

THE REPORTER

Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

February 9-22, 2024
Volume LIII, Number 3

Federation to hold community hockey event on Feb. 24

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will sponsor a community hockey event at a Binghamton Black Bears game at the Visions Veterans Me-

morial Arena, 1 Stuart St., Binghamton, on Saturday, February 24, at 7 pm. Tickets are at the discounted rate of \$10 per person with the Federation paying the rest of the fee. Tickets must be purchased

by Wednesday, February 14. Visit www.jfgeb.org/ to make a reservation. Contact Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation, at 607-724-2332 for any seating requests, such as sitting with

another person(s).

"I hope the community will come out for the Black Bears game," said Hubal. "Hockey games are fast paced and a great way to spend a winter evening."

Film Fest virtual showing of "March '68" in March

By Reporter staff

The Greater Binghamton Jewish Film Fest will hold a virtual showing of "March '68" in March. A virtual discussion of the film will be moderated by Ben Kasper, professor emeritus at SUNY Broome, on Sunday, March 17, at 5 pm. The link to the film will be sent to those who register by 5 pm on Thursday, March 14. People can register for the film and the discussion at www.jfgeb.org/film-fest.

Donations are appreciated; the suggested donation is \$10.

The film tells the story of two young students – Hania (Vanessa Aleksander) and Janek (Ignacy Liss) – who meet and fall in love in 1960s' Warsaw, which was a time of social turmoil and Jewish discrimination. Although Hania and Janek are not interested in politics, governmental edicts affect them: Hania's father and mother lose their jobs due to the antisemitic purge and

are forced to emigrate. Since Hania does not want to leave Janek, the two participate in a protest rally at the university, during which they learn freedom can come at a high price.

The film won the Audience Award for Best Narrative at the Washington, DC, JxJ Film Festival in 2023, the Audience Award for Best Feature at the Palm Beach Jewish Film Festival in 2023, the Audience Award for Best Narrative at the Jewish International Film Festival Australia in 2022 and Honorable Mention – International Jury Competition at the Jerusalem Jewish Film Festival in 2022.

On the website <https://culturalmining.com>, Daniel Garber wrote that the film "is an excellent romantic drama set in Warsaw during that dark, tumultuous and repressive time." Nora Lee Mandel wrote on her website, Mandel Maven's Nest Lilith Watch: Guide to Jewish Women in Film, that "integrating archival footage and recordings into both sides of the involving romantic story, [Director Krzysztof] Lang, with co-writer Andrzej Golda, intensely builds up how anti-Zionism and antisemitism were fomented to make Jews scapegoats

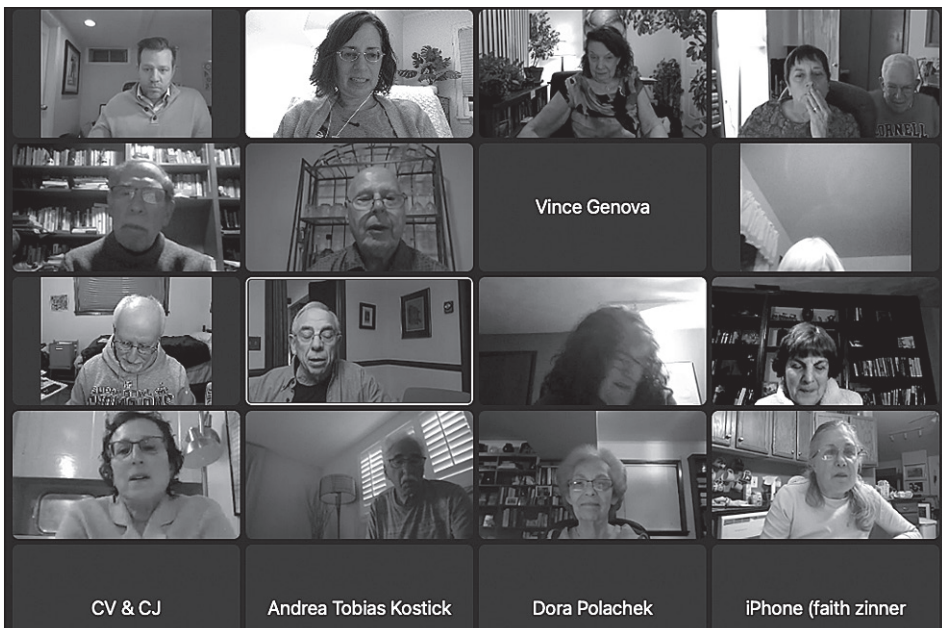


Archive footage used in "March '68" (Photo courtesy of TVP Theatrical Distribution)

for the political power plays within the Communist government... While Lang lost childhood friends in March 1968, this poignant film is also a sober lesson on what happens again and again, with different victims."

"Join us for this film, which is a wonderful conclusion to this year's excellent Film Fest series," said Shelley Hubal, Federation executive director. "I found this film very engaging. Although it takes place in 1968, its message is still relevant today."

Film Fest discussion



The Greater Binghamton Jewish Film Fest held a virtual discussion of the film "Our Almost Completely True Love Story" moderated by Richard Mattson on February 4. Forty-five computers registered to watch the film and 23 computers were tuned into the discussion.

Spotlight

Local lawyer helps launch pro-bono website for Israelis affected by war

By Reporter staff

Richard "Dick" Lewis, an attorney at Hinman, Howard and Kattell, and current president of the New York State Bar Association, is an active member of the Binghamton Jewish community. He's been a member of many boards of directors of local Jewish organizations and is a supporter of Israel. That's why after the Hamas October 7 attack, he knew he had to use his expertise to offer practical help to Israel. The result is a collaboration between the New York State Bar Association, the Israel Bar Association and the legal tech company Paladin to create the platform www.israelbar.legal.

In his capacity as president of the New York State Bar Association, Lewis released the following statement: "The New York State Bar Association strongly condemns Hamas' premeditated invasion of Israel and its brutal murders of hundreds of Israeli and Arab citizens in their homes and communities. The attacks are abhorrent and unforgivable and flagrantly violate the United Nations Charter, Helsinki Accords, and established norms and principles of international law."

However, just condemning Hamas was not enough. Lewis wanted to use his legal expertise to help, which is what led to the idea of the website. The pro-bono site offers

free legal assistance from Israeli lawyers to those who survived the October 7 attacks, the families of those taken hostage and those who were evacuated from the southern and northern borders of Israel.

Lewis noted that "the devastation in Israel is significant. Firstly, the whole social fabric has been disrupted because of people having to go off to the front. There are legal needs that people have with regard to housing, government benefits, family law, and numerous other areas, as one would expect. The goal is that these people can connect with an attorney who can, on a pro bono basis, assist them with many of their legal issues."

Lewis approached the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton for information about potential funding sources for the website. The Federation agreed that his project was important and gave him suggestions about where to seek funds. "I am so pleased that Dick asked our Federation to be part of this important and exciting program," said Suzanne Holwitt, Federation president. "I'm delighted that Dick's pride in his hometown enables us to be part of an international effort to help people living in Israel, and our involvement will help him to raise the necessary funds to allow the platform to get up and running."

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Talks around town
BD Sisterhood plans Zoom talk on cybersecurity on Feb. 14, tour of BU Art Museum in March.
.....Pages 3 and 5

Children's books
Five new books will be released this spring by local publisher Kalanot Books.
.....Page 4

Hostage news
The IDF confirms at least 32 out of the 136 remaining hostages are dead.
.....Page 8

Special Sections
Book Review..... 4
Women in Business..... 5
Congregational Notes 6
Classifieds 8

Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

“Elmo is just checking in! How is everybody doing?” With empathy, the beloved Sesame Street character Elmo posted this question recently on the social media platform X and opened a floodgate. More than 13,000 people responded and the post was viewed more than 180 million times. Thousands of the responses described honest feelings of anxiety, depression and pain. It is clear Americans are feeling overwhelmed. With the United States at risk of being

pulled into a war in the Middle East, the cost of living on the rise, daily reminders of the crisis in Gaza, election year drudgery and so much more, it is no wonder many adults used a sweet Muppet friend to unload on.

Many opined that it is the innocence of Elmo that paved the way for the plethora of responses, but I wonder if it is simply that so few of us have someone in our lives that asks, “How are you, really?” Furthermore, few have the courage

to share their honest feelings with someone they know. Thanks for starting the conversation, Elmo, and for reminding us all to be patient with one another and to check in on our loved ones and neighbors. I will add to the conversation by saying with honesty, “I am tired, but I know that each day brings new opportunities to grow more loving as a wife, mother, daughter, sister, leader and human. Also, a little chocolate in the afternoon really helps!”

The Israel-Hamas War first-hand: personal accounts, part II

By Bill Simons

Many more accounts of lives impacted by the Israel-Hamas War await telling. Death has ended too many of those personal journeys. Others, including the three below, are in progress.

◆ Kfir Y Shoham is an undergraduate at Syracuse University, studying accounting and finance. An Israeli citizen, Kfir moved to New Jersey with his parents at the age of 13. He contacted me concerning his Israel baseball research. And Kfir offered to articulate his reaction to October 7 and its aftermath:

“I woke up on October 7 in my dorm room to a bunch of notifications from my extended family with WhatsApp asking if everyone is safe and news from channel 12 that Israel was under attack... [M]y fall break began by trying to reach out to extended family in Israel, friends who I grew up with in Israel... [and those who] went back to Israel after graduation.

“While watching the news, I was not able to turn away. The feeling then and for the next couple of days turned into a feeling of powerlessness and disappointment. There is nothing I can do; I am stuck thousands of kilometers away with no real way to contribute; virtue signaling does not affect anything. I am at the age that if I were in Israel, I would be making an impact as part of the IDF by helping

families in trouble.

“In a sense being a student at college... turned into a ‘what am I doing here?’ moment, playing ultimate frisbee while my friends and extended family in Israel faced attack. My mother would tell me that at least I was not there, at least our immediate family was safe in the U.S. and not fighting terrorists in Gaza... I could have been one of the kidnapped soldiers such as my former classmate Edan Alexander... My grandfather’s memorial had to be pushed back. My mother could not go to our cousin’s wedding as planned. That combination of despair, worry and helplessness got better as I saw that my extended family and friends were not in immediate danger.”

◆ Sports blogger and rap artist David Nachenberg, long ago an attendee at a lecture I gave, provided the following account from Israel:

“I am a 61-year-old Jewish American/Israeli and have been living for most of the past 27½ years in Israel. While I am far from the ‘action,’... the current situation has deeply affected me emotionally. I grew up learning about the Holocaust in school...”

“[The] October 7, 2023... atrocities... and the anti-Jewish riots all over the world have only served to make me fear and hate... more than I ever did in my life. And I fully support establishing chapters of the JDL all over the world.

“While I never served in any army anywhere, I have used a gun as an auxiliary policeman and as an armed guard. Since the war broke out, I, along with hundreds of residents of my city have volunteered at roadblocks. The first time I was at a roadblock, we stopped a car of Arabs to check their IDs, and they had Israeli papers, so we had to let them pass, but the driver’s name shocked me. His name was ‘Jihad.’”

◆ The October 7 slaughter in southern Israel shocked Phil Glick. He pondered what would follow. And he wanted to help Israel. His life course led Phil to mark Israel, its existence and survival, as “existential to Jews.” Through our stints as United University Professions chapter presidents, Phil at Buffalo Health Science Center and I at SUNY Oneonta, as well as mutual activism in an informal Jewish labor interest group and shared baseball enthusiasm, we had come to know each other. On Thursday, January 4, I interviewed Phil, via Zoom, about the circumstances that shaped his response to the October 7 attack.

Growing up in Southern California, Phil was an ardent fan of the Los Angeles Dodgers and their ace pitcher Sandy Koufax, the lefty’s achievements a special source of pride for Jews. His bar mitzvah and several memorable summers at Jewish summer camps deepened his ethnic See “War” on page 7

In My Own Words

Book banning, review bombing and censorship

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

“The right to speak and the right to publish under the First Amendment has been interpreted widely to protect individuals and society from government attempts to suppress ideas and information, and to forbid government censorship of books, magazines, and newspapers as well as art, film, music and materials on the internet.” – *The American Library Association* (www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/censorship)

Book banning and review bombing: it’s interesting how these two forms of censorship come from different ends of the political spectrum. The challenges to works that speak about slavery, the LGBTQ community and the Holocaust, or which include individuals striving to understand their sexuality come from the Right end of the political spectrum. Parents seek not only to prevent their children from reading these works, but all children by having them removed from school library shelves. State legislatures are also

working to make certain these books are not available in public libraries – censoring what their citizens can read. The range of censored books is bewildering: the only thing they share is that someone finds the work disturbing for sometimes unnamed reasons.

The reverse side of this comes from the Left end of the political spectrum and takes the form of review bombing: that’s placing no star or one star reviews on the social media site Goodreads or condemning the works on TikTok. The reason behind the review bombing is that the reviewers – many of whom have not even read the book – believe the work doesn’t offer an enlightened view of the world and its problems. Recent examples include the protests against Elizabeth Gilbert’s “The Snow Forest” simply because it is set in Russia (any work featuring Russia is considered an affront to those who support Ukraine in the current war) and “The Boy With the Star Tattoo” by Talia Carner, which offers a positive view of the state of Israel, the Youth Aliyah program after World War II and the Six-Day War. (A review of Carner’s work will appear in a future issue of *The Reporter*.) Gilbert pulled her book before it appeared in stores. Carner’s work has just been published: she readily admits that it is a Zionist novel and makes no apologies for it being one.

Both groups are trying to do the same thing: prevent people from reading a book with which they disagree. Sometimes all it takes is a description of the work to make them uncomfortable or note that it offers a political viewpoint with which they disagree. But isn’t that one of the most important reasons for reading – to challenge ourselves, to hear a different point of view or to discover a new way of looking at the world? That doesn’t necessarily mean that we’ll change our opinions, but learning how other people think can help us make better and more educated decisions. Yes, we might find someone’s ideas offensive or they may trigger an emotional reaction in us we would rather not have. But we can choose *not* to read them. The important word here is *choice*. That means *not* preventing other people from reading them.

Freedom of *choice*: that is supposed to be an American value, but both sides of the spectrum are working to limit our freedom. Freedom of choice means that you don’t have to buy or read a book, whether it’s one that’s been banned or one that’s been review bombed. That is your choice. But telling me that I can’t read those books by making them unavailable is censorship and goes *against* American values. “The right to speak and the right to publish” means not just those with whom we agree, but everyone.

Addendum

The following bar mitzvah was not printed in the January 26 issue of *The Reporter*: Noah Cole Grills, the son of Sara and Brian Grills, will celebrate his bar mitzvah on June 8 at Temple Concord.



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THE REPORTER

Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

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.

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DEADLINE

Regular deadline is noon, Wednesday, for the following week’s newspaper (see deadline dates on page 3). All articles should be e-mailed to TReporter@aol.com.

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“The Reporter” (USPS 096-280) is published bi-weekly for \$40 per year by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Road, Vestal, NY 13850-3734. Periodicals Postage Paid at Vestal, NY and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Reporter*, 500 Clubhouse Road, Vestal, NY 13850-3734 or reach us by e-mail at TREPORTER@AOL.COM.

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Time changed to 2 pm

Grier to speak at BD Sisterhood Zoom meeting

The Sisterhood of Beth David Synagogue will host a Zoom presentation by Jonathan Grier on Wednesday, February 14, at 2 pm. This is a change from the original time in order to accommodate Grier's schedule. Grier, who was born and raised in Binghamton, will speak about cybersecurity, focusing on how to spot the red flags of phishing and avoid them. Attendees will learn tips for securing data and their identity while browsing the Internet, checking e-mails or conducting other activities online.

The Sisterhood meeting is open to all in the community. The Zoom link will be available to anyone on the Beth David Sisterhood e-mail list or who receives the weekly bulletins from Rabbi Zev Silber. Anyone who does not receive these e-mails should provide their e-mail address by contacting the Beth David Synagogue office at 607-722-1793 or bethdavid@stny.rr.com before noon on Tuesday,

February 13, when messages will be retrieved.

Grier is a nationally recognized expert in cyber security, digital forensics and advanced technology. He is the founder and CEO of Grier Forensics, LLC, which produces advanced cyber technology for national security. Grier Forensics' technology is used by the United States Air Force, the United States Marine Corps and other organizations to defend their data and networks. Grier has led R&D efforts for the US Air Force Research Laboratory, the Department of Defense Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA), the Department of Justice, MIT Lincoln Laboratory, the U.S. Marine Corps System Command and private clients. He has also provided training for the National Incident Response Team of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, the Department of Defense Cyber Crime Center (DC3) and others.

He is the author or coauthor of more than 12 papers on computer security and forensics, has seven patents awarded or pending, and is a speaker at conferences such as Black Hat and RSA. Grier has been named a Yeshiva University Distinguished Scholar and has lectured on the intersection of halachah with computer science and physics. He is a member of the QL+ Board of Directors and the Cybersecurity Advisory Board of Stillman College. SC Magazine has noted that Grier's work has "attracted national attention" and called Grier one "of the nation's leading experts on insider threats."

Federation held webinar about Israel



The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton held a "Conversations about the Day After" with David Rittberg (shown in photo), senior director at the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies, on January 31. Rittberg discussed life after the October 7 attack on Israel, what is happening in southern Israel, and how the war will affect Jewish communities and philanthropy in the United States.



On January 31, 37 computers and more than 50 people joined the webinar with David Rittberg, senior director at the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies, who discussed life after the October 7 attack on Israel.

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of **Marvin A. Cohen**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Neil Auerbach on the death of his sister, **Fran Lane**

REPORTER DEADLINES

The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming issues of the biweekly REPORTER.

ISSUE	DEADLINE
February 23-March 7	February 14
March 8-21	February 28
March 22-April 4	March 13
April 5-18	March 27

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

Hillel Academy Challah Bake and Kabbalat Shabbat

Hillel Academy of Broome County held a community Challah Bake and Kabbalat Shabbat on January 19. More than 40 challahs were made and people were able to take them home. "The Challah Bake was led by our wonderful Judaic studies teacher Hadasa Slonim," said organizers of the event.

"She gave a beautiful talk on the significance of challah. Together, we made a special bracha for the hostages and Israeli soldiers in Gaza, praying that they would all return home safely." See "Bake" on page 8



Above, left and right: Students mixed dough for challah during the Challah Bake.

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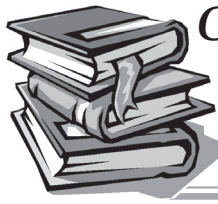
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Off the Shelf

Angels, alternative worlds and Jewish themes

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

The best part of reading novels based on Jewish fantasy and folklore is the wide range of material offered. If you add real-life settings (well, at least, for parts of the book), then you create the elements for some of my favorite genre reading. What is particularly fun is that the two novels featured in this review – “The Book of Paradise” by Itzik Manger, translated from the Yiddish by Robert Adler Peckerer (Puskin Press Classics) and “The Pomegranate Gate” by Ariel Kaplan (Erewhon Books/Kensington Publishing Company) – were initially published 80 years apart. How lucky it is that books like “The Book of Paradise” are still available when new works like “The Pomegranate Gate” are appearing – a phenomenon that shows how Jewish fantasy is flourishing in contemporary times.

“The Book of Paradise” was initially serialized in a Warsaw newspaper before being published in book format in 1939, when its author was living as a stateless person in Paris. Although Manger survived the war, he never wrote another novel. His narrator, Samuel Abba, is a young angel who is forced to leave heaven so his soul can be placed in a human body. However, Samuel plays a trick on the angel bringing him to earth: he manages to avoid having his memory of heaven erased. That means this newly born infant can speak and does so at great length, telling his parents, the town’s rabbi and two other members of his community stories about heaven – that is, when he is not being fed by his mother or napping like any other child.

Heaven is actually divided into three parts: there is the Jewish one, of course, filled with rabbis and characters from the Bible, who don’t act much better than they did on earth. There is also a Gentile heaven (for Christians) and a Turkish one (for Muslims). The angels and humans from each do not mingle. In fact, the borders between

their heavens are carefully guarded and very difficult to cross. The angels, at least in Samuel’s heaven, are no saints, either: they drink, fight and cheat. In fact, they seem remarkably human.

The novel is really a satire on human behavior and it does an excellent job showing its characters’ faults and foibles. At first, the work had no plot other than Samuel Abba being born and his discourses about his heavenly adventures with his good friend Little Pisser (yes, that really is his name), but, just when I was wondering if the satire – which was very funny – would be enough to sustain the novel, a plot did develop. The Behemoth – a humongous beast mentioned in the Book of Job – is being fattened so that after the messiah comes the righteous will be able to feast on his flesh. The beast escapes from the Jewish heaven to the Gentile one, where he is punished for crossing the border without permission. The righteous members of the Jewish heaven are very upset and worried the Behemoth will not be available when the time comes for their feast. Samuel Abba and Little Pisser are picked to travel to the Gentile heaven and bring the Behemoth back once his punishment is over.

“The Book of Paradise” serves as a commentary on the society of its time, although readers don’t need to know about 1930s Poland in order to appreciate the satire because humans today closely resemble those about whom Manger writes. Lovers of Jewish folklore will enjoy seeing how the author brings biblical and rabbinic writings to life, although with his own special touch. In the introduction to the book published in 1939, Manger wrote that this was to be the first book in a trilogy: he planned to write “The Book of the Earth” and “The Book of the World of Chaos.” It’s readers’ loss that those works never appeared.

While the plot of “The Book of Paradise” has no connection to a specific historical event, “The Pomegranate Gate,” the first work in “The Mirror Realm Cycle” trilogy, takes place during the Spanish Inquisition. It focuses on two characters: Toba Peres, who is so weak that she can’t run or shout. Instead she spends her days reading and listening to her grandfather teach. Naftaly is so unsuccessful

as a tailor that he wonders if he’ll ever be able to make a living. Even worse, he frequently has strange dreams and is known to fall into a trance-like state – two things his father forbids him to speak about.

When the Queen demands every Jew in her kingdom convert or emigrate, Toba and Naftaly leave with their families in the hope of finding a safe place to live. Although they are not supposed to bring anything of value with them, Toba hides an amulet she’s never taken off – an amulet given to her by her grandmother for protection. Naftaly also hides something: a book his father said must never leave his possession, but which is never to be opened.

When Toba stumbles through a pomegranate gate to the magical world of the Maziks, she begins to understand her true nature. Naftaly realizes the people in his dream-world are real: they are Maziks, connected to the world where Toba now finds herself. Can Naftaly – with the help of Toba’s grandmother and another fellow traveler – save Toba? Will Toba finally open herself to her true nature? And while doing so, can they save both worlds from an insidious plot that might destroy them?

This very short plot summary does not do justice to the complex and absorbing action in the novel’s almost 550 pages – pages that flew by. In addition its two main characters, the work’s many minor characters – and there are many of them – are as well drawn and interesting as its two major characters. Although the multi-page character list at the start of the book might frighten readers, it’s easy to follow the plot and learn which characters belong to which world; there is also a glossary at the end for unfamiliar Jewish terms.

What also makes “The Pomegranate Gate” stand out is that Kaplan levens her story with some laugh-out-loud humor. Plus, it’s wonderful to read a work that offers a Sephardic slant to its fantasy. The fantasy elements, which borrow from Jewish folklore, are extremely well done, as are Kaplan’s own fantasy inventions. Its ending surprised, startled and left me wishing the second book was already available. According to the bookstores, volume two is due out in October. I can’t wait to find out what happens.

TC Sisterhood held annual book talk



The Temple Concord Sisterhood held its annual book review with Rabbi Rachel Esserman on January 28. More than 20 people listened to Esserman discuss “Kunstlers in Paradise” by Cathleen Schine, “Abomination” by Ashley Goldberg and “Loving Our Own Bones: Disability Wisdom and the Spiritual Subversiveness of Knowing Ourselves Whole” by Julia Watts Belser.

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To arrange for a sponsorship or for answers to questions, contact Rabbi Rachel Esserman at rachel@thereporter.org.

New in Books

Kalaniot Books releases new children’s books for spring

Kalaniot Books announced its new children’s picture books for spring 2024:

◆ “The Hedgehog Who Said Who Cares?” by Neri Aluma with illustrations by Amit Trainin (to be released March 12)

Jewish teachings are the basis for a story about community. Hedgehog builds his hut in the middle of the road, something that upsets his neighbors, Rabbit and Mouse, who are unable to use the road. Readers learn what it means to have community obligations.

◆ “The Blue Butterfly of Cochin” by Ariana Mizrahi with illustrations by Siona Benjamin (to be released March 19)

The book tells the story of the ancient Jewish Indian community’s mass immigration to Israel in the 1950s through the eyes of Leah, who struggles with leaving her home for a new homeland.

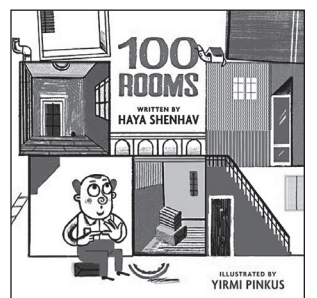
◆ “100 Rooms” by Haya Shenhav with illustrations by Yirkmi Pinkus (to be released May 7)

A man discovers the difficulty of living in a house with 100 rooms. The book teaches about consumer culture and how more is not always better.

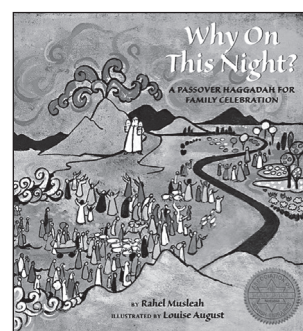
◆ Two other works are being released in paperback: “An Invitation to Passover” by Rabbi Kerry Olitzky and Rabbi Deborah Bodin Cohen with illustrations by Mariia Kolk-

er (to be released February 13) and an updated version of “Why On This Night? A Passover Haggadah for Family Celebration” by Rahel Musleah with illustrations by Louise August (to be released February 13).

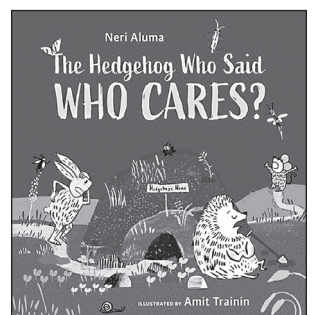
Kalaniot Books’ website can be found at <http://kalaniotbooks.com/>.



“100 Rooms” by Haya Shenhav with illustrations by Yirkmi Pinkus



“Why On This Night? A Passover Haggadah for Family Celebration” by Rahel Musleah with illustrations by Louise August



“The Hedgehog Who Said Who Cares?” by Neri Aluma with illustrations by Amit Trainin (Photos courtesy of Kalaniot Books)



“An Invitation to Passover” by Rabbi Kerry Olitzky and Rabbi Deborah Bodin Cohen with illustrations by Mariia Kolkher



“The Blue Butterfly of Cochin” by Ariana Mizrahi with illustrations by Siona Benjamin

Our Annual
Wedding, Prom &
Party Planning Guide
is coming soon!

To advertise in this annual, keepsake section, please contact Kathy Brown at 607-724-2360, ext. 244 or advertising@thereporter.org.

Issue Date: March 8
Ad Deadline: February 29

THE REPORTER
Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

Hillel Academy celebrated Tu B'Shevat

Hillel Academy of Broome County celebrated Tu B'Shevat, the New Year of the Trees, by holding a Tu B'Shevat seder that was open to the community. The students blessed and tasted the fruits, read excerpts from Jewish literature and sang songs of the land of Israel. Then each child was able to pot a plant.



Students and teachers at Hillel Academy celebrated Tu B'Shevat, the New Year of the Trees.



Students potted plants as part of their Tu B'Shevat celebration.



Students potted plants as part of their Tu B'Shevat celebration.

TC Religious School held service



Temple Concord Religious School students led the Shabbat morning service on January 27. The class service was followed by lunch. Back row: Teachers Karen Hammer and Orly Shoer. (Students' names held on request)

BD Sisterhood to tour BU Art Museum on March 13

The Beth David Sisterhood will offer a tour of the Binghamton University Art Museum on Wednesday, March 13, at 1:30 pm. The event is open to non-Sisterhood members of the community, both male and female. The tour will feature works of Jewish interest that relate in some way to the Jewish experience or which were created by Jewish artists. Some of the better-known Jewish artists whose works will be included are Marc Chagall, Moshe Castel and Max Liebermann.

The tour will be held in the Lindsay Room (room 179) in the Fine Arts Building on the Binghamton University campus. The location of the building is listed as FA on campus maps, which are available online. Seating will be

available. There is a paid parking garage for guests that charges \$1 an hour located next to the Fine Arts Building. Visitors are encouraged to park on the upper level of the parking garage to avoid having to climb stairs.

Anyone wishing to come early or stay later to further enjoy the museum may do so. The museum is open from noon-4 pm. Special accommodations, if needed, can be made if the museum is notified in advance by calling 607-777-3968.

Additional information may be obtained by leaving a message on the Beth David office answering machine at 607-722-1793 or by e-mailing bethdavid@stny.rr.com. Messages are typically retrieved before noon on Tuesdays.

TC-TI held adult ed. program



Rabbi Talia Laster spoke about "Areyvut: What Responsibility Do Jews Have to One Another?" during the adult brunch.



Around 45 people attended the Temple Concord/Temple Israel adult education brunch and presentation by Rabbi Talia Laster on January 21. Around 40 people were at Temple Concord, while five people joined online.

Jewish online resources

By Reporter staff

A variety of Jewish groups are offering educational and recreational online resources. Below is a sampling of those. *The Reporter* will publish additional listings as they become available.

- ◆ The Shalom Hartman Institute announced a new podcast, "TEXTing" with Elana Stein Hain, which looks at Jewish as guides for people's concerns and issue. To listen to the podcast, visit <https://www.hartman.org.il/loss-and-uncertainty/>.

- ◆ The Jewish Theological Seminary will hold the four-part virtual course "On the Blood Libel (and Other Lies about

Jews)" on Wednesdays, March 27-April 17, from 7-8:15 pm. The cost to attend is \$120. The cost will explore the history of anti-Jewish conspiracies over the centuries. For more information or to register, visit www.jtsa.edu/event/on-the-blood-libel-and-other-lies-about-jews/.

- ◆ JewBelong will hold a virtual JewBlong Briefing on Monday, March 11, at noon. The organization will discuss its response to the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel. To register for the event, visit https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kzqGE9CKSwO1f1DXk4lxQg#/registration.

See "Resources" on page 8



The Cat Doctor

Specialty: A full service veterinary hospital providing medical, surgical, dental and behavioral care for cats of all ages.

Location: 423 East Main St. Endicott, NY 13760

Owner: Darcy Sobel, D. V. M.

Phone: 754-7221

Hours: Mon. and Fri. 8 am-5 pm, Tues. and Thurs. 12:30-8 pm, Wed. 8 am-3 pm, Sat. 9 am-1 pm

The Cat Doctor is celebrating 29 years of caring for cats and their people. Dr. Darcy Sobel and Dr. Kaitlin Pace and staff at The Cat Doctor recognize that cats are important family members and treat each individual with special attention to their age, temperament and health conditions. Preventive medicine is practiced by providing complete physical examinations, behavioral counseling, dental care, diet management and appropriate vaccinations. The hospital has advanced radiology capabilities, providing instant, superior quality, digital x-rays as well as digital dental x-rays for the detection of early tooth disease below the gumline. The hospital now offers abdominal ultrasound for early detection of organ problems. When illness does occur, thorough and caring medical and surgical treatment is tailored to each patient.

The Reporter

Specialty: Advertising

Location: 500 Clubhouse Rd. Vestal, NY 13850

Name: Kathy Brown

Phone: 607-724-2360, ext. 244

E-mail: advertising@thereportergroup.org

Website: www.thereportergroup.org

Facebook: The Reporter Group

Hours: Mon. 9 am-4 pm, Wed. 9 am-3 pm, Thurs. 9 am-4 pm

Advertising was a new field for Kathy when she started three years ago, but she's discovered the pleasure of working with the clients, giving them ideas on how to promote their business using print ads. Her motto is "the client comes first" and, to prove that, she researches each client to see what they have done in the past and tries to figure out if there is a way to improve their ad-image. She also works with them to discover the ad sections that will best highlight their business.

Kathy has lived here for 40 years, moving from Long Island to meet and marry her husband. She loves the outdoors, even in the winter. She is ready to help you advertise your business in *The Reporter*, in Binghamton and Scranton, the best way she can. Call or e-mail her to discuss options.

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Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

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Mishpatim, Exodus 21:1-24:18

What exactly does that verse mean (and what do we do about chicken)?

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, THE REPORTER

When people study the Bible, they usually view it through generations of commentary. It can be very difficult to strip off those layers and look at the literal meaning of text. However, even though we know what interpretation was accepted by the majority of rabbis, it's interesting to see the process taken to arrive at that result. Some of my favorite discussions about the meaning of biblical verses deal with the laws of meat and milk.

The statement "You shall not seethe a kid in its mother's milk" appears in the Torah three times, including this week's *parasha*, Mishpatim. (Exodus 23:19) While the commandment sounds very simple, deciding actually what it means is not. In fact, the verse generated an enormous amount of discussion in the rabbinic period. The reason for the debate was that the ancient rabbis wanted to perform the *mitzvot* correctly. Among the issues they discussed were the

exact meaning of the word seethe, what the Torah means when it says "mother" and why the verse is repeated three times. Of additional interest was the question of chicken: did it qualify as meat?

The rabbis agreed that the word "seethe" meant a kind of cooking. There was some question about whether the verse applied to only a specific cooking method, but the general consensus prohibited all forms of cooking. That led to another question. The text says only that meat and milk can't be cooked together. Does that mean that they can be eaten together? And how do the rules of milk apply to cheese since the verse says nothing about other forms of dairy products? Could cheese and meat be eaten together as long as they are not cooked together? In the end the rabbis prohibited eating any form of dairy with meat, but only after they considered the question.

When I tell people about the rabbinical discussion of what is meant by the word "mother," they usually think I'm joking, until I assure them I'm quoting text. The classical discussion has two parts, one dealing with familial relationships and the other with different species. In other words, the Torah verse says that you can't cook a kid in the milk of its mother. The rabbis, however, asked, how about the milk of its sister or aunt or grandmother? What about a goat that's not related to the kid? What about other species? Can you cook a goat in cow's milk or a calf in sheep's milk? Obviously, in the end, the rabbis did not take the verse literally and ruled that any type of meat could not be cooked in any type of milk.

Rabbinic methods of interpretation declared that there is no repetition in Torah. Therefore if something is said See "Verse" on page 7

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

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Micah Friedman via Zoom and in-person (masks are required for unvaccinated participants).

On Saturday, February 10, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required for unvaccinated participants). The Torah portion is Exodus 21:1-24:18 and the haftarah is Isaiah 66:1-24. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 6:15 pm.

On Saturday, February 17, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required for unvaccinated participants). The Torah portion is Exodus 25:1-27:19 and the haftarah is I Kings 5:26-6:13. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 6:30 pm.

The Temple Office will be closed Monday, February 19, for Presidents' Day.

A Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 20, at 7 pm.

The Ritual Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 21, at 10 am.

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 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 Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: 607-756-7181

President: Nick Martelli

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 "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.

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.

Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union

Rabbi: Zev Silber

Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905

Phone: 607-722-1793, Rabbi's Office: 607-722-7514

Fax: 607-722-7121

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.

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

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.

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

Rabbi: TBA

Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass

Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292

Phone: 607-273-5775

E-mail: president@tbeithaca.org, secretary@tbeithaca.org

Website: www.tbeithaca.org

Presidents: Melanie Kalman and Alexis Siemon

Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman

Director of Education: TBA

Services: Friday 8 pm; Saturday 10 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 Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and

Wednesday afternoons, 3:45-5:45 pm. The teen No'ar program meets twice per month (every other Sunday from 5-7 pm) and is designed with the flexibility to accommodate busy student schedules.

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/HappeningATBE.

Friday, February 9, light candles before..... 5:10 pm

Shabbat ends Saturday, February 10 6:12 pm

Friday, February 16, light candles before..... 5:19 pm

Shabbat ends Saturday, February 17 6:21 pm

Friday, February 23, light candles before..... 5:27 pm

Shabbat ends Saturday, February 24 6:29 pm

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism

Rabbi: TBA

Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905

Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm

Phone: 607-723-7355

Fax: 607-723-0785

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, February 9: At 7:30 pm, Repro Shabbat service with Barbara Thomas and Robin Hazen. 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, February 10: At 9 am, Shabbat school; at 9:15 am, Torah study in person and on Zoom (<http://bit.ly/3XDnVRE>, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892); and at 10:35 am, Shabbat family class service and lunch.

Tuesday, February 13: At 8 pm, General (Board of Trustees) Board meeting, which is open to temple members. For the meeting link, contact the temple office at 607-723-7355 or at templeconcordaa@gmail.com.

Friday, February 16: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service with Allen Alt and Daphne Churgil. 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, February 17: No Shabbat school or family service; at 9:15 am, Torah study in person and on Zoom (<http://bit.ly/3XDnVRE>, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892).

Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive

Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815

Phone: 334-2691

E-mail: fertigj@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.

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

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.



ADL says new campaign video comparing Trump to Hitler goes too far

By Jacob Kornbluh

This story originally appeared in the Forward. To get the Forward's free e-mail newsletters delivered to your inbox, visit forward.com/newsletter-signup.

The Anti-Defamation League is calling on the Lincoln Project, a super PAC launched by a group of "never Trump" Republicans in 2019, to pull an ad that draws parallels between Donald Trump's presidential campaign and Adolf Hitler's regime in Nazi Germany.

The recently released minute-long ad, titled "Translation," features Trump's promises to reissue a 2020 executive order targeting "rogue bureaucrats" and "corrupt actors" overlaid on historic footage of Nazi-aligned German forces, and Jews being beaten down by Nazi thugs during Hitler's rule. The video – part of a series highlighting Trump's potential anti-democratic agenda in a second term

– contrasts Trump's commitment to forming a "Truth and Reconciliation Commission" with visuals of Nazi loyalists giving salutes.

Trump's pledge to crack down on "government leakers" collaborating with "fake news" and relocate government agencies outside the "Washington swamp" is juxtaposed with footage of book burning and images of burning buildings.

"We've heard the kind of promises that Trump is making before, but last time they were in German," the ad concludes. The ad was first reported by the Florida Politics website.

In a statement shared by e-mail, an ADL spokesperson said the comparison "denigrates the memory of the six million and trivializes the horrific events of the Holocaust."

The ADL urged the Lincoln Project to pull the ad "and to refrain from using Nazi analogies in the future."

Drawing parallels between the former president and the

Nazi regime has been hotly debated in the public discourse for a number of years. In 2020, a Jewish Democratic Council of America ad contrasted images from the rise of fascism in Europe during the 1930s with visuals from the four years of the Trump presidency. It was condemned by the ADL as offensive.

Trump himself compared the federal indictment on the 2020 election interference to the tactics used by the German Nazi regime, and his allies likened the FBI's raid of Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in the classified documents case to Nazism. In 2022, Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, a Republican from Georgia, also made a Biden-Hitler comparison.

"Donald Trump is troubling enough on his own and may present a challenge to democracy," said Abe Foxman, a Holocaust survivor and the former longtime head of the ADL. "But comparing him to Hitler is an over-the-top exaggeration which trivializes who Hitler was and the horrors he brought."

A Lincoln Project spokesperson didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Jacob Kornbluh is the Forward's senior political reporter. Follow him on Twitter @jacobkornbluh or email kornbluh@forward.com.

War

identification. As a football player, he encountered little direct antisemitism, save for jibes that the "A" grades on his report card made his teammates look bad.

Phil became an M.D. with a specialty in pediatric surgery. Dr. Philip L. Glick, M.D., M.B.A., F.A.C.S., F.A.A.P., F.R.C.S., is professor of surgery and management, as well as liaison for Health Sciences Schools and School of Management for M.B.A. programs at Buffalo HSC. No longer performing surgery, he conducts patient evaluations and teaches anatomy and medical ethics.

Phil married a fellow M.D., Drucy Borowitz, a pediatric pulmonologist and the daughter of a rabbi. They raised two children amidst their demanding schedules. Membership in two Reform temples, sending their children to Jewish summer camps, financial and volunteer contributions and two trips to Israel evidenced their strong ethnic connections. In addition, Phil has long served on the board of campus Hillel.

A Jewish sensibility influenced additional commitments. He has conducted innumerable "Stop the Bleed" workshops, demonstrating effective techniques to stop a potentially fatal loss of blood. (Regional groups wishing to sponsor "Stop the Bleed" workshops can contact him at glicklab@buffalo.edu.) An "angel investor," Phil assists socially conscious startup businesses. A strong proponent of racial justice, he marched not only in Buffalo civil rights demonstrations, but through rural, sometimes hostile, areas of the South. As chair of the Faculty Senate and UUP Buffalo president, he championed academic freedom and employee rights. Now, anti-Israel graffiti and posters have

appeared on his campus, and a Jewish student leader was threatened. A former friend repeatedly accuses Israel of genocide on the Internet.

Phil took a special mentoring interest in Aaron Epstein, M.D., a fourth-year resident, now in his mid-30s, at Buffalo HSC. Epstein in turn provided inspiration and information. A former special forces operative, proficient with firearms and a veteran of dangerous postings, Epstein morphed into a physician. A founder of the Global Surgical and Medical Support Group, Epstein and his organization have brought critical medical care to regions beset by war and turbulence, supplying their own security. It appears that Epstein's example contributed to Phil Glick's response to October 7 terrorism.

Along with 10,000 other Jewish American doctors, Phil volunteered to provide medical services in Israel, even as the prospect of a broadening war looms. From Israeli authorities and from Epstein, he knows that such a venture would entail gas mask, flak jacket, helmet, satellite phone – and the reasons for such provisions. Phil has completed credentialing and interviews, and is now on the Israel Ministry of Health's waiting list. At age 70, Phil is prepared to board a flight to Israel on a week's notice.

Dr. Phil Glick's willingness to go to Israel exemplifies the desire of many frustrated American Jews to do more. Financial donations, institutional support, political advocacy, participation in rallies, letters to the editor, corrective conversations and educating our children are avenues to affirm solidarity. With public opinion embattled and the war continuing, support for Israel is urgent.

Verse

more than once, each time it must have something different to teach us. As I mentioned before, the verse "You shall not seethe a kid in its mother's milk" appears three times – Exodus 23:19 and 34:26, and Deuteronomy 14:21. The rabbis offered a variety of explanations. One opinion said that the three mentions refer to the three covenants God made with Israel – one at Horah, one on the plains of Moab and one on Mount Gerizim. In a second opinion, the three repetitions are said to refer to three different kinds of flesh: the first to domestic animals, the second to beasts of chase and the third to fowl. A third suggestion claimed that the first mention teaches that we are not supposed to cook meat and milk together; the second mention means that we can't eat this mixture if it is cooked (the Torah text says nothing about eating); and the third mention shows that we are not to derive any benefit from a mixture of meat and milk (for example, feeding it to our dog or selling it to a non-Jew who isn't prohibited from eating it). This

opinion is the basis for many legal decisions that prohibit Jews from cooking, eating and benefitting from mixtures of meat and milk.

And what about the tricky question of chicken and other forms of fowl? That was a difficult one, since fowl lay eggs and don't produce milk. Technically they could be considered the same as fish, who also lay eggs and don't breast feed their young. Fish can be eaten with meat or milk. In fact, the Talmud records examples of rabbis who ate cheese and chicken at the same meal. In the end, though, chicken was declared a form of meat.

When we study the laws of meat and milk today, we usually only learn how to practice the commandment as determined by the rulings of our ancestors. We rarely take time to address the questions that Talmud raises. However, I find that knowing the history and development of our laws and customs enriches my Jewish practice. It also allows me to be part of the continuing evolution of our religion.

Continued from page 2

Continued from page 6

Wedding/engagement photos wanted

The Reporter is looking for photos of couples who became engaged or married in 2023 for the annual Wedding, Prom and Party Guide issue (coming March 8).

Please e-mail these photos with the names of all those in the photo (including maiden names), date of wedding and photographer. Please do so by Tuesday, February 27. Photos can be e-mailed, in TIF or JPG format, to TReporter@aol.com; please note in the subject line that a wedding/engagement photo for The Reporter is attached and include the necessary information in the message.



BE A PART OF OUR UPCOMING TAX & FINANCIAL PLANNING ADVERTISING SECTION

For information, contact Kathy at 607-724-2360 ext. 244 or advertising@thereportergroup.org

ISSUE DATE: FEB. 23
DEADLINE: FEB. 15

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Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

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Contact Kathy to advertise at 607-724-2360, ext. 244, or advertising@thereportergroup.org

THE REPORTER

We Remember You 2024 JFS Accepting Purim Donations

Jewish Family Service will once again be collecting funds to fulfill the Purim mitzvah of *matanot le'evyonim* (gifts for the poor). These donations will be distributed to more than 16 local Jewish families who are experiencing extreme financial difficulties. In order to assure a timely distribution of these gifts, please be sure your contribution reaches our offices by February 29, 2024.

Thank you for your support of your neighbors in need. Please mail or bring your donation to Jewish Family Service, 500 Clubhouse Road, Vestal, NY 13850. Contact Rose Shea, JFS Director, at 724-2332, ext. 339, with any questions.

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IDF confirms 32 out of 136 remaining hostages dead

By JNS staff

(JNS) – At least 32 of the remaining 136 hostages captured by Hamas during its October 7 terrorist onslaught are confirmed to have died, *The New York Times* reported on February 6, citing a confidential Israel Defense Forces intelligence assessment. Their families have been updated, according to four IDF military officials who spoke anonymously to discuss classified information. Jerusalem was also assessing unconfirmed reports indicating that at least 20 additional captives may no longer be alive, the officials said.

Hamas abducted more than 240 people during its bloody rampage across the northwestern Negev, in which some 1,200 people were murdered and thousands more wounded. One hundred five hostages, mostly women and children, were released last year as part of a ceasefire deal, which Hamas broke when it refused to hand over the last group of captives. Four more were released by Hamas before the ceasefire, while one hostage was rescued by Israeli troops.

The figure of 32 – or possibly even 52 – dead captives is significantly higher than previously thought and would



Israelis held photographs of a mother and child held captive by Hamas terrorists in Gaza, outside the Tel Aviv Museum of Art on November 2, 2023. (Photo by Miriam Alster/Flash90)

mean that more than one-fifth of the remaining hostages have been killed.

Asked for comment by the *Times*, the IDF said it was still “deploying all available resources to locate and retrieve as much information as possible regarding the hostages currently held by Hamas.” Most of the dead are believed to have been murdered on October 7, the army added.

Hamas is expected to turn down an offer for a hostages-for-ceasefire deal with Israel along the lines of the November agreement, the Saudi-owned Al Arabiya news channel reported on February 4.

The terrorist group is demanding that Israel release more Palestinian security prisoners in exchange for each of the remaining hostages. Hamas is reportedly insisting that Israel free terrorists arrested on October 7. Hamas is also seeking guarantees for the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and a total end to the war – a stance that is incompatible with Israel’s stated goal of destroying the terrorist group.

“The efforts to free the hostages are continuing at all times,” Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told journalists on February 4 “However, we will not agree to every deal, and not at any price.”

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Northwestern U. launches Educators for Justice in Palestine

A group of faculty, employees and graduate students at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL, has not only offered support to Students for Justice in Palestine but has decided to establish a new entity to complement the chapter’s anti-Israel activities. After 200 individuals signed a statement in December advocating for SJP, some signatories joined to create a campus branch of Educators for Justice in Palestine. The group defined its principles, including support for the BDS movement, “as a way to pressure Israel to end the occupation of Palestine and the curtailment of Palestinian rights in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel.” It also rejected the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s working definition of antisemitism, stating its opposition to “the conflation of antisemitism with criticism of the policies and actions of the Israeli state, critiques of Zionism or support for Palestinian liberation.” Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, a professor of political science professor and religious studies, supports the group. In December, she wrote on social media that “the definition of anti-Semitism is broad enough that it attempts to silence those, including Palestinians and Jews, who criticize Israel’s current actions in Gaza or voice their support for BDS.”

Bake Continued from page 3

Following the Challah Bake, the school held a musical *Kabbalat* Shabbat, with Hillel students accompanied by Rabbi Ben Menora (guitar and vocals), Rabbi Michah Friedman (vocals), Steve Gilbert (ukulele and vocals), Josh Hubal (guitar and vocals), Dr. Johnny Pachter (piano and vocals) and Cantor Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu (vocals and conducting).

“The atmosphere was impressive, the singing reached the sky, and there was a lot of love and happiness in the air,” said organizers. “At the end of the *Kabbalat* Shabbat, a festive lunch was held to welcome Shabbat.”

Organizers continued, “We would like to thank Tara Kaminsky for the initiative and planning, and thank the musicians who performed. We would also like to thank the guests from the community who came to support and enjoy the event, in addition to the teachers and students.”

Resources Continued from page 5

◆ Recustom offers a series of free Shabbat booklets to download at www.recustom.com/shabbat. Selections include “Shabbat How-To Guides” and “Alternative Shabbat Ceremonies.”

◆ Aleph will hold two virtual programs in February: Rabbi Shefa Gold will discuss her new app, *Flavors of Praise*, which offers more than 60 melodies, on Tuesday, February 13, at 8 pm (<https://aleph.org/civicrm/event/register/?reset=1&id=543>); and the book launch for “Toward a Holy Ecology: Reading the Song of Songs in the Age of Climate Crisis” with Rabbi Ellen Bernstein and Rabbi Rami Shapiro on Wednesday, February 21, at 8 pm (<https://aleph.org/civicrm/event/register/?reset=1&id=544>).

◆ The Hadassah-Brandeis Institute will hold several virtual Sandra Seltzer Silberman HBI Conversations events: Talia Carner, “The Boy with the Star Tattoo,” on Wednesday, February 28, 7 pm (<https://brandeis.zoom.us/j/98456789012>); and Shulamit Reinharz and Barbara Vinick, Editors, “100 Jewish Brides: Stories from Around the World,” on Wednesday, May 22, at 7 pm (<https://brandeis.zoom.us/j/123456789012>).

◆ Uri L’Tzedek will hold the virtual program “Preparing for Pesach: On Liberation & Justice!” with Rabbi Dr. Yitz Greenberg on Sunday, April 7, at 1 pm. The cost to attend is \$18. To register for the event, visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/joinMeeting?meetingid=9876543210>.

◆ The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research will hold a three-part webinar series, “The Origins and Ideology of Hamas,” with historian Jeffrey Herf on three Mondays: “Hamas and the Origins of Islamic Antisemitism” on Monday, February 26, at 1 pm (yivo.org/IdeologySeries1); “Colonialism, Racism, and the Arab Israeli War of 1948” on Monday, March 25, at 1 pm (yivo.org/IdeologySeries2); and “Responses to October 7th” on Tuesday, April 16, at 1 pm (yivo.org/IdeologySeries3).

◆ The Roundtable by the 92nd Street Y will hold the virtual class “The Remarkable Story of the Venice Ghetto” on Tuesdays, March 26-April 9, from 2-3 pm. The cost to attend is \$132. “Based on Harry Freedman’s new book, ‘Shylock’s Venice,’ this course will look at the origins of the ghetto and its stories.” For more information or to register, visit <https://roundtable.org/live-courses/history/the-remarkable-story-of-the-venice-ghetto>.

◆ Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion will offer a series of hybrid library event, including “The High Priest’s Garments of Splendor: An Exploration of

Biblical Text and Textile” on Thursday, February 15, at 12:30 pm; and “All Things Large and Small: The Child and the (Children’s) Story in ‘The Kerchief’ and Other Stories for Children by S.Y. Agnon” on Tuesday, April 9, at 12:30 am. For more information or to register, visit <https://huc.edu/libraries/library-events/>.

◆ The Forward will hold the virtual event “Jewish Deli and Yiddish Cooking in a TikTok World” on Tuesday, February 27, at 1 pm. For more information or to register, visit <https://forward.com/events/>.

◆ The Shalom Hartman Institute will hold two virtual programs in February: “Israel and the Threat of Jewish Fundamentalism” on Wednesday, February 21, from noon-1:15 pm (www.hartman.org.il/event/israel-and-the-threat-of-jewish-fundamentalism/?mc_cid=d9d3836267&mc_eid=96085fa8a5); and “Genocide on Trial: Law and Politics in 1948 and Today” on Wednesday, February 28, from 7:30-8:30 pm (www.hartman.org.il/event/genocide-on-trial-law-and-politics-in-1948-and-today/?mc_cid=d9d3836267&mc_eid=96085fa8a5).

◆ Ritualwell will hold the virtual course “Finding Our Place in the Stories of the Hebrew Matriarch: Sarah” on Thursdays, February 29-March 21, from noon-1:30 pm. The cost to attend is \$180. The course seek to help attendees “reclaim the stories of Sarah and the Hebrew matriarchs through poetic writing – and access the gifts of wisdom, healing, and joy that are our universal birthright.” For more information or to register, visit <https://ritualwell.org/event/finding-our-place-in-the-stories-of-the-hebrew-matriarch-sarah/2024-02-29/>.

◆ My Jewish Learning is offering the course “The Well of Dreams: Jewish Dream Wisdom Across Time” with Rabbi Jill Hammer. The cost to view the course is \$120. The class includes instructional videos, guided audio meditations, access to a private discussion group on Facebook and downloadable PDFs with source material. For more information or to register visit, <https://my-jewish-learning.teachable.com/p/the-well-of-dreams-jewish-dream-wisdom-across-time>.

◆ Jewish Together will hold the virtual program “Jewish Disability Advocacy Day” on Wednesday, February 28, from 1-2:30 pm. The program seeks to “help advance policies and empower millions of people with disabilities to lead more independent and fulfilling lives while fully and meaningfully participating in their communities.” For more information or to register, visit www.jewishtogether.org/jdad-2024.

◆ The American Jewish University will hold the virtual program “Teaching the Holocaust on Fortnite and Through Gaming Platforms” on Wednesday, March 13, at noon. Luc Bernard, a game designer, will talk about the opportunities the virtual world has to offer for Holocaust education.” For more information or to register, visit www.aju.edu/events/teaching-holocaust-fortnite-and-through-gaming-platforms.

For additional resources, see previous issues of *The Reporter* on its website, www.thereporter.org/jewish-online-resources.

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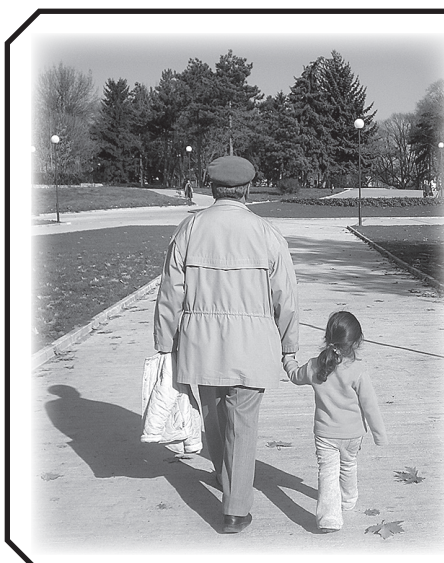
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