

THE REPORTER

Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

March 14-27, 2025
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BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

Federation to hold security training on March 27

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold the security training “Navigating Conflict: The Power of De-Escalation” led by Mark Henderson, regional security advisor, Rochester, for the Secure Community Network, on Thursday, March 27, at 6:30 pm, at the Jewish Community Center, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal. It is designed for all members of the community. To register for the program, visit www.jfgb.org.

“Navigating Conflict: The Power of De-Escalation” offers a 60- to 75-minute foundational overview of de-escalation techniques. Its goal is to provide a basic understanding of, and introduction to, the skills and techniques to defuse or reduce tension, hostility and/or conflict in situations. It will focus on helping attendees understand the definition of de-escalation, common escalation triggers and the de-escalation process, while also

offering information on communication skills and how to handle aggression. It will show how to identify the initial indicators of escalating behaviors, both verbal and non-verbal; demonstrate de-escalation best practices using the “Behavioral Change Stairwell”; offer techniques for managing personal emotions in challenging situations to maintain composure and clear thinking; and how cultural and mental health sensitivity can

help de-escalation efforts.

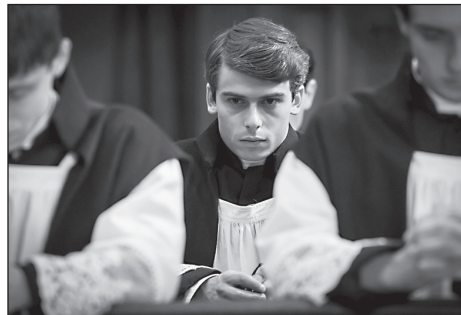
“I am so grateful the Binghamton Jewish community has access to a security professional with expansive knowledge,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. “Mark Henderson is an insightful speaker. The information he brings to our community is practical, relevant and could save your life or the life of someone you know. Please join us for this important training.”

Jewish Film Fest continues in March-April

In-person showing of “Kidnapped” on March 30

By Reporter staff

The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest will hold an in-person showing of the film “Kidnapped: The Abduction of Edgardo Mortara” on Sunday, March 30, at 2 pm, at the Jewish Community Center, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal. There is a suggested donation of \$5. The film is in Italian with subtitles. Dora Polachek, Ph.D., associate professor of romance languages and literatures at Binghamton University, will moderate a discussion of the film. Registration for the film and discussion is suggested, but walk-ins are welcome; visit www.jfgb.org/film-fest to register. The film fest is co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton and the Ithaca Area United Jewish Community.



Leonardo Maltese in “Kidnapped.” (Photo courtesy of Cohen Media Group)

“Kidnapped” is based on the real-life story of Edgardo Mortara, a young Jewish boy living in Bologna, Italy, who in 1858, See “March” on page 7

Virtual showing in April of “Troll Storm”

By Reporter staff

The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest will hold a virtual showing of the documentary “Troll Storm.” Richard (Dick) Lewis, an attorney at Hinman, Howard and Kattell, and immediate past president of the New York State Bar Association, will moderate a Zoom discussion. People can register for links to the film and discussion at www.jfgb.org/film-fest. The film will be available for viewing from Thursday-Sunday, April 3-6. The discussion will be held on Sunday, April 6, at 7 pm. The deadline to register for the film will be Wednesday, April 2. The film fest is co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton and the Ithaca Area United Jewish Community.

“Troll Storm” chronicles the journey of



Tanya Gersh in a scene from “Troll Storm.” (Photo courtesy Delphin Films)

a woman who transformed from a victim of cyber-hate into an advocate for justice and free speech. The documentary “captures the spirit of resilience, the power of community and the pursuit of justice in See “April” on page 7

Federation plans Yom Hashoah program on April 22

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a Yom Hashoah program on Tuesday, April 22, at 6:30 pm, at Temple Concord, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. The evening will open with a short commemorative service led by local rabbis. Then Dr. Eileen Angelini, Ph.D., a Holocaust scholar and educator, will offer a talk called “Simple Acts of Human Kindness.” During her presentation, Angelini will provide an overview of the position that France had during World War II and screen sections of the documentary “La France divisée/France Divided” that highlight simple acts of hu-

man kindness by non-Jews that resulted in some Jews surviving the Holocaust.

Registration for the program is encouraged, but not required, and can be made at www.jfgb.org or by contacting the Federation office at director@jfgb.org or 607-724-2332. For more information about the program, contact the Federation. The event is co-sponsored by Beth David Synagogue, Temple Israel and Temple Concord.

“La France divisée/France Divided” explores the events of World War II in France via oral testimony of survivors, hidden children, Righteous Gentiles and members of the French Resistance. The

interdisciplinary film was co-produced, written and directed with Barbara P. Barnett, and was supported by a Title VI Grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Angelini has spent years working and lecturing on the causes and events of the Holocaust, particularly as it relates to the occupation of France during World War II. She has made presentations at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, and also served as a faculty fellow for the Holocaust Museum Houston’s Warren Fellowship for Future Teachers. In the spring of 2024,

Angelini received a Reading and Discussion Program Grant from Humanities New York to facilitate sessions at the Jewish Federation of Central New York, Syracuse, on the topic “The Righteous Among the Nations: Understanding Rescue During the Holocaust.”

“Join us for what is certain to be a fascinating look at how simple acts of human kindness can save people’s lives,” said Shelley Hubal, Federation executive director. “I feel it’s important for the community to gather to recognize the significance of Yom Hashoah and I am grateful that the Federation can offer this type of moving and educational program.”

Spotlight

Scholar talks about her commitment to Holocaust ed.

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Dr. Eileen M. Angelini will speak at the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton’s Yom Hashoah program on Tuesday, April 22, at 6:30 pm, at Temple Concord, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. For more information, see the article on page 1.

Dr. Eileen M. Angelini is frequently asked why someone Catholic became a Holocaust scholar and educator. Her answer? “Why do I have to be Jewish to care?” In addition to her research and her

speaking engagements about the Holocaust, Angelini is the upstate regional coordinator for 3GNY. That organization serves as “an educational non-profit that brings together 3G’s – third-generation descendants of Holocaust survivors – to educate diverse communities about the perils of intolerance.”

In an e-mail interview, Angelini spoke about her work at



Eileen Angelini (Photo by Matthew Turner)

3GNY. “It is an honor and a privilege for me to serve as the upstate regional coordinator of 3GNY,” she said, noting that “3GNY’s mission of preserving the legacies and lessons of the Holocaust, educating diverse communities about the dangers of intolerance, and providing a supportive forum for the descendants of survivors is one which I wholeheartedly support and to

which I have dedicated a very significant portion of my professional career.”

Education plays a major role in her work. “I am responsible for amplifying 3GNY’s impact on students and communities in Onondaga County and across upstate New York,” she noted. “To do this, I create new and recurring speaking opportunities for our volunteer 3G speakers by building and strengthening relationships with schools, BOCES, campus Hillels, teacher networks See “Scholar” on page 4

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Game night at TC
Temple Concord will host a board game night open to the community on March 22.
.....Page 3

Talks around town
TI hosting Artist in Residence; BU Judaic Studies Dept. lecture; pre-Passover talk at BD Sisterhood.
.....Pages 3 and 5

AJC report says...
An AJC report finds a majority of U.S. Jews say fear of antisemitism has changed their behaviors.
.....Page 7

Special Sections
Book Review..... 4
Wedding and Party Planning 5
Dine Out..... 7
Classifieds 8

Opinion

“The Little Liar” and fake news

By Bill Simons

The obligation of witnessing and telling “The Truth” is heroic, painful and imperative. Lies and truth – and their consequences – invest Mitch Albom’s 2023 novel “The Little Liar” with embattled themes.

Books about the Holocaust fill library shelves. But “The Little Liar” is one of the relatively few works about the impact of World War II on Greek Jews, more specifically those from the great port city of Salonika. Spanning the years from 1936 to 1983, the 300-plus page novel finds its roots, foundational events and penultimate episode in Salonika.

The story’s three Jewish protagonists, Fanny Nahmias and brothers Sebastian and Nico Krispis, first appear in the waning days of their innocence. Sebastian and younger brother Nico both had an unspoken crush on Fanny.

Christians, Muslims and Jews lived amicably in pre-war Salonika. The venerable White Tower and the sheer robustness of Salonika nurtured optimism in the three young friends. And tightknit families, synagogues, traditions and Sabbath observance contributed to their strong Jewish identities. Lazarre, grandfather to Sebastian and Nico, took the trio to the Jewish cemetery, the largest in the world, where they practiced kindness washing tombstones of family and strangers alike.

In 1941, the Salonika idyll started to crumble for Sebastian, Nico and Fanny. The Germans seized control of the city and put it under the military command of Nazi SS officer Udo Graf, an ardent disciple of Adolf Hitler. Graf, the antagonist of the novel, is its fourth major character. First, the Nazis seized the businesses of Salonika’s Jews and then their homes. Fanny’s father was shot dead defending his apothecary. Armed soldiers prohibited Jews from entering padlocked synagogues. Then the Jews were rounded up and deported by train to the Dachau concentration camp. By the end of World War II, Salonika’s 1940 Jewish population of 50,000 had dwindled to approximately 2,000.

On the train platform, our story’s defining episode took place and the novel acquired a name. On March 15, 1943, 11-year-old Nico, blond and innocent of look, roamed up and down the train platform. He had never yet lied. As railroad cars beckoned, Nico told frightened and confused Salonika Jews that he had overheard Nazi officials talking amongst themselves and learned from their conversations that the trains were taking the Jews to a good place where families would be reunited and prosper. Nico’s words were strategic, reassuring and false, marking him forever as the little liar. Those words effectively calmed many Jews, inducing them to docilely enter railroad cars destined

for the Dachau killing machine. Graf followed the Jews, assuming command of the Dachau camp.

Several factors converged to prompt Nico’s big lie: his age and accompanying immaturity, his initial belief in the words he spoke, promises that his family would be well treated and his manipulation by Graf. The relationship between Graf and Nico was cruel, yet ambiguous, rooted in the Nazi’s recognition of the boy’s talents and strange interest in him.

Graf allowed Nico to live. The boy was not sent to Dachau. Nico came to understand that his words hastened the journey of Jews to gas chambers and crematoriums. Despite the passage of decades, Nico never forgave himself. Nor did his older brother Sebastian, 14 in 1943, ever forgive Nico for his duplicity. Formerly hailed for this transparent truthfulness, Nico was never again able to tell the truth, formulating future lies about all things, small and great.

Fanny also survived the Shoah at great cost. To save her from Dachau, Fanny, 12, was pushed through the vandalized window of a crowded cattle car as a fellow Jew commanded, “Tell the world what happened here.” At risk to her own life, Gizella, a Hungarian woman – a compassionate Gentile – hid Fanny from the Nazis, and through See “Fake” on page 8

In My Own Words

Two controversial issues

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Who can be president?

Did you ever have a response to a political announcement that made you shake your head in despair? I did recently and my reaction made me worry even more about the future of our country. What caused my dilemma was reading that Pete Buttigieg was deciding if he wanted to run for the Senate or for the presidency. I greatly admire Buttigieg and think he would be a wonderful president. So why was my first reaction that he should definitely *not* run for president? Because in a country that voted for Donald Trump for president, a country that is rolling back rights for the LGBTQ community and taking personal medical decisions out of the hands of women, I don’t think that, as a gay male, he stands a chance of being elected. That’s right: I don’t think a woman, a person of color or someone from the LGBTQ community can be elected president in the current climate. If the Democrats want to win the next presidential election, then the candidate needs to be a straight, cisgendered, white male. And that thought makes me profoundly sad.

Before you say, “Wait, we had an African American president,” let me remind you that the current backlash against minority rights began when Barack Obama was elected president. While I think Obama is a wonderful human being, I don’t think he was a great president. He was

just too nice. Sometimes a president needs to fight and fight dirty, but Obama never did that. He never even called out the racism that was clearly part of the Republican response to him. That party worked hard to prevent any legislation Obama put forth from being passed, even if it benefitted their constituents. One example is the opposition to the Affordable Care Act. That included people who falsely insisted that the act would result in death panels. (By the way, we already have death panels: they’re called insurance companies and they can refuse coverage for needed live-saving treatments, leaving people to die.)

As much as I hate to say it, we have to eliminate a number of wonderful candidates because of the bias against minorities if we want a different type of president in office in 2029. That is, if we even *have* an election. The image of Trump dressed as a king that was recently shared by the White House is even scarier than my fear that no minority will ever again be elected president. Even if the image was a joke, it was not a funny one because the potential destruction of our democracy is not a laughing matter.

Ukraine

Repeat after me: In 2022, Russia began a full-scale aggressive invasion of Ukraine. Let’s be clear, this was truly an act of unwarranted aggression. If you are going

to talk about Ukraine causing the war by not wanting to cede territory to Russia or because it wanted to join NATO, then you have a problem. A sovereign nation has the right to its own territory and the right to pick its alliances. The reasons Russia puts forward are its way of excusing its act of aggression. That excuse is not a great one if you consider the American past.

Do you know that Japan felt that it had good reason to bomb Pearl Harbor? The country was trying to stop American interference with its desire to conquer parts of Asia. After all, the British, French and other European countries had colonized a good portion of the world and Japan felt it had the right to do the same. In addition, the United States had taken control of Guam, Puerto Rico and the Philippines during the Spanish American War. The U.S. also annexed Hawaii during that war, which had been an independent territory. Japan didn’t see why anyone should prevent it from becoming an empire.

If we object to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, then we should feel the same about what is happening in Ukraine. So, please repeat the following until you stop believing the fake news being offered by our president and Vladimir Putin: In 2022, Russia began a full-scale aggressive invasion of Ukraine. That was an illegal and immoral act.

Letters

Support the Green Olive Collective

Letter to the Editor:

An article in *The Reporter* of February 28-March 13 reprinted from JNS with the headline “Adopting olive trees in Israel” caught our attention since we are monthly contributors to the Green Olive Collective, an organization that, among other things, offers solidarity work days that often include the planting of trees in the West Bank. The reprinted JNS article in *The Reporter* is, in fact, not about planting trees as such, but about My Tree in Israel, a project of an Israeli company that seeks donations for planting olive trees in Moshav Hayogev, and naming particular donated trees for individuals.

The author of the article appears to celebrate the fact that three trees that have been planted bear the names of Donald Trump, Mike Huckabee and Miriam Adelson, individuals who support an extremist expansionary po-

sition entailing expulsion of Palestinians from their land and annexation of the West Bank, in blatant violation of international law. A detail that the article fails to mention is that the *moshav* itself, which has “row upon row of pristine olive trees,” was founded in 1949 on land that a few years earlier had belonged to the Palestinian village of Khirbat Lid. Its inhabitants, according to reputable sources, were driven out by the Israeli forces during the War of Independence.

Moreover, the article quotes one of the directors of the project, praising the previous work of the JNF and points to how this new project takes the JNF project of planting trees “to a new level,” since with this project “your” tree can bear “your” name, and you can visit and see “your” tree. To find out more about the tree planting activity of the JNF and its consequences, we

suggest you watch the documentary “My Tree” (2021), which describes the Jewish filmmaker Jason Sherman’s experience when he tried to find the tree that was planted in his name in Israel years ago and, overcoming the resistance of JNF authorities, discovers that his tree stands on the remains of a Palestinian village that was destroyed in 1967.

Finally, if you are really interested in supporting farmers who have been cultivating the land around Hayogev and on the West Bank for centuries and not just for 75 years, the Green Olive Collective is a good place to start. It supports farmers who are systematically deprived of water by the Israeli authorities, whose olive trees are often uprooted and whose settlements are regularly attacked by settlers under the eyes of the IDF.

Rhonda Levine and Arieh Ullmann



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of Greater Binghamton

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

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www.thereporter.org

TI to hold Artist in Residence Weekend, March 14-16

Temple Israel will hold an Artist in Residence Weekend featuring musician Zach Mayer on Friday-Sunday, March 14-16. All four programs will be held at Temple Israel, 4737 Deerfield Place, Vestal. The entire community is invited to attend. The events are free. For more information or to register, contact Temple Israel at 607-723-7461 or office@templeisraelvestal.org, or visit the temple's website at <https://templeisraelvestal.org>.

On Friday, March 14, at 4:30 pm, there will be a Purim celebration that will include music, dancing and a *megillah* reading. Those attending are encouraged to wear costumes. A musical *kabbalat* Shabbat and light meal will follow.

On Saturday, March 15, at 10:15 am, Mayer will lead a musical *tefillah* program in the Temple Israel chapel for children and their families. The morning will culminate in

a *hakafah*, where the children will march with their parents to the main service. A *kiddush* will follow services.

On Saturday, March 15, at 7:30 pm, Shabbat will conclude with Mayer leading *Havdalah*, which will be followed by a participatory concert event cosponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton. Light refreshments will be served.

On Sunday, March 16, at 11 am, the weekend will conclude with a workshop exploring the art of harmony and the spiritual power of song. Participants will learn two melodies, a traditional *nigun* and one of Mayer's original compositions. Light refreshments will be served.

The Artist in Residence Weekend is made possible thanks to a gift from The Community Foundation for South Central New York - The David and Virginia Eisenberg Fund.

Judaic Studies Dept. to offer lecture "Addressing the Palestine Question"

The Judaic Studies Department will sponsor a lecture by Professor Geoffrey Levin of Emory University called "Addressing the Palestine Question: Binghamton Professor Don Peretz vs. the American Jewish Leadership" on Monday, March 17, at 4:30 pm, at Binghamton University in the Fine Arts Building Room 258. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Levin is the author of the recent book "Israel and American Jewish Dissent: 1948-1978" (Yale University Press, 2023) in which Professor Don Peretz, who taught at Binghamton University from 1966-92, figures prominently. In his book, Levin focuses on the American Jews who, in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, were involved in consideration of the Palestine question and who wanted the Jewish community to seriously address issues like the Palestinian refugee question, Arab minority rights in Israel, and Israel's post-1967 occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Peretz was considered one of the most prominent of these American Jews. Levin will explore the reasons for the activism of Peretz and other American Jews who were critical of Israeli policy, and the reasons why their efforts to influence the American Jewish community were met with little success.

TC to hold board game night

Temple Concord will host a community board game night on Saturday, March 22, at 6 pm. "All are welcome to attend," said organizers of the event. "Bring a favorite game to play with others or try out something new!"

A light dinner will be provided. Suggested donation is \$5 to \$10 per person, or \$20 per family to cover costs. RSVPs are requested by Wednesday, March 19.

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Shari Neuberger** on the death of her husband,

Rob Neuberger

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of

Lillian Sommer

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Mark Zapotocky** on the death of his wife and **Myrna Dubofsky** on the death of her daughter,

Deborah Zapotocky

DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
March 28-April 10	March 19
April 11-24	April 2
April 25-May 8	April 16
May 9-22	April 30

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

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Tea and Talk

Chabad of Binghamton, with co-sponsorship from the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, holds Tea and Talk programs, an hour-long gathering for local Jewish seniors who are looking for "a meaningful conversation," from 11 am-noon, in Chabad's atrium lounge.

Upcoming dates are:

- ♦ March 27
- ♦ April 9
- ♦ April 24

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

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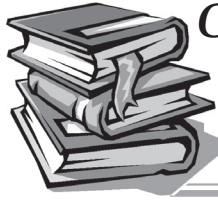
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Off the Shelf

A funeral and a riot

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Many American Jews are unaware that in 1888 a group of New York City Orthodox congregations brought Rabbi Jacob Joseph from Europe to the United States to be the first and only American chief rabbi. This attempt to establish one leader for the entire Jewish American community was not a success, as Scott D. Seligman shows in “The Chief Rabbi’s Funeral: The Untold Story of America’s Largest Antisemitic Riot” (Potomac Books/University of Nebraska Press). Seligman, a writer and historian, writes accessible and well-researched historical looks at small, but telling, moments in Jewish history (*). His latest work discusses what has been called the largest antisemitic riot in American history, something he feels is particularly relevant today with the increase in American antisemitism.

The book features a large cast of characters: Its “Dramatis Personae” is five pages long and includes members of the East Side Vigilance League, government officials, officers of the New York Police Department and rabbinical figures, to name only a few. Numerous Jewish organizations and Jewish newspapers are also listed. However, Seligman writes so well and his descriptions are so clear that readers will rarely need to consult the list, something that is a major accomplishment.

Although Joseph was not successful in uniting the various branches of Judaism or establishing *kashrut* standard throughout New York City, when he died in 1902, he was mourned as if he had been a beloved leader. An estimated 50,000 people gathered in the morning to view the funeral procession. That number increased to at least 100,000 during the funeral procession. When the procession passed the R. Hoe and Company building, the mourners were attacked by Hoe employees, something that was not unusual because they often threw objects from the building at any Jew passing by. However, this time, the Jewish response was different: a group of Jews struck back at their attackers. The chaos became worse when members of the New York Police Department arrived and began attacking Jews, brutally beating many and arresting others.

To help readers truly understand why the riot was significant and how the response to it changed the Jewish

community, readers must first learn about New York politics, including immigrants’ relationship to the police and the attempts being made at that time to weed out corrupt politicians and policemen. Seligman notes political corruption was rampant in New York City at that time, with positions – including those in the police department – being bought and sold. Rising through the police ranks was not based on ability or worth, but on cold, hard cash. However, the police used their position in the community to turn a blind eye to many criminal enterprises by demanding cash payments from those breaking the law. Those who refused to pay were arrested and jailed, often after standing before equally corrupt judges. While the police disliked most immigrants, they were especially hard on Jews whom they saw as troublemakers – particularly those who were involved in unions. During this time, the police were always on the side of the factory owners, who would use them as a personal strikebreaker force.

But the relationship between the Jewish community and the police was a complex one because, as Seligman notes, the Jewish population knew they needed the police to keep order in the city and for protection from crime or other attacks. However, the antagonism between the groups was clear. Seligman writes, “There was no denying that many in the heavily Irish police – by 1902, Irish cops made up upward of 50 percent of the nearly eight thousand men on the force compared to only 140 Jews – nurtured a particular dislike to Russian and Eastern European immigrant Jews. Or that they often treated them harshly.” That means the police assumed that the Jews were the troublemakers during the riot and refused to believe their testimony, accepting the lie told by Hoe employees that they had not started the fight.

The reason Seligman considers the riot so important is the way the Jewish community handled the attack. Not only did Jews fight back physically, but afterward they worked through the political system to rid the city of police corruption. It’s impossible to do justice to Seligman’s descriptions of the depth of corruption or the actions of those who opposed cleaning up New York City politics, a difficult thing to do because many people benefitted from the system. Votes were

basically bought and sold, with politicians offering help to those in the immigrant communities who voted for them. The riot had a long-lasting effect on the Jewish community, as it was the beginning of the formation of Jewish communal organizations that worked against discrimination. In the end, the riot mobilized the Jewish community to protect itself in ways that had never been done before.

“The Chief Rabbi’s Funeral” is easy to read even for those with no knowledge of the era in which it takes place; those already familiar with the period will find Seligman’s research offers new and intriguing material. He manages to tell the personal stories of those involved, while still offering a larger historical and sociological look at this little-known part of American history. The author also hopes that his work will serve as a reminder of the continuing need to fight racism and antisemitism, noting that “in 1902, [the New York Jewish community] served notice on all who would attack them that what they could expect in return was to be doggedly pursued and brought to justice.”

*Seligman’s previous works include “The Great Kosher Meat War of 1902: Immigrant Housewives and the Riots That Shook New York City” (see The Reporter review at www.thereportergroup.org/book-reviews/off-the-shelf-women-and-the-war-over-kosher-meat-prices?entry=375596) and “Murder in Manchuria: The True Story of a Jewish Virtuoso, Russian Fascists, a French Diplomat, and a Japanese Spy in Occupied China” (see The Reporter review at www.thereportergroup.org/book-reviews/off-the-shelf-jews-in-manchuria?entry=462580).

Scholar . . . Continued from page 1

and other outlets across the region. Additionally, I recruit and engage Jewish 3Gs in upstate communities to develop them as local leaders in Holocaust education. Through these and related tasks, and in coordination with 3GNY staff and volunteers, I enhance the field of Holocaust education in upstate New York and strengthen the community connections among descendants of survivors in the region.”

At the Yom Hashoah event, Angelini will speak about her personal research, the result of which is the documentary “La France divisée/France Divided.” (Selections from the film will be shown during the event.) Her area of expertise is the German occupation of France during World War II. “France was in the unique position of being defeated by the Germans, of being occupied by the Germans, of having collaborated with the Germans and having declared victory over the Germans (France was one of the four Allies with the United States, Great Britain and the former Soviet Union),” she said. “France was a very divided country and was for a long time after the war. This split national identity – the Vichy government of Marshal [Philippe] Pétain on one side, the Free French Forces of General [Charles] de Gaulle on the other – makes the problems of cultural memory relating to the occupation period especially acute. In fact, it was not until 1972 when Robert Paxton, an American and professor of history at Columbia University, wrote ‘Vichy France’ that a whole new period in French historiography began about the occupation years, as well as in the French popular perceptions about this period. ‘La France divisée/France Divided’ explores the occupation period via oral testimony of survivors, hidden children, members of the French Resistance, Righteous Gentiles and historians, allowing us all to have first-hand access to this painful period.”

Angelini added, “Although my degrees are in French studies, my passion is sharing the stories of survivors of the Holocaust. Toward the end of my Ph.D. candidature, which focused on 20th-century French literature, I recognized that there was a significant difference in the style of my authors before and after [World War II]. I, thus, determined that I would explore why this difference was so prominent.”

It was that work that led Angelini in an unexpected direction. “This exploration led me down the path of interviewing Holocaust survivors, hidden children, members of the French Resistance and Righteous Gentiles,” she said. “I then used these interviews with my students as way of instilling in them this important part of French history. I encouraged students to write letters in French to those who shared their testimonies with me, most especially the survivors. The results were extraordinary as the students worked hard to write empathetic letters and were deeply moved by the letters they received back. The survivors themselves were incredibly grateful that young Americans were interested in what had happened to them and appreciated my efforts to connect them with an interested American audience.”

Those reactions are part of the reason she continued her work in Holocaust education. “I made a promise to all those survivors who shared their oral testimonies with me that they would not be forgotten,” Angelini said. “As my teaching career progressed, I drew upon my background in researching Jewish-Christian relations and documentary filmmaking to teach the Holocaust from an interdisciplinary perspective, helping students understand that the Holocaust is not simply a Jewish question, but one that involves us all, regardless of religion, ethnicity, gender or nationality.”



On the Jewish food scene

The Shabbat family dinner

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

I periodically get obsessed with a book, TV or movie. My latest obsession is the Sonic the Hedgehog films. I have only seen Sonic 1 and Sonic 2, but there is something about that cute, wise-cracking blue guy that just tickles my fancy. (Please note: I have never played and have no plans to play the video games the films are based on.) I’ve also become a fan of Knuckles the Echidna (the red character), who is a warrior without a sense of humor. By now, though, you are probably wondering what this has to do with Shabbat dinner.

Knuckles was given his own TV mini-series, which also features Wade Whipple, who is a minor character in the films. I’ll spare you the plot of the first two episodes, but the third finds Knuckles and Wade hiding out in Wade’s mother’s home. To my surprise, it turns out that Wade is Jewish and it’s almost time for Shabbat dinner. Wade’s sister is also there and the family dynamic is pretty awful: Wade and his sister fight (she actually stabs him with a fork) and both stalk off to their rooms.

But Knuckles remains at the table with Wade’s mother, who pronounces his name as if it were spelled with the

guttural Hebrew letter *chet*. (I only know this because it’s mentioned in the dialogue. I still don’t hear well enough to tell the difference between the “ck” English sound and the “ch” Hebrew used in the show.) Knuckles loves the Shabbat table filled with food, which he calls a feast worthy of a great warrior. Although at first he asks for his beloved grapes (which he is told are in the wine), Knuckles enjoys the rest of the meal. He loves the tiny hats (Wade is wearing a yarmulka), thinks the matzah ball soup tastes wonderful and even though he says the gefilte fish have “the constancy of a wet sponge,” he can’t stop eating them.

At one point in the evening, Knuckles and Wade’s mother, who knows Krav Maga, fight a group of bounty hunters, who are trying to capture Wade. As the fight begins, Wade’s mother tells Knuckles to protect the Shabbat candles. They successfully defeat the bounty hunters, although the house is a mess with at least one big hole in an outer wall. The episode ends with this stereotypical version of a Jewish mother noting how wonderful it is to have her children at home with her. Now that’s what I call a successful Shabbat dinner.



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Jewish Family Service would like to thank everyone for their generous donations to help those who lost their homes and possessions due to the fires in Los Angeles. Judaism asks us to provide for those in need no matter where they live. This community has once again stepped up to fulfill this principle.

BD Sisterhood to hold pre-Passover workshop

Beth David Sisterhood will hold its annual Community Passover Workshop on Wednesday, March 26, at 7 pm, in the Beth David social hall. The workshop is open to everyone in the Jewish community, men and women, whether or not they are affiliated with Beth David Sisterhood or Beth David Synagogue.

Rabbi Zev Silber, the spiritual leader of Beth David Synagogue, will update attendees on changes to products that were previously acceptable for Passover use, and alert them to new kosher for Passover items available this year. Copies of the OU Passover issue should be available for distribution.

Silber's primary topic for the evening will be how to deal with the many problems resulting from the fact that the first seder this year occurs Saturday night after Shabbat. He will discuss: When and how do we prepare? How do we make *Hamotzi* on Shabbat and still stay *pesadick*? How are the other Passover *mitzvot* affected?

Silber will also attempt to answer these and other questions anyone may have concerning Passover and Passover preparations this year. It would be appreciated if questions that might require research be submitted to him in advance at rabbisilber@stny.rr.com.

Attendees will also have an opportunity to share favorite Passover recipes, tips, shortcuts and other useful information that may make cleaning or cooking easier this year.

"Remember, we collect food for CHOW at every meeting, so start cleaning out your pantry early and bring your *chametzdik* donations to our meeting," said organizers of the workshop.

BD Sisterhood made hamantashen



On March 2, members and supporters of Beth David Sisterhood baked hamantashen for the Beth David Purim seudah. Clockwise from left: Elie Silber, Julie Piaker, Gina Santiago and Judy Silber mixed the ingredients for the hamantashen dough. (Photos by Stacey Silber)



Many helpers gathered around the table making hamantashen. Clockwise from left: Julie Piaker, Josh Witter, Judy Silber, Charlie Manasse, Elie Silber, Gina Santiago, Cathy Velenchik and Chaim Joy.



Cathy Velenchik placed a baking pan of hamantashen in the oven.

Wedding Planning Guide

Weddings



Bill Chionis and Debra Orringer
(Photo by Raphael's Matta Photography)



Samantha Goldman and Juan Frausto Jr.
April 21, 2024
(Photo by Anita Friedrich)

Mazel Tov to our Married Couples!

Engagements



Lindsey Schapiro and Daniel Cohen
(Photo by Andre Bottonstock)

Mazel Tov to our Engaged Couple!

Your wedding checklist

6-12 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING

- Determine budget
- Visit rabbi (ceremony variations)
- Set day, time and location of ceremony, rehearsal and reception
- Select a caterer
- Choose wedding photographer and/or videographer
- Draw up guest list
- Obtain floral/rental/music estimates
- Invite attendants
- Discuss honeymoon and new home
- Select gown and headpiece
- Select music for ceremony and reception
- Register with bridal gift registry

4 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING

- Order invitations and personal stationery
- Plan reception
- Plan ceremony and reception music
- Choose florist
- Mothers choose gowns
- Men choose attire
- Make honeymoon reservations
- Begin trousseau shopping
- Arrange motel accommodations for out-of-town guests

3 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING

- Make an appointment with gynecologist to discuss birth control, etc.

2 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING

- Order wedding cake
- Select attendants' gifts
- Plan to keep gift record
- Acknowledge gifts as they arrive
- Finish invitations - mail them 6 weeks before wedding
- Plan rehearsal dinner
- Check on marriage license
- Get rings engraved
- Plan luncheon for bridesmaids
- Select gift for groom
- Go over wedding ceremony details
- Gown fitting
- Bridal portrait sitting
- Arrange for limousine service
- Make hairdresser appointment

1 MONTH BEFORE WEDDING

- Make up reception seating charts
- Check wedding party apparel
- Final gown fitting

- Get blood tests for marriage license

2 WEEKS BEFORE WEDDING

- Make final check on bridal-party clothes and catering
- Arrange name changes/get marriage license
- Arrange transportation from reception to airport or wherever you are leaving from for the honeymoon

1 WEEK BEFORE WEDDING

- Wrap attendants' gifts
- Give final count to caterer
- Confirm music arrangements and check selections
- Arrange to move belongings to new home
- Check that your hairstyle complements your headpiece
- Final instructions to photographer and videographer
- Final instructions to ushers for special seating
- Give clergy fee to best man in sealed envelope (he will deliver it)
- Begin packing for honeymoon

1 DAY BEFORE WEDDING

- Give ushers guest list
- Do something relaxing and pamper yourself!



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Weekly Parasha

Ki Tisa, Exodus 30:11-34:35

What is work?

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

How do you define work? Is it a job done only for pay? Do volunteer activities count? Should cooking or gardening – which some consider pleasurable tasks, but which others feel are hard labor – be called work? Defining the term is very important from a religious point of view since in this week's *parasha*, God declares that the Israelites must not work on the Sabbath: "Thus you shall keep my Sabbaths, for it is a sign between Me and between you throughout your generations... and you will guard the Sabbath because it is holy to you." (Exodus 31:13-14) The section goes on to explain how anyone who works on Shabbat will be put to death.

While it is quite clear that one is not supposed to work on the Sabbath, a problem arises. Except for a few examples (lighting a fire and gathering food), the Bible never specifies exactly what it means by work. According to Mishnah Shabbat 7:2, there are 39 forbidden labors (for example, sowing seeds, binding sheaves, baking, tying a knot, sewing, weaving, etc.). However, this listing is said to be a mountain hanging by a thread since the forbidden labors were determined through rabbinic exegesis. How did the rabbis decide what was forbidden? The verses from Exodus quoted above follow instructions for building the *Mishkan*, the Tabernacle. Because nothing in the Torah is

considered superfluous, the ancient rabbis believed that the verses about Shabbat were placed here to inform us that the activities needed to build the *Mishkan* are forbidden on Shabbat.

However, the rabbis did not confine their definition of work just to these verses in Exodus. For example, farming labor and most food preparation activities are forbidden. There are also exceptions to their decrees, which are rarely noted: Labors forbidden to laymen could be done by the priestly class if they were necessary for the performance of Shabbat sacrifices. However, of more interest to the See "Work" 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.

There will be an Artist-in-Residence Weekend with musician Zach Mayer on Friday-Sunday, March 14-16. For more information, see the article on page 3.

On Saturday, March 15, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Exodus 30:11-34:35 and the haftarah is I Kings 18:1-39. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 8 pm.

There will be a Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday, March 18, at 7 pm.

There will be a Ritual Committee meeting on Wednesday, March 19, at 10 am.

On Saturday, March 22, Shacharit services will be held at 9:45 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Exodus 35:1-38:20 and the haftarah is Ezekiel 36:16-38. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 8:15 pm.

Office hours on Monday, March 24, will be from 2-4 pm.

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
 Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
 Phone: 607-756-7181
 President: Leo Searfoss
 Cemetery Committee: 315-696-5744
 Website: templebrithsholomcortland.org
 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/>

Service leaders: Lay leadership
 Shabbat services: Services are usually on the third Friday of the month and led by a variety of leaders. Check the Facebook page or weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.
 Religious School: Students are educated on an individual basis.

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

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

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
 Rabbi: Caleb Brommer
 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: president@tbeithaca.org, secretary@tbeithaca.org
 Website: www.tbeithaca.org

Presidents: Melanie Kalman and Alexis Siemon
 Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman
 Director of Education: Calle Schueler
 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/HappeningAtTBE.

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.

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.: Call ahead, text or e-mail to confirm dates.

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.

Congregation Tikun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
 Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY
 Phone: 607-256-1471
 Website: www.tikkunvor.org, E-mail: info@tikkunvor.org
 Presidents: Martha Armstrong and Mitch Grossman, presidents_22@tikkunvor.org
 Education Director/Admin. 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.

Friday, March 14, light candles before..... 6:51 pm
 Shabbat ends Saturday, March 15 7:52 pm
 Friday, March 21, light candles before..... 6:59 pm
 Shabbat ends Saturday, March 22 8 pm
 Friday, March 28, light candles before..... 7:07 pm
 Shabbat ends Saturday, March 29 8:08 pm
 Friday, April 4, light candles before..... 7:14 pm
 Shabbat ends Saturday, April 5 8:16 pm

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
 Rabbi: Leah Moser
 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.
 Shabbat services: Zoom link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86996998146?pwd=RIVMTHFQYVNVNGFHdmJLVUcvQ3JNQ009>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330; dial-in number 646-931-3860; and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord.
 Torah study: Zoom link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87897900994?pwd=bOMvwxDuovoaBlnB4aVfHoTlSyamj.1>, meeting ID: 878 9790 0994 and passcode: 743506; and dial-in number 646-931-3860.
 Wednesday night adult education: Zoom link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87020925321?wd=pBwCRpK45u4cOyhEbx0LGvxCcOCKxA.1>, meeting ID 870 2092 5321 and passcode 778310.

Some services and programs are online only.
 Friday, March 14: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service in person, on Zoom or on Facebook.

Saturday, March 15: At 9 am, Shabbat school Purim program; and at 9:15 am, Torah study in person and on Zoom.

Sunday, March 16: At 2 pm, Sisterhood's Chair Yoga Class. The 30-minute class will be taught by Jill Lukach, who teaches Pilates and Silver Sneakers classes at the JCC. To sign up for the class, contact Deb Daniels at 607-743-1427.

Wednesday, March 19: At 6 pm, "Adult Education: Jewish Mysticism" in person and on Zoom.

Friday, March 21: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat services in person, on Zoom or on Facebook.

Saturday, March 22: At 9 am, Shabbat school; and at 9:15 am, Torah study in person and on Zoom. At 6 pm, Board Game Night and light dinner for all ages. RSVP the temple office at templeconcordaa@gmail.com by Wednesday, March 19, so enough food can be offered. For more information, see the article on page 3.

Tuesday, March 25: At 6 pm, Social Action Committee will meet. For details, contact the temple office.

Wednesday, March 26: At 6 pm, "Adult Education: Jewish Mysticism" in person and on Zoom.

Sunday, April 6: From 10 am-2 pm, rummage sale in the synagogue basement. Shoppers should use the Oak Street entrance.

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.

Majority of American Jews say fear of antisemitism has changed behaviors, AJC report finds

By Vita Fellig

(JNS) – A majority of American Jews report changing their behavior out of fear of antisemitism, according to an annual American Jewish Committee report documenting antisemitism in America published on February 12. Some 56 percent of American Jews say they have avoided certain behaviors or activities because of fears of antisemitism, rising from a reported 46 percent in 2023, according to its “The State of Antisemitism in America 2024.”

It is the first analysis of the impacts of antisemitism on American Jews and U.S. adults during the full year following the Hamas-led terrorist attack in southern Israel on October 7, 2023.

A total of 40 percent say they have avoided publicly wearing or displaying items that might identify them as a Jew – up from 26 percent in 2023. Some 37 percent say they have

avoided posting content online that would identify them as a Jew or reveal their views on Jewish issues, compared with 30 percent in 2023. Another 31 percent say they have avoided certain places, events or situations out of concern for their safety or comfort as a Jewish person – up from 26 percent in 2023.

Ted Deutch, CEO of the AJC, told JNS that the survey data is a crucial tool in combating Jew-hatred. “This data serves as a foundation for setting policy priorities and ensuring that leaders across sectors fully grasp the severity of the problem,” he said. “We take it and share it with leaders across the country. We will share it with the Trump administration, including members of Congress, and the bipartisan Task Force to Combat Antisemitism in the House and Senate, which plays a critical role in addressing this issue.”

According to the report, the vast majority (90 percent) of American Jews say antisem-

itism has increased either a lot (61 percent) or somewhat (29 percent) since October 7, and one-third (33 percent) of American Jews say they have been the personal target of antisemitism – in person or virtually – at least once in the last year.

The annual survey also includes a comparative component, measuring the general public’s views on antisemitism in the United States with those of the Jewish community. According to the report, 93 percent of See AJC” on page 8

Jewish Community Center

JCC Friendship Club

The Jewish Community Center Friendship Club met on February 18. We did not meet at the JCC, but went out for lunch at the Lost Dog Cafe in Binghamton. A good time was had by all.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 19. It will not be held at the JCC. We will meet at Castle Gardens nursing facility in Vestal and

participate in a Purim party. The story and the customs of the holiday will be told. Graggers and hamentashen will be there at 2:30 pm.

Come join us on Wednesday, April 16, at the JCC, at 1:30 pm, and reminisce about past Passovers.

Sylvia Diamond
President

April Continued from page 1

the face of adversity.” It tells the story of the antisemitic attacks that began against Whitefish, MT, resident Tanya Gersh after the 2016 election of Donald Trump. As the far-right extremism harassment continued and intensified, Gersh felt overwhelmed and threatened. In an attempt to regain her life, she filed a lawsuit against the perpetrators. The documentary tells of her fight.

“Troll Storm” won the NY WIFT Award for Excellence in Documentary for Direct-

ing at the 25th Woodstock Film Festival. The Missoulian said, “‘Troll Storm’ dives deep into this harrowing story and puts the rise of antisemitism in the U.S. into historical context.”

“This film tells the story of one woman who fought back against hate,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. “It is both alarming and inspirational. I hope everyone will join us as we explore this important documentary.”

March Continued from page 1

after being secretly baptized, was forcibly taken from his family to be raised as a Christian. His parents’ struggle to free their son became part of a larger political battle that pitted the papacy against forces of democracy and Italian unification.

On “Fresh Air,” John Powers said, “What gives the movie its timely resonance is not merely its depiction of antisemitism but what it shows about the dangerous politics of religious belief. Although reli-

gion officially deals in timeless universal truths, ‘Kidnapped’ reminds us that these timeless universals are always bound up with historical questions of power. And where there’s power, there will be abuse.” *The Wall Street Journal* called the film “a sensitive and beautifully realized drama.” “Kidnapped” has received 19 awards and 16 nominations. They include awards for best film, best screenplay, best actor, best director, best actress and best supporting actor.

Work Continued from page 6

ancient rabbis was the discussion of how much labor was needed for an activity to be called work. Although writing is forbidden on Shabbat, the rabbis argued about whether one or two letters must be written before the laws of Shabbat are broken. How many threads does one have to weave before that constitutes work? Is all gardening forbidden or is it okay to pull just one weed?

To prevent people from working on Shabbat, the rabbis created their own category, known as *muksah*, of objects one is forbidden to touch on the seventh day. My favorite example of this is the pen. While it is not *biblically* forbidden to pick up a writing instrument on Shabbat, it is *rabbinically* forbidden. Why? Because if

you can’t pick up a pen, then you can’t accidentally start doodling and find you’ve written two letters. This idea is known as “making a fence around the Torah,” with the “fence” giving one an extra layer of protection to help prevent the breaking of a rule.

For me, however, the most important part of these laws is contained in a section of verse 13, when God declares that these rules are being given so that “you will know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you.” The commandment to rest on the seventh day allows us to pause in our daily lives and appreciate the beauty of God’s creation. By sanctifying the seventh day, we, too, become holy.

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Israeli hiker, 12, finds 3,500-year-old Egyptian amulet

By JNS staff

(JNS) – A young girl discovered a 3,500-year-old Egyptian amulet during a family trip near an archaeological site in Hod Hasharon, a city northeast of Tel Aviv.

Dafna Filshteiner, 12, was hiking below the ancient site of Tel Qana when she discovered a beetle-like stone. “I was looking down at the ground to find porcupine needles and smooth pebbles,” she said, when she found the curious-looking stone. She showed to her mother, who said it was nothing.

“But then I saw a decoration and stubbornly insisted it was more than that, so we searched on the internet. There, we identified more photos of stones similar to what we had found. We realized that it was something special and immediately called the Antiquities Authority,” Filshteiner said. She and her family were awarded a certificate of excellence for good citizenship.

The find, examined by Yitzhak Paz, a Bronze Age expert at the Israel Antiquities Authority, dates from the New Kingdom period in Egypt, between the 16th and 11th centuries B.C.E. Two scorpions appear on it, standing head to tail. “The scorpion symbol represented the Egyptian goddess Serket, who was considered responsible, among other things, for protecting pregnant mothers,” Paz said.

Another decoration on the amulet is the nefer symbol, which in Egyptian means “good” or “chosen.” There is also another symbol that looks like a royal staff, Paz noted.

The scarab is an amulet designed in the shape of a dung beetle. This beetle, considered sacred by ancient Egyptians,

was a symbol of new life because it would create a dung ball and lay its eggs in it from which new life hatched. The Egyptian name derives from the verb “to form,” or “to be created,” as the Egyptians saw the scarab as symbolizing the embodiment of the divine creator.

“The scarab is indeed a distinct Egyptian characteristic, but their wide distribution also reached far beyond Egypt’s borders. It may have been dropped by an important and authoritative figure passing through the area, or it may have been deliberately buried,” said Paz.

The scarab amulets found in Israel – sometimes used as a seal – are evidence of Egyptian rule and cultural influence in the

region more than 3,000 years ago.

Tel Qana, which stands near the spot where the scarab was found, is considered an archaeological site of historic importance. “This find is both exciting and significant. The scarab and its unique pictorial features, along with other finds discovered at Tel Qana with similar motifs, provide new insights into the nature of the Egyptian influence in the region in general, and the Yarkon area in particular,” said Amit Dagan, from Bar-Ilan University’s Martin (Szusz) Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology, and Ayelet Dayan from the Israel Antiquities Authority, who are excavating at the site.

The discovery will be presented to the public in Jerusalem, at the Jay and Jeanie



The amulet, held by Dafna Filshteiner. (Photo by Emil Aladjem/Israel Antiquities Authority)

Schottenstein National Campus for the Archaeology of Israel.

AJC.

American Jews consider antisemitism in the country to be a problem, compared with 72 percent of the general public.

Deutch told JNS that while a high percentage of the general public recognizes hatred against Jews right now, its continued persistence indicates that not enough is being done to confront and battle the scourge. “We need leaders across society – business leaders, technology leaders, government leaders and education leaders across the country – to make it clear that just as there would be zero tolerance for any other form of hatred directed at a group because of who they are, the same must be true for antisemitism,” he said. “That is the most important message.”

He continued, pointing out that “we’re having this conversation just a few days after the Super Bowl, where someone who was once, by any measure, a cultural icon, Kanye West, used the event to promote his website selling T-shirts with swastikas. Everyone should be outraged by that. Everyone should demand accountability and ensure that this is never viewed as acceptable. Instead, we’re seeing articles suggesting that while it was a problem, there were

other issues that day as well.”

According to the report, 81 percent of American Jews say caring about Israel is very (51 percent) or somewhat (30 percent) important to what being Jewish means to them. Adults also recognize and understand the connection between Jewish identity and Israel, with 85 percent saying that the statement “Israel has no right to exist” is antisemitic. This is in line with American Jews, with 85 percent saying the same.

Deutch told JNS that the new report might finally counter claims that anti-Zionism is distinct from antisemitism. “It is critical to the conversation about what has transpired since October 7, is that we acknowledge that for over 80 percent of American Jews, Israel is a central part of their Jewish identity,” he said. “So when people argue that calling for the destruction of the only Jewish state is not antisemitic, or when they protest in front of Jewish businesses in response to events in Gaza, or shout at Jews in the streets that Israel has no right to exist, we no longer have to

Continued from page 7

guess whether that is antisemitism – it is.

“We have seen protesters marching in support of terrorists who exist to slaughter Jews,” he said. “Now we also understand that these attacks on Israel resonate deeply with the Jewish community here. That is why it is so important to view all of this together and put an end to the idea that calling for the destruction of Israel – the one Jewish state – is somehow not antisemitic.”

Deutch told JNS that the survey data also suggests that Jewish Americans have become more affiliated with Jewish institutions since the October 7 attacks. “Since October 7, we have seen this dramatic increase in the number of people in the Jewish community who have chosen to respond to this rise in antisemitism by standing up and declaring to their neighbors, their co-workers and the world that they are proud Jews, who will continue to live proudly as Jews in America, with their Jewish stars and their hostage tags and yellow ribbons – and all of the ways that they can show that they’re not going to let the antisemites win,” he said.

Fake.

bribes, a Jewish actress also prevented the girl’s capture.

At war’s end, Fanny returned to a devastated Salonika, encountering an equally traumatized Sebastian who lost most of his family at Dachau and performed wretched tasks at the camp. Fanny, 16, and Sebastian, 18, married and a baby daughter soon joined them, a course dictated not by love, but by the need to confirm their survival. Their marriage failed. An obsessed Sebastian joined an individual, resembling Simon Wiesenthal, in hunting down escaped Nazis.

All of this was recorded by “The Little Liar’s” fifth and final major character, The Truth, a fallen angel, who acts as the novel’s narrator. Realism is the dominant tone of this well-researched historical novel, but The Truth interjects asides, commentary and Jewish parables at discrete intervals.

Handsome, charismatic and tortured, Nico, an antagonist to his own identity, assumed a variety of names and migrated from job to job in the postwar world. Moving to America, he emerged as a successful and very wealthy film producer. A compulsive liar and quasi recluse, Nico avoided deep friendship and meaningful romance, not even with Fanny who came to serve as his private projectionist. Yet, he covertly visited Jewish cemeteries to clean gravestones. And on March 15 every year, Nico would anonymously oversee the delivery of large amounts of money to Holocaust survivors

Continued from page 2

and their families, and to the brave and righteous Gentiles who saved Jewish lives during the Holocaust.

Due in fair measure to Sebastian’s advocacy, a great march was held in Salonika on March 15, 1983, to mark the 40th anniversary of the first train to depart the city for Dachau. During the pre-march oratory, Nico dramatically co-opted the sound system to announce his presence and apologize for his Judas-goat lies. Graf, still dreaming of restoring the Third Reich and outraged that his achievement in eliminating so many Jewish vermin was not honored, fired shots aimed at Sebastian, whom he feared as a relentless Nazi hunter. Nico shielded Sebastian, taking the lethal fire himself. As Nico died in the arms of Sebastian and Fanny, he received a brother’s forgiveness and confirmation that he was Fanny’s true love. Subsequently, Fanny would fatally poison Graf. In the end, readers learned that Fanny was The Truth, tasked long ago to “Tell the world what happened here.”

“The Little Liar” is a cautionary tale for today. Lies fueled the Nazi ascension and consolidation of power. Castigating inconvenient truths as fake news, aspiring absolutists shout that the 2020 election was “stolen”; that the January 6, 2021, insurrection was a “tourist visit”; and that Ukraine started the war with Russia. History demands that we “tell the world what happened here.”

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