

## Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education recent news

Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education has a lot of news to share this month.

OJMCHE Board President Jeff Mazer recently announced that longtime Executive Director Judy Margles will retire at the end of 2023.

“Judy’s contribution to our community’s understanding of its past and its commitment to a better future cannot be overstated,” Mazer says. “For the last 24 years, she has been a guiding force in the evolution of OJMCHE and the strengthening of the museum’s mission.”

Other news for the museum is the announcement that The Institute of Museum and Library Services has selected OJMCHE as one of 30 finalists for the prestigious 2023 National Medal for Museum and Library Service. OJMCHE is the only institution in Oregon to be selected as a finalist for this award and was selected from hundreds of applications.

“OJMCHE’s work is both life-affirming and challenging,” says Director Judy Margles. “This nomination – with its national recognition of our work – inspires us to renew both our larger cultural mission and our immediate social responsibility. OJMCHE’s staff and board are more committed than ever to the power of civic engagement: our audiences discuss, look, listen, study and learn. This nomination reaffirms our mission to stimulate diverse voices in our community, to illuminate the rich experience of Jews in the world at large, to learn from the past and to anticipate a livable future.”

The awards will be announced at the end of May.

April is Holocaust and Genocide Awareness Month and along with the annual Yom HaShoah services, OJMCHE has a series of collaborative events. This year’s Rising Up for Human Dignity series focuses on the nature of justice and repair.

The Yom HaShoah memorial service will be at 7 pm, April 17, at Congregation Neveh Shalom. The Oregon Board of Rabbis and Holocaust survivors and their descendants will participate. Portland Chamber Music will perform.

The annual Reading of the Names will be from 9 am to 5 pm, April 18, at Pioneer Courthouse Square.

Every year on Yom HaShoah, the Day of Remembrance, communities around the world uphold the memory of victims of the Holocaust through the Reading of the Names, a public recitation of Holocaust victims’ names, ages and birthplaces. OJMCHE sponsors the Reading of the Names at Pioneer Courthouse Square. A selection of community members and elected officials will be reading the names of those murdered in the Holocaust.

“Each year, the Reading of the Names seeks to defy indifference and historical revisionism, such as denial that the Holocaust ever happened, by personalizing the individual tragedy of the dead and the survivors,” explains Margles. “As the names of victims are read aloud, they are remembered. Furthermore, keeping the memory of the victims alive fulfills one of the vital tenets of our collective experience – *zachor* – to remember.”

## Labor shortage reduces available beds at Robison

BY SYDNEY CLEVENGER

With labor shortages amplified nationwide since the pandemic, particularly in nursing, Robison Jewish Home (Cedar Sinai Park) recently made changes to its skilled nursing offerings.

“Despite major wage increases and continued excellent caregiving ratios, Robison Jewish Health Center is unable to staff all of its 92 skilled nursing beds, except with contract labor, the costs of which are exorbitant,” says Chief Executive Officer Kimberly Fuson. “Our expenses are exceeding our cash reserves, and the model is not only financially unsustainable, but irresponsible stewardship.”

With the support of its board, Robison Jewish Health Center in early March reduced admissions to its skilled nursing offerings.

Of the 92 skilled nursing beds available at Robison, 48 will remain open. The majority of suites are full already, so skilled nursing referrals will con-

tinue to be accepted on a very limited basis as room allows.

“The decision to minimize Robison admissions for now was not made lightly; in fact, we believe it is the best way to achieve our long-term goals,” said Fuson. “Above all else, Cedar Sinai Park must remain viable for the elders and vulnerable who rely upon us. We have a long tradition of high-quality care and staffing, and we want to maintain that reputation in the community well into the next century.”

Cedar Sinai Park is working with two expert advisory firms to help develop scenarios for sustainability, including a market analysis that will inform decision-making regarding the future of post-acute services at Robison Jewish Health Center.

Rose Schnitzer Manor Independent and Assisted Living, Adult Day Services and Sinai In-Home Care are fully functioning and open to the community. For information or to take a tour, call 503-535-4000.

## JFCS/Beth Israel community seder is back

WRJ/Beth Israel Sisterhood and Jewish Family & Child Service partnered to provide the first Community Seder since 2019.

“For three years, things were so restrictive in what we could do, so this seder is quite a celebration,” says Kate Gillespie, a Sisterhood member who chaired the Community Seder reboot.

Sammy Monk, JFCS’ volunteer coordinator, ensured that 30 clients of JFCS could participate in the seder, and had transportation to and from it.

The group gathered in Congregation Beth Israel’s Goodman Hall for the lunchtime seder. Cantor Ida Rae Cahana officiated while JFCS’ Alla Piatski, bilingual case manager, translated everything into Russian for clients from the former Soviet Union.

Prior to the meal – provided by Century Catering – Cantor Cahana shared a story of hope that her mother-in-law, Alice Lok Cahana, z”l, a Holocaust survivor, used to recite at Passover. “She said when she was a teenager in the camp, ‘If I survive, I will cleanse my heart of hatred. And that will be my victory.’ And she did.”



JFCS clients, above, are ready for the first traditional glass of wine. Left, Cantor Ida Rae Cahana of Congregation Beth Israel offers a *l’chaim* after reciting kiddush at the late-March Community Seder, the first in three years.