

THE REPORTER

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Federation to hold 2025 Annual Meeting on June 18

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold its 2025 Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 18, at 7:30 pm, at the Jewish Community Center. The event will include the election of the new Board of Directors. The Federation's Annual Report will be available at the meeting in hard copy. It will also appear on the Federation website and in the June 13 issue of *The Reporter*.

"If you are curious about how the Fed-

eration board works, then please join us for our end of the year annual meeting," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "As we look back at the last year and all we have accomplished, including sponsoring or co-sponsoring 21 programs, we hope the community will see the value of their gift to the Federation."

Proposed members of the Board of Directors are:

◆ Executive Committee: Suzanne Holwitt,

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

◆ Board members at large are Rita Bleier, Nancy Dorfman, Dennis Foreman, Sondra Foreman, Steve Gilbert, Tara Kaminsky, Barbara Mullen, Maren Nasar, Andrew Newmark, Jeff Platsky, Jodi Sampey, Rose

Shapiro and Cathy Velenchik.

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

JCC Annual Meeting to be held on June 5

The Jewish Community Center will host its Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 5, from 6:45-9 pm. All JCC members, friends and supporters are welcome to attend. The event is free to the community. Anyone planning on attending is requested to call the JCC office to make a reservation at 607-724-2417.

The evening will begin with a dessert buffet prepared by chef Victor Torres from 6:45-7:30 pm. From 7:30-8:30 pm, there will be a series of awards presentations honoring those individuals who went above and beyond in their service and dedication to the JCC this past year.

Two of the awards being presented are

going to longtime members of our community. Harry Cohen will be receiving the JCC Chai award for 18 years of dedicated service to the center and for the positive role he has played in the lives of thousands of children who grew up under his guidance. Rabbi Rachel Esserman will be receiving a special Presidents Tikkun Olam award

to thank her for the importance of the contribution she made to our community through her 24 years as a member of *The Reporter* staff.

The event will conclude with the swearing in of a new JCC president, Justin Salkin, and the installation of the 2025-26 JCC Board of Directors.

Information for Federation calendar due June 13

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton is collecting information for its 2025-26 calendar. Dates for meetings, events and communitywide celebrations are due by Friday, June 13, and should be e-mailed to Executive Director Shelley Hubal at director@jfgb.org. The Fed-

eration will collate the dates and make certain there are no conflicts.

"We are a small, but active, community," said Hubal. "It is important to make sure there are no conflicts, so we can all enjoy the wonderful things our community has to offer us. Also, I greatly

appreciate when people send me their changes and additions during the year, so we can keep the calendar as accurate as possible."

The calendar can be found on the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's website at www.jfgb.org/

community-calendar. "The calendar is a quick and easy way to see what is happening in the community," Hubal added. "It includes everything from lectures to board meetings. You might be surprised to see just how active our local organizations are."

Reporter wins Syracuse Press Club Award

By Reporter staff

Bill Simons won second place in the Syracuse Press Club Awards' Column category for his column "Columbia protesters chant, 'No More Money for Israel Crime.'" He wrote about the different protests and encampments against Israel that were taking place on the Columbia University campus in New York City. Simons also wrote of his visit to the area around the campus,

which gave him an opportunity to observe what was occurring. (Simons' column can be found at www.thereportergroup.org/features/columbia-protesters-chant-no-more-money-for-israel-crime.)

"I am appreciative of the recognition from the Syracuse Press Club," Simons noted. "And thanks to Rabbi [Rachel] Esserman for the editorial support and encouragement to take on diverse and challenging topics.

By visiting Columbia University in person, I had the opportunity to directly observe and converse with anti-Israel protesters, as well as with security personnel, on-lookers and other journalists. The assignment gave me the venue to grapple with an important encounter. My goal was to authentically render time, place and context as I encountered it. Anti-Israel sentiment on campus is a volatile topic with public policy impli-

cations. I strove to report what I saw, no more, no less."

"We're so pleased that Bill has won another award," said Rabbi Rachel Esserman, executive editor of The Reporter Group. "His columns are a wonderful addition to the paper. His versatility is amazing. His contributions add depth and breadth to our pages, and better allow us to cover different aspects of the greater Jewish community."

Spotlight

BU historian explores the death of Jesus

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Although many people believe the question of who was responsible for the death of Jesus had long been put to rest, disagreements about that issue have occurred in recent months, for example, with complaints that a bill against antisemitism would make it impossible for Christians to declare that the Jews killed Jesus. Entering into this debate is Binghamton University Professor Nathanael Andrade with his new book "Killing the Messiah: The Trial and Crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth."

In an e-mail interview, Andrade, who has a Ph.D. in Greek and Roman history, and was raised Catholic, noted how his curiosity brought him to the research project. "I think two factors ultimately brought me to this topic," he said. "The first is my background as a historian of the Roman Middle East

who has long reflected on how its various peoples, including Jews and Christians, navigated Roman imperialism. The second factor is that I have long had a deep curiosity about the New Testament Gospels as historical texts and their relationship to Jesus as a historical figure. This is an issue that modern scholarship has long explored and, in a variety of ways, I wanted to do some of this critical work in the hope of lending some helpful perspectives or at least coming to terms with my own understanding."

Andrade's study led him to a different conclusion than the one that appears in the Christian Gospels. "As I did my research on the Gospels and the existing scholarship on them, I grew to appreciate more and more the contemporary relevance. I became more convinced that Pontius Pilate executed Jesus because he thought Jesus had committed a

criminal offense," he said. "The Gospels' reports that he believed Jesus was innocent and had Jesus crucified only because the chief priests and a crowd at Jerusalem insisted on it distorted his role and agency in Jesus' death. This distortion is in many ways the source of the harmful view that Jews are responsible for Jesus' death, one that persists until this day."

According to Andrade, the reason behind the version told in the Gospels has more to do with Christians looking to ingratiate themselves with the Roman world and to separate themselves from those Jews who were rebelling against the empire. "I do think that a desire among members of Jesus' movement to find acceptance in the Roman empire and to distance themselves from Jewish insurgencies of the late first and second centuries is a key part of the

picture," he said. "Also, by the time the Gospels were being written, members of Jesus' movement were receiving increased scrutiny and in some cases violence from Roman magistrates, and this informs the portrayal of a Pontius Pilate who essentially considers Jesus harmless and innocent of wrongdoing. The Gospels are basically arguing that Jesus and those who accept him as a messiah, are not guilty of anything that Roman authorities would or should classify as criminal. These factors, combined with the fact that contemporary Jews mostly did not accept Jesus as their messiah, in my view govern the shift that we see in the Gospels."

Andrade noted that the original Jesus movement was a Jewish one. "For many scholars (with whom I agree), the first-century Jesus movement was a Jewish See "BU" on page 7

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Opinion

Josh Shapiro's American Passover

By Bill Simons

Saturday evening, April 12 (the 14th of Nisan, 5785), announced the arrival of Passover and the first seder. At the official residence of Governor Josh Shapiro in Harrisburg, PA, family and guests savored the *Pesach* traditions and the warmth of each other's company. The gathering provided temporary respite from the polarization and acrimony now common in American life.

A few hours after their guests departed, however, a frightening incident beset the Shapiro home. In his bylined *New York Times* opinion piece, "Finding Moral Clarity After an Arsonist's Attack," Governor Shapiro shared details of that episode. At about 2 am, shouting and door pounding roused the governor, informing him that fire in the mansion's private quarters necessitated instant departure of the family. The Shapiros, along with their two dogs, followed a uniformed officer to safety outside the residence.

After the flames were extinguished, Shapiro re-entered the residence with the Harrisburg fire chief to assess the cause and extent of the damage. Shapiro learned that the conflagration was deliberate and possessed of lethal intent.

Destruction of the building's infrastructure and historic artifacts was extensive. "It looked like a bomb had gone off in the middle of our home," stated the governor. Entering the dining room and seeing remnants of a haggadah shredded by the blast, Shapiro envisioned the seat place of each family member and guest. Come daylight, the governor and First Lady Lori Shapiro performed the difficult task of informing their four children of the planned and purposeful post-seder attack.

Violence directed against Jews on Passover has a long lineage. Mary Antin, a social reformer and memoirist whose Jewish family migrated to Boston, recalled Russians evoking the ancient libel that Jews "used the blood of murdered Christian children at the Passover festival" as pretext for pogroms. Although history and the contemporary resurgence of antisemitism provides context, there is a singularity to the Passover attack on Governor Shapiro's residence.

Despite High Holiday solemnity, Hanukkah candles and riotous Purim, it is Passover that arguably evokes the most intimate connections for American Jews. Passover

is typically a home-based, multi-generational celebration with family and special guests. Through story, prayer, parable, question, mild roguery, generosity and improvisation, a dramatic, foundational story is told through the haggadah reading. As Rabbi Adin Even-Israel Steinsaltz notes, even the Passover food possesses a distinctiveness: "There are unique tastes, smells, and sounds: the taste and smell of the matza, maror and haroset, the special foods of the festival, the cracking and crunching of the matza. All of these elements join together to form a complete performance that engages all the senses – sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste."

Beyond rules governing consumption, the Passover seder necessitates direct engagement on multiple levels. The haggadah reflects shifting moods and circumstances. It is the youngest person who asks the Four Questions. And characterizations of the Four Children (Sons) might lead to introspection. During recitation of the plagues, Egyptian suffering is recognized through droplets of wine. The children conspire to hide and ransom the *afikomen*. See "Shapiro" on page 8

The staggering hypocrisy behind Trump's deal to free the last living American hostage

By Rob Eshman

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

Seeing photos of the newly freed American-Israeli hostage Edan Alexander reuniting with his parents fills me with unadulterated joy.

But the story of how President Donald Trump's team negotiated with Hamas for the release of the 20-year-old hostage also fills me with questions.

Because at the same time Trump's administration was proudly detaining and attempting to deport strong critics of Israel, accusing them of being "agents of Hamas," the administration itself was actively dealing with actual Hamas operatives – working through a Trump supporter who is a fervid Israel critic.

According to a striking scoop detailing the negotiations from Axios, Alexander's release came about after Hamas members reached out to Bishara Bahbah, the former leader of Arab Americans for Trump.

By using Bahbah as a third-party intermediary with Trump envoy Steve Witkoff, senior Hamas officials sought

–successfully–to circumvent Israeli interference. Witkoff, via Bahbah and Qatari interlocutors, communicated to Hamas that releasing Alexander without conditions "would carry a lot of weight with Trump."

"Around 20 messages were passed between the sides in calls and texts to Bahbah over the last two weeks," Axios reported. "Bahbah also spoke to Hamas chief negotiator Khalil al-Hayya, according to a source familiar. Bahbah declined to comment."

If all this resulted in freedom for Alexander, I'm all for it. But I'm wondering if the Trump administration has any arguments that could possibly make it make sense.

Make it make sense, say, that activists are disappeared from their homes and neighborhoods for accusing Israel of genocide – when Bishara, the key Trump ally in these negotiations, posted a chart of Gaza casualties labeled "The Israeli Genocide in the Gaza Strip," to his X account on December 28, 2023, with the comment "ISRAEL'S SAVAGERY HAS NO BOUNDS!"

What has no bounds is the hypocrisy and double standards of an administration that pulls funding from universities for not cracking down on outspoken critics of Israel,

when Bahbah, who has been a Trump supporter from the beginning of his campaign, wrote on his X account, "We would rather die in Palestine than leave it to the Israelis."

Again, none of this is to say that Trump's deal to free Alexander wasn't profoundly welcome. A freed hostage is a blessing. But the process demands an answer to one crucial question: Why is it that some critics of Israel face deportation on Trump's initiative, while others, like Bahbah, become indispensable?

Bahbah, 67, is a Palestinian whose family lost property and ended up in a refugee camp following the creation of Israel. He has long supported compromise and a two-state solution, and he has a right as an American to be as harsh in his criticism of Israel as he wants. But all those other critics and protesters – Mahmoud Khalil, Badar Khan Suri, Rasha Alawieh – have the same rights.

One obvious explanation for the clear discrepancy between the administration's treatment of Bahbah and of Israel's more left-leaning critics is that it's using political dissent as an excuse to deport non-citizens because, well, it wants to deport non-citizens. Trump promised to deport See "Deal" on page 4

In My Own Words

FEMA and the reason for a federal government

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the General Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." – *The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription from the National Archives*, www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript (Italics are mine)

What are our obligations to our fellow American citizens? The Constitution says one reason for our union is to promote the general welfare, which I believe includes helping those in need; for example, those who have experienced natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, earthquakes or volcanic explosions. Are you a resident of a poor state or a rich state? That shouldn't matter because the idea is that no state is left solely to its own resources. Our taxes contribute funds to a central authority (in this case the federal government) that is supposed to help all citizens, regardless of the state in which they live or to

which political party they belong.

The idea of communal responsibility to help those in need is a very Jewish one, which is why I was so distressed to learn that the Trump administration is refusing to fund community grants offered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Those whose homes and businesses were flooded in Broome County in 2011 know the help FEMA offers. The community grants (some of which were already awarded, but which will no longer be funded) were to prevent damage from future floods and other natural disasters.

These cuts will also hinder our ability to predict upcoming weather disasters, which limits not only property damage, but saves human lives. *Pikuach nefesh*, the saving of a human life, is not only considered a fundamental Jewish principle, but one of the most important *mitzvot* (commandments) we can perform. Having trouble visualizing how these are connected? Tornado warnings can help people find a safe place to shelter. Flood warnings give people time to leave before the water reaches their area. Hurricane warnings can help people move to a safe

space and/or leave the area. *All of these warnings save lives.*

Saving the lives of our fellow citizens: that seems to me to be a fundamental purpose of our government. If the federal government is not going to provide services for U.S. citizens, then what is the reason for its existence? It certainly isn't to fund the salaries of members of Congress or the executive branch. What need is there for them if they are not concerned with helping the citizens who voted for them?

If the purpose of the Trump administration is to prevent the federal government from helping U.S. states and citizens, then we need to decide whether we should be supporting that government with our taxes. New York state is a relatively wealthy state, so we might be OK on our own, especially if the funds we now pay to Washington would go to Albany instead. I feel for those states whose citizens live in poverty and need all the help they can get. Unfortunately, the current administration thinks they'll be fine on their own, or, perhaps, really doesn't care about their welfare. The latter idea is a profoundly sad one.



Jewish Federation
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 TReporter@aol.com.

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www.thereporter.org

Inter-Sisterhood event to be held on May 28

This year's Inter-Sisterhood event will be held on Wednesday, May 28, at 7 pm, at Beth David Synagogue, 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. The event will feature two performances from Present Arts Productions. The charge for the event will be \$7 per person and can be paid at the door.



Bonnie DeForest as Sophie Lyons (Photo by Judith Present)

Present Arts Productions will present two performances written and directed by Judith Present. The first will be a dramatic reading of "Four Ways to Hide," which depicts four different characters and their particular experiences from the Holocaust. The second will feature the true story of Sophie Lyons, a Jewish pickpocket

from many years ago who "lit the criminal world on fire with her wily con-woman ways."

"The performances will be interspersed with some lively, pre-recorded klezmer music," said organizers of the event. "Of course, there will be a wonderful assortment of refreshments and lots of schmoozing as well."

In addition to the evening's entertainment, attendees will have the chance to participate in a raffle that will include gift certificates to some local restaurants, two tickets to the Binghamton Black Bears Hockey team, gift certificates for Midway Lanes Bowling alley, two three-month memberships to the Binghamton Philharmonic

Best Seat Club, Skate Estate free admission coupons, PS Restaurant gift certificates, Binghamton Rumble Ponies baseball tickets, a gift certificate to Ristorante Dell' Arco in Endwell, a gift certificate to Frank's Italian Restaurant in Maine, two tickets to the KNOW Theater, an Art and Fable 500-piece puzzle and more. "A big thank you goes out to all these local businesses that have donated!" organizers added. "A very special thank you to Michael Wright and the Eisenberg Foundation for the generous grant to help fund this event."

Organizers of this year's Inter-Sisterhood event are Eileen Miller from Beth David Synagogue, Brooke Little from Temple Israel and Helene Philips from Temple Concord.

JFS, Friendship Club to hold "Recognizing Identity Theft and Scams" seminar

Jewish Family Service, in partnership with Visions Federal Credit Union and the Friendship Club, will present a seminar titled "Recognizing Identity Theft and Scams

(especially for older adults)" on Wednesday, June 18, at 1 pm, at the Jewish Community Center. To register, visit www.jfcb.org.

"Scammers are frequently targeting older adults," said Merryl Wallach, director of JFS. "It's important to give people the skills they need to prevent identity theft and other problems caused by scams. Join us for this important program."

BD Sisterhood to hold program with Dan Miller on June 11

The final meeting of Beth David Sisterhood for the 2024-25 season will be held on Wednesday June 11, at 7 pm, at Beth David Synagogue, during which the new slate of officers will be voted upon. The evening's speaker will be local musician Dan Miller, who will present a condensed version of a lecture he prepared last fall for Lyceum about the saxophone.



Dan Miller (Photo by Eileen Miller)

one play the saxophone and have heard its distinctive sound. Learning something about the saxophone's history, how it works, what musical styles it is associated with and how it fits in the orchestra should enhance one's enjoyment of the music it makes."

Anyone on the Sisterhood's e-mail list will receive a flyer designed by Rabbi David Serkin as a reminder about the meeting. Anyone who wishes to be added to the list should e-mail address the synagogue office at bethdavid@stny.rr.com.

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

Miller is on the faculties of Binghamton University and SUNY Broome as an instructor of saxophone, and the faculty of Syracuse University as an instructor of music education.

Miller said, "It is assumed we have all seen some-

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

Stacey Silber continues to accept donations of new and used items of all types that she will attempt to sell in order to raise money for Sisterhood. Anyone with items to donate should contact Silber directly, or notify the Beth David office.

Talk about Jewish artists at Roberson at June BD Luncheon

Beth David Synagogue's next Shabbat Luncheon will be held on Saturday, June 14. Shannon Lindridge, collection director at Roberson Museum, will speak about "Jewish Artists in the Roberson Museum Collection." The talk was originally scheduled for February, but was postponed. The community is invited to attend. Morning services will begin at 9:30 am, with the luncheon and program following the conclusion of services. The luncheon is free and open to the public.

Lindridge has been researching and will speak about Jewish artists in the museum's collection. Her focus will be

on 20th century works by Jewish artists from the region, as well as from elsewhere. Handouts will be made available for all who attend.

Lindridge obtained her B.S. from SUNY Cortland with a dual major in art history and studio art with a concentration in textile, and a minor in chemistry. She has worked in a variety of departments at The Dowd Fine Arts Gallery, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, The Herbert F. Johnson Museum and The History Center of Tompkins County before joining Roberson as their collections director in 2010.

When organizers of the Beth David Luncheon speaker series reached out to Roberson's Executive Director Michael See "Artists" on page 4



An exhibit at Roberson Museum (Photo courtesy of Roberson Museum)

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:

- ◆ June 5
- ◆ June 19

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

The Reporter is offering sponsorships!

Celebrate your simcha with the community or honor your loved one.

There are four levels: Bronze \$200, Silver \$400, Gold \$600 and Platinum \$1,000.

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

DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
June 13-26.....	June 4
June 27-July 10.....	June 18
July 11-24.....	July 2
July 25-August 7.....	July 16

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

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MAY 23 - 25

FRIDAY, MAY 23

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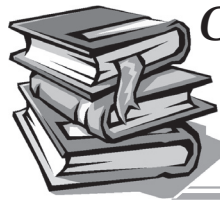
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Off the Shelf

Rituals, religious and secular

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

What exactly is a ritual? Wendy A. Horwitz contemplates that question in the introduction to her book of essays, "Milkweed and Honey Cake: A Memoir in Ritual Moments" (Red Lightening Books). The difficulty for Horwitz is that most definitions see ritual as a religious act. Although Horwitz celebrates some Jewish holidays, she doesn't believe in God – well, except for those moments when she has a spiritual experience, although she often can't define what makes the experience spiritual. Her main concern, though, are actions she believes qualify as rituals, even when they are distinctly secular in nature. The author explains the purpose of her book is to "discern and create meaning through ritual," but she notes that she does so "through the lens of my memories and observations. The essays take a deliberately personal, subjective, and idiosyncratic viewpoint." She does hope, though, that her reflections will resonate with her readers and help them engage in their own rituals – whether religious or secular in nature.

For Jewish readers, the essays on Jewish ritual may be of most interest. For example, in "It Won't Be This Simple Next Time," Horwitz discusses teaching her children the concept of *tzedakah* from the time they first began receiving an allowance. Her children were required to divide their allowance in three parts: money for spending, money for saving and money for

tzedakah. When the High Holidays arrived, the children emptied their *tzedakah* boxes and decided where the funds should go, with the adults rounding up the amount and writing the check. The author also writes of the *tzedakah* project that one child did as a mitzvah project: it raised awareness about the importance of marriage equality just before the Supreme Court declared same-gender marriage bans illegal.

When writing about "Polishing the Silver" as a ritual moment, Horwitz ties her actions to the Jewish principle of *hiddur mitzvah*, the concept of "making a ritual more beautiful than needed... for example, decorating a challah cover or Kiddush cup." However, the author sees this ritual as doing more than just creating a beautiful object for herself or her family: "Laying out the china and polishing the silver expresses some of what is good in the world, maybe providing a spark of defiance against inhumanity and cruelty. Gilding mundane acts with intention and beauty may not rectify the world's problems, but it does help us make sense of life and imbue it with meaning."

Horwitz also finds meaning in looking through the "Sacred Pages" of the folder

where she keeps her recipes, the ones given to her by relatives and friends. While she acknowledges the way that foods connected to holidays offer meaning, her real interest is in the way these writings bring memories to life. For example, handwritten recipes need to be deciphered in a different way than ones found in a cookbook: What did the person mean by the size of a potato, or how much oil or butter is enough to complete the dish? Whether making the recipes or just reading them, Horwitz is reminded of the original event where she tasted the food and her connection to the person who made the dish. She doesn't believe the same thing can be achieved with recipes printed from the Internet. It is the personal connection that matters.

The most moving essays focus on the rituals Horwitz created during the pandemic. In "Under the Tent," she writes of gathering under an open tent for an outdoor Shabbat service that offered more meaning and connection than the Zoom services she had attended. The author connects the feeling to the holiday of Sukkot and of how sitting in a sukkah reminds us of the fragility of life, something relevant to the

pandemic. She writes of creating personal and meaningful graduation events when people were unable to gather in crowds in "Graduation in a Year of Wonders," and the beauty of weddings with fewer people, but a greater focus on family and connection, in "Love in the Time of COVID." She concludes with essays focusing on death and the rituals that accompany it in "Visiting the Graves," "Writing to the Dead" and "The Last Country," which focuses on those rituals that were of help after the loss of her father.

Readers may quibble with the book's subtitle. Although Horwitz writes about her personal experiences, the collection of essays doesn't feel like a memoir. That's because huge sections of her life story are missing: for example, readers learn she's been married and divorced twice, and changed employment, but the details of what occurred are never revealed. However, those interested in ritual, rather than the author's personal life, may find ways to incorporate or consider new rituals, in addition to noting the ones they regularly practice that they never before considered sacred moments.

Artists

Grasso with their request for a presentation on Jewish artists, he indicated that this data point had not previously been recorded, but that it was a valuable one. "Given the research that Shannon is engaged in for this project," organizers say, "we hope that at a future date Roberson will consider having an exhibit focusing on these artists – that would be truly wonderful. With this lecture, we are excited to get the ball rolling in that direction!"

To date, Lindridge has found at least a dozen Jewish artists in the Roberson collection. Among them is William Zorach (1887-1966), whose "Three Graces" statue can be found in the museum's courtyard. Considered a leading figure in the art world, his works are part of collections that include the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City and the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, DC.

"We are sure," organizers said, "that Shannon's presentation will open our eyes to what is right here in our community in that gem of a museum that is Roberson!"

Beth David's luncheon speaker series takes place the second Saturday of the

Continued from page 3

month after Shabbat morning services, and is open to the community. There is no charge for the luncheon. Since the monthly series' continuation depends on the generosity of contributors, Beth David welcomes and appreciates donations to the Luncheon Fund in order to keep the program going. Donations can be made in honor of or in memory of someone, or to mark a special occasion. Those wishing an acknowledgment to be sent to the person being honored, or to the family of someone being remembered, can indicate that, along with the necessary information. Donations can be sent to Beth David Synagogue, 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905, Attention: Luncheon Fund.

Deal

a million non-citizens, and pro-Palestinian protesters with disagreeable politics, even those here completely legally, might seem like low-hanging fruit.

But it's becoming harder and harder for the administration to explain the wild contradictions in its own behavior.

Consider that on April 22, the same day that a delegation of congressional members traveled to Louisiana to demand the release of Rümeyza Öztürk – the Turkish doctoral student at Tufts University who was snatched off the street by plainclothes agents and spirited away to a detention facility for co-writing an op-ed critical of Israel – Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdul Rahman al-Thani visited the White House and met Witkoff and Trump, a discussion that led, according to Axios, to Trump tapping Bahbah as an interlocutor with Hamas.

If this double-standard spins the heads of Trump's opponents, it's become equally baffling to his die-hard supporters. Trump went behind Israel's back to cut deals with terrorists. He brought in Bahbah, whose career has been devoted to explaining what he called "the painful truth about Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian lands."

"President Trump promised to drain the swamp," said the right-wing podcaster and Trump cheerleader Ben Shapiro. "This is not, in fact, draining the swamp."

And there are yet more reasons for Trump's pro-Israel supporters to be, well, a bit anxious – even though he just achieved a major goal in securing Alexander's release. He re-opened talks with Iran for a nuclear deal, which, largely due to the foolish advocacy of those same supporters, he canceled in his first administration. He accepted a \$400 million bribe – I mean, airplane – from Qatar, Hamas' main supporters. And on his first foreign trip, to the Middle East, he's pursuing lucrative deals

with Saudi Arabia and the UAE – and has left Israel off the itinerary.

"Trump has been a friend, a strong friend to Israel," Hillel Fuld, a staunch online Israel defender, wrote on X to his 175,000 followers. "And Trump is doing some very questionable things in the past few weeks as it pertains to Israel."

Very questionable things abroad – and at home. Thankfully, for those whom Trump's administration has detained for supposed support of Hamas – while, again, directly engaging with talks with Hamas, in an unprecedented move for the U.S. government – federal judges have been thwarting their plans to undermine the First Amendment, due process and habeas corpus, protecting constitutional freedoms which in the end protect us all.

But questions about how firm, exactly, Trump's ideals are when it comes to Israel – and how arbitrarily he chooses to enforce them at home – will persist. It may be that Trump, or his people, realized that U.S. interests are not totally aligned with those of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Or that Trump is simply doing what he has always done: following the money. Or that, in the case of Alexander, he chose a diplomatic win over, say, consistency.

Thank God Alexander is free. And to those of Trump's supporters feeling newly uncertain about what his erratic Middle East decision-making might mean for them: Well, welcome to the club.

Rob Eshman is a senior columnist for the Forward. Follow him on Instagram @foodaism or email eshman@forward.com. For his food writing and recipes go to foodaism.com.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Forward. Discover more perspectives in Opinion. To contact Opinion authors, e-mail opinion@forward.com.

 Looking for this issue's "Jewish Resources"? Visit www.thereportergroup.org/jewish-online-resources to find out what's happening online."

Annual Campaign 2025

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- 3) Fill out the form in this ad and mail it to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

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Jewish Federation
of Greater Binghamton

JEWITICA cultural festival to be held on June 8

JEWITICA, the fourth annual cultural festival presented by the Jewish Community Federation of the Mohawk Valley, will be held on Sunday, June 8, from noon-6 pm, at the Jewish Community Center in Utica. The event will feature crafts, games, kosher food and music. Street parking near the festival is limited. Cars may be parked at Temple Emanu-El, 2710 Genesee St.; a free shuttle will be available.

"The smell of food and sounds of music will fill the air with local crafters selling their wares, kids playing games,

popular Jewish chefs sharing their secrets and the Jewish community of the Mohawk Valley celebrating its heritage," said organizers of the event.

Featured at the event will be Micah Siva, chef and author of "Nosh: Plant-Forward Recipes Celebrating Modern Jewish Cuisine," who will share her favorite recipes. A variety of other kosher food will be offered.

There will be musical performances by Boichik, a Syracuse Jewish rock band featuring Cantor Kari Eglash of

Temple Concord, that performs contemporary and familiar Jewish and Israeli rock music; Joe Eglash, director of the largest publisher of Jewish music in the world, Transcontinental Music; local drumming veteran John Martin; contemporary accordion music; singer/songwriter Live Noah; local trio Chap-O's playing traditional jazz from Jewish composers; and Cantor Kal Socolof.

"Come to schmooze, nosh, buy a tchotchke and enjoy!" said organizers.

Book Club announces books for 2025-26

The Book Club announced its book list for the 2025-26 season. All meetings are currently scheduled to take place on Tuesdays.

- ◆ July 1: "Going Home" by Tom Lamont (fiction)
- ◆ August 5: "On Her Own" by Lihi Lapid translated from the Hebrew by Sondra Silverston (fiction)
- ◆ September 2: "The Love Elixir of Augusta Stern" by Lynda Cohen Loigman (fiction)
- ◆ October 21: "The Whisper Sister" by Jennifer S. Brown

(fiction). The author will join the club in person.

- ◆ November 4: TBD
- ◆ December 2: "Your Presence is Mandatory" by Sasha Vasilyuk (fiction). Rabbi Rachel Esserman will lead the discussion.
- ◆ January 6: "Marjorie Morningstar" by Herman Wouk (fiction)
- ◆ February 3: "On Division" by Goldie Goldbloom (fiction)

◆ March 3: Purim. Meeting will take place later in March. Book TBD.

- ◆ April 7: "The Talented Mrs. Mandelbaum: The Rise and Fall of an American Organized Crime Boss" by Margalit Fox (non-fiction)
- ◆ May 5: "Songs for the Brokenhearted" by Ayelet Tsa- bari (fiction)
- ◆ June 2: "The Anatomy of Exile" by Zeeva Bukai (fiction)

BD dinner honored Dick Lewis



At left: Close to 100 people attended the Beth David May 4 gala dinner, during which attorney Dick Lewis received the Jack and Mary Ferber Award.



At right, l-r: Rabbi Zev and Judy Silber, Sarit and Rabbi Jared Anstandig, and Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu and his daughter, Moriah Shmaryahu.



At left: Clockwise from left: Marilyn Bell, Merri Pell-Preus and Tony Preus, Neil and Sima Auerbach, Hollie Levine, and Julie and Alan Piaker.



At right, l-r: Emily, Anna, Lori and Dick Lewis



Front row (l-r): Annette and Lawrence Wiesner, Anna Lewis, Dick Lewis and Beth David President Saba Wiesner. Back row: Andre Rosaes, Lori Lewis and Emily Lewis.



L-r: Charlie Manassee, Art Siegel, Eileen Miller, Shelley Hubal, Suzanne Holwitt and Steve Gilbert.

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Behar-Bechukotai Leviticus 25:1-27:34

The trait of fear

RABBI MOSHE SHMARYAHU, HEAD OF JEWISH STUDIES, HILLEL ACADEMY OF BROOME COUNTY

Fortunate is the man who is always afraid. (Proverbs 28 14)

There are many myths common among humans, which have nothing to do with the truth. One of the most famous myths concerns the female ostrich, who buries her head in the sand when she feels that her life is in danger. According to the myth, the female ostrich does this in order not to see the danger: she thinks that if she doesn't see the predator, the predator doesn't see her, either.

The female ostrich does bury her head in the sand when danger is approaching, but for a completely different reason. What is it? The ostrich's long neck makes it easier for its enemy to recognize, so, when the ostrich detects a predator, it immediately bends its head so that the predator mistakenly thinks that there is a rock or a bump in front of it, rather than a bird. If the ostrich had not bent its head, it would have been obvious to everyone that it was an animal

and that its life would be in danger. The ostrich's bending of its head deceives the predator. This is their defense system – camouflage from predators.

The Creator of the universe has created in almost all animals the trait of fear. The fear system is a priceless gift, since it serves as a defense and survival mechanism and, without it, life is in danger.

When a person is afraid, the body releases adrenaline. Adrenaline stimulates blood flow and a person is suddenly capable of amazing feats. For example, a person runs away from a dog and suddenly finds himself able to climb a high fence or jump to a great height, something he has never been able to do before.

The last *parasha* in the book of Leviticus is *parashat* Bechukotai. The *parasha* includes words of severe calamities that may come true if, God forbid, the Israelites violate the covenant between them and the Creator.

The purpose of all the words of calamities and curses is to arouse the person's fear of what may happen. But the purpose of fear here is not to paralyze a person, but rather to spur them to action and give them a correct view of life.

A study of the blessings reveals a very long list: blessings for peace, rain, harvest, health, happiness and many others. The list of punishments is also very long and includes war, cessation of rain, poor harvests, diseases and the like. But all the blessings and punishments mentioned are physical and concern the affairs of this world.

In his explanation of the *parasha*, Rabbi Yitzchak Abarbanel cites the words of Maimonides and expands on them: all the good deeds mentioned in the Torah are not ends in themselves, but means to reach a goal. All the good deeds and blessings are not a reward for those who do a mitzvah, but a lever for performing additional mitzvahs. See "Trait" on page 7

Congregational Notes

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism (this header block updates the current one.)

Rabbi: Leah Moser

Address: 9 Rivers Dr, Binghamton NY 13905

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

Phone: 607-723-7355

Office e-mail: TempleConcordBinghamton@gmail.com

Website: www.TempleConcord.com

Please contact Temple Concord for Zoom links.

Some services and programs are online only.

Fridays, May 23 and 30, and June 6: At 7:30 pm, Friday Shabbat services are in person, on Zoom and Facebook.com.

Saturdays, May 24 and May 31, and June 7: At 9:15 am, Torah study is in person and on Zoom, and at 10:30 am, Shabbat service, in person only.

Wednesdays, May 28, and June 4 and 11: At 5:30 pm, evening prayers in person only. At 6 pm, "Jewish Mysticism" class in person and on Zoom.

Other events:

Tuesday, Tuesday, May 27: At 7 pm, Temple Concord Annual Meeting

Sunday, June 1: From 10 am-2 pm, Sisterhood Rumage Sale. Shoppers are asked to use the Oak St. entrance.

Sunday, June 1: At 7:15 pm, Temple Concord and Temple Israel will hold a Shavuot program. It will feature lessons taught by a number of different teachers on the theme of "Zot Torat ha-Adam: How is Torah shaped by our humanity?" Those interested in attending are asked to RSVP to the temple office.

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 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.

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.

Congregation Tikkun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism

Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Tripphammer Rd. (corner of Tripphammer 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, May 23, light candles before..... 8:07 pm

Shabbat ends Saturday, May 24 9:09 pm

Friday, May 30, light candles before..... 8:13 pm

Shabbat ends Saturday, May 31 9:15 pm

Sunday, June 1, light candles before..... 8:15 pm

Monday, June 2, light candles after..... 9:16 pm

Tuesday, June 3, yom tov ends..... 9:17 pm

Friday, June 6, light candles before..... 8:18 pm

Shabbat ends Saturday, June 7 9:19 pm

Friday, June 13, light candles before..... 8:22 pm

Shabbat ends Saturday, June 14 9:23 pm

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.

On Saturday, May 24, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Leviticus 25:1-27:34 and the haftarah is Jeremiah 16:19-17:14. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:30 pm.

Monday, May 26, the office will be closed for Memorial Day.

On Friday, May 30, the minyan will be held at 7:30 pm.

On Saturday, May 31, Shacharit services will be held at 9:45 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Numbers 1:1-4:20 and the haftarah is Hosea 2:1-22. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:30 pm.

On Monday-Tuesday, June 2-3, the office will be closed for Shavuot.

On Tuesday, June 3, at 7 pm, there will be an Executive Board meeting

On Saturday, June 7, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person. The bat mitzvah of Zohar Friedman will take place during the service. The Torah portion is Numbers 4:21-7:89 and the haftarah is Judges 13:2-25. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:45 pm.

Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

Cantor: David Green

Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820

Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820

Phone: 607-432-5522

E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com

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

Religious School/Education: Religious School, for grades kindergarten through bar/bat mitzvah, meets Sunday mornings.

For the schedule of services, classes and events, contact the temple.

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated

Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045

Phone: 607-756-7181

President: 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.

TC Religious School led service



The Temple Concord Religious School finished the school year on May 3 with a class service led by the students. The service was followed by a lunch.

JFS Corner

JFS wants you to know

Community Health Survey

Broome County is asking for participation in its Community Health Survey. Anyone over 18 can participate; the information gathered will be used for Broome's Health Improvement plan. Visit bit.ly/BroomeCHA2025 to access it online, or call 607-778-3930 for a paper copy.

No cost health services

Healthy Broome will sponsor nine days of free medical, dental, vision and pet services. The event will be at SUNY Broome from August 11-20 and is a partnership with several Broome County Health services and the Army Reserve. For more details, visit <https://broomecountyny.gov/irt>.



On the Jewish food scene

What am I...

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

"What am I..." I'm betting many people can fill in the rest of that phrase. For those who can't, it should read, "What am I, chopped liver?" I've said and heard that more times than I can count, but today for the first time, I wondered where it came from. People use it when they feel overlooked or ignored, which makes chopped liver a negative thing. Yet, chopped liver used to adorn the tables of Jewish celebrations. I wondered, why chopped liver and not something else? I don't think I've ever heard anyone who wasn't Jewish say it, although my experience is not definitive. Still, I was curious because I'm interested in speech and food customs.

First, my relationship to chopped liver. As a child, I refused to eat it. I have no idea if I ever tried it or if I just looked at that grey glop and said no. However, as an adult, I finally did try it and really liked it. By this point in my life, I rarely see chopped liver at celebrations, though, and, more recently, when I do, it's usually vegetarian chopped liver.

For those unfamiliar with chopped liver (and I'm betting there are many in the younger generation who are), it's a mixture of broiled chicken livers (for liver to be kosher, you have to let the blood drain so the livers have to be broiled or grilled, rather than fried), hard boiled eggs, spices and some kind of fat. (Traditionally, that fat was usually schmaltz, also known as rendered chicken fat. Hey, no one said that traditional Jewish food was heart healthy.)

While chopped liver may be looked down upon, there is the very fancy French variation known as *pâté de foie gras*, which is made from the livers of fattened geese and duck, a procedure that is considered cruel by the animal rights establishment. Some posit that since *foie gras* is for the upper crust, chopped liver would be considered far less important, meaning that a gourmet would consider chopped liver beneath his interest. Hence, a person being compared to chopped liver.

Another theory is that chopped liver is only served as an appetizer, rather than a main course. That would make it less important than whatever meat was being served during dinner. A third theory addresses liver itself: not everyone likes liver. In fact, it's been considered part of the offal (the internal organs of an animal) that many people see as not fit to eat.

Many believe the phrase has a Yiddish-flavored cadence, meaning that it's hard to say without a typical Yiddish inflection. The articles I read seem to agree,

though, that the phrase developed in the U.S. rather than Europe. I'm guessing that the phrase is not found in Yiddish writings, but only in American ones. It may also not be as old as one might expect. The first printed record the different writers found was its use in a cartoon in a 1971 newspaper. However, that doesn't mean no one was using the phrase earlier.

I would say that we should change the phrase to reflect the fact that chopped liver is, in fact, not a bad thing, but that's just complicating matters. However, all this discussion of food is making me hungry. But, no, I am not going to make chopped liver for dinner. Not only have I never made it, it's been a while since I've even seen chicken livers in my grocery store. Yes, they used to sell a small box containing just chicken livers, maybe so people could make chopped liver without having to buy more than one chicken at a time. If, however, someone else wants to make some and share, well, I wouldn't say no.

BU.....Continued from page 1

community that recognized Jesus as a heaven-sent Messiah and was recruiting non-Jews to join it," he added. "An entirely separate Christian community had not yet taken shape. But like most Jewish communities in the Roman empire, Jesus' movement had to define its own relationship with Roman authority. In this context, the Gospels portray Jesus and his followers as in conflict with other Jews who did not embrace Jesus as the Messiah while minimizing the concerns that Jesus' messianic preaching at the Temple of Jerusalem would have raised for Roman magistrates like Pilate."

The historian views his work from a secular rather than a religious point of view, noting that his research has not had "an impact on my religious practice or orientation personally. For me, asking historical questions of the Gospels is something distinct from believing in their theological or cosmic truth (though I know that not everyone agrees). I believe that religious diversity is to be celebrated, but my views on history and politics are best described as secular, and that is the lens through which I have long evaluated the Gospels as historical texts."

SENIOR LIVING

Keep the spring in your step: good reasons to exercise after age 50

(NAPSI) – For many older adults, growing older seems to involve an inevitable loss of strength, energy and vigor – but that need not be, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The frailty and decreased energy associated with aging are largely due to muscle loss due to inactivity. And when it comes to muscle, the old saying is true: "Use it or lose it."

One of the best ways to keep muscles healthy and strong, the CDC advises, is through exercises called strength training.

Done regularly, strength training builds bone and muscle and helps to preserve strength, independence and energy. These exercises are safe and effective for women and men of all ages, including those who are not in perfect health. In fact, people with health concerns – such as arthritis or heart disease – often benefit the most from lifting weights a few times each week.

Strength training, the CDC adds, can also reduce the signs and symptoms of:

Arthritis – It reduces pain and stiffness and increases

strength and flexibility.

Diabetes – It improves glycemic control.

Osteoporosis – It builds bone density and reduces risk for falls.

Heart disease – It reduces cardiovascular risk by improving lipid profile and overall fitness.

Obesity – It increases metabolism, which helps burn more calories and helps with long-term weight control.

Back pain – It strengthens back and abdominal muscles to reduce stress on the spine.

What's more, studies have shown that people who exercise regularly sleep better and have less depression, more self-confidence and self-esteem, and a greater sense of well-being.

Trait.....Continued from page 6

After all, the reward for the mitzvahs is mainly in the next world, and it is indescribable.

The Creator of the world promises that "if you walk in my statutes," he will give peace, health, a livelihood and many other favorable conditions, with the help of which we will be able to continue our spiritual work with greater intensity and strength. Thus, we will merit the life of the next world. After all, when there is peace of mind, it is easier to advance spiritually with full strength.

On the contrary, all the evil deeds mentioned in the Torah are not punishments for the actual transgressions, but rather their purpose is to constitute annoyances and obstacles to the fulfillment of the mitzvahs. In other words, we will not have a free heart and a healthy body to fulfill the Torah and its mitzvahs, and thus we will not merit the life of the next world. That is because we will not have the peace of mind and the comfortable conditions to advance spiritually.

The choice is ours. Will we deserve all the blessings? It is not for nothing that King Solomon says, "Fortunate is the man who is always afraid." (Proverbs 28) Yes, when a person channels fear into spiritual progress, blessed is he and blessed is his portion.

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Nostalgia in the form of rich dairy on Shavuot

By Ethel G. Hofman

(JNS) – It was a typical one-hour flight from Edinburgh to Shetland; tea and biscuits (cookies) were served by a smiling tartan-clad stewardess. My heart flipped as the little Saab plane bumped over the landing strip. Ocean waves lapped up almost to the edges of the runway. As I clung to the rail of a rickety stairway to descend onto the tarmac, I inhaled the familiar salty air deep into my lungs.

This was Sumburgh Airport, Shetland – the most northerly commercial airport in the United Kingdom. Although I've spent a lifetime in the United States, this is still home.

I'm grateful for having grown up Jewish on this remote island. I learned the value of respect and caring within a Christian community – one where extended family included "Granny Hunter, Auntie Joanne, Uncle Johnny," and playmates who became close as cousins. My parents, who assimilated socially, made sure I was immersed in my Jewish heritage. Friday morning was abuzz with cooking and cleaning, newspapers spread on the scrubbed kitchen floor, tall brass candlesticks polished to light on Shabbat and always a chicken simmering in a pot ready for kneidlach (matzah balls) to be dropped in.

For my mother, cooking for Shavuot was easy. Even during the starkness of World War II, there were plenty of fresh local dairy ingredients – eggs, butter, cheeses, milk and cream – all delivered daily to our front door. In fact, many of our weekday, dairy dishes, like baked rice puddings and fish pies, fit right in with Shavuot, the holiday that commemorates the giving of the Torah to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai more than 3,300 years ago.

Shavuot begins this year on the evening of June 1, the fifth of Sivan, right after Shabbat. It's customary to serve dairy meals during the two-day festival (one day in Israel). Some scholars claim that spring harvest festivals usually feature dairy dishes because cheese was produced during this season. Others take the practice directly from scripture saying we eat dairy to symbolize the "land flowing with milk and honey."

During visits to longtime friends, besides laughter and memories, I brought back ideas and recipes, perfect to serve during Shavuot. Salmon and Haddock Pie was on the table in less than half an hour, using chunks of ocean-fresh fish in a milk gravy studded with green peas and a mashed-potato crust. Creamed mushrooms on slabs of homemade bread served as a late supper – the perfect way to finish leftover Shabbat challah. Boiled Fruit Loaf, a childhood favorite, is mixed in one pot. Checking my mother's recipe, I tweaked it to reduce the sugar without sacrificing the rich fruit and spice flavors. In my house, Mondays were laundry days, and creamy rice pudding was the reward at supertime. Make one or all, and enjoy!

Salmon and Haddock Pie (Dairy)

Serves 4

Cook's tip: Substitute any white fish for

haddock (cod, for example).

1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
½ medium onion, thinly sliced
1 rib celery, cut into ¼-inch slices
6 oz. skinless salmon, cut into 1-inch chunks
6-8 oz. haddock, cut into 1-inch chunks
½ tsp. each salt and fresh ground pepper
¼ cups milk
1 Tbsp. butter or margarine, softened
1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
1 cup green peas
3 cups mashed potatoes
Paprika to sprinkle (optional)

Heat the vegetable oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion and celery. Cook 5 minutes or until beginning to soften.

Add the salmon, haddock, salt and pepper. Pour the milk over and stir gently. Cover and bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium. Cook for 15 minutes, or until the fish begins to flake.

Meanwhile, combine the butter and flour, mixing to a smooth paste. Drop a teaspoon at a time into the simmering liquid, stirring constantly. The mixture will begin to thicken. Stir in the peas.

Cook, simmering, for 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer to an ovenproof casserole. Spoon mashed potatoes over. Heat in the microwave for 3 to 4 minutes until hot.

Sprinkle with paprika and serve.

Creamed Mushrooms on Toasted Challah (Dairy)

Serves 4

Cook's tip: No challah? Toasted Kaiser rolls or thickly sliced bread work just as well.

2 Tbsp. butter or margarine
1 small onion, thinly sliced
1 ½ cups thinly sliced white mushrooms
1 ½ cups sour cream
Freshly ground pepper to taste
4 slices of toasted challah about ½-inch thick

In a medium skillet, melt butter over medium heat.

Add the onions and cook until softened. Stir in the mushrooms. Reduce heat. Cover and simmer 5 minutes longer. Remove from heat. Stir in the sour cream.

Season to taste with pepper.

Spoon onto toasted challah and serve at once.

Cucumber and Radish Salad With Lemon Zest (Dairy)

Serves 4-6

Cook's tip: For a creamy texture and a few more calories, use ½ cup low-fat sour cream and ½ cup plain yogurt.

1 cup plain yogurt
1 Tbsp. lemon zest
1 Tbsp. rice vinegar
½ tsp. freshly ground pepper
2 cucumbers, unpeeled, thinly sliced
1 bunch of red radishes, trimmed and thinly sliced
½ cup golden raisins

In a medium bowl, combine the yogurt, lemon zest, vinegar and pepper.

Add the remaining ingredients and toss to mix.

Serve chilled.

Boiled Fruit Loaf (Dairy)

Makes 8-10 slices

Cook's tips:

◆ Use a mixture of any dried fruits such as raisins, currants, dried cranberries and a handful of shredded coconut; whatever you have on hand.

◆ To make self-rising flour, add 2 teaspoons of baking powder to 1 cup of all-purpose flour.

◆ Don't be afraid of substituting favorite spices – pumpkin spice, Chinese Five Spice – but go easy on ground cloves.

2 cups dried fruits

½ cup sugar

1½ cups milk

2 Tbsp. butter

1 tsp. baking soda

1 egg, lightly beaten

1¾ cups self-rising flour

1 tsp. cinnamon

½ tsp. ground nutmeg

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a loaf pan, 9x5x3 inches, with nonstick vegetable spray.

In a medium saucepan, combine the dried fruits, sugar, milk, butter and baking soda. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring often.

Lower to simmer and cook for 5 minutes or until dark and beginning to be syrupy. Remove from heat. Set aside to cool completely.

After the mixture has cooled, whisk in the egg and spices, then add the flour gradually, ½ cup at a time. Transfer to prepared loaf pan. Bake in preheated oven 45-50 minutes or until a skewer comes out clean when inserted.

Cool, slice and enjoy. Freezes well.

Ma's Stovetop Rice Pudding (Dairy)

Serves 4-6

Cook's tips:

◆ Best made in a double boiler but may use a heavy-bottomed saucepan, stirring often.

◆ May use low-fat milk.

◆ Add ¼ teaspoon orange or vanilla extract.

½ cup rice

4 cups milk

¼ cup sugar

2 tsp. unsalted butter

½ cup dark raisins

Place all ingredients in a double boiler. Stir to mix.

Cover and cook over the lowest heat for 1½ hours, or until thick and creamy. Stir often.

Check the water in the lower pot of the double boiler, adding more water as needed.

Serve warm or at room temperature.

Ethel G. Hofman is a syndicated American Jewish food and travel columnist, author and culinary consultant.

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When an exterior door is open, it might appear that a sip has been taken from the Cup of Elijah. A Simons seder tradition invites competition to determine who can read "Chad Gadya" the fastest. The tale of Hebrew emancipation from Egyptian slavery is narrated with dramatic power. Participants are under injunction to consider themselves as part of the generation liberated from bondage and to offer thanks to God. According to the Steinsaltz Haggadah, "The Passover seder is in general an act of transferring memory from the older generation to the younger one."

Undoubtedly, most seders, including the Shapiro's, feature many of the preceding attributes. That commonality makes the post-seder attack on the Shapiro residence relatable, even personal.

Monday, April 14, brought an arrest. A tip by a former domestic partner, surveillance footage and confession confirmed 38-year-old Cody Balmer – possessed of a troubled past, mental health problem, and allegations of multiple assaults – as the culprit. He was charged with terrorism and attempted murder. Video shows Balmer hopping a fence, breaking windows, wielding a hammer and employing incendiaries to ignite two fires in the Shapiro residence before escaping. Balmer told police he hated Shapiro and was prepared to beat him with the hammer.

Announcing his participation in a second night Passover seder from a smashed window that Balmer had used to gain entry to the governor's mansion, Shapiro made clear that he will continue to publicly affirm his Jewish background.

Pennsylvania gave birth to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. As an heir to that legacy, Shapiro will stand strong against any attempt to employ violence for purposes of intimidation. The governor previously demonstrated this on July 13, 2024, when then former and future President Donald Trump faced an assassina-

tion attempt in Butler, PA. Insistent that the rule of law applies to all, Shapiro projects a strong unifying role.

When Shapiro discusses his Jewish faith publicly, he does so because he believes it makes it easier for other individuals to openly discuss their differences and similarities. Evoking Pennsylvania founder William Penn's commitment to tolerance and diversity, the governor recounted Muslims and Christians sharing their deepest concerns with him after watching a video of the Shapiro family observing Shabbat. Shapiro mentions several good dialogues in the Pennsylvania hinterland that jump-started with respectful exchanges about diversity: "Let me tell you what it's like on Sunday afternoon when I come home from church." "Let me tell you what it's like on Christmas Eve." Let me tell you about our Iftar dinners that we have during Ramadan."

Currently, Shapiro is best known outside of Pennsylvania for demonstrating the nuts-and-bolts management skills that reopened a damaged section of Interstate (highway) 95 far ahead of schedule, receiving serious consideration as the 2024 Democratic vice-presidential nominee and his leadership following the Passover attack on the governor's residence. With an orientation toward a federalism that perceives certain issues best dealt with by local authorities, Shapiro, 51, offers an alternative to Chuck Schumer, 74, the U.S. Senate minority leader, as Jewish American leadership evolves generationally.

A popular and effective governor of a key battleground state, proud of his own ethnicity and supportive of that of others, morally courageous, and telegenic, Shapiro may have an important role to play in revitalizing the civic cooperation necessary to "promote the general welfare." Josh Shapiro's Passover observance exemplifies the commitment of the nation's founders to *E Pluribus Unum* – Out of Many, One People.

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