

THE REPORTER

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Federation to hold 2026 Annual Meeting on June 17

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold its 2026 Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 17, at 7:30 pm, at the Jewish Community Center. The event will include the election of the new Board of Directors. The Federation's Annual Report will be available at the meeting in hard copy. It will also appear on the Federation website and appears in this issue of *The Reporter*.

"The community is invited to our annual meeting in June where we will

discuss the Annual Report, elect new officers and conduct other business. Our board members are committed to making the community better. I am so grateful for their commitment," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "As we look back at the last year and all we have accomplished, we hope the community will see the value of their gift to the Federation."

Proposed members of the Board of Directors are:

◆ Executive Committee: Suzanne Hol-

witt, president; Howard Warner, immediate past president; Mark Walker, vice president; Lee Schechter, interim treasurer; Eileen Miller, secretary; Charles Gilinsky, assistant secretary; Jodi Sampey, Campaign chairwoman; Lee Schechter, endowment chairman; and TBD, community relations chairman.

◆ Board members at large are Jared Anstandig, Rita Bleier, Dennis Foreman, Sondra Foreman, Steve Gilbert, Phillip Gottlieb, Maren Nasar, Andrew Newmark, Jeff Platsky, Rose Shapiro, Dina Shvetsov,

Cathy Velenchik and Susan Walker.

◆ Affiliate organization representatives are Sheryl Brumer and Raychel Reilly (Jewish Community Center); TBA (*The Reporter*); Neisen Luks and Rabbi Leiah Moser (Temple Concord); Arthur Seigel and Rabbi Micah Friedman (Temple Israel); Rabbi Zev Silber and Benny Kellman (Beth David Synagogue); Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu (Hillel Academy); and Rabbi Aaron Slonim (Rohr Chabad Center). Steve Malkin is the chairman of the Safety and Security Committee.

TC/TI adult ed. with Rabbis Moser and Friedman

Rabbis Leiah Moser from Temple Concord and Micah Friedman from Temple Israel will present "Shifting Paradigms in Judaism, Past and Present," a joint Temple Concord and Temple Israel adult education program at Temple Concord on Sunday, June 7, from 10 am-noon. A brunch will start at 10 am, with the presentation and discussion starting at 10:30 am.

"A paradigm is a model or framework

that defines how we understand and interpret the world around us. When that model fails to help us deal with a newly emerging reality, the old paradigm breaks down to be replaced with a new interpretive framework," said program organizers. "Over the course of Jewish history, there have been a number of such revolutions in which new models of Jewish thinking emerged. Journeying from the earliest rabbis, to medieval philosophers

and early modern mystics, we will examine some of the key paradigm shifts that have shaped Judaism as we know it, and look for inspiration for wrestling with the changing Jewish world of our time. Recent examples of these shifts would include gender equality in Jewish law and practice, post-denominationalism, and the contestation of the role of Zionism in Diaspora Jewish life. Rabbis Moser and Friedman will model different

ways of thinking about current creative trends in American Jewish life."

A donation of \$5-\$20 per person is requested at the door. Reservations are appreciated and can be made by contacting the Temple Concord office by Wednesday, June 3, at 607-723-7355 during office hours, Tuesday-Friday 10 am-2 pm, by leaving a message during off hours, or by e-mail at templeconcordaa@gmail.com. Walk-ins will be accepted.

"Coffee, Community and Connection" topic of June 13 Beth David luncheon talk

On Saturday, June 13, Beth David's Luncheon Speaker Series will feature Rabbi Jared Anstandig; he and his wife Sarit are the JLIC couple at Binghamton University. "What is JLIC? When was it founded? What is its mission, and how does the JLIC couple – who is chosen to engage with a university community – tailor its programming to enhance the particular features and culture of an individual campus? When it comes to Jewish life at BU," organizers said, "many of us are impressed with the variety of options available for students. In addition to the welcoming atmosphere that our local synagogues offer to students, we

may have heard of Chabad and Hillel, but where does JLIC fit into this panoply of resources? We are honored to have Rabbi Anstandig, JLIC director at Binghamton, as our luncheon speaker. He looks forward to answering all our questions, and to telling us everything we want to know – and more – about JLIC! The title of his talk is 'Coffee, Community, and Connection: Reflections from Campus Life.'"

A native of West Bloomfield, MI, Anstandig studied at Yeshiva



Rabbi Jared Anstandig (Photo by Dora Polachek)

University, where he earned his bachelor's degree in Judaic studies and biblical studies, a master's degree in Bible, and his rabbinical ordination. Prior to his position at Binghamton, he and his wife lived in Toronto, where he served as a rabbi at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. They also taught Judaic studies at Bnei Akiva schools, and both worked as JLIC directors to build a community for university students who lived in the "down south" part of Toronto. Anstandig also served as a

reservist and 1st lieutenant in the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps. The Anstandigs live in the community, along with their four children.

Beth David Synagogue's Shabbat services commence at 9:30 am, with the luncheon and program following the conclusion of services. Its continuation relies on the generosity of contributors. Donations to the Luncheon Fund are welcomed and appreciated, and can be made in honor or memory of a loved one, or to mark a special occasion. Acknowledgments can be sent by including the necessary information. Donations can be sent to Beth David Synagogue, 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905, Attention: Luncheon Fund.

Reporter wins Syracuse Press Club Award

By Reporter staff

Bill Simons won first place in the Syracuse Press Club's 48th annual Professional Recognition Awards "Non-Daily or Special Interest – Sports Story" cate-

gory for his column "Sandy at 90 – That's how to be a good Jew." Simons' column, a retrospective of Sandy Koufax's career, can be found at [www.thereporter.com/features/jbp-sandy-at-90-thats-how-](http://www.thereporter.com/features/jbp-sandy-at-90-thats-how-to-be-a-good-jew)

to-be-a-good-jew.

"Kudos to the Syracuse Press Club for providing a network and framework of recognition for regional journalism," Simons said. "And special thanks to *Reporter*

Editor Emerita Rabbi Rachel Esserman and Editor Diana Sochor for the support and encouragement that they have provided for my 'Diaspora Report' column over the past six years."

"I am thrilled that Bill has once again won a well-deserved award for one of his sports columns," said Diana Sochor, executive editor of *The Reporter*. "Whether he's commenting on current events, movies, personalities or sports, his writing always ensures *The Reporter* offers its readers something they can't find anywhere else."



Bill Simons (Courtesy of Bill Simons)

InterSisterhood to be held on June 14

This year, InterSisterhood will be held on Sunday, June 14, at noon. Chairs Brooke Little from Temple Israel, Eileen Miller from Beth David Synagogue and Helene Philips from Temple Concord have announced Greg Neff as the entertainment at the event.

"Greg plays music from the '60s, '70s, '80s and much more," organizers said. "He



Greg Neff (Photo by Redmar Photography)

performs all around the area and is well known by many. He is often found playing at Carol's Art Bar in Owego. We are looking forward to his performance, and we hope you will make your reservation as soon as possible."

The event will include lunch and desserts. There will also be the opportunity to purchase a variety of different raffle

items; raffle tickets will be available at the door.

The admission fee is \$7 per person. Reservations must be made no later than Monday, June 8. To make a reservation and find out the location of the event, call Temple Concord at 607-723-7355, Temple Israel at 607-723-7461 or Beth David Synagogue at 607-722-1793.

"A huge thank you to the Eisenberg Foundation for its generous donation to this event," said organizers.

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Sisterhood talk

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TI to celebrate the 10th anniversary of its building in July; the JCC is gearing up for its 100th year.

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Federation Annual Report

The Federation Annual Report details events held and funds distributed in the last year.

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The Reporter wants the community to kvell with you

If your baby was born between July 2025 and May 2026, submit your baby's picture to *The Reporter* for the annual Family Focus issue, which will be published

in July. Pictures must be e-mailed by Tuesday, June 9.

Parents and grandparents are welcome to e-mail a photo to TReporter@aol.com as a JPG or TIF. Please

include the baby's name, sex, date of birth, parents' names, grandparents' names and great-grandparents' names.



Opinion

Responding to anti-Israel sentiment

By Bill Simons

Never since the 1948 rebirth of Israel has U.S. public opinion been more critical of the Jewish state. American Jews are divided about how to respond both to canards and truths. We know what Nazi genocide looked like, insist on the right of self-defense and remain committed to the survival of the Jewish state, but refuse to blind ourselves to wonton murder in Gaza, Lebanon and the West Bank inflicted by an Israel led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

On Saturday, April 25, in Albany at the Delegate Assembly (DA), statewide deliberative body of United University Professions (UUP), a higher education union, I faced a conundrum. Nearing the 30-year mark as a UUP Oneonta officer, 16 of them as president, I remain committed to unionism. Although an omnibus resolution advocated the two-state solution that I espouse, I spoke and voted against the resolution because it contained language that failed to adequately distinguish Israeli offensive and defensive military measures: "Demand that all U.S. aid to Israel be conditioned upon an agreement that Israel stop its attacks and actions in Lebanon, Iran, Gaza and the West Bank." After emotional debate, the resolution carried. Some Jewish colleagues voted for the resolution, strategizing that it would preclude adoption of a more anti-Israel declaration.

Several readers of this column answered my request: "I am working on an article about how to respond when an organization, or simply a peer group, that you belong to and generally respect adopts an anti-Israel position. How should we as American Jews respond—agree with the group consensus, defend Israel loudly and without reservation, differentiate between the current government of Israel and the Jewish state of Israel, remain silent, disassociate yourself with the group, or take some other approach?" Their answers, several intense and emotional, spanned the spectrum as the following excerpts illustrate.

Asking for anonymity, a prominent scholar asserted that Netanyahu "has made it almost impossible to defend Israel these days, especially among liberals and progressives. He's the Israeli Trump, a racist, corrupt... I often say I'm

pro-Israel but anti-Bibi and pro-Palestine but anti-Hamas." Given today's toxic polarization, he cautioned, "I'm not sure it is a good idea to write an article about this. Who will you persuade?"

My former student David Wendel, an attorney, also suggested reflective restraint, "I believe it's important to differentiate between the actions of the current government of Israel and the broader concept of the Jewish state itself. That distinction can make for more thoughtful dialogue. If consensus seems impossible and opinions are completely at odds, sometimes remaining silent or even distancing yourself from the group might be the better route."

Despite the heated rhetoric and maybe because of it, I decided to proceed. If we concede an inability to discuss this issue even amongst fellow Jews, there is little hope for constructive debate about Israel in the larger American polity. Thus, I heeded the counsel of my friend Richard Cohen, a retired MD: "I wonder if... your article might better focus on something that is more relatable to your readers—your feelings of disappointment over the conversation and any struggles you may personally have with this issue. As far as how to respond, rather than suggesting a specific response, you might want to list options..."

Alan Levine, my Colby College classmate and facilitator in Boston's Big Dig, cautioned, "We need to think about what kind of community we have created and what kind of community it is becoming over time... We cannot live a good life while turning a blind eye to what sins other Jews might be committing."

My cousin Robert Benson took offense with my inquiry formulation: "If you do not take an anti-Zionist position in 2026, you are violating the basic rules of humanity you learned in your own Jewish home. ... we could only ever be free by supporting the freedom for all peoples... I can't comprehend your question 'How should we as American Jews respond when confronted with an anti-Israel position?' ... you disguise your own prejudices with the framing of that question. What if instead, you had asked, how should we as American Jews respond to a regime that uses genocide, starvation, bullets and bombs to secure the vision of its leaders?"

Retired orthopedic surgeon and former synagogue president Richard Sternberg wrote, "Defend Israel and point out that Israel didn't start the fight in Gaza or hide its military behind civilians. Differentiate between the current government and the Jewish state and people of Israel... I don't see why innocent Lebanese should be bearing the brunt on the attack in Lebanon. It was clear that the Lebanese government had no control whatsoever in southern Lebanon. The situation there is not equivalent to what happened on October 7."

David Lonborg, formerly my student and subsequently a New York City social studies teacher, answered unequivocally: "[F]irst and foremost, make it clear that we remain pro-Israel, unapologetically." He added, "You could even go so far as to point out the blatant hypocrisy of the pro-Palestinian side that is so quick to condemn Israel yet never have a word to say about other injustices, including those within the Arab world and their treatment of the Palestinians... [A] lot of the anti-Israel sentiment is based on misinformation, false equivalencies, social media, and the influence of Qatar in their dissemination of biased educational materials throughout the world."

Challenging accusations of Israeli genocide, Susan Poretz, past SUNY and UUP colleague, shared her letter to the editor of Hudson Valley One. Poretz argued that "a nation hell bent on genocide does not warn the potential victims to leave the area... [Israel is] after the Palestinians who are either Iran's Hamas or Hezbollah stoolies. Israel has consistently alerted the inhabitants of Gaza and Lebanon of a planned attack in their area." Of "the signature phrase of [Palestinian proponents] ... 'from the river to the sea,'" Poretz asks, "And how do the Palestinians expect to do that? Genocide maybe?"

As global antisemitism escalates and Israel struggles to move beyond Netanyahu's malevolence, consensus on direction eludes American Jews. We need to keep talking. Shaming, silencing and shouting each other down will only further fragment American Jewry. Defining elections await Israel and the U.S. Despite our differences, let's repair the fractured commitment to compassion and justice at the core of authentic American and Jewish ideals.

One Perspective from Israel

Monsters in the attic

JEREMY M. STAIMAN

This article originally appeared in the Times of Israel and is being reprinted with permission.

I don't think I've ever told anyone this before, but I was afraid of the monsters in our basement.

And the ones in the attic.

I suppose that's not unusual for children, but the embarrassing part is that my fear followed me into adulthood. Even after I was married, with children of my own and a mortgage to pay, if I couldn't turn on the light before descending the five steps into our cluttered basement, I would hurry down, grab what I needed and race back upstairs to safety with the speed of an Olympic sprinter.

The monsters weren't confined to home. When the movie "Jaws" came out in 1975, I was so unnerved on the drive home that I kept checking the rearview mirror, half-expecting a predator of the deep to be closing in behind me.

If memory serves, I made it home unchewed.

Those were the monsters of my past. I suppose people are entitled to their phobias, no matter how irrational.

My grandchildren are growing up in the land of our ancestors —

the land flowing with milk and honey,
the land dubbed the Startup Nation,
a land with a storied past, a vibrant present, and, we pray, a luminous future.

But not a land without air-raid sirens.

Not a land where their fathers simply go to work and return home at night — where they don't have to carry a gun and leave for hours or days or weeks at a time to protect us all.

Not a land without nightmares.

Real ones. Legitimate ones.

One of the little ones refused to go upstairs alone, afraid that a siren might sound and she would have to run to the shelter by herself.

Some of them sleep each night on mattresses crowding the floor of the shelter.

They are, no doubt, typical of the more than two million children who live here. None of us knows what fears may take root, silently accompanying them into the future. Yet

we are a resilient people and we have every reason to believe in the strength of the next generation — their capacity to endure and to move forward.

We have monsters to the north. Monsters to the south. Monsters to the east. And the west does not always appear much kinder.

We came to Israel for the promise of a brilliant future — one that often feels so close we can almost touch it, the way our fingers wend their ways into the ancient crevices of the *Kotel*.

We can smell it with the same intensity as when we pass the bakeries that line our streets, breathing in the wafting scent of fresh-baked bread.

We can hear it in our raucous marketplaces, in the tapestry of music rising from our streets, and in the laughter echoing from playgrounds on nearly every corner.

Our children will inherit it. We have paid far too much for it to be otherwise. And we will continue to pay whatever is required to ensure that the Land of Israel fulfills its promise.

All we have to do is get past the monsters.



Jewish Federation
of Greater Binghamton

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OPINIONS
The views expressed in editorials and opinion pieces are those of each author and not necessarily the views of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton.

LETTERS
The Reporter welcomes letters on subjects of interest to the Jewish community. All letters must be signed and include a phone number; names may be withheld upon request.

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The Reporter does not necessarily endorse any advertised products and services. In addition, the paper is not responsible for the kashruth of any advertiser's product or establishment.

DEADLINE
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www.thereporter.org

Marconi Tower topic of Beth David Sisterhood

June 10 meeting



The Marconi Tower in downtown Binghamton (Photo by allen lutins)

The final meeting of Beth David Sisterhood for the 2025-26 season will be held on Wednesday June 10, at 7 pm, at the Beth David Synagogue.

The evening's speaker will be allen lutins (who spells his name lowercase), who will discuss the Marconi Tower that is located in downtown Binghamton near the old railroad station. This often-overlooked piece of American history played an important part in proving that radio signals could be used to communicate with a fast-moving vehicle such as a train.

He is an electronics technician and professional folk/ethnic musician. He maintains several web pages on a variety of topics, including documentation of the Marconi Tower at lutins.org/marconi. His other interests include hiking, ethnomusicology, vintage electronics restoration, cartography and amateur ("ham") radio.

A business meeting, during which the new slate of officers will be voted upon, will precede the presentation. Anyone who might be interested in becoming Sisterhood's new treasurer, publicity chairperson or service vice president should leave a message for the Beth David Synagogue office at 607-722-1793 or send



allen lutins (Photo by allen lutins)

an e-mail to bethdavid@stny.rr.com.

The meeting will be open to both men and women, whether or not they are affiliated with Beth David Sisterhood or Beth David Synagogue. Only paid members, however, will be eligible to vote on the slate of officers for next year.

Donations for CHOW will be accepted at the meeting; mitzvah cards, which are \$3, may be requested.

Donations of new and used items of all types, which are then offered for resale at Your Needful Things, are always appreciated.

Contact the Beth David office if you would like to arrange a donation.

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of **Daniel L. Faulkner**

Community invited to celebrate a decade at Temple Israel on July 26

The Temple Israel congregation invites the community to join the 10th Anniversary Celebration of the new temple building on Sunday, July 26, at noon, at Temple Israel.

"Ten years ago, the doors of a beautiful new synagogue opened in Vestal – and a decade of memories, growth and connection began," said organizers of the event. "This July, Temple Israel invites everyone to come together to mark that milestone in the warmth and spirit it deserves. The 10th Anniversary Celebration is open to all, and the congregation hopes to fill the day with familiar faces, new

friends and a shared sense of gratitude for everything that the building – and the community within it – has come to represent."

The day's program will include a commemorative march to bring participants together before a sanctuary program reflecting on the past 10 years. The afternoon will continue with a barbecue, raffle baskets and a 50/50 raffle.

"We hope you'll join us – not just to look back on how far we've come, but to celebrate the people who made it all possible," said organizers of the event. "Every friendship forged, every service shared, every life-cycle moment celebrated within these walls has woven together something truly special. We'd love nothing more than to share this day with you."

Those planning to attend are asked to RSVP by Friday, July 10, by e-mailing office@templeisraelvestal.org or calling the temple office at 607-723-7461.

JCC centennial campaign ongoing

The Jewish Community Center's centennial campaign is ongoing this year, with a goal of \$800,000. The JCC will celebrate its 100th anniversary on August 15, 2027.

"The first seven months were quite successful as our See "JCC" on page 4



L-r: JCC President Bud Parish and JCC Executive Director Maurice Finklestein surveyed the site for the new JCC building.

In Business

DeMunn Funeral Home purchases Parsons

Timothy A. Szczesny, owner of DeMunn Funeral Home and Cremation Service, recently purchased Ernest H. Parsons Funeral Home, which will now be located at 36 Conklin Ave., Binghamton. "We are incredibly excited about this partnership and the opportunities it brings," said Szczesny. "Our shared values and commitment to compassionate care make this collaboration a natural fit. Together, we will continue to provide the support and assistance that families in Binghamton and the surrounding areas deserve during their most difficult times." The new location on Conklin Avenue will allow for more accessibility and enable both funeral homes to work together in providing personalized services for families during their times of loss, he said.

DEADLINES

The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming printed issues of the monthly **REPORTER**.

ISSUE	DEADLINE
July	June 10
August	July 8
September	August 12
October	September 9

All deadlines for the year can be found at www.thereportergroup.org/contact-us/faqs under "Q: What Are the Deadlines for the Paper?"

Don't miss the boat...advertise!
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JUNE 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		2 REA 5:07 PM	3 REA 11:00 AM	4 REA 6:07 PM	5 REA 7:00 PM	6 REA 6:07 PM
7 REA 1:00 PM	8 @SON 6:35 PM	9 @SON 6:35 PM	10 @SON 6:35 PM	11 @SON 7:05 PM	12 @SON 7:05 PM	13 @SON 7:05 PM
14 @SON 1:05 PM	15 NH 5:07 PM	16 NH 5:07 PM	17 NH 5:07 PM	18 NH 7:00 PM	19 NH 7:00 PM	20 NH 5:07 PM
21 NH 1:00 PM	22 @ERI 6:05 PM	23 @ERI 6:05 PM	24 @ERI 6:05 PM	25 @ERI 6:05 PM	26 @ERI 6:05 PM	27 @ERI 6:05 PM
28 @ERI 6:05 PM	29 CHE 6:07 PM	30 CHE 6:07 PM				

HOME GAMES FIREWORKS GAMES AWAY GAMES

JUNE 19-21 BOBBERS

TEACHER & SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR APPRECIATION DAY **FRIDAY, 6/19**
(1) COMPLIMENTARY TICKET FOR GAME WHEN WORK IS OBSERVED AT THIS OFFICE

Disney **A NIGHT IN THE HUNDRED ACRE WOOD**
Winnie the Pooh
SATURDAY, JUNE 6TH

miller AUTO TEAM FIREWORKS SERIES
JUNE 5TH & JUNE 19TH

TEDDY BEAR GIVEAWAY FIRST 1,000 KIDS 12 & UNDER

BING BANG BOOM FIREWORKS
FRIDAY, JULY 3RD
GATES OPEN 6 PM

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1ST 1,000 FANS 13+
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the 2026 Annual **Community Guide**
the largest issue all year, with dine-out and health care sections!
To advertise, contact Kathy Brown at 607-724-2360, ext. 244 or advertising@thereportergroup.org
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THE REPORTER
Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

THE BINGHAMTON DOWNTOWN SINGERS AND ORCHESTRA PRESENT

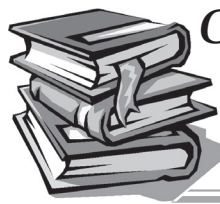
The Soul's Voyage

JOHANNES BRAHMS Nanie
RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS Toward the Unknown Region
JOHANNES BRAHMS Schicksalslied
HOWARD HANSON Song of Democracy

Saturday, June 6, 2026 7:00pm
United Presbyterian Church, 42 Chenango Street, Binghamton, NY
Tickets \$20 www.downtownsingers.org/tickets

The 2026 Spring Concert project was made possible by a grant from the Alcearn Foundation and from the Broome County Arts Council's United Cultural Fund. In addition, this Spring Concert underwritten, in part, by the Larry G. Denniston Legacy Fund.

The Alcearn Foundation
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Off the Shelf

No easy answers

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Every author, consciously or unconsciously, chooses a writing style when deciding how to tell a story. That's true of fiction and nonfiction, and can play a major role in how readers feel about the exposition and characters. Some novels contain lush descriptions of characters' feelings, something commonly found in melodrama. Others offer a more sparse tone with characters who nonchalantly perform horrifying actions as if they were everyday, unimportant occurrences. This low-key approach means that sometimes a simple decision or statement only offers emotional depth when readers supply added layers of meaning. This sparse style can be found in Giaime Alonge's impressive novel "The Feeling of Iron" (Europa Editions). The 440-plus page work focuses on two different timelines: the 1940s with an emphasis on World War II, concentration camps and the founding of the state of Israel; and the 1980s, which looks at the failures of communism and the battles between the Soviet-supported forces and the American-backed Contra in South America.

At first, "The Feeling of Iron" felt like a puzzle with its short chapters offering snapshots of a wide variety of characters. Readers need to piece together how these disparate people are connected, although all are featured again at some point, even if only for one important moment. The work demands patience because the puzzle pieces only begin to make sense about 100 pages into the novel, but it's worth the effort. Several main characters, though, are the true focus of the novel: SS Major Hans Lichtblau, whose job is to use science to create better soldiers to fight for the Nazi cause; the Polish shtetl-born Shlomo Libowitz, who, after the war, moves to Israel; and Anton Epstein, an assimilated Jew from Prague, who commits to the Communist cause after the war. The lives of these three characters are intertwined and their decision-making is what informs the work's ethical basis.

It doesn't spoil the plot to note that Shlomo and Anton survive the war because readers immediately meet them at two points in their lives: the 1940s, when Germany has begun persecuting Jews, and in the 1980s. In the later time period, Shlomo is part of a group that searches for and kills Nazis who managed to hide their identities after the war. His group is not connected to Mossad: it is funded by independent rich Jews, many from the United States. However, a different disaster – the loss of his soldier son during the first days of Israel's war with Lebanon – has left Shlomo feeling bereft. His *sabra* wife, Rivka, wants him to stop before he dies in an action. However, in a section that brilliantly shows how the author's understated prose creates great emotion, after Rivka learns the man he will be seeking this time is Lichtblau, she quietly takes his hand and notes that they have to go home so she can pack his suitcase.

Anton has had his post-war dream of a socialist utopia betrayed by the Soviet Union. Expelled from the Czechoslovakian Communist party for supporting a more liberal version of socialism, he was also removed from his hospital and teaching posts and exiled to the countryside. Now alone after the death of his wife, the KGB offers him a chance to redeem himself by traveling with one of its operatives to recover Lichtblau's research. Anton debates what he should do, but the idea of punishing Lichtblau and returning to his former life is attractive. What is interesting is that at this point in the novel, Shlomo and Anton have not met each other or Lichtblau in the 1940s timeline. This means that readers have yet to discover what Lichtblau did that would impel them to search for him, which also begs the question of whether or not the person they both seek is really Lichtblau. Although the two search for different reasons, they are willing to risk their lives for what might be called either justice or revenge, a concept readers may debate.

What makes "The Feeling of Iron" so remarkable is the breadth and depth of the characters. Readers are able to see the world through Lichtblau's eyes, as he seeks to create soldiers who will bring about a greater Germany and rid the world of unworthy races. His firm belief in German superiority allows him to discount the worth of the lives of those he believes are beneath him. Other German reactions to the Nazi cause are also shown. For example, one minor character, Martha Kernig, is only concerned with creating a good life for herself and her two children. After bad experiences with Soviets, including the death of her

husband, the Nazis have given her a better life and a future. Although she is not concerned with politics, she believes the Poles who live in the area are little better than savages and doesn't care how the Nazis treat them.

However, a different type of German, Baron Wilhelm von Lehdorff, looks down at those he considers Nazi upstarts and works against them. His life is tied to the land of his ancestors and all they fought for over the centuries. His protests against what was being done to the Poles and the Jews have earned him house-arrest, along with being forced to host Lichtblau, his lackeys and his experiments. What makes von Lehdorff such a fascinating character is that readers can despise some of his ideas about kin and blood, while also admiring his actions and his defense of what he sees as the honor of his country, something handed down to him as a heritage from previous generations of von Lehdorffs.

The idea of whether it's possible to settle all of one's accounts in life floats beneath the surface of the novel. However, even as prior accounts are settled, new ones arise. The author of "The Feeling of Iron" is not easy on anyone and that includes some actions taken by Israel in 1948 and the United States in South America during the 1980s. Readers may debate whether the ending of the novel is totally satisfying, but the more important question is whether Shlomo and Anton will ever feel they have done enough to avenge the past. This compelling work challenges readers to explore the ethical decisions all of its characters faced and, perhaps, relate those feelings to contemporary times.



On the Jewish food scene

My one and only cookbook

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

When I graduated from college and moved into my first adult apartment, I decided that I needed to buy some very important things. Those who know me won't be surprised that meant books. For example, among my first two purchases were "The Reader's Encyclopedia" (which contains information about books and authors from ancient to contemporary times) and a book containing the plots of major operas. (When I could hear normally, I was a huge theater fan and that included opera.) Readers need to remember that this was *way* before the Internet, so these were very important reference books. The one other book I remember buying was my very own copy of "The Settlement Cookbook."

I say my own copy because my mother owned an earlier version. Although our two books looked very different, they contain the same basic material. The advantage of the book was that it not only contained recipes, but gave general directions on how to cook almost any kind of food. Just want to roast a chicken or cook a piece of fish? It would tell you what to do. Want a fancy recipe to impress a friend? It had that also. However, it was the simple advice that appealed to me. By that point in time, I was already on medically restricted diets and there were few cookbooks that had recipes I could use. This book was actually helpful.

What I didn't realize was that "The Settlement Cookbook" had a Jewish connection. The Settlement Movement sought to help immigrant women – Jewish and non-Jewish

– become more American. Jews played a major role in the movement, both those who financially supported it and those who worked helping immigrants adjust. It's important to note, though, that the cookbook is not a kosher cookbook: it contains recipes for pork and shellfish.

One major difference between the white-covered version my mother used (which still sits on a shelf in the kitchen) and the larger, yellow-mustard covered version I bought (that's hidden somewhere in the house) is what was no longer printed on the cover. Displayed on my mother's book are the words, "The way to a man's heart." By the time I bought my version, the feminist movement was a large influence and that phrase had disappeared.

I rarely review cookbooks for *The Reporter* unless they contain a great deal of information beyond the recipes. It only seems fair to actually make some of the dishes before commenting on a book. Since I still can rarely follow a complete recipe for health reasons, that severely limits me. It's also a reason why I still think fondly of the book that helped me learn to cook around those restrictions.

"The Settlement Cookbook" seems to be out of print now, although I found copies on used book sites of the many different revised versions. Now when I want to learn to do something, I usually turn to the internet for advice and/or recipes. There is still, however, something wonderful about a book that influenced generations of American women and taught them how to cook.

GRADUATION SIMCHAS

Mazal tov, Sophie!
You've continued to
amaze me through the
years!
Love, Rebecca

Congratulations, Katie,
on graduating from
Ithaca College!
We're so very proud of
you!
Love, Mom and Dad

Katie,
You've made it!!!
Congratulations on
your graduation.
Kathy

JCC..... Continued from page 3

community recognizes how important the JCC is to us all," said Sue and Mark Walker, co-chairpersons of the campaign. "Every dollar is being generously matched by funds from the Eisenberg Foundation. Please reach out to the JCC today with your pledge. *L'dor v'dor*, let's keep our JCC here for the next 100 years. In these uncertain times, our JCC remains a safe and welcoming place for us all. Thank you."

Donations may be made immediately or pledged over the campaign period through Sunday, October 31, 2027. The David Eisenberg Donor Advised Fund will match all contributions up to \$400,000. There are donor recognition opportunities available. To donate, checks may be sent to the Jewish Community Center, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850. For more information, contact the JCC at 607-724-2417.

L-r: Sanford Parish, JCC president 1965-69, and Maurice Finkelstein, JCC executive director 1963-69, worked on the JCC Building Fund Drive.



L-r (holding the shovel): JCC Leadership Gifts Chairman Alec Rosefsky and JCC President Bud Parish broke ground for the new JCC circa 1967.

Community Yom Hashoah Holocaust memorial program held at JCC

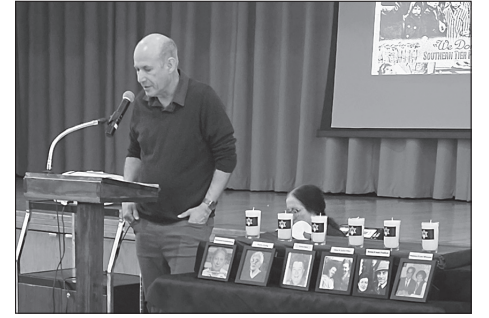
More than 65 community members attended the Yom Hashoah Holocaust memorial program at the Jewish Community Center on April 16. It was co-sponsored by the JCC, the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton and the College of Jewish Studies. The program began with a memorial candle lighting, followed by the film “We Don’t Say Goodbye’: Southern Tier People Remember the Holocaust,” and then a lecture and discussion led by Rabbi Lance J. Sussman, Ph.D. Organizers of the event also curated a photo display of community members’ relatives who were lost in the Holocaust to display at the program.



L-r: Nancy Dorfman, Jamie Tandlich and JCC Executive Director Sheryl Brumer attended the April 16 Yom Hashoah memorial program.



Rabbi Lance J. Sussman spoke at the Yom Hashoah memorial program on April 16.



Jonathan Karp welcomed the crowd to the program.



More than 65 community members attended the Yom Hashoah Holocaust memorial program at the JCC on April 16.

Beth David honored Mark Yonaty



Beth David Synagogue’s Annual Dinner was held on May 3, honoring Mark Yonaty with the Jack and Mary Ferber Award. Approximately 60 people attended the event. L-r, seated: Marcy Yonaty, Sari-Ann Yonaty, Stephen Yonaty and daughter Talia Yonaty. Standing: Gavriel Yonaty, honoree Mark Yonaty and wife Inessa Yonaty. (Photos by Dora Polachek)



L-r: Saba Wiesner, and Dick and Lori Lewis.



L-r: Rabbi Zev Silber, Judy Silber and Suzanne Holwitt.

TI/TC Adult Ed. hosted brunch



On April 19, the Temple Israel/ Temple Concord Adult Education Committee hosted its fifth of six brunch programs for the 2025-26 season, at Temple Israel. Author Richard Kreitner discussed his book “Fear No Pharaoh: American Jews, the Civil War, and the Fight to End Slavery.” Approximately 40 people attended, with many participating in a Q&A session at the end of the talk.

At left: Richard Kreitner discussed his book at the April 19 program.



TI/TC adult ed. attendees at the April 19 program. (Photos by Steve Gilbert)

Gifts for Dads & Grads



In front, l-r: Shelley Hubal, Annette Shaw, Barry Shaw, Susan and Gerry Hubal.

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Annual Report June 2025 through May 2026

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

MISSION STATEMENT

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton strives to create a caring, vibrant, enduring community locally, in Israel and worldwide. The Federation uses its assets and contributions to strengthen local Jewish institutions and organizations, to support Jewish people in need, and to educate the people in the Southern Tier about Jewish values and identity.

MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear Community Members,

Profound challenges have been at the forefront of our lives for several years, and we, as leaders, cannot escape the weight of this moment. The task of keeping our community united, secure, and strong has not been easy, but we have come to understand that the Jewish people are resilient and compassionate.

In the last year, members of this community have mourned together and celebrated as one. We have gathered for meaningful programs that deepened our love for and understanding of Jewish values. We have also raised the essential dollars that will sustain our community for the future. We have done this even as we've watched war rage through the Middle East, through parts of Europe, and the unrest on the streets here in the United States.

To every community member who has shown up and given of their time and resources, we say "yasher koach." Your generosity has created a light in the darkness and has given strength to others. This is what the Federation is all about and what it means to be Jewish.

Together, we are making the Greater Binghamton area a safer, more compassionate and more vibrant home for all of us. May we continue to be strong and be strengthened by each other.

Sincerely,
Shelley Hubal Executive Director
Suzanne Holwitt Board President



The Reporter keeps our area informed of Jewish activities, programming and important news (local, national and global). Our staff continues to find ways to remain solvent and relevant during the ongoing struggles of print media. *The Reporter* is received in almost 1,000 homes by people in 28 states. After going to a monthly print edition this year, *The Reporter* launched its "Reporter Notes" e-blast to help keep the community informed about upcoming events and up to date news. Our website, www.thereporter.org, is also updated frequently to better serve the community. In 2025, *The Reporter* won a Syracuse Press Club award for an article by columnist Bill Simons and two American Jewish Press Club Simon Rockower Awards for Excellence in Jewish Journalism, both by columnist Bill Simons.

The Reporter staff wants to thank its loyal readers and generous supporters. We are dedicated to continuing the important work of keeping the Binghamton Jewish community connected and informed.

FEDERATION SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS & FINANCIALS

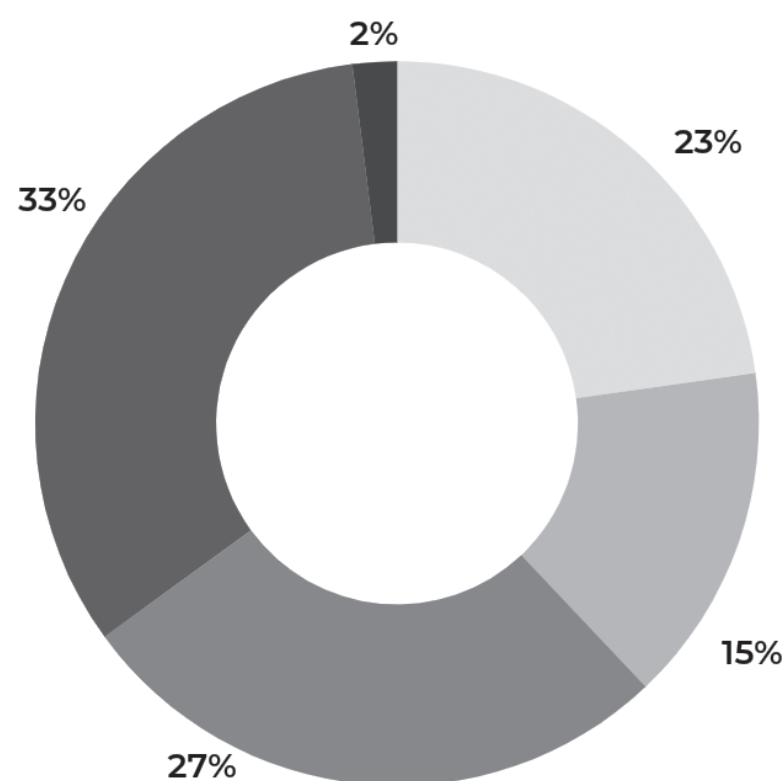
2025 Budget & Allocations

The Federation Board of Directors allocated a total of \$329,345 for 2025.

The Federation budget included funding for Jewish Family Service, Film Fest and PJ Library. Funding for allocations comes from Annual Campaign dollars and the endowment.

Our resources are precious. We are grateful for the community's support.

- Hillel Academy \$75,000
- The Reporter* \$50,000
- JCC \$89,000
- Federation Budget \$108,845
- JFNA, Community Mikvah, Hillel at BU and Security \$6,500



JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE

I had the honor of becoming the director of Jewish Family Service in November 2024. At that time, I really did not understand the needs of our neighbors, or the incredible generosity of our Jewish community. In collaboration with many other community service providers, we have supported people who have no one left to turn to for help.

In the last year, we have been able to assist with NYSEG bills, food pantry referrals, grocery cards, gas cards, dental bills, rent payments and storage unit bills. Although we can't support everyone, we try to listen with compassion and problem solve for every person seeking support.

Our partnership with Jackie's Kitchen has enabled us to feed 11 families every week with free kosher food. Currently, JFS is seeking outside funding for a program that will pay for storage units for people that have lost their homes and are living in a shelter or a hotel.

Recently, a family in the "We Remember You" program was able (with our help) to move out of financial distress and, as a result, let us know that our support was no longer needed. We see this as a success and are grateful for all the donors that support this program.

Sincerely,
Merryl Wallach, JFS Director

JFS IMPACT JUNE 2025 – MAY 2026:

- \$9,780 to Jewish families in the "We Remember You" program
- \$3,974 miscellaneous emergency financial help
- \$4,277 rent or moving assistance
- \$1,400 grocery assistance
- 26 emotional support calls
- 90 well check calls
- 40 referrals to food pantries
- 20 referrals to NYSEG for funding support
- \$4,787 in assistance for NYSEG bills
- 12 referrals for housing and rent support
- 3 referrals for home care
- 24 referrals for mental health support
- 4 home visits
- 48 collaborations with other agencies

SAFETY & SECURITY COMMITTEE

As an affiliate of the Central-Western NY Region of the Secure Community Network, members of the Safety and Security Committee have direct communication with regional director Mark Henderson. With the rise in antisemitism and increase in global unrest, this relationship is integral to our community's day-to-day safety preparation. The committee chairs have also maintained relationships with the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security, local police, state police and the Broome County Sheriff's Office.

Funding for the Safety and Security initiative was formerly supported, in part, by the Jewish Federations of North America Live Secure grant. This grant is no longer available.

We are grateful to Adam Weitsman and family for their generous gift in support of community security.

Community members that want to contribute to our security efforts can contact the Federation office at 607-724-2332.

CONSISTENT WITH ITS PURPOSE STATEMENT, THE SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING BETWEEN JUNE 2025 AND MAY 2026:

- Continued use of the text alert system to disseminate information to committee members and local Jewish leadership.
- Held meetings with local leadership to enhance security protocols.
- Distributed funds to support High Holiday security for local synagogues and campus Jewish organizations.
- Reported security updates and information to the Federation board.
- Three community-wide security training courses.
- \$8,300 raised for our community security fund.
- Site specific training for the JCC, Hillel Academy and Temple Concord.
- Acted as a liaison to connect local leadership with law enforcement.

YEAR IN REVIEW

JUNE - SEPTEMBER 2025

- JUNE 25, 2025** – Security meeting for local leadership
- JULY 15, 2025** – Peace vigil for the Israeli hostages
- AUGUST 17, 2025** – Annual Campaign kickoff featuring Tamir Goodman
- AUGUST 27, 2025** – "Guardian" and "Stop the Bleed" training
- SEPTEMBER 28, 2025** – Holocaust memorial gathering

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2025

- OCTOBER 5, 2025** – Community October 7th commemoration with Dr. Yehezkel Caine, president of Herzog Medical Center in Jerusalem
- NOVEMBER 9, 2025** – Global Day of Jewish Learning
- NOVEMBER 23, 2025** – "Running on Sand" – Film Fest event
- DECEMBER 7, 2025** – Screening of four short films – Film Fest event
- DECEMBER 14, 2025** – "Discover Hannukah" PJ Library event at the Discovery Center
- DECEMBER 28, 2025** – "The Matchmaker" – Film Fest event

JANUARY - MAY 2026

- FEBRUARY 8, 2026** – "The Tasters" – Film Fest event
- FEBRUARY 26, 2026** – A conversation with the ADL
- MARCH 15, 2026** – "Soul of a Nation" – Film Fest event
- APRIL 16, 2026** – Community Yom Hashoah commemoration featuring Rabbi Dr. Lance Sussman
- MAY 31, 2026** – "Sheep & Shmears" PJ Library farm tour

BINGHAMTON JEWISH FILM FEST

The 2025-2026 Film Fest season consisted of five events. Four events were virtual and one was an in-person screening. The Binghamton and Ithaca communities combined for more than 230 views in total.

We are grateful to the Victor & Esther Rozen Foundation and all our contributing members for their generous donations that helped to make the Film Fest a success.

“The Film Fest brings current and former community members together for entertainment and discussion. It is a wonderful way to keep our community connected.”

– Shelley Hubal, Federation Executive Director

A special thank you to the Film Fest Committee members: Shelley Hubal, Susan Hubal, Ben Kasper and Steve Lisman.

This year, with the support of the Federation budget and a special anonymous donor, PJ library sustained a subscriber list of 82 young children who received free Jewish-themed children’s books every month.



The “Discover Hanukkah” party at the Discovery Center was co-sponsored by Hillel Academy. More than 100 participants enjoyed sufganiyot, special Hanukkah crafts and play time at the museum. PJ Library also sponsored a special program, “Sheep and Shmears,” featuring a farm tour and an opportunity for young families to shmooze at the Miller family farm.

PJ Library enables the next generation to connect with their Jewish roots in a meaningful way. That is a great investment in our future!

you belong

“You Belong,” the theme for the 2026 Annual Campaign, reflects the impact of each donor, volunteer and community member. It is our mission to create a community where everyone is accepted and knows they belong.

The Annual Campaign for 2025 raised \$282,950 from 299 donors. To date, the 2026 Campaign has raised \$240,494 from 273 donors.

A special thank you to all our generous donors and especially the David and Virginia Eisenberg Foundation. We pledge to use our precious resources to make the Binghamton Jewish community safe, vibrant and welcoming for all.

“It was my great honor to chair the Federation Annual Campaign. This important work has given me a greater understanding of the local Jewish community. The compassion and generosity that I have witnessed is outstanding. I want to say ‘yasher koach’ to all of our donors. You make our community better.”

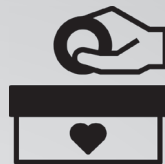
–Marilyn Bell, Campaign Chair

HIGHLIGHTS

82 Children receiving PJ Library Books



310 Donors to the Annual Campaign



The Reporter is delivered to homes in 28 States



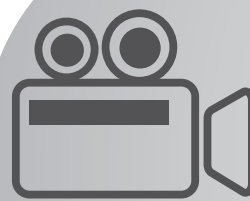
16 community-wide sponsored or co-sponsored programs



\$14,438 Distributed locally in emergency relief funds



5 Film Fest Screenings



\$9,780 Distributed to our “We Remember You” families



Hochul intends to opt New York in for federal school-choice tax-credit program

By Menachem Wecker

(JNS)—New York Gov. Kathy Hochul intends to opt in to the Republican school-choice scholarship program, which is slated to go into effect on January 1, 2027, according to her office. That would make her the second Democrat to do so, after Colorado Gov. Jared Polis.

“Gov. Hochul is supportive of the federal tax-credit scholarship and its potential to help New York students and schools,” a spokesman for the governor told JNS. “Our office awaits information from the federal government on the program and will thoroughly review the details of the policy for poison pills that could harm New York’s education system.”

Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear, Maryland Gov. Wes Moore, California Gov. Gavin Newsom, Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker, Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro and Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer – all Democrats considered potential 2028 candidates – have not said if they will include their states in the program.

The IRS and U.S. Treasury Department stated in December that the program allows people to donate money to scholarships for elementary- and secondary-school

expenses, and to claim those donations, up to \$1,700, as federal tax credits. Students can only access that money under those terms if the state opted into the program, the federal government said at the time.

Sen Ted Cruz (R-TX) called the announcement a “massive victory. ... I was proud to author this landmark school choice bill, the largest in American history, and now millions of New York kids will benefit,” he stated.

Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC) stated that “30 states and counting” had said they would opt into the program. “More choice, more opportunity and more hope for families across America,” he wrote. “Proud to have led the effort to get the most significant school choice legislation in our nation’s history, the Education Freedom Tax Credit, signed into law.”

“When parents have a choice, kids have a chance,” he added.

“I did not have this one on my Bingo card,” stated Corey DeAngelis, a n advocate for school choice and a research fellow at Heritage Foundation.

Moshe Schwartz of Yeshiva World News reported on May 7 that Hochul broke the news, which he called a

“massive win” for yeshivas, to a group associated with the Orthodox umbrella group Agudath Israel of America. “The announcement came at a private event held at the offices of Agudah chairman Sol Werdyger, with members of the Agudah board, including chief operating officer Avi Schnall, Yeruchem Silber, Rabbi Chaim Dovid Zwiebel, Chaskel Bennett” and others, he wrote.

“Agudath Israel of America played a central role in crafting and advancing the legislation alongside legislative sponsors and coalition partners over several years,” Schwartz wrote. “Eligibility for scholarships is determined by income thresholds based on a family’s place of residence. According to Agudath Israel, most families in Orthodox Jewish communities will qualify under the program’s generous income guidelines.”

Steve Rabinowitz, president and co-founder of Bluelight Strategies in Washington and a former White House design and production director under President Bill Clinton, told JNS that he remembers “fondly” the “days when for most American Jews, church-state separation included our passing on the possibility of help with tuition in our See “School” on page 11



Prep your ride for a summer road trip

(NewsUSA) – The weather is heating up, school will soon be out and that means it’s time to hit the open road on a summer road trip! Wherever your road trip takes you, the key to having a great experience starts with proper preparation; that means taking care of the driver, passengers and your ride. Here are some tips from www.goldeagle.com to help you plan a road trip and make your summer adventure one to remember:

- ◆ Safety first: The driver focuses on driving. If the driver needs to check the phone, take a break, have a snack, or anything else, wait for a rest stop, or pull over to the side of the road.
- ◆ Check your ride: A complete car check before a road trip should include checking the fluid levels, wiper blades, lights (including brights) and tires.

- ◆ Optimize your engine. Before you hit the road, a simple way to troubleshoot performance issues is to use a fuel injector cleaner to break up heavy carbon deposits that can keep your car’s engine from working its best.
- ◆ Ride in style. A clean car makes any trip more pleasant, especially a summer road trip. Spills are inevitable on a long ride, so use an automotive stain guard spray to help protect the carpet and car seat fabric against messes caused by coffee, soda, pets, dirt, mud and more.
- ◆ Resist the elements. On your trip, you may hit some inclement weather or encounter other elemental irritants, so make sure to protect the metal areas of your car and trailer with a coat of rust prevention spray.

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DRINKING AND DRIVING IS A DEADLY COMBO



DON'T TALK OR TEXT WHEN DRIVING!

A MESSAGE FROM
THE REPORTER GROUP



DON'T LET ALCOHOL GET BEHIND THE WHEEL

When alcohol is the driver, nobody's safe! It doesn't take a large amount to do a lot of damage. Even one drink can cloud judgment and slow reflexes enough to hamper fast thinking and total control at the wheel. At holidays when many people celebrate "to the limit," steer clear of disaster. If you take a drink, don't take the driver's seat... and make it a safe and happy holiday weekend!

This Safety Message Sponsored By:

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 Broome County Sheriff's Corrections Officers Local 2012
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Individuality within community: Mission possible?

RABBI LEVI Y. SLONIM, CO-DIRECTOR OF CHABAD DOWNTOWN AND DIR. OF DEVELOPMENT, ROHR CHABAD CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDENT LIFE AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

Do I really matter? Is there room for my unique contribution in such an organized religion and storied tradition? Does Judaism leave room for me to express my creativity and channel my personality? These questions are among those most frequently asked.

Parashat Naso can provide an answer! Following their Exodus from Egypt and the subsequent giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, the next big “project” for the Jewish people was building the Tabernacle. After months of labor, it was finally complete. The dedication of the temple lasted 12 days, each of which featured a beautiful ceremony, conducted by the *nasi* (“prince”

of one of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

The Torah (Numbers 7:12-83), describes in great detail how each day the prince of one of the tribes brought a magnificent gift to God, as a personal offering from his own possessions. Every gift included a large silver platter, a silver bowl and golden spoon filled with incense, and a number of cattle. Oddly enough, the description of the identical gifts appears 12 times.

The Rebbe (whose 32nd *yahrzeit* will be commemorated on June 19 this year) addressed the apparent redundancy. It is true, he teaches, that each prince brought an identical gift, but each one infused it with different intentions

and meaning. There was symbolism in the weights of the platter, the bowl and spoon, and in the numbers of the different animals that were offered, and each prince meditated thereon in a specific manner. While a simple reading appears repetitive, in fact, the Torah is teaching that each day the offering was completely unique in terms of its “heart and soul.”

For this reason, the Torah describes the offering 12 times prefacing each day with the words: “One chieftain each day, one chieftain each day, shall present his offering for the dedication of the altar” (Numbers 7:11).

See “Mission” on page 11

Congregational Notes

Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative
Rabbi: Micah Friedman
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 607-723-7461 and 607-231-3746
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-3:30 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm
E-mail: office@templeisraelvestal.org
Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org
Service schedule: Tues., 5:30 pm; Fri., 5:30 pm; Sat., 9:30 am – all via Zoom and in-person

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Micah Friedman.

On Saturday, June 6, Shabbat services will be held at 9:30 am. The Torah portion is Numbers 8:1-12:16 and the haftarah is Zechariah 2:45-4:7. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:30 pm.

On Saturday, June 13, Shabbat services will be held at 9:30 am. The Torah portion is Numbers 13:1-15:41 and the haftarah is Joshua 2:1-24. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:45 pm.

On Saturday, June 20, Shabbat services will be held at 9:30 am. The Torah portion is Numbers 16:1-18:32 and the haftarah is I Samuel 11:14-12:22. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:45 pm.

On Saturday, June 27, Shabbat services will be held at 9:30 am. The Torah portion is Numbers 19:1-25:9 and the haftarah is Micah 5:6-6:8. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:45 pm.

Upcoming events:

Mondays, June 1, 8, 18 and 22: “Hebrew with the Weekly Parsha” class with Rabbi Micah Friedman from 6:30-7:45 pm.

Tuesdays, June 2, 9, 16 and 23: “Torah and Our Times” class with Rabbi Micah Friedman at 4:30 pm.

Tuesday, June 2: Executive Board meeting at 7 pm.

Sunday, June 7: TI/TC Adult Ed. event at Temple Concord at 10 am.

Wednesday, June 10: “Torah of Being an American Jew” class with Hadassah Mativetsky at 11 am.

Tuesday, June 16: Congregational/Trustees annual meeting at 7 pm.

Wednesday, June 17: Ritual Committee meeting at 10 am.

Saturday, June 20: Farewell services and kiddush for Rabbis Micah Friedman and Talia Laster.

Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815
Phone: 607-334-2691
Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: 607-756-7181
President: Mark Suben
Cemetery Committee: 315-696-5744
Website: templebrithsholomcortland.org
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/>
Service leaders: Lay leadership
Shabbat services: Services are usually on the third Friday of the month and led by a variety of leaders. Check the Facebook page or weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.
Religious School: Students are educated on an individual basis.

Temple Brith Sholom is a small equalitarian congregation serving the greater Cortland community. Congregants span the gamut of observance and services are largely dependent on the service leader. The Friday night siddur is “Likrat Shabbat.” The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences. The Board of Trustees meets on the second Tuesday of the month.

Services and programs are held by Zoom usually on the third Friday of the month.

Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union
Rabbi: Zev Silber
Assistant Rabbi: Moshe Shmaryahu
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Phone: 722-1793
Rabbi's Office: 722-7514
Fax: 722-7121
Office hours: Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm
Beth David e-mail address: bethdavid@stny.rr.com
Rabbi's e-mail: rabbisilber@stny.rr.com
Website: www.bethdavid.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton
Classes: Rabbi Zev Silber will hold his weekly Talmud class every Tuesday evening after services.

Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Cantor: David Green
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820
Phone: 607-432-5522
E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com
Regular service times: Contact the temple for days of services and times.
Religious School/Education: Religious School, for grades kindergarten through bar/bat mitzvah, meets Sunday mornings. For the schedule of services, classes and events, contact the temple.

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi: Caleb Brommer
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292
Phone: 607-273-5775
Website: www.tbethithaca.org
President: Nommi Nadich
Director of Education and Engagement: Calle Schueler
Services: Friday 6:30 pm; Saturday 9:30 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sundays and legal holidays).
Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sundays from 9 am-noon and Wednesdays from 4-6 pm. Teen Midrasha meets Tuesdays from 6-8 pm.
Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office, or email secretary@tbethithaca.org, for more information.

Congregation Tikun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY
Phone: 607-256-1471
Website: www.tikkunvor.org
E-mail: info@tikkunvor.org
Presidents: Judy Saul and Eric Maroney, presidents_22@tikkunvor.org
Education Director/Administrative Coordinator: TBA
Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin
Services: All services currently on Zoom. E-mail info@tikkunvor.org for the times and links. Contemplative morning services every Tuesday from 8:30-9:30 am. Saturday mornings, Gan Shabbat and other special services at least once a month. Call for the weekly schedule.
Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE) for second through seventh grade classes meet on Sunday mornings. Sixth and seventh grades also meet on Wednesday afternoons. Family programs for kindergarten and first grade held monthly.
Adult Education: Offered regularly throughout the year. Check the website for details.

Friday, June 5, light candles 8:18 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, June 6 9:19 pm
Friday, June 12, light candles 8:22 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, June 13 9:23 pm
Friday, June 19, light candles 8:24 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, June 20 9:25 pm
Friday, June 26, light candles 8:25 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, June 27 9:26 pm
Friday, July 3, light candles 8:25 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, July 4 9:25 pm

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Rabbi: Leiah Moser
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton NY 13905
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm
Phone: 607-723-7355
Office e-mail: TempleConcordBinghamton@gmail.com
Website: www.TempleConcord.com
Please contact Temple Concord for Zoom links.

Some services and programs are online only. For Zoom links, contact Temple Concord.

Services, ongoing classes and evening prayers at Temple Concord:

Fridays: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service (in person, on Zoom and on Facebook).

Saturdays: At 9:15 am, Torah study (in person and on Zoom) and at 10:30 am, Shabbat service (in person).

Wednesdays: At 5:30 pm, evening prayers (in person). At 6 pm, adult education classes (in person and on Zoom). Contact the temple office for more details.

Upcoming events:

Tuesday, June 2: At 10:30 am, the Tuesday Morning Book Club will discuss “The Anatomy of Exile” by Zeeva Bukai. For more information, contact Merri Pell-Preus at 607-222-2875 or e-mail merrypell.preus@gmail.com. To join via Zoom, visit <https://bit.ly/3CXVd9b>, meeting ID 881 6469 4206 and passcode 653272.

Thursday, June 4: At 7 pm, the Annual Meeting will be held. Temple members are encouraged to attend, in person or via Zoom.

Sunday, June 7: From 10 am-2 pm, Sisterhood Rummage Sale – Bag Sale, \$8/bag. This is the last sale before summer break. It will be held in Temple Concord’s basement. Shoppers are asked to use the Oak Street entrance.

Sunday, June 7: At 10am, TC/TI Adult Education Brunch, “Shifting Paradigms in Judaism, Past and Present.” Rabbis Leiah Moser and Micah Friedman will model different ways of thinking about current creative trends in American Jewish life. Contact the Temple Concord office by e-mail at templeconcordaa@gmail.com or by phone at 607-723-7355 to make reservations by Wednesday, June 3.
See “TC” on page 12

Penn-York Jewish Community

B'nai B'rith: William H. Seigel Lodge
Purpose: To promote Jewish identity through religious, cultural, educational and social activities in the Southern Tier of New York and the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania, including Waverly, NY; Sayre, Athens and Towanda, PA, and surrounding communities.
For more information, contact the Penn-York Jewish Community at pennnyorkjcc@gmail.com.

Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch
Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors
E-mail: aslonim@binghamton.edu
rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com
Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 607-797-0015, Fax: 607-797-0095
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Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming
E-mail: yohana@Jewishbu.com, gohana@Jewishbu.com
Regular service times: Daily 7:30 am, Friday evening 6 pm, Shabbat morning 9:30 am, Maariv and Havdalah one hour after candle-lighting time, Sundays 9:30 am.
To join the mailing list, for up-to-date information on adult education offerings or to arrange for a private tutorial, for details concerning the Judaica shop and resource center, or for assistance through the Piaker Free Loan Society or Raff Maasim Tovim Foundation, call Chabad’s office at 797-0015.

Chabad will be holding pre-Shabbat virtual programs. For more information, visit www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership.

Children shaped clay 15,000 years ago in Israel

By Etgar Lefkovits

(JNS) – An Israeli university announced recently that archaeologists have uncovered the earliest known clay ornaments in Southwest Asia, dating back 15,000 years in modern-day Israel.

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem said that 142 beads and pendants were created by Natufian hunter-gatherers. These ancient people lived by gathering wild food and hunting, rather than through agriculture or farming. The ornaments were found at four Natufian sites: el-Wad, Nahal Oren, Hayonim and Eynan-Mallaha, spanning more than three millennia of occupation. These communities were the first in the world to settle permanently in one place, millennia before the rise of agriculture. Small enough to fit in the palm of a hand, the beads were carefully shaped from unbaked clay into cylinders, discs and ellipses.

“This discovery completely changes how we understand the relationship between clay, symbolism and the emergence of settled life,” said Laurent Davin, a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute of Archaeology at Hebrew University of Jerusalem who led the archaeological team.

Fifty reserved fingerprints were identified as those of individuals of different ages, including children, adolescents and adults. Until now, clay in this period was thought to play little or no ornamental role, with only five clay beads from this era being previously known worldwide. Many were coated in red ochre, using a technique known as engobe, a thin layer of liquid clay smoothed onto the surface. This is the earliest known use of this coloring technique anywhere in the world, the university said in a press release.

“By documenting one of the world’s oldest traditions of clay adornment, the study reframes the Natufians not just as forerunners of agriculture, but as innovators of symbolic culture – people who used clay to say something about who they were and who they were becoming,” the press release added.

“These objects show that profound social and cognitive changes were already underway,” said Prof. Leore Grosman. “The roots of the Neolithic lie deeper than we once thought.” The findings were published the week of March 18 in Science Advances, a peer-reviewed American journal.

Originally published at <https://www.jns.org/news/israel-news/children-shaped-clay-15-000-years-ago-in-israel>.

Israeli judokas won three medals at European Championships

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Israeli athletes won three medals at the European Judo Championships in Tbilisi, Georgia, over the April 19 weekend, including a gold medal in the women’s over-78kg category.

Raz Hershko, 27, beat France’s Lea Fontaine in under a minute on April 19, winning gold for the second time in her judo career, after overcoming Croatia’s Helena Vukovic in the semifinal and Italy’s Erika Simonetti in the quarterfinal.

In doing so, Hershko became the third Israeli judoka to win more than one gold medal at the European championship, after Arik Zeevi and Sagi Muki.

The win marked Hershko’s fifth consecutive medal at the continental tournament. In 2022, 2023 and 2025, she won a silver medal, and in 2024, she secured her first gold.

Originally published by Jewish News Syndicate, www.jns.org/news/israel-news/israeli-judokas-win-three-medals-at-european-championships.

Mission. Continued from page 10

The message is clear and so important: The Talmud (Berachot 58a.) teaches that “just as everyone’s face is different, so are our ideas and approach to life different.” God demands what looks like a uniform contribution from all of us. Like that of the princes, our “gifts” to God seem identical. At the same time, everyone offers a unique contribution, without which the world would be lacking. The specific meaning of the details, the intentions and passions that we bring to our gifts, is where this individual contribution is expressed. For example, when a person prays, he or she is saying the

same words as everyone else in the assemblage, but each person’s thoughts are private and theirs alone.

The repeated description of the offerings made by the princes teaches us that in the global responsibility of Judaism, no individual need feel lost. Everyone is uniquely important; indeed, each person, man or woman, is crucial for the fulfillment of God’s plan for the world. Yes, I matter and I make a difference.

Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe of righteous memory.

Jewish Community Center

JCC Friendship Club

The JCC Friendship Club met on April 15. We met at the Jewish Community Center and proceeded to drive to a local restaurant where we had lunch. It was a beautiful day, just the kind of sunny and warm day that you want to be outside.

It is with a heavy heart that I am moving out of this area. I will miss everyone but it is time. I am moving to Rochester to be near my daughter. At my age (over 90) I am finding it difficult to live alone. My problem is, how do I move a three-plus bedroom house into a one bedroom apartment.

When I am gone, I want you to remember the men in my life (it is a joke). Arthur is a big pain. His name is Arthritis. I don’t like his friend Ben. He has a bad smell – Ben Gay. Charley doesn’t come around anymore because I don’t go to the places he likes – Charley Horse. Will leaves me when I need him the most – Will Power. I was told that there is a man named Al. looking for me. I don’t want to have anything to do with him – Alzheimer.

I wish everyone a happy summer.

Shalom.

Sylvia Diamond, president

School. Continued from page 9

private parochial schools, despite how much help was indeed needed.

“That dichotomy was always frustrating, but it was a big part of the price we paid,” said Rabinowitz, who also is a former Senate communications director who consults with Democratic and Jewish clients, among others. “Those days are quickly ending and not only in New York state,” he told JNS. “I think other states are sure to follow. . . . Even though I am now out of the day school tuition game,” he added, “I played for 13 years. I find myself strangely more ambivalent than I was, ironically, when it was burning holes in my pockets.”

Sydney Altfield, CEO of Teach Coalition, part of the Orthodox Union, stated that the governor’s decision is “extraordinary news for Jewish families and for every community across our state. . . . Gov. Hochul is showing true national leadership,” Altfield said. “Her support for this program puts New York at the forefront of expanding educational opportunity and positions the state as a leader among blue states looking to empower families. “This is bigger than New York. Blue states across the country will now be watching closely.”

Originally published at www.jns.org/news/u-s-news/hochul-intends-to-opt-new-york-in-for-federal-school-choice-tax-credit-program.



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For youth with disabilities, Birthright offers a customized experience

By Howard Blas

(JNS) – As Israel’s streets once again fill with the voices and laughter of Birthright Israel participants from around the world, a quieter but no less meaningful story is unfolding alongside the program’s better-known classic trips.

Since its founding in 2000, Taglit-Birthright Israel has brought more than 900,000 young Jews to Israel. Far less widely known is the organization’s long-standing commitment to making that experience accessible to youth with disabilities and other special needs – through customized, fully supported trips offered at no additional cost. A Birthright trip earlier this year, from January 4-15, for youth with autism spectrum disorder, was titled “Israel All Together.”

For Elizabeth Sokolsky, executive vice president of Birthright Israel, the rationale is both simple and deeply Jewish. Citing the talmudic principle that “All Israel is responsible for one another,” she explained that inclusion is not an add-on but a core value.

“Taglit-Birthright Israel believes that every eligible young adult should be able to travel to Israel to experience their birthright,” she told JNS. “Guided by our Jewish values, we aim to be inclusive of all individuals with disabilities, special requirements, limitations or challenges.”

Birthright currently offers both classic 10-day and volunteer trips tailored for participants on the autism spectrum, those with vision or hearing impairments, mobility challenges, intellectual and developmental disabilities, individuals in recovery, and others with medical, cognitive or physical conditions. These trips feature higher staff-to-participant ratios, adjusted pacing and, when necessary, one-to-one aides – without sacrificing the “richness or rigor” of the itinerary.

I write this not only as a journalist, but as someone who has led more than a dozen such trips. In December and January, I guided back-to-back Birthright programs: one for alumni of Camp Ramah’s Tikvah Program for people with disabilities, and another for the participants on the autism spectrum. Both were organized by Tailor Made, a leading provider of accessibility-focused travel in Israel.

“This mission is our flagship and our honor – to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to experience Israel with dignity, independence, and equal access,” said Tatiana Hasson-Katz, Tailor Made’s director of programming and outreach. “We are deeply passionate about serving this community and are proud to continue our commitment to creating meaningful, inclusive travel experiences for all.”

On a bus winding from Tiberias to the Golan Heights,

23 Birthright participants on the autism spectrum chatted with one another, listening as tour guide Duby Langberg narrated Israel’s landscapes and history. They had arrived just a day earlier on an Arkia flight from New York, quickly bonding in the airport chapel as connections arrived from across the United States and Canada.

The days that followed were filled with the kinds of experiences familiar to any Birthright alumnus – only adapted. At Ein Kshatot, the group explored an ancient synagogue. On the Golan, a musical workshop invited participants to tap rhythms, sing and engage multiple senses. At Agamon Hahuleh, small groups toured the wetlands by golf cart, observing hundreds of thousands of migrating cranes. One participant took 600 photographs, later curating and sharing her favorite 50 with the group.

Accessible hikes at Ein Afek and Nahal Shofet, a nighttime boat ride on the Kinneret, volunteering with therapy horses, visits to Tsfat (Safed), Tel Aviv, Jaffa and Jerusalem – all were part of the journey. The group was also scheduled to meet Israeli soldiers, attend a geopolitics lecture and visit Yad Vashem, the Western Wall and the Dead Sea.

For Brad Levitt, 30, from Manhattan’s Upper West Side, this January trip was his second Birthright experience in four months. “The reason I chose this trip is that I struggle with organization, so changing hotels every three days doesn’t suit me so well,” he said with a laugh. “Changing hotels only three times is perfect.”

Levitt, a professional headhunter, said the appeal went beyond logistics. “It is hard to argue with a free trip and also – how often do you get an opportunity to see Israel



The Tailor Made “Israel For All” Birthright Israel trip for participants with autism spectrum disorder posed for a photograph at the Ein Kshatot Synagogue on the Golan Heights on January 6, 2026. (Courtesy photo via JNS)

with fresh eyes, meet locals, and have powerful programs on identity like we had last night?”

Langberg, who has guided similar groups before, said the experience is transformative for staff as well as participants. “Being here with these amazing, sensitive, kind people is a privilege,” he said. “They see so much, and most of the time in society they are misunderstood. It is amazing to see Israel through their eyes.”

Levitt hopes the program continues to grow. “These trips are important and need to continue,” he said, “because they serve a specific population that wouldn’t otherwise have the opportunity to go on an organized trip.”

In doing so, Birthright Israel is quietly affirming a powerful truth: that belonging, connection and peoplehood are not limited by disability – and that Israel, like the Jewish people themselves, is strongest when everyone has a place on the journey.

The writer regularly leads Birthright Israel disability trips.

Rare gold coin minted for Egyptian queen unearthed in Jerusalem

By JNS Staff

(JNS) – A gold coin dating back about 2,200 years has been uncovered just outside the walled Old City of Jerusalem, shedding new light on the development of the city after the destruction of the first ancient Jewish Temple, the Israel Antiquities Authority announced recently.

The small denomination quarter-drachma, made of pure gold (99.3 percent), and dated to 246-241 B.C.E., was minted for Queen Berenice II during the reign of her husband, Ptolemy III, the state-run archaeological body said.

The coin, which was found last year during soil sifting next to a dig at the parking lot opposite the history-rich City of David, is one of only 20 such coins known to exist, and the first discovered outside of Egypt and in an archaeological excavation.

“I was sifting the excavation soil when suddenly I saw something shiny,” recounted Rivka Langler, an excavator at the site. “I’ve been excavating in the City of David for two years, and this is the first time I’ve found gold! I always saw other excavators discovering special finds, and I kept waiting for my moment – and now it finally arrived!”

The coin depicts Berenice as a Hellenistic queen, wearing a diadem and veil, with a necklace around her neck. The reverse shows a cornucopia, an ancient symbol of prosperity

and fertility, flanked by two stars. A surrounding Greek inscription reads “of Queen Berenice.”

“As far as we know the coin is the only one of its kind ever discovered outside Egypt, which was the center of Ptolemaic rule,” said Robert Kool, head of the Numismatics Department at the Israel Antiquities Authority, and Haim Gitler, chief curator of archaeology and Curator of Numismatics at the Israel Museum. “Only about 20 such coins are known, and this is the first ever uncovered in a controlled archaeological excavation, making it a find of extraordinary scientific importance.”

The discovery sheds new light on the status of Jerusalem and its development even after the destruction of the first Jewish Temple by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E.

“Until now, the prevailing scholarly view was that post-586 B.C.E. Jerusalem was a small, marginal, economically weak town,” noted Yiftah Shalev, director of the excavation. “The coin – alongside additional finds from the mid-third century B.C.E. – begins to shed new light on this: Jerusalem in the centuries after the destruction of the First Temple was not desolate and isolated, but rather a city in the process of renewal, reestablishing ties with the dominant political, economic, and cultural centers of the period.”

The coin will be displayed to the public in September during the annual City of David Research Conference.

TCContinued from page 10

Tuesday, June 9: At 7:30 pm, general (Board of Trustees) board meeting, open to members of Temple Concord. Contact the office for the meeting link at 607-723-7355 or by e-mail at templeconcordaa@gmail.com.

Sunday, June 14: At noon, InterSisterhood event at Temple Concord in the social hall, with music by Greg Neff, lunch, dessert and raffles. Admission is \$7 per person. RSVP to Temple Concord by Monday, June 8.

Tuesday, June 16: At 7 pm, Social Action Committee meeting. For details, contact the temple office or committee Co-chairs Phyllis Weinstein (pweinste@stny.rr.com) or Debra Saltzman (dsmsw@yahoo.com).

Saturday, June 27: At 6 pm, Community Board Game Night in the social hall for all ages. Pizza and salad will be provided. RSVP to the temple office by Wednesday, June 24. Suggested donation is \$5 per person or \$20 per family to cover the cost of refreshments.

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