

THE REPORTER

Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

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BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

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 on pages 6-8 of this issue of *The Reporter*.

"If you are curious about how the Federation 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.

JFS, Friendship Club to hold identity theft seminar

Jewish Family Service, in partnership with Visions Federal Credit Union and the JCC 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.jfjgb.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 luncheon talk on Jewish artists at Roberson

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 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.

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 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.

Save the date

"The Jewish Jordan" Tamir Goodman at Federation pre-Campaign event on Aug. 17

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a pre-Campaign event featuring basketball player Tamir Goodman on Sunday, August 17, at 7 pm, at the Jewish Community

Center, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal. Goodman was the first Jewish athlete to play Division I college and professional basketball while wearing a yarmulke and observing Shabbat.

"We are so lucky to host Tamir as our

speaker for this special Federation event," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "Tamir has an inspirational story of faith and commitment. We are excited to engage him as our early Campaign

speaker. Join us for what is sure to be a meaningful event."

More information about the event and an interview of Goodman will appear in a future edition of *The Reporter*.

Federation Alert

Federation supports a NY State Holocaust Memorial

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton was approached by the Capital District Jewish Holocaust Memorial organization (www.cdjhm.org), which is working to create a permanent New York State Holocaust Memorial, to write a letter to the New York state legislature in support of a memorial. Below is the letter the Federation sent.

"The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton is pleased to support the efforts of the Capital District Jewish Holocaust Memorial," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "It is important to teach the next generation of citizens about the history of the Holocaust and the dangers of not standing up to hate in all its forms."

The letter sent to the New York state legislature

May 6, 2025

Mr. Dan Dembling, President

Capital District Jewish Holocaust Memorial

184 Washington Ave. Ext.

Albany, NY 12203

Dear Mr. Dembling,

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton believes in the importance of Holocaust education. We therefore ad-

vocate for the construction of a Holocaust Memorial adjacent to the NYS Museum in Albany.

Our endorsement extends to the CDJHM's legislative efforts to secure the location adjacent to the State Museum and establish the memorial as the official New York State Holocaust Memorial. We endorse a traveling "Pop-up" version of the memorial, designed for schools, synagogues, churches, and other public venues. This portable memorial will ensure that the lessons of the Holocaust reach a broader audience and engage many communities.

As time continues to pass, we see the number of first-hand accounts from survivors and rescuers diminish rapidly. With the rise of Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism, the urgency of this initiative intensifies. The need for remembrance and education is more pressing than ever.

We stand ready to assist CDJHM and know that together, we can ensure that the memory of the Holocaust is preserved and honored for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Shelley Hubal, Executive Director, Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton
Suzanne Holwitt, President, Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

Inter-sisterhood meeting



The Sisterhoods of Temple Concord, Temple Israel and Beth David Synagogue gathered at Beth David for the annual Inter-sisterhood meeting. Shown are attendees enjoying a chance to talk before the meeting began. More photos on page 5. (Photo by Cathy Velenchik)

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Jews in sports

Bill Simons takes a look at college basketball's 2024-25 season and Jewish coaches.

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Jewish food scene

A brief look at hot dogs; and a reminiscence about a recent trip to NYC's 2nd Ave. Kosher Deli.

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Federation Annual Report

The Federation Annual Report details events held and funds distributed in the last year.

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Opinion

Antisemitism is no longer just an ideology – it's an economic model

By Tehilla Shwartz Altshuler

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.

Days after Mohammed "Mo" Khan, a Temple University student, was suspended after an antisemitic altercation at a Philadelphia sports bar, he appeared on the podcast of Stew Peters.

Peters, a vocal Holocaust denier who has called for the mass deportation of Jews and refers to Zionists as a global financial cabal, bantered with Khan about "Jewish supremacy," and then rewarded him with \$100,000 in JPROOF, a cryptocurrency launched by Peters in April

that he marketed as a way to "liberate" financial systems from Rothschild-like Jewish banking influence.

The use of crypto reflects a deeper shift: antisemitism is no longer just an ideology; it is also an economic model. We are not just confronting hateful speech – we are confronting a comprehensive digital and economic system. The only meaningful response is systemic as well: a new regulatory approach that targets the monetization mechanisms, technological enablers and financial platforms that turn hate into profit.

The antisemitism of 2025 is no longer confined to fringe forums or swastikas sprayed on synagogue walls. It's live-streamed, crowdsourced and, for the first time, monetized.

And crucially, it travels faster than our capacity to respond. Welcome to the new economy of hate.

Khan ended up raising tens of thousands of dollars online – in the \$100,000 worth of JPROOF tokens offered by Peters, and also through GiveSendGo campaigns for his legal fees, relocation and mental health support, which drew support from anti-Zionist and conspiracy-driven communities.

This economy of hate does not stand alone. It is increasingly supported by a broader infrastructure of technology – just social media platforms, but also AI systems, data profiling tools and decentralized financial technologies. See "Model" on page 12

One Perspective from Israel

A plague on both your houses! An untasty tradition

JEREMY M. STAIMAN

This article originally appeared in the Times of Israel and is being reprinted with permission.

Plagues come in different shapes colors, and sizes.

Modern medicine has all but eradicated many of history's most notorious medical plagues, such as the Black Death and smallpox. Coronavirus, which claimed somewhere between five and 17 million lives, gave us a bitter taste of the chaos that a plague can inflict – even in this modern era.

The Ten Plagues, inflicted on the Egyptians during biblical times, surely rank high on the list of the world's most infamous plagues. So when it comes to the plagues at the Pesach seder, we can only begin to imagine the mayhem that was unfolding 3,335 years ago!

Of course, a major theme of the Pesach seder is remembering – and even reenacting – the Exodus story, retelling the events to our children and linking them to the origins of our tradition. Thus the emergence of playful seder practices,

such as throwing ping pong balls (for the plague of hail), releasing plastic frogs and conjuring water into blood, via the alchemy of jello powder in a cup.

In recent years, the Biblical Museum of Natural History has included a most unwelcome addition: jars of genuine kosher locusts. If ever there was a more unpalatable supplement to the evening, this is it. Given a choice between chomping on pure horseradish root or eating an overgrown insect with wings, I'll forgo the high-protein option and take the former, thank you.

In more than one seder in the course of more than one pregnancy, my son consumed locusts as part of the proceedings, much to the chagrin of his pregnant wife. Of all my failings as a father, raising someone with a penchant for munching on locusts has to be in the Top Ten.

This Pesach, we had an honored guest from the United States, my sister-in-law Liz, who was keeping a second seder. We found another woman who was also in need of a

seder, and my son hosted them both. The woman, Chantal – who was born in Morocco and has lived in the U.S. most of her life – was relieved to have some company, and not go through the hours-long ritual on her own.

We weren't sure how to break the news to her that genuine locusts would be visiting our table that night. When we finally mentioned it, we did not get the reception we anticipated.

Chantal's eyes lit up. "We used to eat those in Morocco!" she exclaimed.

We were shocked.

"We made a dish called mahena, using locusts. And my brothers liked them in their eggs." Her excitement gave us all a good laugh.

There's a famous line from Romeo and Juliet: "A plague on both your houses."

In this case, locusts are the plague, and now I can tell you of two houses that actually welcome them to the table!

In My Own Words

Random thoughts after a cemetery visit

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

This past Memorial Day weekend, I continued a tradition my mom and I started years ago: we would visit Westlawn Cemetery, stopping by her parents, my father and my little brother's graves first and then visiting family and friends located throughout the cemetery. My mom would tell me stories of people I didn't know and we would share memories of those whom we both knew.

After my mom passed away, I've continued to visit Westlawn during Memorial Day weekend. Rather than listening to her stories, I now remind myself of my connections to many people buried there, including some whose funeral I served as rabbi. The visit is always bittersweet: sorrow for those I still deeply miss, while also being reminded of the cycle of life – the older generation passes away to leave space for those who come after.

This visit made me think of something strange that has happened this year: I've been hearing my mom's voice in my head and her words coming out of my mouth. To be clear, I don't literally hear her, but rather my brain anticipates something she would have said in reaction to something I've done. The result of this might surprise those who didn't know my mom: as I find myself acting more like her, I also find myself having more fun and more enjoyment in life.

First, I should make clear that for decades I took after my father. There were times I would say something to my mom and then looked around to see if my father was in the room because those were his words, not mine, coming out

of my mouth. People who only know me as an adult might be very surprised to know that I was a *very serious*, almost solemn, child, one who didn't realize she had a sense of humor until she went to college.

But back to my mom: The first instance of my hearing my mom's voice was after I did a funeral this year. For years, I would work for the paper, then race to do a funeral and then return to work for the rest of the day. This time I decided to take the whole afternoon off. What did my mom say about that? "It's about time you used your brains." I think my decision was based on the fact I'm getting too old and too tired to push myself like that, but she made a good point.

Anyone who knew my mom also knew that she was fond of a drink. If she were still alive and at home with me, there would have to be alcohol in the house. Since the pandemic started, that is no longer true. It's not that I don't have an occasional drink (especially if I am out with a friend who is having a drink), but I don't feel the need to keep it within easy reach. The other month, I had an urge for a specific drink, though, but had resisted going to the liquor store. Then one day I was driving home and heard my mom's voice saying to me, "Cut out the crap and buy the booze." (For those who are interested, I bought two mini bottles of Disaronno, an after-dinner liquor that a friend refers to as a sickly, sweet, awful excuse for alcohol. Some folks drink it on the rocks, but I prefer to drink it room temperature so I

can feel its warmth flooding my chest when I swallow it.)

I've also found my mom's words coming out of my mouth. Since my mother could be blunt and was not particularly politically correct, I've been losing count of the times another friend exclaimed, "Rachel!" when I said something that shocked her. (My friend is a bit more circumspect with her comments.) Actually, that was something my whole family did: while I was growing up, we said things out loud that other people might think, but wouldn't say. I joke that I grew up pretty much embarrassment proof because that made life with my mom easier. I have, however, learned to be more careful of my words. For example, if I don't like a book or a movie, I'll say it's not to my taste. My mom would quickly rip it apart in such a way that made it almost impossible for you to appreciate it. That's one part of her I prefer not to emulate.

However, there are many good parts of my mom to emulate. As I wrote above, I was a very serious child who was easily upset and took everything to heart. My mother would tell me that I needed to grow a tougher skin, something I've developed for my own sanity, although, at times, it still becomes far too permeable when I'm doing a funeral. She would also ask, "What is the purpose of life?" Her answer? "To have fun!" I try to follow that statement as much as possible, although it is still not always easy for me. But it's good to have something to which you aspire. For me, being able to think about and hear my mom's voice in my head is truly a blessing.



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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

TC Sisterhood held donor program



The Temple Concord Sisterhood held its donor program on May 18. The attendees were treated to refreshments and a program featuring musician Greg Neff, who played music from the 1960s and '70s. He also took requests from those attending.



Greg Neff performed at the Temple Concord Sisterhood donor program.

TC Sisterhood held installation



The Temple Concord Sisterhood held its installation on May 16. Shown are board members and Sisterhood members who participated in the service. Changes were made to the Temple Concord Sisterhood Board of Directors before the installation. (For a complete listing, see the May 9 issue of the paper.) These changes include Sylvia Diamond, Nominating Committee chairwoman; and Alycia Harris, rummage sale co-chairwoman.

Jews in Sports

Gold and Golden: Jewish basketball, 2024-25

BILL SIMONS

Basketball has long had a strong appeal to Jews. As players, coaches, referees, owners, promoters, pundits and fans, they have had a significant basketball presence since James Naismith invented the game at the International YMCA in Springfield, MA, in 1891. The great wave of East European Jews arrived in New York and other urban centers just as basketball emerged as the quintessential city game. Unlike baseball and football, it didn't require much equipment or space. A compact gym or a patch of asphalt provided a sufficient setting for a game of hoops. Basketball's frenetic pace and strategizing found eager adherents among the children of Jewish immigrants. As the game grew from playground and settlement house courts to public school, college and professional venues, the Jewish basketball profile evolved, but remained vital. Indeed, an American Jewish basketball star, Tal Brody, grew Israeli basketball.

In the first generation of the National Basketball Association, there were several star Jewish players, headlined by Dolph Schayes and Max Zaslofsky. Three Jews – Maurice Podoloff, David Stern and Adam Silver – have served as commissioner of the NBA. Two landsman named Red, Auerbach and Holzman, rank amongst the pro game's greatest coaches. Today, Jews are more notable as NBA executives, owners and commentators than as players. However, 6'9" Portland Trail Blazer forward Deni Avdija, an Israeli native, averaged 16.9 points per game this season, giving Jews an NBA standard bearer. In the college ranks, Jewish players Blake Peters, Ben Shtolzberg, Sam Silverstein, Danny Wolf and Harrison Hochberg just concluded notable seasons. However, the most memorable achievements in 2024-25 Jewish basketball came from the coaches in the college game.

Save for the National Football League Super Bowl, its actual play confined to a single day, the NCAA Division I men's basketball national championship tournament – March Madness – is sport's most hyped and compelling drama. Dominating fan attention for about a month, March Madness includes a women's tournament that grows geometrically more significant by the year. University of Southern California coach Lindsay Gottlieb, a Northern California Jewish Sports Hall of Fame inductee, made it to the women's 2025 Elite Eight. Remarkably, on the men's side in this season's vaunted Final Four competition three teams were led by Jewish coaches – Jon Scheyer, Bruce Pearl and Todd Golden.

More than a sobriquet, March Madness is a state of mind. With both the men's and women's tournaments featuring 68 teams representing diverse regions, campuses across the country erupt in excitement. As a single-elimination tournament, every game counts. The NCAA basketball playoffs regularly witness the stunning elimination of heavy favorites and the dramatic emergence of Cinderella stories. The organization of competition around visual brackets, starting with all 68 teams and winnowing the field down game-by-game until two teams compete for the championship, makes tournament progress easy to follow. New developments, amongst them the player transfer portal, the See "Golden" on page 11

OF NOTE

Salomons

Noah Salomons, son of Dr. David and Linda Salomons, is engaged to Isabelle "Izzie" Stevens, daughter of Norma and Eric Stevens of Baltimore, MD. The couple, both software engineers and graduates of the University of Maryland, currently reside in Arlington, VA, but will be moving to Chicago, IL, in late July. No wedding date has been announced yet.



Noah Salomons and Isabelle "Izzie" Stevens

Yonaty

Inessa Yonaty was named 2025 Entrepreneur of the Year by the Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce. Yonaty is the owner of The Goldsmith. According to the Chamber, "the Entrepreneur of the Year exemplifies leadership and entrepreneurial skills. They show a willingness to take risks and demonstrate exceptional vision that contributes to business success. This person exhibits personal drive, focus, innovation and business acumen."

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of **Stephen A. and Marcia Sutter**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Barbara Krongold** on the death of her mother, **Elinor S. Van Atta**

DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
June 27-July 10	June 18
July 11-24	July 2
July 25-August 7	July 16
August 8-21	July 30

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

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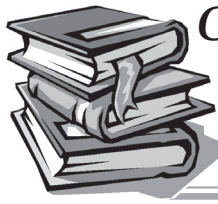
EPAC Rep. Co. **THE HOUSE OF BLUE LEAVES** by John Guare **June 13-15**

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Off the Shelf

Challenging and rewriting the biblical text

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Ever really look forward to a book and have a mixed reaction after finishing it? That's what occurred while reading "Smashing the Tablets: Radical Retelling of the Hebrew Bible" edited by Sara Lippmann and Seth Rogoff (Excelsior Editions). I find different interpretations of the biblical stories fascinating and the work's title suggested that its stories would be challenging and controversial, something that did prove to be true. The list of authors included was impressive because it featured many authors whose works I've enjoyed and reviewed in this column.

Its forward offers Shalom Auslander's very funny commentary on the Hebrew Bible. Auslander believes the Bible's true title should be "The Very Good God." However, he notes that the story goes "awry" when humans entered the picture. For him, the text portrays how this very good God must deal with a group of awful, stubborn, ungrateful humans, something Auslander thinks is not only an inaccurate portrait of the world, but one that needs to be changed. He sees "Smashing the Tablets" as offering a new and improved version of the work.

The editors agree that writers and readers need to push back against traditional interpretations of the text. This means recreating the stories in ways that are very different from traditional commentary. Their purpose is to make the text relevant to contemporary times and to include those whom the traditional readings overlooked. They believe the many gaps in the biblical narrative allow

for this creative activity. While readers might say that is also true for some traditional interpretations and rabbinic *midrash* (stories), the works included here often stray even further from the text.

As with almost any collection, readers will have mixed feelings about the selections. If I had not known, I would not have guessed that the first few were supposed to be based or connected to the biblical text. Some offerings are short stories that transport the story into contemporary times (and often change them into almost unrecognizable versions of the original text), while others are essays in which the author writes personal reflections on how the text affected them. An excellent example of the former is Aaron Hamburger's "Mount Sinai and Me," in which he discusses his difficulties adjusting to the U.S. as an awkward day school student after his parents moved to the U.S. from Russia. He loves his studies, unlike most of his fellow students, and decides he wants to be a prophet. Hamburger writes of how that desire related not only to his schooling, but to decisions he's made through the decades about his religious practice and attachment.

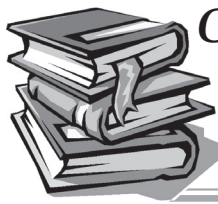
Erika Dreifus' wonderful short story "Upon the Hills with Jephthah's Daughter" tells how, in the book of Judges, Jephthah promised to sacrifice his daughter to fulfill a promise he made to God. Her version is told in the voices of Jephthah's unnamed daughter's friends. The daughter heads to the hills with her friends to come to

terms with the fact her father will kill her even though there is so much of life she has yet to experience. The twists in the story are well done and will leave readers with a sense of satisfaction not experienced when reading the original text.

Another short story that rewrites the biblical one is Steve Almond's "The Job Book." However, Almond moves his tale into contemporary times with a female substitute, Dina, for Job. The narrator is a longtime friend of Dina's who admits to not understanding why so many terrible things now affect the once blessed Dina. She does finally compare Dina's life to the book of Job and notes that as far as she is concerned God has acted like a sadist in both instances.

Other stories that stood out were Ilana Masad's lovely retelling of the book of Ruth in "Root"; a contemporary variation on the book of Esther in "Haman" by Max Gross, which features a surprise villain; and Michael David Lukas' beautifully written "Scroll of Stars," which offers a surprise, so it would be unfair to spoil it by giving away any details.

Some selections were less successful, but that doesn't mean they won't resonate with other readers. Reading them with more traditional commentary or *midrash* could make for some interesting discussions. While not everyone will appreciate the direction "Smashing the Tablets" takes, the work does show just how relevant the Bible still is in contemporary times, even if the reaction is to rebel against the teachings of the traditional text.



Off the Shelf

Four historical novels

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Biblical times

The debate continues in scholarly circles over whether the Exodus from Egypt actually occurred. For many writers that debate is irrelevant: the Exodus has inspired storytelling from ancient to contemporary times. Maggie Anton, whose novels focus on tales of little known Jewish women, now offers her view of that event. One difference between her novel and other works is that the two characters who narrate "The Midwives' Escape: From Egypt to Jericho" (Banot Press) are non-Jewish midwives, whom she calls Asenet and Shifra.

Readers of the Bible will be familiar with the name Shifra, who, with Pua, helped the newly born sons of the Israelite women survive, even though they had been commanded by Pharaoh to put them to death. Commentaries debate whether the women were Egyptians or Israelites (the text is unclear), but Anton portrays them as Egyptian with Asenet as the mother of Shifra and Pua, the latter of whom is married to an Israelite man. When the Exodus occurs, the two narrators, along with other non-Israelites, also decide to leave Egypt.

The novel follows the two women's travels and echoes parts of the biblical text. The most interesting sections, though, explore the practical aspects of the trip in which biblical writers had no interest. That includes everything from showing the Israelites taking advantage of the horses and weapons left behind by the Egyptians who died in the Red Sea to where the latrines were dug when the people camped. Anton includes characters from biblical and rabbinic tales, for example portraying Serach bat Asher (the daughter of Jacob) as still alive at the time of the Exodus, which means she was able to tell Moses where Joseph's bones were buried so they could be brought to the promised land. Also interesting are the personal interactions between Moses, Aaron and Miriam. Anton portrays Aaron as an

untrustworthy person: he sends Moses' wife away without letting her and her children see Moses. He also lies about the creation of the golden calf.

"The Midwives' Escape" is generally well done and easy to read. One quibble is that it is sometimes difficult to determine which chapters were written by Asenet and which by Shifra, meaning that readers may have to refer to the chapter's title page to know who is speaking. However, readers who enjoy novels focusing on characters from the Bible will want to add this work to their must-read pile.

Eighteenth century Italy and Egypt

Is it possible to read the sequel of a novel without having read the first work? Fortunately, Michelle Cameron offers enough detail in "Napoleon's Mirage" (She Write Press) that those who have not read her previous book, "Beyond the Ghetto Gate," will still be able to follow the plot. This novel, which takes place in 1798-99, focuses mainly on two characters, Mirelle, who is running her late father's scribal business in Acona, Italy, and Daniel, a French Jewish soldier who is taking part in Napoleon's campaign to conquer Egypt and Palestine. Mirelle and Daniel, who are cousins, met in the first book when Napoleon conquered Italy and tore down the gates of the Acona ghetto. By the end of the prior work, the two cousins were in love with each other, although neither had revealed the fact. Each wonders if the other feels the same and worries they will never meet again.

Although the Jewish population of Italy has gained equal rights under Napoleon, that is not true for Italian women. Mirelle tries to support herself by running her father's workshop, something the local rabbi opposes. Because she had fallen in love with a non-Jewish French soldier in the first novel, this connection branded her as a fallen woman in the Jewish community. Now, though, she realizes she is in love with Daniel, but he is far away and her life becomes even more difficult when a former friend turns against her.

The chapters that focus on Daniel portray his changing feelings about Napoleon as the French army fights its way through Egypt and into Palestine. He wonders if there is a reason for the campaign, especially since so many people are dying for no reason he can understand. This new Napoleon murders the innocent and acts in ways Daniel considers inappropriate. These sections do an excellent job portraying the horror, stupidity and savagery of war, while also leaving readers wondering which characters might die.

However, the character whose fate most affected me was that of Mirelle. In my review of the first novel (www.thereporter.org/executive-editor/off-the-shelf-womens-roles-and-history-by-rachel-esserman?entry=364059), I noted my lack of emotional engagement with the characters. This time I was so concerned about Mirelle's fate that I was tempted to skip ahead to the chapters featuring her story so I could learn what happened to her, something I never do. That helped make "Napoleon's Mirage" an engaging and exciting work.

Nineteenth century Palestine and Italy

When is a murder mystery not really a murder mystery? When the theological path of the deceased is far more interesting than whether he was murdered or died by suicide. In "The Renegade" by Ariel Toaff and translated

by Cristine Popple (CPL Editions), the body of Rabbi David Ajash is found under an olive tree, along with the weapon that caused his death. David – who was born in Algeria, but spent a good portion of his life in Italy – was a controversial figure. His religious explorations took him far from the approved path, partly because of his interest in not only mysticism and Kabbalah, but the radical ideas offered by messianic figures of that time. However, those living in Nablus, where he spent the last years of his life, saw him as a kind, warm human being.

Not so his son, Moise, who is called from Jerusalem for the funeral. Staying with a member of the community who fears David's death will create problems with the Ottoman government, Moise receives a manuscript taken from his father's house before the authorities could find it. The document is David's attempt at a memoir: it explains not only his life path, but his theology. Moise dislikes his father who deserted his family in Palestine to go to Italy and whose behavior was considered a disgrace by the community. Moise is also a rabbi, but one who prefers a rationalist approach to religion. Although he rejects his father's theology, he finds himself far more intrigued by David's life story than he expected.

The novel rotates narration between Moise and David, with Moise commenting on his father's memoir. At times, it's difficult to tell the two sections apart because the fonts used are so similar. However, the prose is beautiful and readers will find themselves intrigued by David's spiritual journey, even if they are not particularly interested in mysticism. Parts of the work – particularly the section dealing with the freemasons – may leave readers wondering how much of the novel is based on fact. Unfortunately, the author does not include a section noting which parts are real and which are based on his imagination.

"The Renegade" offers a portrait of someone who deviated in unusual ways from the traditional Jewish path: choosing a different spiritual path, rather than a secular one. David and Moise make excellent counterpoints as each chose to live their lives in very different ways. What does stand out is the way emotional ties – whether positive or negative – played such an important role in both men's personal and religious decision making.

Twentieth century America

Many novels about the Jewish American immigrant experience offer rags-to-riches tales or, at least, from poverty to a lower middle class comfortable existence. That is not exactly true of "Gitel's Freedom" by Iris Mitlin Lav (She Writes Press). As a young child, Gitel emigrated from Russia with her mother and five brothers to join her father in South Bend, IN, in 1911. Although her father makes a good living, Gitel's problems begin when she becomes an adult and marries.

Gitel wanted to be an all American girl, but her parents were resistant to her efforts. That included not letting her attend college. When Gitel becomes involved in the labor movement, she meets Shmuel, an Orthodox Jew whose left-wing political stands she admires. Shmuel is a pharmacist and, after they marry, opens his own store. Gitel uses her bookkeeping skills to help, but the Great Depression forces them to give up the store and Shmuel suffers several other

See "Novels" on page 12

Coming to our July 11 issue...

* The 2025 Annual

Community
Guide

the largest issue of the year,
with special dine-out and
health care sections!

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

THE
REPORTER

Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

* Issue date: July 11 • Ad deadline: July 2

Inter-sisterhood meeting held at Beth David

The Sisterhoods of Temple Concord, Temple Israel and Beth David Synagogue gathered at Beth David Synagogue for the annual Inter-sisterhood meeting. Committee members Helene Phillips, Brooke Little and Eileen Miller organized raffles and entertainment by PresentArts.



Brooke Little and Eileen Miller read a winning raffle number.



Bonnie De Forest performed as turn of the 20th century Jewish pickpocket Sophie Lyons.

At right, l-r: Performers Maryann Johnson, Rev. Norm Evans, Adam Ruff and John Montgomery read the stories of four people's experiences hiding during the Holocaust.

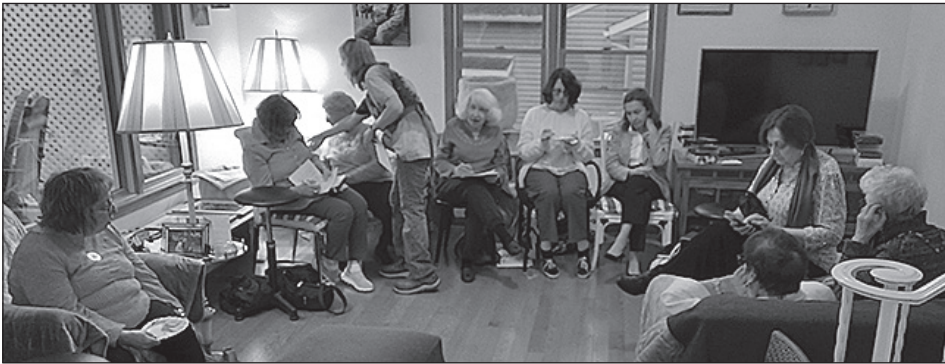


At left, l-r: Helene Phillips and Nancy Dorfman sold raffle tickets to Dora Polachek. (Photos by Cathy Velenchik)

BD Sisterhood held donor meeting

On May 14, Beth David Sisterhood held its Donor Dessert meeting. The speaker was Nancy Basmann, who exhibited some of her photographs and explained how different camera lenses are used. Basmann is a certified professional photographer and a master of photography under the auspices of Professional Photographers of America.

Her photographs appear in art books, including "The Village of Endicott, IBM and the Rust Belt" (2022), which sold out at the Roberson Museum. Her photos hang in several local businesses, and one of her images currently appears in an exhibit of the American Society of Photographers that is touring Texas galleries.



L-r: Merri Pell Preus, Susan Hubal, Ina Bellis, Nancy Basmann, Cathy Velenchik, Shelley Hubal, Saba Wiesner, Dora Polachek, Marcy Yonaty and Marti Klionsky enjoyed a casual moment at the donor meeting of Beth David Sisterhood. (Photo by Chaim Joy)



L-r: Marti Klionsky and Marcy Yonaty displayed photos that Nancy Basmann used to create an enhanced photo of Beth David Synagogue. (Photo by Dora Polachek)



L-r: Ina Bellis, Dora Polachek and Susan Hubal enjoyed dessert at the Beth David Sisterhood Donor meeting. (Photo by Chaim Joy)



Nancy Basmann (standing) spoke as (l-r) Shelley Hubal, Saba Wiesner, Dora Polachek, Marti Klionsky and Marcy Yonaty listened. (Photo by Chaim Joy)

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.

The upcoming date is:

◆ June 19

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

On the Jewish food scene

Hot dogs

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Some folks considered it sacrilege. It was definitely frowned on by New York City Jews. What could be so horrible? When I was growing up, I ate my hot dogs with ketchup and ketchup only. Before you decide this is so beyond the pale that you can't be friends with me, I now eat my hot dogs with ketchup, mustard and (if available) relish (although I didn't grow up with relish in the house and still don't have any in my refrigerator).

Although I ate hot dogs made of meat when I was young, I later began to eat non-meat ones due to dietary restrictions, although those, alas, have generally been banned from my diet because they contain more sodium than I should eat. It's not that I won't eat beef hot dogs; I just don't cook meat at home. (Trust me, you don't want to know.) Sigh, a hot dog is such an easy protein (I sometimes have difficulty getting enough protein in my diet) and I really like the way they taste. But I try to save that sodium for other treats, although I would not turn down an invitation to someone's barbecue (hint, hint) where beef hot dogs were being served.

My Grandpa Joe (my mom's father) worked for a butcher when he was young and refused to eat hot dogs. He never explained why, but I've read Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle" and have a good imagination. (In Sinclair's expose of the meat industry, he wrote about hot dogs that were partly filled with sawdust. I think, in my grandfather's case, the hot dog was probably made from

parts of the cow no one wanted to eat, or spices may have been used to disguise the taste of spoiled meat.)

What made me think about hot dogs was an article in the Noshier titled "Hot Dogs Are the Greatest American Jewish Food. Here's Why" (www.myjewishlearning.com/the-noshier/hot-dogs-are-the-greatest-american-jewish-food-heres-why). I never thought of the hot dog as a Jewish food nor have I ever pondered whether a burger is a Jewish food. (FYI: In case you are thinking of inviting me to that barbecue, I prefer hot dogs to burgers, but would eat a burger if that was all you were serving.)

The article doesn't claim that Jews invented the sausage (although there is another Jewish website that tries to find a Jewish connection to almost everyone and everything), but that it is thought that the first person to stick a sausage in a bun (so it could be eaten as a street food) was Jewish, creating what we now think of as a hot dog, even though no one called it that then. Although that hot dog was not kosher, a kosher butcher soon began selling all beef ones (although the article notes that while they picked someone as the first for this, there is no way to completely confirm that information).

While it is kind of neat to think of hot dogs as a Jewish food, it really doesn't matter if someone Jewish invented the hot dog. The hot dog, even more than the bagel, has become an all-American food, which is perfectly fine with me.

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Annual Report June 2024 through May 2025

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

Mission Statement

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton strives to create a caring, vibrant, enduring community locally, in Israel and worldwide. The Federation uses its assets and contributions to strengthen local Jewish institutions and organizations, to support Jewish people in need, and to educate the people in the Southern Tier about Jewish values and identity.

Message from Leadership

Dear Community Members,

The Jewish people around the globe have been challenged both physically and emotionally in recent years. Our collective souls remain in despair as the war in Gaza drags on. The continued captivity of the hostages, global uncertainty, campus protests, the rise in antisemitism, and political divisiveness have added to our stress.

However, amid the darkness, we have discovered the strength of our spirit as our community has come together on many occasions. Together we prayed for a peaceful resolution to the war, helped the most vulnerable among us, and worked hard to create a safe and compassionate space for the Jewish people of the Southern Tier of New York for today and for generations to come. These are the ideals that bring us strength and inspire us. These are the reasons the Federation exists, and these accomplishments are what we hope to share with you in this year's Annual Report.

We want to thank you, the community, for believing in the Jewish Federation. Every dollar you gave, every program you attended, and every time you reached out, you gave us the strength to continue to do the work of bettering our community. Let's never forget, "A community is too heavy to carry alone." (Deuteronomy Rabbah 1:10)

L'Shalom,

Shelley Hubal
Executive Director

Suzanne Holwitt
Board President

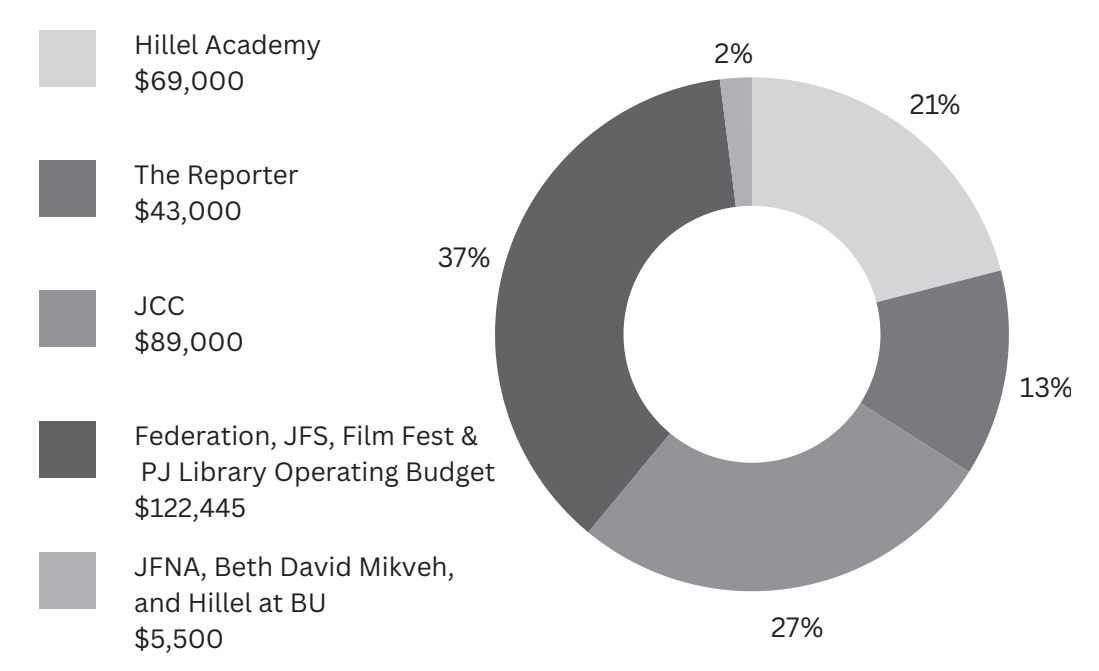


The Reporter keeps our area informed of Jewish activities, programming and important news (local, national and global). Our staff continues to find ways to remain solvent and relevant during the ongoing struggles of print media. *The Reporter* is received in more than 1,000 homes by people in 41 states. *The Reporter* Committee is also looking for ways to increase our digital presence and offer more digital opportunities to our readers. In 2024, *The Reporter* won a Syracuse Press Club award for an article by columnist Bill Simon and two American Jewish Press Club Simon Rockower Awards for Excellence in Jewish Journalism, one by columnist Bill Simon and the second by guest author Arie Ullmann. *The Reporter* staff wants to thank its loyal readers and generous supporters. We are dedicated to continuing the important work of keeping the Binghamton Jewish community connected and informed.

Federation Supported Organizations and Financials:

2024 Beneficiary Agencies & Allocation Distribution

In November of 2023, the Federation Executive Committee and Board of Directors voted to allocate a total of \$328,945 to be distributed in the calendar year 2024. These allocations supported 7 organizations plus the local Jewish Family Service, Film Fest and PJ Library programs. Funding for allocations comes from Annual Campaign dollars and the Federation endowment.



Safety & Security Committee Annual Report

As an affiliate of the Central-Western NY Region of the Secure Community Network, the Safety and Security Committee of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton maintains direct communication with regional director Mark Henderson. With the increase in global unrest, this relationship has become integral to our community's safety planning and preparation. Consultation and communication with Mark Henderson improved the day-to-day security posture of our local institutions and helped them to apply for grant funding. Additionally, the committee chairs maintained relationships with the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security, local police, state police and the Broome County Sheriff's office.

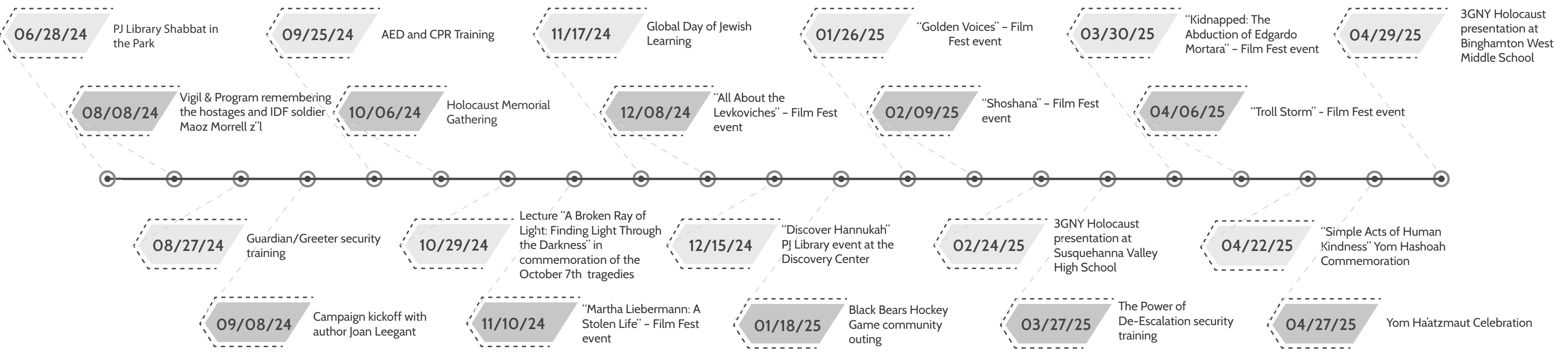
Consistent with its purpose statement, the Safety and Security Committee accomplished the following between June 2024 and May 2025:

- Established a text alert system for community leadership.
- Obtained armed security for Federation sponsored events.
- Made the safety & security committee a permanent committee of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton.
- Three community-wide security training courses were held, educating 96 community members. The trainings included a "Guardian Training"; "AED & CPR" and "The Power of De-Escalation".
- \$8,600 raised for our community security fund.
- Two staff training courses for the JCC.

"A commitment to security comes with a financial cost, but we feel it is well worth it. Behind the scenes, leadership is working hard to create an impactful security posture for the Binghamton Jewish community."
- Shelley Hubal

The Safety and Security Committee would like to thank Adam Weitsman and family for their generous support of the community's security initiatives.

Timeline of Sponsored or Co-Sponsored Events



BINGHAMTON JEWISH FILM FEST

The 2024-2025 Binghamton Jewish Film Fest consisted of 6 films. Five of these films were viewed virtually and one was an in-person screening. Our monthly screenings began in November and ended in April. The Binghamton and Ithaca communities combined for more than 294 views of our six films. Our thanks to the Victor & Esther Rozen Foundation and all our contributing members for their generous donations that helped to make the Film Fest a success.

PJ Library sends free Jewish themed children's books to families across the community every month, enabling young children to connect with their Jewish roots in a meaningful way. In the last year, we provided monthly PJ Library subscriptions to 79 young Jewish children in our community. PJ Library also sponsored three programs in the last year. Our Hannukah party at the Discovery Center had more than 75 participants. That is a great investment in our future!



Jewish Family Service

In November 2024 Jewish Family Service welcomed a new director, Merryl Wallach. We are grateful for Merryl's expert guidance as she continues the tradition of leading JFS with compassion. It is with this spirit that JFS delivers essential human services to individuals and families facing challenges to their well-being. Financial assistance is provided within specific guidelines as funding permits. It is through thoughtful listening and compassionate caring that JFS can help people move from instability to a more secure and positive place. JFS collaborates with the human service network in Broome and Tioga Counties to meet the needs of the community.

"Without the generosity of the community, JFS could not continue to do this essential work. A sincere thank you to all our donors."
-Merryl Wallach

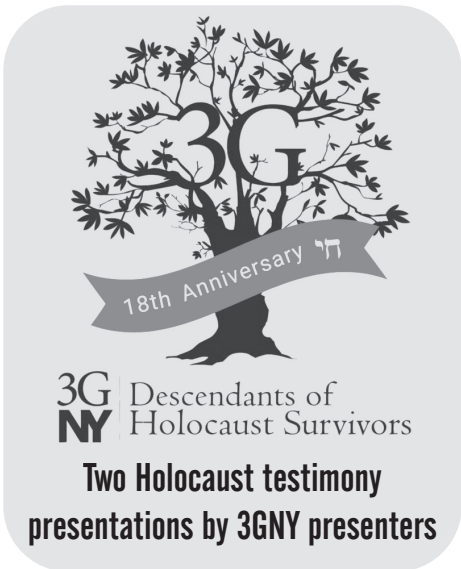
Summary of JFS support June 2024 - May 31, 2025:

- \$8,120 to Jewish families through the "We Remember You" program
- \$2,740 miscellaneous emergency financial help
- \$6,709 rent or moving assistance
- \$967 grocery assistance
- 32 emotional support calls
- 68 well check calls
- 32 referrals to food pantries
- 21 referrals to NYSEG for funding support
- \$1,962 in assistance for NYSEG bills
- 16 referrals for housing and rent support
- 3 referrals for home care
- 23 referrals for mental health support
- \$200 in gas cards for emergency travel
- 5 home visits
- 45 collaborations with other agencies
- \$850 in scholarship support

Fed By Numbers



community-wide sponsored or co-sponsored programs



\$6,709 distributed for rent or moving assistance

1,004 copies of The Reporter delivered to homes every other week



safety and security training



\$8,120 in funds distributed to Jewish families through the "We Remember You" program

6 Binghamton Jewish Film Fest screenings

79 Children receiving PJ Library books

Annual Campaign

"This year it's different" is the theme for the 2025 Annual Campaign. Whether it's the war in Gaza, the increase in antisemitism, political divisiveness or the struggle to make ends meet, "This year it's different" describes the changing times in which we are living.

Despite our challenges, one thing remains the same; we are, as always, grateful for the community's support. Every donor and volunteer makes a difference.

The Annual Campaign for 2024 raised \$279,887 from 310 donors. To date, the 2025 Campaign has raised \$251,569 from 326 donors.

A special thank you to all our generous donors and especially the David and Virginia Eisenberg Foundation. We pledge to use our precious resources to keep the Greater Binghamton community connected, safe and vibrant.



"As chair of the Federation Annual Campaign, I have the opportunity to speak with many community members and the common theme is they all care about the Binghamton Jewish community and want to see it thrive. Many thanks to each and every donor. You make our community better."

This year it's different.

-Marilyn Bell, Campaign Chair



On the Jewish food scene

Memories to make your mouth water

ROZ ANTOUN

Remember how chicken soup was served at the Concord Hotel in the Catskills back in the 60s? A waiter balancing a tray with three or more soup plates on it brought that first course. Each soup plate contained two matzah balls and a metal mug filled with soup that was set down in front of each guest. The waiter picked up the hot soup mug by the handle from the plate and poured the piping hot soup over the matzah balls. A delectable aroma arose that tickled the senses and whet each person's appetite for the food to come.

You probably know that smells can trigger powerful and vivid memories. I can attest to that as I had that experience recently when I was walking along 33rd Street off Third Avenue in Manhattan and the smell of hot corned beef filled the air. I said to my friend, "Where is that delicious smell coming from?" My friend pointed to the store we were just passing. I glanced up at the store's awning and there in what looked like Hebrew letters, but was actually English, were the words "2nd Avenue Kosher Deli." I had not thought of kosher food like that in eons because Binghamton is devoid of such places. But at that moment, I was transported back to my youth in Queens and salivating for a taste of kosher deli.

"Oh, wow," I said to my friend. Here we are scouting out restaurants, looking for good international fare and right here under our noses was this treasure. "Do you want to go in and look at the menu?" We smiled at each other and went right in.

Forgetting the menus for a moment, we just let our eyes scan the glass cases filled with foods to delight the senses of my Jewish upbringing. Chopped liver, noodle kugel, sliced corn beef, pastrami and turkey to mention just a few delicacies. But wait, how about kasha varnishkes, Nova lox and stuffed derma? And on the back shelf, fresh loaves of rye bread and challah, along with

chocolate babka and assorted cookies to raise my blood sugar.

"Let's just sit down and look the menus over," my friend said. Actually, I wasn't very hungry since I had just eaten a late breakfast, but so what? My mouth was watering and I wanted a half corned beef, half turkey sandwich on rye with Russian dressing and coleslaw, although my stomach was too full from breakfast to eat that. So, I ordered a bowl of mushroom barley soup and my friend ordered a vegetable omelette that turned out to be at least two inches high and falling over the edge of the plate.

Thinking those choices would not be too heavy and that we would come back later in the day for dinner, we realized when we saw our plates that perhaps we were wrong. In addition, I had forgotten that in a kosher deli, without ordering it separately, the waiter would bring a large dish piled high with coleslaw, dill pickles and half sour pickles, rye bread and challah. No butter, of course, not in a kosher deli, but their in-house mustard did the trick.

As we ate, a group of seven sat down adjacent to us, with four kids and three adults. They ordered chicken soup and matzah balls and a smorgasbord of sides, that included a ginormous potato pancake, two kinds of knishes, two hot dogs and French fries, a hot brisket sandwich and a roast beef sandwich. When their cole slaw and pickle plate and bread arrived, forks went a-flying. The kids were amazing to watch, wolfing in the specialties put in front of them. I expect that they were experienced kosher



Roz Antoun's attempt to duplicate the soup she saw at the 2nd Avenue Deli. (Photo courtesy Roz Antoun)

food eaters. Their excitement filled the air and added to my own joy of being in that space.

As I told you earlier, my memory of a waiter bringing the soup at the Concord was enhanced by watching the waiter serve this neighboring table. I'll call his technique the "two-fisted pour" as he filled two of the bowls simultaneously, letting the hot chicken soup cascade over the tennis ball sized matzah balls. And when the brisket and roast beef sandwiches arrived, I watched the guys engulf them like the great white shark in "Jaws." I didn't want to stare, but couldn't help myself. It was all such fun.

As we paid the bill at the register, we giggled at our obsession with this food and decided that just in case we got hungry during the day, we purchased a take-out package of a 1/4 lb. of chopped liver, a 1/4 lb. of egg salad and a huge potato knish to tide us over till our evening meal. Turns out, our eyes were bigger than our stomachs. We did nibble on the things we carried back to our place and then realized we were still filled to the brim at dinner time. So we agreed that we couldn't eat another thing. Our bellies said, "No way. Not tonight." In fact, we didn't even eat dinner that night, but enjoyed just reminiscing about the 2nd Avenue Deli.

We returned home with the promise to return ASAP. So, as soon as we got home, we booked another Manhattan stay for this summer. When we do go back, we'll be wiser knowing to go hungry to the 2nd Avenue Deli where that corned beef sandwich is waiting for me.

Jewish online resources

By Reporter staff

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

- ◆ The Noshers is offering a free download of the digital cookbook "12 Jewish Breakfasts from Around the World." The recipe collection was inspired by Jewish communities around the globe. For more information or to sign up to receive the cookbook, visit www.myjewishlearning.com/12-jewish-breakfasts-from-around-the-world.

- ◆ The Jewish Book Council will hold the virtual program "2025 Global Jewish Literary Alliance Conversation: How to Tell a Jewish Story" with Manya Wilkinson and Ayelet Tsabari on Wednesday, June 18, from noon-1 pm. Manya Wilkinson and Ayelet Tsabari will discuss "being storytellers, their journeys into the writing world, what inspires them, and how their approaches to writing differ." For more information or to register, visit www.jewishbookcouncil.org/events/2025-global-jewish-literary-alliance-conversation-how-to-tell-a-jewish-story.

- ◆ Yetzirah will hold a hybrid version of its 2025 Jewish Poetry Conference on Tuesday-Wednesday, June 24-Friday, June 27. The cost to attend depends on the number of events attended. For more information, including the schedule of events, or to register, visit <https://secure.givelively.org/event/yezirah/2025-yezirah-jewish-poetry-conference-online-event-pass>.

- ◆ My Jewish Learning is offering the eight-part e-mail series "Breaking the Glass," which offers information

"about all the rituals that are unique to Jewish weddings" and "tips for establishing a Jewish home together and special resources for interfaith couples." For more information or to register, visit www.myjewishlearning.com/sign-up-for-breaking-the-glass.

- ◆ Qesher will hold two programs in July: "A Year of Music and Food in Jewish Italy" on Sunday, July 13, at 3 pm (www.qesher.com/music-and-food-jewish-italy); and "The Jewish Metropolis: A Tour of Jewish New York through Time and Space" on Thursday, July 17, at 3 pm (www.qesher.com/jewish-new-york). The cost for general admission to either program is \$18.

- ◆ The American Jewish University will hold the virtual talk "Echoes of a Vanished World: Jewish Life and Legacy in Lithuania" with Nick Sayers on Thursday, June 26, at 3 pm. Using a blend of family history and historical analysis, Sayers will address questions about Jewish migration, resilience and tragedy. For more information or to register, visit <https://open.aju.edu/event/echoes-of-a-vanished-world-jewish-life-and-legacy-in-lithuania>.

- ◆ Roundtable will hold the virtual course "Letters from the Diaspora: A Sephardic Family in the 20th Century" on Mondays, July 7-14, from 3-4 pm. The cost to attend is \$88. The course will look at Sephardic 20th-century history through the eyes of one remarkable family. For more information or to register, visit <https://roundtable.org/live-courses/history/ottoman-jewish-life-a-family-odyssey>.

- ◆ Tikvah is offering the five-part audio series "Words That Changed the World: The Meaning of the Ten Commandments." Rabbi Meir Soloveichik will explore "the

most consequential code of ethics in history." For more information or to register, visit <https://lp.meirsoloveichik.com/words-that-changed-the-world>.

- ◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage will hold the virtual book talk "The Teacher of Auschwitz" on Tuesday, July 15, at 7 pm. The request cost to attend is \$10. Wendy Holden's novel "shines a light on a truly remarkable individual and tells the inspiring story of how he fought to protect innocence and hope amid depravity and despair." For more information or to register, visit <https://mjhnyc.org/events/teacher-of-auschwitz>.

- ◆ My Jewish Learning is offering the virtual on-demand course "Inside Jokes: Explore the Essence of Jewish Humor" taught by Andrew Silow-Carroll. The course explores "Jewish humor on a particular theme, and how that theme illuminates an aspect of the Jewish experience." For more information or to register, visit <https://my-jewish-learning.teachable.com/p/inside-jokes-jewish-humor>.

- ◆ The Jewish Grandparents Network will hold the virtual program "Connecting with Your Teen Grandchild in the Age of Social Media" on Wednesday, August 6, from 7-8 pm. The program will discuss digital literacy fundamentals and the challenges grandparents face in learning about these programs. For more information or to register, visit <https://jewishgrandparentsnetwork.org/event/connecting-with-your-teen-grandchild-in-the-age-of-social-media>.

- ◆ Tikvah Online Academy is accepting applications for its "Summer 2025 Book Clubs" for seventh- and eighth-graders. Tuition is \$100. Classes are typically 10-15 students. See "Online" on page 12



Wishing Neil Auerbach a happy 86th birthday!

Sima

Mazel tov, Brody Rosenthal, on your graduation from middle school!

Mazel tov, Tessa Rosenthal, on your graduation from elementary school!

Love you both,
Nana Nancy Bittman

Anna Grills and Evan Grills,
Mazel Tov on your graduation from Binghamton H.S.!

Love, Grandma & Poppop

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BeHa'alotcha Numbers 8:1-12:16

Reasonable or unreasonable demands?

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR, THE REPORTER GROUP

I crave pizza during Passover, even when pizza is not a regular part of my diet. I dislike matzah pizza and look forward to having a slice after the holiday. However, once Passover is over, my craving goes away. We crave things when they're missing from our lives, especially when we know we have no access to them.

Something similar happens in this week's Torah portion. In chapter 11 of Numbers, the Israelites suddenly crave meat. It's important to remember that in those days (and in many cultures today), meat was not an everyday food. That makes it even more desirable: it's normally saved for special occasions. But now meat seems vital to the Israelites, enough so that they complain to Moses about the lack of it.

What happens in this *parasha* is simple. The Israelites whine. God gets mad. Then God gives them what they want – sort of – and then punishes them for complaining. It's interesting to examine the behavior of both parties in this incident. You have to feel sorry for God, who, after performing all kinds of miracles and wonders, has to listen to the people complain about food and water, rather than remaining awe-inspired by God's deeds.

However, God seems to lack a basic understanding of human nature: grand deeds don't matter to people who are hungry and thirsty.

Consider the Israelites' side of the issue: They asked God to release them from oppression, but they didn't ask to be dragged out of Egypt. Nor was there a request to conquer a land many thought unconquerable. (This doesn't even include the long list of rules and regulations, including those about dietary customs, that were not part of their previous life and which they were now expected to obey.) Imagine their fear when God seems to forget they need food and water to exist. They have to complain to Moses, who then has to remind God about their basic needs. While they have manna, imagine having to eat the same thing for three meals a day, every day. Even if you love it, you'll get tired to it. It's basic human nature.

This reminds me of a study done in a nursing home. One group of residents was given a wide variety of services, whether they requested them or not. A second group was allowed to choose those that appealed to them. Which group was happier? Those who had control over their

lives, something the Israelites in the desert lacked. God told them what to do and when to do it, which, from the complaints we hear, left many of them dissatisfied and willing to act out.

Traditional commentary usually takes God's side in these incidents, calling the Israelites ungrateful and unreasonable. But once we look more closely at their demands, we can see that the Israelites were just demanding some control over their lives. That lesson is something to carry over into our lives. If we see someone we think is making unreasonable demands, perhaps we should stop and think about the reason behind those demands. That doesn't mean we have to give into them: after all, doing so may not be best for them or us. But considering those demands to see the fear or insecurity that may lie behind them could help us react with compassion and care. As we can see in this *parasha*, punishment did not solve the problems of the Israelites wanting/needing something different. What happened instead is the complaints stopped for a short period of time, only to reappear because the underlying problem was never resolved.

Congregational Notes

Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative
 Rabbi: Micah Friedman
 Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850
 Phone: 607-723-7461 and 607-231-3746
 Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-3:30 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm
 E-mail: office@templeisraelvestal.org
 Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org
 Service schedule: Tues., 5:30 pm; Fri., 5:30 pm; Sat., 9:30 am

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Micah Friedman via Zoom and in-person.

On Saturday, June 14, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Numbers 8:1-12:16 and the haftarah is Zechariah 2:14-4:7. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:45 pm.

On Tuesday, June 17, at 7 pm, there will be the Congregational/Board of Trustees Annual Meeting.

On Saturday, June 21, Shacharit services will be held at 9:45 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Numbers 13:1-15:41 and the haftarah is Joshua 2:1-24. The bar mitzvah of Micah Yarkoni will take place during the service. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:45 pm.

On Wednesday, June 25, at 10 am, there will be a meeting of the Ritual Committee.

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

Treasurer: Beth Herbst, 607-857-0976
 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 Schueller
 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 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY
 Phone: 607-256-1471
 Website: www.tikkunvor.org, E-mail: info@tikkunvor.org
 Presidents: Martha Armstrong and Mitch Grossman, presidents_22@tikkunvor.org
 Education Director/Admin. Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky
 Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin
 Services: All services currently on Zoom. E-mail info@tikkunvor.org for the times and links. Contemplative morning services every Tuesday from 8:30-9:30 am. Saturday mornings, Gan Shabbat and other special services at least once a month. Call for the weekly schedule.
 Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE) for second through seventh grade classes meet on Sunday mornings. Sixth and seventh grades also meet on Wednesday afternoons. Family programs for kindergarten and first grade held monthly.
 Adult Education: Offered regularly throughout the year. Check the website for details.

Friday, June 13, light candles before..... 8:22 pm
 Shabbat ends Saturday, June 14 9:23 pm
 Friday, June 20, light candles before..... 8:24 pm
 Shabbat ends Saturday, June 21 9:25 pm
 Friday, June 27, light candles before..... 8:25 pm
 Shabbat ends Saturday, June 28 9:26 pm

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
 Rabbi: Leah Moser
 Address: 9 Riverside Dr, Binghamton NY 13905
 Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm
 Phone: 607-723-7355
 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, June 13 and 20: At 7:30 pm, Friday Shabbat services are in person, on Zoom and Facebook.com.

Saturdays, June 14 and 21: At 9:15 am, Torah study is in person and on Zoom, and at 10:30 am, Shabbat service, in person only.

Wednesdays, June 18 and 25: At 5:30 pm, evening prayers in person only. At 6 pm, "Jewish Mysticism" class in person and on Zoom.

Other events:
 Saturday, June 14: From noon-6pm, Temple Concord will host a booth offering community outreach at the Pride Palooza event at Otsiningo Park. The event will feature music, food and information about community resources. Those interested in attending or helping at the booth should contact the temple office at 607-723-7355.

Tuesday, June 17: At 7 pm, the Temple Concord Social Action Committee meeting will be held in the temple library.

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.

Golden.....Continued from page 3

option of moving on to the NBA before graduation, compensation for a star's name or image, and the legalization of sports gambling, add to the drama and ubiquitous media attention attendant to the tournament.

Coaching his alma mater, Jon Scheyer, 37, is no stranger to March Madness. As a 6'5" guard, who averaged 18.2 points during his senior year, he was a key factor in Duke winning the 2010 NCAA basketball championship under legendary coach Mike Krzyzewski. He subsequently played professional basketball in Israel for Maccabi Tel Aviv. Succeeding Krzyzewski as Duke's head basketball coach three years ago, he notched a stellar 35-4 record during the 2024-2025 season. However, the quest by the Scheyer-led Duke for another championship ended with an upset 70-67 loss to Houston in the Final Four.

With a combined career coaching record of 477-224 (.680 winning percentage) at Division I Milwaukee, Tennessee and Auburn, Bruce Pearl, 65, is recognized as one of this generation's most successful and colorful college coaches. While at Tennessee, however, he ran afoul of the NCAA for an episode that began with hosting a high school prospect at a cookout and then denying it. Proud of his Jewish identity and a vocal supporter of Israel,

Pearl coached the U.S. team to a gold medal in the 2009 Maccabi Games, brought his Auburn squad to Israel for a series of exhibition games in 2022 and publicly demands the release of hostages held by Hamas. Leading Auburn to a 32-6 (.842) season record, Pearl was eliminated from the 2025 tournament by a 79-73 Final Four loss to Florida, coached by his former protégé, Todd Golden, whom Pearl coached in the Maccabiah and under whom Golden was an assistant at Auburn.

In the final game of the NCAA championship tournament, Golden's Florida Gators defeated the Houston Cougars 65-63 in a hard-fought contest. For almost all of the game – save for 64 seconds – Houston held the lead, at one juncture by 12 points, but the only score that counts is the final one. Claiming its third national title, Florida players and fans embraced the euphoria.

A youthful 39 years old in only his third season as coach of the Gators, Golden capped at 36-4 season with college basketball's ultimate prize, joining Nat Holman and Larry Brown in the pantheon of Jewish coaches to win a NCAA national championship.

The title brought Golden celebrity and gold. Florida gifted Golden with a six-year, \$40.5 million contract

extension. Player recruitment got much easier. And the Chicago Cubs, Golden's favorite baseball team, invited him to throw out the first pitch on May 13th.

Kudos aside, on September 27, 2024, charges against Golden, the married father of two, were filed with University of Florida's Title IX office. Several women made accusations of sexual harassment, including stalking, against him. The Title IX office concluded that Golden committed no offense "within a university program or activity." However, the narrow scope of the investigation doesn't preclude broader inquiry by another entity.

Picking my best Jewish basketball memory of the past season is easy. My wife Nancy and I were sitting in the bleachers with son Joe and some of the grandchildren to watch a Swampscott (MA) High School basketball game. Our prime interest was to witness the debut season of granddaughter Hannah as a varsity cheerleader. Scanning the stands, Joe recognized an older fan sitting alone. It was my Uncle Alan, who, decades before, earned plaudits for his deft ball handling as a Swampscott guard. Sliding down to his row, we joined Uncle Alan. With cheerleader Hannah working the crowd, four generations of Simons rooted Swampscott to victory.



Getting road trip ready

(NAPSI) – Here's something you should know the next time you're getting your vehicle ready for a road trip. While you may take steps to prepare for a trip – checking tire pressure and oil levels and filling the tank – there is one step that's often overlooked: checking your vehicle for open safety recalls.

There are millions of unrepaired recalls on U.S. roads today. For example, tens of millions of vehicles in the United States – across all makes and models – have unrepaired, recalled airbags. Even in a minor crash, recalled airbags that deploy can rupture and spray shrapnel into the vehicle – transforming lifesaving devices into life-threatening ones. The risk associated with defective airbags is even

greater in hot and humid conditions.

That's why it's critical that you check your vehicle for recalled airbags and get them repaired at an authorized dealer. Repairs are paid by your vehicle manufacturer, regardless of where or from whom you bought the vehicle. You can find out if your vehicle has an open recall by visiting CheckToProtect.org and entering your license plate number or Vehicle Identification Number (VIN). The 17-character VIN is located on the driver's side dashboard near the windshield and can be found on insurance and registration documents.

Before you hit the road, protect yourself and your passengers by checking your vehicle for open airbag recalls.

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Academy's new home to focus on the history and revival of the Hebrew language

By Judy Lash Balint

(JNS) – Professor Aharon Maman is confident that the Minve, the new home of the Academy of the Hebrew Language he heads, will soon take its rightful place alongside Jerusalem's principal institutions in the Government Quarter near the Knesset and within sight of the new National Library of Israel.

Maman believes Israelis sometimes take Hebrew for granted. "We speak it every day, but few know the story behind it," he told JNS in a recent interview. "We want the next generation to appreciate the miracle of its revival."

In the 72 years since its inception, the institution charged by Israeli law with preserving and adapting the Hebrew language of the Jewish state has never had a home worthy of its mission. The Academy, as it is often called, now seeks to bring Hebrew's story to the public in a more tangible way – a museum dedicated to the 3,000-year journey of the Hebrew language.

Maman, the president of the Academy of the Hebrew Language, told JNS, "We currently have a small museum, but we want to build something bigger, with sound, sight and historical objects – something that tells the story not just to Israelis, but to the world."

The proposed Minve building will help promote the dual goals of elevating and expanding the study of Hebrew while exploring its cultural significance, Maman said. He explained that the name "Minve" (pronounced Meen-vé) is an example of the work of the Academy. It's a new Hebrew word derived from *navé*, meaning home or abode, as well as pleasant and beautiful.

In addition to its public spaces, the Minve will also house the dozens of lexicographers who work in the Academy's research institutes and on its Historical Dictionary Project.

Maman described the Historical Dictionary as a monumental, ongoing project to trace the history of every Hebrew word from its earliest usage to today. "Just to give you a general idea of what we accomplished in the first 50 years of work, we have about 20 million words. So if you take that as one single dictionary, it means that you have 20 million examples. Twenty million, of course, is not a dictionary. It's a gathering of many concordances of many texts," he said.

In addition to the Historical Dictionary, the Academy publishes an average of one new dictionary per year, listing current Hebrew terms related to a particular field. Wine, diplomacy



An architectural rendering taken from the submission that won the public competition for the design of the "Minve," submitted by Mayslits Kassif Roytman Architects. (Photo courtesy of Mayslits Kassif Roytman Architects)

and computers are recent topics addressed by the Academy.

Maman noted that these were relatively small dictionaries. The fields of psychology and philosophy are still waiting to be completed, he said. More than a hundred different dictionaries are now accessible on the Academy's website. A recent example: words associated with COVID-19.

Despite its biblical roots, Hebrew has never existed in a vacuum. Foreign influence has shaped its lexicon for millennia. Words like *sus* (horse) hail from Egyptian, *heikhal* (temple) from Assyrian and Sumerian, and Sanhedrin – the supreme religious body during Temple times – comes from Greek.

Modern Hebrew, too, has absorbed influences, especially from English. English words that have filtered into common Israeli usage include *oto* (car), *kurs* (course) and internet, despite the Academy's attempt to get people to adopt *mirshetet* (derived from "reshet," meaning "net.")

Over the years, the Academy proposed Hebrew alternatives – for "babysitter" and "supermarket," for example – that just never stuck with the Israeli public.

None of that bothers Maman, who says it's a natural process of an evolving language. "Even the word academy is Greek," he explained. "We considered replacing it, but kept it for international recognition."

The word *toda* (thank you), he said, "appears over a thousand times in the sources, but its meaning shifts from 'offering' in the Bible to 'thanks' in modern Hebrew. Tracing that journey is the essence of our work."

What Hebrew lacks in word volume – it has roughly one-third the vocabulary of English – it makes up for in precision and resonance, Maman said. "We never feel limited," he said. "We have a word for everything we need."

Born in Morocco, Maman spoke the local Arabic dialect as a child and first encountered Hebrew at the age of 4 in a local Talmud Torah. After making *aliyah* at age 16 with

Online Continued from page 9

and meet for three 75-minute sessions on consecutive days, live on Zoom. For more information or to apply, visit <https://tikvah.org/toa/summer-2025>.

◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold the virtual class "Family History Today: Strategies to Analyze Endogamous DNA" on Monday, July 7, at 5 pm. A minimum donation of \$5 is requested. The talk "will discuss how best to weed out false-positive DNA Matches that test-takers from endogamous groups face daily. Participants will learn about segment analysis and threshold manipulation to determine which matches are worth pursuing." For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/event/family-history-today-2025-07-07>.

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

a desire to study math, Maman switched to the study of Hebrew language when he realized, "Hebrew is a central part of the definition of the Jewish identity. Any Jew anywhere in the world should be aware that Hebrew is part of not only his culture, but of his identity."

He won the Israel Prize for the year 2009 for his contribution to the study of Hebrew language and literature.

"Hebrew is the glue that connects us all together," Maman concluded, reflecting on the miracle of a language that returned dramatically from near extinction. "There's nothing like it anywhere else."

Model Continued from page 2

Artificial intelligence is rapidly becoming the next frontier in the war against antisemitism, enabling automated hate speech, deepfake conspiracies, personalized disinformation campaigns and algorithmic erasure of history.

Add to this the power of data analytics to micro-target Jewish individuals and communities, and we are looking at a multi-layered threat landscape that goes far beyond what traditional watchdogs are tracking.

These watchdogs tend to focus on hate speech monitoring and extremist group activity on mainstream platforms. But in 2025, antisemitism is increasingly engineered through decentralized apps, gamified tokens and synthetic media (content that has been generated or manipulated with AI). These are domains that watchdogs have yet to fully penetrate.

This new antisemitic financial landscape dissolves borders, not only between online and offline life, but between Israel and the Diaspora. What starts in an American bar ripples through Jewish communities worldwide. This fluidity is not a side effect; it is the defining feature of the age, and demands a new kind of vigilance.

The future of combatting antisemitism will not be decided in synagogues, universities or even community organizations. It is being shaped right now in rooms where technology policy is made – the AI Act in Brussels, in the content moderation rollbacks in Washington and by the disturbing regulatory silence around crypto platforms.

The battleground is institutional: Who sets the rules for what speech is monetized, what platforms remain unregulated and which forms of financial manipulation are allowed to operate unchecked. The silence around regulating hate-linked crypto assets and AI-driven propaganda systems is not neutral – it is permissive.

Traditionally, education has been upheld as the antidote to antisemitism. But in an online ecosystem where provocation is rewarded over reflection, every act of hate becomes a monetizable moment. As long as hate is not hidden but algorithmically amplified, education alone will remain siloed and insufficient.

We must pressure technology companies, policymakers, and civil society institutions to recognize this new reality – and to act accordingly: through regulation, platform accountability and investment in systemic digital literacy. Crucially, the responsibility also lies with Jewish communal leadership around the world. This moment demands more than statements and solidarity – it calls for a new strategic vision to protect Jewish life in the digital age.

This incident isn't about one student. It's a signal flare. The ecosystem of antisemitism has evolved, merging conspiracy, content, commerce and code into a seamless machine. We are no longer only fighting ignorance – we are fighting infrastructure.

Khan's podcast visit should serve as a wake-up call for how we as a society confront the evolving ecosystem of antisemitism. The fight against hate in this age requires more than outrage – it demands a rethinking of our tools, our priorities and our educational frameworks.

Education remains necessary, but it must be recalibrated. Holocaust education, for instance, cannot simply recount history; it must be reframed as a moral compass for navigating online influence, understanding algorithmic bias and resisting the gamification of hate. Without that framing, even well-intentioned education risks being drowned in the noise.

We can no longer rely on traditional models of education to inoculate us against hate. Instead, we must evolve our educational frameworks to meet the realities of this moment – teaching how antisemitism mutates, how it markets itself and how it monetizes engagement.

Before we ask what Khan should have learned, we must ask what we are failing to teach and, more importantly, what systems we are failing to regulate.

The lesson here is not just about what Khan refused to learn – it's about what the rest of us can no longer afford to ignore.

Dr. Tehilla Shwartz Altshuler is a senior fellow and the head of the Israel Democracy Institute's "Democracy in the Digital Age" program. She is an expert in technology policy and law.

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, email opinion@forward.com.

Novels Continued from page 4

setbacks, which leave Gitel not only the sole breadwinner, but with children who need her care.

The writing in "Gitel's Freedom" is plain and blunt, making the plot the most interesting part of the work. The discussions about the role *mazel* (luck) plays in one's life and if one's religious practice determines whether one succeeds or fails will be something readers will also debate. Gitel finds parts of married life unsatisfactory (which will leave readers wondering about her sexuality, something that is never resolved) and worries about the different paths her two daughters take. That raises the question of whether women, even if they are happily married, should be prepared that for the fact someday they may have to support themselves and their children through no fault of their own. Readers may find themselves debating this and other questions, which makes this work suitable for book clubs.

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