

# THE REPORTER

Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

June 16-29, 2023  
Volume LII, Number 12

BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

## Federation to hold 2023 Annual Meeting on June 21

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold its 2023 Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 21, at 7:30 pm, at the Jewish Community Center. The event will include the election of the new Board of Directors. The Federation's Annual Report will be available at the meeting in hard copy. It will also appear on the Federation website and in this issue of *The Reporter*.

"With so many events happening in our

community, we decided to not include a special program at the 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 18 community-wide programs, we hope the community will see the value in their gift to the Federation."

**Members of the Board of Directors are:**

◆ Executive Committee: Suzanne Holwitt, president; Howard Warner, immediate past

president; Mark Walker, vice president; Jeffrey Shapiro, treasurer; Lee Schechter, assistant treasurer; Eileen Miller, secretary; Charles Gilinsky, assistant secretary; Marilyn Bell, Campaign chairwoman; TBA, endowment chairman; and Randy Friedman, community relations chairman.

◆ Board members at large are Rita Bleier, Nancy Dorfman, Dennis Foreman, Sondra Foreman, Steve Gilbert, Tara Kaminsky, Barbara Mullen, Jeff Platsky, Josh Shap-

iro, Rose Shapiro, Arieh Ullmann, Cathy Velenchik and Susan Walker.

◆ Affiliate organization representatives are Sheryl Brumer (Jewish Community Center), Rebecca Kahn (*The Reporter*), Neisen Luks (Temple Concord), Arthur Seigel (Temple Israel), Rabbi Zev Silber and Benny Kellman (Beth David Synagogue), Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu (Hillel Academy) and Rabbi Aaron Slonim (Rohr Chabad Center).

## Federation to hold L'Dor V'Dor event on June 29

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a L'Dor V'Dor – Next Generation event on Thursday, June 29, beginning at 5:30 pm. Attendees will meet at a local park for a vegetarian potluck

dinner followed by a hike. For the location, more information or to make a reservation, visit [www.jfgeb.org](http://www.jfgeb.org), e-mail [director@jfgeb.org](mailto:director@jfgeb.org) or text 607-222-9026.

Shelley Hubal, executive director



of the Federation, thought an outdoor event could be a great, stress-free way for people to gather. "We hope young Jewish people living in the community will come out for this casual event," she said. "What better

way to enjoy a long summer day than to be outdoors in the long summer evening."

Hubal noted that "Our L'Dor V'Dor gatherings have been well attended. They break the myth that there are no young Jewish people living in Binghamton anymore."

## BD to offer stipend to families/individuals moving to Broome County

Saba Wiesner, Beth David Synagogue's president, has announced what the Beth David Executive Board called "a unique opportunity" for a family or individual who is willing to relocate to Broome County and become a resident. Thanks to a generous donor, a family or individuals who move to the Binghamton area will receive a monthly subsidy of up to \$500 per month per year. This \$500 can be applied to a rent

or mortgage payment. The subsidy will be provided for a maximum of three years. In return, the family or individual will be requested to become an active member of the Beth David Synagogue community. To be an active member, a male member, who is above bar mitzvah age, is asked to attend Shabbat services two or more times a month. Female members are asked to be involved in the Beth David Sisterhood.

"Our community," Wiesner noted, "offers affordable housing, no traffic, beautiful parks, a Hebrew day school, a three-hour drive to New York City and a Beth David congregation that will embrace you and your family!"

Wiesner added, "Beth David Synagogue is a warm, friendly, modern Orthodox *shul* with active members. This is a positive and exciting opportunity for both the *shul* and for

the family or individuals who are willing to become a part of the Beth David family. We are excited to hear from interested people and to welcome them to our community."

Those wishing to obtain further information should contact Beth David Synagogue by sending a letter to the synagogue at 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905, e-mailing [bethdavid@stny.rr.com](mailto:bethdavid@stny.rr.com) or calling 607-722-1793.

## The Reporter receives grant from Eisenberg Fund

By Reporter staff

*The Reporter* received a \$15,000 grant from The Community Foundation for South Central New York – David and Virginia Eisenberg Fund. The grant will

be used for general purposes.

"On behalf of the Editorial Committee, I would like to express my appreciation to the David and Virginia Eisenberg Fund," said Rebecca Goldstein Kahn, chairwoman of

*The Reporter* Editorial Committee. "Thank you for your donation. *The Reporter* will be putting your generous contribution to good use."

"We are very grateful to the Eisenberg Fund offering us money for general purposes," said Rabbi Rachel Esserman, executive editor of *The Reporter*. "Since we are a religious non-profit organization, it's difficult to find grant money because there are few foundations that give money to organizations like us for general purposes, rather than specific projects. It's wonderful that the foundation realizes the

importance of having a Jewish community newspaper in Broome County."

Esserman noted that all newspapers are having difficulty obtaining advertising, which has had a negative impact on their finances "We changed from weekly to biweekly because advertising income is down, and not just due to the pandemic," Esserman said. "Businesses are using social media to reach their customers. Many cities' secular papers are no longer daily. This trend is hard to buck so the Eisenberg Fund deserves our thanks and our readers' thanks."

## Federation held Security Seminar



Mark Henderson, the director of community security for the Jewish Community Federation of Greater Rochester, taught the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's security program "Countering Active Threat Training," which was held on June 6. See page 3 for more photos. (Photo by Hadassah Mativetsky)

## Federation still seeking 2023-24 calendar info

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton is still collecting information for its 2023-24 calendar. Dates for meetings, events and communitywide celebrations were already due, but calendar information is accepted throughout the year. Organizations who have not yet submitted dates are asked to e-mail them to Executive Director Shelley Hubal at [director@jfgeb.org](mailto:director@jfgeb.org).

"Please send us your information,"

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

Hubal added, "If you add or change dates, also let us know so we can make those changes in the calendar. Our organizations use the calendar to choose dates for events, but if it not accurate, then two events may be scheduled for the same time, forcing people to choose between them."

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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## On the Jewish food scene

# “Immersive” research in Jewish deli culture, part II

BILL SIMONS

The 35 years from the end of World War I to the end of the Korean War marked the heyday of the Jewish deli. New York City, then home to more than half of American’s Jews, was the deli capital, although areas of Jewish settlement across the U.S. had their own establishments. Proximity to the Broadway theater invested the Midtown Manhattan delis with celebrity glamor. Autographed photos of patrons from entertainment, politics and culture lined their walls. Lindy’s, the Gaiety, Reuben’s, Carnegie Deli and the Stage Delicatessen named sandwiches for their famous diners.

By the mid-1950s, the Jewish delis of New York City were in decline. Movement of Jews from the city’s boroughs to the Levittown suburbs of Long Island eroded the base of local customers. Assimilation lessened participation in ethnic culture, culinary and otherwise. Upward mobility and higher education made Jews more health conscious, lessening the appeal of fatty, salty meats. During World War II, Jewish soldiers were exposed to new foods in other regions and overseas, rendering them and their families more hospitable to other cuisines as Italian and Chinese restaurants multiplied. *Jewish Chronicle* columnist Jesse Berman observed that Jews, often found in Chinese restaurants on Christmas Eve, may prefer “a plate of moo shu chicken over... a bowl of matzah balls.” Although they kept kosher in the house, my paternal grandparents would host the extended Simons family breaking of the Yom Kippur fast at Tai Hong’s Chinese restaurant in Lynn, MA.

With the erosion of its core Jewish clientele, delis and kosher food companies attempted to woo a Gentile clientele. During the 1960s and 1970s, Levy’s (Henry S. Levy and Sons), a Brooklyn bakery specializing in seeded Jewish rye, ran a spectacularly successful advertising campaign directed at non-Jews. Designed by advertising genius Judy Protas, the iconic Levy series featured a variety of diverse ethnic and racial faces, often stereotypical, on their large billboard posters and magazine displays. Beneath photos of Native Americans, Asians, an Irish cop, an Italian woman and Blacks (even the militant Malcolm X) appeared the tagline, “You Don’t Have to Be Jewish to Love Levy’s Real Jewish Rye.” The ads spoke to an American era of assimilation, increased tolerance, intermarriage and the sharing of culture, including food, across ethnic lines. However, even with Jewish bread, pickles and other kosher products finding new adherents, the Jewish delis continued to decline.

Once home to more than 100 Jewish delicatessens, the Bronx now has but one kosher deli, the landmark Liebman’s, still at 552 West 235<sup>th</sup> St. ESPN Investigative

Producer William Weinbaum recently shared with readers of *The Riverdale Press*, a Bronx newspaper, his adventure presiding over the Liebman’s initiation of a “pair of transplanted Michiganders.” When one of the “neophytes” asked for a Cobb salad, the waiter informed him, “That’s not what you order here” – and returned with a pastrami sampler. Weinbaum reports, “To make a megillah short, both newcomers ordered pastramis on rye, and one also had matzo ball soup and a Dr. Brown’s Cel-Ray tonic (celery soda), after trying a sip. With a little kvelling and proselytizing from us, we have two new converts to the cuisine we love.”

Beyond the handful of traditional Jewish delicatessens still standing, the salted meats and pickles survive in non-ethnic restaurants, supermarkets and retro delis in suburban malls. And attempting to cash in on ethnic nostalgia, a few trendy New York City delis, including S&P and Simply Nove, have opened in recent years, appealing to childhood memories with menus highlighting sandwiches, lox, chopped liver, and black and white cookies.

During a 72-hour stint in NYC this spring, I sampled deli food in five different venues. While the open walls, pell-mell atmosphere and multi-ethnic knockoffs (chicken parmesan, burrito, deluxe ham sandwich) didn’t evoke Jewish culture, the Reuben at the Port Authority Deli was surprisingly good. Likewise, Storico, a sophisticated café with international offerings situated in the New-York Historical Society building, is clearly not a deli, but served an excellent matzah ball soup to complement its “I’ll Have What She’s Having” exhibit.

The Second Avenue Deli is renowned. Neither of its venues are still on Second Avenue, but my late Sunday afternoon dinner at the First Avenue location provided a nostalgic portal to the past. The food is still kosher and traditional. My potato knish was gigantic and delicious. Stopping by tables, the owner kibitzed with regulars and newcomers. Second Avenue lore tells that diners start as customers and become friends whose bar mitzvahs, weddings and funerals are attended.

At Junior’s 49<sup>th</sup> Street location, I consumed a large slice of arguably the best cheesecake in the city, which traces its origins to Harry Rosen’s eatery on Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn. My Jewish deli research also took me to the 45<sup>th</sup> Street Junior’s in the heart of the theater district. Junior’s is not a kosher deli, evidenced by the fried shrimp, Virginia ham and cheeseburger options. Nonetheless, the menu and ambience retain a Jewish resonance, and I ordered tradi-

tional: large corned beef sandwich on rye, kosher pickles, coleslaw and Dr. Brown’s Cel-Ray soda. Two young women to my immediate right ordered the Cobb salad, verboten at Liebman’s. The customer demographics were ethnically eclectic. The bartender, Phil Whitney, 6 foot plus, muscular, charming and Black, took drink and food orders, while deftly supervising several waiters. He addressed regulars by their first names, some of whom worked in the performing arts. Phil himself has appeared in small TV soap opera roles. From his smart phone, Phil showed me a video of his son’s first collegiate home run. The comradery and food were welcoming.

Reflecting on the deli experience at Junior’s, a quote from satirist Lenny Bruce came to mind: “If you live in New York, you’re Jewish.” The adage is correct, but incomplete, “If you live in New York, you’re Jewish, Black, Latinx, Asian, Italian, Irish...”

At its best, New York, a diverse city since its inception, is a place where groups share their music, vernacular, fashion, style, wit, sensibility and food, including still evolving deli fare.

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

## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

### Hezbollah-supporting “sanctions evasion network” cited

In a recent announcement, the U.S. Treasury Department designated a “global sanctions evasion network” supporting Hezbollah with the U.S. State Department re-advertising a \$10 million reward for information about Hezbollah’s “financial mechanisms.” The latter specified information about Nazem Said Ahmad, a “specially designated global terrorist.” The two departments – working with the Departments of Justice, Homeland Security and Commerce, and with the United Kingdom – noted that the evasion network “facilitates the payment, shipment and delivery of cash, art and luxury goods” for Hezbollah’s benefit. Ahmad, who owns a large art collection and has “blood diamond” trade ties, is reported to be a top Hezbollah donor.

## Opinion

### In My Own Words

## Asking the wrong question

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Every major newspaper in the United States offered details about the deal President Joe Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy reached to prevent the United States from defaulting for the first time in the history of our country. The questions and the tone of many of the headlines were disturbing. The first one I saw asked, “Who won?” Other headlines featured a variation on this theme, with writers disagreeing on which side proved to be more powerful and how the deal would affect the dealmakers’ standing

### Addendum

The soccer exhibition mentioned in “Soccer memories of Zurich” by Arieh Ullmann, which appeared on page 1 in the June 2 issue of *The Reporter*, was housed in the museum of FC Zurich, a professional soccer club. FC Zurich and FC Hakoah have maintained a friendship that is decades-old, which contrasts with the antisemitism harbored by the leadership of the other professional soccer club in Zurich.

in their political party.

I found those headlines disturbing because they clearly show a major problem occurring within our political system. The running of our country is not a contest that someone wins or loses. The potential default and financial ruin of our nation should not be considered a game of chicken with each side waiting to see who yields first. Our government’s programs – programs that have a profound influence on people’s lives – should not be part of a contest to see who blinks first. Our representatives are supposed to be working together for the good of our country, not hoping to make points with members of their political party. A good outcome for our country is a win for *everyone*.

When did compromise for the good of all become an insult? How did being willing to make concessions that help our citizens become an affront? The extremists on both sides seem to think that they hold the sole truth about all our needs, even when a majority of our citizens disagree with them. Didn’t get everything you wanted in a deal?

Welcome to the real world – a world where considering the greater good should be more important than achieving any of your individual desires.

What is horrifying is that a good deal of what occurred was not based on principle, but the idea that Party A should never vote for anything that Party B wants, even if it helps their constituents. Personal attacks have replaced civility. Some representatives seem more concerned with personal power – especially the power to thwart others – than with actually accomplishing something meaningful.

This needs to stop and stop *now*. Those working in government should be working together for the good of our society. I can’t repeat this too many times because so many people in politics don’t seem to understand the idea: the good of our country is *more important* than any political party or any individual government representative. Let me say this in a different way: Stop the nonsense and take care of business. And that means *all of you* in every political party and of every political stance.



**Jewish Federation**  
of Greater Binghamton

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## THE REPORTER

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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 weekly deadline is noon, Wednesday, for the following week’s newspaper.

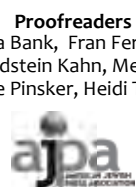
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www.thereporter.org

# The Wholesale Klezmer Band at Cranberry Coffeehouse on June 17

The Wholesale Klezmer Band will play their first ever Binghamton performance on Saturday, June 17, at 7:30 pm. The band features Yosl (Joe) Kurland (vocals and fiddle), Peggy Davis (flute and vocals) and Aaron Bousel (accordion). The Cranberry Coffeehouse is located at Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 183 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. A \$10 per person donation at the door is sug-

gested (all funds, minus a small fee for use of the space, benefit our performers).

“The Wholesale Klezmer Band performs in Yiddish and Loshn Koydesh, (Ashkenazic Hebrew), and they specialize in making it accessible to the English speaking world with translations, stories, explanations, visual aids and that universal language that speaks to

your feet and makes them want to dance,” said organizers of the event.

Klezmer music arose in medieval eastern European Jewish communities to perform at holidays and celebratory events (especially weddings). It’s origins lay in Jewish folk music and cantorial chanting, with elements of other local ethnic folk tunes (especially those of the Roma) and military band music. When brought to the United States by Jewish immigrants in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was further influenced by jazz and theater music.

## Federation held Security Seminar on June 6

At right: More than 30 people attended the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton’s security program “Countering Active Threat Training,” which was held on June 6. The Countering Active Threat Training is a comprehensive training program that teaches how to counter an active threat event. It was developed for faith-based institutions and houses of worship. (Photo by Reporter staff)



L-r: Susan Case DeMari, the community security coordinator for the Buffalo Jewish Federation; Shelley Hubal, the executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton; and Mark Henderson, the director of community security for the Jewish Community Federation of Greater Rochester, before the training began. (Photo by Reporter staff)

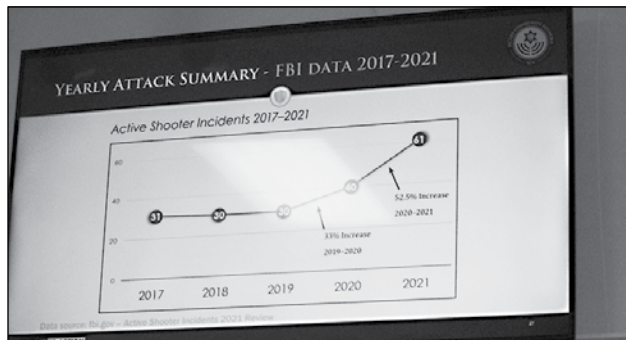


Members of the community listened as various ways to counter an active threat were discussed. (Photo by Reporter staff)

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Steve Gilbert** on the death of his wife,  
**Barbara Gilbert**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of  
**Diane Herz**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Robert Weiner** on the death of his wife,  
**Vickie L. Weiner**



A slide showed the increase in active shooters between 2017 and 2021. (Photo by Reporter staff)

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The Reporter is giving away a limited number of Rumble Ponies tickets to anyone placing an ad in the paper.

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**THE REPORTER**  
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### DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
June 30-July 13	June 21
July 14-27	July 5
July 28-August 10	July 19
August 11-24	August 2

All deadlines for the year can be found at [www.thereporter.com/contact-us/faqs](http://www.thereporter.com/contact-us/faqs) under “Q: What Are the Deadlines for the Paper?”

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## We Want the Community to Kvell with You!

If your baby was born between July 2022 and June 2023, submit your baby’s picture to us for our FAMILY FOCUS ISSUE on June 30. Pictures must be in our hands by **Tuesday, June 20**. Parents and grandparents are welcome to e-mail a photo to [TReporter@aol.com](mailto:TReporter@aol.com) as a JPEG or TIFF. Please include baby’s name, sex, date of birth, parents’ names, grandparents’ names and great-grandparents’ names.

**THE REPORTER**  
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Coming to our July 14 issue...

## The 2023 Annual Community Guide

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

To advertise, please contact Kathy Brown at 607-724-2360, ext. 244 or [advertising@thereporter.com](mailto:advertising@thereporter.com).

**THE REPORTER**  
Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

Issue date: July 14 • Ad deadline: July 6

### Batter Up! Head Down To The Ballpark!

**FRIDAY, JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup> GATES OPEN 5:35 PM | FIRST PITCH 7:05 PM**

Portland Sea Dogs, Derryl Strawberry Appearance, Miller Auto Team Fireworks Series, Shortcakes, Happy Hour 5:35 PM - 6:35 PM, Live Music: Caviar & Grits, Drink Specials: Mystery Can Barrel - \$6 Cans

**SATURDAY, JUNE 17<sup>TH</sup> GATES OPEN 5:00 PM | FIRST PITCH 6:07 PM**

Portland Sea Dogs, Shortcakes Shirt Giveaway First 1,000 Fans, 100th Anniversary, Lockheed Martin, Leadership Alliance, 607th Anniversary, Family 4-Pack, Magic Vault

**SATURDAY, JUNE 18<sup>TH</sup> GATES OPEN 5:30 PM | FIRST PITCH 6:35 PM**

Spend Father’s Day at the Ballpark!, Home Instead Senior Sunday, Pre-Game Catch on Field 5:35 PM - 6:05 PM, Beards are Beautiful, Grandstand Ticket Special for anyone with a beard!

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Off the Shelf

## Resistance and hiding in plain sight

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Fiction making history come alive: that describes two recent novels about World War II. Pam Jenoff and J. C. Maetis (better known as thriller writer John Matthews) take lesser known events from the war and create page-turning works about those who resisted or hid from the Nazis. In "Code Name Sapphire" (Park Row Books), Jenoff writes not only of those who helped downed Allied airmen escape the Nazis, but a true life attempt to liberate prisoners from a train taking them to a concentration camp. Maetis explores how Jews and Romani lived openly in Austria after procuring forged papers and new names in "The Vienna Writers Circle" (Mira).

Taking place in 1942, "Code Name Sapphire" features four narrators: Jewish Hannah Martel and her cousin Lily, and two members of the resistance, Micheline and her brother, Matteo. Hannah escaped Nazi Germany and sailed to Cuba, but the passengers were unable to disembark and the ship returned to Europe with its passengers. Because Lily lives in Brussels, the two cousins are reunited after years apart. However, life is not easy for Jews in Belgium: Lily's doctor husband can no longer treat non-Jews and other restrictions are soon added. However, Lily feels more Belgian than Jewish and has no plans to emigrate. Life, however, is more precarious for Hannah, who took part in resisting the Nazis in Germany. She needs to find a way to escape Europe before the Nazi occupiers of Belgium discover her real identity.

This puts her into contact with Micheline and Matteo, whose Sapphire Line is part of the Belgian resistance movement. The pair work to help downed airmen escape occupied territory so they can make their way back to England and continue the fight against the Nazis. But the group is always one step from discovery since the Nazis want to arrest and kill members of the resistance movement. In return for agreeing to find a way for Hannah to escape, Micheline asks her to help in rescuing the Allied airmen. Although at first reluctant, Hannah soon relishes returning to resistance work. However, Lily is not happy when she discovers what Hannah is doing because her work could endanger the family. In fact, that's what happens, which is what ultimately leads to the rescue mission.

"Code Name Sapphire" is a well-done and exciting thriller. The suspense builds as the pages turn and readers will be tempted to look ahead to discover what happens, but it's worth waiting for the revelations. The novel is more realistic than some in the genre, but to reveal more would ruin the surprises. Anyone interested in thrillers about World War II will find much to enjoy.

While those who resisted the Nazis in "Code Name Sapphire" took an active role against the invaders, there were other ways to defy the Nazis. For the members of "The Vienna Writers Circle," resistance was hiding in plain sight – managing to survive until the Nazis could be

defeated by the Allies. The novel centers around another set of cousins: thriller writers Mathias Kraemer and Johannes Namal. When Hitler annexes Austria, anyone who was part of Sigmund Freud's circle is seen as dangerous to the regime. When the cousins are unable to escape from the country, they and their families go underground with the help of their agent and a friend from the police force.

Unfortunately, the SS is looking for anyone connected to Freud and one agent in particular is interested in Kraemer. Discovery would send Kraemer and his family to a concentration camp or immediate death. The plot, though, is more complex than this summary suggests, especially when people are forced to make life or death decisions that have ramifications beyond their control.

"The Vienna Writers Circle" opens with a familiar prologue: readers learn what happens to one of the characters, but can't predict whose story is being told since no names are revealed. However, the author offers an interesting twist on this almost stereotyped beginning for World War II books. The novel is filled with suspense and interesting characters, and enough surprises to keep readers guessing and turning pages. To add to the interest, the author's note at the end of the book explains why he decided to write this work, including the fact that he didn't know his father was Jewish until he was dying. Readers of World War II thrillers will want to add this to their pile.



Off the Shelf

## Two novels about immigrants

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Reading two novels that focus on similar time periods and characters can make for interesting reading. Reading two novels that were written and published almost 100 years apart makes for fascinating reading. If I hadn't known that "Bread Givers" by Anzia Yezierska (Penguin Classics) was originally published in 1925, I would have criticized it for its unrealistic, feminist approach to women of that time. That made comparing it to "Shayna" by Miriam Ruth Black (Kirk House Publishers), which was published in 2022, fun because, while its heroine dislikes religious restrictions on women's actions, she would not qualify as a feminist. However, "Shayna" does contain material – fairly explicit descriptions of rape and violence – that few publishers would have been willing to print in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

There are other differences between the novels: "Bread Givers" is narrated by Sara Smolinsky, the youngest of four daughters of a rabbi father who refuses to work for a living, expecting his daughters to support him. Sara has no memories of Poland and dreams of becoming a true American. "Shayna" begins during a pogrom in Ukraine. Almost all of Shayna's family are murdered except for her nephew, Dovid. She does have tickets from a brother who moved to American years before and plans to travel there with her fiancé, Yossi, and his mother, Manya. Readers see what occurs not only from Shayna's point of view, but that of Yossi and Manya.

In "Bread Givers," Sara watches her father force her three sisters into joyless marriages after forbidding them to marry men they loved. Those potential son-in-laws were either not religious enough or refused to support him. Her father subjects the women in his family to verbal abuse and demands a separate room for his religious books, even though everyone else has to share space. Sara's mother is castigated for not giving him sons and not being able to manage on the money her daughters bring home from

back-breaking work. Sara wants something more for herself: she dreams of becoming a school teacher, but the only way for her to follow that dream is to separate herself from her family.

Yet, as she pursues those dreams, Sara wonders if she will ever fit into American society. The people she meets outside the tenement seem so different from her. And she wonders about her family: in fact, she misses them and wishes they had better lives. But trying to reason with her father is impossible: he belittles her and her efforts to better herself, claiming that women's only purpose in life is to support their father or husband and have children. The pull between her family, her dreams and her obligations serve as the core of Sara's struggle.

My one quibble with this version of the novel is the forward. Deborah Feldman, author of the memoir "Unorthodox," wonders if readers will be able to understand the novel's prose, particularly the dialogue written with Yiddish inflections. I didn't find that a problem and neither will most readers. The beauty of "Bread Givers" is that, even though it was written almost 100 years ago, it still feels fresh and real. Although we may not face the exact same problems that Sara does, her thoughts and desires will still speak to contemporary readers. The feminist perspective is refreshing, as is the fact that Sara learns and grows during her successes and trials. I might never have read the novel if Penguin Classics had not offered this new version and commend the publisher for doing so.

While we only learn about Sara's father from her point of view, the religious characters in "Shayna" have an opportunity to speak for themselves. Although Shayna no longer believes in a loving and caring God, when life feels oppressive, she still experiences comfort in praying. Yossi, who loves studying Jewish texts, fears losing his soul during their journey and must balance his love of study with the practical realities of the world. He also must come to terms with his inability to protect Shayna from a horrific event. Their once loving relationship is marred by the experience and both wonder if it can ever recover.

The older generation is also given a voice in Manya who never dreamed she would be forced to choose between her sons: either going with her one son and her grandchildren to

Palestine or accompanying Shayna and Yossi to New York. Although she tried to be the voice of reason during their journey and life in the U.S., she often irritates Shayna who sees her as meddling – revealing secrets Shayna would prefer to remain hidden. What does keep Shayna from total despair is the need to create a better future for Dovid: she wants to protect him since he is the only member of her family for whom she cares. She had hopes of connecting to her American brother, but life in the U.S. has turned him into someone she doesn't recognize.

Parts of "Shayna" can be difficult to read due to the subject matter, but it's well worth persevering. The author does an excellent job making readers feel for her characters and offers a wonderful portrait of Jewish life in all its glory and imperfections. I'd resisted asking for a review copy of the novel due to its serious nature, but owe thanks to a friend who pushed me to read it. Someday, "Shayna" may be considered as much of a classic as "Bread Givers."

### NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

#### Antisemitic incidents, violence dropped slightly in Canada in 2022

Antisemitic incidents in Canada dropped 1.1 percent in 2022 from the record high of 2,799 incidents in 2021, and violent incidents dropped from 75 in 2021 to 25 in 2022, according to B'nai B'rith Canada's just-released Annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents. But despite Canadian Jews being able to take "some solace in the numbers" in the new audit, which recorded the first decline in antisemitic incidents since 2015, antisemitism remains rampant in Canada, according to the audit. There were 2,769 antisemitic incidents in Canada last year, or more than 7.5 incidents daily on average. Michael Mostyn, CEO of B'nai Brith Canada, stated that the human rights organization is alarmed and disturbed by the audit findings. Online hate accounted for an estimated 74 percent of the recorded incidents, according to the audit.

Coming to our July 15 issue...

\* The 2023 Annual

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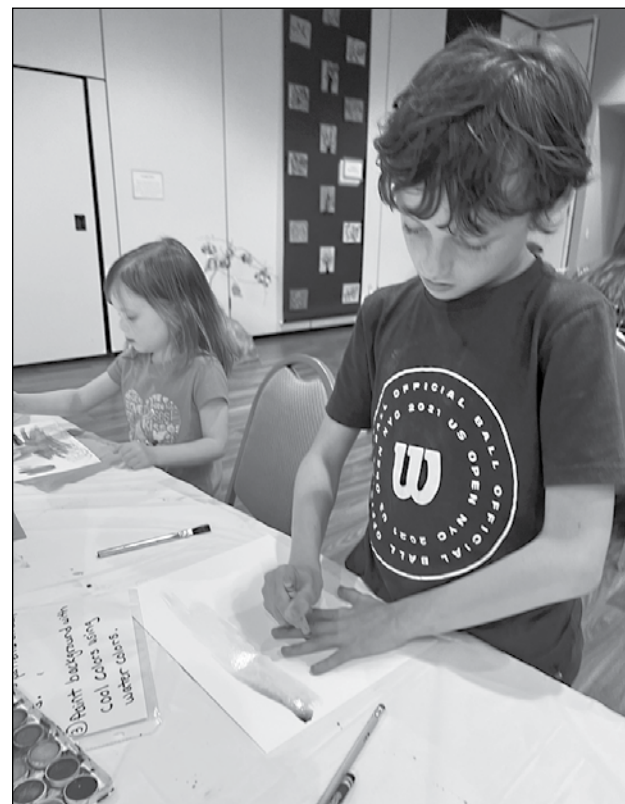
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# Hillel Academy hosted Family Art Night

Hillel Academy of Broome County hosted Family Art Night on May 24 in the Temple Israel social hall. The art night was made possible through a New York State of Education grant, which was distributed through the Vestal School System. The students also displayed all the work they created in the school's Art Club, which also received money from the grant.

More images from the evening can be seen on Hillel Academy's Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/hillelacademybroomecounty/](http://www.facebook.com/hillelacademybroomecounty/). The next Family Night will be held in the fall. Community members will be welcome to attend. *At right and below: Students created works of art at Hillel Academy of Broome County's Family Art Night on May 24. (Students names held on request.)*



## Hillel Academy donates to TC CHOW




Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu (shown in photo) and students from Hillel Academy donated fresh fruit and vegetables, and canned goods to Temple Concord's CHOW pantry before the holiday of Shavuot. "With his generous spirit, Rabbi Shmaryahu exemplifies how helping the needy is an act of tikkun olam," said Temple Concord staff. "Thank you, Rabbi Shmaryahu and Hillel Academy for your generosity!"

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Or just leaving town for a few months?**

Whether you're moving across town or across the country, please let *The Reporter* know so you can stay up to date on community news and quickly receive the paper at your new (or temporary) address!

E-mail [reporter@aol.com](mailto:reporter@aol.com) with "Reporter Address change" in the subject line, or call 607-724-2360, ext. 254, to let *The Reporter* know about your new address.



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# Annual Report June 2022 through May 2023 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,

We are pleased to share with you this annual report that highlights the impact of your contributions to the Jewish Federation from June 2022 through May 2023.

The Jewish Federation has worked diligently over the last year to create a vibrant and compassionate community. We are proud of the fact that we sponsored or co-sponsored a total of 18 events, proving that we are a trusted convener of spiritual, cultural and essential services for the Binghamton Jewish community.

Two new initiatives were born in the last year. The first is our "L'Dor V'Dor Next Generation" group, which was created to provide a fun space for young Jewish adults to connect with one another. Second, we have assembled an ad hoc "Committee for Safety and Security." By providing trainings, convening leadership and making connections with security professionals, this committee has already begun the difficult task of improving the security infrastructure for our community.

Whether it is making a monetary gift, attending an event or volunteering, we are sincerely grateful for everyone who supports the work we are doing at the Federation. We take inspiration from Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks' z"l words: "Society is where we come together to achieve collectively what none of us can do alone... It is the realm in which all of us is more important than any of us."

L'Shalom,

Shelley Hubal, Executive Director  
Suzanne Holwitt, President

## The Reporter

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 Committee is also looking for ways to increase our digital presence and offer more digital opportunities to our readers. During the pandemic, we kept readers connected with online resources and by promoting virtual programming offered by various Jewish organizations. In 2022, the executive editor of The Reporter, Rabbi Rachel Esserman, won one award from the American Jewish Press Association and three awards from the Syracuse Press Club. We are grateful for her talent and dedication. 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.

## Jewish Film Fest

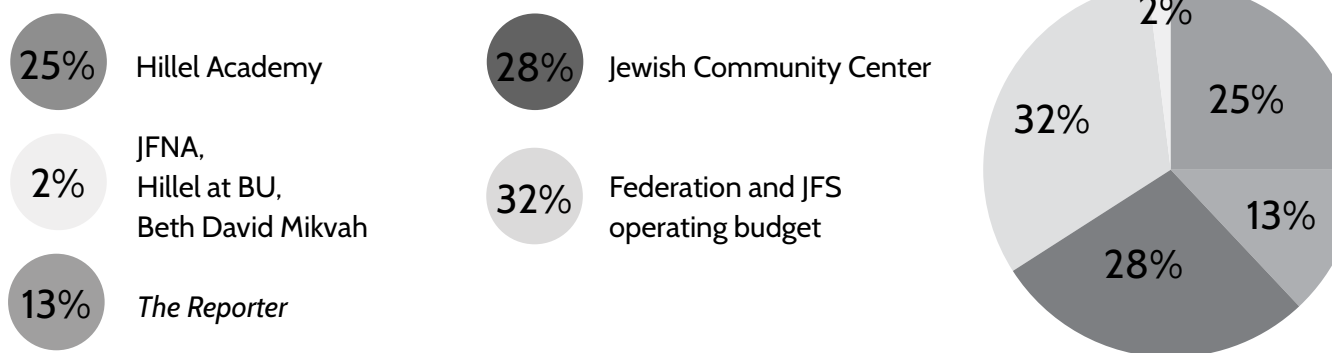
The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest showed four virtual films and one in-person film between November 2022 and March 2023. We totaled over 190 views of our five films.

Thanks to generous donations from the Rozen Foundation and other benefactors, we were able to keep the film fest free or low cost to our community.

## Federation Supported Organizations and Financials:

### 2022 Beneficiary Agencies & Allocation Distribution

In November 2021, the Federation Executive Committee and Board of Directors voted to allocate a total of \$311,878 to be distributed in the calendar year 2022. These allocations supported eight different organizations and programs. Funding for allocations came from Annual Campaign dollars and the endowment.



## Jewish Family Service

Guided by the principal of "Chesed" or loving-kindness, Jewish Family Service 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 Binghamton to meet the needs of the community.

### Summary of JFS support June 2022 - May 31, 2023:

- 79 monetary gifts totaling \$13,805 given to Jewish families
- 39 families received emergency financial help
- \$9,005 distributed in essential emergency relief funds other than food
- \$1,700 in grocery cards distributed
- 69 emotional support calls
- 79 well check calls
- 48 referrals to food pantries
- 31 referrals to NYSEG for funding support
- 39 housing and rent support referrals
- 12 home care referrals
- 44 mental health referrals
- 27 legal assistance referrals
- \$400 in gas cards distributed to aid travel for doctor visits
- 4 home visits
- 10 collaborations with families out of the area
- 11 employment assistance referrals
- 3 refugee assistance support cases with \$3,392 in aid given to refugees

JFS would like to thank all our donors for their generosity.

## PJ Library

PJ Library sends free Jewish children's books to families across the community every month; enabling young children to connect with their Jewish roots in a meaningful way.

Thanks to the Donald Etra fund, our generous donors, and an anonymous benefactor, in 2022 we were able to provide monthly PJ Library subscriptions to 78 young Jewish children in our community. That is an impactful investment in our future!

## 69 Emotional support calls



5 Binghamton Jewish Film Fest screenings

\$13,805 in funds distributed to Jewish families through the "We Remember You" program

78 CHILDREN RECEIVING PJ LIBRARY BOOKS

\$250,938 raised in 2022 Campaign

18 community-wide sponsored or co-sponsored programs



3 safety and security training

3 L'Dor V'Dor Next Generation events



1,055 copies of The Reporter delivered to homes every other week

\$9,005 distributed in emergency relief funds

## Annual Campaign

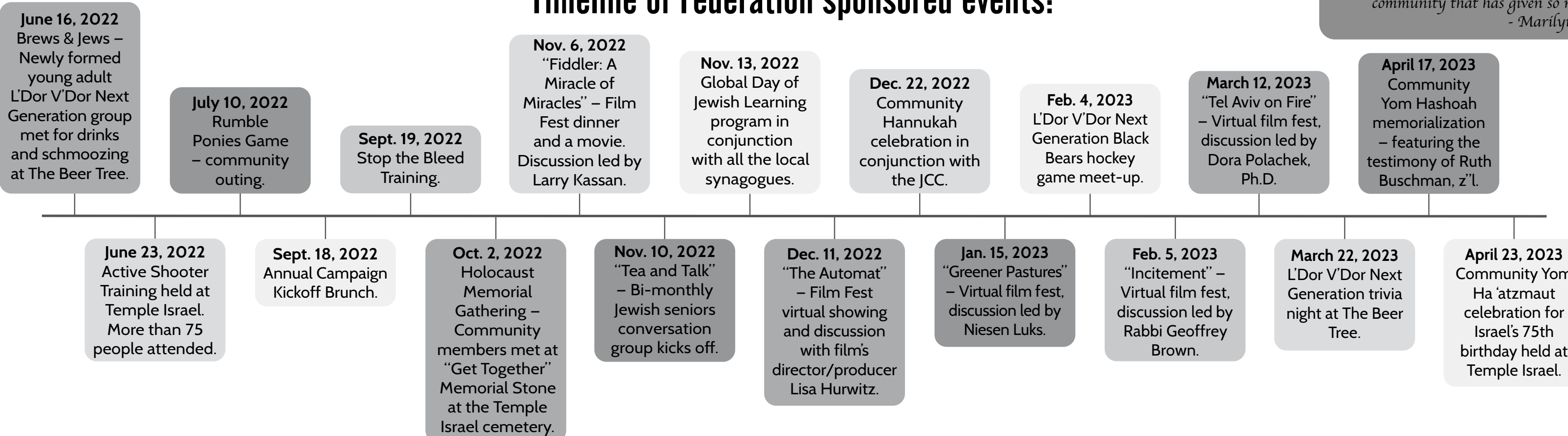
"We Create Community" - That was the theme of the Annual Campaign for 2023. It was chosen to illustrate all that Federation does to keep our Jewish community connected, thriving and safe. Without your generous dollars there would be no Reporter, no PJ Library, no Jewish Family Service, no security committee, and limited community-wide Jewish programming. Your support also enables us to play an integral role in creating the next generation of proud Jewish people.

In 2022, our generous donors gave \$250,938 to the Federation Annual Campaign. The Campaign for 2023 has raised \$268,346 to date. We are truly grateful for everyone who has stepped up to "Create Community" in the past year.

We extend a special thank you to the David and Virginia Eisenberg Fund for their enduring support. Without them we would not be able to reach our Campaign goals.

"Thank you to all our generous donors and campaign volunteers. I am honored to serve as the Annual Campaign chair once again and to serve this compassionate community that has given so much to me and everyone else over the years."  
- Marilyn Bell, Campaign Chair

## Timeline of Federation sponsored events:



## Security Initiative

In 2022, the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton created an ad hoc Committee for Safety and Security. Since its inception, the committee has received guidance and is now in partnership with JFNA's "LiveSecure" and the Central-Western New York Security Partnership. Committee members represent a cross-section of our local Jewish community and are committed to leadership roles. Consistent with its purpose statement, three community-wide training sessions have been held and the committee has provided support to our local institutions for assessment and grant writing. Future plans include training sessions, emergency preparedness, threat assessments, information sharing and community engagement.

# 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.

◆ Uri L'Tzedek, Orthodox Social Justice, will hold "Walking towards a more tolerable society: *Tikkun Olam*" with Mosaic Visions Dee Sanae on Monday, June 19, at noon. She will discuss "the complexities of social justice work that is rooted in Jewish ethics." To register, visit [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_PVzbCeAjTV-erENST3h09wQ#registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_PVzbCeAjTV-erENST3h09wQ#registration).

◆ The Jewish Theological Seminary will hold "Between the Lines: 'Where I Am'" with Israeli author Dana Shem-ur about her new novel on Tuesday, June 20, from 1-2 pm. "Where I Am" has been called "an intimate, witty book portraying a profoundly human yearning to stop everything, to lay down one's head, and to feel – if only for a moment – at home." For more information or to register, visit [www.jtsa.edu/event/between-the-lines-where-i-am/](http://www.jtsa.edu/event/between-the-lines-where-i-am/).

◆ Melton will hold the lecture "Classic Israeli Souvenirs on Display" on Monday, June 19, from 7-8 pm. The cost to attend is \$18. A new type of art emerged that celebrated the traditional images of the new State: Israeliana. Dr. Rachael Goldman will discuss the "mass-produced pieces, designed by Israelis, [that] aimed to put Israel's new identity into the hands of Jews around the world." For more information or to register, visit <https://events.org/events/calendarcourse?tid=6ee1c812-1630-4827-8755-4af9cd8f4092>.

◆ Melton will hold the class "Femme Fatale or Fierce Woman Warrior?" on Thursdays, June 22-July 13, from 1-2 pm. There is a sliding scale cost to attend. Each week will focus on a different biblical women – Delilah, Lilith, Tamar and Yael – and use *midrash* and poetry to explore the characters. For more information or to register, visit <https://events.org/events/calendarcourse?tid=79e967bb-38d7-4d2a-8ce0-24a1bd95cab3>.

◆ The Jewish Theological Seminary will hold the lecture series "The Dynamics of Change" from June to August on Mondays from 1-2:30 pm. Upcoming classes include "Patient Change, Slow Influence: The Model of the Rabbis of Late Antiquity" on June 26; "The Power of Words: How What We Say Affects Us and Those Around Us" on July 10; "*Tikkun Olam*: Repairing the World, Healing God in Kabbalistic Thought" on July 17; "Literature as an Agent of Change: Revisiting Leslie Feinberg's Transgender Novel *Stone Butch Blues*" on July 24; "Evolving Jewish Attitudes Towards Abortion" on July 31; "Becoming Jewish Americans: Popular Culture and Protest in Yiddish New York" on August 7; and "Can Institutions Be Nimble? Community Organizing in Tumultuous Times" on August 14. For more information or to register, visit [www.jtsa.edu/news/summer-2023-learning-series/](http://www.jtsa.edu/news/summer-2023-learning-series/).

◆ The HUC-JIR Jewish Language Project will hold the lecture series "Jewish Language on TV," featuring the lectures "Language Mixing in Netflix's 'Rough Diamonds'" on Sunday, July 16, from 1-2:30 pm; "Jewish Language on TV," including "Language in 'History of the World Part II'" on Sunday, August 13, from 6-7:30 pm; and "Language in 'Jewish Matchmaking'" on Sunday, August 20, from 1-2:30 pm. For more information or to register, visit [www.jewishlanguages.org/events](http://www.jewishlanguages.org/events).

◆ The Yiddish Book Center will hold the talk "Kibbitz and Nosh – Cafeteria Culture in 1970s New York City" with Marcia Bricker Halperin and Deborah Dash Moore on Thursday, June 29, at 7 pm. They will discuss the photos Halperin took of self-service cafeterias of the 1970s and '80s. For more information or to register, visit <https://support.yiddishbookcenter.org/site/Ticketing?view=Tickets&id=9181>.

◆ The Center for Jewish History and the Museum of Chinese will hold a panel discussion "Beyond These Walls: Material Cultures of Jewish and Chinese Detainees" on Tuesday, June 27, at 6:30 pm. The panel will discuss materials created by Jewish and Chinese detainees as they waited for entry into the United States. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/tickets/beyond-these-walls-2023-06-27>.

◆ The Jewish Literary Journal, <https://jewishliteraryjournal.com/>, offers an "online magazine/review/venue that publishes all genres of Jewish, creative writing on

a monthly basis. Jewish Literature, Jewish Writing, and Jewish Expression are at the forefront of everything the JLJ does." It also offers a podcast, which can be found at <https://jewishliteraryjournal.com/media/>.

◆ Roundtable will hold "Jewish Flavors of Italy with Silvia Nacamulli" on Thursday, June 22, from 4-5:30 pm. The cost to attend is \$25. Nacamulli will speak about Italian-Jewish cuisine and offer a cooking demonstration combined with information about Italy's 2000-year-old Jewish community.

◆ The Fuchsberg Jerusalem Center will hold the Project Oded Mini-Courses in hybrid. Classes run from July 2-27 and each class will meet over four one-hour sessions. There is a charge: from \$36 for one course to \$120 for all five. Courses include "Jeremiah's Jerusalem – The Last Years (But Who Knew?)" ; "(More) Women Who Built the State"; "Visions of Zion in a World Redeemed"; "Reading Bat Sheva: Woman, Wife, and Warrior"; and "*Tehillim* and *Tehillot*." For more information or to register, visit <https://fuchsbergcenter.org/oded/>.

◆ Maven will hold several virtual lectures: "Protect and Persecute: A History of Jews and Catholics in Rome" on June 27, from 3-3:45 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/protect-and-persecute-a-history-of-jews-and-catholics-in-rome>); "The In-Betweens: Jewish Identity and Race in America" on Tuesday, July 11, from 3:3:45 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/the-in-betweens-jewish-identity-and-race-in-america>); "Virtual Tour of Auschwitz Exhibition at the Reagan Library" on Thursday, July 20, from 3-3:45 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/virtual-tour-of-auschwitz-exhibition-at-the-reagan-library>); and "From Soviet Prisoner to Israeli Politician: Natan Sharansky's Story" on Tuesday, July 25, from 3-3:45 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/from-soviet-prisoner-to-israeli-politician-natan-sharanskys-story>).

◆ Uri L'Tzedek, Orthodox Social Justice, will hold "Learn with Rabbanit Nomi Kaltmann : Is changing Australia's constitution a Jewish value?" on Tuesday, July 11, at 8 pm. She will discuss the referendum vote to amend the Australian constitution to recognize Aboriginal Australians as the First Nations people of the country. To register for the seminar, visit [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_AkRboU5MQaG5HJJo40CDjQ#registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_AkRboU5MQaG5HJJo40CDjQ#registration).

◆ The Women's Initiative of the Orthodox Union will hold a "Virtual Summer *Beit Midrash*" from July 10-20 with morning and evening classes. There will be classes in halacha, Jewish history, Tanach and *tikkun hamiddot*. To receive e-mail notification when the application form is open, visit <https://www.ou.org/women/alit2023/>.

◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage will hold "The Forgot-

ten Tales of Jewish Winchester," a virtual walking tour, on Wednesday, June 28, at 11 am. The cost is \$18 for museum members and \$25 for non-members. The tour will explore the Jewish heritage of Winchester, England, including the once-thriving Jewish Quarter that was there during the Middle Ages. For more information or to register, visit <https://mjhny.org/events/virtual-walking-tour-the-forgotten-tales-of-jewish-winchester/>.

◆ The Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning will hold "Sacred Numbers" on Wednesday, August 23, from 8-9 pm. The cost to attend is \$18. The class will explore the Hebrew language focusing "around hidden meanings, rabbinic interpretations, and more. One of the most intriguing areas of exploration is Gematria, the study of how Hebrew letters correspond to numbers, unlocking codes that teach us something deeper than our surface understanding of words." For more information or to register, visit <https://marketplace.jewishtogether.org/event/1689>.

◆ The Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning will hold the virtual course "Abraham on Trial" on four Thursdays, August 17-September 7, from 1-2:30 pm. There is a sliding scale cost to attend. The class will explore the *Akedah* (binding), or near sacrifice of Isaac, along with the continuing reverberations of the controversial biblical story. For more information or to attend, visit <https://events.org/events/calendarcourse?tid=b63e9820-b8fc-433b-a6d8-6bfdad8b4ada>.

◆ The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research will hold a virtual Yiddish Civilization Lecture Series on Tuesdays and Thursdays from June 22-July 25. It will cover "topics ranging from history and historiography to literature, poetry, folklore and theater, and featuring some of the field's leading scholars: Kenneth B. Moss, Daniela Smolov Levy, Marion Aptroot, Jonathan Boyarin, Glenn Dynner, Chaya Nove, Avi Blitz, Miriam Trinh, and Shachar Pinsker." For information about individual courses, visit <https://summer-program.yivo.org/LectureSeries>.

◆ The Center for Jewish History's Summer Reading Schmooze 2023 is looking for recommendations to send out in its newsletter. According to the site, the books "can be fiction or nonfiction... Maybe the author or characters are Jewish, it takes place in a relevant historical setting, or the themes echo traditional Jewish concerns." Recommendations may be shared in e-blasts and on social media, and each entry will be entered in a drawing for CJH swag. For more information, or to recommend a book, visit <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSchY3Zr6AIRetR-1MA-xw4zmBss44NDWv9kPVpc0OPdH3VbyMQ/viewform>.

For additional resources, see previous issues of *The Reporter* on its website, [www.thereporter.org/streams/miscellaneous-features/miscellaneous-features/tag/80309?](http://www.thereporter.org/streams/miscellaneous-features/miscellaneous-features/tag/80309?)

## Tel Aviv ANU–Museum of the Jewish People buys Codex Sassoon for \$38.1 million

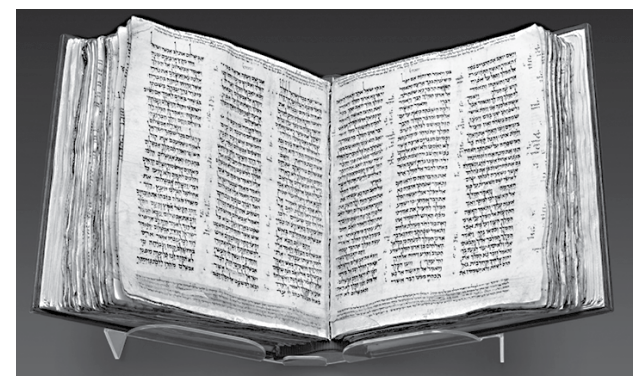
By Menachem Wecker

(JNS) – First, there was the possibility that Renaissance man par excellence Leonardo da Vinci was Jewish. Now, the oldest near-complete Hebrew Bible, Codex Sassoon, which dates to around the year 900, beat da Vinci's Codex Leicester as the most expensive book ever sold at auction. Business magnate Bill Gates bought the latter for \$30.8 million in 1994.

On May 17, Tel Aviv's ANU–Museum of the Jewish People bought the Codex Sassoon for \$33.5 million at Sotheby's auction house in New York. (Although the Hebrew volume is a higher price, the da Vinci manuscript is pricier when adjusted for inflation; with the buyer's premium, a charge in addition to the hammer price, the sale totaled \$38.1 million.)

Alfred H. Moses, a former U.S. ambassador to Romania and active member of the Georgetown Jewish community, and his family purchased the Hebrew manuscript on behalf of the American Friends of ANU and gifted it to the museum, according to a press release from the auction house. Moses is chair of the museum's international board of governors.

"The hammer fell after a four-minute bidding battle between two determined bidders," Sotheby's stated.



The Codex Sassoon, late ninth to early 10<sup>th</sup> century (Photo courtesy of Sotheby's)

Michelle Margolis, librarian for Jewish studies at Columbia University and president of the Association of Jewish Libraries, told JNS that when the manuscript first came up for auction, many assumed it would "disappear into private hands, which is what happened to the Luzzatto Mahzor."

"It was easy for keyboard warriors to say 'this should go to a museum,' but for a donor to actually lay out that kind of money to make it happen? That – that is the best possible outcome from the point of view of those of us in the rare book and manuscript world," she said. "No institution has that kind of flexible funding. I'm so thrilled to see this happen."

Simona Di Nepi, Judaica curator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, is a former curator of nearly three years at ANU–Museum of the Jewish People. She told JNS that she dreams of the Boston museum acquiring a Hebrew manuscript. "If these are the price tags, it will stay that way," she told JNS.

Di Nepi said it is an achievement for a museum, rather than a private collector, to secure such a rare manuscript, which will be available for the public to enjoy. "What is even more poignant is that it goes to a museum that in its early days of its foundation in 1979, and for many years following that, set an example and became a model of a museum without a collection," she said.

In its former iteration as Beit Hatfutsot: The Diaspora See "Oldest" on page 11



### Create a Jewish Legacy

Strengthen the Jewish community you care about for generations to come. Consider a gift to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton in your estate.

For further information or assistance, please contact Shelley Hubal at 724-2332 or [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org)



# In its bat mitzvah year, Sefaria executive reflects on the online Jewish library's ubiquity

By Bradley Martin

(JNS)—It started as an online digital copy of the Hebrew Bible. Today, Sefaria has thousands of biblical and rabbinic texts, which 700,000 people access monthly, according to Sara Wolkenfeld, the nonprofit's chief learning officer.

Sefaria traces its origins back to 2011, when author Joshua Foer and Brett Lockspeiser, formerly of Google, developed its initial concept. As Sefaria celebrates its "bat mitzvah" year and looks ahead to its "bar mitzvah," Wolkenfeld told JNS that "Sefaria is everywhere."

"We have several people in California, one person in Berlin and a few in Israel," said Wolkenfeld, who lives in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood.

Prior to joining Sefaria in 2013, when it incorporated as a nonprofit, Wolkenfeld and her husband, Rabbi David Wolkenfeld of Chicago's Modern Orthodox synagogue Anshe Sholom B'nai Israel, co-directed the Orthodox Union's Jewish Learning Initiative on Campus at Princeton University for five years.

Following a lecture she delivered on May 2 at a Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning conference in Chicago, she told JNS that during the 2009-10 school year, a Princeton student asked her a question about Jewish views of the afterlife. She organized a course on the matter focused on primary sources, and while teaching the class at the Princeton Hillel, she decided that there had to be a way to make Jewish texts more accessible to the public.

"These were extremely smart young people," she said of the students. "But the problem was they could not access the physical texts themselves because they weren't fluent enough in Hebrew."

Lockspeiser and Foer approached her in 2013, and she agreed to join. "Sefaria existed as an idea," she said of the concept at the time.

Wolkenfeld came aboard as director of education, focusing on outreach to Jewish educators, whom she and the co-founders assumed would be Sefaria's earliest adopters.



Sefaria's database directly links to the National Library of Israel's RAMBI repository of articles on Jewish subjects. (Photo courtesy of Sefaria)

She also identified Jewish religious texts to add to the site and secured the permissions necessary to republish the texts that weren't already in the public domain. Her responsibilities later broadened to include helping learners of all levels.

In 2013, an average of about 3,000 people visited the site, which had 9.3 million words, monthly. In 2023, monthly visitors climbed to nearly 675,000, and as of March, Sefaria's library has 322 million words – nearly 76.5 million translated words, 3.3 million intertextual links and nearly 450,000 source sheets.

Wolkenfeld has found it fulfilling to see how much Sefaria has grown. "It is incredible to see the adoption of Sefaria throughout the Jewish world. Almost everywhere I go, I see how much it is being used and also expanded upon," she said.

Sefaria plans to continue expanding its library, while emphasizing accessibility to Jewish texts that speaks to users' unique needs and questions.

This year, Sefaria debuted a "Word-by-Word" writing project, which will support the Jewish textual research of a cohort of up to 20 Jewish women who are preparing manuscripts for publication. Another recent development is that Sefaria's database directly links to the National Library of Israel's RAMBI repository of articles on Jewish subjects.



Sara Wolkenfeld (center), chief learning officer of Sefaria (Photo courtesy of Sefaria)

Sefaria has also added three kabbalistic works – all connected to the central Aramaic kabbalistic text "Zohar" – to its holdings: a Hebrew translation of "Zohar," a 20<sup>th</sup>-century commentary on the work by Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag (known as the Baal Ha-Sulam) and an 18<sup>th</sup>-century "Zohar" commentary by Moroccan kabbalist Rabbi Shalom Buzaglo.

"In the years to come," said Wolkenfeld, "we are very excited to experiment with new products of Torah learning in the digital age."

## Scholars expound on Mount Ebal curse tablet with oldest Hebrew text

By Etgar Lefkovits

(JNS) – A lead tablet found at a site where millions of Jews and Christians believe the Israelite leader Joshua built an altar contains the oldest Hebrew text ever found in the land of Israel as well as the name of God, a recent academic article concluded. The peer review of the small 3,200-year-old curse tablet discovered at Mount Ebal in Samaria more than two years ago is expected to reignite the debate in the archaeological community over the find. It could prove the Israelites were literate at the time, as well as shed light on the date of the Exodus from Egypt.

"The text... is the oldest Hebrew text found within the borders of ancient Israel... by at least two centuries," the article published in *Heritage Science* states.

"The big point here is that we have evidence of Hebrew writing in Israel earlier than has previously been established, as well as mention of two of names of the Hebrew God, all from the site where the Bible said Joshua built an altar," Scott Stripling, the provost at the Bible Seminary in Katy, TX, who uncovered the tablet, said in a telephone interview with JNS.

The folded, 2x2-centimeter square lead tablet was found in December 2019, during an examination of discarded

materials from an excavation at the site that had been led by University of Haifa Professor Adam Zertal (1936-2015) more than three decades earlier.

Zertal carried out the dig where the ruins of ancient Shechem lie between 1982 and 1989, at the site of what he concluded were two altars dating to the Late Bronze Age II and Iron Age I.

The Book of Joshua relates that Moses' successor as leader built an altar on Mount Ebal as part of a covenant renewal ceremony soon after the Israelites returned to Canaan from Egypt. The site is known from the book of Deuteronomy as a place of curses.

The tablet emerged from a dump pile left behind from the original dig – common after excavations – in a process known as "wet sifting" whereby ancient stones covered in dirt are washed. The method, which was first used in Jerusalem for finds removed from the Temple Mount, is not considered as scientific as an actual dig, although in this case the item was found in situ.

Stripling, who had previously participated in the Temple Mount Sifting Project in Jerusalem, said in the interview that when he began the sifting project at Mount Ebal, he **See "Tablet" on page 11**

## Quick Reference Guide to Planned Giving

Use this planned giving quick reference guide to help determine the best strategy for achieving your philanthropic and financial goals.

For further information or assistance, please contact Shelley Hubal at 724-2332 or [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org)

### If Your Goal is to:

Make a quick and easy gift

Avoid tax on capital gains

Defer a gift until after your death

Receive guaranteed fixed income that is partially tax-free

Avoid the two-fold taxation on IRA or other employee benefit plans

Make a large gift with little cost to you

Reduce taxable income from IRA Required Minimum Distributions

### Then You Can:

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Contribute long-term appreciated stock or other securities

Put a bequest in your will (gifts of cash or a share or the residue of your estate)

Create a charitable gift annuity

Name a charity as the beneficiary of the remainder of the retirement assets after your lifetime

Contribute a life insurance policy you no longer need or purchase a new one and designate a charity as the owner

Make a qualified charitable donation directly from your IRA (after age 70½)

### Your Benefits May Include:

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Exemption from federal estate tax on donations

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Tax relief to your family on inherited assets

Current and possible future income tax deductions

Reducing taxable income





## Weekly Parasha

Shelach Lecha, Numbers 13:1-15:41

# Trusting in God's promise

RABBI BARBARA GOLDMAN-WARTELL, TEMPLE CONCORD

In this week's Torah portion, Moses sends 12 scouts selected from the leaders of each tribe to check out the land that God has promised to the Israelites before they prepare to enter the land. They were to investigate the Promised Land, which these ex-slaves had never seen, only heard about. When they returned laden with lush grapes from the land that "flows with milk and honey," 10 of the scouts also described the inhabitants as fearless giants. When Caleb and Joshua, the other two scouts, spoke, they praised the land and its produce, and encouraged the people to trust in God's promise, for if God promised the land to them, and they followed God and lived up to their covenant with God, they would be victorious and take possession of the land. The people refused to follow them into battle and

instead had to wander 38 more years before entering the Promised Land.

In the *haftarah*, Joshua sends out two spies, trained scouts, to check out the walled city of Jericho before moving in to surround the city. These two groups of scouts were charged by their leader with coming back to him with eyewitness reports and information to decide how to best proceed.

In the first situation, the scouts were sent openly and reported back to Moses and the people gathered together. In the Jericho situation, the spies were sent secretly. They were professionals who made a strategic connection with those who saved their lives. They brought back intelligence information that helped Joshua lead the Israelites to take

over Jericho in their settlement of the Promised Land.

We are living in challenging times that necessitate our congregations and communities to assess our current situation, develop a long range vision for our community and scout out the various possibilities for the future. We, too, must do our homework, as Moses and Joshua did to decide best how to move forward.

But another aspect of this Torah portion is trust in God and God's promise. The Israelites were not alone and neither are we. Trust is important within the community and with God. Moses and the Israelite's troubles ensued because the Israelites did not trust in God, or in Joshua and Caleb, God's true messengers at that time. They also didn't have trust **See "Promise" on page 11**

## Congregational Notes

### Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union  
Rabbi: Zev Silber  
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Phone: 722-1793  
Rabbi's Office: 722-7514  
Fax: 722-7121  
Office hours: 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.

### Temple Israel

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

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

The temple office will be closed Friday, June 16. Office hours for the week of Monday-Thursday, June 19-22, will be 2-4 pm.

On Saturday, June 17, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required for unvaccinated participants). The Torah portion is Numbers 13:1-15:41 and the haftarah is Joshua 2:1-24. The bat mitzvah of Isabelle Gindi will be held during services. At 10 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Tuesday, June 20, there will be a Congregation/Board of Trustees Annual meeting at 7 pm.

On Wednesday, June 21, Torah study will be held from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

On Saturday, June 24, at 9:30 am, Shacharit services will be held via Zoom and in-person (masks are required for unvaccinated participants). The Torah portion is Numbers 16:1-18:32 and the haftarah is I Samuel 11:14-12:22. At 10 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Wednesday, June 28, Torah study will be held from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

### Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Rabbi: Rachel Safman  
Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass  
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292  
Phone: 273-5775  
E-mail: rabbi-safman@tbeithaca.org, secretary@tbeithaca.org  
Website: www.tbeithaca.org  
Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen  
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman  
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody  
Services: Fri. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced.  
Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sun. and legal holidays).

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

For upcoming services and events on Zoom, visit [www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE](http://www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE).

### Penn-York Jewish Community

President-Treasurer-Secretary: Harvey Chernosky, 570-265-3869  
B'nai B'rith: William H. Seigel Lodge  
Purpose: To promote Jewish identity through religious, cultural, educational and social activities in the Southern Tier of New York and the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania, including Waverly, NY; Sayre, Athens and Towanda, PA, and surrounding communities.

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

### Rohr Chabad Center

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

Chabad will be holding pre-Shabbat virtual programs. For more information, visit [www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership](http://www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership).

### Temple Brith Sholom

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

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

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

### 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.

Friday, June 16, light candles before..... 8:23 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, June 17 ..... 9:24 pm  
Friday, June 23, light candles before..... 8:25 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, June 24 ..... 9:26 pm  
Friday, June 30, light candles before..... 8:25 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, July 1 ..... 9:25 pm

### Temple Concord

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

Some services and programs are online only.

Friday, June 16: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service led by Allen Alt and Robin Hazen. Masks are optional for those attending in person. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRm-W2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/templeconcord/](http://www.facebook.com/templeconcord/).

Saturday, June 17: At 9:15 am, Torah study with Allan Alt and Robin Hazen (join via Zoom at <http://bit.ly/3XD-nvRE>, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892; and 11 am-1 pm, Kilmer Mansion Event: "Path Through History Open House" with a tour of the mansion. The admission is \$7 with children under 12 attending for no cost. For more information or to register for the event, visit <https://friendsofkilmerkings-bloom.kindful.com/e/path-through-history-open-house>.

Friday, June 23: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat Service led by Allen Alt and Robin Hazen. Masks are optional for those attending in person. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRm-W2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/templeconcord/](http://www.facebook.com/templeconcord/).

Saturday, June 24: At 9:15 am, Torah study with Allen Alt (join via Zoom at <http://bit.ly/3XD-nvRE>, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892); and 1-3 pm, "Kilmer Mansion Event: Walk the Mansion with Christopher" with psychic Christopher Stilson. The cost to attend is \$35. For more information or to register, visit <https://friendsofkilmerkings-bloom.kindful.com/e/walk-the-mansion-with-christopher>.

Sunday, June 25: Noon-3 pm, "Kilmer Mansion Event: Summer Wreath Workshop." The cost to attend is \$60. For more information or to register, visit <https://friendsofkilmerkings-bloom.kindful.com/e/summer-wreath-workshop>.

### Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive  
Rabbi: David Regenspan  
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815  
Phone: 334-2691  
E-mail: fertigj@roadrunner.com  
Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 373-5087  
Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.  
Adult Ed.: Shabbat study sessions are held on designated Saturday mornings at 10 am. Call ahead, text or e-mail to confirm dates.

### Congregation Tikun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY  
Phone: 607-256-1471  
Website: www.tikkunvor.org  
E-mail: info@tikkunvor.org  
Rabbi: Shifrah Tobacman, rabbishifrah@tikkunvor.org  
Presidents: Sue Merkel and Laurie Willick, presidents\_22@tikkunvor.org  
Education Director/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.

# March of Life honors Israel's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary with national events

By Rolene Marks

(JNS) – Thousands of participants from around the world joined the “March of Nations” event in Jerusalem on May 16 to celebrate Israel’s 75<sup>th</sup> year of independence. The event was organized by March of Life, an initiative founded by Jobst and Charlotte Bittner and the evangelical TOS Ministries from Tübingen, Germany. The southwestern German university town served as the training ground for the Einsatzgruppen, the SS death squads that murdered 700,000 Jews, primarily by shooting, during the Holocaust.

Joined by the descendants of German Wehrmacht soldiers and members of the SS and police force, March of Life have organized memorial and reconciliation marches at Holocaust sites all over Europe. Founded in 2007, March of Life has spread to more than 20 nations and 500 cities around the world.

“As descendants of Nazi perpetrators it is not enough to say ‘never again,’ March of Life founder Pastor Jobst Bittner told JNS in an interview from Germany earlier this year. “We have to be responsible to do something and are calling on people to speak out against antisemitism and to stand with Israel.”

Bittner, whose father was an officer in the Wehrmacht’s Afrika Corps during World War II, has been honored by

Israel for his staunch support for the Jewish state. He calls the founding of Israel one of the greatest miracles of our time.

Officially welcoming the “March of Nations” event to Jerusalem earlier this year, Israeli President Isaac Herzog gave his endorsement. “I commend your courage in engaging with dark and difficult family histories, and your insistence on directing the call of your collective conscience to advocating on behalf of Israel and Jewish communities everywhere. I look forward to the upcoming March of the Nations, which coincides with the international date of Israel’s 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Your presence demonstrates unwavering moral support for our nation-state and its people, and the state of Israel welcomes you with open arms,” he said.

The event drew well over a thousand participants from around the world who marched from Sacher Park to Safra Square in front of Jerusalem City Hall. They were addressed by a variety of speakers, including Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Fleur Hassan-Nahoum, Jewish Agency President Doron Almog, Ahmed al-Mansoori, founder of the first Holocaust museum in Dubai, and March of Life founder Bittner.

“It is something special for us to be Jerusalem in this crucial time. Our motto of the March of Life is: ‘Israel you

are not alone,’ and we pray for the peace of Jerusalem. We expect many participants and are thankful to stand alongside Israel,” said Bittner.

The march was led by Odessa-born Holocaust survivor Arie Itamar, who arrived in Israel on the *Exodus* as a 7-year-old, and the theme was “*Mi Shoah le Tkuma* –from the Holocaust to New Life.”

Participant Carolin Klein was proud to be among the marchers. “I am here with the March of Nations because I love Israel, and we come from many nations to really stand with Israel, especially at times of attacks. I am from Germany, and about 40 percent of the young people do not know what Auschwitz was, so I want to talk about what happened in the Second World War. Mostly all families were part of the Nazi regime during that time. I found out many of my forefathers were Nazis, too, and I want to make a clear statement that with my generation we really want to stand with Israel. We love Israel and we will speak up against antisemitism when we see it.”

Additional marches took place on May 17 in various cities across Israel, including Metula, Tiberias, Zichron Yaakov, Netanya, Ashkelon, Beersheva and Merhavim. Participants had the opportunity to meet with Holocaust survivors, students and soldiers.

## Tablet

Continued from page 9

only expected to write a “boring methodical paper” about embracing the new technology offered by wet sifting the rubble of excavations.

“The tablet would not have been found without wet sifting,” he said. “At first, it looked like a piece of stone covered in dirt. Only when we washed it, it popped out.”

The tablet, which the researchers date to 1400-1200 B.C.E., could not be opened without damaging it, so a team of experts performed X-ray tomography scanning in Prague as well as detailed photography, revealing an ancient curse written in a proto-alphabetic script, the article, titled “You are Cursed by the God YHW: An Early Hebrew Inscription from Mt. Ebal,” states. The article includes images and scans of the inscriptions for other academics to weigh in on.

The inscription contains as many as 48 letters and the curse appears on the inside and outside of the tablet. “You are cursed by the god, yhw, cursed. You will die cursed – cursed you will surely die. Cursed you are by yhw-cursed,” a translation of the inner inscription reads, according to the article.

“What we thought over a year ago, we now have substantiated through our research,” said Stripling.

The earliest Hebrew writing previously found – the Khirbet Qeiyafa ostrakon found in the dig at the ancient fortress city near the central Israeli city of Beit Shemesh – was dated from 1000 B.C.E., making the inscription on this tablet 200 to 400 years older, Stripling said. Its use of the Hebrew word for God also predates the oldest previously



The curse tablet found on Mount Ebal. (Photo by Jaroslav Valach)

found in Israel by 500 to 600 years, he added. Scholars date the Exodus from Egypt to the 13<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., said Stripling, although their dating on this tablet could suggest it was earlier.

“We have a Hebrew inscription of a curse found on the mountain of curses,” said Peter van der Veen, associate professor at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz in Germany and an epigrapher who reviewed the inscription for the study. “I think the conclusion we reached last year



Line-drawing of the inscription on “Inner B” and annotated line-drawing. (Drawing and annotations by Gershon Galil)

is now confirmed by more in-depth study,” he said. A second peer review of the outer inscription is expected to come out next year, followed by an international conference on the find.

## Promise

Continued from page 10

in one another. After the incident, they were condemned to wander for 38 more years in the wilderness before they could enter the Promised Land.

We, too, are at a critical juncture in our journey. We need to let God in to be a part of our plans and our process. And we must work to build trust in one another.

## Oldest

Continued from page 8

Museum, the museum pioneered “the successful new way” to function without a permanent collection, according to Di Nepi. “It was known for its wonderful dioramas, synagogue models and replicas,” she said. “In the past few years, curators started to form a collection for the new ANU, and now, it has managed to acquire a Hebraica celebrity.”


The volume had been expected to sell for between \$30 million and \$50 million. Moses referred to the volume as “the most influential book in history” in a release from the museum, which stated it would be displayed as part of the permanent collection.

“The Hebrew Bible is the most influential book in history and constitutes the bedrock of Western civilization. I rejoice in knowing that it belongs to the Jewish people. It was my mission, realizing the historic significance of Codex Sassoon, to see that it resides in a place with global access to all people,” Moses stated. “In my heart and mind, that place was the land of Israel, the cradle of Judaism, where the Hebrew Bible originated. In Israel at ANU, it will be preserved for generations to come as the centerpiece and gem of the entire and extensive display and presence of the Jewish story.”


Sharon Liberman Mintz, Sotheby’s senior specialist for Judaica, books and manuscripts, stated that the “record-breaking result directly reflects the profound power, influence and significance of the Hebrew Bible, which is an indispensable pillar of humanity.”

# GRADUATION SIMCHAS

**CARA,**  
**MAZEL TOV ON YOUR**  
**GRADUATION FROM**  
**VESTAL HS!**  
**GOOD LUCK AT SU!**  
**LOVE, MOM AND DAD**



Congratulations  
 Josh on graduating  
 from The College  
 Experience at  
 The College of  
 Saint Rose.



We are so proud  
 of all you have  
 accomplished.

Love,  
 Mom, Dad and Rae

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# Israeli hydrogen-powered drones could prove revolutionary

By Yaakov Lappin

(JNS) – A new drone made by Israeli company HevenDrones could revolutionize defense and commercial drone uses. The firm's hydrogen-powered H2D55 Drone is five times more energy efficient than traditional lithium battery-powered drones and can fly for 100 minutes with a payload of seven kilograms (15 pounds), according to the company.

The drone, which was unveiled earlier this year at Abu Dhabi's IDEX (International Defence Exhibition and Conference), can be used for a wide range of defense and commercial applications, from emergency responses to last-mile delivery and intelligence-gathering missions.

Bentzion Levinson, founder and CEO of HevenDrones, told JNS the company was founded three-and-a-half years ago, based on the concept of seeing drones not merely as flying cameras, but also as flying robots.

The vast majority of drones currently act as flying cameras, he said, identifying problems, gathering information over a battlefield or spotting hazards like fires – all highly important functions. “The problem is limiting drones to being flying sensors. We wanted to develop flying robots that can do things from the sky, like lifting larger payloads over larger distances,” he said. “We asked, how can relatively small drones carry significant payloads for longer?”

The answer, Levinson and his team found, was in the battery. With drones already starting to play greater functions, such as Amazon's delivery project, Levinson's company identified a key bottleneck: limited flight time.

“We saw two problems. The first is the range, usually



HevenDrones' H2D55 UAV (Photo courtesy of JNS)

capped at around 10 kilometers and sometimes shorter. The second is the need to get multiple drones to work as a swarm. That creates value and takes the person out of the loop. If you have to come back to change batteries every 30 to 40 minutes, that has less value,” he said.

The company gathered energy experts and concluded that hydrogen is the best power source for UAV fuel cells.

HevenDrones works with the Israeli Defense Ministry and has become its supplier of hydrogen-powered drones after demonstrating proof of concept for the ministry in November. The H2D55 Drone is the company's first product line. It is planning two additional models that can take heavier payloads greater distances.

Levinson described the technology as a game-changer. “The hydrogen allows for much longer flights, for massive increases in hovering and maneuvering. We achieved five times the flight speed and 10 times the range,” he said.

The drones can take any kind of payload, for example, universal containers and logistic packages.

The promise of hydrogen fuel has been talked about by various industries for the past 20 years, so far with few tangible results. There are some hydrogen-powered cars on the market but they have yet to make major inroads.

Levinson said issues of easy access to hydrogen fuel have until now formed a main challenge. To overcome this, HevenDrones teamed up with supply chain partners, including American energy company Plug Power, which creates lightweight hydrogen fuel cells.

“Drones have the ability to lead the hydrogen revolution. The main challenge goes back to the supply chain,” said Levinson. “Customers need 24/7 resupply.”

To overcome this challenge, the company offers three options: resupplying the customer directly with fuel tanks, a portable technology in which the tanks are pressurized by clients such as hospitals, and an option in which clients create their own hydrogen using nothing more than running water and electricity – a solution Levinson described as a “real breakthrough.”

“Any army base or offshore energy rig can use electricity and running water to create energy out of thin air,” he said.

This enables automated refueling systems to come online. “This technology is here. The final stages of it are being commercialized,” said Levinson. The environmental benefits of this power source are clear, he added.

The company is working with a number of clients worldwide. Levinson said the journey ahead is exciting. “As regulation and capabilities grow, more and more problems will be solved by these flying robots,” he said.

# Powerful new Israeli eye in space will keep tabs on Iran

By Yaakov Lappin

(JNS) – It was the announcement the Israeli defense establishment had been waiting to make. On April 10, the country's Defense Ministry revealed that the “Ofek 13” spy satellite, launched on March 28, had successfully transmitted its first images. The development was a milestone on the way to the satellite becoming a fully operational Israeli intelligence asset.

The “Ofek 13's” key feature is its synthetic-aperture radar (SAR) on-board sensor. The SAR payload grants the craft advanced observation capability, which is not limited by many of the constraints that apply to space-based cameras, being able to capture highly detailed images even through cloud cover, or at night.

The satellite “will drastically improve Israel's intelligence capabilities from space for years to come,” said the head of the Israeli Defense Ministry's Space and Satellite Administration, Avi Berger, following the launch.

Israel's “Ofek 10” and “Ofek 8” satellites were also equipped with SAR capability.



The launch of the “Ofek 13” satellite from the Palmachim Airbase in central Israel on March 29. (Photo by Israeli Ministry of Defense)

According to Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, Israel is one of very few countries to possess such capabilities. In early April, he praised Israeli engineers' “creativity, talent and consistency in addition to the hard work of outstanding professionals that took part in this operation,” vowing to “continue to prove that even the sky isn't the limit for the Israeli defense establishment.”

A key figure in this project is Brig. Gen. (res.) Daniel Gold, head of the Defense Directorate for Research and Development. Gold described the SAR satellite as being at “the peak of global technology,” adding that the March 28 launch establishes Israel's “superiority in the field of space yet again. It also constitutes a leap forward in operational and technological abilities for the preservation and improvement of Israel's standing in space for the coming decades.”

The keys to the satellite are now in the hands of the IDF's Military intelligence 9900 Unit, which will begin receiving around-the-clock images from it, and building a full operational intelligence picture.

In July 2020, in the middle of the coronavirus global pandemic, Israel launched its “Ofek 16” observation satellite into orbit from central Israel. “Ofek 16” carries an on-board camera that provides higher-resolution images than ever before. While no additional information was offered regarding the Ofek 16, it's worth noting that Elbit Systems' sophisticated camera system known as “Jupiter” had been put on earlier Israeli satellites.

The camera allows for inspections of “extremely high-value targets,” and it produces higher clarity photographs of small and discrete vehicles, objects, and structures, according to Elbit's website. In order to examine the harm done to adversary targets, it can also be utilized for “more advanced battle damage assessment” and “more detailed operational planning.”

Other Israeli satellites in orbit include the “Ofek 5,” which was launched in 2002 and is still in use today, according to Defense Ministry officials.

The series kicked off in 1988 with the launch of the “Ofek 1” (“Horizon 1”).

Israel Aerospace Industries is the prime contractor in the development of the “Ofek 13” satellite, launcher and ground monitoring system. Rafael Advanced Defense Systems developed the launch engines, together with Tomer, a government-owned firm.

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