

THE REPORTER

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Fest Film to show “Incitement” in February

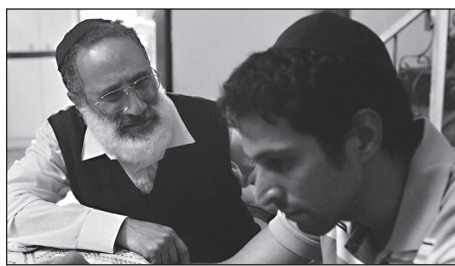
By Reporter staff

The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest will hold a virtual showing of the Israeli drama “Incitement” in February. The film is in Hebrew with English subtitles. Registration is required prior to Wednesday, February 1, which is when the link will be sent out. A discussion will take place on Sunday, February 5; the discussion moderator and time are TBA. Registration is free, but donations are welcome. To register, visit www.jfjb.org/.

“Incitement” offers a depiction of the lead-up to the 1995 assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin seen through

the worldview of his assassin, Yigal Amir. It chronicles the descent of a promising law student to an intransigent ultra-nationalist obsessed with murdering his country’s leader. The film was nominated for 10 Ophir awards in Israel and won awards for best film and casting.

In *The Los Angeles Times*, Kenneth Turan noted that “those expecting a bombastic diatribe will encounter a film that is anything but. A chilling portrait of how fanaticism can grow and be enabled, this is a matter-of-fact film that moves with an awful inexorability toward its foregone conclusion.” On the website Movie



Yigal Amir (right, played by Yehuda Nahari Halevi) talked with his father (Amitay Yaish Ben Ousilio) in “Incitement.” (Photo used with permission of Greenwich Entertainment)

Nation (<https://rogersmovienation.com>), Roger Moore wrote that “‘Incitement’ is a riveting Israeli docudrama about the chain of events that led Amir, an intense, fanatical ex-special forces soldier turned law student, to assassinate Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, a murder that directly led to decades of right wing rule in Israel, much of it by the indicted, corrupt darling of Israel’s religious right, Benjamin Netanyahu.”

“Join us for this thought-provoking and dramatic film,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton. “It packs a powerful punch.”

“Chevrah Kadisha – Sacred Mitzvah” adult education program to be held Jan. 22

The Jewish Federation, in cooperation with Beth David Synagogue, Temple Concord and Temple Israel, will hold an adult education brunch program, “Chevrah Kadisha – Sacred Mitzvah,” on Sunday, January 22, from 10 am-noon, hosted at Temple Israel. The event will feature Rabbi Elchonon

Zohn, director of the Vaad Harobonim of Queens, who has been called “one of New York state’s experts on all things chevrah kadisha.” The brunch will begin at 10 am and be prepared by Victor Torres. The cost of the brunch is \$10. Zohn will begin speaking at 10:30 am. Participants may opt to join

the program via Zoom at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84097361294?pwd=dW1uM-2hhMlo1UINMdn1DS1hU3FEQT09,meetingID84097361294andpasscodeMinyan18>. For more information, contact Temple Israel at 723-7461 or e-mail at titammy@stny.twcbc.com.

“We are looking forward to hearing Rabbi Zohn teach participants about the holy task and honor associated with the chevrah kadisha,” said organizers of the event. “Among Ashkenazi Jews, the chevrah kadisha, a mutual beneficial society, was established to properly prepare a body for burial in accordance with Jewish law and custom. Chevrah kadisha from the Aramaic literally means the holy brotherhood.”

Organizers continued, “Do you have questions about the chevrah kadisha? For example, people may want to know, How do we prepare our loved one’s for burial? When did Jewish communities begin this practice? Is everyone eligible to be part of the chevrah kadisha?”

Anyone with questions should send them to Rabbi Geoffrey Brown at rabbigbrown@stny.twcbc.com or rabbigbrown@gmail.com for the question-and-answer portion of the program.

L’Dor V’Dor Next Generation event: hockey game on Feb. 4

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton’s next L’Dor v’Dor – Next Generation event will be a Binghamton Black Bears hockey game. L’Dor v’Dor is aimed at those in their 20s and 30s. The game will be held on Saturday, February

4, at 7 pm. Tickets are \$6 per person and must be reserved and paid for in advance. The deadline to reserve is Friday, January 27. To make a reservation, visit <https://www.jfjb.org/>.

“The Federation is excited to get a group of young Jewish adults together

again,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. “Our ‘Jews and Breads’ event last summer was a success. It showed us that there are lots of young Jewish people living in Binghamton and they are eager to make social connections.”

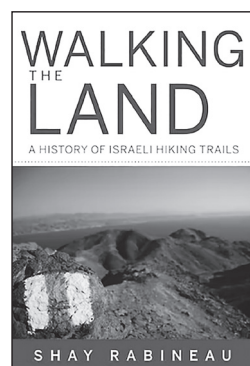
Spotlight

Rabineau explores Israeli hiking trails in new book

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Hiking as an Israeli national activity? That may not be the first thing that comes to mind when people think about the country, but according to Shay Rabineau, assistant professor of Israel studies and associate director of the Center for Israel Studies at Binghamton University, “Hiking is very much a part of Israeli culture, and its roots go all the way back to the early days of Zionism.”

Rabineau, who teaches courses focusing on Israel and pre-statehood Palestine, has written a book about hiking, “Walking the Land: A History of Israeli Hiking Trails” (Indiana University Press). In an e-mail interview, he noted, “As early as the First Aliyah, Jewish educators in Ottoman Palestine incorporated outdoor walking into the geography curriculum in Zionist schools. Later, during the Second Aliyah, the young men and women who went on to build the key institutions of the state of Israel – people like David Ben-Gurion and Manya Shochat – loved to walk through the country in order to ‘know the land’ and discover new places. Today, most schools in Israel still require their students to take annual hikes,



“Walking the Land: A History of Israeli Hiking Trails” (Photo courtesy of Indiana University Press)



Shay Rabineau during his recent trek around the Dead Sea in November.

to the point that by the time many students graduate high school, they have walked the length and breadth of the country.”

“Walking the Land” began as Rabineau’s Ph.D. dissertation for Brandeis University. The topic was inspired by personal experience. “The initial research questions came from my first experience hiking the Israel National Trail in 2006,” he said. “It

seemed like every hiker I met, upon finding out I was American, wanted to know what I thought about the route, or the sites the trail accessed, or whether I thought the trail should go through the West Bank, or what I thought about the guidebook author’s political persuasions. I couldn’t imagine American hikers ever asking these questions on, say, the Appalachian Trail.”

He realized that these hiking trails meant something more to Israelis than it did to Americans. “It became apparent to me that for Israelis, trails were much more than just trails, and hiking was deeply interwoven with politics, history, archaeology and, most importantly, what it meant to be Israeli,” he added. “So I suppose I wrote this book in the hope that it might teach readers something about how Israelis define their identities in relation to their country, its soil, its borders and so on. The great Hebrew poet Shaul Tchernichovsky famously wrote, ‘Man is nothing more than the image of his homeland,’ and for many Israeli hikers, that statement is much more than a mere figure of speech.”

The importance of hiking began before Israel became a state. “Hiking played roles in British Mandate Palestine and the early state of Israel that went far beyond mere education,” Rabineau said. “As the Jewish community grew, and conflicts between Jews and Arabs became more frequent, Zionist youth organizations used hiking as a tool for paramilitary training, and as a way to scout out territory in order to eventually See “Trails” on page 7

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PJ Library

The PJ Library and PJ Our Way have announced their Get Together initiative for families.

.....Page 3

Jewish literature

JLI’s new course will look at 33 centuries of Jewish lit.; book talk planned by TC Sisterhood.

.....Page 3

Shabbat luncheons at BD

Upcoming BD Shabbat luncheons will look at “Mobile Menschen” and “Jews, Dodgers and Brooklyn.”

.....Page 5

Special Sections

Book Review..... 4
Dine Out..... 5
Business Profiles..... 7
Classifieds 8


Jews in Sports


Lefty Bloom: Antisemitism on the gridiron

BILL SIMONS

As conveyed by Abner Doubleday mythology, the genesis of baseball is pastoral, creationist and Edenic. Not so football. Sportswriter Sally Jenkins observed, American football, “like the country in which it was created, was a rough... [hybrid] thing that jumped up out of the mud.” Football was and is a violent and brutal game as evidenced by the devastating epidemic of Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy. Nonetheless, America is addicted to high school, college and, particularly, NFL football. Baseball, as well as boxing and basketball in earlier eras, has produced numbers of dominant Jewish athletes. Due in part to Jewish parental opposition, the numbers are less in football, but certainly serious fans with a knowledge of the gridiron’s past and present recognize the names Benny Friedman, Sid Luckman, Marshall Goldberg, Charlie Goldenberg, Sid Gillman, Allie Sherman, Randy Grossman, Marv Levy, Ron Mix, Jay Fiedler, Julian Edelman and Josh Rosen.

Elite collegiate and professional players become regional and national football heroes. Over the decades, however, most football games have taken place between high school, neighborhood, company and semi-pro teams. Before World War II, rudimentary equipment and ethnic antagonisms often added to the gritty nature of play. The experience of Jews who played football on the sandlots during the early decades of the 20th century is not well documented, yet is more typical than that of celebrated stars like Friedman, Luckman and Goldberg. The writings of James T. Farrell and the shared

memories of Harry Bloom open a neglected portal.

Although not in the top tier of literary masters, Farrell, an Irish American writer, was an acute observer, bequeathing a sociological realism to his novels. Set in the lower middle class of the Chicago South Side during the interwar years, his “Studs Lonigan” trilogy, featuring a young Irish tough as anti-hero, provides a record of urban ethnic life, rich in detail. The world in which Lonigan lived was highly antisemitic. Farrell was chronicler, not apologist, of an Irish-Catholic antisemitism that then blamed Jews for the crucifixion of Jesus.

As a young man in the early 1920s, Lonigan played on the Fifty-Eight Street Cardinals, a neighborhood team with a nearly all-Irish roster – Sheehan, Nolan, Reilley, Kelly and Donoghue. In a game against the Monitors, the Cardinals encountered “Jewboy Schwartz,” a strong tackler and powerful running back, who ran for a touchdown, intercepted a pass and made the Irish look foolish. The Cardinals particularly disliked Schwartz because he was Jewish. They were determined to seriously injure Schwartz no matter what it took.

Near the end of the second quarter, the Cardinals tackled Schwartz, and there was a pile on. Weary Reilley intentionally jammed his knee into Schwartz’s groin. Despite excruciating pain, Schwartz continued to play.

In the third quarter after Schwartz returned a kick-off 20 yards, Reilley screamed to “put that Jew out for keeps.” Even after a flying tackle dumped Schwartz on his head, he insisted on staying in the game with blood pouring from his mouth and nose. Finally, five Cardinals slammed into a weakened Schwartz simultaneously, necessitating his leaving the field, barely conscious, on a stretcher. Reilley threatened Monitor opponent Jake Schaeffer: “And I’ll kill you too, kike!”

Before World War II, ethnic antagonisms surfaced on playing fields. Usually, the cheap shot came from opponents, sometimes from teammates. Jewish athletes suffered injuries, sometimes serious, precisely because they were Jews. There were real-life Jewish counterparts to Schwartz. One of them was Harry Bloom.

On March 11, 1986, I interviewed Harry, then a venerable and respected English professor at SUNY Oneonta, about his days on the interwar gridiron. Harry grew up in Minneapolis, MN. The atmosphere in his parent’s home was Jewish, but they were largely non-observant of religious ritual. By the age of 13, Harry had built a “private sphere” of activity – newspaper route, omnivo-

rous reading and unsuccessful attempts to publish sports articles in pulp journals. And Harry played football, a circumstance not discussed with his parents, who never saw him on the gridiron.

A sturdy 140 pounds, Harry was one of the stars of the seventh-grade football team at Abraham Lincoln Junior High School. Although the student body was predominantly Jewish, they comprised only a minority of the football team. Slavs and a couple of Blacks rounded out the Lincoln squad. Like other starters of the era, Harry played both offense and defense. Roaming the secondary on defense, he frequently filled the left halfback slot on offense in a single-wing formation, taking advantage of his ability to drive left, earning Harry the nickname “Lefty.”

On a beautiful autumn day in 1932, Edison met the heavily Polish Thomas Jefferson Junior High School on a neutral field. Early in the game, Harry intercepted a pass and ran for a touchdown. A little later, he returned a kickoff 102 yards for a second touchdown, accounting for all of Lincoln’s initial scoring.

After his second touchdown, Edison players started calling Harry “Jewboy” and “Jew bastard.” They elbowed him, hit him when he didn’t have the ball, hit him from the side and hit him from the back. Edison wanted Harry out of the game.

When Harry was tackled, one player after another jumped on him. In the pile up, they damaged Harry’s leg. The pain was fierce, and the leg swollen. Immediately, Harry knew something was wrong. He could not walk. Two touchdowns had resulted in a broken leg. Harry’s sister Fanny screamed, “Ma’s going to ‘murdelize’ you.”

Harry recovered and played football again. He broke his nose in high school. With the passage of more than a half-century, Harry still vividly recalled that game with Edison.

A generation later in postwar suburbia, increasing numbers of Jews played schoolboy football with minimum incident. My cousin Johnny Simons, for example, was elected the first Jewish football team captain in the old town of Marblehead, MA. Down the line in Swampscott, another cousin, Lloyd Benson, blocked for NFL-bound running back Dick Jauron. As we move forward, the stories of “Jewboy Schwartz” and Harry Bloom merit remembrance.

Bill Simons is a professor emeritus at SUNY Oneonta where he continues to teach courses in American history. He is also the co-director of The Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture, and served as a speaker for the New York Council on the Humanities.

Bar/Bat photos needed

Can we have your mug? Kids mugging for the camera and formal photos, that is. For *The Reporter’s* annual Bar/Bat Mitzvah issue (coming January 27), we need photos of all teens who became bar/bat mitzvah during the calendar year of 2022.

Please e-mail these photos with identification, including name, date and place of the bar/bat mitzvah ceremony. Please send them by Tuesday, January 17. Photos can be e-mailed, in TIF or JPG format, to TReporter@aol.com; please note in the subject line that a bar/bat photo for *The Reporter* is attached and include the necessary information in the message.

Opinion

In My Own Words

Appreciating life’s quiet moments

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

I am not particularly adventurous. When I was young, friends would suggest a questionable activity and try to convince me to go along by asking, “Why not?” I would answer, “Sorry, I want a good reason for doing it.” Years later, I read a science article that suggested people interested in extreme activities like bungee jumping have high adrenaline thresholds, meaning it’s difficult for them to feel excited unless they do something very scary. That made me laugh because I figure I must have the world’s lowest adrenaline threshold. Tell me that an author I like has a new book coming out and the excitement – sometimes even accompanied by singing and dancing – begins.

However, when thinking about this recently, I realized that it’s life’s quiet moments that speak most to me. Let me give you an example: during my chaplaincy work this past summer, a group of us – staff and individuals – sat in the courtyard on a warm, summery day. There was music playing in the background and very little talking. As I sat there, an emotion came over me that is hard to describe as anything other than peaceful contentment. During that

moment, there was nothing I wanted or needed: life felt complete and joyous. My great fortune was to recognize that moment when it was occurring. In fact, when it was time to leave, I did so wishing I could have remained there until the end of the day.

Recently I’ve been reviewing peaceful moments with my mother that occurred in the last year of her life. Facebook offers memories of our time together: although I am wearing a mask, you can see my mother’s face – her smile reflects happiness and contentment in the fact we were together. We didn’t always need to talk: just being in the same room reminded us of how much we cared for each other. Life before the nursing home had not been that much different: my mom would nap or watch TV, and I would read. It’s not that we didn’t talk, but, as she declined, it was harder and harder to have a real conversation. But smiling and talking about favorite memories created a time and space where we could connect. It’s so easy to take moments like these for granted; we need to remember and cherish them.

I’ve also experienced this with friends, many times over

a cup of tea or coffee. We don’t have to be doing anything other than sitting, sometimes talking, sometimes just enjoying each other’s company. Now I love talking: discussions about life or books form a major portion of my interactions with people, but there is also something wonderful about the pauses that take place in those discussions.

Judaism has blessings for a great many actions we perform or wondrous things we see. While there is no specific, formal rabbinic blessing for the kind of moments I’m writing about, there is no reason we can’t offer one of our own: blessing God for the quiet moments, the connections we make during those times and the gratitude that we can recognize them when they occur.

Grand adventures are wonderful. I have no problem with them and have had several of my own over the years. However, those of us who are now less likely to venture across the globe should try to appreciate the quieter moments we can garner on an ordinary day – taking a pause in our busy lives to look around us and note the beauty we find there if only we open our eyes to see it.



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BINGHAMTON, NY

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.

ADS

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

Regular weekly deadline is noon, Wednesday, for the following week’s newspaper.

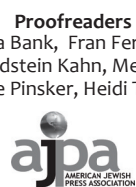
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www.thereporter.org

Federation encourages PJ Library Get Togethers

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton has sponsored the PJ Library, which offers free books to local Jewish children, for more than a decade. "We are so happy we take part in this wonderful program," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "There is something special about reading a Jewish book to young children and watching older ones read those books themselves. Now think of how great it would be if parents and children gathered with other PJ Library

families to experience the joys of Judaism."

Hubal noted that the PJ Library is trying to make that happen with its Get Together initiative. The PJ Library and its PJ Our Way families program are offering funds for those sponsoring a Get Together with two or more families. The hosts will be able to submit a reimbursement report and receive up to \$100. There can be up to three reimbursements for this first round of Get Togethers, which began in September and ends in May. There is no limit to how many events a family can attend.

"These Get Togethers can be used to celebrate Jewish holidays or experience the joys of Shabbat," Hubal said. "Some groups have done a PJ Library *Havdalah* program or used the event to volunteer or perform service projects. As long as the event is Jewish related, it can be considered a get together."

For more information about the program, visit <https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/get-together/together-experience-2022> or contact the PJ Library at gettogether@pjlibrary.org.

Reminder: Film fest discussion on Jan. 15

By Reporter staff

The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest will hold its discussion of the Israeli comedy "Greener Pastures" virtually on Sunday, January 15, at the new time of 5:30 pm. For more information, visit www.jfjb.org/. Neisen Luk will lead the discussion of the Israel comedy that tells the story of 79-year-old Dov, whose family has forced him to move into a nursing home. After noticing his fellow residents smoking legal medical cannabis, Dov decides that if he sells the weed, rather than smoking it, he may be able to raise

enough money to buy back his house and move back home.

Luks has been an active member of the Jewish community since arriving in town in June 1966. He is a past president of Temple Concord and the Jewish Federation of Broome County (now known as the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton). "I've agreed to be the moderator of this film since it is a 'light' comedy and relatable to a person of my age," he said. "Additionally, it appears to be fairly benign, thus not requiring any in-depth analysis or profound movie expertise."

At right: Shlomo Baraba stars in the film "Greener Pastures."



Chabad and Federation to hold "Tea and Talk" on Jan. 19

Chabad of Binghamton, with co-sponsorship from the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, announced its next Tea and Talk program will be held Thursday, January 19, from 11 am-noon, in Chabad's atrium lounge. "Tea and

Talk" is a monthly hour-long gathering for local Jewish seniors who are looking for "a meaningful conversation."

To RSVP and for more information, visit www.JewishBU.com/Tea or call 797-0015.

TC Sisterhood sets annual book talk with Rabbi Rachel Esserman

The Temple Concord Sisterhood will hold its annual book talk featuring Rabbi Rachel Esserman on Sunday, January 29, at 11 am, at the synagogue, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. This is an in-person event only and will take place in the mansion. Brunch will be served at no cost. The event is open to the community. Reservations must be made by Wednesday, January 25, to Phyllis Kellenberger at pweinste@stny.rr.com or 607-727-8305. The snow date will be Sunday, February 5.



Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Esserman will discuss three books: "Shanda: A Memoir of Shame and Secrecy" by Letty Cottin Pogrebin, "From Dust, A Flame" by Rebecca Podos and "Village Idiot" by Steve Stern.

Esserman said, "I'm once again looking forward to one of my favorite events of the year. It's always a pleasure to talk about books and it's an extra pleasure to be doing it with members of Sisterhood. For the third year, I'm including a nonfiction work by request. As happens every year, I have not read the books yet since I want them fresh in my mind for the review. But I'm looking forward to reading the books, writing my notes up and sharing them at this always fun event."

"Shanda: A Memoir of Shame and Secrecy" is a memoir by the noted feminist that tells of the secrets and lies kept by her family, and how they affected See "Esserman" on page 4

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Steve Medwin on the death of his mother,

Marilyn Medwin

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Lynn Dumoff on the death of her daughter,

Michele Slotnick

DEADLINES

The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming **REPORTER** issues.

ISSUE	DEADLINE
January 27-February 9	January 18
February 10-23	February 1
February 24-March 9	February 15
March 10-23	March 1

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

New JLI course to cover 33 centuries of Jewish literature

Rivkah Slonim will teach JLI's new winter 2023 offering "Book Smart" in person at the Chabad Center and virtually. The course will explore the history, authors and content of Judaism's "most important titles" subdivided in eight general genres. It will be held on six consecutive Mondays, beginning on January 30, at 7 pm. An 8:45 pm section of the course will be offered if there are a minimum of 10 registries for that time. To register, e-mail Rshea@ChabadofBinghamton.com, call the Chabad Center at 797-0015 or visit www.myjli.com. The course fee is \$79 (\$150 for a couple) and includes the course textbook.

During the 90-minute sessions, participants will begin a six-week survey of traditional Jewish literature, including Torah, Talmud, *midrash*, *halachah*, ethics and philosophy, as well as Kabbalah and Chasidic mysticism. "We'll meet

See "JLI" on page 8

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Wallenberg Festival Saturday, January 28, 2023 at 7:30pm	Pops at the Forum Saturday, March 25, 2023 at 3pm
8th Annual Mac & Cheese Fest Thursday, February 16, 2023 at 6-8pm	Northern Lights Saturday, April 29, 2023 at 7:30pm
May the Fourth Be With You Thursday, May 4, 2023 at 7:30pm	

For more information on our concert season, visit www.binghamtonphilharmonic.org/events or scan the QR code.

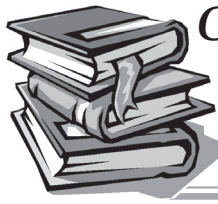
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Off the Shelf

Demons in the rabbinic world

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Demons, gremlins, golems: for many contemporary Jews, these creatures belong to the realm of fairy tales. This was not true – at least, not in the case of demons – for the ancient rabbis who lived in Babylon. In her book “Demons in the Details: Demonic Discourse and Rabbinic Culture in Late Antique Babylonia” (University of California Press), Sara Ronis, associate professor of theology at St. Mary’s University, San Antonio, TX, shows how “the Babylonian Talmud is filled with stories about rabbinic encounters with demons as well as with the laws that regulate and integrate demons into the rabbinical intellectual system.” Although they recognized that demons could be dangerous, these Babylonian rabbis felt that demons were not necessarily evil. That view not only differed with the religious culture in which they lived, but allowed them to incorporate demons into rabbinic culture. That was done by claiming demons were also subject to the rabbinic legal system. In addition, demons sometimes worked with the rabbis and, in at least one case, served as a servant to a rabbi.

Ronis notes that post-biblical Jewish literature originally offered two theories to explain the origin of demons. One posited that demons were part of God’s original plan for creation. The other saw demons as the result of angels and humans engaged in forbidden encounters: those born of these encounters were demons. Neither of these views are found in the Chumash (the first five books of the Bible). Whether or not demons can be found in the prophetic writings is a matter of interpretation. This changes during the rabbinic period: there are mentions of demons in the Palestinian Talmud, although the major theological development and the normalization of demons only occurs in the

Babylonian Talmud. The Babylonian rabbis believed that demons came into being after Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden. But Ronis notes that the rabbis believed “that the creation of demons was the *accidental* product of an *accidental* sin, rather than the product of intentional acts of inappropriate sexual intercourse,” which was the Palestinian rabbinic opinion.

The author also discusses Greek and Christian ideas about demons in order to compare them with rabbinic thoughts. One major difference is that, with only a few exceptions, the rabbis did not join those groups in having systemic discussions about the nature of demons. Instead, details appeared in different parts of the text during discussions of specific encounters with demons. Ronis notes these details include the fact that demons could be male or female; either had their own name (biblical or Aramaicized) or appeared nameless in groups; and could move quickly over large distances. The rabbis saw the demons as a distinct species: they were not connected to angels or to humans. Demons could be dangerous and there were discussions in the talmudic text about how to avoid the danger, for example, being careful when urinating or defecating in fields (so as not to do so on an unseen demon), or eating and drinking in even numbers.

The Babylonian rabbis sought to control demon behavior by making them subject to the *halachic* (Jewish legal) system. Ronis notes that “[the rabbis] used the law and their status as lawmakers to define, restrict, and prevent demonic harm.” In this way, they absorbed demons into the rabbinic community. The rabbis were very serious in their discussions of demons; there is no noticeable difference

in tone between their discussions of demons and those of other Jewish laws, for example, Shabbat, festivals and *kashrut* (the dietary laws). It’s clear they believed demons were subject to *halachah* and offered tales of demons who studied Torah.

The rabbis didn’t see the demons as a great danger to the general community, at least to those who followed rabbinic law. However, demons were considered more of a danger to the rabbis themselves because greatness – in men or women – attracted demons. Ronis notes, “The rabbis acknowledged demonic danger as they undermine it for their followers: if you follow rabbinic dicta, you were largely safe from demons; but if you disobey rabbinic dicta, you will be attacked by demons. This type of totalizing discourse, whether or not it was ever actually enacted in particular rabbis’ lived experiences, involved both rewards (the proud lineage, spiritual fulfillment, and prestige in belonging to the rabbinic class) and punishment (dangerous demons). The rabbis control and neutralize capricious intermediary beings; at the same time, the rabbis construct demons as enforcers of rabbinic laws.” By being subject to rabbinical law, the rabbis were able to control and work with demons.

“Demons in the Details” is a fascinating look at how the Babylonian rabbis ordered their world. Ronis does an excellent job explaining and analyzing passages of the Babylonian Talmud that reference demons. Her prose is generally clear, making it possible for non-specialists to understand her ideas. This work may challenge readers’ ideas about their ancestors’ view of the world, something that definitely makes it worth reading for anyone interested in learning more about rabbinic times.



On the Jewish food scene

That wonderful, or awful, smell

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

I walked into the kitchen and said, “Something smells wonderful!” A short while after, my father arrived home and said, “What is that awful stink?” No, my mother hadn’t started cooking something different: she was cooking with garlic, and my dad and I had very different reactions.

I’ve joked that if you don’t like onion or garlic powder, you can’t eat most of my cooking. When growing up, I associated garlic with Italian cooking because that was the main cuisine of most Endicott restaurants. Tomato sauce (or gravy, if you listen to Italians talk about it) was the cornerstone of many of these dishes. It wasn’t until later, when I became interested in Jewish culinary history, that I learned garlic was an important ingredient in Jewish food.

That does make sense. Just think of pickles, a popular Jewish food: I suppose you could make pickles without garlic, but they wouldn’t be nearly as good. Garlic isn’t/wasn’t found just in the Ashkenazi world, but in the Sephardic world. And the phenomenon is not new: the ancient Romans referred to Jews as garlic eaters. While I’m not sure they meant it as a compliment, I prefer to take it as one. However, throughout the centuries, the idea that Jews smell of garlic was meant as an insult. In the U.S. during the early part of the 20th century, social workers felt that the use of that and other spices negatively affected Jewish behavior, making the Jewish population more excitable. Bland food was thought to be more appropriate. That thought makes me shudder: give me spices any day.

In my research, I discovered that the Jewish love of garlic dates back to biblical times. When the Israelites

in the desert complained to Moses about not having enough food to eat, one of the things they were nostalgic for was the garlic they ate in Egypt. According to MyJewishlearning.com (www.myjewishlearning.com/the-nosher/why-garlic-is-actually-the-most-jewish-ingredient-ever/), Jewish cooking often didn’t differ from the cuisine of the surrounding culture except for one thing: the addition of garlic to those dishes. As a lover of garlic, that makes perfect sense to me.

Speaking of being a garlic lover, my mom was also one. In fact, she loved garlic and onions. I can testify to the smell because sometimes I had to ask her to move back a

little when she talked to me. One year, she began looking for a garlic roaster. She didn’t want one you had to put in the oven. For her birthday, I bought her an electric garlic roaster. Did she ever use it? No, but I did and started to add garlic to everything from tuna salad to pasta sauces. The best part of roasting the garlic? Eating it warm, straight from the roaster.

I don’t use the garlic roaster as much as I used to. It doesn’t make sense when there is only me to cook for. In fact, I think I’ve only used it once in the past few years. But I like knowing it’s there because it reminds me of my mom and the meals we shared.

Esserman. Continued from page 3


her life. “From Dust, A Flame” is a young adult fantasy filled with mystery and suspense that takes place in contemporary times. “Village Idiot” is a novel about Jewish artist Chaim Soutine, which has been described as both “heartbreaking and funny.”

Esserman, the executive editor and book reviewer for The Reporter Group, noted this past year she won three Syracuse Press Club awards and one Rockower award from the American Jewish Press Association. The year before, she won two Syracuse Press Club awards and two Rockowers.

She also serves as the Jewish chaplain for Broome Developmental Disabilities Service Office. Her work has been published in “The Women’s Torah Commentary” and “The Women’s Haftarah Commentary” both by Jewish Lights Publishing. She also has had a book of poetry, “I

Stand by The River,” published by Keshet Press of Temple Concord. A Reconstructionist rabbi who says her first love is teaching, she sees her position at *The Reporter* as an opportunity to educate the public about Judaism.

In addition, Esserman is a freelance rabbi who performs lifecycle events, hospital visits and chaplaincy. She is rabbi-on-call when needed by local Reform and Conservative synagogues. Her education includes a bachelor of arts degree in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania, and rabbinic ordination and master of arts in Hebrew letters from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Wyncote, PA.



Looking for this issue’s “Jewish Resources”? Visit www.thereportergroup.org/streams/miscellaneous-features/miscellaneous-features/tag/80309? to find out what’s happening online.”

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

UAE to include Holocaust education in school curricula


The United Arab Emirates Embassy in Washington, DC, confirmed on Jan. 5 that Holocaust education will be incorporated into the Gulf state’s curricula. “In the wake of the historic Abraham Accords, the U.A.E. will now include the Holocaust in the curriculum for primary and secondary schools,” the embassy said in a statement. The U.A.E. is the first Arab state to introduce Holocaust education in its national curriculum. IMPACT-se, the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education, an Israeli NGO which monitors the content of school textbooks, worked with the U.A.E. Education Ministry to develop a curriculum framework, having been invited last March by U.A.E. Education Minister Hussain bin Ibrahim Al Hammadi to meet with officials in Abu Dhabi.

Quick Reference Guide to Planned Giving

Use this planned giving quick reference guide to help determine the best strategy for achieving your philanthropic and financial goals.

For further information or assistance, please contact Shelley Hubal at 724-2332 or director@jfgb.org

<p>If Your Goal is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a quick and easy gift Avoid tax on capital gains Defer a gift until after your death Receive guaranteed fixed income that is partially tax-free Avoid the two-fold taxation on IRA or other employee benefit plans Make a large gift with little cost to you Reduce taxable income from IRA Required Minimum Distributions 	<p>Then You Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simply write a check now or use a credit card Contribute long-term appreciated stock or other securities Put a bequest in your will (gifts of cash or a share or the residue of your estate) Create a charitable gift annuity Name a charity as the beneficiary of the remainder of the retirement assets after your lifetime Contribute a life insurance policy you no longer need or purchase a new one and designate a charity as the owner Make a qualified charitable donation directly from your IRA (after age 70½) 	<p>Your Benefits May Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An income tax deduction and immediate charitable impact A charitable deduction plus no capital gains tax Exemption from federal estate tax on donations Current and future savings on income taxes plus fixed stable payments Tax relief to your family on inherited assets Current and possible future income tax deductions Reducing taxable income
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BD Shabbat luncheons in January and February

Featuring Rabbi Benny Kellman

Beth David's Luncheon Speaker Series will continue in person on Saturday, January 14, with guest speaker Rabbi Benny Kellman. Kellman will speak on "Mobile Menschen: Mapping the Social Mobility of Jews in Binghamton, NY, 1890-1975."

"Where did Jews in Binghamton live in 1890, 1948 and 1975, and what can this tell us about the growth of the community?" said organizers of the event. "How does geographic mobility of Binghamton Jews fit into larger contexts with regard to 20th century American history? These questions will be addressed by Benny Kellman at Beth David's luncheon on January 14."

Kellman and his family moved to Binghamton from Monsey in 2015. He serves on the board of Beth David Synagogue and the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton. He is the *mashgiach* of the Kosher Korner at Binghamton University. He is also a board member of the soon-to-be announced Southern Tier Museum of Jewish Life. He obtained his undergraduate degree with a major in history from SUNY-New Paltz, and is currently in his fourth year of a doctoral program in the Department of History at Binghamton University with Professor Jonathan Karp as his advisor.

His research on the Binghamton com-



Rabbi Benny Kellman

munity is the first case study he is undertaking as part of his Ph.D. project, which will focus on small town Jewish communities and what can be learned about migration to and from these communities. "There are definite challenges," Kellman said, "In gathering addresses from the past, but with the help of BU's Professor Bradley Skopyk, my research is designed to be statistically quantifiable. I am using a sophisticated computer program whose tools store, analyze and interpret geographical data, and enable us to visualize the findings. I am looking forward to sharing my work in progress, and if anyone in the Jewish community has stories and artifacts they would like to share with me, they can reach me at bkellma2@binghamton.edu."

Beth David's Luncheon Speaker Series takes place the second Saturday of the month after Shabbat morning services and is open to the community. People are encouraged to attend the morning service, which begins at 9:30 am. There is no charge for the luncheon. Since the monthly series' continuation depends on the generosity of contributors, Beth David welcomes and appreciates donations to the Luncheon Fund in order to keep the program going. Donations as well as sponsorships can be made in honor of or in memory of someone, or to mark a special occasion. Those wishing an acknowledgment to be sent to the person being honored, or to the family of someone being remembered, can indicate that along with the necessary information. Donations can be sent to Beth David Synagogue, 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905, Attention: Luncheon Fund.

Featuring Bill Simons

Beth David Synagogue's second-Saturday-of-the-month Luncheon Speaker Series will feature Professor Bill Simons on February 11. A featured columnist for *The Reporter* since 2020, Simons will present on "Jews, Dodgers and Brooklyn: Before the Diaspora." Morning services will begin at 9:30 am, with the talk and luncheon following. The services and the luncheon are open to the community.



Bill Simons (Photo courtesy of Bill Simons)

Simons will focus on the "special relationship" that existed between Brooklyn's large Jewish community and the Dodgers baseball team before its departure for Los Angeles. In addition to offering information about a specific time and place in American history, Simons promises that the story is filled with humor and verve. "A

special relationship connected the Dodgers and Brooklyn Jews," Simons said. "Arguably, no baseball team ever forged a closer relationship with Jewish fans than did the Dodgers during their Brooklyn years. In other New York City boroughs, the Yankees and Giants had their Jewish adherents, as did Major League Baseball teams in other cities, but, in Brooklyn, the Dodgers drilled deep into the social fabric."

Simons is a native of Lynn, MA. He earned his doctor of arts degree from Carnegie Mellon, with a specialization in American history. As the former chairman of the SUNY-Oneonta History Department, he continues teaching there as professor emeritus with courses that include athletics, society and sports. He is the recipient of The Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, the highest such award in the SUNY system, as well as the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Service.

"Growing up, I developed my interest in baseball," Simons said, "by watching games coached by my Dad, Shep. His stories about his superhero, Hank Greenberg, made me appreciate the important symbolic role sport holds for Jewish Americans."

Simons is the co-director of the Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American History, an annual academic conference on the national pastime co-sponsored by the National Baseball Hall of Fame and SUNY Oneonta. He has served as editor and contributor to 12 baseball anthologies published by McFarland Press. His articles, reviews and essays have appeared in many journals. See "Simons" on page 7

BD Sisterhood to meet Feb. 8 on Zoom

The Beth David Sisterhood will hold a business and planning meeting – open to all members and friends of Beth David Sisterhood – on Zoom on Wednesday February 8, at 1 pm. It will be a working meeting during which reports will be given by each committee so Sisterhood members can examine what has been accomplished and what needs to be improved.

"We will review the programs that have been presented so far this year and re-examine our plans for the future," said Sisterhood organizers. "If you have feedback, either positive or negative about our programming so far, we would love to hear what you have to say. We will also be looking for ideas about programs, meeting themes and activities which we might undertake in the future which will benefit either our Sisterhood, such as fund-raising ideas, or

benefit our synagogue or the Jewish community at large."

They added, "We have chosen to meet on Zoom because the weather in February is unpredictable and several of our members will be spending the winter months in warmer climates. We hope the Zoom format will allow the largest number of people to participate.

"Often planning meetings are limited to board members, but we feel it is important to involve as many people as possible as we discuss the future of Beth David Sisterhood," they noted. "If you know of anyone who might have ideas for programs or is interested in becoming more involved in our Sisterhood, please make sure they are aware of this opportunity. We are always looking for new ideas to consider which will make our community a better place."

They continued, "Beth David Sisterhood is only as strong as the people who participate in our programs and support our efforts. One need not be a member of Beth David Synagogue or Sisterhood to participate. Most of our programs are open to the community and welcome men."

Zoom link information for the meeting will be sent to Beth David Sisterhood members and friends who are on the Sisterhood mailing list, and will also be included in Rabbi Zev Silber's weekly e-mail from Beth David Synagogue.

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Whether you're moving across town or across the country, please e-mail treporter@aol.com with "Reporter Address change" in the subject line to let *The Reporter* know about your new address.

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Shemot, Exodus 1:1-6:1

There should have been a better way

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR, THE REPORTER GROUP

I was thinking recently about an ethical dilemma that is often posed to Jews: If you could go back in time to when Hitler was a baby, would you kill him? There are numerous articles posted on the Internet debating the ethics of any particular answer to this question. Personally, I think the wrong question is being asked. The true question should be, "Can you think of a way to prevent the Holocaust in which no one would be hurt?" I certainly can. If I had a time machine, I would not go back to when Hitler was an infant, but send myself to the time period when he was a struggling artist. I would then buy as many of his paintings as necessary to make him the most popular painter in all of Europe. I can't promise that World War II wouldn't occur, but if Hitler had been a rich, famous artist, the Holocaust might have been averted.

Parashat Shemot raises a similar ethical dilemma. We don't often focus on the section of this *parasha* in which God tells Moses everything that is going to happen in Egypt before the Exodus occurs. In Exodus 3:16-22, God predicts that not only will Pharaoh not let the Israelites leave, but that God will afflict the land and people with plagues and destruction. God acknowledges that these will be so terrible that the people of Egypt will be willing to give their possessions to the Israelites in the hopes they will leave before more deaths occur. Surely a God this powerful should have been able to find another way to help the Israelites leave Egypt, one that did not include death and destruction. Perhaps when there was darkness across the land, God could have helped the Israelites sneak out of the country? Maybe God could have performed another

kind of miracle to help the people leave?

Some commentaries say that the plagues were necessary to punish the Egyptians for the oppression under which the Israelites suffered. That might be true, but then why did God let the Israelites become slaves in the first place? It was God's hand that caused the famine that brought Jacob's family to Egypt. Why didn't God speak to Jacob again and say, "Don't go?" Or, at least, remind someone in the family that they should go back to Canaan before they became slaves. After all, Canaan was promised to the family, a promise God says will be fulfilled once the Israelites leave Egypt.

Other commentaries focus on the necessity of proving that the Israelite God was more powerful than the Egyptian See "Way" on page 7

Congregational Notes

Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union
Rabbi: Zev Silber
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Phone: 722-1793, Rabbi's Office: 722-7514, Fax: 722-7121
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-1 pm; Wed. closed; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm; Fri. 10 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

Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative
Rabbi: Geoffrey Brown
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 723-7461 and 231-3746
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-3:30 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm
E-mail: titammy@stny.twcbc.com
Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org
Service schedule: Tues., 5:30 pm; Fri., 5:30 pm; Sat., 9:30 am

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom and in-person (masks are required).

On Saturday, January 14, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Genesis Exodus 1-6:1 and the haftarah is Isaiah 27:6-28:13 and 29:22-23. At 6:15 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

The temple office will be closed on Monday, January 16. A Board of Trustees meeting will take place on Tuesday, January 17, at 7 pm, on Zoom.

On Wednesday, January 18, Torah study will be held from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

On Saturday, January 21, at 9:30 am, Shacharit services will be held via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Exodus 6:2-9:35 and the haftarah is Ezekiel 28:25-29:21. At 6:15 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

A Chevra Kadisha event will take place at Temple Israel on Sunday, January 22, at 10 am. For more information, see the article on page 1.

On Wednesday, January 25, Torah study will be held from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi: Rachel Safman
Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292
Phone: 273-5775
E-mail: rabbi-safman@tbeithaca.org, secretary@tbeithaca.org
Website: www.tbeithaca.org

Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody
Services: Fri. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sun. and legal holidays).
Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday, 3:45-5:45 pm. The Midrashah (eighth grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers. Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.

For upcoming services and events on Zoom, visit www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE.

Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive
Rabbi: David Regenspan
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815
Phone: 334-2691
E-mail: fertigg@roadrunner.com
Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 373-5087
Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.
Adult Ed.: Shabbat study sessions are held on designated Saturday mornings at 10 am. Call ahead, text or e-mail to confirm dates.

Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

For specific information regarding services (including online services), meetings and classes at any of the area synagogues, contact them by phone or e-mail.

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: 797-0015, Fax: 797-0095
Website: www.Chabadofbinghamton.com
Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education
E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com
Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development
Chabad Downtown Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton
E-mail: lslonim@Jewishbu.com, hslonim@Jewishbu.com
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.

Congregation Tikkun 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
Rabbi: Shifrah Tobacman, rabbishifrah@tikkunvor.org
Presidents: Sue Merkel and Laurie Willick, presidents_22@tikkunvor.org
Education Director/Administrative Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky
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.

Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi: Amelia F. Wolf
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.



Friday, January 13, light candles before..... 4:36 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, January 14 5:38 pm
Friday, January 20, light candles before..... 4:44 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, January 21 5:46 pm
Friday, January 27, light candles before..... 4:53 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, January 28 5:55 pm

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Rabbi: Barbara Goldman-Wartell
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm
Phone: 723-7355
Fax: 723-0785
Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com
Website: www.templeconcord.com
Regular service times: Fri., 7:30 pm; Sat., 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.
Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm on Tues. and Thurs. during the school year unless otherwise noted.

Some services and programs are online only.
Friday, January 13: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service with Eve Berman and Robin Hazen. Masks are optional for those attending in person. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, January 14: 9 am, Shabbat school; 9:15 am, Torah study (join via Zoom at Zoom at <http://bit.ly/3XD-nvRE>, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode: 743892); 10:35 am, Shabbat family service; and 7 pm, "Havdalah with a Bonus" via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3e8mZsy>, meeting ID 833 9654 6578 and passcode 333740, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Friday, January 20: 7:30 pm, Shabbat service. Masks are optional for those attending in person. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, January 21: 9 am, Shabbat school; 9:15 am, Torah study (join via Zoom at Zoom at <http://bit.ly/3XD-nvRE>, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892); and 10:35 am, Shabbat family service.

Sunday, January 22: at 10 am, "Chevrah Kadisha-Sacred Mitzvah" adult education program and brunch at Temple Israel. (For more information, see the article on page 1.)

Penn-York Jewish Community

President-Treasurer-Secretary: Harvey Chernosky, 570-265-3869
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.

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: 607-756-7181
President: Carol Levine, 315-696-5744
Cemetery Committee: 315-696-5744
Website: templebrithsholomcortland.org
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/>
Service leaders: Lay leadership
Shabbat services: Either Friday evening at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 10 am from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot. Holiday services are also held. 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," while the Saturday morning siddur is "Gates of Prayer." The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences.
Services and programs are held by Zoom on the first and second Fridays of the month.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

MyHeritage publishes 1.7 million-record Israeli immigration list

Online genealogy platform MyHeritage announced on Jan. 8 the publication of a database comprising 1.7 million records, covering immigration to Israel from 1919. The company called it “the Israeli equivalent of the famous ‘Ellis Island’ immigration database for the United States.” For more than a year, MyHeritage indexed thousands of public-domain images from the Israel State Archives, linking them to surviving records of those who immigrated to Israel

SimonsContinued from page 5

and books, and include “Addressing Antisemitism and Racism in Statuary and Text: A Pedagogical Approach,” Israel Journal of Israel Foreign Affairs; “Jackie Robinson and the American Mind: Media Images of the Reintegration of Baseball,” in “From Jack Johnson to LeBron James: Sports, Media, and the Color Line”; “Greenberg at the Bat: A Twenty-first Century Jewish Moonlight Graham”; “Baseball and American Culture: A Seminar,” and “Baseball in the Classroom: Essays on Teaching the National Pastime.” In 2021, he received the American Jewish Press Association First Place Award for Excellence in Writing About Sports.

“As a longtime speaker for the New York Council for the Humanities,” organizers said, “Professor Simons has delivered invited lectures in more colleges, libraries, museums and community groups than we can count. We are honored to have him add Beth David Synagogue to that list, and are certain that the program will be a highlight of our luncheon series!”

TrailsContinued from page 1

conquer it. The first marked hiking trail in the Middle East, in fact, was created by the Palmach along the route to Masada in November 1947, just one week before the United Nations voted to partition Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state. It’s interesting that even at a time like that, military leaders like Yitzhak Rabin and Yigael Yadin, both of whom went on to become chiefs of staff in the Israel Defense Forces, saw trails as absolutely essential for the future of the Jewish state.”

Most tourists to Israel have remained unfamiliar with the trails and Israel’s Ministry of Tourism has shown little interest in encouraging tourists to hike. “Trail maps and guidebooks were only written in Hebrew, and were never translated into other languages,” he noted. “Even today, even Israel’s flagship trail – the Israel National Trail – is difficult to hike without a working knowledge of Hebrew.”

Rabineau believes this is because “walking the land” is seen as a Jewish-Israeli activity. “People hiked because they loved the country and saw it as their homeland,” he added. “They couldn’t imagine that anyone else would want to go hiking there. One of the personal stories I tell in the book connects with this: in 2006, I set out to hike the Israel National Trail, and tried to order a Hebrew-language guidebook to my house in the United States. I soon received an e-mail from the publishing company, asking whether I had placed the order by accident. ‘Not many outsiders are interested in hiking in our little country,’ the employee wrote. But that wasn’t true then, and it isn’t true now. Some Israelis have begun to market Israel as an international hiking destination, but a lot remains to be done if that’s ever going to be successful.”

During his sabbatical in November, Rabineau returned to Israel to hike with his friend Julian Bender. This time, he wanted to see if he could repeat a legendary hike taken in 1934 by members of a Zionist youth movement: the group walked around the Dead Sea on foot. “The trek eventually became legendary among Israeli hikers, but for all kinds of reasons – national boundaries, regional wars, minefields and so on – the trek was never repeated,” he said. “As I completed this book and began thinking of a new research project, I wondered whether it would be possible to organize the second trek around the Dead Sea in recorded history.”

Rabineau and Bender hiked for two weeks through Jordan, Israel and the West Bank. “My next book will use the trek as a narrative thread that offers jumping-off points for talking about the life of the Dead Sea throughout history, and its slow death over the last several decades,” he said “The Dead Sea has been famous throughout history for many things: it is the lowest point on the surface of the earth, the saltiest body of water in the world, and the site of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Bible. But more recently, it has become famous as the scene of a tremendous environmental crisis. Overuse of the Jordan River has caused water levels to drop catastrophically, opening sinkholes and destroying settlements, highways and farmland. The sea’s southern basin has become an industrial zone where chemical corporations profit enormously by further depleting the water and extracting valuable minerals. In short, the Dead Sea is disappearing, and it seemed that if anyone were ever to try to walk around it again in a single push, this might be a good time to do it.”

by ship and by plane starting in 1919. MyHeritage said it’s the first organization to create a searchable index for the collection and link it with the scanned images. The collection is available to search for free and without having to sign up to the company’s website, to make it easily accessible for those researching their Jewish roots in Israel. The records in the collection include the name of the immigrant, the names of relatives who immigrated with them, the country of origin, the name of the ship they arrived on, the date of arrival, the names of parents, the names of relatives who were expecting them in Israel, and their destination city in Israel. Historians have defined several waves of *aliyah* between 1882 and the beginning of World War II. The collection starts with the Third Aliyah period (1919-1923). The first two waves took place from 1882 to 1918 under Ottoman rule, and are not covered in this collection. The collection

WayContinued from page 6

gods. The text itself makes it sound like the struggle between different forces may have reflected the heavens as much as it did the earth. This, of course, is not rabbinic commentary, which negates any statements that make it sound as if in biblical times the Israelites might have believed more than one God existed, rather than just believing they had a special relationship with this particular God.

There are no real answers to the questions I have raised. The story as written in Exodus is the story we have, and its writers had no difficulty with the vengeance God rained on the Egyptians. One of the beauties of rabbinic Judaism, though, is that the rabbis raised the same idea I have, even if they expressed it in a very different way. The result is that, during the Passover seder, we remove drops of wine from our cups of joy to remember that others suffered for our freedom. That idea – that even when we feel joy, we should acknowledge the sorrows of others – is one that still resonates today.

was created from scanned books stored by the Israel State Archives, with lists of immigrants arranged in chronological order according to the arrival dates of the ships or planes. The records also included the arrival of tourists to Israel, or the return of Israeli residents from trips abroad. Pedestrian arrivals are also listed; those who came in through border crossings in the north or south.

Israel approves punitive measures against P.A. over U.N. vote

Israel’s Security Cabinet on Jan. 5 approved several punitive measures against the Palestinian Authority in response to what it described as Ramallah’s ongoing “political and legal war” against the Jewish state. The move came a week after the U.N. General Assembly passed a resolution calling on the International Court of Justice to “render urgently an advisory opinion” on Israel’s “prolonged occupation, settlement and annexation of Palestinian territory.” The Security Cabinet decided to withhold taxes and tariffs collected on behalf of and transferred to the P.A., in an amount equal to that which Ramallah paid to terrorists and their families in 2022 as part of its “pay-for-slay” policy. An additional sum of nearly \$40 million was deducted from the same P.A. pool of funds, to be disbursed to Israeli victims of Palestinian terrorism. The Knesset had previously passed legislation mandating such deductions, however, the Bennett-Lapid government repeatedly found loopholes to delay its implementation. The Security Cabinet also placed a moratorium on Palestinian construction in Area C of Judea and Samaria, with a view to curbing illegal building, and denying VIP benefits to P.A. officials leading the “lawfare” campaign against Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that the “distorted” and “disgraceful” ICJ resolution would not obligate or restrain his government, adding: “The Jewish people is not occupying its land and is not occupying its eternal capital Jerusalem. No U.N. resolution can distort this historical truth.”

Business Profiles

Ernest H. Parsons Funeral Home

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 Website: www.parsonsfuneral.com
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The Ernest H. Parsons Funeral Home, located at 71 Main St., Binghamton, has been a landmark since 1928 and is located in the J. Stewart Wells Mansion, built by renowned architect Isaac Perry, who completed construction in 1867.

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Hillel Academy celebrated Hanukkah



Students from Hillel Academy's second-fifth grade went to Glass Creations by Carol to learn how to work with decorative glass. Shown are students with their glass dreidels.



Hillel Academy held a carnival for Hanukkah. Included in the fun were students learning to make balloon hats. (Students' names held by request)



Students worked in the glass studio.



Students learned about glass cutting at Glass Creations by Carol.



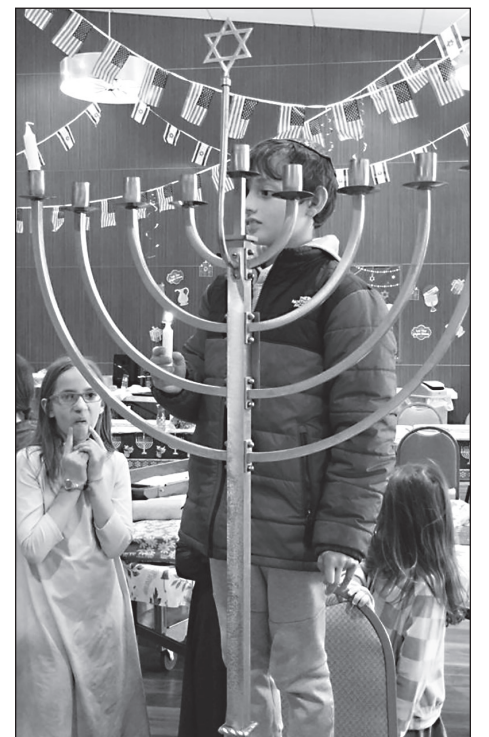
Students danced to Hanukkah songs. Other activities included games and juggling by Rabbi Benny Kelman.



At left: Students enjoyed activities at Hillel Academy's Hanukkah carnival.



Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu, head of Jewish studies, offered the students a Hanukkah treat: sufganiyot that were made in Israel.



A student lit the Hanukkah menorah.

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THE REPORTER

JLI..... Continued from page 3

the authors behind the big ideas of Jewish history over a period of 33 centuries," explained Slonim.

"It's an ambitious undertaking," says Slonim. "I'm excited because I think the course will give us a richer understanding of what Judaism meant throughout the centuries and what it can mean for us today."

"To study the history of most cultures, you need to learn about wars and empires, warriors and city builders and great works of art," said course organizers. "But the history of Judaism is overwhelmingly a history of books. Books form the core of Judaism's culture. But even if they're known as 'the People of the Book,' much of Judaism's classic literature remains closed to contemporary Jews."

The history of Jewish literature is a broad subject, but Slonim noted that the course will also go deep: "We're not just going to learn why these works were written. We're actually going to get a taste of what it's like to participate in a talmudic debate, unpack a philosophical conundrum and decipher a kabbalistic text from the Zohar."

"Book Smart" was developed by the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, which is headquartered in Brooklyn. Organizers noted that the institute "has a sterling reputation for producing high-quality and engaging courses."

Slonim said she isn't promising students overnight expertise on the works discussed in the course. "But I can assure them it will be an enjoyable and intellectually engaging journey," she noted, "giving us valuable context for all our future Jewish learning."

She added, "Please register sooner rather than later if you are planning to join so we can order the correct number of text books for all interested participants."

JLI offers programs in 11 languages at more than 1,600 international locations in 41 U.S. states and 28 countries on five continents. More than 400,000 students have attended JLI classes since it was founded in 1998.

"JLI uses cutting-edge pedagogical techniques to create content that communicates Jewish teachings, observances, and history to Jewish audiences of all backgrounds and affiliations, across a wide range of formats and media," organizers said.