



# Synagogue Life in the Age of the Mass Killer Part Two

**L**ast week I wrote about the frightening rise of ideologically driven gun violence in the United States and the problems associated with rooting out the ‘lone wolf’ mass shooter. The problem of course, is you never know who the mass shooter is until they start shooting. They may be swayed by some form of ideological, political, or religious belief system; but, because they lack people skills and tend to be anti-social, they rarely belong to an established group. Established groups, regardless of size, or how far underground they may be, have a hierarchy, and lone wolves are lone wolves

for a reason. They tend to not even get along with people with whom they have an affinity; the indignation and disregard for others is already there, all they need is an outlet (scapegoat) and opportunity. Our goal therefore, becomes to deny them that opportunity. While I do not advocate turning the synagogue into a fortress and reject the notion that adding more guns to the equation will solve the problem; I believe synagogues must establish and practice an action plan for dealing with these flashpoint situations, no matter how remote the possibility it might occur. Austrian psychologist and Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl said, “When we are no

longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.” Man has survived because he has learned to adapt and we must do so , once again. On Oct. 24, 2018, Gregory Bush, 51, allegedly mortally wounded two African-American shoppers at a Kroger supermarket in Jeffersontown. Prior to the shooting Bush was seen attempting to enter First Baptist Church of Jeffersontown, a church with a predominantly black congregation; however, services had recently ended and the doors were locked. Denied entrance to the church, Bush apparently moved on to the nearby Kroger. Interestingly, the doors were locked in response to the shooting at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal, in Charleston, S.C. when Dylann S. Roof entered during services and shot down nine worshipers and injured another. There are a wide variety of potential threats to the average synagogue, including:

- Arson attacks
- Bombings
- Mass shooting attacks
- Biological & Chemical attacks
- Hostage taking

While all of these demand our attention mass shootings have been the most consistent types of attack recently.

Here are seven Steps for improving Synagogue security

1. Develop a synagogue security plan – this should not be a button list of general ideas; but, an actual well thought out plan



*Accused Kroger shooter, Gregory Bush is believed to have attempted to enter a church, before killing two shoppers.*

that considers numerous scenarios and incorporates a list of viable contingencies.

2. Partner with local law enforcement agencies – invite local law enforcement to review and comment on your plan; if possible, have them perform a vulnerability assessment; they are much more in tune with potential weaknesses than congregational heads, unless they have a security background;

3. Implementing and practicing

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## **Congregation Ahavas Sholom**

**President – Eric Freedman**

**Rabbi Simon Rosenbach**

**Cantor – Fred Grabiner**

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emergency drills – calmly discussing potential escape routes is not going to cut it; in

extreme

situations people stop being rational and become emotional. Just like a fire drill, the purpose of repeated drills is to get people to react instinctively. If you know what to do your instincts will kick in.

4. In a crisis, know how to communicate with law enforcement – In a crises situation, moments are precious. One must know who to call and what information is required. Everything that's going on needs to be communicated with law enforcement; how many assailants there are, in what part of the building are they, what type of weapons are they using, how many congregants are in the facility. You must be able to tell them as much as you can as succinctly as possible. There may not be time for the 911 operator to ask a slew of questions; give them what they need to assess the situation - and get there ASAP!

5. Control points of ingress and egress – Though most congregations shun locking their doors during service, synagogues must control the traffic flow to insure they know who's entering the premises. Unattended

doors should be locked.

6. Have a congregation greeter – not to be confused with a security guard. The greeter welcomes people as they enter the synagogue; they also give unfamiliar people the once over. The greeter is not there to subject visitors and unfamiliar people to the 3rd. degree; but to welcome them while remaining aware of strange or worrisome behavior, i.e. are they overly anxious, are they carrying anything, is there clothing unusually bulky

etcetera.

7. Install a video surveillance system – Depending on the size of the congregation and budget constraints, a video surveillance system is a prudent investment that watches over the facility 24/7.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has an active shooter video available on their website, <https://www.dhs.gov/cisa/options-consideration-active-shooter-preparedness-video>

In closing, no plan is foolproof nor will it guarantee no one will be harmed if an attack occurs; however, a well thought-out and implemented plan will dramatically improve the chances of surviving the unthinkable. ☆

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***Synagogues need an actual  
well thought out plan that  
considers numerous scenarios  
and incorporates  
a list of viable  
contingencies.***

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***To all of our good friends; It is with great sadness and a very heavy heart that I am writing to let you know of the death of Joan Hirst, the mother of Jonathan Hirt and Ilana Saporta, and grandmother to Sarah, Eric, Adam and Leah, on Wednesday.***

***May her memory be for a blessing.***

***The family will be sitting Shiva on Thursday, following the funeral, through Tuesday at Ilana's home, 844 Mountain Avenue, Springfield, NJ from 11:00 am to Minyanim. (Ending early on Friday and resuming Sunday).***

***To Jonathan and Ilana, HaMakom y'nahem etkhem b'tokh sh'ar avelei Tziyon v'Yerushalayim. May God comfort you together with all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem. Amen.***

***Eric Freedman***



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**Fred and Linda Grabiner have a 10 x 12 sukkah they're looking to dispose of; interested parties should contact Rabbi Rosenbach at 908-591-4037**

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# Simon Says

*Weekly insights from Rabbi Simon Rosebach*



***Rabbi Simon Rosenbach***

**T**oday we learned the President suggested to the Israeli government that Israel bar admittance to Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib, two congressmen (or women) who wanted to visit the West Bank. And the Israeli government, reversing a decision made previously, barred the admittance of these two United States congressmen.

Now, there are many things wrong about the President's and the Israeli government's

decision. First, the President disparaged representatives of our government, duly elected representatives, to a foreign government. Second, these two women are staunch supporters of the BDS movement, and the Israeli government's denial of entry plays right into the hands of BDS proponents. Third, at the invitation of Republican members of Congress Prime Minister Netanyahu spoke in 2015 to Congress assembled against the Obama administration's Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (the Iran deal).

Most of us disagree with Representatives Omar's and Tlaib's views of Israel and I personally think that they are anti-Semitic. But we do not silent voices that propose viewpoints that are antithetical to our viewpoints; we seek to educate the people who listen to them. If we're afraid of ideas, that might mean that those ideas are good. (It might mean that those ideas are bad; no sane person believes that the Nazis had good ideas.)

The President told Omar and Tlaib to go back to their countries of origin, but now the President is going to ban Tlaib from her country of origin. Such irony. Israel is pointing to a law that says subversives aren't welcome. But banning these two congressmen will backfire. ☆

# The Weequahic High School Alumni Association **HALL OF DISTINCTION INDUCTEES**

**Warren Grover, 1955** - Author, historian, and co-founder of the Newark History Society.

**Stanley Markowitz, 1955** - Educator, professor, activist for peace and social justice.

**Eli Hoffman, 1956** - President of the Jaqua Foundation in NJ.

**Paul Tractenberg, 1956** - Founder of Education Law Center and Institute on Education Law and Policy.

**Jacob Toporek, 1963** - Executive Director NJ State Association of Jewish Federations, WHS Note newsletter.

**Steven Dinetz, 1965** - CEO of Next Media, President of the Chancellor Foundation.

**Wilfredo Nieves, 1966** - Educator, President of Capital Community College in Hartford, Connecticut.

**Carrie Jackson, 1968** - Jazz vocalist, producer/arranger, recording artist, CEO of C-Jay Records.

**Honorable Sheila Oliver, 1970** - NJ Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the NJ State Assembly.

**Antoinette Baskerville-Richardson, 1970** - Chief Education Officer for the City of Newark.

**Hisani Dubose, 1971** - Film producer, screenwriter, director and founder of NJ Movie Maker's Network.

**Dr. Frederick Tyson, 1972** - Scientific Program Director at the National Institute of Environmental Health Services.

## **Deceased**

**Dr. Nathan Weiss, 1940** - Longtime President of Kean University, graduate school named after him, and author.

**David Schechner, 1946** - Attorney, leader in Jewish community, synagogue historian, WHS Alumni trustee.

**Hal Braff, 1952** - Attorney, civil rights activist, co founder of the WHS Alumni Association and avid Mets fan.

**Dr. Eleanor Lutzke Lewis, 1959** - Social and consumer justice advocate who worked with Ralph Nader.

**Dr. James Oliver Horton, 1961** - Professor Emeritus, scholar of African American history, and author.

**Sadie Rous, Faculty, 1935-1968** - Popular and well-respected Social Studies teacher for 33 years.

**Coach Burney Adams, Faculty, 1968-2002** - Legendary football coach and mentor for 34 years.

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## Help Us Remodel Our Kitchen

It's been estimated it will take \$60, 000 to properly renovate our kitchen.

April Modlinger, who has always been a pillar at Congregation Ahavas Sholom, has generously pledged \$10, 000 to making this happen.

We have recently received another pledge for \$2,200, bringing the total to 12, 200.

With your help Congregation Ahavas Sholom will soon have a kitchen we all deserve.

**Make your pledge today!**

## CAS Tzedakah Honor Roll

We would like to thank and recognize those who gave so generously to support Congregation Ahavas

Sholom in its various efforts to foster Tikun Olam

Rabbi Simon and Gayle Rosenbach - *The Ronald and Joan David Foundation*

Irene Cooper-Busch-*Namutumba Famine Relief Fund*

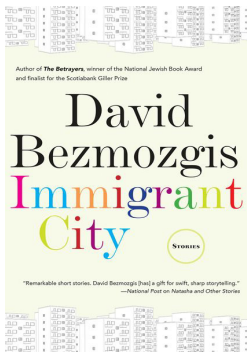
Elisa Sananman-*Namutumba Famine Relief Fund*

Linda Bloom  
Elena Smith  
Dubra Shenker



## The BookShelf

Summer is a perfect time to catch up on your reading; stretched out in a chair beneath a large tree; what could be better? The Jewish Book Council has a number of Jewish themed books they consider potential great reads; two of which, fittingly enough, deal with the hot topic of immigration.

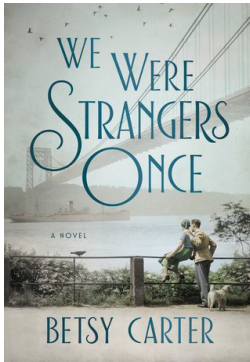


### **Immigrant City & Other Stories - By David Bezmozgis (224 pages)**

Award-winning author David Bezmozgis's first story collection in more than a decade, hailed by the Toronto Star as "intelligent, funny, unfailingly sympathetic"

In the title story, a father and his young daughter stumble into a bizarre version of his immigrant childhood. A mysterious tech conference brings a writer to Montreal, where he discovers new designs on the past in "How It Used to Be." A grandfather's Yiddish

letters expose a love affair and a wartime secret in "**Little Rooster.**" In "**Childhood,**" Mark's concern about his son's phobias evokes a shameful incident from his own adolescence. In "**Roman's Song,**" Roman's desire to help a new immigrant brings him into contact with a sordid underworld. At his father's request, Victor returns to Riga, the city of his birth, where his loyalties are tested by the man he might have been in "**A New Gravestone for an Old Grave.**" And, in the noir-inspired "The Russian Riviera," Kostya leaves Russia to pursue a boxing career only to find himself working as a doorman in a garish nightclub in the Toronto suburbs. In these deeply felt, slyly humorous stories, Bezmozgis pleads no special causes but presents immigrant characters with all their contradictions and complexities, their earnest and divided hearts.



**We Were Strangers Once - By Betsy Carter (336 pages)**

On the eve of World War II, one German Jewish family is forced to emigrate and face a new future in America; one fraught with degradation big and small, which each person suffers and conquers in a unique way. Egon Schneider, a thriving ophthalmologist and ladies' man in Frankfort, is reduced to being "the Cheese Man" at a local grocery in Washington Heights; Catrina Harty, a vivacious daughter of dirt poor Irish immigrants, has fought her way to a comfortable if unhappy spinsterhood; and Meyer Leavitt Egon's terminally acerbic best friend is a former children's book author turned sandwich board salesman turned newspaper columnist. Together they suffer the wonders and indignities of this strange new world—and each other—in the hopes of creating a permanent home.



**Kaddish.com - By Nathan Englander, (224 pages)** - Larry is the secular son in a family of Orthodox Brooklyn Jews. When his father dies, it's his responsibility to recite the Kaddish, the Jewish prayer for the dead, every day for eleven months. To the horror and dismay of his sister, Larry refuses—imperiling the fate of his father's soul. To appease her, Larry hatches an ingenious if cynical plan, hiring a stranger through a website called kaddish.com to recite the prayer and shepherd his father's soul safely to rest. Sharp, irreverent, hilarious, and wholly irresistible,

Englander's tale of a son who makes a diabolical compromise ingeniously captures the tensions between tradition and modernity; a book to be devoured in a single sitting, whose pleasures and provocations will be savored long after the last page has been turned.

*To learn more about these or other Jewish themed books, visit the Jewish Book Council at [www.jewishbookcouncil.org](http://www.jewishbookcouncil.org)*

## **BOK CHOY CHOPPED SALAD WITH CASHEWS**



**D**uring the hot and steamy days of summer, no one wants to spend too much time sweating over a hot stove. Luckily, most of us also tend to eat lighter during these summer months. A salad satisfies both parts of the equation. It's the perfect meal for this time of year. Salads are healthy, convenient, and quick, and with a little imagination and preparation, tasty enough to placate the most finicky of critics – the grandchildren.

The prep time for this wonderful salad is only about 10 minutes and serves two.

Ingredients: Salad

### **Ingredients: Salad**

3 heads baby bok choy, trimmed and thinly sliced  
(3 cups)

½ cup shredded carrot

2 bunches of scallions , chopped

Small jar of sunflower kernels

¼ cup thinly sliced red onion

¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves

### **Ingredients: Vinaigrette**

2 Tbsp. rice vinegar

1 Tbsp. low-sodium soy sauce

1 tsp. toasted sesame oil

1 tsp. honey or agave nectar

Minced zest and juice of 1 small lemon

Black pepper to taste

### **Instructions:**

Slice the Bok choy into bite sized pieces. Mix the ingredients in a bowl and add vinaigrette( for additional flavor roast the cashews for about one minute, and add to the salad just prior to serving.)

## Kiddush Sponsorship

**L**ast week's Kiddush was sponsored by Dorris Spector, this week's Kiddush is being sponsored Joan & Allan Podnos. Kiddush is \$150, which barely covers the cost of the lunch. Our goal is to have every Kiddush sponsored. To sponsor a Kiddush, email Rabbi Rosenbach or contact Alla Eicheldinger at Alla7815@yahoo.com. You can also help us by shopping, which doesn't cost any money, just a little time. We'll give you a list of items, you shop and we'll reimburse you. Whatever you can do will be appreciated, greatly.

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***"It's not how much or how little you have that makes you great or small, but how much or how little you accomplish with what you have."***

***- Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch***

## Shabbat Services

**J**oin us this Saturday for Shabbat services. Strangers, visitors, friends, old and new; our doors are open to you. Looking for a new home? New members are always welcome at Congregation Ahavas Sholom. Services starts at 9:00AM. Our congregation is open and welcoming, so feel free to pay us a visit.

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## Our Sister Synagogue in Uganda Needs Our Help

Ravaged by famine and drought, the Namutumba Synagogue is reaching out to us; let's not disappoint them.

**The Namutumba Famine Relief Fund**

To Learn more **Click here**

**Give Today!**