giving more aid to Ukraine or Israel. The United States has provided Ukraine and Israel with significant amounts of military and financial aid. The United States is helping Ukraine to defend itself against Russia, a country of vastly greater military capacity and population than Ukraine. Since the start of the Russian invasion of



Ukraine, the United States has organized and led the effort of the Western democratic countries to help Ukraine and the United States has given 75 billion dollars in humanitarian, financial, and military armaments to Ukraine to fight Russia. Following the tragic and unspeakable events of October 7, President Biden went to Israel and declared that the United States would stand with Israel. He sent two U.S. carrier groups, which are amongst the most powerful military items the U.S. has. Subsequently, at around the end of October, President Biden requested supplemental funding from Congress for Ukraine and Israel. It is important to note that the amount of aid given

to Ukraine is obviously much more substantial than what is being requested to be given to Israel. The NPR newsletter states that "President Biden has asked Congress for 61.4 billion dollars to support Ukraine in the war against Russia, and 14.3 billion dollars to support Israel in its effort to combat Hamas".

The reason America is giving Israel less money is because at this time Israel does not need as much money as Ukraine.

Another reason is that Israel and the United States have been allies since the creation of Israel. While there may be more money spent on Ukraine, the United States' show of support and request for money for Israel may exceed what has been given to Ukraine.

Should the Voting Age be Lowered?

Jonah Pappas, Staff Writer



The question of whether minors should be allowed to vote is a complex and debated issue in democratic societies around the world, with most countries setting the voting age at 18. However, some argue that lowering the voting age could enhance democracy by involving younger citizens in decision-making from an earlier age.

The advent of social media and the prevalence of technology has created a group of the most politically aware kids ever. If these politically aware kids are given the opportunity to vote, then they can actually make a difference in the issues that they always hear about. By not being forced to sit on the sidelines and actually make a change, these kids will believe in the power of voting, and when they grow up, they will know that they can cause changes in whatever they want to. But with the heavy usage of social media, there comes a price. Misinformation spreads like wildfire, and because some kids do not put the proper research into it, they can be lied to and tricked.

Another argument for lowering the voting age is that children have the biggest stake in the future; if terrible laws are voted into place, they are the ones hurt the most. If they are able to shape the policies that will affect them, they can choose the way that the rest of their life goes. Lowering the age could also improve education. If someone wants to make an educated decision about an election, they will naturally try to learn as much as they can about it. If more people can vote, then more people will want to learn more about the policies and ideas of the politicians. However, there are many valid arguments against lowering the voting age. Children under 18 may not be mature enough to decide the fate of their country. Letting immature children vote risks the possibility of an election that does not represent the true feelings of the country. If a large group of these immature kids decides to vote childishly, the impacts could be devastating.

Lowering the voting age would also affect the politicians themselves. If a whole new demographic was suddenly introduced, most politicians would change their policies to cater to the new voters. Depending on how different politicians act, this could result in at least one demographic being entirely left out.

The debate over this is nuanced and complicated but ultimately, any decision to change the voting age should be made with careful consideration of the potential impacts on the democratic process, and the ability of minors to make informed and independent decisions. The debate continues, highlighting the ongoing need to evaluate and adapt democratic systems to the evolving dynamics of society.

An Uplifting Update from Benaya

Sophia Mittman, School News Editor

Our shaliach and director for Jewish Life, Benaya Yehuda, has recently been called back to serve in the Israel Defense Forces after Hamas brutally attacked Israel. The JLI members have been



in close contact with Benaya over the past few weeks and have appreciated hearing his updates and his positive attitude. During a recent interview with Benaya over the phone, Benaya talked about what he is currently doing in the IDF, what has been happening around him, and how stays positive during these difficult times. Benaya can only share some information regarding his unit in the IDF. Yet, he spoke a lot about the current situation and how communities around him are so active in helping soldiers and others in need.

While Benaya was in his army service from 2005 to 2008, he served as a sniper in a parachute unit. He served during the Second Lebanon War, as well as when Israel pulled out of Gaza. After his army service, he studied in Yeshivot and continued volunteering. He lived in Sderot – a city less than a mile away from Gaza – and was a madrich for Bnei Akiva. In October of 2023, after the Israel-Hamas broke out, Benaya was contacted and went back to serve in the IDF. Because Benaya has previous experience in drone photography, he currently serves as a drone operator in his unit in the Northern part of Israel -- in places such as Shtula and Netu'a. After arriving in Israel in late October, Benaya took a

course. Now, he uses several drones with imaging and zoom functions to watch from far distances and see potential targets on the Northern border. With these special drones, he can search the Lebanon borders and then give the air force and tank operators the coordinates for the attacks.

Despite the catastrophes that happened to Israel on October 7, Benaya can stay optimistic. In Israel, a spirit of solidarity and unwavering support thrives among its people. Communities in Israel are coming together, recognizing the urgency to assist those who have lost homes or find themselves in need. Families open their doors to offer shelter, food, and comfort to individuals who are affected by Hamas' catastrophes. Volunteers

– even outside Israel – are tirelessly organizing donation drives, gathering essential supplies to distribute to those struggling to meet their basic needs. Benaya claims, "there is no way [he] can't be positive about this." He sees all these amazing and spirited individuals – firsthand – going anywhere when someone is in need. There is "no other way to look at the situation."

Benaya also talked a lot about how individuals do everything they can to help the soldiers, whether this involves offering to do soldiers' laundry, cooking home food, or even solely giving their love and appreciation to all the soldiers working endlessly to protect the State of Israel. Over Benaya's drone operating course, he took when he first arrived in Israel a few weeks ago, he was hitchhiking on the way back from the course, and he raised his hand for a moment, and a kind woman stopped for him. She took him to where he needed to go, and she gave

him cooked food before he took off. Benaya says, "there is this amazing spirit in the streets everywhere. It is a wonderful feeling that we are united and people truly care about each other." Benaya is one of eight children, with four of his brothers in the IDF. Over Benaya's day off, he met with a few of his brothers who also serve in the army. They sat down for lunch, and the restaurant owner gave them free dessert and bags of food to take with them. One of Benaya's brothers is currently a commander in Jerusalem hotels with families who had to evacuate their homes in Sderot because of the recent attacks fired from Gaza. Another brother of Benaya is a psychologist and has been traveling all over the world to help individuals with family members kidnapped in Gaza.

Another experience Benaya encountered over his day off was when he walked into a music shop, and the owner gifted him two guitars to give to the soldiers in his unit. They appreciated this significantly. These simple, kind gestures, as



well as the collective efforts, demonstrate a strong sense of solidarity and appreciation for the sacrifices made by Israeli soldiers like Benaya. According to Benaya, "no one in Israel has ever experienced such a horrific accident, but also no one in Israel has experienced such tremendous power, energy, togetherness, and love."

Benaya was fortunate enough to be able to come home to his family for Thanksgiving, but he will be returning to Israel soon to continue defending the Jewish people and the State of Israel. As a Barrack community, we send our thoughts and prayers to Benaya and fervently hope for his safety and that he can return soon.

Barrack Efforts for Israel

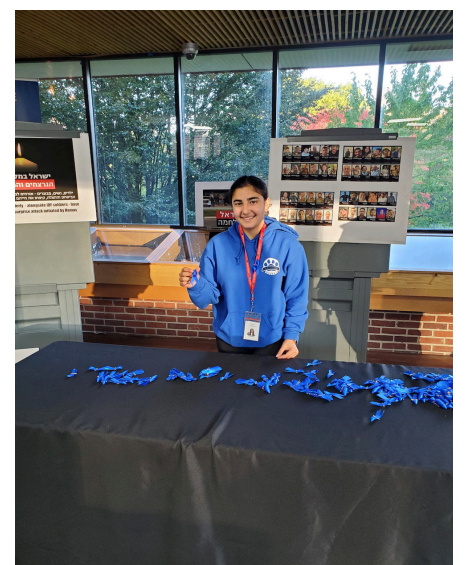
Rachel Loeb, Editor-in-Chief

Practically every student at Barrack has some connection to Israel. For this reason, the war in Israel after the October 7th attack has been very personal for teachers and students alike. While this time has been difficult for students, Barrack has made many efforts to reduce these struggles.

Starting with the first school day after the attack, the Hebrew department planned a presentation to keep the student body informed. The presentation, which was preceded by the lowering of the Israeli flag, included basic information about the war thus far, as well as prayers for Israel and the recitation of Hatikvah. While the presentation did address the horrific events of the war, it also described how Israeli society was coming together in many ways, for example, the number of people donating blood. After the presentation, we heard from Rabbi Lesack, who shared his thoughts on the war, and his understanding of the difficulty of this on students.

After that, Barrack students participated in a project where, on a big sign saying "We stand strong with Israel", they were encouraged to fill the empty space of the sign with personal notes of their thoughts and feelings. Next, the school encouraged students to attend the Philly Stands with Israel

Rally at Saligman Campus in Wynnewood, even making it a no-homework night. The rally was very powerful, as students and faculty gathered among other supporters of Israel, and heard support from local, state, and federal representatives. Barrack then encouraged students to come together with other Jewish organizations to attend the March for Israel in Center City, organized by the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia. day so students would not miss any class.



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Barrack Efforts - Continued

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Aside from rallies, Barrack has also put in many in-school efforts. Particularly in the days following the initial attack, teachers were especially accommodating with regard to school work. In Hebrew and Jewish Studies classes, teachers temporarily put aside the curriculum, to allow students the chance to express themselves. Barrack participated in the #BlueRibbonsforIsrael trend as a way for students and faculty to express their solidarity with the hostages, their families, and more generally, the people of Israel. In class, some Hebrew teachers invited family members from Israel to discuss their lives in Israel with students. In class, and also facilitated by the JLI, students made cards and videos sharing positive messages with IDF soldiers. In a Shabbos Shmooze, the JLI led students in



On the Barrack website, there are also many resources available both in helping discussions, but also financially supporting Israel.

lighting 1300 tea lights in memory of those who lost their lives. Shacharit groups have also added prayers for healing, and prayers for the State of

Israel to their regular prayers. There have also been many efforts to educate students, including a visit by a StandWithUs ambassador, and a live video meeting with a teacher from IsraelEd. Also, there is a board by the front desk which has pictures of some of the hostages and brief information about them.

On the Barrack website, there are also many resources available both in helping discussions, but also financially supporting Israel. There is a link to the fundraiser made by the 11th graders to help affected soldiers and families, as well as various other fundraisers by alumni. Beyond that, there are links to resources like the Jewish Federation events website, a class on Jews' history in Israel by Danny Stein, a Barrack Alumnus and Muss teacher, and various other informational websites with facts on conflict and advice on how to address this conversation in family discussions. The Barrack community also brought together toiletries, supplies, and other essential items to deliver to Israel. There were bins at Barrack in the school foyer to collect items donated, and they were completely full. Finally, as always, our school counselors Ms. Grolnick and Ms. Yontef are available to help students emotionally during this difficult time. While this time has been very difficult, it has been really wonderful to see the Barrack community come together and support one another, and Israel!

The Many Interfaith Dialogue Programs at Barrack

Rachel Loeb, Editor-in-Chief

Despite Barrack being a Jewish school, we make many efforts to encourage interfaith dialogue and expand students' perspectives on religion. This has taken place through various speakers, as well as the Friends in Faith program with Pope John Paul II High School.

The 12th grade recently had the opportunity to hear from guest speaker Aziz Nathoo on October 30, an imam (Muslim religious leader) and campus chaplain at Chestnut Hill College and Ursinus College. It was clear that he was very knowledgeable about Judaism and had experience with interfaith dialogue, and this allowed him to offer a more in-depth contrast of the two religions during his presentation. He spoke about the relationship between the two religions and how despite them being different faiths, they are more alike than some believe and are actually siblings. One similarity he touched on was the value of Amana in Islam and how it relates to Tikun Olam in Judaism. However, while he did compare with Judaism, he also focused on teach-

ing the basic morals of Islam to try to give us a better understanding. He discussed the Shia-Sunni difference, as well as the diversity in race among Muslims. Beyond religious beliefs, the speaker discussed his experience as a minority at college, an experience many of these seniors will relate to next year.

The next interfaith programming was the meeting of the Friends in Faith program on November 13, supported by the American Jewish Committee and St. Joseph's University, with students and faculty from Pope John Paul II High School visiting Barrack. The program began with a presentation from Professors Philip Cunningham and Adam Gregerman who discussed past relations between the two religions. There was a prayer for peace read by both a Pope John Paul II student and a Barrack student, in English and Hebrew, respectively. After the presentation, we were divided into small groups to discuss our religious

differences and our relative experiences. In these discussions, we not only focused on our religious experiences but also read texts from the two religions in order to apply our

All of these visitors have been extremely impactful and helpful in broadening our understanding of religion.

beliefs to the topic of immigration. We then enjoyed lunch together, with water ice and donut holes, and it was particularly enjoyable to socialize with the Pope John Paul II



students teen to teen. The program was also run last year, and it was especially nice to do it again, but at Barrack this time!

Most recently, on November 15, we heard from Rev. Myungjung Lee who serves as a minister the Won Buddhist Temple in Glenside. First, she led us in a group meditation,

leading us through the steps, and ringing the bell to give an authentic experience. That went into her explaining more about Won Buddhism, as many of us had never heard of it before. She explained that it was created when the founder, Venerable Sotaesan, experienced an Enlightenment. Then, she discussed the day-to-day life of a Won Buddhist, which includes many times throughout the day for rest, prayer, reflection, meditation, and study.

All of these visitors have been extremely impactful and helpful in broadening our understanding of religion and learning about different cultures, and hopefully, there will be similar visitors in Barrack's future!

Is Golda All That it is Hyped Up to Be?

Claire Englander, Staff Writer

Many have eagerly awaited the release of *Golda*. *Golda* is an incredibly moving and powerful film that offers deep insight into the life and legacy of Israel's first female prime minister, Golda Meir. It is based on the true story of how she handled the 1963 Yom Kippur War. This movie discusses all of Golda Meir's choices throughout the War and her and her team's perspective and thought process. It shows the challenges and successes she faced and the decisions she made that shaped the nation. *Golda* came out just before the 50th anniversary of the Yom Kippur War, and just a few weeks



before the war on October seventh against Hamas broke out. *Golda* has informative details about the Yom Kippur War, Israel's relationships with surrounding countries, and the historical context of Israel's formation and conflicts. Primarily, *Golda* displays Jewish and Israeli persistence, which is so important, especially at this time. It demonstrates Israel and the Jewish people's determination and might. *Golda* is sorrowful, but it represents powerful information.

The movie does a great job

of portraying the challenges and triumphs Golda Meir faced as a leader, and it captures the remarkable strength and determination she possessed. The performances in

moments from her life while also showing the larger political context. Visually, the movie is beautiful, with attention to detail in recreating the time period. It also captures the

Golda is sorrowful, but it represents powerful information.

Golda are also amazing, especially the lead actress, who shows Meir's personality, strength, determination, and commitment to her people. The film also pays attention to the challenges faced being a female leader at that time. Throughout the movie, the audience really feels the weight of her responsibilities and the sacrifices she made. The storytelling is compelling, and the film manages to balance personal

emotions and intensity of the story. It's a thought-provoking movie that showcases the complexities of leadership and the sacrifices made for the greater good. Overall, *Golda* is a must-watch for anyone. It's a beautifully made movie that pays tribute to a truly inspirational figure. I highly recommend giving it a watch!

Disney Releases "Wish"

Rachel Loeb, Editor-in-Chief

The release of *Wish* marks a significant occasion, as Walt Disney celebrates its centennial anniversary. The company's journey began on October 16, 1923, when Walt Disney and his brother Roy founded Disney Brothers Cartoon Studio with a contract for six Alice Comedies. Since then, the Disney franchise has experienced remarkable growth, producing over 1,200 movies and TV shows, acquiring entities like Pixar, Marvel, and Star Wars, and establishing six Disney resorts worldwide. Their movies have consistently achieved great success; for instance, *Frozen II* grossed \$1,450,026,933 at the box office, making it the tenth highest-grossing film of all time.

To commemorate their centennial, Disney chose to explore a recurring theme in their films – wishes coming true. *Wish* takes place between the 13th and 14th centuries in the Kingdom of Rosas, an island in the Mediterranean Sea. The narrative centers on King Magnifico, who wields sorcery and can take and grant his

subjects' desires. Each person gives Magnifico a wish and gives up their memory of their wish to protect it, and monthly, King Magnifico selects one wish to fulfill. However, the protagonist, Asha, an aspiring apprentice of Magnifico, discovers that the king does not plan to grant all the wishes or return them to their owners. This leads to Asha then making a wish on a star which then falls from the sky to answer her wish.

Initially, Disney planned for the movie to be animated in the style of traditional 2D as a way to honor their past. However, they later opted for a blend of watercolor illustration and CGI animation, a decision met with criticism from viewers who preferred the original style. Similarly, the movie's musical style has been scrutinized, with some perceiving it as a departure from Disney's better

villain songs. Many people are comparing the classics like "Mother Knows Best" and "Hellfire", with King Magnifico's song "This is the Thanks I Get", to support their claim that in choosing basic

pop songs, Disney is putting in less effort and playing it safe. Development of the movie began in 2018, but it was not publicly announced until 2022. The movie came out in theaters on November 22, 2023, and will likely be on Disney+ after. Despite the movie being set up for success with popular actors like Chris Pine, and directors who worked on *Frozen*, *Wish* did



not perform well, earning 51% on Rotten Tomatoes. That being said, many people have enjoyed this movie and readers should make their own decisions regarding the movie.

Book Recommendations From Barrack Students

Aviva Markowitz, Arts & Entertainment Editor

Need something new to read? Here are 10 book recs from our Barrack students!

- The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini
- Neuromancer by William Gibson
- Haunting Adeline by H. D. Carlton
- It Starts With Us by Colleen Hoover
- November by Colleen Hoover
- If We Were Villains by M. L. Rio
- The Atlas Six by Olivia Blake
- The Sun Is Also a Star by Nicola Yoon
- Turtles All The Way Down by John Green
- Hell Bent by Leigh Bardugo

Pixar Releases Trailer for “Inside Out 2”

Mikaela Garber, Managing Editor

Hype has started to build around the June 2024 release of “Inside Out 2”. This Pixar movie is the sequel to the 2015 film, “Inside Out”. The movie centers around Riley, an 11-year-old girl, and the five emotions in her brain: Joy, Sadness, Disgust, Anger, and Fear. Riley has just moved from Minnesota to San Francisco and is having



The introduction of a new emotion, Anxiety, has people excited over the prospects of what this movie could bring.

difficulty adjusting to her new life. This, coupled with all of the issues that tweens face, causes her to experience mixed emotions that she doesn’t fully understand. Viewers follow Riley and the emotions in her head as they fight to help Riley get settled in her new home and understand

her feelings. Ultimately, Joy and Sadness work together to create a core memory for Riley. The film concludes with Riley turning 12, surrounded by new-found friends and a loving family. The film swept the movie theaters, enchanting young and old audiences alike, even going so far as to cause viewers to cry. It received a 2016 Academy Award for best animated feature.

Pixar released the first trailer for the new movie, which has notably set viewing records, and people are weighing in their opinions. Similarly to the first movie, this one will once again take viewers into Riley’s mind, this time through her puberty years. The introduction of a new emotion, Anxiety, has people excited over the prospects of what this movie could bring. Pixar has likely chosen this due to the fact that many

people, especially teenagers, experience high levels of anxiety. Many are thankful for the increase in representation regarding mental health. Others, however, feel that the addition of a new emotion is unnecessary. They use media to escape from the real world and don’t want to have to face their problems when watching a movie.

A big change in this movie compared



to the previous one is the change in a few voice actors. Bill Hader and Mindy Kaling are not returning as Fear and Disgust in the sequel, citing the reason to be a lower salary than the actor playing Joy. They have been replaced by Tony Hale and Liza Lapira, respectively. The rest of the voice actors will be returning.

The release of this movie comes after a lull in revenue for Pixar. During COVID-19, Pixar was forced to directly release their movies to Disney+, instead of to theaters due to safety concerns. Additionally, many fans of Pixar have cited a decline in the quality of movies recently, as shown by movies such as “Elemental,” which had the worst Pixar opening to date. Hopefully, with “Inside Out 2”, viewers will once again be drawn into the magical stories that Pixar produces.

The Many Controversies Over Disney’s “Snow White” Remake

Jonah Pappas, Staff Writer

Since Disney began remaking their classic animated films into live-action movies, there has been no shortage of outrage over controversies. Every single live action remake, from Cinderella in 2015 to this past May’s “The Little Mermaid” has been met with anger, from critics and audiences alike. Proving to be no exception to this, Snow White has faced massive controversies despite not being released yet. The storm of heated discourse around Snow White began on X (formerly known as Twitter) and TikTok when Rachel Zegler was announced to play the titular character. The casting

of Zegler, whose parents are Colombian and Polish, as Snow White angered reactionary conservatives who believed that Snow White needed to be portrayed by a white actress.

In an interview with Variety, Zegler responded to the racist comments, saying that “Snow White” is really a big deal in Spanish-speaking countries.” In that same interview, Zegler described the changes made to the story, stating that “it’s no longer 1937” and that she is “not going to be saved by the prince. And she’s not going to be dreaming about true love. She’s dreaming about becoming the leader she knows she can be.” X and TikTok once

again blew up, with radical conservatives on the platforms calling Zegler a “walking PR disaster,” and the movie “woke” and “at odds with the original film’s values.” However, the debate over the movie was not restricted to Rachel Zegler. Peter Dinklage, an actor diagnosed with dwarfism, expressed concern over the use of dwarfs in the film while on Marc Maron’s podcast, “WTF”. He called the remake a “backwards story,” and “was a little taken

aback when [Disney] was very proud to cast a Latina actress as Snow White, but [still told] the story of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.” However, other actors with dwarfism disagreed with Dinklage.

Dylan Postl, Katrina Kemp, and Jeff Brooks have all asserted that more roles for dwarf actors are better, especially in a mainstream Disney movie. Although the movie was originally set to release in February of 2024, it has been delayed to an unspecified date in early 2025. It is speculated that Disney delayed the release to wait for the controversies to die down, but Disney has not spoken on the reason for the delay.

Snow White has faced massive controversies despite not being released yet.



Diplomatic Discourse

Ryan Fink, World News Editor

Currently, Israel has relations with a slight majority of Arab nations including Jordan, Egypt, the U.A.E, and Morocco. As the leader of the Arab world, Saudi Arabia has yet to officially recognize Israel as a legitimate state; however, leading up to the October 7th attack in Israel, talks were in place to normalize relations between the two countries, which is a leading contributor to Hamas's attack. Hamas took advantage of the fact there was political division in Israel and that they did not want Saudi Arabia to normalize ties with Israel. This cumulated with Hamas's horrific attack on Israeli and non-Israeli civilians, killing over 1200 people and taking around 240 hostages, one of whom is thought to have been born in captivity. Immediately, NATO alliance members such as The United States, The United Kingdom, and France condemned the attacks on Israeli civilians and expressed unwavering support for Israel; however, other countries did not play to the same tune. Qatar, a country that has been accused of backing terrorism and not being tough on Iran, immediately said that it was Israel's fault for the attack that took place. Iran argued the same thing while the rest of the arab world backed Hamas and the Palestinians.

The attacks that took place on October 7th may not be comparable to anything except the Holocaust, but a place where one could look back and see Israel's diplomatic relationships with other countries is the Yom Kippur War. During that time many countries closed their diplomatic missions with Israel, similar to what is seen today with eight countries



having closed their embassies in Tel Aviv at the time of writing. One of those countries is Jordan, which completed its peace negotiations with Israel in 1994, along with South Africa, which has long stood with the Palestinian people because they think closely of themselves considering South Africa's long history of conflict.

An Influx of Immigrants at the Southern Border

Edan Held, World News Editor

In recent years, specifically the past year, America has experienced an unforeseen influx of migrants arriving at its southern border. Many Republicans blame President Joe Biden's weak immigration policy; however, Joe Biden himself has commented that he wants to punish illegal immigrants while increasing the legal ways of entering the United States.

Throughout the world, conflict and catastrophic events have pushed people to seek

shelter in the United States. People have moved from both Russia and Ukraine to countries in South America, where they later realized the move didn't fulfill their needs. In turn, they come to the U.S. in search of refuge, attempting to get meetings with Customs and Border Control officials to seek asylum. But long wait times and a complicated process have forced many migrants to consider entering illegally, simply in search of safety.

Following the expiration of Title 42 in May of 2023, which eased immigration restrictions after COVID-19, Customs and Border Patrol only reported around 3,500 arrests of illegal border crossings each day. However, in the last three to four months, they have arrested nearly 8,000 migrants per day following attempted border crossings, requiring increased government spending and resources. In the first half of September alone, 142,000 immigrants showed up at

the US-Mexico border.

This surge in immigration has put pressure on border towns, and even towns further north. Eagle Pass, Texas declared a state of emergency following an influx of immigrants, and San Diego has received 230,000 people just this year — up 30% from 2022. New York City has announced that they have reached the maximum number of immigrants that they can take in, and can no longer offer shelter to those coming to the city.

The increase in immigrants seeking legal entry into the U.S. poses a big problem for President Joe Biden and whoever wins the next Presidential election. The Republican nominee will likely target Joe Biden for his "weak" immigration policies, while that nominee will also have to create a plan to combat the surge in immigrants showing up at the southern border.



Earthquakes in Afghanistan

Mordy Singer, Staff Writer

Beginning on October 15th, Afghanistan experienced a series of devastating earthquakes, the highest with a magnitude of 6.3. The tremors, with their epicenter located in the Hindu Kush region, were felt across a large area, causing widespread destruction and loss of life. The seismic activity struck at a particularly vulnerable time for Afghanistan, as the nation was already grappling with various challenges, including political instability, economic hardship, and healthcare concerns.

The earthquakes inflicted extensive damage to infrastructure, including homes, schools, and healthcare facilities. Thousands of families were suddenly displaced and forced to seek shelter in makeshift camps or overcrowded public spaces. Access to basic necessities such as clean water, food, and medical care became scarce, adding another problem to those affected. According to an October 20th United Nations report, over 154,000 citizens had been displaced with 21,500 homes being destroyed. Since then, the number has grown greatly.

The earthquakes also posed a challenge to the already strained humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan. Aid organizations, local and inter-

national, mobilized quickly to provide assistance, but logistical obstacles, security concerns, and the ongoing political turmoil in the country complicated relief efforts. The earthquakes underscored the urgent need for coordinated, sustained, and efficient humanitarian response to alleviate the suffering of the affected populations.

In the wake of these seismic events, the Afghan people demonstrated remarkable resilience, coming together to support one another and rebuild their communities. However, a return to normalcy for the Afghan people is far from close. These earthquakes have caused a lasting devastation to the people, economy, and infrastructure in Afghanistan.



Diagnoses in a New Fashion

Evan Berman, Staff Writer, and Chloe Hedaya, Staff Writer

When diagnosed with brain cancer, surgery is an option, yet it always comes with risks. When the surgeon finally comes into contact with the tumor, they are faced with two options. They can either ensure that the whole tumor gets removed by additionally cutting out some healthy tissue, or they can leave the healthy tissue alone yet risk leaving some cancer behind. However, based on preliminary testing, scientists in the Netherlands have created a device to aid surgeons in making their decisions. Surgeons have been using a computer during the early hours of



brain tumor surgery that scans a small segment of the tumor's DNA, giving them a comprehensive diagnosis of the tumor, revealing its type and sometimes its subtype. Knowing the type of tumor drastically helps the surgeons make better, more informed decisions when deciding how aggressive to be with the tumor.

Initially, this method was tested on frozen tumors previously extracted from past brain surgeries. The system was able to accurately diagnose about 90% of the cases



within only 40 minutes. After the trial's immeasurable success, scientists began testing on live brains during surgery, which they found was 72% effective and able to detect the tumor type within 90 minutes. This device provides a leap in the right direction as it allows doctors to thoroughly understand what they are treating rather than spending time testing and analyzing results. Not only does this help them in surgery, but if they can more comprehensively categorize the cancers, they may be able to find new treatments for the targeted type of cancer.

Who is Mike Johnson?

Isaac Dahan, Staff Writer



On October 25, 2023, after a grand total of 19 different votes for Speaker of the House, the Republican majority finally managed to elect Louisiana's fourth representative, Mike Johnson. Serving in the House since 2017, Mike Johnson is the least experienced Speaker ever to be elected to the position of Speaker, and, at only 51, he is also the third-youngest Speaker ever to grace the seat. As a result of his recent admittance to the House and abrupt nomination to Speakership, many Americans have wondered what to think of the new third most powerful person in the country.

Before entering politics, Johnson practiced constitutional law in both private practice and as a member of the ADF, the "Alliance Defending Freedom," where he made a name for himself advocating for the criminalization of homosexuality and so-called "sodomy." Between 2004 and 2012, Johnson sat on the Ethics and Religious Liberty Convention of the Southern Bap-

tist Convention, the people known for protesting Pride Parades, Abortion Clinics, and women serving as Church officials. Johnson's career as a politician started in 2015 when he was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives, where he served until 2017. However, in 2016, identified as a member of the Christian Right, Johnson was promptly elected to Louisiana's 4th Congressional District seat in the House of Representatives. While serving in Congress, Johnson made news by contesting the 2020 elections, supporting a nationwide ban on abortion, and arguing against the sepa-

Many Americans have wondered what to think of the new third most powerful person in the country.

ration of Church and State. Because of his extremist views, he was appointed to the chair of the Republican Study Committee, the largest Republican caucus, in 2019, before being promoted to vice chair of the House Republican Conference from 2021 to 2023.

Johnson prides himself on his ultraconservative and uncompromising positions on outlawing abortions and taking away gay rights. In fact, he blamed school shootings in America on abortion and gay marriage, saying, "when you tell a generation of people that life has no value, no meaning, that it's expendable, then you do wind up with school shooters." He has also correlated a link between the teaching of evolution and school shootings, insisting that the idea

of "survival of the fittest" is causing young people to open fire on their classmates. Furthermore, he claims that abortion damages the economy because it reduces the number of workers in America. Johnson continues to believe that the 2020 election was rigged and stolen, using his position to fight against the result to such an extent that the New York Times has referred to him as "the most important architect of the electoral college objections." Johnson has voted against the establishment of a national commission to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of the January 6th riot

of the Capitol. He also denies that humans have an impact on climate change, citing the Bible and the oil and gas lobbyists, who have donated \$338,125 to him throughout his congressional career. In 2017, he voted for the American Health Care Act, which was intended to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

In a continuum of something mentioned earlier, he's been a longtime opponent of LGBT rights, working with Marjorie Taylor Greene and Jim Jordan to push for the criminalization of homosexuality and calling homosexuals "sinful," "destructive," a "deviant group," and pedophiles, actively calling on his supporters to be homophobic. Again, citing the Bible and his lobbyists, he's claimed that "homosexual marriage is the dark harbinger of

chaos and sexual anarchy that could doom even the strongest republic." From the perspective of a constitutional lawyer, he has also opposed the rulings of both *Lawrence v. Texas* and *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which outlawed regulation of private sexual conduct and universally legalized same-sex marriage respectively. Johnson himself introduced an act in 2022 which, comparable to the "Don't Say Gay" law of Florida, would ban the mentioning of sexual orientation and gender identity in public schools nationwide, which he justified under the banner of "stopping the sexualization of children."

Aligning with many of his views on the LGBT community, he doesn't believe in allowing transgender youth access to gender-affirming care, sponsoring legislation to make providing such care to minors a felony.

All in all, Mike Johnson is a textbook example of a polivangelist, a politician who blurs the line between church and state to propel his religious views on others. As an extremely religious man, there is no line between politics and religion for Mike Johnson, as when asked what he thought on some current issues, Johnson told the reporter to just read the Bible to find out. Right now, with all things said and done and Mike Johnson's place as speaker solidified for God knows how long, the only question left for Americans is no longer "who?" but "what's next for America?" Find out in the next issue of Cougar Chronicle.

Jewish Ce

Finding the Light

Claire Englander, Staff Writer

Light is a significant part of Judaism and is a huge part of everyday Jewish life. Light is seen as a symbol of the presence of God, hope, guidance, resilience, wisdom, and spirit. On Friday nights, the beginning of Shabbat, we light the Shabbat candles to welcome in light, warmth, and peace into



our homes. Then, during Havdalah, we cleanse again with light to bring the new week in. An annual festival that is centered around light is coming up: Hanukkah. Hannukah means dedication and is an invitation to rededicate ourselves

to Mitzvot and bettering the world around us. Lighting the Menorah represents the miracle of the oil lasting eight nights in the Temple, bringing hope and light to the Israelites.

Light serves as a reminder to seek out the good and bring joy into

our lives and the world. There is the important Jewish concept of “Tikkun Olam,” meaning “repairing the world.” This encourages us to engage in Mitzvot such as greeting someone with a warm hello, visiting people in need, and writing supportive letters to the IDF. Bringing light to everyone by helping others and our environment, we can actively brighten the world. In difficult times, Jewish rituals can also be very comforting. Whether it is praying and reciting Psalms, lighting candles for a Shabbat, Yahrzeit and Yom Tov, or just being with a Jewish community.

Especially in this time, light is playing a large role in Jewish persistence. There are candles remembering all of the hostages and victims of this Israeli-Hamas war. Lighting these candles is a way to honor their lives. Light is a powerful symbol of resilience and a reminder to find hope and strength even in the darkest of times. It teaches us to be a light unto others and spread kindness and warmth everywhere we go. So, even during challenging times, let us continue to shine bright and be a source of light for ourselves and others.

The Lionesses of Israel

Margot Englander, Centerspread Editor

When everything seemed to stop on October 7, an all-female tank unit took action. Following allegations of infiltration by heavily armed terrorists, Commander Lieutenant Colonel Or Ben-Yehudah ordered her all-female force to “stay alert” as they proceeded to the southern Israeli kibbutz of Sufa. “We are going out to eliminate terrorists,” she declared to her twelve soldiers, “Infiltration into Israel is happening, and it’s spreading. Stay alert. We might cross paths. We are a strong squad”.

Israel is one of the only countries where military service is required for able-bodied females (only Jewish women), and they serve for slightly shorter periods than their male counterparts. The IDF’s regulated integration of women began in the days of the Yishuv, when Jewish women served in the ranks of various Zionist paramilitaries during the 1947-1949 Palestine War. In 1999-2000, an amendment was made to the Women’s Equal Rights Law of Israel, under which men and women became fully equalized – although separately – in the Israeli military. Until 2001, all female soldiers served in the Women’s Corps/Chayil Nashim. As of 2011, about 88% of the IDF was open to women, but women only served in 69% of the positions offered to them. Amidst the 2014 Gaza War, the IDF stated that fewer than 4% of their female soldiers were enlisted in combat positions.

In 2020, the IDF confirmed the success of a two-year pilot program for an all-female

tank operating team and that the role would become permanent in the military. The company, in the Caracal mixed-gender light infantry battalion (which is in the IDF’s Border Defense Corps), operates along the Egyptian border, and is typically not in wars or fighting deep behind enemy lines (until October 7th). The Border Defense Corps is responsible for defending Israel’s borders with Jordan and Egypt. Although Israel maintains peace treaties with Amman and Cairo, these frontiers normally see frequent smuggling attempts, and on occasion, other violent incidents. The Sinai desert is home to a small but capable branch of the Islamic State terror group, known as the Sinai Province, which has committed numerous terror attacks.

On October 7th, when the team got to the military base near Egypt, they discovered that over fifty Israeli soldiers were being held captive by Hamas following a terrorist raid. The fifty heavily armed terrorists attacked

Commander Lt-Col Ben-Yehudah and her squad of twelve women as they closed in on the base. The commander shot a male terrorist at close range after coming face to face with him.

When an officer from a different squad showed up and suggested attacking the building where the terrorists were hiding, Lt-Col Ben-Yehudah declined to endanger the hostages’ lives. Rather, she aimed her offensive fire toward the terrorists who were dispersed across the base and in the open.

Four hours of intense fighting ensued between the terrorists and the female battalion. Later, soldiers from a Navy Special Forces Unit reinforced the Caracal unit. They needed fourteen hours to secure the base. This proves that there should be no more “doubt about female combat soldiers,” according to Lt-Col Ben-Yehudah. Her forces’ “significant contributions” to the victory, the death of roughly 100 terrorists, and the life-saving helicopter evacuations of injured soldiers under fire were all hailed by her. “They



fought valiantly, prevented fatalities, and became heroes.” That day, another all-female tank crew under the command of

They fought like Lionesses.

Lt-Col Ben-Yehudah launched another valiant charge against Hamas rebels who had stormed the nearby kibbutz Holit, killing over a dozen residents.

“The all-female tank crew members who were stationed near to our team on October 7th,” according to a fighter in the Peled team (who battled with the all-female team) “were amazing, incredible, they fought like lionesses. They were a huge assistance to us. They ought to be embellished.” Approximately 25% of the 200,000 active soldiers in the IDF are female. Seventy percent of the units in the Caracal Battalion, which is stationed in Southern Israel, are made up entirely of women. On October 7, the Caracal Battalion is reported to have killed one hundred terrorists in all.

Now, following the events of October 7th, Israel is reported to be considering putting more women into higher positions of power within the IDF.

celebration

Israel's Greatest Inventions

Ari Eisenstadt, Staff Writer

Israel's innovative inventions have changed the medical and technological world. Without Israel, what would doctors have to test for the cause of internal bleeding if not for the pill cam? What would we do if we had to wake up every morning and drive to school or work without opening Waze? How would Israel be different or survive without the Iron Dome to protect them from Hamas's attacks?

As of 2022, Israel is ranked 6th in the world index of healthcare innovation because of its incredible advancements, such as nano retinas, research into the cure for cancer, and many more. Doctors in Israel have found a way to insert a device into the eye that works as a retina and enhances the patient's vision called a nano retina. They have also invented the capsule endoscopy, usually called the pill cam, a pill you swallow that records photos of your digestive system. The pill cam helps diagnose cancer, celiac, and inflammatory bowel diseases and to discover bleeding. There is a small risk that the pill gets stuck while traveling through the digestive system, but it is improbable and shouldn't bother your day plans or work. Since the pill was created in 2001, it has been used in 75 countries and around 1.5 million times. The medical advances continue with the Rewalk, which allows disabled people to walk by tracking their upper body movement. When the body tilts forward, it causes the legs to step forward. Unlike the ones before, one downside of this product is that the Rewalk could cost anywhere between \$70,000 and \$85,000. Nevertheless, Israel has changed the medical world for the better and continues to be a place fostering medical development.

Israel's medicine is not the only thing that stands out because of its groundbreaking technological developments. Israel is credited with inventing the navigation app Waze. Waze is innovative and differentiates itself from Google Maps by using its followers' information about where a car

crash is and the traffic to direct others to a faster route. Also, it has adorable emoticons to keep you company when you're stuck in traffic. Simcha Blass also invented a drip irrigation system that preserves water. Water is preserved by transporting it directly to the area of the root that absorbs it. This is a critical creation for Israel because it allows them to use their limited source of water in other ways and for the world because it is a good reform to improve global warming. While Waze and drip irrigation are adored, a more relevant invention is the Iron Dome. A device that has been crucial in defending Israel throughout the current war and against the spontaneous missile attacks this year. The Iron Dome uses radars that can sense missiles and rockets from around 60 miles away and send response missiles to shoot the episode down. Additionally, the missiles are supposed to be able to distinguish between the attacks heading toward highly populated places and target those rockets. It is incredibly effective working around 94% of the time, but each interceptor costs around 50,000 dollars. Israel is willing to spend a tremendous amount of money to protect its people, an intelligent decision that was praised by Jonathan Conricus, who said, "The number of Israelis killed and wounded would be far higher if it had not been for the Iron Dome system, which has been a lifesaver as it always is."

What would the world be like without Israel? It would not be as advanced or knowledgeable in the medical field or have the same technology.



Rabbis' Hanukkah Teachings

Margot Englander, Centerspread Editor

Hanukkah. Chanukah. The Festival of Light. Many names, many spellings, and many traditions. In the spirit of the joy of the holiday, the Chronicle decided to reach out to Jack M. Barrack's very own Rabbis!

Hanukkah, (meaning "dedication"), commemorates the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. In 164 BCE, a group of fighters (The Maccabees), fought and defeated the Greek Army that had captured Jerusalem in 200 BCE. When they reclaimed the temple, they wanted to re-light the menorah. Even though they only found enough oil for one day, the menorah burned for eight. Hanukkah begins on the 25th day of Kislev, which this year falls on Thursday, December 7th. Hanukkah ends at sundown on Friday, December 15th.

All over the world, through various Jewish

kenazim, the custom is for every member of the household to light their own Hanukkah. In Sephardic households, there is one Hanukkah for the entire family. Some people, especially Ashkenazim, use the shamash to light the rest of the candles. It is Sephardic custom to light the shamash last, using a different candle or match to light the others; some Hasidic Jews follow this custom as well.

There are a lot of tasty foods eaten on Hanukkah, including fried foods and sufganiyot (doughnuts). For Jews from Central and Eastern Europe, the real factor that defined Hanukkah eating was less delicious, since it was during the harsh winter season, which yielded nothing. Jews in prewar Europe ate what was available, and made pancakes from grated turnips, potatoes, or milled grains. They'd fry them in schmaltz, rendered poultry fat, an essential component of Ashkenazi cooking.

In the Old World, there was a tradition of eating a Hanukkah goose. When Hanukkah fell



on Shabbat, Jewish families would host a feast with roast goose and latkes – the smell of smoking goose fat became the traditional scent of Hanukkah. The goose was a beneficial animal for the Jews of Poland because it supplied so much to a household: food, feathers for bedding, and fats for rendering.

Indian Jews typically eat gulab jamun, fried dough balls soaked in a sweet syrup, as part of their Hanukkah celebrations. Italian Jews eat fried chicken, cassola (a ricotta cheese latke similar to a cheesecake), and *fritelle de riso par Hanukkah* (a fried sweet rice pancake).

In the spirit of the joy of the holiday, the Chronicle decided to reach out to Jack M. Barrack's very own Rabbis!

communities there are many different customs and traditions regarding Hanukkah celebrations. In terms of lighting the Hanukkah, among Ash-

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Rabbis' Teachings - Continued

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Romanian Jews have pasta latkes as their traditional Hanukkah dish, and Syrian Jews consume Kibbet Yakeen, a dish made with pumpkin and bulgar similar to latkes, as well as their own version of keftes de prasa spiced with allspice and cinnamon.

The custom of eating dairy foods on Hanukkah dates back to the Middle Ages, when the book of Judith played an important role in the Hanukkah narrative. Judith was a celebrated Jewish heroine who saved her village from an invading Assyrian army. Since she was very beautiful, she tricked the Assyrian army's general with wine and salty cheese. When the general passed out drunk and full, she beheaded him with his own sword. The Israelites launched a surprise attack on the leader-less Assyrian army and emerged victorious. In Judith's honor, some communities eat dairy on Hanukkah.

In the JBHA community, our numerous Rabbis have their own favorite teachings and traditions specific to Hanukkah. In Rabbi Lev's house, they like to keep the spirit of Hanukkah going all year, so they usually sing the blessings over Shabbat candles to the Hanukkah melody all year! They also enjoy challah with honey all year and don't limit themselves to only Rosh HaShanah and Sukkot. Why not enjoy the sweetness all

year long? Rabbi Razin's family's favorite tradition is making homemade *לביבות וסופגניות*. His favorite teaching is that the *מכבים* (Maccabees) led the first battle for religious freedom in recorded history. Rabbi Lauren enjoys the newer tradition



of giving tzedakah during Hanukkah rather than only giving kids gifts. This Jewish tradition reminds us of the serious issue of poverty, especially in Philadelphia. Jewish teachings ask each community to make sure that everyone in their proximity is cared for. The Fifth Night Project was created to dedicate the fifth night of Hanukkah for charity – skip the gifts that night and teach children the importance of giving to those in need. Rabbi Rosenberg likes the (mentioned above) special tradition of eating dairy on Ha-

nukkah to commemorate Judith. Judith models someone who intelligently comes up with different strategies for opposing what feels like overwhelming existential threat. This is especially relevant to right now, with the war in Israel! Rabbi

Zinkow's favorite teaching is that, according to Ravad (Rabbi Avraham ben David), the blessing that is said when lighting the candles is modeled on the blessing that is said in the Temple when the Kohanim would light the menorah. When we light our candles, our hanukkiah is akin to the menorah, us to Kohanim, and our houses to the temple. Finally, Rabbi Yondorf loves Shabbat 21a - 22a. This section of the Talmud discusses lighting Shabbat candles, so we can draw comparisons to Hanukkah candles. Shabbat 21b

discusses the obligation of lighting candles on Shabbat, just as we are obligated to light for eight nights on Hanukkah. Also, Shabbat 22a touches on the importance of parents teaching their children the Torah, and Hanukkah also emphasizes the role of education and passing down stories to the future generations.

Perhaps, for your Hanukkah celebrations this year, you could incorporate some of these unique traditions from around the world and our community here at Barrack!

Uniting Jews Worldwide

Talia Hurtig, Staff Writer

In the face of the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine, a remarkable and unexpected consequence has emerged - a new sense of unity among Jews across borders. As tensions escalate in the Middle East, Jews in Israel, the United States, and Europe find themselves drawn together by a shared concern for the well-being of their fellow community members and in an attempt to combat the rise in anti-semitism that is being felt across the world.

One striking manifestation of this unity is evident in the collaborative efforts to support those affected by the conflict. Jewish communities around the world, particularly in Israel and the United States, have rallied to provide aid and assistance to those in need.

The conflict has prompted Jewish communities to organize blood donation drives, which have become a symbol of solidarity and shared purpose, emphasizing the importance of standing together in times of crisis. In Israel, where the

impact of the conflict is most directly felt, the response has been swift and widespread. People from all walks of life, no matter of religious or political affiliations, have come forward to donate blood to support the victims of the conflict. The act of giving blood overcomes political and geographic boundaries, serving as a physical expression of empathy



and shared humanity.

The unity among Jews extends beyond geographic locations, with the Jewish diaspora in the United States playing a crucial role in supporting their brothers and sisters in Israel. Jewish communities in the U.S. have organized fundraising campaigns, awareness drives, and solidarity events to demonstrate their commitment to the well-being

of those affected by the conflict and to the safety of the State of Israel. The sense of shared identity and history has become a catalyst for collabo-

rative efforts aimed at mending the suffering caused by the violence in the region.

Furthermore, with the hostage situation that is taking place, events around the world have emerged to call for their release. Shabbat dinners with empty chairs for the missing, posters hung on every street, social media posts, and rallies have popped up around the United States and the world. Many Jews are leveraging their networks to raise awareness, encourage dialogue, and amplify the voices of those affected by this crisis. Additionally, some community leaders are working closely with government officials and international organizations to explore opportunities for hostage release.

The conflict has ignited conversations within the Jewish diaspora about the importance of a collec-

tive response to global challenges. Regardless of the physical distance, the emotional and cultural ties that bind Jews together have become a

New sense of unity among Jews across borders

source of strength during these trying times. It has become increasingly evident that the Israel-Palestine conflict, while deeply divisive in many aspects, has served as a catalyst for fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility among Jews worldwide.

In conclusion, the Israel-Palestine conflict has had the unexpected consequence of uniting Jews in Israel and the United States. The establishment of blood banks and the collective efforts to support those affected by the conflict highlight the resilience of the global Jewish community in times of crisis. While the conflict continues to be a source of pain and sorrow, the silver lining lies in the solidarity and unity that have emerged, transcending geographic boundaries and strengthening the bonds that connect Jews across the world.

We Cannot Fight Antisemitism Alone: A Deeper Dive Into the Reason for the Rapid Rise in Antisemitism

Jillian Shweky, Opinion Editor

Just as we are reaching the point where very few Holocaust survivors are still living, hate akin to the rise of Nazi-ism is surfacing. The ADL and FBI have seen a 400% increase in antisemitic incidents in the US since Oct 7th. Jews are 2.4% of the population but the recipients of 60% of religious hate crimes. Since October 7th, Jewish day schools have canceled classes, synagogues have been locked, homes have been graffitied with Swastikas, mobs have attacked Jewish students on campuses, and social media has boomed with antisemitism.

Until October 7th, the majority of American Jews have been able to ignore antisemitism blissfully. Many read when it happened to someone else in another city or state, or they did not hear about it at all. Even the 2018 Tree of Life synagogue massacre was not a wake-up call for most of us.

So, many Jews are asking, where do they turn for support? Who are their friends? Bridgette Gabriel, a Lebanese Christian who spent her teen years in a bomb shelter in Beirut hiding from Hezbollah and ultimately rescued by

are afraid to intervene, or don't feel as if it is their fight. Because they don't speak about it, they also



often assume that they are the only ones both-

What most non-Jews don't realize is that antisemitic violence has been shown to be a precursor to deeper divides between people and government.

ered by this. They sympathize with the person, or people regularly attacked and intimidated, but feel unable to assist. With respect to Raviv's quote and the current crisis, the Pro-Palestinian/Pro-Hamas rallies are large and relentless like any effective bully. Since non-Jews are less likely to have conversations about or post in support of Jews or Israel, they likely have the impression that they are in the minority in their support. Moreover, they are made to feel by these groups that if you support Jews and/or Israel, you are an oppressor and equally culpable.

What most non-Jews don't realize is that antisemitic violence has been shown to be a precursor to deeper divides between people and government. In an article for CNN, Stephen Collinson noted that "outbursts of antisemitism have often been harbingers of societies in deep trouble and omens that extremism and violence are imminent." Look at Germany in the 1930s: the economy was struggling deeply, and there was political instability. During this time, antisemitism spiked. Additionally, in the years leading up to the French Revolution, Jews had begun to gain more rights and in some cases establish themselves in society while at the same time, there was growing political unrest. People were looking to blame and to lash out and Jews were a small but visible minority, so they were a good target.

In the last 20 years in the USA, there has been a growing polarization within political parties and their ideologies. A significant segment of the Republican party is leaning very conservative. The Democrats have a notable left-lean-

ing faction that has aligned with the ideals of the Democratic Socialists of America, including the very vocal members of "The Squad": Ocasio-Cortez, Rashida Tlaib, and Cori Bush. Organizations and groups that oppose the U.S. government and sometimes its democratic way of life have also been behind vocal and often violent incidents. BDS and Black Lives Matter have become political forces. These groups have been known to use democratic values such as freedom of speech, expression, and the right to peaceful assembly to justify words and actions which many believe cross the lines into hate speech and incitement.

Many Jews protested with the Black community after the death of George Floyd and even posted Black Lives Matter signs on their lawns and bumper stickers on their cars. However, after multiple antisemitic actions and most recently, a post on their social media of a silhouette of a Hamas Paraglider to stand with Palestine, BLM has subsequently hindered its relationship with many Jews.

Jews cannot fight antisemitism alone. "The victim cannot cure the crime. The hated cannot cure the hate. It would be the greatest mistake for Jews to believe that they can fight it alone. The only people who can successfully combat antisemitism are those active in the cultures that harbor it," according to Rabbi Jonathan Sacks.

Interestingly, the climate has awakened many Jews who had been sitting on the sidelines of Judaism. Even though social media is spreading hate faster than we can counter it, it is also building strong communities of Jewish activism. Jews are coming together and sharing information, then reaching out to universities and signing petitions to remove antisemitic professors and staff. Simultaneously, social media has aided in stopping antisemitic protests, speakers, and films from being shown, as well as pulling donations. In October, spearheaded by the head of Yeshiva University, a coalition of more than 100 public, private, faith-based, and historically Black colleges and universities issued a statement standing with "Israel, the Palestinians who suffer under Hamas' cruel rule in Gaza, and all people of moral conscience."

As noted in a recent article on CNN.com; "History does not end. It merely slumbers, then repeats itself."

"Never again" is now.



the IDF, is an outspoken Israel and anti-Islamic terrorism activist. In a video, she noted that most people are seemingly peaceful. During the Holocaust, it was a minority that drove and executed the ethnic cleansing. The peaceful majority was irrelevant. They did not stand up.

We cannot fight antisemitism alone.

According to Dr. Zohar Raviv, International Vice President of Educational Strategy for Birthright, Jews are also fighting "the silent majority who thinks that they are the silenced minority." Antisemitism is no different from the bullying that everyone is taught to be so aware of in school. The bully always seems larger than life, and those not being bullied, but witnessing it (which is generally the majority of the kids),

Muss in Review

Margot Englander, *Centerspread Editor*

I have to admit that I was skeptical about MUSS being a “life changing” experience that everyone raved about. However, I will say that MUSS was an incredible experience. From the beginning, I could tell that the Alexander Muss High School In Israel was a school like no other. Our first trip, about three days in (once the jet lag had worn off), was to Tel Gezer. We were all jittery, not knowing what to expect from our first tiyul, but it exceeded expectations. We learned how to navigate our huge maps, sit in the dust, and how much water to bring.

That first week involved a lot of classes, figuring out the campus, shopping at Ofer’s, an on campus store, and walking around Hod Hasharon. Shabbat was a welcome reset. We took pictures, sang songs, and recited prayers during Kabbalat Shabbat. We spent all of Saturday together as a grade, relaxing.

Come Tuesday we geared up at seven in the morning to hike Gilboa. Gilboa was nothing like what I expected. It was almost completely vertical, and we were all red and out of breath by the end. Its redeeming quality was that it ended with a trip to the Sachne springs. We spent our first overnight in Jerusalem, and woke up to a jam-packed day, involving water tunnels and the Kotel. Together in the tunnels, we walked in total darkness, singing along to multiple speakers. Our second Shabbat (but first off-campus one) was in Haifa. We spent the day at the beach, and stayed at a beachside hotel. Another Shabbat was spent at a Tel Aviv beach. Each night off campus was a welcome opportunity to room with new people and form

new connections. One of my favorite days was hiking Masada. The day started around 4 AM, and after eating two rolls of bread for breakfast, we began the hike. It was tough, but the rising sun energized us. We had our Israel Studies class on top of Masada for the next five hours, including a moment to shout over the mountain, hearing our echoes. Luckily, we got to take the cable car down before refreshing in the Dead Sea. Other amazing trips included a day in Tzfat, the Bar Kochba caves, and seeing the ruins of a Crusader castle.

While the trips were super fun, another amazing part of MUSS was the liminal spaces, such as the bus rides, and the time in our dorms. I truly felt a deeper connection to many different students in my grade, especially people that I hadn’t had the chance to talk to before. On a religious note, as a grade,

we spent Yom Kippur together in Jerusalem. Fasting together as a grade was incredible, and we ended the fast at the Kotel with hundreds of other hungry Jews.

Beyond spending time with the grade, I also got the opportunity to connect with family members and friends who live in Israel. I spent Rosh Hashanah with my cousins in Nofit, and Sukkot with family friends at the Kineret. MUSS gave me the time to connect with my family, my Judaism, and my classmates.

It’s impossible to talk about

my MUSS experience without mentioning the war. On Friday, October 6th, we spent the day at the Jerusalem shuk, and the night in services,



davening for Simchat Torah. We went to bed and expected to wake up for a full day of synagogue in Jerusalem. However, I awoke to banging on my hotel room door and the realization that I had slept through a Red Alert Siren. For the next five to six hours, we found ourselves running to the bomb shelter in the hotel multiple times. But, this did not stop us – we continued the Sim-

Connect with my family, my Judaism, and my classmates

chat Torah services in the shelter, connecting with other Jews in the hotel.

We had no idea what was happening. For the next five days, we stayed in bomb shelters, said goodbye to our beloved madrichim, who were called up to serve, and prayed for the safety of Israel. School kind of simmered out, except for Israel Studies, in which we continued to learn about the ongoing situation in Israel. We learned that we were leaving 12 hours before we did, and our last night was spent frantically packing, trying to fit everything

into one suitcase. Most of my items were donated. The morning of our departure was rough, and we were forced to say goodbye to our second home far too soon. However, we were also grateful for our safety, especially when so many people couldn’t leave. I went to Europe for the first time (yay Rome!), even if I only spent the night in a hotel.

It was hard to adjust back home and back to regular school. School is so different here. I couldn’t see my madrichim or my teachers anymore (and I was used to seeing them daily), and I had to say goodbye to family over text.

I also had to let go of everything we were supposed to do that we couldn’t. Yam Le Yam was supposed to be the Monday after Simchat Torah. Gadna. Two more open weekends with my family. The entire second half of MUSS. Not being in Israel, especially in its time of need, was and is rough. Every morning I check the news and every night before bed I pray.

Back at campus, we’ve made the most of the situation. We have (almost) daily special classes with guest speakers, who discuss topics ranging from antisemitism on college campuses to their thoughts on the current conflict. We even had the opportunity to work with the art department to create a visual representation of our thoughts and feelings. We’ve gotten to talk with some Israeli soldiers, and we have constant discussions in our JS and Hebrew classes about the war and how we are feeling.

A Day Marked in History: the Washington Rally

Mikaela Garber, *Managing Editor*

Authorities cite that upwards of 300,000 people attended the pro-Israel Rally in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday, November 14. The rally, hastily put together following the attacks on October 7, featured famous singers and politicians who were confirmed to be speaking only days before the event. The rally aimed to unify the Jew-



ish people and all those who support Israel.

I had the honor of attending the rally by way of the Barrack buses. The first thing that struck me was the energy that ran through everyone on my bus. The long bus ride felt like torture, not because of the actual length of time but because we all wanted to be there already. Alas, the drive took longer than the average commute time due to the immense

volume of vehicles traveling to D.C. Passing by other buses and cars filled with people decked in blue and white, I felt a great sense of pride for my people, the first of many times that day. People waved at each other, a feeling of comradery formed only by the information that the others were going to the same place.

After a bus ride filled with Israeli music and trivia, we finally reached our destination... kind of.

Continued on following page..

Washington Rally - Continued

Continued from page 14

In reality, we had arrived at a parking lot of a Metro station, with a 30-minute Metro ride still awaiting us. Believe it or not, this was as close as we could get to the march, and this parking lot was packed. YU students in matching blue sweatshirts streamed out of big buses, and people wearing Israeli flags headed towards the Metro. Being in the Metro station and on the train itself was perhaps the most chaotic experience of my life. There were long lines just to swipe our tickets, so much so that the attendants kept the gates open to try to ease the congestion. We ran to the train and squeezed inside - squeeze being entirely literal in this sense. There were so many people that the temperature instantly rose five or more degrees, and I had to hold onto a friend to keep from falling onto a bunch of people when

These were songs that defined parts of my childhood, and everyone was singing along, just as I was. There were shouts of recognition as people saw long-lost cousins and bunkmates from the camp they went to years ago. The mood was somehow simultaneously subdued and uplifting as people collectively mourned the events of the past month or so and stood up for their Israeli pride.

While I felt incredibly supported by the countless politicians who pledged their unwavering solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people, I felt more swayed by the songs, chants, and signs. Hearing hundreds of thousands of unified voices singing songs, I have grown up with a part of my heart that nothing else could have done. Similarly, the chants in between speakers demanding

with what one of the speakers alluded to: the idea that while the phrase “two Jews, three opinions” is normally accurate, on this day, it was 300,000 Jews and non-Jewish allies, with one unified



opinion and experience.

The most meaningful part, though, was the families of hostages who bravely shared about the wonderful person they were missing to a sea of strangers. Despite the overwhelming amount of people, they poured open their hearts, allowing us to share in their pain, if only for a brief moment.

Perhaps too soon, it was time to head back to the buses, away from the moment that people are saying is going to be cemented in history. As I reflected on the day's events (before falling asleep for a solid hour and a half on the bus), I realized that what they say is really true: we are a small but mighty nation, and we are not going down without a fight.

The mood was somehow simultaneously subdued and uplifting as people collectively mourned the events of the past month or so and stood up for their Israeli pride.

the train started and stopped.

After a crowded ride, the train opened its doors at the L'enfant Plaza, and almost everyone on the train headed outside. Unnecessary were maps because a consistent flow of people showed the way to the rally. We followed, blue and white flags flailing behind us, posters in our hands, and a collective mission on our minds.

As we entered the National Mall, Ishay Ribo was singing some of his fan-favorite songs.

to “bring them home” helped me see that other people outside of my immediate community care about the over 200 innocent people who have been wrongly taken. The signs that people spent hours carefully crafting inspired me with their to-the-point statements, sometimes making me laugh, like “spread cream cheese, not hate,” and some urging me to scream out against injustice, such as “never again is now.” All of these unifying experiences forced me to agree full-heartedly

One of the Most Meaningful and Special Impacts on my Life

Ariel Shavit, Arts, Features, & Games Editor

My Muss experience was far from normal. Of course, living on campus with my class was one of the best experiences so far of my Barrack journey, and going on trips all over the country, from climbing Masada to praying at the Kotel on Yom Kippur, will never be forgotten, but it had to come to an end much sooner than I expected. When I woke up on Simchat Torah on October 7th to multiple messages on my phone instructing me to put my head down in my hotel room because it was too late to run to the bomb shelter, I felt scared and heartbroken. I realized that instead of making my last couple



of days in Israel sad, I should be hopeful because it was my time to help those in need. While sleeping in bomb shelters at night, during the day, I helped pack bags for soldiers in the south. I started a fundraiser for families and soldiers in the Gaza Envelope (which is about 6 Km away from Gaza, in Israel - an area where many were targeted during the first couple of days) affected by the horrific tragedies. My Alexander Muss High School in Israel experience was one of the most memorable experiences ever, and I will never forget it and the impact it made on my life.

March for Israel Speech

Jacob Weiner, Staff Writer

Speech given to Independence Hall on Oct. 16, 2023 after a “March For Israel” from City Hall:

On October 7th at 7:30 in the morning on Shabbat and Simchas Torah, I was walking up Ben Yehuda Street on my way back from sunrise services at the Western Wall. That is where I was when the sirens went off for the first time. The small group of students and our guide had to run and take shelter in a doorway as the Iron Dome intercepted rockets overhead. We sat in the shelter for 15 minutes hearing the explosions and seeing the flashes of the rockets colliding. That moment was the beginning of a whirlwind four days that would bring to an end what was supposed to be a life-changing three-month study abroad program for me and my Jack Bar-

rack Hebrew Academy classmates. When we returned to the hotel, we were greeted by our classmates who had just been roused from their beds. Most were in pajamas, some hadn't even had the time to put on shoes before running to the saferoom. All of us were shaken. As the day progressed, as more sirens came, as reports of the massacres in the country's south began to come in, I called my parents. I was not the only one. Nearly everyone, even those who kept shabbos, was on the phone with their parents, afraid for their lives due to the terrorist onslaught, wondering if Jerusalem was next.

Continued on following page.

Speech - Continued

Continued from page 15

But we chose not to let the terrorists win that day. Even though we could not follow through with our plans for Simchas Torah, instead of sitting around and sulking, we chose to celebrate and had our hakafot and Torah reading in the hotel bomb shelter. As we sang and danced and prayed, there was a feeling of pride and purpose, and it did not stop there. When we returned to campus we assembled over 1,500 care packages that were distributed to survivors of the Kibbutz Be'eri massacre as well as IDF soldiers in Southern Israel. We also started a fundraising campaign, which in only a week, has raised over \$136,000 from more than 1,000 people. We watched as Israelis lined up for 8 hours to donate blood, as thousands of Israelis left their lives behind at the drop of a hat in order to go home and serve their country, and as Jews around the world united, we were filled with immense pride, because this past week



demonstrated to the world what we have always known.

We are Am Yisrael, the nation that rises from the ashes of destruction, expulsion, persecution, and genocide to reach even greater heights, because we believe in what my Israel Studies teacher Michael Glassman calls the Abrahamic revolution, that right makes might and not the other way around. Because we believe that all Jews are brothers and sisters, and when a Jew anywhere is hurting, all Jews everywhere have their back. Because when the world calls out "Ayekah", where are you, as God did in last week's Torah portion, we always proudly and strongly answer "Hineni" Here I am.

We go to shul, we put on Tefillin, we give tzedakah. We come out to support Israel. We persist in our Judaism, in our kiddush hashem Ela Sheb'chol Dor VaDor Omdim Aleinu Lechaloteinu.

For, in every generation they try to destroy us, and yet we live on, and will continue to live on for eternity! Thank you to every single one of you who came out today, and proudly said "Hineni" Here I am. Am Yisrael Chai!

Sports

Top Fantasy League Players

Eli Hocking, Staff Writer

The fantasy football playoffs are upon us and it's critical to have athletes who can carry your team to victory. We know the trade deadline is over and your team may be stuck with injured or useless players, but we're here to boost your hopes of making a long run in your league's playoffs. To guide you in making informed decisions, we present the top three players in each position destined to deliver standout performances in the fantasy playoffs and potentially lead your squad to victory.

Quarterbacks:

1. Jalen Hurts (Philadelphia Eagles): Hurts has been averaging just over 24 points a week and is the 2nd highest-ranking quarterback for points per week. With a playoff schedule of the Seahawks, Giants, and Cardinals, he's bound to go off and carry your team.

2. Patrick Mahomes (Kansas City Chiefs): Mahomes has been consistently producing since he came into the league. Despite getting no more than 17 points over the last 3 weeks, he's destined to improve his totals during the playoffs through his games against the Patriots, Raiders, and Bengals.

3. Justin Herbert (Los Angeles Chargers): Herbert has been the spark of offense for the Chargers even though they're at an abysmal 4-7. However, he has averaged just under 21 points a week and against the Raiders, Bills, and Broncos, he will certainly help your team to victory.

Player to watch out for - C.J Stroud: It's only his first fantasy season and he has been fantastic, averaging 20.6 points per game. Now it's time to see if he can deliver against the Titans, Browns, and Titans again.

Running backs:

1. Christian McCaffrey: Simply put, CMC is the best running back in fantasy football. He has only had 2 weeks under 15 points and is averaging just under 23 points per week. Expect big numbers against the Cardinals, Ravens, and Commanders

2. Austin Ekeler: Ekeler may not have been the most consistent running back this season after his injury but he's still a reliable player for the playoffs. He is facing the Raiders, Bills, and Broncos and will likely perform well for your team.

3. Kyren Williams: Before his injury, Williams was becoming one of the league's best running backs and he showed it during the first game after his injury getting 38.4 points. With matchups against the Commanders, Saints, and Giants, he is going to help your team in its playoff matchups and is going to continue where he left off.

Player to watch out for - Travis Etienne: Etienne may not have been producing the best recently but in the 4 weeks before his bye week, he averaged 27 points per week. Facing the Ravens, Buccaneers, and Panthers will only help him boost your team's success.

Wide Receivers:

1. Tyreek Hill: Tyreek Hill is the speediest receiver in the NFL and he burns his defenders with ease as he leads your team to victory. While he will be facing hard defenses (the Jets, Cowboys, and Ravens), he will still help your team to victory as the Dolphins will need him to have good games

2. Ceedee Lamb: Anyone who was Lamb right now has got to be happy as he has averaged 29 points over the last 6 weeks. Additionally, he faces the Bills, Dolphins, and Lions, and the

Cowboys will need him to help them win these shootout games.

3. Keenan Allen: Allen has been in the top 3 performing wide receivers over 13 weeks and signs to continue during the playoffs as he plays the Raiders, Bills, and Broncos.

Player to watch out for - DK Metcalf: Metcalf may not have been the best this season but he went off last week getting 31 points in Week 13. Look out for him to possibly break out and get some crucial playoff points against the Eagles, Titans, and Steelers.

Tight ends:

1. TJ Hockenson: Hockenson is the #1 TE in the NFL, averaging 15.6 points per game. Hockenson's fantasy managers are going to be extremely happy as Hockenson plays the Bengals, Lions, and Packers, and additionally is coming off a 16-point week.

2. Travis Kelce: This is Travis Kelce we are talking about here! 2nd in points per game as a TE and playing the Patriots, Raiders, and Bengals? Give me all that.

3. George Kittle: Kittle is one of Purdy's favorite targets and is averaging 12 points a week. He faces the Cardinals, Ravens, and Commanders, and 2 of them have some of the worst defenses in the NFL.

Player to watch out for - David Njoku: Njoku has averaged 9.5 points per game and he is a player you should watch out for as he plays the Bears, Texans, and Jets. Who knows, he could go off.

Good luck in your fantasy football playoffs, and we hope this guide helps!

Phillies' Offseason Preview

Manny Shklar, Managing Editor

If Bryce Harper hadn't needed Tommy John surgery on his partially torn UCL (ulnar collateral ligament), Phillies' President of Baseball Operation Dave Dombrowski wouldn't have to make a franchise-altering decision this offseason. Hypotheticals can be fun in sports, but this situation is now a reality for the Phillies. We can only speculate for now, but the team's announcement that Harper will move to first base full time could be a sign that the Phillies are ready to move on from star first baseman Rhys Hoskins.

Hoskins seemed primed for another great season heading into 2023, but a torn ACL suffered in spring training sidelined him for the entire year. The former 2014 fifth round pick has hit at least 27 homeruns in each of his four full seasons (excluding the shortened 2020 season) and has been an elite postseason performer in the power department. He's averaging a homerun every 11.5 at-bats in 17 career playoff games despite a low .159 batting average. He was a key piece in the Phillies' World Series run in 2022, and would've been a huge player to have in 2023's deep run.

Despite the loss of Hoskins, the Phillies were just fine. Moving Harper to first and promoting outfielder Johan Rojas from AA affiliate Reading Fightin Phils proved to benefit the team a ton, as they improved both their hitting and fielding. Harper was good as he always was and Rojas shined defensively and is widely considered one of the elite young outfielders now. Additionally, Brnadon Marsh, who became the

starting left fielder, was serviceable in the regular season and simply incredible in the playoffs. Right fielder Nick Castellanos broke numerous homerun records in the playoffs despite ending on a cold streak. All of this depth in the outfield, and Harper at first, leaves zero room for Hoskins on this team. He's a free agent, and it seems imminent that the staple first basemen has played his last game in Phillies' red and white.

While the bats were usually carrying this team in the postseason, pitching was important as well. Zach Wheeler continued to be an ace, and both Ranger Suarez and Jose Alverado provided many valuable innings. One player who stood out, and not in a good way, was reliever Craig Kimbrel. Kimbrel had back-to-back chances to seal wins in the NLCS, but blew it twice. Had the Phillies won just one of those games, this city would be celebrating a World Series appearance, maybe even a championship. Kimbrel's abysmal outings have made him a target of many insults on social media, and many fans have voiced that they never want to see him pitch for the Phillies again. Thankfully, he's a free agent, so that solution looks likely. Another pitcher whose contract is up is Aaron Nola, who has been one of the most inconsistent players in baseball year-to-year.

When he plays well, he can be one of the best pitchers in baseball, as shown by his 2.37, 3.28 and 3.25 earned run averages in 2018, 2020 and 2022, respectively. However he has also had horrible years, proven by his 4.63 ERA in 2021 and this season's 4.46. Ultimately, because of his highs, Nola is requesting a long and expensive deal, but the Phillies can look for better options at their number two option.

In free agency this year, some of the players the Phillies should target are Blake Snell, Brent Suter, Aroldis Chapman and Travis Jankowski. Snell, a starting pitcher, is a Cy Young Award candidate after an amazing 2023 and would replace Nola perfectly as a consistently great pitcher. Suter and Chapman are both lefty relievers, similar to Kimbrel, and each are coming off impressive years in their own right. Suter pitched well in the Colorado Rockies' hitter friendly Coors' Field, while Chapman continued to build his MLB legacy by domination in the postseason and winning the World Series.

Dombrowski clearly has a lot of options on the table, and he knows that the Phillies' World Series window could close very soon with how stacked the rest of the National League is. With necessary changes coming to this team, fans can expect some new and exciting players helping the 2024 campaign.



The NBA's Midseason Spectacle

Micah Friedman, Staff Writer

As elite athletics develop, associations are often searching for better approaches to improve fan commitment and lift enthusiasm for the impending season. Due to

make stories that catch fans' attention by splitting away from the conventional dullness of the regular season. During the competition, groups contend with one another,

and in the end, the tournament finishes with a title game and monetary rewards for the triumphant group.

The in-season competition presents an open door for a group like the

Philadelphia 76ers. Fans often lose interest in a group during mid-season offdays or small games, but because of the competition, groups can vie for a sought-after title without holding on until the end of the season games to contend.

During the In-Season Tournament, Sixers stars Joel Embiid and Tyrese Maxey can refine their methodologies, assemble chemistry, and test their backbone against top-level

talent. Besides, achievements such as winning the tournament can support the group's confidence, which can help their play in the final part of the season.

Because of its vast worldwide following, the NBA grasps the significance of charming fans all over the planet. With the in-season competition, fans get a concentrated portion of high-stakes basketball. Accordingly, teams want to extend their worldwide fan base and reinforce their global image. Because of its exciting configuration and spotlight on transient achievement, the competition could be a favorite among fans, as it offers an extreme moment of excitement during the dull 82-game season. Each team can profit from this expanded commitment by building a more significant and devoted fan base.

Besides expanded fan commitment and energy, the in-season competition offers significant mon-

etary prizes for the champions. A 500,000 dollar reward is granted to the triumphant group's players and staff.

Even though the reward is 500,000 dollars, many fans want to raise the stakes. They believe that if the stakes were raised there would be even more motivation for teams to win. Many fans believe that if the reward was larger then the in season tournament would be viewed similarly to the playoffs.

The NBA In-Season Tournament is an intense series of games that can remake the midpoint of the NBA season, where teams can exhibit their skills, draw in fans on a worldwide scale, and receive monetary benefits. As the association keeps on developing, the in-season competition demonstrates the NBA's obligation to advancement, guaranteeing that basketball remains a completely exhilarating and dynamic game for fans worldwide.



this, the NBA has decided to create a new in-season competition.

The NBA In-Season Tournament was created to make another degree of contest during the season. Fans are enthralled by this mid-season occasion, which motivates groups and gives a compelling story to follow throughout the season.

Its essential objective is to give groups new difficulties and

Arts, Features, & Games

Sudoku

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| | | 5 | | 3 | | | | |

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Word Puzzle

Ariel Shavit, Art, Features, & Games Editor

How many words can you find from...

JACK M BARRACK HEBREW ACADEMY

Hint: There are 1,051 words that you can find. See how many you can get!

Chronicle Connections

Rachel Loeb, Editor-in-Chief, and Marigold Warmund, Staff Writer

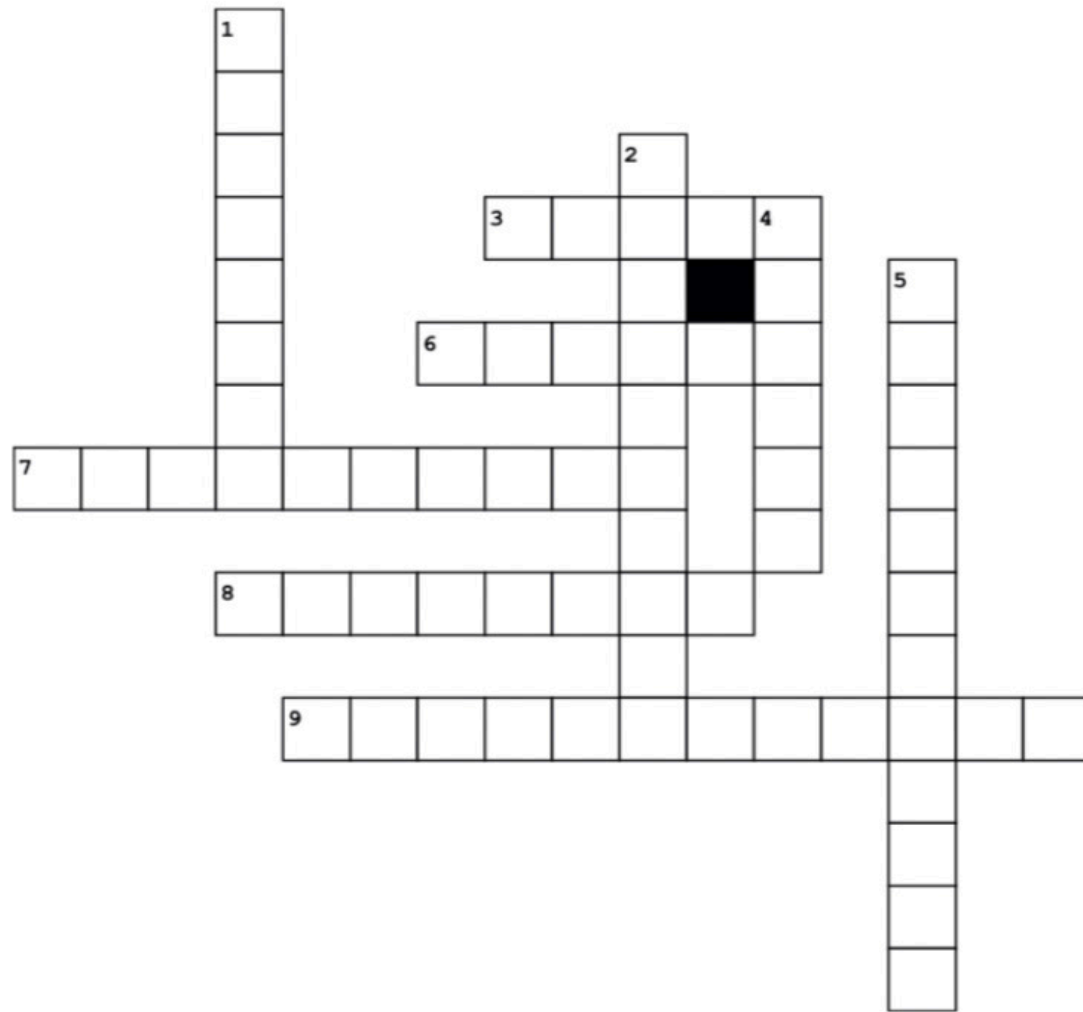
Connections is a New York Times game which gives you unsorted 16 word to sort into four categories of four.

The answers are on the last page - only check when you're sure it's done, or get a friend to check for you so it doesn't get spoiled and you can try again!

| | | | |
|---------|-----------|--------|-------|
| COULDNT | PRESENT | DONT | AINT |
| SMORE | SNOWFLAKE | CAKE | BAKE |
| PHONE | ALEC | CANDLE | DONUT |
| SHAKE | FOOD | COOKIE | OIL |

Crossword Puzzle

Ariel Shavit, Arts, Features, & Games Editor



Down

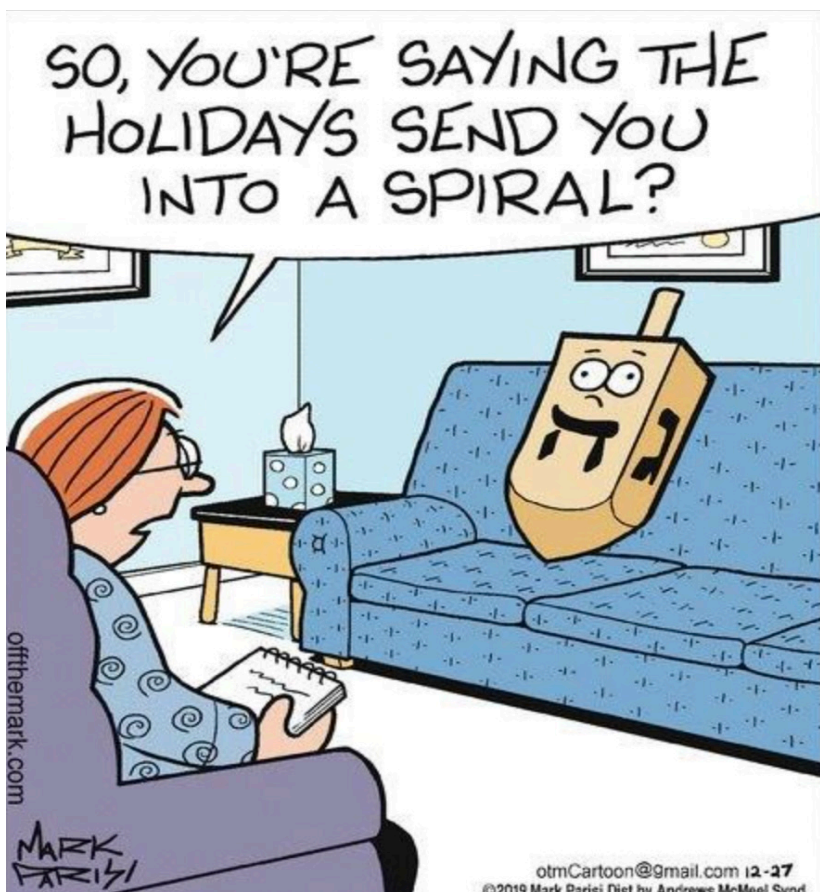
Across

- 1. Barrack winter sport that makes you very cold
- 2. The longest running winter sport at Barrack
- 4. The Jewish month in which Hanukkah takes place
- 5. American holiday that just happened

- 3. Sport that involves a lot of running and racing
- 6. Fried potato snacks that are eaten throughout the Jewish holiday in the Winter
- 7. Fried sweet treat that is eaten on Hanukkah
- 8. Jewish holiday in December
- 9. The only sport that uses pom-poms

The answers are on the last page.

Comics



Credit: Of the Mark by Mark Parisi

NEW WINTER SPORTS



ICE HATING



NO-MOBILING



SNOW SHOO-ING

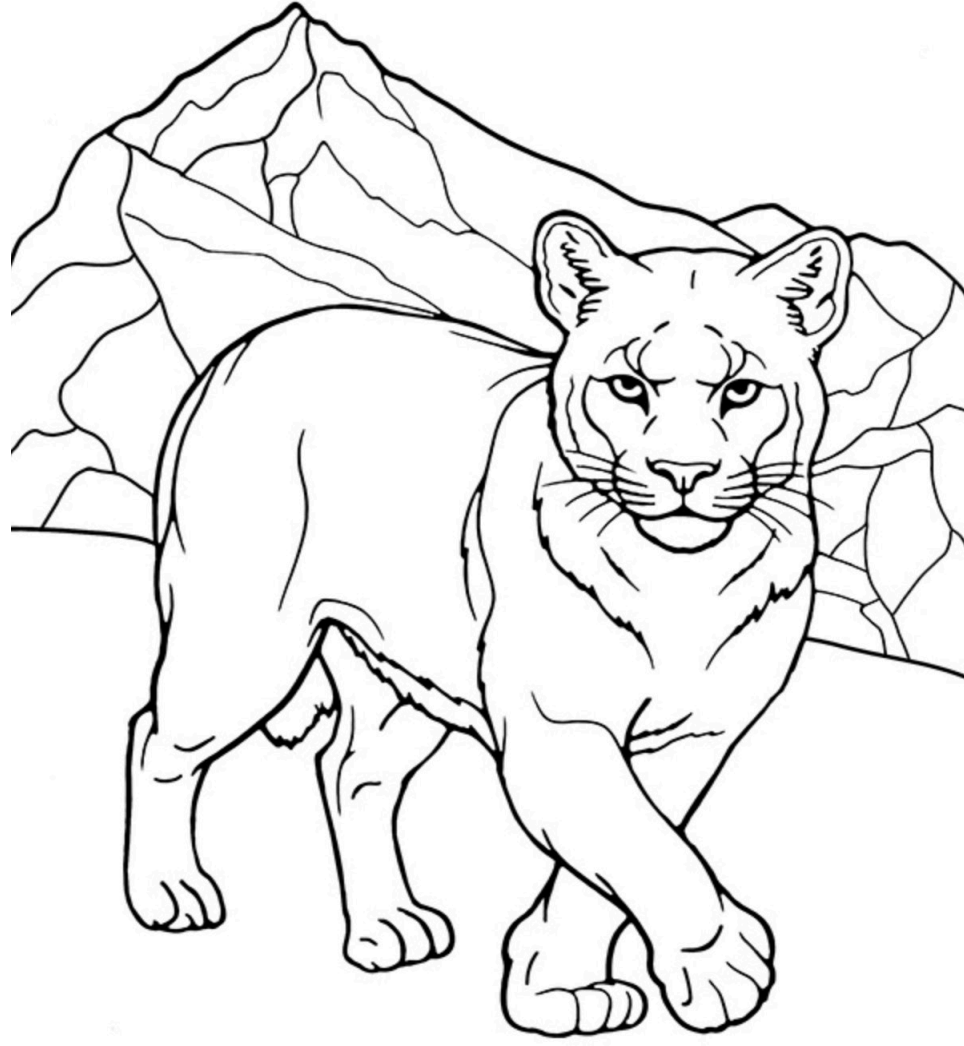


CROSS-COUNTRY FLEEING

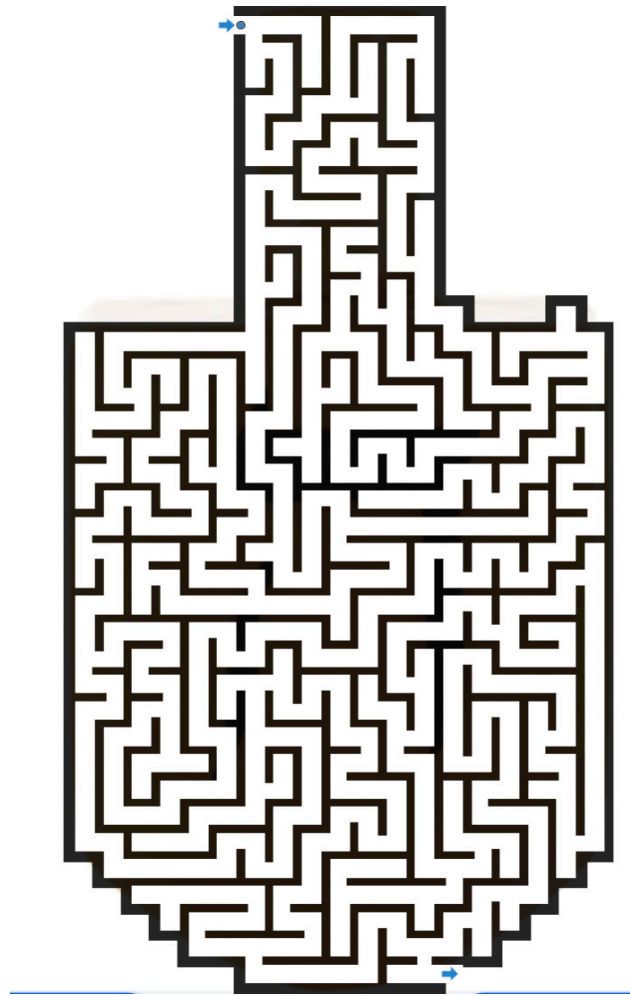
©Brian Gordon

Credit: Fowl Language Comics by Brian Gordon

Color in the Cougar



Dreidel Maze



Answers

Connections:

- Yellow group - Words that end in ake (Shake, Bake, Cake, Snowflake)
- Green group - Contractions (Smore, Aint, Dont, Couldnt)
- Blue group - Hannukah related (Donut, Candle, Present, Oil)
- Purple group - Smart — (Alec, Cookie, Food, Phone)

Crossword:

- 1. Swimming
- 2. Basketball
- 3. Track
- 4. Kislew
- 5. Thanksgiving
- 6. Latkes
- 7. Sufganiyot
- 8. Hannukah
- 9. Cheerleading