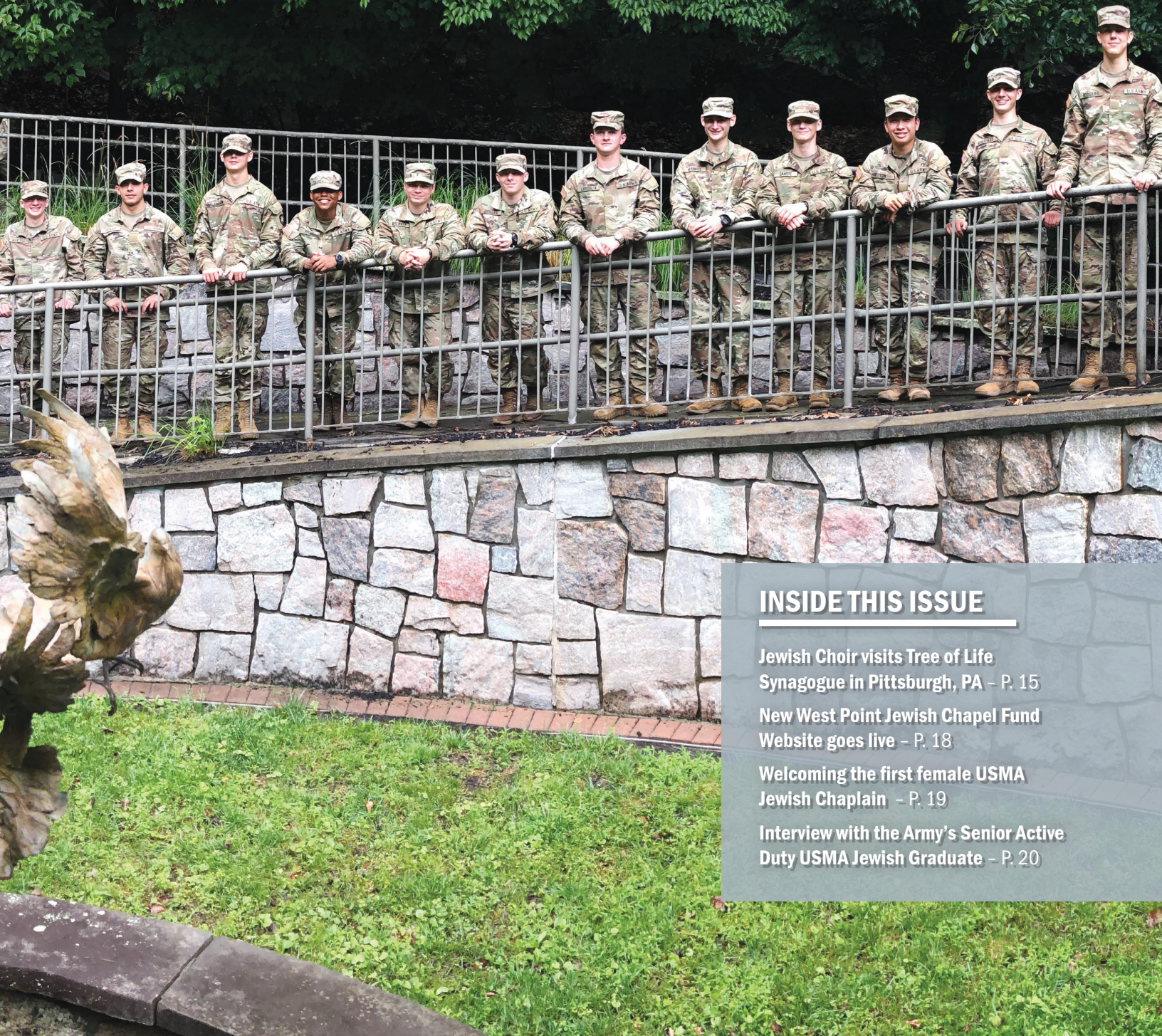


The Tablets

The Official Newsletter of The West Point Jewish Chapel Fund • Fall 2023



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Fund News

I don't have the words to express how all of us at the Fund feel about the situation in Israel, and if I did, I'm sure I wouldn't have the space here for them. Rather than my trying to figure out something to say, let me tell you about the Shabbat service at the chapel on Friday, October 13th, one week after the attack. Rather than close with the usual prayer, the rabbi had the Jewish Chapel Choir sing Hatikvah.



MG (USA Ret.)

Jeffrey A. Jacobs

Everyone in the sanctuary or watching online could not help but be moved. Please keep everyone in Israel in your prayers but remember especially our board member Elad Yoran '91 and our rabbinical scholarship recipient Lt. Jesse Paquin, who both live in Israel.

As to more mundane matters, please visit our new website, www.westpointjewishchapel.org (note the new URL). It's a significant upgrade, and, as always, we welcome your input to improve it. Our thanks to our secretary and communications director, Beth Robbins '92, with enthusiastic support and assistance from Bob Wolff '65, for her leadership and the inordinate amount of time and effort she put into developing it.

Our new West Point Jewish chaplain has arrived, and she is fully engaged and committed to the mission. Chaplain (Major) Heather Borshof and her children Nathaniel and

Eliana are now card-carrying members of the West Point Jewish community; it took her no time at all to realize that, in her words, "this place is like no other." I'm sure it's every rabbi's nightmare to arrive at a new pulpit just before the High Holidays, but that certainly didn't faze Rabbi Borshof—Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services were meaningful, and the full sanctuary would have made any civilian synagogue president proud.

When our founders conceived of a Jewish chapel at West Point, they envisioned not only a building, but a means to bring Yiddishkeit, a Jewish presence, to West Point and, by extension, to the Army. I'm convinced they succeeded, and I wish that more of them were here to see it. Here's a recent example.

After Shabbat services on the day of our last board meeting, a group of cadets approached the rabbi and asked that she conduct a Havdalah service on Saturday evening after the football game (as it turned out, we needed the comfort of Havdalah after watching the Army team put up a total of zero points against Troy). The rabbi sprang into action, texted all the Jewish cadets on their group messaging app, and used Fund money to order pizza. About 12 cadets showed up at the chapel on Saturday evening. With three old grads from our board—Terry Bresnick '69, Billy Medof '94, and me—and, of course, along with 3-year-old Nathaniel, we all put our arms around each other and sang along with the rabbi as she led Havdalah. Think of it: Jewish cadets asking an Army Jewish chaplain to lead a Havdalah service in the West Point Jewish Chapel. In my cadet days, we never would have thought to ask the chaplain to lead a Havdalah service. Of course, we didn't have a chaplain to ask or a place to hold the service. We didn't even have a Havdalah candle. Yiddishkeit is thriving at West Point, and our founders would be proud.

The Fund's mission is to ensure not only that the founders' vision is realized, but that we expand and build on that vision. If that Saturday evening Havdalah service is any indication, I think we're on the right track. I hope you'll support us in our effort.

Beat Navy!

Jeff Jacobs, USMA '79

West Point Jewish Chapel Fund Mission

The West Point Jewish Chapel Fund, in support of the USMA mission to produce leaders of character, maintains an endowment to support Jewish cadets and programs, contributes to the beauty of the Chapel for the benefit of cadets and the public, and supports and engages with the Army Jewish community.

Chapel News

The first time I ever visited West Point was when I was in rabbinical school in New York City. There was a special event happening and a few of my classmates planned to come up for the event and Shabbat dinner. We were all part of the military in a special program where we were "chaplain candidates." Ironically, we were all affiliated with either the Air Force or the Navy, but this opportunity presented itself. I informed my friends that I could not make it because I was too overwhelmed with work and papers that were quickly approaching their deadline. I felt that I did not have time to attend this event. And, I will always remember what my friend said in response.



Rabbi Heather Borshof

She said, "you will not remember the work that you had to do, but you will always remember this evening. This is a special time." So I decided to go, and she was right. I have no recollection of what school work I was doing or what else I had going on, but I fondly remember that evening and meeting an Army Jewish chaplain for the first time.

These words that my friend and now colleague said to me in order to convince me to join them for services and Shabbat dinner at West Point have stayed with me. It is a longer story for another time how I switched to the Army, and as some say, 'saw the light', but this was my introduction to this very special place here at West Point.

Life is full of choices and decisions that must be made. Making one decision, means that we sacrifice another. We are often told in life, and certainly in the military, that everything is a priority. But obviously, not everything can be a priority, which leaves us with having to choose

one thing over another. We try to make the best decision we can, but to understand that our time is precious and limited is the foundation of helping us not to regret our decisions later on.

In the military, most of us spend a short time in each place. We work as hard as we can, learn as much as we can, and touch and are touched by many people. Often because of that short time we have, we long for the past, but know that we should appreciate the present, for that is really all we have.

Time goes by. Time – something that no matter how much money or means someone has, is not for sale. To say there is always time means that we think we have control over it, but that is also not the case. Rich or poor, educated or non-educated, time passes for everyone.

They say, "Time flies when you're having fun." The more life we live and the more experiences we have, the faster time seems to leave us behind. It is difficult to argue that it would be better for time to go slower because that might mean that things are difficult. We all know that running a minute seems to be much longer than walking a minute when we can catch our breath. But it is amazing how one day we can look around and everyone is grown up, times have changed, and what once was is now something different.

It is hard to believe that it has been over 15 years since the first time I visited West Point. I do not know where the time has gone and I never imagined that I would be stationed here, as I am sure so many Cadets and faculty never imagined they would be here either. Time passes quickly and before we know it, we will wonder where that time went. And so, it is important to recognize that there are so many moments along the way that are worth cherishing.

My time here at West Point is a short one, as is with most military assignments. I am very thankful to Cantor David Frommer for the leadership that he provided during his time at West Point, and for all of his help and support during my transition here. I am grateful to Melanie Ullah, the West Point Jewish Chapel Fund Administrator, who has been instrumental in helping me navigate my way as I continue to learn about this unique and historic place. As always, we would not be able to provide most of what we do if it were not for the West Point Jewish Chapel Fund. We are indebted to them for the amazing resources they provide to us, as well as to the incredible commitment of our Jewish Cadets, which allow this community to thrive as it does. I am very excited to be here and to be a part of this special place. I look forward to working with everyone as we continue to build our extraordinary Jewish community.

We ask God to remind us that time is precious with one of the most common blessings that we recite during any number of special occasions.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha-Olam shehehchiyahnu vekiyamanu vehegianu lazman ha-zeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this moment.

L'shalom,
Rabbi Heather Borshof

West Point Jewish Chapel

A Historic Edifice and Center for Jewish Life at West Point

Est. 1984

UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY AT WEST POINT

CHAIN OF COMMAND

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Garrison Commander
COL Brian A. Jacobs,
USMA '99

CHAPLAIN CHAIN OF SUPPORT

USMA Chaplain
CH (COL) Keith Goode

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Maschoff

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Choir OIC
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USMA '96

West Point Jewish Chapel
750 Merritt Road
West Point, NY 10996
Phone: (845) 938-2710

Visiting Hours:
Mon-Fri 0900-1600

Shabbat Services:
Friday 1900

Sat, Sun and Holidays: Please call for hours



New Cadets enjoy a Dunkin' Donuts "picnic" for Chaplain's Time at Lake Frederick, lovingly supported by Mrs. Elaine McConnell and Ms. Melanie Ullah.



New Cadets get ready to work off those donuts by going through STX lanes

WEST POINT JEWISH CHAPEL RELIGIOUS SUPPORT ACROSS ALL 16,000 ACRES OF WEST POINT

Summer is an exciting time at West Point with prospective Cadets spending a week at West Point as part of the Summer Leadership Experience (SLE), incoming high school graduates ("New Cadets") beginning their 47-month West Point journey during Cadet Basic Training (CBT), Cadets honing their war fighting skills during Cadet Field Training (CFT), and Cadets challenging themselves as leaders at Cadet Leader Development Training (CLDT)! I know! We are certainly developing leaders of character! Throughout the wonderful opportunities, Jewish services were coordinated and offered based on availability in training schedules. In fact, Jewish services were offered 37 times at 15 different locations. The level of support was made possible by the amazing efforts of Melanie Ullah, Chaplain (MAJ) David Frommer, COL(Ret) Glenn Goldman, Mrs. Elaine McConnell, Dr. Adam Kalkstein, and COL Ben Wallen.



CLDT Chaplains Time Support



R-day Jewish Chapel booth supported by the incredible team of Chaplain (MAJ) David Frommer, Mrs. Elaine McConnell, COL Ben Wallen, SPC Cohen, Mrs. Carolina Bardales, and Mrs. Jennifer Kaufman



CBT at the Jewish Chapel

WEST POINT JEWISH CHAPEL

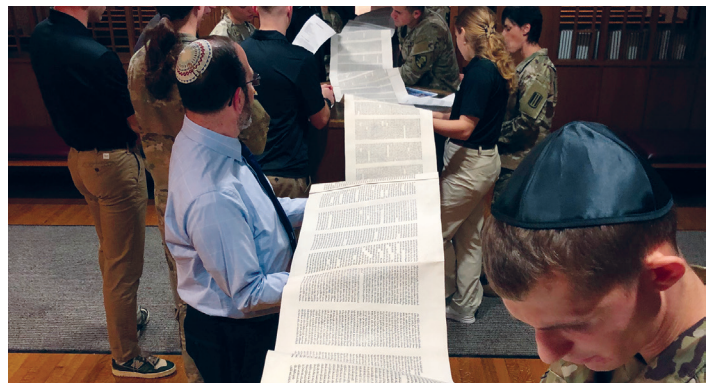
HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FALL SEMESTER - SERVICES & SIMCHAT TORAH



Cadets participating in leading services; CH (MAJ) Borshof with CDT Blake Schryer. CDT Celeste Pollack-Lamirand with CDT Ariya Bradley in the background, providing wonderful musical accompaniment.



CDT Sophie Cohen and CDT Schryer with CDT Brandon Agran in the background providing beautiful support as the pianist.



Cadets get up close and personal with the original "Knowledge Book"



View of the unfurled Torah scroll from the balcony...



... and from the pews



Jewish Plebe retreat participants at Camp Ramah.

WEST POINT JEWISH CHAPEL PLEBE RETREAT

On 25 August 2025, 26 Jewish community members departed for the Plebe retreat hosted at Camp Ramah in the Berkshires in Wingdale, NY. Staff and Faculty along with leadership from the West Point Jewish Chapel Fund provided oversight for this Cadet-led weekend which focused on introducing 4th Class Cadets to the enriching, supportive Jewish community in and around West Point. Cadets Blake Schryer and Ellie Davis provided superb Cadet leadership for the weekend. The desired outcome of fostering spiritual growth and camaraderie between all present was successfully achieved through conducting Shabbat services including a Torah study and Havdalah services lead by Rabbi (Chaplain (MAJ)) Heather Borshof. CDT Schryer incorporated a superb ice-breaker (“speed meeting through timed questions...”), meals, time at the beach, hiking, volleyball, rock wall, studying in the library, and roasting marshmallows and creating s’mores over a camp fire. The weekend was made possible from support by the West Point Jewish Chapel Fund.



Class of 2026 Cadets loving the service led by Rabbi Borshof and super excited about the weekend activities!



So many activities to pick from for Saturday morning and afternoon! These included expert storytelling, taking time to study in the camp library.



Shabbat Services lead by CH(MAJ) Rabbi Heather Borshof, West Point Jewish Chaplain.



Team-building ice-breaker fun had by all giving time to get to know each other. (top-left) Spending two minutes answering the question with the person across from you, "If you had a superpower, what would it be?" Examples of other questions included your celebrity crush, favorite pasta, and why you came to West Point. (bottom-left) LTC(Ret) Terry Bresnick '69 and President of the West Point Jewish Chapel Fund enjoying chatting with Rabbi Heather Borshof, West Point Jewish Chaplain. (right) All had a great time! This included Rabbi Heather Borshof, Mrs. Andrea Bresnick, Dr. Al and Dr. Ruth Beitler, Mrs. Elaine McConnell, and CPT Ramona Fastow-Jones'05.



Climbing excellence was indeed demonstrated by the brave and the bold...and certainly the young (Cadets) and the old (COL Wallen).

PLEBE RETREAT CONTINUED...



Cadets enjoyed volleyball (left) and relaxing on the water (middle), and relaxing at the beach (right).



There was a hike to enjoy with a super view to enjoy (left), while three great Cadets took the opportunity (by request of others at Camp Ramah for a Bat Mitzvah celebration) to lead an Army PT session and answer questions about West Point, the Army, and the motivation to serve our Nation! (right).



The last night together began with a wonderful meal (left) followed by a Havdalah service (right).



The evening ended with a bonfire and smores making with the most wonderful addition of singing a beautiful prayer led by Cadet Daniel Clare, Class of 2027.



WHAT DID THIS WEEKEND MEAN TO YOU?

“The Plebe retreat allowed me to reconnect with the Jewish community and connect with people that I feel like I can rely on through the rest of my 47-month journey at USMA.”

– Cadet Sophia Levitt ‘27

“I really enjoyed...getting more into Judaism!”

– Cadet Jonathan Benchabat ‘27

“The retreat provided an opportunity to enjoy time with individuals brought together through faith and to strengthen the bonds between us during engaging activities.”

– Cadet Zev Dewan ‘27

“I really enjoyed being able to experience a relaxed and chill Shabbat environment with fellow Jewish cadets, that I can now call my friends.”

– Cadet Daniel Clare ‘27

“I think the Plebe retreat is one of the best opportunities to welcome the Jewish Plebes into the Jewish community at West Point. I also believe that the retreat provides an opportunity for Jewish cadets to see each other at a place outside of the stresses of

West Point where Jewish Cadets can catch up after the summer. Lastly, cadets who have had less of a chance to be a part of the Jewish community at West Point due to having other responsibilities can have a chance to introduce themselves and become involved in everything the Jewish community has to offer.”

– Cadet Kiran Golgstein ‘26

“It’s amazing how well a weekend away can build such a tight knit community.”

– Cadet Sam Steinbart ‘26

“For me, the most meaningful part of the trip was celebrating Havdalah for the first time and learning about the spices, candle, and grape juice. Sharing moments like that with my peers truly shows how close our Jewish community is.”

– Cadet Colby Keck ‘26

“I am so grateful to be given the opportunity to spend time with such an accepting community.”

– Cadet Ian Campbell ‘26

“Coming on the Plebe retreat meant a weekend of relaxation and fellowship. I got to meet cadets I haven’t seen before and

enjoyed the opportunity to connect with cadets I already knew.”

– Cadet Amar Rodgers ‘25

“I know that when I was a Plebe, this event brought me into the Jewish community here, and I figured that it was only fair that I try to give our new Plebes the same experience I was given. Doing it early into the AY will allow us to build on the amazing memories we have created at Camp Ramah. Looking forward to an awesome AY. Thank you to the West Point Jewish Chapel Fund! I wouldn’t be the Cadet that I am without their love and support.”

– Cadet Charlie Aronov ‘26

“This retreat was a wonderful opportunity to strengthen existing friendships and create new ones.”

– Cadet Lilly Baker ‘25

“I loved going on this retreat because I feel like I had a great opportunity to really connect with the other classes, especially the Plebes. I feel like it’s important to connect with them early so that we can be a strong and interconnected community.”

– Cadet Ellie Davis ‘25

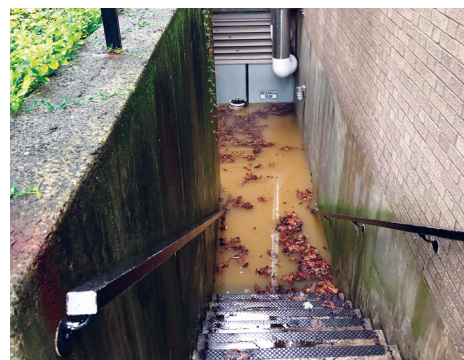


As with any good Army story, let's start with, "And there we were..." Indeed, on 9 July 2023, the heavens opened up and provided enough rain to make Noah feel at home. A storm cell stalled over West Point and the surrounding area, resulting in a 1,000 year flood event. To put this in context, West Point received over 8 inches of rain in four hours which is typically distributed over two months. All roads into West Point were closed and the post was basically shut down. Thayer Road from the hotel to the Cadet area had portions totally underwater to include cars that were parked on it.

WEST POINT JEWISH CHAPEL

THE STORM OF THE CENTURY...A STORY OF RESILIENCE, COMMUNITY, AND SUPPORT

Colonel Ben Wallen along with great religious leadership from across the installation answered the call to save the Chapel after discovering the flooding while the deluge was in progress. Synchronization of efforts were superbly supported by Melanie Ullah, the West Point Jewish Chapel Fund Manager. Father Matt (USCC Chaplain), Chaplain (LTC) Karyln Maschoff (Garrison Chaplain), and amazing Chaplains Assistants in the form of SFC Will and SPC Cooke converged on the Chapel and became the "Bucket Brigade." (photo bottom left). They worked tirelessly for about 3 hours to mop up all the water, clear the drains from all the muck (that's right folks - SFC Will was on his knees in the standing water and using his hand to clear the drains!), and remove debris to keep the drains clear in case of more rain. Father Matt called the Department of Public Works (DPW) to initiate an emergency work order to get the Mechanical Room drained of the floodwaters and reestablish power for the building. All perishable foods in the refrigerators were given to Father Matt to donate to a church in Highland Falls to help victims of the flooding. We are immensely grateful for Melanie's quick thinking, Ben's unflinching and selfless support as always, and the leadership and support of Father Matt and Chaplain Maschoff, and the superb mucking skills of SFC Will and SPC Cooke. What a great team!



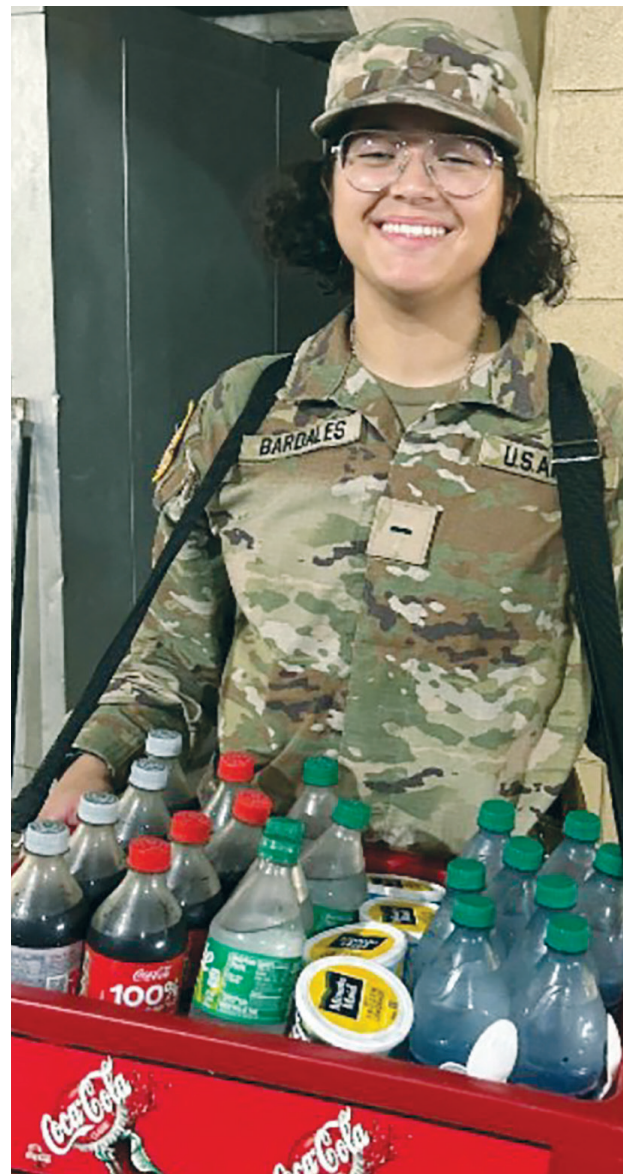
The bad news: The Jewish Chapel had severe leaks in the social hall (photo middle top), the chaplain's office, and the sanctuary. The worse news: The downstairs mechanical room that has the electrical system for the building which includes both air conditioning and heating was flooded (photo middle bottom). The chapel temporarily lost power and there are significant repairs necessary for the roof, the floor in the social hall, and the air conditioning and heating system. Indeed, as of publication of the Tablets, the Chapel is still in need of repair for the electrical systems. Fortunately, the Department of Public Works on West Point has an interim solution to provide heat as we head into winter.



Cadets from the West Point Jewish Community providing mobile concession support throughout Michie Stadium where they ran into the local superhero, Dirtman!

RELIGIOUS CLUB - HILLEL
SUPPORT TO THE CORPS

On 9 September 2023, a wonderful group of 8 Cadets led by Cadet Ben Dubetsky did something never done before by our club! He coordinated and gathered Jewish community members to try our hand at supporting concessions at the Army football game versus Delaware State. As with the game (Army 57 – Delaware State – 0), the Cadets crushed it! They provided hydration support throughout Michie Stadium helping those present to beat the heat and helping to earn funds for future team building and fellowship events.





Cadets from the West Point Jewish Community enjoy apple picking along with COL Ben Wallen, Mrs. Elaine McConnell, and Rabbi Heather Borshof with her son.

RELIGIOUS CLUB – HILLEL

APPLE PICKING

On 10 September 2023, a fantastic group of 21 Cadets, two faculty members, and the Jewish Chaplain and family traveled to Weed Orchards in Marlboro, NY to enjoy apple picking as part of celebrating the time around Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. Cadet leaders Brandon Agran, Blake Schryer, Ellie Davis, and Angelina Pfister helped plan and provide driving support for the event which was enjoyed by all. We even had some of the Cadets in our community join meet up with us while on off-post privileges. Festivities at this confluence of wonderful folks included enjoying freshly made cinnamon-apple donuts, apple cider, and picking apples directly from the trees.



Fueling Up on Cinnamon-Apple donuts and Apple Cider before heading out to apple pick



Fueling Up after apple picking...indeed...a lot of fueling up!



Jewish Warrior Weekend Cadets from West Point and the Citadel joining leaders from the local religious community, Aleph Institute, the West Point Jewish Chapel Fund, College of Charleston Hillel, and the Jewish War Veterans.



RELIGIOUS CLUB - HILLEL

JEWISH WARRIOR WEEKEND

On the weekend of 26 to 29 October 2023, 17 Cadets from West Point joined about 8 Cadets from the Citadel in Charleston, SC for faith, fellowship, and fun. The Citadel with incredible support from Mr. Jordan Kodner (Hillel Director at the College of Charleston) hosted the Fall semester Jewish Warrior Weekend.

The first day's activities began with four hours of paintball to really put the "warrior" into Jewish Warrior Weekend! Then, the group was welcomed by two fantastic Rabbis which included Rabbi (COL (Ret)) Dresin (Aleph Institute's Director of Personnel-Endorser) and Rabbi (CPT) Admon. The Citadel Cadets coordinated for a tour of campus which culminated in attending a parade. We were honored to have our own seating area reserved with signs stating "Jewish Warrior Weekend." There was no better way to end the first day than with a group photo, Shabbat services, and an amazing meal together with the local community.

Saturday began with fantastic bagels followed by an amazingly insightful guest speaker, our very own MG (Ret) Jeff Jacobs (USMA '79 and Chairman, West Point Jewish Chapel Fund) providing Lay Leader training and a call to action to support our Jewish service members through discussing the Chaplaincy and their changing support to the Jewish

community since World War II. After the discussion, the National Commander (COL (Ret) Barry Lischinsky) and the National Vice Commander (Gary Ginsburg) of the Jewish War Veterans (JWV) shared what the JWV does and their actions they partake in daily as the oldest veterans organization in the United States as the premier voice for Jewish uniformed service members and veterans. The remainder of the day included a boat tour of Charleston Harbour, exploring the downtown area, and a walking tour of Charleston which highlighted the rich history associated with the Revolutionary War and the Civil War through a Jewish lens. All enjoyed a wonderful dinner hosted by the College of Charleston Hillel with free time for fellowship and fun to close out the night.

Cadet Ben Dubetsky did a super job leading the planning efforts from West Point with COL Ben Wallen providing faculty oversight and mentorship throughout the planning process and weekend events. The desired outcome of fostering spiritual growth and camaraderie throughout the joint service community of future Jewish leaders was successfully achieved. The weekend was made possible by the generous and professional support by the West Point Jewish Chapel Fund, the Henry & Sylvia Yaschik Foundation, Mrs. Helen Griffin, the Jewish War Veterans, and Temple Brith Shalom Beth Israel.



Four hours of paintball with fully integrated teams between West Point Cadets, Citadel Cadets, and College of Charleston Hillel staff!



Putting the 'warrior' into Jewish Warrior Weekend'

More photos on page 14



Welcome discussion with Rabbi Dresin.



MG(Ret) Jeff Jacobs discusses the history of chaplain support since World War II.



COL(Ret) Barry Lischinsky shares impacts made by the Jewish War Veterans.



Walking tour highlighting local history of Charleston



Enjoying the Oneg Shabbat where amazing food accompanied fantastic fellowship.

“The opportunity to make new friends within the Jewish community, both at West Point and the Citadel, was invaluable. These trips have solidified the bonds I have within individuals I am certain will be lifelong friends.”

– CDT Lilly Baker ‘25

This trip provided me the opportunity to familiarize myself with the Jewish community in Charleston, but more importantly, the Jewish community preparing to serve the United States of America. Despite differences in the schools and style of education, we are incredibly similar and need to build our community for mutual support. I am proud that I will one day serve alongside the individuals that this trip afforded me the opportunity to meet.”

– CDT Henry Kaye ‘26

“This trip allowed me the opportunity to gain new perspectives on how to ensure Jewish service members are able to fully practice Judaism no matter where they are serving. The Friday Shabbat service was beautiful and really made me feel proud to be Jewish.” –

– CDT Daniel Gologorsky ‘26

“One thing that was really incredible to me was the speech given by MG(Ret) Jeff Jacobs in which he spoke about the ignorance towards the Jewish religion that exists. I didn’t realize how much ignorance existed as West Point does such a great job of inclusion. Going forward and commissioning, I feel like I can be part of the change and help support a network giving voices to Jewish Soldiers.”

– CDT Kiran Goldstein ‘26

“JWW at the Citadel was an amazing experience. I got to tour and better understand how their school operates. I also enjoyed learning about the Jewish influence and history of Charleston and had a beautiful Shabbat service and dinner.”

– CDT Daniel Clare ‘27

“This trip to me was a much-needed time away with people I care very much about. Experiencing the Citadel and Charleston was unbelievable and I could not be more grateful. I was proud to wear white over grey throughout the city and represent my family, West Point, the Citadel, and most importantly Jews.”

– CDT Louis Hover ‘26



Jewish Chapel Choir performing in the main sanctuary at Cavalry Episcopal Church, Saturday November 10th, 2023.

JEWISH CHAPEL CHIOR

JEWISH CHOIR VISITS TREE OF LIFE SYNAGOGUE IN PITTSBURGH, PA

Tikkun Olam. Five years after the horrendous Saturday morning attack at the Tree of Life shul which took the lives of eleven congregants, the Jewish Chapel Choir, 18 strong, traveled to Pittsburgh to meet with the congregation and offer support as Tree of Life continues in a new temporary home in the Rodef Shalom Shul.

The contingent of cadets, the Rabbi and OIC arrived on Friday, November 10th in time to attend services on Friday evening. Cadets had the opportunity to meet with congregants during the oneg. After a well-deserved night of rest and relaxation, the choir then returned with their sponsors for Saturday morning's full Torah service where we were honored with aliyahs for the Choir, LTC (Ret) Terry and Andrea Bresnick, Rabbi Borshof, Elaine McConnell and Chidy Harris. Following services, the cadets enjoyed a light luncheon with the congregation and had the opportunity to see the shul's main

sanctuary with its incredible stained-glass windows and organ. Cadets then had some free time to explore Pittsburgh and enjoy home hospitality before capping off the trip with an evening choir performance at the Calvary Episcopal Church. The concert was truly ecumenical, with an incredible organ prelude by the church organist prior to the Jewish Chapel Choir's program which included patriotic and religious music. Always a crowd favorite, choir members answered questions from the audience and presented a special encore to the delight of all in attendance.

The weekend served to help heal the members of the Tree of Life Congregation, knowing that they have the support of the West Point Jewish Chapel Choir, and the larger community. Equally important was the impact on the cadets in meeting congregants and seeing their strength as they continue to worship while remembering and honoring all righteous souls who have come before us.



Pre-concert warm-up at Cavalry Episcopal Church, Pittsburgh, PA November 10th, 2023.



Celeste conducting a final sound check and run through for the concert in Pittsburgh, PA November 10, 2023.

WEST POINT JEWISH CHAPEL

UPCOMING EVENTS

Please join us at the Jewish Chapel for our many upcoming events! For further information, contact the West Point Jewish Chapel Fund Administrator at WPJCF@outlook.com.

DECEMBER

Hannukah Party

JANUARY

Tu B'Shevat

FEBRUARY

Choir Performance (Location TBD)

MARCH

Purim Party

Plebe Parent Weekend Shabbat

APRIL

Passover and Days of Remembrance

MAY

Honoring Jewish War Veterans

Yom Hashoah

Mickey Marcus Memorial Service

Baccalaureate Service

Graduation for the Class of 2024!

Attention All Cadets! [And friends!]

As we move towards a more environmentally friendly method of communication, we plan to default to a digital version of the Tablets for everyone. **If you are interested in continuing to receive a printed copy, please email the Fund Administrator at WPJCF@outlook.com.**

WEST POINT JEWISH CHAPEL FUND PUBLISHES MEMORIAL BOOK

By LTC(R) Robert D. Wolff, Ph.D., USMA '65

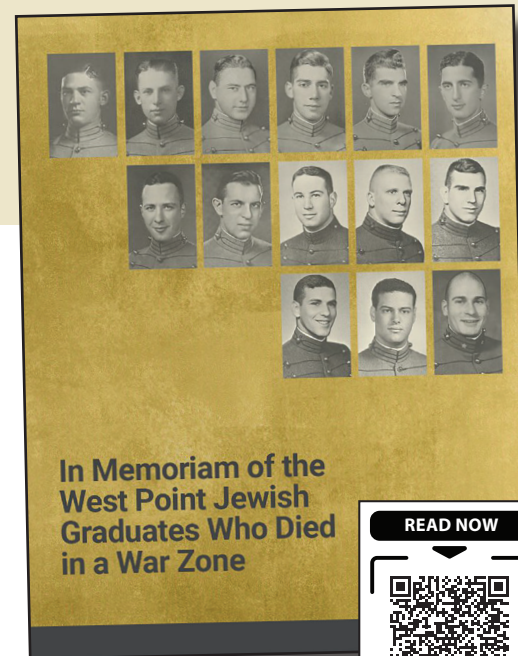
The West Point Jewish Chapel Fund (WPJCF) installed a "Wall of Honor" in the Jewish Chapel to recognize those Jewish graduates who died in a war zone, received a Valor Award, or rose to the rank of General Officer. The WPJCF has now published a Memorial book on the first category: the Jewish graduates who died in a war zone.

Following are the fourteen Jewish graduates honored in the book:

- Col. David "Mickey" Marcus, Class of 1924
- Lt. Col. Madison Schepps, Class of 1928
- Lt. Col. Paul Berkowitz, Class of 1934
- Capt. Robert Barker, Class of 1938

- Capt. Walter Wald, Class of 1940
- Capt. Robert Rosen, Class of 1943
- 1st Lt. Harry Saunders, Class of 1943
- 1st Lt. David Smith, Class of 1943
- Maj. Stephen Kott, Class of 1962
- Capt. Michael Berdy, Class of 1965
- 2nd Lt. Gary Kadetz, Class of 1965
- 1st Lt. Howard Pontuck, Class of 1966
- Capt. Ellis Greene, Class of 1967
- 1st Lt. David Bernstein, Class of 2002

These graduates made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country. We hope that visitors to the Chapel will take some time to read the memorial



In Memoriam of the
West Point Jewish
Graduates Who Died
in a War Zone

READ NOW



articles written by the family, classmates, and friends. They are truly inspiring. Also included are the citations for those who received valor awards. For more information, please contact the Fund Administrator at WPJCF@outlook.com.

TODAH RABAH!

We would like to acknowledge the many donors who have sponsored meals, celebrations, and Oneg Shabbats and other activities to support the Jewish cadets. Joining together for a delicious repast has long been a very special part of the West Point Jewish Chapel environment, and it helps to bring cadets, staff, faculty and families together in a true "home-away-from-home" environment. Thank you all for your support and generosity over the last year!

thank you

The Lichtenberg Family
 The Class of 2002
 The Garelick Family
 The Hudson Valley Region Federation Jewish Men's Club
 The Crossman Family, in honor of Cadet Jacob Crossman's birthday
 The Seigler & Furlong Families

The Jewish War Veterans (JWV) of the United States, Department of New York
 The Jewish Welfare Board (JWB)
 The Margolin & Polesky Families
 David Everett & The Justic Brandeis Law Society

JWV Post #1
 The Djavadi & Kaufman Families
 COL Ben Wallen
 Tammi Ryley
 The Cypro Family
 Lindsey Wallace
 Steven Agran
 David Nachman & Amy Schulman

DONATIONS TO THE WEST POINT JEWISH CHAPEL FUND

We are very fortunate that there has been an increase in interest, participation and attendance at the programs, services and meals at the West Point Jewish Chapel. Obviously, that increases our need to raise more money to support our cadets. Please consider making a donation to support our work. You can give to one of the following areas. If you would like to speak further about your support, please contact the Chapel and we can help.

Our most pressing needs

- Meals
- Trips
- Jewish Chapel Choir trips
- Cadet attendance at lay leadership training



DIVERSITY IN THE LONG GRAY LINE



In this award-winning film from 2019, conceived and co-produced by WPJCF member and USMA graduate Joel Kampf '59, we explore how the history of West Point reflects social changes in America. As the Academy recognized the 1000th graduating Jewish cadet the film looks at struggles and changes in the social make up of the cadet population over the years. The film has won multiple awards and features Jewish cadets, graduates, faculty, and staff.

Directed by Les Owen (USA)

NEW WEST POINT JEWISH CHAPEL FUND WEBSITE GOES LIVE

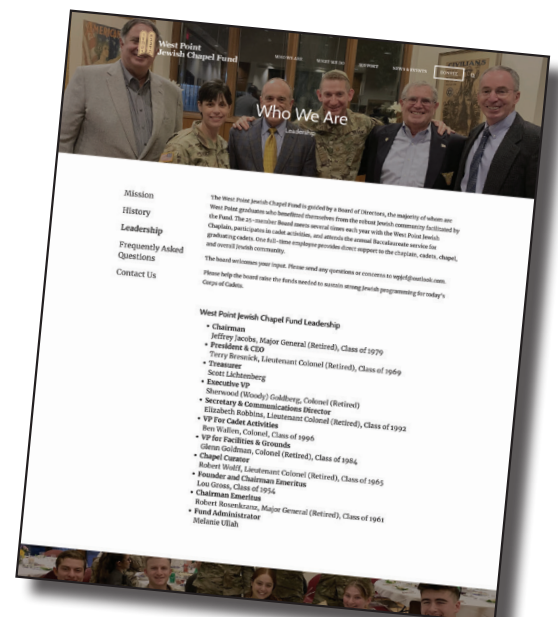
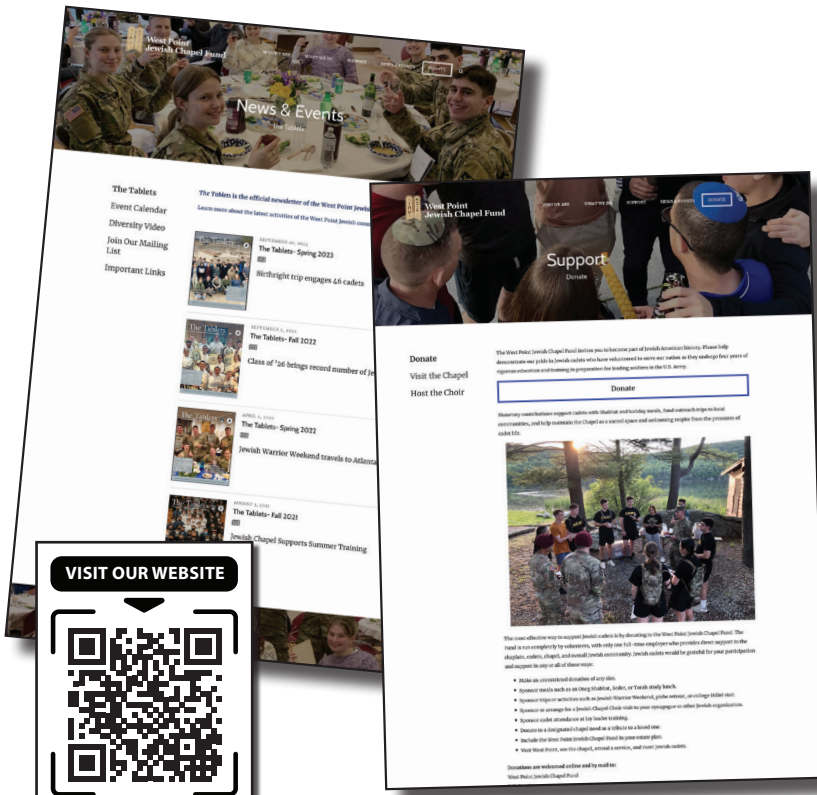
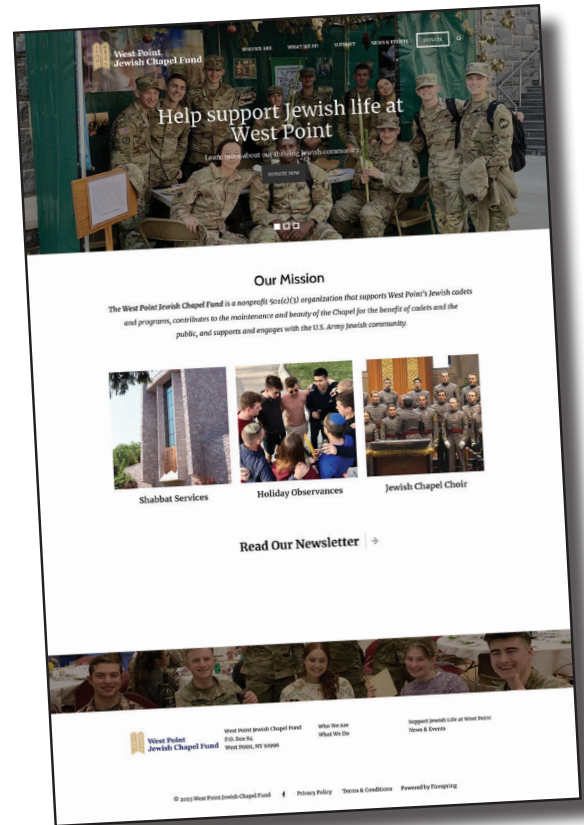
Welcome to our exciting new website, expertly designed by LTC (Ret) Beth Robbins '92. Along with beautiful photos and graphics, please enjoy the following features as you take your "tour":

- **Who We Are:** The West Point Jewish Chapel Fund's Mission, History of Jewish Chapel and community at West Point, Leadership of the Fund, Frequently Asked Questions, and contact information.
- **What We Do:** Information on Shabbat Services, Holiday Observances, the Jewish Chapel Choir, the Plebe Retreat, Birthright, and Jewish Warrior Weekend.
- **Support:** How to support the Chapel and Cadets, whether it be by donating, visiting the Chapel, or hosting the choir.
- **News and Events:** Links to The Tablets (that's us!), an Event Calendar (as always, following OPSEC guidelines), the Diversity Video, how to join our mailing list, and important links.

Please visit us at www.westpointjewishchapel.org and let us know what you think!



West Point Jewish Chapel Fund



INTRODUCING CHAPLAIN (MAJOR) HEATHER BORSHOF

OUR NEW JEWISH CHAPLAIN



This summer, the United States Military Academy welcomed its fourteenth Jewish Chaplain and its FIRST female Jewish Chaplain! Since her arrival to USMA, Rabbi Borshof has been absorbing the unique traditions of West Point and bringing her extensive experience as a chaplain in the active duty Army to services and other Jewish Chapel activities as she guides this next cohort of Jewish cadets.

Chaplain (Major) Heather Borshof was born in Brooklyn, NY and raised in Central NJ. She holds a BA in Judaic Studies and Philosophy from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, an MA in Jewish Education from Baltimore Hebrew University, and was ordained as a rabbi from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 2010. Upon ordination, Rabbi Borshof commissioned onto active duty in the United States Army. She completed the Chaplain Basic Officer Leadership Course at Fort Jackson, SC in April 2011 and was assigned to Fort Belvoir, VA. While assigned to the base, she worked



Rabbi Borshof's son, Nathaniel, 3 1/2, ready to chauffeur some cadets on their next trip section.

with the Headquarters Battalion and the Advanced Individual Training Soldiers of Global Spatial Engineers. In July 2013 she was assigned to Fort Bragg, NC

with the 82nd Sustainment Brigade and deployed to Afghanistan in 2013-2014. From there, she was assigned to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and served military service members from all branches. From 2017-2020 she



Rabbi Borshof with her littles.

served as the chaplain for the Warrior Transition Battalion at Fort Belvoir, VA, working with Wounded Warriors, while also serving the Jewish community. From 2020-2023, Rabbi Borshof was stationed at Fort Jackson, SC as a Battalion Chaplain in the 165th Infantry Brigade and as a Brigade Chaplain in the 193d Infantry Brigade. Rabbi Borshof arrived to West Point NY in July 2023, and currently serves as the Jewish Chaplain providing support to all Cadets and the Garrison.

What made you decide to join the Army and become a chaplain?

I have had the amazing opportunity to spend a lot of time in Israel during my high school and college years. As many know, military service is mandatory for Israelis and so it is very common to see

Soldiers walking around in everyday places. While each country has its own military which is unique, it gave me an appreciation overall for those who serve. When I learned that I could be a chaplain in the United States Military, I felt it was

a way that I could give something back to our country.

What has been your most challenging and/or unique experience as a Jewish chaplain?

In my 13 years in the Army as a Jewish chaplain, I have had an assortment of different experiences. Each one comes with its own opportunities and challenges. One of the challenges for me has always been balancing our designated assignment with also running a Jewish community. As chaplains we serve everyone, and as Jewish chaplains we also serve the Jewish community; these follow different calendars, which do not always align easily. At the same time, having the chance to serve everyone is what makes

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WEST POINT JEWISH CHAPEL ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

BG David W. Gardner, USMA '94
Commanding General, JRTC, Fort Johnson, LA

By **LTC(R) Robert Wolff, Ph.D., USMA '65**
West Point Jewish Chapel Fund Curator

General Gardner is the senior active-duty Jewish graduate of West Point. He has an outstanding record as a Soldier and contributes to the legacy of the US Military Academy Jewish graduates. His name is included on the Wall of Honor in the West Point Jewish Chapel.

Following graduation and completion of Airborne and Ranger Schools, General Gardner served in a variety of maneuver assignments. From 1995-98 he served as a platoon leader, Executive Officer and Battalion Logistics Officer in the 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment in the 82d Airborne Division. Upon graduation from



Brig. Gen. Gardner at the 30th Anniversary of the Joint Readiness Training Center.

the Field Artillery Advanced Course, General Gardner was assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) where

he commended in Kosovo and in the invasion of Iraq. In 2008, General Gardner served in various assignments in the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division before assuming battalion command in the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment. He then deployed the battalion to Afghanistan in 2012. From 2016-18, he commended the 2d Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division and deployed with the command to Europe in support of Atlantic Resolve.

General Gardner's non-troop assignments include the Army Staff, Military Assistant to the Commander, International Security and Assistance Force/US Forces Afghanistan, and instructor at the School of Advanced Military Studies. He holds Bachelor and Master's degrees from Harvard University and is a graduate of the Army Command and Staff College and National Defense University.

What was your experience as a Jewish Cadet at West Point?

When I attended there was a very small Jewish population. While on the one hand that can be somewhat isolating, there are many areas in which one can find common ground with fellow cadets to develop lifelong relationships. Still, it was extremely helpful to have the West Point Jewish Chapel and fellow Jewish



BG Gardner discusses live fire operations at JRTC with Gen. Poppas, the Commanding General of US Army Forces Command.

cadets in order to be able to maintain and strengthen our connections to Judaism.

What advice would you give a high school student?

The Army is a great opportunity to become the best version of oneself, and West Point in particular is a place that affords one the resources, experiences, and opportunities to begin that journey. I think that it is hard to live as a Jew in many places and in many careers, but I do think that at West Point, and in the Army, Jewish Soldiers and their families can thrive. Set your goals, work towards those goals, and keep the Commandments.

BG David Warshaw, USMA '89

By LTC(R) Robert Wolff, Ph.D., USMA '65
West Point Jewish Chapel Fund Curator

General Warshaw is retiring at the end of 2023 after 34 years of active and reserve service. His name is included on the Wall of Honor in the West Point Jewish Chapel and contributes to the proud legacy of West Point Jewish graduates.

General Warshaw is the Director of the Operational Analysis Department, Operations and Integration Directorate (OI-OA) for the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). He was commissioned in Military Intelligence upon graduation from the United States Military Academy in 1989. He has over 30 years of military intelligence and civil affairs experience. He has commanded military intelligence units at the company, battalion, and brigade levels. He has served at numerous posts in the United States as well as tours in Germany, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa. In his most recent assignment, he served as Commander, United States Army Reserve Element, United States Central Command J2 Headquarters in Tampa, Florida.

General Warshaw holds a Master of Strategic Studies from the United States Army War College. He also completed the Joint Forces Staff College's Joint and Combined Warfighting School-Hybrid.

What was your experience as a Jewish cadet at West Point?

I really valued the kinship I felt with my fellow Jewish cadets. The chapel had only been opened one year when I entered

West Point and that building, and what it symbolized, was a rock for many of us. Combined with the activities of Sabbath services and the Jewish Chapel Choir, I felt a sense of pride in being a Jewish cadet at West Point. You could really feel that pride during Jewish Chapel Choir trip sections, when we had a chance to share our West Point experience with the greater American Jewish community. We realized that what we were doing with our lives was unique and interesting as we traveled an uncommon



path as Jewish teenagers. I appreciated the diversity of West Point as a whole, allowing me to be exposed to people of all different backgrounds, experiences and religions. Having grown up in the American South, I was a little concerned about coming across people who may have negative perceptions of Jews. What I found was quite the opposite. I did not find animosity, but people who were uneducated about the Jewish religion and Jewish culture.

What advice would you give Jewish high school students regarding West Point and pursuing a military career?

I would advise them to fully explore the opportunities of West Point while balancing that with other choices for schools and a profession. You have to make an informed decision that is right for you. Having a Jewish college experience was important to me and weighed heavily in my decision. So, I had to choose between a more “traditional” college experience, complete with Hillel, pledging a Jewish fraternity, and going to a school where I already knew people, with something completely different in West Point. I wasn't sure if the military, or even the Army, was going to be my career choice. In fact, as an Army Reserve Soldier, the Army became a second career after nine years of Active Duty. In fact, one of the most impactful symbols for me as I made my decision to attend West Point was a poster that hung in my high school guidance counselor's office. It had busts of Grant, Lee, MacArthur, and Eisenhower and proclaimed “At West Point, much of the history we teach was made by the people we taught.” West Point taught leadership and developed leaders. That was the differentiator. In fully exploring West Point, I would definitely encourage a prospective cadet to visit West Point and stay overnight during the academic year. I did this and, when I did, I specifically requested to be paired with a Jewish cadet. To this day, I am extremely grateful to Phil Krichilsky, '88, for paving the way for me. I can state, unequivocally, that, had it not been for that visit and the existence of the Jewish Chapel, I may not have made the choice to attend West Point and pursue a military career.

MY HEART IS IN THE EAST

By Chaplain Candidate (1LT) Jesse L Paquin

510th Regional Support Group, Daener Kaserne, Germany
Rabbinical Student and West Point Jewish Chapel Fund Scholarship Recipient
Brother of Major Jeremy Paquin, USMA 2009

Port Orange, Florida
November 7, 2023

On October 7th, on the holiday of Simchat Torah in Israel, Hamas murdered over 1400 people and started a war. My family and I evacuated our home in Tzfat, in northern Israel, and we are now safe in the United States. It was not an easy decision for us, but after a few close calls my wife, Shayna, and I decided it would be better for our family, including three children with special needs, to be as far away from the fighting as possible.

We haven't slept much since October 7th. Simchat Torah is usually fun in Tzfat. We were at our favorite shul in the Old City that Shabbat morning when somebody told us that the Chief Rabbi of Tzfat ordered that we had to turn our phones on and anybody who had a weapon had to go get it. At first I did not believe it, but there was something strange in the atmosphere that day. For Tzfat, a mostly Shabbat observant and mixed Orthodox city, this was no small thing. I turned on my phone to see that there was a major security situation happening in the south. Israel is a small country so that explained the fighter jets in the sky. We were only 12 kilometers from Lebanon and Hezbollah, after all. I suggested to the Rabbi that we should probably stop drinking alcohol during our celebration, just to be safe. He agreed and we collected all of the bottles. We finished our 'hakafot,' and our dancing with the Torah in time to see an entire yeshiva of Israel Defense Forces (IDF) reservists get on a

bus to get to their units. All of this was on Shabbat; this was serious.

The next morning school in the entire country was canceled, and we could not believe our eyes as we saw from our balcony hundreds of tanks and other tracked vehicles making their way north on two highways, convoy after convoy. Most of the tanks were driving directly on the road, another indication that it was very serious. Over 136,000 IDF reservists were called up overnight, including neighbors and friends.

Our four-year-old son had a doctor appointment that Monday afternoon and I wanted to get him an ice cream on Jerusalem Street afterwards, but when we got off the elevator on the main street of Tzfat, all of the shopkeepers were hurrying to close up their stores. When I asked them what happened, they pointed to a trail of smoke in the sky. A Patriot missile had gone off while we were in the elevator. We did not get ice cream that day.



Chaplain Candidate (1LT) Jesse Paquin and his family

Then came sirens, rockets, iron dome interceptions, more Patriot missile launches, and infiltration alerts. We had a family from a border community staying with us; at one point we had 15 people in our shelter room. It was stressful and traumatic for our four-year-old son, Yanai, especially. He was walking around the house constantly checking locks on doors, shutting off lights, and telling everybody to be quiet so the bad guys don't hear us.

As we were making our way to the gate at Ben Gurion Airport for our US Embassy evacuation flight, there were more incoming rockets and we all got down on the floor together. Yanai then started having trouble breathing and we were rushed to the hospital in Rishon

Continued on page 23

Ltzion. We missed our flight. While Yanai was recuperating we had more incoming rockets, one which was intercepted directly over Shayna, our two-year-old son, and our five-month-old daughter in the parking lot; I was on top of Yanai on the floor of the emergency room. We got on an El Al flight to the United States the next day, the only airline available.

Before we evacuated, we were mobilized as a family, volunteering to bring food to needy people in our community, as well as the thousands of IDF Soldiers who became overnight residents of the Galilee. Two guides I work with in my civilian job as an adventure guide were killed in action. May their memories be a blessing. My heart is in the East, although we are in the West.



Chaplain Candidate (1LT) Jesse Paquin and his wife, Shayna

Introducing Chaplain (Major) Heather Borshof

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Rabbi Borshof's daughter, Eliana, 11 months, practices searching for chametz.

our job so unique and special. I love having the opportunity to meet and work with so many people from a variety of faiths and backgrounds.

What do your non-military Jewish friends think of your career?

My non-military Jewish friends think that what I am doing is unique and special. Most people do not choose to join the military and they appreciate the sacrifices that we make in order to serve our Jewish personnel as well as our military in general.

What advice do you have for the Jewish cadets at USMA as they go through their four years here and then transition to their military careers as commissioned officers?

The advice that I would give to the Jewish Cadets here at USMA is to appreciate the time they have here. Do not wish the time away. It will go by very quickly and

while there are incredible opportunities awaiting them when they go out into the Army, their time here as part of the West Point Jewish community and in school as a whole is unlike no other experience they will have. Plan for the future, but live in the present and enjoy as much as you can.

What are your top three goals as the USMA Jewish Chaplain, and what would you like your West Point legacy to be?

My goals as the USMA Jewish Chaplain are similar goals that I have as a

military chaplain wherever I am stationed. My hope is to always be approachable to everyone I work with and serve. My wish is to hold programs and events that are valuable, relevant, and enjoyable for those attending. Finally, while “rabbi” means teacher and Jewish leader, my goal is to impart many of the morals and values, and teachings that I was fortunate to learn from some of my own teachers and mentors.

When I leave West Point, I would like my legacy to be that I had a positive impact and made a difference for those whom I had the blessing to interact with.

And the last thing - what number are you in the line of Jewish Chaplains? I want to highlight in the Tablets that you're our first female chaplain!

I believe I am the 14th Jewish chaplain here at West Point.

