

Community

By **Blake DeVine**

today at 6:29 pm Published September 20, 2020 4:59 pm



Santa Barbara synagogue hosts drive-thru shofar blast for Rosh Hashanah



SANTA BARBARA, Calif. — Santa Barbara's Jewish community is kicking off its High Holiday Days with a twist on tradition.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic moving many events online, members of Congregation B'nai B'rith — the oldest and largest synagogue in Santa Barbara — were not going to let COVID-19 get in the way of its Rosh Hashanah festivities.

On Sunday morning, the congregation hosted a drive-thru shofar blast within its parking lot.

"Rosh Hashanah in the Torah, is referred to as the day of the blowing of the shofar," Congregation B'nai B'rith Rabbi Steve Cohen explained.

Over the past few days, the temple has been working hard to make its livestream services meaningful for its 800 members.

"People heard the sound of the shofar through their speakers, computers and televisions," Congregation B'nai B'rith Cantor Mark Childs said.

In Jewish tradition, a person who has not listened to the shofar has not observed the day.

This emphasizes the importance of hearing its sound.

"The experience of hearing it live, is completely unequaled," Cohen said.

Many members of the congregation were thankful to be able to participate from their cars or bikes.

"I didn't think this was going to happen this year, so this is really cool," Dan Feinberg said. "The logistics of this is really funny, it's like a carwash for the spirit."

"This is a special part of the year for Rosh Hashanah," Daniel Curhan said. "To hear the shofar blowing is wonderful."

While this wasn't a typical holiday service, the event allowed Jews to join together and look forward to better days ahead.

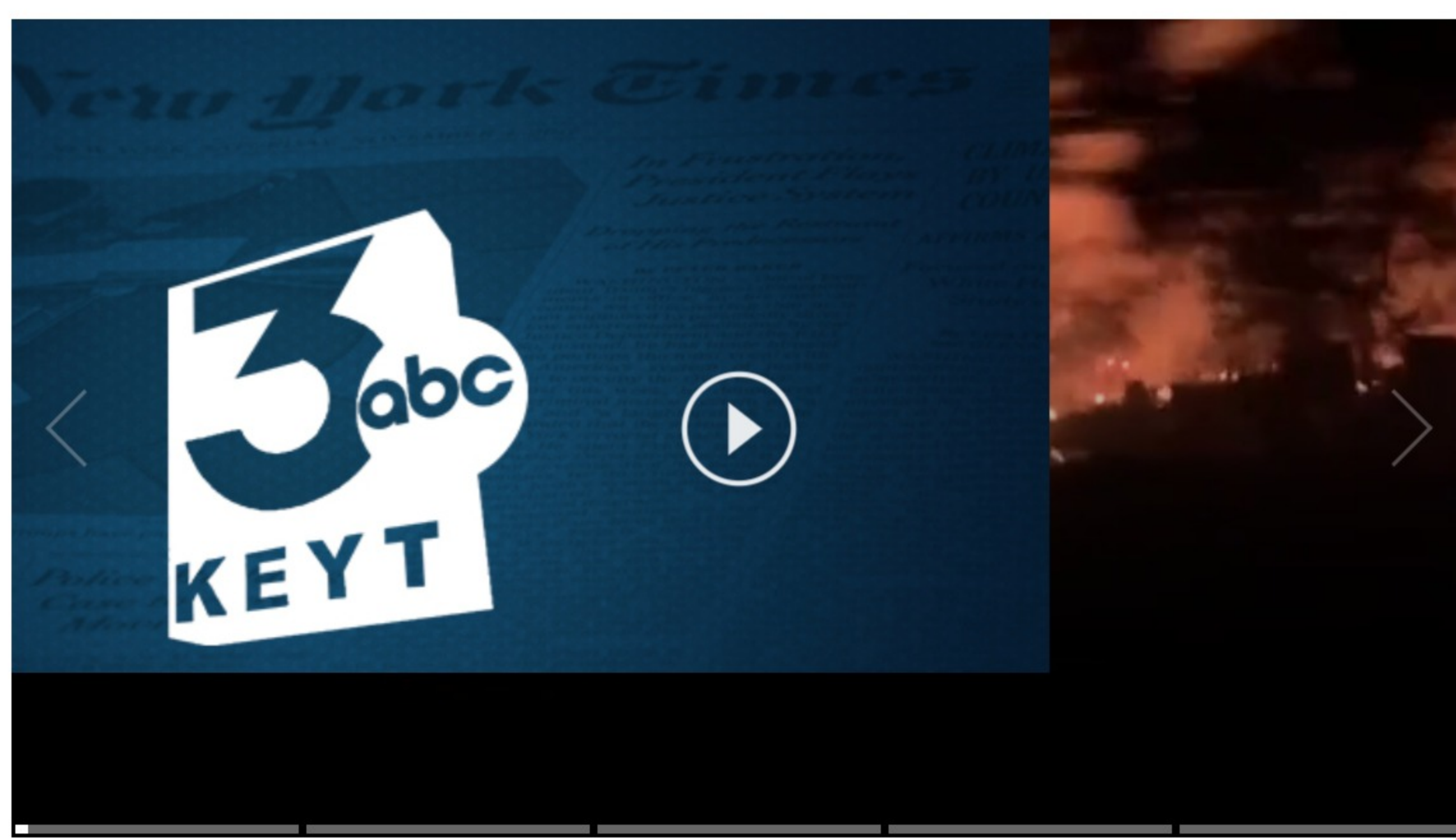
"The idea of the new year is of renewal and of reconnecting with the sources of our hope," Cohen said.

"This was an opportunity to see families come back together that I haven't seen in so long," Childs concluded.

For more information on how to access the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services and programs please visit [Congregation B'nai B'rith's website](#).

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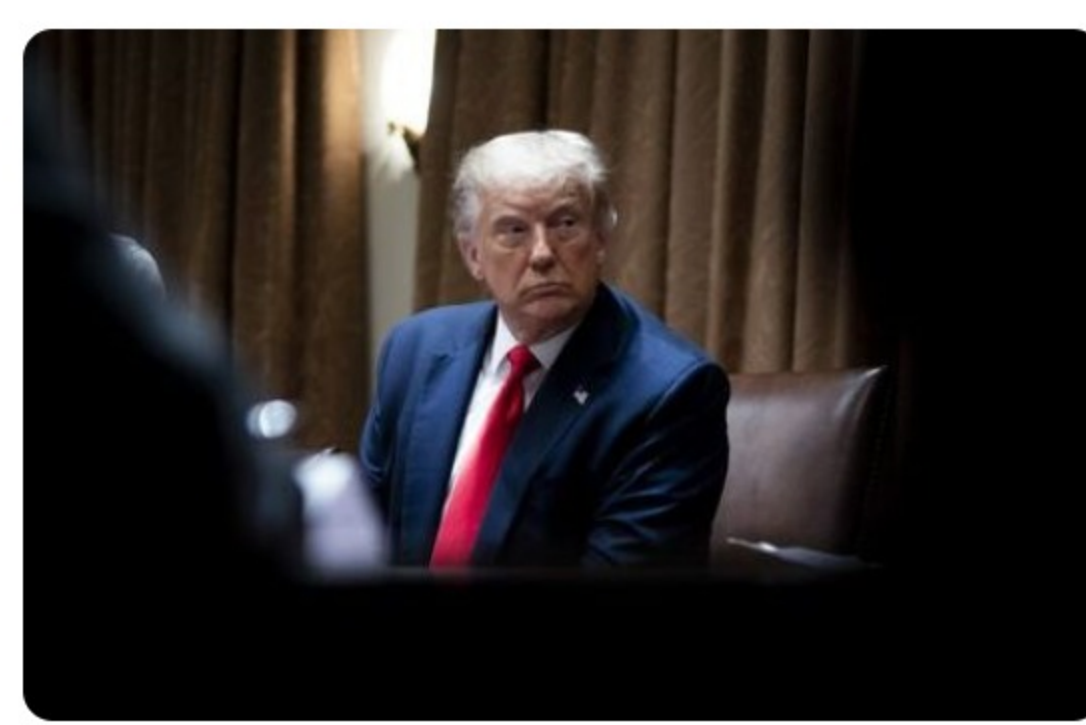
Blake DeVine is a multimedia journalist at KEYT NewsChannel 3, KCOY NewsChannel 12 and KKFX My Fox 11



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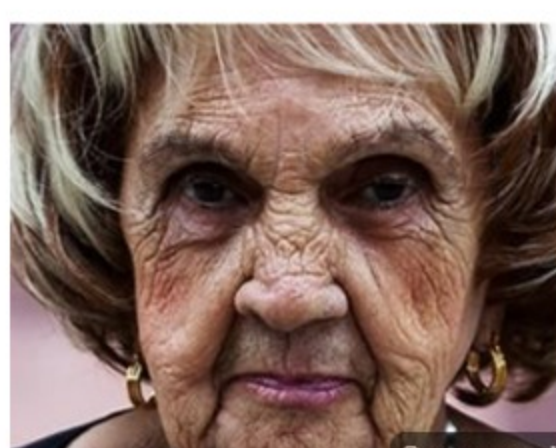
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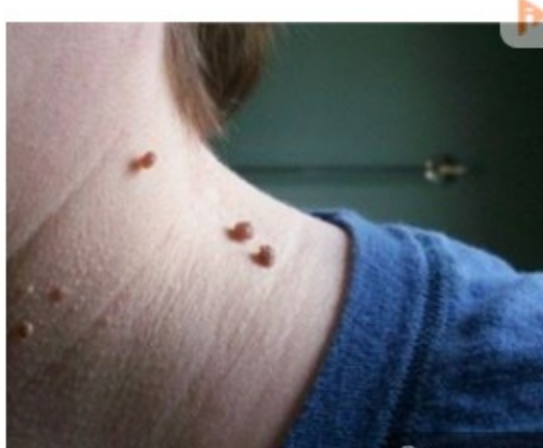
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