

THE REPORTER

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Federation to hold Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration at Temple Israel on April 23

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a Yom Ha'atzmaut (Independence Day) celebration celebrating Israel's 75th anniversary on Sunday, April 23, at 11:30 am, at Temple Israel, 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal. The event is open to all ages. Admission is free due to a grant from the Rozen Foundation. Reg-

istration is required and can be made at www.jfgeb.org or by calling the Federation office at 724-2332. Donations will be accepted.

The event will include a virtual live tour of Jerusalem's Old City, Israeli dancing led by the Roberson Interna-



tional Folk Dancers and a kosher "Happy birthday Israel" cake.

"We hope the community will come out and celebrate Israel

at 75," said Shelley Hubal, Federation executive director. "The goal is to bring the Jewish community together, young

and old, for a joyous celebration. We also want to thank Temple Israel for hosting the event."

Hubal added, "Israel is going through some growing pains right now, but one thing most Jews can agree on is that it is always in our hearts. For this event, we will put politics aside and simply say 'cheers' to 75 years!"

CJS spring series to highlight "Jews and Ukraine: History and the Current Conflict"

The College of Jewish Studies spring 2023 Lecture Series will highlight the topic "Jews and Ukraine: History and the Current Conflict." The series will feature a Zoom presentation on Thursday, April 26, at 7:30 pm, by Marci Shore; an in-person talk at the Jewish Community Center by Binghamton University's Gina Glasman on Thursday, May 4, at 7:30 pm, and a Zoom presentation on Thursday, May 11, at 7 pm, by Lord Maurice Glasman, member



Gina Glasman (Photo by Jonathan Cohen, BU photographer)



Lord Maurice Glasman (Photo by Antonio Olmos, The Observer)



Marci Shore (Photo by Rostyslav Kostenko)

Judaic Studies homepage. You can also contact Jon Karp to register via e-mail at jkarp@binghamton.edu. There will be a modest admission charge for the in-person talk.

Shore will speak on "The War in Ukraine - What It Means for Jewish History." "A hundred years after Scholem Aleichem and Isaac Babel wrote of timid Jewish tailors and emasculated yeshiva boys, and Bruno Schulz painted hunched Jewish

men, sometimes crawling, shunned by coldly enticing women, Jews are making the pilgrimage from the Pale of Settlement to Jerusalem in reverse," said organizers of the event. "Israeli Defense Force veterans are training Ukrainian soldiers. Chasids are wearing *vyshyvankas* (embroidered shirts) under their *tefillin*. And as Europe hovers on the edge of the third world war, a Russian-speaking Jewish comedian accused of being a Ukrainian Nazi has stepped into the role of Winston Churchill. What does this war - which has brought a decisive end to a post-communist narrative arc - mean for Jewish history?"

Shore is associate professor of history at Yale University and a regular visiting See "CJS" on page 5

of the British House of Lords, who has recently returned from a visit to war-torn Ukraine. There is a charge of \$8 for the in-person talk, except for students for whom

there is no charge. Registration for one or all lectures is available through the CJS Facebook page, the homepage of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton and the

TI to hold Chevra Kadisha training on April 30

Temple Israel will hold a Chevra Kadisha training on Sunday, April 30, from 1:30-5 pm. The non-profit organization Kavod v'Nichum (which means honor and comfort in Hebrew) will do *taharah* and *shemirah* training. Registration is required

and can be made by calling Temple Israel at 723-7461.

Under the leadership of Sarit Wishevski, the group will teach and train attendees about *taharah*, the ritual physical and spiritual preparation of the deceased for burial.

Training will include hands-on practice and participants will gain understanding of both *taharah* and *shemirah* (guarding the deceased before burial).

Kavod V'Nahum was founded 2000 and its mission is to providing end-of-life education,

support and training in the Jewish tradition.

"If you are curious to learn more about the ritual of *taharah* and what it means to be part of a Chevra Kadisha - Sacred Community join us for this program," said organizers.

JLI to offer "Jewpernatural" beginning in May

Registration is now being accepted for the all new JLI course titled "Jewpernatural: Signs, Spirits and Superstitions in Jewish Belief," which will begin on Monday, May 1. The four-week course will be offered in person at the Chabad Center, as well as virtually. The cost for the course, which will meet on four consecutive Mondays,

is \$79 per person or \$159 for a couple. A second class section, which would meet virtually beginning at 8:45 pm on the same Monday nights, may be offered if there is enough demand.

"Please register by writing to rshea@chabadofbinghamton.com or visiting MyJLI.com. The sooner people register

the easier it is to order the text books with accuracy and have enough available for all participants," said Rivkah Slonim, course instructor.

"We are currently experiencing a heightened interest in the paranormal," commented Slonim. "As Jews, we don't have to reinvent the wheel. The Jewish tradition has probed

issues such as dreams, astrology, spirits and other mysteries for three millennia. These are legitimate questions that deserve meaningful and satisfying answers."

Slonim added, "I think we are going to have a lot of fun, but do join expecting the depth and breadth that is the hallmark of a JLI course."

Intersisterhood event to be held on May 3

The 2023 Intersisterhood event will be held at Temple Concord on Wednesday, May 3, at 7 pm. The topic will be "Jewish Merchants in Binghamton's Heyday." The admission price of \$5 will give attendees an occasion to socialize, to partake in refreshments and to participate in a raffle for door prizes, as well as to have a chance to hear four local Binghamtonians - Marti Klionsky, Francine Stein, Howard Zendle and Ron Sall - recall what Binghamton was like in the 1950s and '60s.

Because of the subject matter, the event will also be open to men. Those planning

to attend are asked to make their reservations by Wednesday, April 26, by contacting Beth David at 722-1793 or bethdavid@stny.rr.com; Temple Israel at 723-7461 or titammy@stny.twcbe.com; or Temple Concord at 723-7355 or templeconcordaa@gmail.com. Those who wish to attend can also respond by using the QR code included with this article, on the event flyer that the synagogues will be including in their bulletins and announcements, or on the Federation website.



The QR code

"Do you remember the great meeting place called The Hub?" organizers ask. "Or a high-end women's store that had local Binghamton girls serve as models for their clothing on their television commercials? Or the iconic, huge discount department store where they gave you free popcorn while you were hunting for fabulous bargains? The answers to these questions and more will be revealed to all who attend this year's annual."

"I was born in Rochester, and my fam-

ily moved to Binghamton when I was 18 months old," recalls Klionsky. "I have vivid memories of the many Jewish merchant stores, and I look forward to sharing them at the Intersisterhood event. If I have the time, I will try to create a map of where all these stores were, including my favorite go-to place for the wonderful fabrics they had for the clothes I made for myself and my family: Philadelphia Sales!"

In 1960, Francine Stein moved from Philadelphia to Binghamton, when her husband, Steve Stein, began a new job in a See "Event" on page 8

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Children of Abraham will hold a vigil for the victims of last year's shooting in Buffalo on May 13.

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Jewish Baseball Players

Israel and Diaspora Baseball: Team Israel meets the 2023 World Baseball Classic, Part II

BILL SIMONS

For Team Israel and its animated, partisan followers, the squad's 2023 World Baseball Classic game one was dramatic and memorable. At high noon in LoanDepot Park, home of MLB's Miami Marlins, Israel and Nicaragua met on Sunday, March 12, before nearly 20,000 fans as well as thousands more watching on FS2. Enthusiastic Jewish and Nicaraguan fans, attired in team shirts and hats, shook the stadium with loud cheers. More than a few rooters jumped, gyrated and danced to encourage their teams. A substantial contingent, including Claudia Wolff and Lloyd Kaplan, came from New York. Jordan Gladstone received leave-of-absence permission from his Baltimore Jewish day school to serve as Team Israel batboy.

Game one was well-played with defense and pitching dominating up till the eighth inning, giving Nicaragua a razor-thin 1-0 lead. Then, in the eighth inning, Israel bats brought in three runs, doing damage against ace reliever Jonathan Loaisiga. With Israel's 3-1 triumph, jubilant Team Israel fans went wild, dreaming of an improbable WBC championship.

Then, reality set in. On March 13, Puerto Rico trounced Israel 10-0 with "the mercy rule" bringing an end to the mayhem after eight innings. The next day, March 14, the scenario repeated, with "the mercy rule" again evoked as the Dominican team also overwhelmed Israel 10-0. Team Israel's downward slide concluded with a 5-1 loss to Venezuela on March 15. Outscored 26-4, Team Israel's

WBC quest ended with a single victory against three losses. Nonetheless, that was better than winless Nicaragua, assuring Israel a spot in the 2026 WBC.

Even as Team Israel found itself outmatched, Jewish media and fans continued to foster a buzz about Team Israel players, perhaps none so more than Shlomo Lipetz. Although relegated to reserve status and thus not on the final roster during official 2023 WBC competition, Lipetz remains the heart and soul of Team Israel. At 44 years old, he is Methuselah, the only native-born Israeli on the squad and a veteran of the Israel army. As an 11-year-old Little Leaguer, Lipetz endured a humiliating 50-0 defeat inflicted by Saudi Arabia in Israel's first international competition. Lipetz was at center stage throughout Team Israel's baseball ascent – the one-season (2007) professional Israel Baseball League, past World Baseball Classics and the Olympics. Despite a slow toss that now tops out at about 75 MPH, Lipetz's sidearm delivery, augmented by exceptional control, is difficult to hit. Team Israel's patriarch, Lipetz radiates a baseball mysticism, enhanced by his paying job as a music-booking impresario. However, he is not a novelty relic. On March 8, Lipetz pitched in an exhibition game against the Miami Marlins.

At the other end of the baseball pitcher age spectrum, Team Israel boasted 19-year-old wunderkind Jacob Steinmetz, the first documented observant Orthodox Jew in organized baseball. During an inning and two-thirds against

the formidable Dominican team, the 6'5" Steinmetz, an Arizona Diamondbacks prospect, struck out three batters. No 19-year-old Jewish pitcher has attracted so much media attention since teenage Brooklyn Dodger Sandy Koufax shut out the mighty Cincinnati Reds, yielding only two hits, on August 27, 1955, while recording 14 strikeouts.

Another Team Israel pitcher, righty Dean Kremer has already reached prime time, registering a 3.23 ERA for the 2022 Baltimore Orioles. Holding dual Israel-U.S. citizenship, Kremer, the son of sabras, lives part of the year in Israel and sometimes startles Orioles teammates who overhear him speaking Hebrew on the phone. The starting pitcher in Team Israel's game one victory over Nicaragua, Kremer gave up only three hits in four shutout innings.

Several Team Israel players attracted attention for their youth and potential, amongst them Chicago Cubs prospect Matt Mervis, a 225-pound first baseman whose 2022 aggregate minor league record included a .309 batting average, 36 home runs and 119 RBIs. Of playing for Team Israel, Mervis, despite difficulties at the plate during the WBC, asserted, "I'm just honored to have had the opportunity."

Despite their WBC won-loss record, Team Israel provided impetus for many stories in Jewish media, and the plethora of articles about individual players were positive and aspirational. Team Israel inspired pride amongst Jewish fans in the U.S. and Israel, and motivation for Jewish **See "Baseball" on page 7**

Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

What brings people together? Here is a short list: food, laughter, prayer, music, beauty and love for children.

Next week marks Israel's 75th birthday and, like many Jewish communities, we are planning a celebration here in Broome County. I must admit that I have a degree of anxiety about this event. Israel's current political leadership is making choices that could lead the country to a civil war.

Should we even have a celebration? Instead, should we pray? Protest? Should Jews in the Diaspora even have a say?

There are no easy answers. In fact, there might be more reasons to disagree than to come together. However, Yom Ha'atzmaut is a day to acknowledge the fact that Israel still exists, despite all the turmoil and bloodshed. A country that was founded by persecuted Jewish people has lasted 75 years.

Whatever Israel means to you, I hope you will consider joining us on April 23. You can register by going to www.jfcb.org; there is no charge to attend. There will be kosher cake, singing, dancing, a virtual live tour of Jerusalem and prayers for peace. It will be a day to focus on what brings us together, rather than what tears us apart. Don't we all need that?

In My Own Words

Ups and downs with my CI

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

In March, I visited the audiologist who handles my cochlear implant to check on my progress with the new CI, which I've had for seven months. (My original one is no longer supported by its maker, much as what happens when you need a new version of a cell phone or computer.) For the first time, the audiologist did a hearing test and a speech test just for the CI. The hearing test was to see if adjusting some volume levels would make it easier for me to hear specific tones. (He did raise and lower some tones, although I can't really tell the difference.)

The speech test was to test my word comprehension. That meant turning off my hearing aid – not that the hearing aid is a help with comprehension. As someone I used to work with once discovered, I did better lip reading without the hearing aids, than I did if someone spoke to me when I wasn't looking directly at their lips. For this test, the audiologist covered his mouth so I couldn't see it. My score was an amazing 85 percent comprehension. For all but one of the words, the ones I missed were close to the word he said. That meant that in context – hearing someone say it in a sentence – I would probably have understood what was being said.

I was very pleased with that result, that is until my foot doctor's office called the next week. I'd used my caption phone to make the appointment and had been very careful

to repeat the day, time and place. (There is a Vestal office and a Binghamton one.) The phone call I received was a robot call, which was a good thing because I could have it repeat again and again what was being said. I did that because something wasn't right. I went to my caption phone, had the robot repeat its message and discovered that my appointment was not on the day I thought.

When I called the office to confirm the appointment, I learned that I had the correct time and location, but not the correct date. Fortunately, I could still make the appointment, but was upset that I'd misheard the date. I'd used the caption phone because I know I have difficulty with numbers. Context doesn't always help because there is often no way to know if, for example, someone said fifty or sixty.

This kind of mistake is not the end of the world, since, thank goodness, doctors' offices usually confirm appointments or send reminders. But I know that hearing problems have occurred at other times. For example, I'm finding it more difficult to hear during evening meetings. That's partly because I've been getting tired more easily than I used to and hearing takes concentration. One reason the audiologist changed some of the settings on the CI was to make it easier for me to hear without having to concentrate as hard. Believe it or not, he said that level of concentration actually makes hearing comprehension more difficult.

I'm not complaining about the implant because I've always had realistic expectations about what the CI can accomplish. I will never have normal hearing. Meetings will always be difficult, especially when I need to answer questions and absorb what people are saying. What I still appreciate and what is beyond measure, though, is being able to hear music. That ability continues to improve. It's wonderful to listen to songs I haven't heard or thought about in decades. Sometimes I can identify something as music, but I can't hear the melody. I've tried listening to some of my former favorites again and again in the hope I will hear that melody. Sometimes, after multiple listenings, they actually sound like the songs I remember. When that happens, it's a moment of pure joy.

Disturbing moments will always happen, but how I deal with them is mine to determine. When I started to feel upset at a recent event because I had no clue what was happening, I told myself to forget that I was lost and just enjoy the company. When talking later with a friend, she said at least I had an excuse for not knowing what was going on. That made me laugh, which is the best reaction I can hope for. Laughing or crying: those are the two ways I can react to my hearing impairment. There will still be times I cry, but I can only hope the times I laugh will outweigh them.



Jewish Federation
of Greater Binghamton

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OPINIONS

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

LETTERS

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

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www.thereporter.org

BU Judaic Studies Department to hold lecture by Sussman on April 27

The Judaic Studies Department of Binghamton University will offer a lecture by Rabbi Dr. Lance Sussman on Thursday, April 27, the Fine Arts building, room 258, from 5-7 pm. He will speak on "Jews in the New American Nation: Revolution Religious Liberty, and Civic Culture." For more information, contact Dr. Beth Burch at bburch@binghamton.edu.

Sussman is the former chairman of the Department of

Judaic Studies at Binghamton University and is currently the chairman of the Board of Governors and professor of Jewish History of Gratz College. Sussman has taught courses in Jewish history at several universities, including Princeton University, Hebrew Union College in New York City, Rutgers University, Temple University and Hunter College. His published writing includes "Isaac Lesser and the Making of American Judaism" and "Sharing Sacred

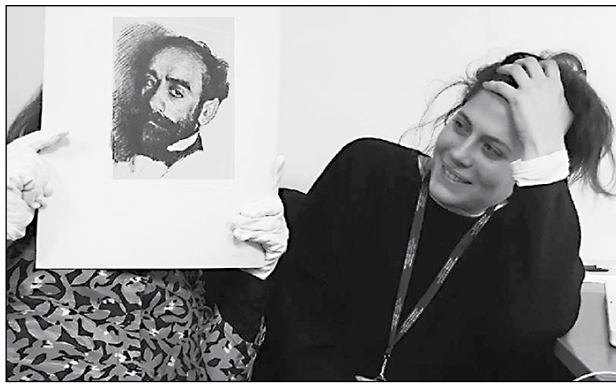
Moments" (a collection of his sermons). He also served as an editor of "Reform Judaism in America: A Biographical Dictionary and Sourcebook."

Sussman is a former rabbi of Binghamton's Temple Concord and the former Temple Beth El of Endicott. He is also rabbi emeritus of Congregation Keneseth Israel, Elkins Park, PA. To learn more Sussman visit www.kenesethisrael.org/rabbi-lance-sussman/.

TBE Ithaca's Arts Committee to hold virtual lecture on April 27

The Arts Committee of Temple Beth-El of Ithaca will hold the virtual lecture "The Photographic Collection of the First Jewish Museum in Berlin: An Artistic Research Between Berlin, Warsaw Tel Aviv and New York" on Thursday, April 27, at 7 pm. Yael Wishnicki-Levi, a Polish-American-Israeli artist and researcher who is currently living in Ithaca, will offer fragments from her thesis project "From an Archive to an Artwork: A Contemporary Analysis of the Photographic Collection of the First Jewish Museum In Berlin" and the contents of the Jewish digital archive. She will also share her plans for the next stage of her research. A question-and-answer period will follow. To register for the program, visit <https://tinyurl.com/mrx2853r>.

Wishnicki-Levi lived in Poland for eight years, researching and creating art focused on her family history. While in Poland, she discovered a photographic repository of the first Jewish Museum in Berlin, which is now housed in the



Yael Wishnicki-Levi is shown at the Jewish Historical Institute archive. She is looking at a reproduction of a portrait by Leon Bakst, depicting the Russian painter Isaac Levitan, a distant relative of the artist.

Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. This has become the subject of her M.A. thesis at the department of Artes Liberales at the University of Warsaw, Poland.

REPORTER DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
May 5-18.....	April 26
May 19-June 1.....	May 10
June 2-15.....	May 22 (early)
June 16-29.....	June 7

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

TBE Oneonta to present concert of Jewish music on May 7

"From the Shtetl to Broadway," Jewish music from the old world to the new, will be presented at Temple Beth El of Oneonta, 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, on Sunday, May 7, at 4 pm. The family-friendly, community event is free and open to the public. From the Eastern European klezmer folk tradition to swing standards and Broadway favorites, the concert will explore the arc of immigrant music to that of established composers such as George Gershwin and Leonard Bernstein, and conclude with a Yiddish sing-along. For more information, call 222-5687.

Robin Seletsky, a second-generation klezmer clarinetist who has appeared in venues around the country as well as internationally, will open the program with *freylekhs* and *ni-*

gunim. The award-winning Siesel/Torgan Duo will contribute several original songs from their project, "Now We Can Sing," which was inspired by the emigration of Jewish composers from Nazi Germany to America. Vocalists Colby Thomas and Stan Fox will perform swing standards accompanied by a jazz trio and Andy Puritz will offer his version of Fagin's showstopper, "Reviewing the Situation," from "Oliver." Other performers include Michael Bauer and Linda Klosset.

The event is made possible with public funds from the Statewide Community Re-grants Program, a regrant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York Legislature, and administered by The Earlville Opera House.

Essential security tips

Know the entrances and exits

Make sure you know how to exit a building through more than one door if possible. If family members are also in the building, arrange a meeting place ahead of time. That way you won't waste time looking for someone who is standing outside on the other side of the building. Ask those in charge if there is a place they would like you to move to if the building has to be evacuated so you know the safest place to be.

 Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

BD Sisterhood donor meeting to be held on April 26

The Beth David Sisterhood will hold its annual donor meeting on Wednesday, April 26, at 7 pm, at the home of Rabbi Zev and Judy Silber. A donation of \$25 or more

is necessary to attend the fund-raising meeting. Rick Pescatore will speak about antique clock repair. To make reservations and receive the Silbers' address, contact Beth David Synagogue at Bethdavid@stny.rr.com or 722-1793. Reservations are requested by Thursday, April 20, to make certain there is enough food, but people may attend without reservations.

Pescatore is a retired teacher from the Binghamton City School District who spent most of his 38 years in special education. He also taught Latin at the high school for 10 See "Donor" on page 7

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OF NOTE

Cohen

Alegria Cohen, formerly of Vestal, was recognized as Outstanding Dietician of the Year at a luncheon of the Massachusetts Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics in Boston. Cohen attended Hillel Academy of Broome County, Vestal High School, Binghamton University and Framingham University, where she received her master's degree in nutrition and dietetics. She is currently the chief dietitian at the Hebrew Rehabilitation Center of Boston.

Cohen is the daughter of Rachel and Michael Aigen, of Vestal, and grandchild of Marilyn Aigen, of Ithaca. She lives in Sharon, MA, with her husband, Matthew Cohen, and two children.



Alegria Cohen surrounded by dieticians of Hebrew Rehabilitation Center of Boston.

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Off the Shelf

A graphic work....

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

◆ Strictly for adults

Confession: I hated sleepaway summer camp. Why, then, you might wonder, did I ask for a review copy of “Camp Pock-a-Wocknee and the Dyn-o-mite Summer ‘77” written and drawn by Eric Glickman (Black Panel Press)? Because the PR material made it sound like great fun. Plus, who could resist a book about teenagers that comes with the label, “Warning! This book is not for kids.”

The narrator, a 15-year-old version of the author, suffers through 10 months of the year impatiently waiting for his two months at camp. Glick (as he is called) and his friends are typical teenage boys: their idea of humor focuses on bodily functions (and the book includes drawings of them going to the bathroom), they speak using cultural references of the time (which are

explained in footnotes) and discuss ways to hook up with the girl campers in the hope of getting to second and third base. The black and white drawings capture their exuberant mood, showing how much they all – boys, girls and counselors – love being at camp.

One of the reasons Glick loves camp is because he feels physically disadvantaged during the rest of the year, meaning he’ll never make a sports team or date any of the girls at his public school. However, he notes that “every summer, I got to live in a world of only Jews, and experience what the counselors at Pock-a-Wocknee called the Jewlusions of sleepaway camp. For 8 weeks you will seemingly possess great athletic ability. For 8 weeks you will seemingly possess a way with girls.” Glick also, rather crassly, talks about one of the

reasons parents sent their sons to camp: to save them from “The Great Goyim Empire” that wants them “to forgo their faith.” The empire’s secret weapons are “Christmas” and “shikshas” (non-Jewish women).

The PR material was not misleading: “Camp Pock-a-Wocknee and the Dyn-o-mite Summer ‘77” was great fun to read and, at times, laugh out loud funny. Did it make me nostalgic for camp? Nope, because it reminded me of all the reasons I didn’t like camp. It also made me glad that I wasn’t aware of what teenage boys were thinking when I was their age: their thoughts, words and actions are the reason a book about teenagers is pitched as not being for children. If you loved sleepaway camp, you’ll enjoy reliving those summers and, if you wished you’d gone to camp, this book will either make you envy those who did or be grateful you escaped the experience.

◆ For those 8-14 years old

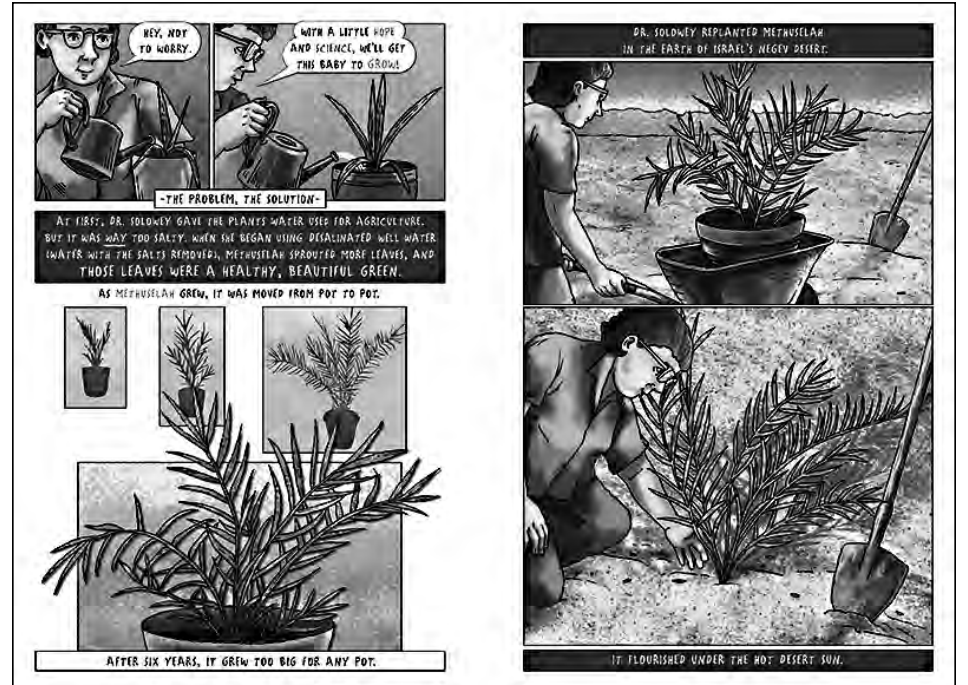
A date palm seed: it doesn’t sound like much until you realize that the seed in question was more than 2,000 years old. In Martin Lemelman’s excellent “The Miracle Seed” (Eerdmans Books for Young Readers), readers follow the true story of how ancient Judean date palm seeds were discovered in Israel and the way scientists – for the first time ever – brought a plant back from extinction.

Lemelman’s work places the story into historical perspective, writing about what occurred in Israel during Roman times and how the date palm came to be extinct. He shows the discovery of the seeds during the excavation of Masada and the steps scientists took to bring the seeds back to life, the first of which was planted on January 25, 2005, which was also Tu B’ Shevat, the Jewish New Year of the Trees. Since those

See “Graphic” on page 7



Above, left and right: “Camp Pock-a-Wocknee and the Dyn-o-mite Summer of ‘77” by Eric Glickman (Used with permission of Black Panel Press)



“The Miracle Seed” by Martin Lemelman (Used with permission of Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company)



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On the Jewish food scene

Falafel, hummus and shawarma

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

During the 10 months I spent in Be’er Sheva, Israel, during rabbinical school (1996-97), I developed a weekly tradition. Every Friday (since there were no classes that day), I went to the Old City and wandered up and down the two block street/outdoor mall of shops and restaurants. My favorite part of the day was lunch: many of the lunch stands sold falafels. (For those who’ve never had a falafel, it consists of deep-fried balls or patties usually made from chickpeas. These balls are stuffed into a pita pocket with salad.)

I tried a different one each week and focused on the salads and sauces you could pour into the pita. Mine were different from many people’s because I requested the falafel “*belie* chips,” meaning “without chips”: I didn’t want the french fries that otherwise would have been part of my sandwich. (I once saw someone eat one that was just french fries in a pita pocket: not my type of thing.) Only once in the almost 30 years since then have I had a falafel that was anywhere near as good as those.

The falafel is often thought of as an Israeli food, but there’s a great debate about whether falafel and hummus (the spiced chickpea spread that is part of the sandwich) are really Israeli. On the one hand, falafel and hummus are Middle Eastern dishes that many consider part of Arab culture. Those from Lebanon have claimed the food as their own, noting that it only later became part of Israeli culture. On the other hand, Mizrahi Jews (those whose ancestors lived in the Middle East or northern Africa) have legitimately noted that their ancestors ate these foods. Food scholars, however, say neither of these claims is correct: the

general consensus now is that the falafel originated in Egypt.

What was interesting about the falafel stands in Be’er Sheva is that they sold something else: shawarma. I’d never seen anything like it before: large cone shaped, vertical rotisseries of meat were cooking in an unusual oven. I believe the ones in the Old City were made of lamb, but don’t quote me because I think I only ate one once. Research says that beef, chicken or a mixture of meats could also be used. The meat was kosher and the stands had the certificates to prove it. Although many also think of shawarma as an Israeli food, food historians believe it originated in Turkey during the Ottoman Empire, possibly as early as the 18th century.

Now that I think about it, I assumed that my falafel was *pareve* (meaning it contained no meat or dairy products), but I never thought to ask what type of oil was used to cook the falafel balls. I do know that there were no dairy products sold at these stands: at least at that time, any kosher restaurant in Israel was either strictly dairy or strictly meat. That meant you couldn’t go to a Subway shop (as I did in a bus station in a city other than Be’er Sheva; I can’t remember which one) and ask for a cheese sub. They didn’t even keep cheese in a meat shop so there was no chance for meat and milk to accidentally mix.

As for the debate on whether falafel, hummus and shawarma are Israeli food, I don’t really care who invented a food as long as it tastes good. And Jews have always transformed the cuisine in any land in which they lived and made it Jewish, so why should Israel be any different?

Children of Abraham to hold vigil for Buffalo on May 13

The Children of Abraham of the Southern Tier will hold a vigil in remembrance of the shooting that occurred at Tops Market in Buffalo last year. The event will take place on Saturday, May 13, at 1 pm, in the first pavilion of Schnurbusch Park, 1171 Conklin Rd., Conklin. The vigil will offer a sharing of prayers for Buffalo, as well as the local community.

CJS Continued from page 1

fellow at the Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen in Vienna. Her research focuses on the intellectual history of 20th and 21st century central and eastern Europe. She is the translator of Michal Glowinski's "The Black Seasons" and the author of "Caviar and Ashes: A Warsaw Generation's Life and Death in Marxism, 1918-1968," "The Taste of Ashes: The Afterlife of Totalitarianism in Eastern Europe" and "The Ukrainian Night: An Intimate History of Revolution." Her articles and essays have appeared in The New Yorker, The Jewish Review of Books, The Atlantic, The New York Review of Books, The Times Literary Supplement, *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. In 2018, she received a Guggenheim Fellowship for the book project she is currently completing about phenomenology in East-Central Europe, tentatively titled "Eyeglasses Floating in the Sky: Central European Encounters that Took Place while Searching for Truth."

Gina Glasman will speak on "Charting a Jewish Geography of Ukraine." Odessa and Lviv, Kyiv and Donetsk: these are some of the place names that feature in daily newsfeeds because of the war. "But they were once heavy with a very different kind of cultural resonance," said organizers. "This is the lost Jewish geography of present-day Ukraine. What that geography once represented, both historically and perceptually, will form the subject matter of Glasman's talk."

Glasman is lecturer in Yiddish language and culture at Binghamton University. She holds degrees from Cambridge University, the Jewish Theological Seminary and Columbia University. She is the author of "East End Synagogues," as well as various articles and translations from Yiddish and Hebrew, including the translation of a 1904 article by historian Simon Dubnow recently published in "Jews in Early Modern Europe, Classic Essays in Jewish History," edited by Jonathan Karp and Francesca Trivellato (Routledge, 2023). Glasman is the recipient of the Provost's Award for Excellence in Teaching for 2015-2016 and is a 2022-23 Faculty Fellow at Binghamton's Institute for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention.

Lord Maurice Glasman's Zoom talk is titled "There are No Jews Left in Ukraine." "Based on his recent speech to the British House of Lords and his April trip to Odessa, Maurice Glasman provides a sad and hauntingly disturbing picture of a community where in 1941 there were more than two million Jews, but that is now characterized by closed synagogues and poignant traces of a once-remarkable Jewish civilization," said organizers of the event. "Although entirely supportive of Ukraine's struggle against Russian invasion, Glasman discusses some of the war's unfortunate side-effects for the country's Jewish legacy, including the rehabilitation of Ukrainian nationalist figures who had victimized Jews in Ukraine's past."

Glasman is an English political theorist and Labour Party life peer in the House of Lords. He is the author of "Unnecessary Suffering: Managing Market Utopia" (1996) and "Blue Labour: The Politics of the Common Good" (2022). His articles and essays have appeared in the New Statesman, The Nation and Tablet, among other venues.

The College of Jewish Studies provides opportunities for adult Jewish education for the Broome County community by offering fall and spring programs. Drawing on local resources and inviting scholars and experts from a range of universities and cultural and religious institutions, CJS sponsors a wide array of programs dealing with Jewish history, culture, religion and politics.

The College of Jewish Studies, founded in 1986, is an informal coalition between the Judaic Studies Department of Binghamton University and several area Jewish sponsoring institutions: the Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, Beth David Synagogue, Temple Concord and Temple Israel. Programming for CJS would not be possible without the additional financial support of a grant from the Community Foundation for South Central New York - David and Virginia Eisenberg Donor Advised Fund, the Jacob and Rose Olum Foundation, the B'nai B'rith Lectureship Fund, the Victor and Esther Rozen Foundation, an endowment fund from the former Temple Beth El of Endicott, a grant from the JoyVel Charitable Fund and the donations of individual sponsors.

"If you are not one already, please consider becoming an individual sponsor so that the CJS can continue bringing quality programs to the community," organizers said. "For more information on how to become an individual sponsor or to make a donation, please e-mail us at bingcjs@gmail.com. The College of Jewish Studies is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization."

For more information on the College of Jewish Studies and its programs, visit to www.facebook.com/bingcjs or https://docs.google.com/forms/d/19YRT23IRR-h4GtSAmN2dX-eXgPDrHiWL9zEd8cZx6jw1/viewform?edit_requested=true.

"We will be gathering in prayer for Buffalo and Conklin one year after the deadly shooting at the Tops Market in Buffalo," said Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell, chairwoman of the Children of Abraham of the Southern Tier Planning Group. "We are coming together to join in prayer for an end to hateful violence and for hope and solidarity. Three members of Temple Concord and I went to Buffalo last November with other faith leaders at the invitation of several church leaders of those who were affected by the shooting. The hope

was that now that we were connected by the deadly actions of another, we should look at how make our connection a positive and affirming one for both communities."

Goldman-Wartell added, "This gathering is the next step in our work in this area. We have plans for future steps and continued actions to promote learning and love in our community, and hope to invite a group from Buffalo to our community sometime in the fall. Join us for this event where we'll share plans for the future."

Beth David Synagogue to honor Dr. Dora Polachek on May 7

The Beth David Annual Dinner will be held on Sunday, May 7, at 3 pm. Dr. Dora Polachek will be honored with the Jack and Mary Ferber Memorial Award during the dinner. The cocktail hour will begin at 3 pm, followed by dinner at 4 pm. The cost is \$50 per person. Invitations have been sent out and reservations should be made by Friday, April 21, by contacting the synagogue at bethdavid@stny.rr.com, or 722-1793. Anyone who has not received an invitation and wants to attend should also contact the synagogue. Sponsorships are also available: gold \$375 includes two dinners; silver \$275 includes two dinners; and bronze \$175 includes one dinner. A raffle will be held; the drawing will take place at the dinner.



Dr. Dora Polachek

In 2020, the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton recognized Polachek's contributions with its Spirit of Community Award. Polachek has served on the Editorial Committee of *The Reporter*, and continues to serve on the board of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's College of Jewish Studies. She has introduced and facilitated discussions for the Binghamton Jewish Film Fest, which is sponsored by the Federation. A member of Beth David since she arrived in the area, Polachek founded and coordinates the monthly Shabbat Luncheon Speaker Series. She is also the synagogue's representative on the annual Intersisterhood Committee, when the three Binghamton synagogues' Sisterhoods develop and sponsor a joint program open to the community.

As a faculty member of Binghamton University's Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, she is the recipient of awards that include the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching and the University Award for Excellence in International Education. A graduate of

Barnard College, New York University and The University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill where she received her doctorate in French Literature, Polachek, moved to Binghamton in 1982.

"Dora's talents and enthusiasm are visible in everything she undertakes, be it at Binghamton University or in the community," organizers said. "Her contributions to the community are manifold."

Shelley Hubal, Federation executive director, said, "Dora has a special gift in generating lively and engaged audience participation." Most recently, Polachek facilitated the March discussion of the Israeli film "Tel Aviv on Fire."

"Dora has contributed so much to making Beth David programs so successful, as well as to other programs," added Rabbi Zev Silber. "She is very deserving of this prestigious award of recognition."

Tea and Talk

Chabad of Binghamton, with co-sponsorship from the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, holds Tea and Talk programs, a monthly 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:

- ◆ May 4
- ◆ May 18
- ◆ June 1
- ◆ June 15

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



Spring cleaning tips

(NAPSI) - When the weather gets warmer, many say it's time for spring cleaning. Here are a few simple ways to make sure your spring cleaning is efficient and uncomplicated.

1. Break out the bleach. Bleach isn't the enemy when it comes to spring cleaning. Some bleach-based cleaning products deodorize and disinfect fast, whether its on laundry loads or throughout your home on countertops, yoga mats, baths and more.

2. Leverage multipurpose tools. Multipurpose cleaning agents are an excellent solution to degrease the stove top, remove pesky soap scum from tiles, get those deep-seated oil stains out of clothes and more.

3. Don't overlook laundry during spring cleaning -

whether it's finally getting that stubborn wine stain out of your favorite sweater or grass marks from the kids' clothes.

4. Make it smell fresh and clean. To further banish odors, grab a deodorizer to clean your home and keep it smelling great for hours.

For more tips and tricks, visit <https://www.alenusa.com/en/>.



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Spiritual impurity

RABBI AARON SLONIM, DIRECTOR OF THE ROHR CHABAD CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

Parashat Metzorah, as its name indicates, deals with the laws of the leprosy curse, a condition of spiritual impurity that manifested itself as discolored spots on a person's skin and, sometimes, their clothes and dwelling place. This condition, nowadays extinct, befell a person as a result of spiritual failings.

When an individual sighted a discoloration of the skin that was suspect, there was a two pronged procedure he underwent: a) In order to establish whether a spot was ritually pure or impure – i.e. if the individual was a *metzora* – the spot(s) had to be viewed by a scholar who was well versed in the intricate laws of the leprosy curse and b) one's actual status had to be declared by a proclamation of

“pure” or “impure” made specifically by a Kohen, a priest. So vital was it that the Kohen make that declaration, that even in cases where the Kohen himself was incapable of discerning the status, “the scholar would view it and say to the Kohen, ‘Proclaim it impure’ and the kohen would proclaim ‘impure’...” (Maimonides)

Since a Kohen in many cases had in any event to rely on the scholar, why was it so important that it be the Kohen who pronounced the actual ritual status? Moreover, why is it specifically regarding this type of ritual impurity that the Torah makes it integral that the Kohen declare (even if not determine) the status?

We might understand this insistence by learning more

about this type of spiritual condition. The impurity of *tzoraat* (the leprosy curse) carried with it a stringency quite unlike any other type of impurity, namely that the afflicted individual was banished from all places of Jewish habitation. Unlike other forms of impurity that made access to the Temple impossible, the *metzora* was to “sit alone; outside of the camp shall be his dwelling,” in effect severing him from any connection with his family and the entire community.

The first priest, Aaron “loved peace and pursued peace”; he was known as a man of kindness and peace. Similarly, all of his descendants served as conduits for bringing God's See “Spiritual” on page 7

Congregational Notes

Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union
Rabbi: Zev Silber
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Phone: 722-1793, Rabbi's Office: 722-7514, Fax: 722-7121
Office hours: Mon. closed; Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Wed. closed; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm; Fri. 10 am-1 pm
Beth David e-mail address: bethdavid@stny.rr.com
Rabbi's e-mail: rabbisilber@stny.rr.com
Website: www.bethdavid.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton

Temple Israel

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

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

On Saturday, April 22, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Leviticus 12:12-15:33 and the haftarah is Isaiah 66:1-24. At 9:15 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Wednesday, April 26, Torah study will be held from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

On Saturday, April 29, at 9:30 am, Shacharit services will be held via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Leviticus 16:1-20:27 and the haftarah is Amos 9:7-15. At 9:15 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Sunday, April 30, from 1:30-5 pm, there will be a Chevra Kadisha training session. (For more information, see the article on page 1.

On Tuesday, May 2, at 7 pm, there will be an Executive Board meeting on Zoom.

On Wednesday, May 3, Torah study will be held from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

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

Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody
Services: Fri. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced.
Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sun. and legal holidays).

Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday, 3:45-5:45 pm. The Midrashah (eighth grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers.
Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.

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

Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi: Amelia F. Wolf
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820
Phone: 607-432-5522
E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com

Regular service times: Contact the temple for days of services and times.

Religious School/Education: Religious School, for grades kindergarten through bar/bat mitzvah, meets Sunday mornings. For the schedule of services, classes and events, contact the temple.

Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

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

Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch
Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors
E-mail: aslonim@binghamton.edu
rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com
Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 797-0015, Fax: 797-0095
Website: www.Chabadofbinghamton.com
Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education
E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com
Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development
Chabad Downtown Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton
E-mail: lslonim@Jewishbu.com, hslonim@Jewishbu.com
Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming
E-mail: yohana@Jewishbu.com, gohana@Jewishbu.com
Regular service times: Daily 7:30 am, Friday evening 6 pm, Shabbat morning 9:30 am, Maariv and Havdalah one hour after candle-lighting time, Sundays 9:30 am.
To join the mailing list, for up-to-date information on adult education offerings or to arrange for a private tutorial, for details concerning the Judaica shop and resource center, or for assistance through the Piaker Free Loan Society or Raff Maasim Tovim Foundation, call Chabad's office at 797-0015.

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

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: 607-756-7181
President: Carol Levine, 315-696-5744
Cemetery Committee: 315-696-5744
Website: templebrithsholomcortland.org
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/>
Service leaders: Lay leadership
Shabbat services: Either Friday evening at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 10 am from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot. Holiday services are also held. Check the Facebook page or weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.

Religious School: Students are educated on an individual basis. Temple Brith Sholom is a small equalitarian congregation serving the greater Cortland community. Congregants span the gamut of observance and services are largely dependent on the service leader. The Friday night siddur is “Likrat Shabbat,” while the Saturday morning siddur is “Gates of Prayer.” The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences.

Services and programs are held by Zoom on the first and second Fridays of the month.

Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive
Rabbi: David Regenspan
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815
Phone: 334-2691
E-mail: fertigj@roadrunner.com
Contact: Guilina 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.



Friday, April 21, light candles before 7:33 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, April 22 8:35 pm
Friday, April 28, light candles before 7:41 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, April 29 8:42 pm
Friday, May 5, light candles before 7:48 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, May 6 8:50 pm

Temple Concord

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

Some services and programs are online only.

Friday, April 21: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat Passover service with Rabbi Talia Laster. She is a 2022 graduate of Hebrew College, a leading non-denominational seminary in Newton, MA. During her studies, she served as rabbinic intern at Congregation Kehillath Israel in Brookline. Masks are optional for those attending in person. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, April 22: At 9 am, Shabbat School; at 9:15 am, Torah study with Rabbi Talia Laster (join via Zoom at <http://bit.ly/3XDnvRE>, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892); and at 10:35 am, Shabbat Family Service.

Wednesday, April 26: At noon, “Counting the Omer – An Exploration of the Jewish People’s Transformation Studying Our Sacred Texts,” session 3, “The Scroll of Ecclesiastes.” To attend one session or all by signing up for the series, visit at www.tinyurl.com/OmerStudy. The sessions will run on Wednesdays through May 24.

Friday, April 28: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service honoring Rabbi Rachel Esserman and celebrating Israel at 75 with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell. Masks are optional for those attending in person. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, April 29: At 9:15 am, Torah study (join via Zoom at <http://bit.ly/3XDnvRE>, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892).

See “Concord” on page 8

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.

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.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Israeli gov't moves to tackle *haredi* draft conundrum

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu convened a meeting on April 16 to address a longstanding issue pertaining to drafting ultra-Orthodox Jews into the Israel Defense Forces. Legislation being drafted would lower the age at which ultra-Orthodox, or *haredi*, Jewish men need to receive deferments from serving in the military, and significantly increase the pay of combat soldiers. The initiative would also reduce the length of time soldiers in positions deemed less essential need to serve. The meeting on April 16 was attended by Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and Justice Minister Yariv Levin, among others. While Israelis are generally drafted into the military aged 18, most *haredi* men continue to receive exemptions from service until they reach the age limit of 26. To do so they remain in yeshivas until then. By lowering the age limit to 23, the government hopes to encourage *haredim* to enter the workforce earlier. The issue of *haredi* military exemptions has long been a point of contention in Israel, with opponents of the practice arguing that it places a heavy and unfair burden on the rest of the population,

and discourages members of the ultra-Orthodox community from working. Two *haredi* parties, Shas and United Torah Judaism, are part of Netanyahu's governing coalition, and they have demanded that draft-related legislation be passed in May before the state budget is approved. For decades, ultra-Orthodox Israelis have received near-blanket exemptions from national service, but in 2012 the Supreme Court struck down the law permitting the arrangement. A new law thereafter was also overturned by the court in 2017. Since then, defense ministers have received more than a dozen extensions from the court, as the government failed to pass legislation. The current extension expires on July 31.

Tens of thousands in Israel protest for and against reform

Protests against judicial reform entered their 15th week as thousands of demonstrators gathered in Tel Aviv on the night of April 15. However, in a new ripple, thousands of heretofore quiescent supporters of reform also attended protests across the country. Matan Peleg, chairman of Im Tirtzu, a Zionist NGO, said, "We thank the tens of thousands who came out to the streets to express their support for the judicial reform. We won't let the anarchists harm the voter's decision. There is a duty to pass the reform so that there will be democracy here."

Graphic Continued from page 4

scientists were women, the book is a perfect gift for girls interested in botany.

The drawings in "The Miracle Seed" are beautiful and colorful, and complement the story, making the science come alive. While this book is aimed at the tweens and teens, adults may also find the story fascinating. This adult certainly did.

◆ For picture book readers 7-11 years old

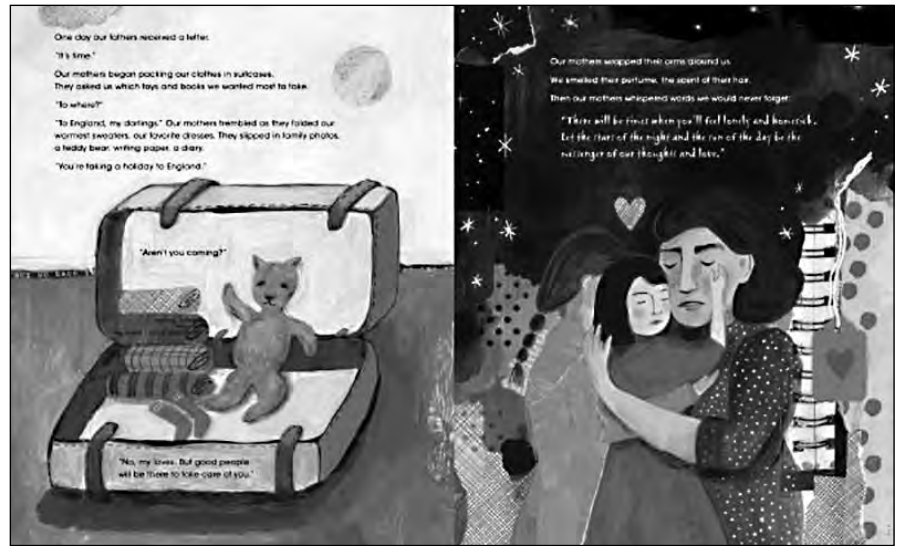
The story of the kindertransport and how Nicolas Winston saved 669 Czechoslovakian children from the Nazis is the subject of a new picture book, "Stars of the Night: The Courageous Children of the Czech Kindertransport" by Caren Stelson with illustration by Selina Alko (Carolrhoda Books). The work tells the story through the eyes of the children who were saved, using the collective "we" as its narrative point of view.

At first, like most young children, they have no real understanding of the events that were occurring. In fact, even as they separated from their parents and were placed on the train taking them from Czechoslovakia, most were still unaware of the reality of the situation. Perhaps, no one – including their parents – had any idea that once separated, they would never see each other again.

The expressionist drawings do an excellent job setting the somber mood of the work. It also contains information for adults about the kindertransport and Winston so they can answer questions children may have. Although "Stars of the Night" is a picture book, parents need to make certain

that their children are emotionally mature enough for the material. However, this work is an excellent addition to the growing number of works for younger children about the Holocaust.

A review of the picture book "Nicky and Vera: A Quiet Hero of the Holocaust and the Children He Rescued" by Peter Sis, which partly tells the story from Nicolas Winston's point of view, can be found at www.thereporter.org/archives/feature/graphic-works-for-all-ages-by-rabbi-rachel-esserman-378454. Adults looking for more information about the kindertransport may be interested in the novel "The Last Train to London" by Meg Waite Clayton and the nonfiction study "The Kindertransport: Contesting Memory" by Jennifer Craig-Norton. To read a review of those books, visit www.thereporter.org/archives/feature/



"Stars of the Night: The Courageous Children of the Czech Kindertransport" by Caren Stelson, illustrated by Selina Alko (Used with permission of Carolrhoda Book) off-the-shelf-kindertransport-fiction-and-fact-by-rabbi-rachel-esserman-342456.

Donor Continued from page 3

years and at Binghamton University for one year. He has traveled to Europe, Asia and Central America, and hosted students from Russia, France and Central America. Pescatore has also done antique clock repair for more than 30 years. Since retirement, this has been his primary interest.

He said that, while he is very good at this work, he is not a master. He also noted that there are very few repairmen in the Binghamton area. He believes he may be the last person in the general area who specializes in clock repair.

"Mr. Pescatore will share his extensive knowledge of the history of clocks and clock repair with us at the meeting, and will be available for consultation about the advisability of repairing your heirloom grandfather clock, mantel clock or more modern but prized electric clock," said organizers of the event. "Please do not hesitate to attend even if you neglected to notify us in advance. We always plan a little extra food just in case!"

Spiritual Continued from page 6

blessings of peace and unity upon the people. *Kohanim* were a unifying force.

Because it was the task of the Kohen to lovingly bless the Jewish people, it is only the Kohen who could truly feel the extreme harshness of proclaiming such a measure of banishment upon a fellow Jew. The Kohen's inherent kindness would lead him to fully investigate the situation, sparing no effort in ascertaining from the scholar whether it was possible to rule more leniently. If, and when, after thorough investigation the Kohen declared an individual "impure," one could be assured that the Kohen would dedicate himself to seeing to this person's subsequent state of purification.

There is a vital lesson here for all of us. Should we note even glaring faults in a fellow Jew, we must know that even a great scholar must scrupulously probe his degree of kindness and love for a fellow Jew before he dares declare that this person's place is "out of the Jewish encampment." Should we find ourselves somewhat lacking in this love, we have no right to make such pronouncements, it is almost certainly a result of our own faulty character traits.

The late Lubavitcher Rebbe once employed the following metaphor: Before a doctor inoculates a patient stabbing him with a needle (clearly with all the right intentions of healing), he must still first make sure to cleanse the area of germs with alcohol. Similarly, before we reprimand or chastise, we must make absolutely sure that we are devoid of any sentiment other than true love and caring for the person in question.

Baseball Continued from page 2

youth to play baseball. Team Israel players from interfaith homes experienced heightened Jewish identity. During the WBC, players from Team Israel and the Dominican Republic joined diplomats in a moving ceremony to sign a memorandum of understanding for the DR to assist Israel in developing its baseball program; it was noted that this agreement comes amidst rising antisemitism. Of major significance, Team Israel symbolizes the bonds between American and Israeli Jews at a time when the policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu threaten to undermine that special relationship.

Perhaps Team Israel would have advanced to the next round had they not been placed somewhat incongruously in the otherwise all Caribbean Pool D, arguably the strongest division. Geographically, Team Cuba would have appeared a more logical selection than Israel for Pool D.

Moreover, Team Israel would quite plausibly have won another game or two had the three top Jewish major leaguers – Houston Astros third baseman Alex Bregman, Atlantic Braves pitcher Max Fried, and New York Yankees centerfielder Harrison Bader – played. Bader had committed

to join Team Israel, but was sidelined by injuries. Bregman, usually demonstrative about exhibiting Jewish pride, and Fried chose to concentrate on spring training preparation for the MLB season. Bregman's Astros teammate José Altuve suffered a fractured thumb while playing for Team Venezuela and will consequently miss two months of the MLB season. Ironically, Fried, once again the Braves' opening game pitcher, suffered a disabling left hamstring injury in that game.

Might-have-been rationalizations aside, there is a hard reality, however, that Israel baseball needs to confront. Team Israel 2023 did not do as well as it had in the 2017 WBC. Despite substantial progress, Israel baseball still consists of only a handful of ballfields and a few hundred players, with Americans dominating its international team. Indigenous Team Israel baseball is still a work in progress.

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



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NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Nearly half of the world's Jews live in Israel

At the start of 2022, there were a total of 15.3 million Jews in the world, seven million of whom, roughly 46 percent of all Jews worldwide, resided in Israel...

ESPN profiles Maryland high-schooler who doesn't race on Shabbat

After a Jewish high school athlete petitioned the Maryland cross-country championship director to reschedule the race slated for Shabbat, Saturday, April 8, the state moved the competition to Sunday, April 9.

Concord... Continued from page 6

Wednesday, April 19: At 10:30 am, the TC Book Club will discuss "People Love Dead Jews: Reports from a Haunted Present" by Dara Horn.

race and keep Shabbat." Ferber described becoming more religiously observant in 2020 and during the COVID-19 pandemic. That included observing Shabbat more strictly, which he said shocked and angered his teammates.

Carolina Hurricanes sign Jewish goalie Yaniv Perets

Two Jewish players helped propel Quinnipiac University in Connecticut to a championship on April 8 in the Frozen Four - the ice-hockey equivalent of the Final Four.

Looking for this issue's "Jewish Resources"? Visit www.thereporter.org/streams/miscellaneous-features/miscellaneous-features/tag/80309? to find out what's happening online.

Event... Continued from page 1

store called Philadelphia Sales, owned by his father and an uncle of Alan Jablon. "The store was open seven days a week; Steve loved working there, and eventually took over," Stein recalls.

this family-owned fine men's haberdashery store," organizers said, "and will detail what the store was like through the years and how it continues to be an important part of Binghamton's retail scene."

Coordinating the evening's program are representatives from each of the three temples sponsoring the event: Dora Polachek and Eileen Miller from Beth David; Marsha Luks and Anne (Cookie) Schaeffer from Temple Concord; and Barbara Zelter from Temple Israel.

Zendle was born and raised in Binghamton and, until his retirement in 2009, worked at IBM Owego as an operational programmer for computers that navigate airplanes.

Organizers added, "The event covered all bases - conviviality, delicious refreshments, as well as door prizes for the lucky raffle ticket winners.

"This is a unique program," organizers said, "and we promise that it will be highly interactive, with audience members encouraged to add their recollections of the Jewish-owned stores they frequented, or have fond memories of.

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