

# THE REPORTER

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## Film Fest to hold virtual showing of “Martha Liebermann: A Stolen Life”

By Reporter staff

The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest will hold a virtual showing of the film “Martha Liebermann: A Stolen Life.” Andrea Kastner, M.F.A., lecturer in the Department of Art and Design at Binghamton University, will moderate a Zoom discussion of the film. People will be able to register for links to the film and discussion on the Federation website at [www.jfgb.org/film-fest](http://www.jfgb.org/film-fest). The film will be available for viewing from Thursday-Sunday, November 7-10. The discussion will be held on Sunday, November 10, at 7 pm. The film is in German with subtitles. The film

fest is being co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton and Ithaca Area United Jewish Community.

The film is based on the real life story of Martha Liebermann, the widow of the artist Max Liebermann. However, at age 85, she is faced with a dilemma: leave her beloved Germany or be deported to a concentration camp. Martha’s friends pressure her into an illegal sale to finance her escape with a resistance group. Gestapo Commissioner Teubner and his henchmen see this as an opportunity to set a trap for opponents of the regime since the art expert consulted works for them. Can Martha trust the art expert who helps, even though he has



Thekla Carola Wied played the main character in “Martha Liebermann: A Stolen Life.” (Photo used courtesy of Menemsha Films)

his own reasons to help the Nazis.

The film has won or been nominated for numerous awards, including the Best Narrative Feature Award at the Boca International Jewish Film Festival, Golden Nymph Awards for Best Film and Best Actress at the Monte-Carlo Television Festival, nominee at the Venice TV Award for Best TV Movie, nominee for the Hessian TV Award for Best Supporting Performance and nominee for the Venice TV Award Best TV Movie.

“I am looking forward to the start of this year’s Film Fest and we have an excellent film for the first entry,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. “It’s fascinating to see the real life story of an amazing woman come to life on the screen.”

### Community event to discuss Oct. 7

## Chabad Piaker lecture to be held on Oct. 29

Editor’s note: There is a change in the speaker featured at the event. Orit Mark Ettinger will be speaking in place of Iris Haim.

Binghamton’s Jewish community will join together to mark October 7 at the annual Pauline and Philip M. Piaker Memorial Lecture at the Chabad Center on Tuesday, October 29, beginning at 7 pm. Orit Mark Ettinger will present her life story and lessons in a presentation titled “Broken Ray of Light; Finding the Light through the Darkness.” There is no cost for the event, but reservations are necessary and can be secured at [www.JewishBU.com/Piaker](http://www.JewishBU.com/Piaker). A question-and-answer session and desserts will follow the presentation. Additional funding for the evening is being supplied by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, the Eisenberg Foundation and Jewish Family Service.

“The lecture will feature one of Israel’s most inspiring speakers, Orit Mark Ettinger,” said organizers of the event. “She lives in Israel and will be traveling for her presentation. Iris Haim was set to be the guest speaker, but due to personal reasons related to the war in Israel had to bow out;

she strongly recommended Ettinger.”

Organizers added, “Orit is a media professional, panelist on Israel’s Channel 13’s ‘Morning Show,’ and an inspirational speaker who delivers riveting lectures sharing her life story interwoven with impactful lessons on overcoming adversity, personal growth and resilience.”

In 2016, her father, Michael Mark, was killed in a terror attack near their home in Otniel, Israel, and her mother was severely injured. Two years later, her eldest brother, Shlomi Mark, was killed while working for Mossad, Israel’s Institute for Intelligence and Special Assignments. On October 8, 2023, when the Israel-Hamas war began, her cousin, Elchanan Kalmanson, was killed by terrorists after he saved more than 100 people from Kibbutz Be’eri. And on October 31, 2023, Orit’s younger brother, Pedayah Mark, was killed while fighting in Gaza.

“Through unending pain and grief, Orit founded an organization called ‘Or Michael,’ which organizes thousands of volunteers to spread light at hospitals and around Israel. Orit is the author of ‘Broken Ray of Light,’ a best-selling book about turning tragedy into hope, soon to be released



Orit Mark Ettinger

in English,” organizers said. “Orit’s story is one about living in the shadow of terror, yet is full of hope and inspiration. Over the past eight years, Orit has turned her profound tragedies into strength, power and hope, and shares her story with thousands across the world. Orit provides her audiences with tools and approaches to handle complex realities of life and grow from hardship.”

“Orit Mark Ettinger is an exceptional speaker whose strength and light tell the story of Israeli resilience,” said Rivky

Slonim. “You may shed tears, but you will also laugh and undoubtedly gain inspiration for navigating through hardship and bringing light to the world.”

“Orit Mark Ettinger shares a message of resilience and faith,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. “Every one of us has the power to choose what kind of life we will live. We can choose to see the good in others and to spread ‘chesed.’ This lecture will be good for the soul. I hope to see you there.”

## Matching grant for The Reporter

By Reporter staff

The Reporter announced that it has received a \$5,000 matching grant courtesy of the David and Virginia Eisenberg Fund. Donations will be accepted now through November 30. Donations may be made several ways:

◆ Give online through The Reporter Group’s website, [www.thereportergroup.org](http://www.thereportergroup.org).

◆ Through Giving Tuesday e-mails that will be sent by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton. Anyone who does not receive Federation e-mails, but would like to be on the list, should e-mail [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org) with “Federation e-mail list” in the subject line.

◆ Mail donations to The Reporter, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850, with “matching grant” in the check’s subject line.

“We are thrilled to once again receive a matching grant from the David and Virginia Eisenberg Fund,” said Rabbi Rachel Esserman, executive editor of The Reporter Group. “They have been so generous over the years, and we deeply appreciate all they have done and continue to do.”

Esserman added, “If you are thinking about making a donation to the paper, this

is the perfect time to do it. Every penny counts in this economic climate. So many Jewish newspapers are either going under or turning into online publications only. Although The Reporter is now biweekly, I am pleased we are still able to produce hard-copy newspapers for our readers. I know that I prefer to read offline. Plus, a hard copy is great for those of us who like to read the paper on Shabbat, but don’t get on the computer that day. We try to be the one-stop shop for those interested in learning about Jewish events in our community.”

Esserman also noted, “Over the past three years, The Reporter has received many Syracuse Press Club awards and American Jewish Press Association Simon Rockower awards. That is pretty impressive for a small community newspaper.”

Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation, was also pleased that The Reporter received the grant. “I think the paper is a valuable addition to our community,” she said. “It not only lets me know what local organizations are doing, but helps keep us connected. Thank you to the Eisenberg Fund for its gift. I know the generosity of our community will make this fourth Giving Tuesday mini-campaign a success.”

## Hillel Academy celebrated Rosh Hashanah



At left: Hillel Academy students showed the new year’s cards they made. (See page 5 for more photos.)

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# Chautauqua Institution: From Protestant exclusivity to interfaith pluralism

By Bill Simons

Sunday, June 30: My wife, Nancy, and I take our seats in the amphitheater at Chautauqua Institution, not as adherents, but as reverent observers. Examining the worship program, I felt uncomfortable examining the scripture portion from Paul's epistle to Galatians 1:13-24: "You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it..."

In her sermon, "The Declaration of Independence: We are Free from Grandma's Context," Reverend Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, bishop of the United Methodist Church for the Western Pennsylvania Conference, examined Paul's words. While she affirmed the message of Jesus and the cross, she also acknowledged pathways in other faiths to embrace freedom: "Because this freedom is not dependent on our faith, it is available to all – Jew, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist." An African-American, Moore-Koikoi confront-

ed the racism and prejudice that our forebears expressed, stating that we can love and honor our ancestors while emancipating ourselves from their errors. As she spoke, a screen projected a message of inclusivity: "So may Torah, cross, and crescent, each a sign of life made new, point us t'ward your love and justice, earth at peace and one in you." Leaving the amphitheater at service's end, I felt as though Moore-Koikoi had traced the evolution of See "Interfaith" on page 8

## Opinion

### One Perspective from Israel

## (Un)Remarkable

JEREMY M. STAIMAN

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

People raising kids generally do a lot of fretting about the coming generation. Perhaps you've heard – or even said yourself – some of these lines:

◆ "If you don't start applying yourself, you'll never get anywhere in life!"

◆ "When I was a kid, we used to walk five miles to and from school in the snow. And it was uphill in both directions!"

I'd like to share a few stories, and then I'll tell you why I think they are remarkable.

When the war broke out, my younger son was immediately called to duty. My older son, Avi, tried to join the IDF to help the war effort. Avi had served in Chail Avir – the Israel Air Force – over 10 years ago. And although he went through basic training and carried a rifle, his main job was serving as an English teacher in the Air Force. So when he tried to rejoin, he was politely informed that English teachers were not in high demand in Gaza.

So he tried to join the police. "Thanks, but no thanks." He tried to join the border patrol. "Thanks, but no thanks."

He followed Facebook groups where different options for military service were publicized, and he finally found a position in the Military Police which matched his qualifications. He applied and was promptly accepted. He showed up in uniform and is serving just 2 km from his

little brother at the Gaza border.

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Then there's Yoni, the son of dear friends of ours from Baltimore. Yoni last carried a rifle as a Chayal Boded 18 years ago. His army service was a very unpleasant one, and ended with a significant injury. But when the war broke out, Yoni immediately called from Baltimore to the IDF: "I'd like to rejoin."

"Thanks for calling, but we really don't need you."

Yoni was undeterred. He began getting himself into shape, hiking mountains with 40 kilos on his back. Going to the rifle range. He prepared and he waited. And then he called again. "I would like to cancel my Army exemption and rejoin the IDF."

The answer came quickly: "We can use you, guarding in the Shomron, in order to free up local soldiers to go to Gaza or up North. How soon can you be here?"

The next day, Yoni was at his post, proudly wearing his madim, his M-16 at the ready.

\*\*\*\*\*

Finally, there's another Avi. Avi Goldberg is one of my son Avi's closest friends for close to 20 years. Avi G. runs a large apartment management firm in Jerusalem. When the war broke out, and surviving families from the south fled with only the clothes on their backs, Avi went into action, dedicating his office and his staff to the resettlement effort. He convinced 50 of his apartment owners abroad to open their

doors and their hearts to families who had nowhere to go.

Together with my Avi at his side, his group bought food, bedding, clothing, medical equipment and anything and everything needed for these shell-shocked families to begin reassembling the traumatized shreds of their lives. To begin breathing and living normally again.

Once he felt that he had done everything he could, he contacted the IDF and joined a group guarding a *yishuv* in the Shomron. Ironically, it is the same *yishuv* where Yoni is serving.

\*\*\*\*

These stories are remarkable because they are so unremarkable.

Hundreds of thousands of people, not just from Israel but from around the world, immediately answered the call and showed up to protect our beloved land. As I look around my friends and neighbors, I see people who are serving, who have served, whose children are serving, or whose grandchildren are serving. I see young men and women with rifles flung behind their backs going about every manner of business imaginable, and guarding us all at the very same time.

To all of you who have raised children and worried about our future, I say to you: Look at this incredible generation. Look at the future of *Am Yisrael*. Our future is truly, and undoubtedly, in unremarkably remarkable hands!

### In My Own Words

## Depending on technology

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

I recently had a conversation with a neighbor who doesn't own a computer. She's younger than me by a few years, so age is not the reason. She doesn't trust computers and mentioned that she's not sure she trusts the smart meters New York State Electric and Gas recently installed, wondering if they would spy on her. That's not an unwarranted concern: recent articles talking about car technology have noted that manufacturers are collecting far more information than drivers and riders might wish. I mentioned not so jokingly that I don't want a smart house: not only does it make me uncomfortable, but I worry about what would happen if the power goes out and there was no way to enter or leave my home.

I had to laugh when, a day or two later, the daily *New York Times* e-mail that I receive discussed the problems of technology. It opened with, "Two months ago, what should have been a routine software update by a security company, CrowdStrike, crashed millions of computers around the world running Microsoft Windows. Airlines grounded flights. Subways stopped. Operators of 911 lines couldn't dispatch help. Stores shut down. Hospitals canceled surgeries." The article went on to note the problem didn't last long, but the fact it happened – not because the system was hacked, but because there was a basic problem with

the system – troubled the author.

I call myself a luddite, someone opposed to technology, but that's not really true. After all, the only reason I can hear is technology: my cochlear implant is a complex piece of technology that has greatly improved my life. Without that and my hearing aid, I am functionally deaf. (Being able to hear loud thuds does not really help with communication.) E-mail has been a boon because friends who rarely wrote a snail mail letter are far more willing to e-mail. (I still love snail mail and regularly use it. But there seem to be fewer people doing so every day.) I finally gave in and got a cell phone to use for phone calls and texts. Well, mostly texts: I hear better on my landline and one of my phones types what is being said in case I have difficulty with understanding a person.

If I think about this in historical context, then I have to wonder if people felt the same way about electricity and water heaters since at one time they were the new and scary technology. We moved from ice boxes (yes, they really used blocks of ice to keep things cold) to refrigerators. The difference is now those refrigerators may have computers that people can hack from outside the house; few people even realize their frig has a password they should change. I still think of the casino that was hacked a few

years back through the heater in the aquarium in the lobby; the hackers managed to get ahold of the casino's list of high rollers, something I'm sure the casino did not want to share. Does that happen often? I'm willing to bet more than we realize. The government does require businesses to tell people if their information has been exposed, but, since most businesses would rather not let their clients know, that lack of notification probably happens far more than we might think. Plus, there have been cases that people were only informed years later when the government forced the business to make the information public.

I can all too easily see the good parts of technology and its potential problems. But technology is here to stay. We need to learn to be careful and make certain the government has laws in place to protect us. That is slow going, though, because most legislators don't have the background to understand the every-changing technical challenges of our world. Thinking of this reminds me of a catch phrase my family used, one that appeared in the original movie version of "Westworld." The owner claimed that "nothing can go wrong." Of course, if you saw the movie, you know that was not true, nor is it true in real life. We need to be prepared for things to go wrong and have procedures in place before problems arise.



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**OPINIONS**

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

**LETTERS**

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

**ADS**

The Reporter does not necessarily endorse any advertised products and services. In addition, the paper is not responsible for the kashruth of any advertiser's product or establishment.

**DEADLINE**

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

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[www.thereporter.org](http://www.thereporter.org)

# Chabad to hold JLI course “Nurturing Relationships”

Chabad of Binghamton will host a six-week course titled “Nurturing Relationships: Jewish Wisdom for Building Deeper, Richer Connection in all of your Relationships” beginning on Monday, November 11, at 7 pm. It will be offered in person at the Chabad Center and via Zoom to remote students or locals who prefer this option. The course will offer practical wisdom for improving all of their interpersonal relationship. It is open to community members of all backgrounds who wish to explore Jewish teachings for enhanced relationships. To register for the course, visit Jewishbu.com/JLIbing or call Ruth Shea at Chabad at 607-797-0015. The course fee is \$79 or \$150 per couple, which includes the text book.

“What does it take to build strong, nourishing relationships?” organizers of the course asked. “Can love conquer all? How can we remain connected to flawed

people? What is the best way to offer criticism? What does it mean to be a good listener? Is there a way back in or a path forward after betrayal? These and other questions will be addressed in the class.”

Organizers added, “Developed by the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, ‘Nurturing Relationships’ draws on 30 centuries of Jewish teaching to deliver effective, relevant tools for better connections today – from empathy, active listening and healthy disagreement to managing reactions around flawed behavior, being a good influence and achieving forgiveness.”

“Everyone is welcome; you don’t need any Jewish learning background to fully appreciate this course,” said Rivkah Slonim, course instructor. “Whether you’re looking to enhance your marriage, improve workplace interactions, or get closer with friends, ‘Nurturing Relationships’ is a goldmine of wisdom that works.”

# TC Sisterhood to hold Whale of a Sale

The Temple Concord Sisterhood’s almost annual Whale of a Sale will begin on Sunday, November 3, from 10 am-4 pm, in the first floor social hall at Temple Concord, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. It will continue on Monday-Wednesday, November 4-6, from noon-6 pm. The last day will be a bag sale on Sunday, November 10, from 10 am-4 pm. Whale of a Sale is open to the public.

The sale will feature new and nearly new clothing in all sizes for women, men, children, teens and babies. Also on sale will be household items, books for all ages, shoes, pocketbooks, jewelry, baby and children’s toys and games,

adult games, small electrical items, household decorations, sports items, small furniture and more. New items may show up every day of the sale. “Everything will be priced very low,” said organizers of the event.

Whale Co-Chairwomen Ani Loew and Lynn Ross noted there will be no sale on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of that week. There may be a bake sale on Sunday, November 3.

“It is just in time for holiday gifts and winter wear for shoppers and their families,” said Loew and Ross. “Don’t miss this high quality once a year sale winter sale.”

# BD Luncheon on Nov. 9 to feature Mark Yonaty



Mark Yonaty  
(Photo courtesy of Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce)

Beth David Synagogue’s November Luncheon will be held on Saturday, November 9. Mark Yonaty will speak on “Binghamton Transformed: Downtown Binghamton Ten Years Later and Going Strong!” The community is invited to attend. Morning services will begin at 9:30 am, with the luncheon and program following the conclusion of services. The luncheon is free and open to the public.

At the November 2014 BD Luncheon, Yonaty gave the talk “Shaping the Binghamton of the Future: An Insider’s Perspective.” Organizers said, “Since 10 years

have passed, Yonaty has graciously agreed to bring us up to date about the numerous endeavors he has succeeded in bringing to fruition during that time span, and what lies ahead in his vision of downtown Binghamton. This will also be a special opportunity for everyone to share their reactions to the renovations they have seen in downtown Binghamton and what other projects they would look forward to seeing.”

Yonaty is the owner of M.B. Development and has been involved in projects that include the creation of new restaurants, residences and spaces for community services. He said that he is particularly proud of the new eateries he has created that have brought more business to downtown Binghamton. Yonaty indicated that his passion for real estate and real estate development has resulted in the restoration and repurposing of buildings that are part of Binghamton’s architectural history. This includes his most recent project, which is the opening of the Station 45 Chophouse, located

in the old Lackawanna Train Station, a space that also serves as a space for local businesses.

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

# Holiday service schedules

October holiday service schedules can be found starting on page 6 of the September 6-19 issue and on *The Reporter’s* website at [www.thereporter.org/local-news/high-holiday-services-at-area-synagogues-2024](http://www.thereporter.org/local-news/high-holiday-services-at-area-synagogues-2024). Contact information can be found in the congregational notes on page 10 of this issue.

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of  
**Ruth E. Levin**

**DEADLINES**

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
November 1-14 .....	October 21 (early)
November 15-28 .....	November 6
November 29-December 12...	November 20
December 13-26.....	December 4

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

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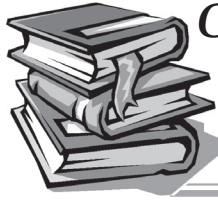
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Off the Shelf

# Jewish culture in Roman times

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

When I was in rabbinical school, we read several scholarly articles about whether the ancient Jewish population had been influenced by the Greek culture of its time. The material was very easy to summarize: even though the authors used the same evidence, some said Greek culture had no influence, while others suggested the exact opposite. These studies came to mind when I was reading Yaron Z. Eliav's "A Jew in the Roman Bathhouse: Cultural Interactions in the Ancient Mediterranean" (Princeton University Press). Although his topic may sound as if it might be of limited interest, Eliav instead offers an excellent discussion of the way ancient Jews managed to live a Jewish life while still taking part in the culture that surrounded them. He focuses on the ways rabbinic literature portrays how the rabbis and other Jews were able to enjoy the Roman bathhouse, while avoiding potential *halachic* (legal) difficulties the bathhouse potentially offered. His overview of Jewish culture offers a different way of exploring the past.

Eliav begins by discussing the physical set-up of the bathhouse and how the Romans accomplished something remarkable, something we take for granted: being able to not only provide running water, but offering running hot water. According to the author, bathhouses were commonly found across the Roman empire and were popular among

the different cultures that were under Roman imperial rule. While this material was interesting, most readers of this review will be more interested in the Jewish population's use of Roman bathhouses. What Eliav does is focus on the intersections of Jewish and Roman culture, rejecting the idea that the Jews either completely avoided Roman culture or were completely Romanized. Using rabbinic texts, he discusses a middle ground, one that allowed Jews to take part in Roman life, while maintaining Jewish culture and religious practices.

To place what occurred in context, Eliav offers details on the development of the rabbinic *halachic* enterprise. He cautions readers not to read back rules and judgments from today's Orthodox Jewish world about ideas of nudity and separation from the general culture into Roman times. The author notes that, in rabbinic writings, there was little to no sense of negative judgment of the Jews who used the baths: he sees only passing references to nudity and licentiousness, which in no way stopped the rabbis and other Jews from participating. This includes the fact that men and women generally shared the same rooms in the bathhouse despite both being nude. In fact, these casual references show how the baths were a regular part of daily Jewish life. Eliav also differentiates between the *mikvah*

(ritual bath), which served a religious purpose, and the bathhouses, which did not.

The author notes discussions of nudity found in rabbinic texts from the time and writes, "Nothing in these *halakhot* forbids Jews (or rabbis) from using the baths. They simply state, objectively, that certain activities involving the uttering of God's name, studying Torah, or reciting prayers cannot be carried out in the presence of nudity. Rather than implying that all Jews must avoid all baths altogether, I believe that these texts do the opposite: by delineating which specific religious activities may not be carried out in the baths, the rabbis are acknowledging that Jews regularly used them."

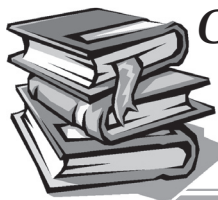
Eliav compares rabbinic judgments about the baths to their comments about other Roman entertainments. He notes that some offered a lenient opinion about attending them with "rabbinic texts betray[ing] familiarity with the goings-ons in these places, suggesting that the authors had firsthand knowledge of them. But the overall disapproval on the part of at least some Jews cannot be mistaken, highlighting the absence of similar condemnation of the bathhouse in rabbinic literature. Whereas at least some rabbis resented the theater and amphitheatres, none, as far as our sources tell us, harbored such hostility, or at least anything close to it, toward the public bathhouse." The author notes that more than 500 mentions of bathhouses occur in rabbinic texts. Some of these discussions look to find ways that Jews might use a bathhouse during the *shemittah* (sabbatical year); this shows that people wanted to use the baths, even during times of possible restrictions. If they were not invested in using the bathhouse, there would have been no need for the discussions.

Eliav also discusses the statues of emperors and Roman gods that were present in the bathhouse. He notes that these types of statues were a regular part of daily Roman life and that Jews would have passed them daily in the marketplace. The statues were extremely difficult to avoid, but Jewish texts suggested that they were generally ignored in both places. The rabbis noted that the activities done in the presence of these statues (for example, urinating) show that people – even Romans – did not consider them holy. The author does mention that Jews did not usually use baths that were connected to a temple dedicated to Roman gods. That might have been considered taking part in idolatrous practices.

Eliav does note that one needs to be careful when analyzing the ideas and stories offered in rabbinic texts because the tales are not necessarily history and the concerns featured focus on specifically Jewish thought, rather than Roman. For example, while the Roman bathhouse was often used in Roman literature to show the greatness of the Roman empire, that was not true of Jewish texts. The rabbis had their own project – discussions of a post-Temple Judaism – that was not concerned with the glorification of Rome.

The author's ultimate purpose in writing his work is the hope that readers will rethink the way that the ancient rabbis and ancient Judaism engaged with Greco-Roman culture. Eliav writes, "The model I've offered here, which I call 'filtered absorption,' explains how different ways of life interact in a relatively peaceful manner. Just as important, it highlights the diversity and disagreement that prevailed among the rabbis themselves about absorption and adaptation. The entire system of cultural interaction comes to life in the bathhouse as rabbis embraced, absorbed, and accepted it, while at the same time they also rejected, reconfigured, and re-created it. The bathhouse tells an entirely new story about ancient Judaism, offering deeper and richer understanding of its interplay with the common way of life in Roman Mediterranean."

"A Jew in the Roman Bathhouse" offers some fascinating ideas about the development of rabbinic Judaism and some challenging ones about rabbinic Judaism's relationship to ancient Rome. Even though a scholarly work, Eliav's prose is generally easy to read, even for the non-specialist. Readers may find themselves rethinking their views of Jewish life during ancient times and pondering how Judaism was, and is, able to adjust to different cultural experiences.



Off the Shelf

# Discussing Torah

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

One of the joys of Torah dialogue is to have someone suggest an idea about the text that had never occurred to you. Almost everyone has something to add from their personal or professional expertise and their lived experiences. Even someone who has never studied the biblical text before can offer interesting and challenging ways to understand its meaning because they don't have the same preconceptions as those who are more learned. The idea that people of different backgrounds can challenge and inspire each other was behind the "Parsha in Progress" podcast sponsored by Tablet magazine, which features Rabbi Dov Linzer, an Orthodox rabbi, and author Abigail Pogrebin, a Reform Jew. Their dialogues were recorded and are now the source of a new book of Torah commentary, "It Takes Two to Torah: An Orthodox Rabbi and Reform Journalist Discuss and Debate Their Way Through the Five Books of Moses" (Fig Tree Books).

"It Takes Two to Torah" offers commentary on the first five books of the Bible. Pogrebin and Linzer focus on one or two specific concepts in each *parasha* (the section read each week). The chapters range from three to six easy-to-read pages because the work is a transcript of their discussions. Between each section is a short paragraph or two offering the basic ideas and plot details of the *parasha* so those unfamiliar with the text will be able to better understand what is discussed. What makes reading their conversations so much fun is that they disagree on everything from the meaning of the characters' actions to the laws given by God and how they should be followed. Their differences are made clear, but so is the way they listen to each other and try to respectfully understand the other's point of view.

The difference in their approach to Judaism is made clear in their discussion of *parashat* Bechukotai. They take a detour to talk about Tzom Gedalia (the fast of Gedalia), a minor fast day not found in the Torah that commemorates the assassination of Gedaliah, a governor of the Kingdom of Judah. While Pogrebin doesn't fast because she does not find the practice meaningful, Linzer declares that finding meaning in a particular ritual practice is not relevant to his observance. He notes that, "at the end of the day, I'm committed to *halacha*, and there's no question that I'm going to fast, and that's where I find meaning. I'd like to find the meaning you talk about, and I often do, but if, in the end, the only meaning is because of my observance and commitment to *halacha*, that's sufficient."

However, in their discussion of Lech Lecha, Linzer notes that there are limits to allowing the biblical text to have the final word for observance: "Even if you believe that God promised the land [of Canaan to the descendants of Abraham], that does not give you license to act in ways that violate morality and *halacha*. I think that's a core message of traditional Judaism: we're not biblical Jews. We're Rabbinic Jews, or *halachic* Jews, and that means we do not live in a world of divine promises. We live in a world in which we are responsible for our actions." Pogrebin also has difficulties with the divine promises, but doesn't see herself bound by *halacha*; rather, she looks for meaning in her observance and is willing to reject or not practice what she finds meaningless or offensive to her sensibilities.

Linzer and Pogrebin often differ when it comes to laws that deal with women. She looks for fairness in the law, which Linzer admits isn't always possible. One example is the *sotah* ritual, when a woman undergoes a humiliating ritual because her husband is jealous. Linzer believes that the ritual was set up in a way that the woman would never be found guilty of adultery, leaving her to live peacefully with her husband afterward, something that Pogrebin answers with a sarcastic, "I'm glad he feels better." She does admit the alternative – dying from the ritual – would be horrible. Linzer asks Pogrebin how she understands difficult passages like this. She notes she has a very different way of viewing the text: "I'm interested in unpacking [the difficult verses] and discussing them, but I am not wrestling with whether to live by them. It feels like you are pretzeling yourself to accept a text as holy that is offensive to you." That is a fundamental difference between the two: he feels the need to accept the text as God's word and live by the rabbinic version of it, while she doesn't feel the need to accept the parts of Jewish tradition that do not speak to her.

"It Takes Two to Torah" works because readers will be able to appreciate the approaches of both writers/speakers, while grappling with their own ideas about the text. The respect the two show each other is impressive, as is the way they really listen to and challenge each other. My only quibble is the book's title: it's reminiscent of the phrase "it take two to tango," which strikes me as frivolous since Linzer and Pogrebin take their discussions seriously. However, that does not negate what the work offers to readers. Those who enjoy learning Torah will want to join the authors on their Torah journey.



On the Jewish food scene

# Food preferences

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

At first I thought it was hummus, although the container was a different shape. When I was growing up, hummus was an exotic food. More common at brunches (like the one I was attending) were lox and whitefish. Although I enjoy lox, whitefish has always been my preferred smoked fish. You can imagine my joy and surprise when what I thought was hummus turned out to be whitefish salad. Whitefish is so expensive that it is now usually made into a salad, rather than being offered as full pieces of fish. Those were so good! Pre-pandemic, I would periodically buy a small piece of whitefish (no one local sells a whole

fish anymore) and eat it plain. That is how good it is and how much I like it.

However, another very Jewish food was served as a dessert and I am going to risk my Jewish credentials by saying that I really don't get babka. It strikes me as neither a bread nor a cake. I've enjoyed it toasted with cream cheese, but a plain piece is just not a thrill. I used to be a big fan of raisin bread and my favorite challah is raisin, but babka is too sweet to be bread. I also enjoy banana bread and other breads of that kind, but babka is not sweet enough to be one of them. Even though I love things with cinnamon (I

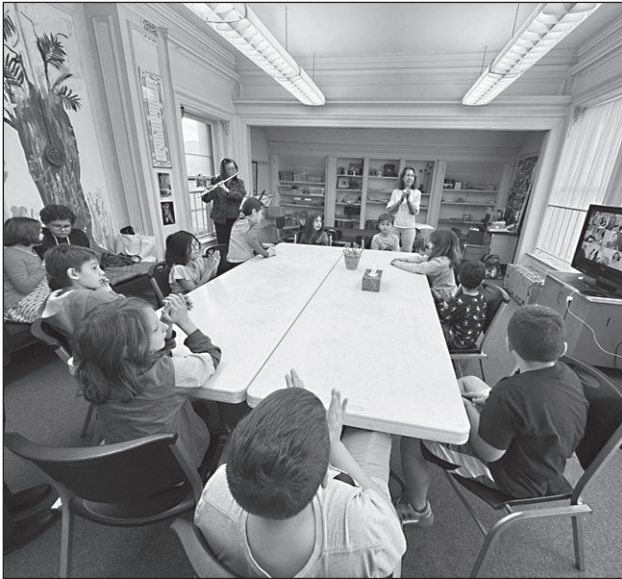
prefer an oatmeal raisin cookie to a chocolate chip one for that reason), even the cinnamon in babka is not enough to make me enjoy eating it.

While we are speaking of preferred foods, there are bagels and there are bagels, meaning there are bagels that are chewy and delightful, and there are bagels whose lack of texture and taste remind me of bland white bread (which I don't like after years of eating whole wheat and seven-grain bread). Those blah bagels don't strike me as a particularly Jewish food, which leads me to make See "Food" on page 6

# TC Religious School activities



On October 1, Temple Concord Religious School students dressed the Torahs in white in preparation for the High Holidays.



Temple Concord Religious School students had the opportunity to learn about klezmer music and experience it first-hand.

# Hillel Academy celebrated Rosh Hashanah

The students of Hillel Academy of Broome County welcomed Rosh Hashanah with several activities. The students made Rosh Hashanah greeting cards for their families, received kosher *shofars* and prepared apples for a Rosh Hashanah seder. A beekeeper spoke to the chil-

dren about the production of honey by the bees. During the Rosh Hashanah seder, a custom that originated in the Talmud, the students ate fruits and vegetables of the land, and wished their families and the community a happy and sweet new year.



Students practiced blowing the shofar.



Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu blew the shofar.



The students celebrated Rosh Hashanah with a seder.



Students displayed food eaten at the seder. (All student names withheld on request)

## Tea and Talk

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

Upcoming dates are:

- ◆ October 31
- ◆ November 14
- ◆ December 5
- ◆ December 19

To RSVP and for more information, visit [www.JewishBU.com/Tea](http://www.JewishBU.com/Tea) or call 797-0015.

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- 2) E-mail Federation Executive Director Shelley Hubal at [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org) with "pledge" in the subject line.
- 3) Fill out the form in this ad and mail it to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850

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# Israeli gov't OKs five-year plan to transform Beersheva into metropolis

by JNS staff

(JNS) – Israel's Prime Minister's Office and Finance Ministry have agreed on a five-year budget plan aimed at establishing Beersheva as a thriving metropolis, the PMO announced recently. According to the PMO, the initiative comes as part of a broader strategy to revitalize the Negev.

The cornerstone of the development plan is the relocation of key Israel Defense Forces units to the Negev, scheduled to commence in late 2025. The move is expected to serve as a catalyst for significant economic and demographic growth in the area, the PMO stated.

The comprehensive plan, set to be submitted for government approval by year's end, addresses critical infrastructure needs, including transportation, housing, employment and economic development. High-speed rail lines, a light-rail system and long-term rental housing solutions are among the key projects slated for implementation.

"This is a significant step that will enable us to face the challenges ahead, including the IDF's relocation to the south," said Beersheva Mayor Rubik Danilovich. "We all



The southern Israeli city of Beersheva on January 22, 2022. (Photo by Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

understand that the Negev is the solution for the state of Israel. Now is the time to make dramatic decisions that will shape the country's future and establish Beersheva as Israel's leading metropolis. This is a national mission and a national interest!"

Beersheva's city engineer, Tamar Poria Adar, warned

that the Negev would lose its Jewish majority within about 20 years unless decisive action is taken. This demographic shift, according to local leaders, is a direct consequence of years of neglect and insufficient investment in the region.

Many residents of the south, while cautiously optimistic, remain wary. Yehuda Benano, chairman of the "Residents for the Negev" organization, responded, "The plans are ready in the drawer, and now is the time to act to ensure a Jewish majority that will live securely, prosperously and healthily, just like the residents of central Israel."

One concrete move in this direction, according to Health Minister Uriel Boss, is the recent approval for a second hospital in Beersheva, set to open by 2028 with approximately 600 beds.

"We are advancing another step in realizing the vision to reduce the gaps between the periphery and the center, and to provide equal rights to advanced health services for every citizen in the State of Israel, regardless of their place of residence, community affiliation, or economic situation," Bosso said in a statement.

## TC celebrated Rosh Hashanah



Members of Temple Concord enjoyed a Super Kiddush, which was held in the Kilmer Mansion after services on October 3.



Temple Concord held a Tashlich service at Confluence Park on October 3.

## Siege of Masada lasted just weeks, researchers say

By JNS Staff

(JNS) – The Roman siege of the Judean Desert fortress of Masada two millennium years ago took several weeks at most, according to study from Tel Aviv University released recently. The groundbreaking archaeological survey casts doubt on the long-held belief that the Roman siege of Masada continued for three years. The team of researchers used a variety of modern technologies, including drones, remote sensing and 3D digital modeling, to generate their analysis of the siege.

"For many years, the prevailing theory that became a modern myth asserted that the Roman siege of Masada was a grueling three-year affair," noted TAU's Guy Stiebel. "In recent decades researchers have begun to challenge this notion, for various reasons. In this first-of-its kind study, we examined the issue with modern technologies enabling precise objective measurements."

The researchers used drones carrying remote sensors that provided precise, high-resolution measurements of the height, width and length of all features of the siege system. This data was used to build an accurate 3D digital model, enabling exact calculation of the structures' volume and how long it took to build them.

About 6,000-8,000 Roman soldiers participated in the siege of Masada, one of the final events in the First Jewish-Roman War around a hilltop on the eastern edge of the Judean Desert, overlooking the Dead Sea.

"Reliable estimates are available of the quantity of earth and stones a Roman soldier was able to move in one day," said TAU's Hai Ashkenazi. "Thus, we were able to objectively calculate how long it took them to build the entire siege system – eight camps and a stone wall surrounding most of the site."

"We found that construction took only about two weeks. Based on the ancient historical testimony, it is clear that

**See "Masada" on page 9**



A view from a drone of the excavation site on Masada. (Photo by The Neustadter Masada Expedition)

## Women in Business

### The Cat Doctor

**Specialty:** A full service veterinary hospital providing medical, surgical, dental and behavioral care for cats of all ages.  
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**Phone:** 607-754-7221  
**Hours:** Mon. and Fri. 8 am-5 pm, Tues. and Thurs. 12:30-8 pm, Wed. 8 am-3 pm, Sat. 9 am-1 pm

The Cat Doctor is celebrating 30 years of caring for cats and their people. Dr. Darcy Sobel, Dr. Kaitlin Pace, Dr. Lea Callan and staff at The Cat Doctor recognize that cats are important family members and treat each individual with special attention to their age, temperament and health conditions. Preventive medicine is practiced by providing complete physical examinations, behavioral counseling, dental care, diet management and appropriate vaccinations. The hospital has advanced radiology capabilities, providing instant, superior quality, digital x-rays as well as digital dental x-rays for the detection of early tooth disease below the gumline. The hospital now offers abdominal ultrasound for early detection of organ problems. When illness does occur, thorough and caring medical and surgical treatment is tailored to each patient.

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**Name:** Kathy Brown  
**Phone:** 607-724-2360, ext. 244  
**E-mail:** advertising@thereportergroup.org  
**Website:** www.thereportergroup.org  
**Facebook:** The Reporter Group  
**Hours:** Mon. 9 am-4 pm, Wed. 9 am-3 pm, Thurs. 9 am-4 pm

Advertising was a new field for Kathy when she started three years ago, but she's discovered the pleasure of working with the clients, giving them ideas on how to promote their business using print ads. Her motto is "the client comes first" and, to prove that, she researches each client to see what they have done in the past and tries to figure out if there is a way to improve their ad-image. She also works with them to discover the ad sections that will best highlight their business.

Kathy has lived here for 40 years, moving from Long Island to meet and marry her husband. She loves the outdoors, even in the winter. She is ready to help you advertise your business in *The Reporter*, in Binghamton and Scranton, the best way she can. Call or e-mail her to discuss options.

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## Food . . . . . Continued from page 4

a controversial declaration: there are Jewish bagels and there are secular/non-Jewish bagels. My preference is the traditional Jewish bagel and, if you really want to make me happy, it should be an onion one.

Of course, I recognize that everyone has different food preferences. That explains the babka at the brunch. The fact that whitefish doesn't usually appear probably has more to do with cost than taste. I realize I can't impose my ideas on others, but if someone wants me to create the menu for the next brunch, I'd be happy to help. Of course, you might have to up the budget, so perhaps we're better off with those currently making the decisions.

# Holocaust memorial service held



At left: Deborah Herz-Walike spoke about the Get Together Club and the Holocaust Memorial Monument (shown on right).

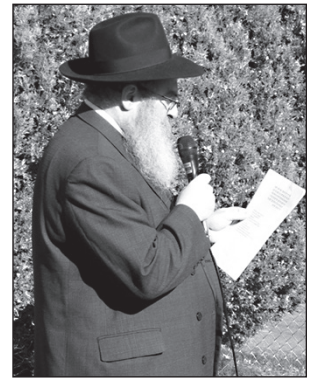


The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton held a memorial service at the Holocaust Memorial Monument in the Temple Israel Cemetery on October 6. More than 30 people attended the event.



At left, l-r: Suzanne Holwitt, president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton; speaker Deborah Herz-Walike; and Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation.

At right, l-r: Among the speakers were Rabbis Micah Friedman, Leah Moser, Moshe Shmaryahu, Zev Silber and Aaron Slonim.

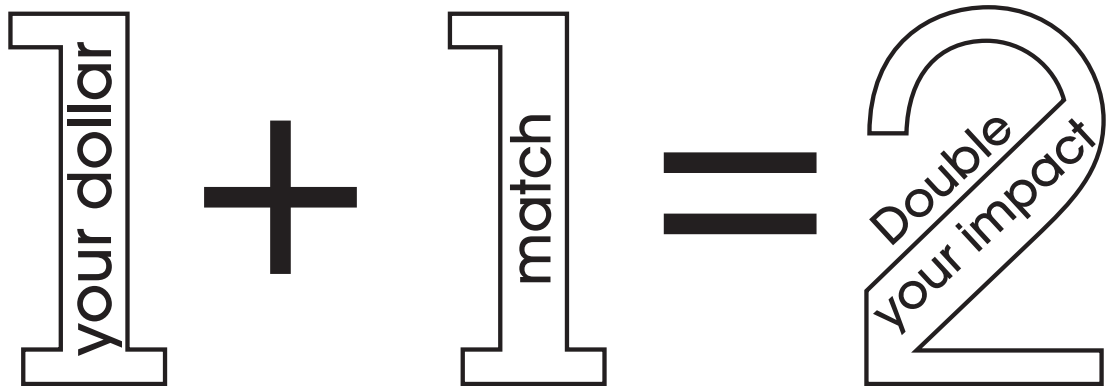


## Support The Reporter

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- Through Matching Grant e-mails that will be sent by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton. Anyone who does not receive Federation e-mails, but would like to be on the list, should e-mail [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org) with "Federation e-mail list" in the subject line.
- Mail donations to The Reporter, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850 with "matching grant" in the check's subject line.



# Holocaust survivor Lily Ebert passes at 100

By JNS staff

(JNS)—Auschwitz survivor turned social media influencer and author Lily Ebert has died on October 9 in London at the age of 100. Ebert “passed away of old age early this morning, at home surrounded by family,” the family said. She is survived by a daughter and a son, 10 grandchildren, 38 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandson.



Lily Ebert at her London home in January. (Photo by Adam Lawrence/March of the Living U.K.)

In July 1944, Ebert, aged 20, and her entire family were deported from Hungary to the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp. Her mother, younger sister and a brother were all murdered in the gas chambers. Four months after arriving at Auschwitz, Ebert and two of her sisters were transferred and put to work in a

German munitions factory near Leipzig, where they remained until liberation by the U.S. Army in 1945.

After World War II, Ebert moved with her surviving two sisters to Switzerland to rebuild her life. In 1953, she was reunited with her older brother, who also survived the Nazi persecution, and the family moved to Israel. In 1967, Lily and her husband immigrated to the United Kingdom.

“Lily’s story has touched hundreds of millions worldwide,” the family said. “Her life-affirming intergenerational memoir, ‘Lily’s Promise,’ co-authored with her great-grandson Dov Forman, is a reminder of the resilience of the human spirit and the dangers of unchecked hatred. Lily taught the power of tolerance and faith, the importance of speaking out, and the need to stand against prejudice.”

In recent years, Ebert’s accounts on TikTok and other online platforms gained more than two million followers, which she used to educate about the horrors of the Holocaust and speak about her experiences.

Scott Saunders, the chairman of March of the Living U.K., who also serves as its global CEO, stated: “Her remarkable partnership with her great-grandson Dov Forman on social media, especially through their TikTok videos, reached younger generations and educated them about the horrors of Auschwitz and the strength of the human spirit.

“Ebert’s work has left an indelible mark on Holocaust education, and March of the Living will continue to carry her message of resilience and hope, passing the torch of memory and responsibility forward,” he said.

In February, Ebert met with Kindertransport survivor Walter Bingham, who was born in Germany and lives in Jerusalem, at her London home on the heels of International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

“We have to live, every day, with the pain of what we went through,” Ebert explained at the time. “We share that understanding, and it is for that reason that meeting the inspirational Walter was so special.”

# Rare 600-pound sea turtle rescued in northern Israel

By JNS staff

(JNS) – An Israel Nature and Parks Authority volunteer found a wounded 600-pound leatherback sea turtle on her daily beach walk near her home recently, leading to its rescue and treatment at the national emergency clinic for marine wildlife.

The turtle, which measures 6.5 feet in length and had washed up on Tel Dor beach near Haifa, is missing one limb and the other is infected following an entanglement in some fishing lines, INPA staff told Ynet. The foreign object is embedded into the animal’s flesh, requiring antibiotic treatment before it’s removed.

Leatherbacks, which are Israel’s largest reptile, are rarely sighted on its beaches. The previous sighting was in 2022 of a dead specimen, which was also found entangled in fishing lines. “Oftentimes, well-intentioned people will try to remove

such objects themselves from entangled animals, diminishing their chances of survival,” Yaniv Levi, the head of INPA’s sea turtle rescue center in Mikhmoret near Hadera, told the news site. The volunteer, Carrol Karmi of Kibbutz Nahsholim, knew this from her work with INPA, he added.

Leatherbacks, which are the fourth largest reptiles in the world, have a wide distribution, spanning the Indian, Pacific and Atlantic oceans, but the species is considered vulnerable, with some subpopulations defined as critically endangered. They may live to be 90 and even older.

Levi was optimistic about the creature’s chances of recovery. “We give the turtles supportive treatment but they do most of the recovery work themselves. They’re very resilient creatures that can recover from serious injuries. We’ll treat it with an eye to reintroducing it to nature as soon as possible.

Because this is a huge marine reptile that lives in deep seas, it has a better chance of recovering in nature than in captivity.”

Karmi named the animal Dor, which means “generation” in Hebrew, for the beach where she found it. INPA is using that name to identify the animal in their records.

# Interfaith. . . . . Continued from page 2

mainline Protestantism in America – and Chautauqua – from sectarian exclusivity to interfaith pluralism.

In 1874, Methodist Minister John Heyl Vincent and Lewis Miller, entrepreneur and philanthropist, founded an institution to improve the quality of Protestant Sunday School instruction. Located in western New York, the project derived its name from proximity to Lake Chautauqua. From modest beginnings in tent domiciles, Chautauqua Institution grew into a sizable enterprise with classroom buildings, diverse places of worship, libraries, museums, family-owned homes, condominiums, seasonal rentals, recreational facilities and restaurants. Modern Chautauqua is a summer encampment of interfaith pluralism, community, culture and learning. In addition to clergy, American presidents, leading intellectuals, renowned maestros and iconic entertainers have graced Chautauqua’s Athenaeum stage. Rather than fleeing, Chautauquans rushed onto that stage on August 12, 2022, when novelist Salman Rushdie was stabbed, to subdue the would-be assassin and to administer life-saving medical care. Over nine weekly sessions, contemporary Chautauqua hosts more than 100,000 attendees each summer.

As recounted in “Shalom Chautauqua: The Hebrew Congregation and the Jewish Presence” by Betty and Arthur Salz, the early institution served white Protestants. In 1891, a Chautauqua address by Reform Rabbi Gustav Gottheil constituted a departure. Composer George Gershwin, needing a quiet summer venue to work incognito in 1925, became the first Jew in residence at Chautauqua. Soon thereafter, Jewish musicians found a place in the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, but they were domiciled apart from other residents. Except for the musicians’ presence, into the 1950s a “gentlemen’s agreement” prevented Jews from renting or purchasing property at Chautauqua. Two pubescent girls provided the impetus for the first Jewish services at Chautauqua in 1959, and the Hebrew Congregation formally organized in 1960. Since then, the Jewish population, infrastructure and activism has grown exponentially as Chautauqua has come to embrace an inclusive ecumenicalism.

Following approval of the governing board, 1965 marked the initial Jewish purchase of a home on the Chautauqua grounds. The Everett Jewish Life Center opened in 2009 with a Chabad House following in 2014. Although occasional religious controversies occur, including a dispute over the BDS movement, tolerance and respect set the tone at Chautauqua, evidenced by the Abraham initiative to promote dialogue and cooperation between

Christians, Jews and Muslims. Today, approximately 25 percent of Chautauqua residents are Jewish. The current challenge is to continue building interfaith goodwill while not blurring the distinctions between Judaism and other religions.

Over the course of three summers, I have come to Chautauqua, with my wife, Nancy, to learn, reflect and teach, providing compensated courses on the transformative year 1960, Jewish baseball and Franklin Roosevelt. In 2024, we roomed at the Presbyterian House, welcoming the opportunity to make new friends from other faiths. One evening, the pre-dinner grace was given by a Buddhist. Reverend Mark Davis and I discussed the shared dilemma of responding to interfaith couples within our respective congregations, Presbyterian and Jewish.

On Friday, July 5, I attended a *Kabbalat* Shabbat service on the last evening of my Chautauqua stay, just as I had done the year before. Outdoors on the shore of Lake Chautauqua, the *Kabbalat* Shabbat service was presided over by Rabbi Samuel Stahl, just as it was in 2023. He is the rabbi emeritus of the Reform Temple Beth El in San Antonio, TX. An iconic presence over two generations amongst Chautauqua Jews and in the larger religious life of the Institute, Stahl, at 84, remains robust of voice and mind. More than 100 worshippers, approximately 40 of them from the rabbi’s San Antonio congregation, attended the service. Some of the men were bare-headed, others wore a *kippah* and several sported baseball hats. A Team Israel cap, emblazoned with a Star of David, sat atop my head.

I found myself immersed in Stahl’s sermon. Discussing heightened concern for Israel at a time of peril, Stahl asserted the need to combat the Hamas terrorists who hold Gaza in thrall and intend to inflict more carnage on Israel. He also emphasized the need for compassion toward innocent Gazan civilians. Then, the rabbi articulated an uncomfortable truth: many attendees question the existence of God due to an absence of scientific proof of divinity, the existence of evil in the world and an unwillingness to surrender individual autonomy. Many of us do not go to services regularly at our community synagogues. We may regard ourselves as atheists, but we are not or we would not have gathered for *Kabbalat* Shabbat. Moreover, Judaism is more concerned with deed than creed, and the true atheists are the ones who loudly proclaim piety while committing evil.

After the service, I fraternized with fellow Jews over pizza and sides while awaiting my turn to speak with Stahl. As we spoke, I felt a quickening of my Jewish identity and resolved next year at Chautauqua.

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Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

# Sixty-one percent of U.S. Jews surveyed feel less safe after Oct. 7

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Research suggests that as crime targeting Jews has risen, the community’s trust in law enforcement has dropped, according to a study released on October 7 by the Combat Antisemitism Movement. The 40-page study presented the results of a survey of 1,075 American Jews between August 12 and September 3. Questions focused on

experiences of antisemitism following the Hamas terrorist attacks in southern Israel on October 7, 2023.

Answers suggest that 3.5 million American Jews have personally encountered antisemitism since then and that 61 percent feel less safe. This includes one-fifth of Jewish children experiencing incidents of bigotry.

Among Jewish adults, 25 percent report seeing antisem-

itism in their area – a doubling from previous reports – and 25 percent of those affiliated with synagogues say theirs has been targeted with graffiti, threats or attacks.

The survey suggests an increase in those physically threatened or attacked in the past year, increasing slightly to 7 percent from 5 percent in a 2020 Pew poll. This accounts for 406,000 adult Jews. Of these individuals, an estimated 290,000 said the encounter involved physical contact, and only 21 percent reported the crime to police.

Coupled with the uptick in hate crimes, Jews surveyed show a diminished faith in law enforcement with 75 percent of those victimized by antisemitism not reporting incidents to anyone outside their family. Only 46 percent of Jews regard the police as somewhat or very effective, a drop from previous research.

The survey also confirmed fears of intimidation at colleges throughout the United States. For Jewish students surveyed, 39 percent felt uncomfortable or unsafe at a campus event due to their Jewish identity, while 29 percent felt or have been excluded from a group or an event on campus because of their religion.

These results also affect Jewish voting decisions, with 43 percent of those surveyed saying it would influence their choice come November.

“The explosion of anti-Jewish hate since October 7 in this country has profoundly impacted individuals, families and communities,” said Misha Galperin, a member of CAM’s board of governors. “The extent of that impact on American Jews documented by this survey is simply stunning.”

The survey’s conductor Ira Sheskin, a geography professor at the University of Miami and a longtime national statistician for the Jewish community, said the survey “emphasizes the number of Jews impacted by antisemitism rather than just the number of incidents.”

He called the results “deeply concerning” and that they showed the “need for immediate action to address rising antisemitism in America.”

## “Lady in Red,” Nova festival survivor, reflects on Oct. 7 attack

By Adi Nirman

(Israel Hayom via JNS) – The haunting image of Vlada Patapov, known as the “Lady in Red,” fleeing the Supernova music festival massacre on October 7, 2023, became one of the most iconic visuals of the tragedy.

Now, a year after the Hamas attack at Nova that claimed more than 360 lives and saw 40 people taken hostage, Patapov has opened up about her experiences and ongoing struggles.

In an exclusive interview with MailOnline, Patapov, a 26-year-old mother and wedding planner, expressed her deepest regret, “If I had one wish, it would be to have told everyone at the festival one hour before the attack that something was going to happen so everyone could have got away.”

Patapov, who was initially feared dead or missing, has been grappling with post-traumatic stress disorder and survivor guilt. “I survived, but others weren’t so fortunate. I think about that. It weighs on my mind,” she said.

She has been undergoing therapy and counseling to cope with the trauma, finding solace in speaking with others who shared her experience. However, the ongoing war in the region has added to her distress. “Sometimes I think who can help me when all this is still going on around us, and the fear is still here and it’s still real,” Patapov said.

During the attack, her primary concern was staying alive for her daughter Romi. “She will be four soon and for a quarter of her life she has known only war,” Patapov lamented.

Patapov, who attended the festival at the last minute with her boyfriend, Matan, and a friend named Mai, found herself separated from Matan during the chaos. She saw friends being shot and killed as terrorists opened fire on the crowd. It took nearly 24 hours before she could reunite with her daughter at home.

Patapov emphasized the importance of resilience. “We can’t let the terrorists win. We can’t be weak – we must remain strong for Israel and for the hostages who are still in Gaza,” she said.

She expressed concern about the current security situation, mentioning rocket attacks from various fronts and the fear of terrorist attacks in daily life. She marked the anniversary quietly at home with her family, prioritizing her daughter’s well-being. “When Romi hears the sirens, she is so scared, she starts crying,” Patapov explained.

Reflecting on the broader impact of the Hamas-led attack, Patapov expressed empathy for the hostages still held in Gaza and their families. “Who would have thought we would still be in this situation a year on?” she questioned.

The October 7, 2023, attacks left about 1,200 people dead, mostly civilians, and some 250 others taken hostage. There are 101 hostages still captive in Gaza, including 97 taken on October 7.

Originally published by Israel Hayom.



Vlada Patapov fled the Supernova festival site on October 7, 2023. (Photo courtesy of JNS)



### Did you know?

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## Masada . . . . Continued from page 6

once the assault ramp was completed, the Romans launched a brutal attack, ultimately capturing the fortress within a few weeks at the most. This leads us to the conclusion that the entire siege of Masada lasted no more than several weeks,” Ashkenazi said.

Stiebel said, “The narrative of Masada, the Great Jewish Revolt, the siege, and the tragic end as related by Flavius Josephus, have all become part of Israeli DNA and the Zionist ethos, and are well known around the world. The duration of the siege is a major element in this narrative, suggesting that the glorious Roman army found it very difficult to take the fortress and crush its defenders.

“As empires throughout history have done, the Romans came, saw and conquered, quickly and brutally quelling the uprising in this remote location,” he added. “Our conclusions, however, detract nothing from the importance of this historical event.”

The findings have been published in the Journal of Roman Archaeology.

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Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton



## Weekly Parasha

Sukkot, Exodus 33:12-34:26, Numbers 29:17-22

## October 7 – Simchat Torah connection and beyond

RABBI LEVI Y. SLONIM, CO-DIRECTOR OF CHABAD DOWNTOWN AND DIR. OF DEVELOPMENT, ROHR CHABAD CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDENT LIFE AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

As you read this, world Jewry finds itself poised between October 7 and the upcoming holiday of Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, the date of the deadly massacre on the Jewish calendar. This bears special significance not only because it is the *yahrzeit* of all those murdered on 22 Tishrei, but, as is well known, our enemies have often chosen Jewish holidays as a “prime day” to attack us. It was no coincidence that the attacks happened on Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, which in Israel are celebrated as one holiday on one day.

The great leader, Rabbi Israel Baal Shemtov, the founder

of Chasidism, taught that there is a lesson we can take regarding our service of God nestled in everything we see and hear. What message are we meant to take from the October 7 attacks happening on this specific holiday?

On Simchat Torah, we celebrate the completion of the annual cycle of reading and studying of the Torah. Notably, we celebrate the completion of the Torah not with staging a symposium of great Torah scholars and leaders in the synagogue, or a 24-hour study marathon, but rather through dancing – particularly dancing in circles, as has been the tradition for thousands of years

in synagogues around the world.

What is the significance of the circle and what is the connection with October 7?

While dancing in a circle, we recognize that, although we have different strengths and skill sets and different perspectives on life, we still share the same connection to the Torah and the same connection to God and thereby are all working toward the same purpose. As we dance in the circle, we recognize how we each need the other to complete the circle.

See “Beyond” on page 11

## Congregational Notes

### Temple Israel

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

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

On Saturday, October 19, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Exodus 33:12-34:26 and the haftarah is Ezekiel 38:18-39:16. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 7 pm.

The temple office will be closed Thursday-Friday, October 24-25, for Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah.

On Saturday, October 26, Shacharit services will be held at 9:45 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Leviticus 16:1-34 and the haftarah is Isaiah 42:5-43:10. The bat mitzvah of Ariela Kweller will take place. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 7 pm.

The bar mitzvah of Dan Sokol will take place on Saturday, November 2, at 9:30 am.

### Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive  
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815  
Phone: 334-2691  
E-mail: fertigj@roadrunner.com  
Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 373-5087  
Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.  
Adult Ed.: Call ahead, text or e-mail to confirm dates.

### Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Rabbi: Caleb Brommer  
Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass  
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292  
Phone: 273-5775  
E-mail: president@tbeithaca.org, secretary@tbeithaca.org  
Website: www.tbeithaca.org  
Presidents: Melanie Kalman and Alexis Siemon  
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman  
Director of Education: Calle Schueler  
Services: Friday 8 pm; Saturday 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sundays and legal holidays).  
Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday afternoons, 3:45-5:45 pm. The teen No'ar program meets twice per month (every other Sunday from 5-7 pm) and is designed with the flexibility to accommodate busy student schedules.  
Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.

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

### 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.

### Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

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

### Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union  
Rabbi: Zev Silber  
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Phone: 607-722-1793, Rabbi's Office: 607-722-7514  
Fax: 607-722-7121  
Office hours: Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm  
Beth David e-mail address: bethdavid@stny.rr.com  
Rabbi's e-mail: rabbisilber@stny.rr.com  
Website: www.bethdavid.org  
Facebook: www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton  
Classes: Rabbi Zev Silber will hold his weekly Talmud class every Tuesday evening after services.

### Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch  
Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors  
E-mail: aslonim@binghamton.edu  
rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com  
Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 607-797-0015, Fax: 607-797-0095  
Website: www.Chabadofbinghamton.com  
Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education  
E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com  
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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: Nick Martelli  
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.

Friday, October 18, light candles before ..... 5:58 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, October 19..... 6:57 pm  
Wednesday, October 23, light candles before .... 5:50 pm  
Thursday, October 24, light candles after ..... 6:49 pm  
Friday, October 25, light candles before ..... 5:47 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, October 26..... 6:47 pm  
Friday, November 1, light candles before ..... 5:38 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, November 2..... 6:37 pm

### Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
Rabbi: Leah Moser  
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm  
Phone: 607-723-7355  
Fax: 607-723-0785  
Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com  
Website: www.templeconcord.com  
Regular service times: Fri., 7:30 pm; Sat., 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.  
Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm on Tues. and Thurs. during the school year unless otherwise noted.

Some services and programs are online only.

Friday, October 18: At 6:30 pm, “Wine and Cheese in the Sukkah.” At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service with Rabbi Leah Moser. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, dial in at 646-931-3860 or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/templeconcord/](http://www.facebook.com/templeconcord/).

Saturday, October 19: At 9 am, Shabbat school; and at 9:15 am, Torah study in person and on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87897900994?pwd=bOMvwx-DuovoaBInB4aVfHoTlSyamj.1,meetingID87897900994> and passcode 743506. To dial in, call 646-931-3860.

Thursday, October 17: No religious school. At 7:30 pm, a Simchat Torah service with Yizkor will be held. Join via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81187681631?pwd=YvKtkXapFpRYuQWJ9jZVtJz7YKQuri.1,meetingID81187681631> and passcode 854093, or dial in at 646-931-3860.

Friday, October 25: At 10:30 am, a Simchat Torah service with Yizkor. Join via Zoom with <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81187681631?pwd=YvKtkXapFpRYuQWJ9jZVtJz7YKQuri.1,meetingID81187681631> and passcode 854093, or dial in at 646-931-3860. BYO lunch to follow. At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service with Rabbi Leah Moser. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, dial in at 646-931-3860 or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/templeconcord/](http://www.facebook.com/templeconcord/).

Saturday, October 26: At 9 am, Shabbat school; at 9:15 am, Torah study in person and on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87897900994?pwd=bOMvwx-DuovoaBInB4aVfHoTlSyamj.1,meetingID87897900994> and passcode 743506. To dial in, call 646-931-3860.

Tuesday, October 29: At 10:30 am, Tuesday Morning Book Club: “Anything but Yes: A Novel of Anna Del Monte, Jewish Citizen of Rome 1749” by Joie David-ow. For more information, contact Merri Pell-Preus at 607-222-2875 or [merrypell.preus@gmail.com](mailto:merrypell.preus@gmail.com). Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3CXVd9b>, meeting ID 881 6469 4206 and passcode 653272. As a reminder, there will be no meeting in November (Election Day).

Wednesday, October 30: At 7 pm, Sisterhood board meeting in person in the Temple Concord library. Contact Barb Thomas at 607-759-2573 for questions about Sisterhood meetings. Anyone interested in joining Sisterhood should contact Carol Herz at 607-222-7144.

### 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](http://www.tikkunvor.org), E-mail: [info@tikkunvor.org](mailto:info@tikkunvor.org)  
Presidents: Martha Armstrong and Mitch Grossman, [presidents\\_22@tikkunvor.org](mailto: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](mailto: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.

# 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.

◆ Biblical Archaeology Society will hold the virtual eight-part class “Egypt and the Bible” with Gary A. Rendsburg on Monday and Thursday evenings every week of February from 7:30-9 pm. Each class is an hour and a half. The first hour is a lecture and the last 30 minutes will be Q-and-A. The cost to attend is \$219. For more information or to register, visit <http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/travel-study/bas-course-with-gary-a-rendsborg>.

◆ Roundtable will hold the virtual course “How the Soviet Jew Was Made” on Tuesdays, November 12, 19 and 26, from 4-5:15 pm. The cost to attend is \$132. Sasha Senderovich explore Russian and Yiddish literature and film between the 1917 Revolution and World War II to show how the Soviet Jews identity came into being. For more information or to register, visit <https://roundtable.org/live-courses/history/how-the-soviet-jew-was-made>.

◆ The Hebrew Union College will hold the hybrid program “Literature as Politics: The Exodus Narrative” on Tuesday, December 3, at 12:30 pm. The talk will offer a new idea about why ancient Israelite scribes used a Mesopotamian work of political allegory as a model for the Moses story and explore the implications of that for the character of Moses and the exodus. For more information or to register, visit <https://huc.edu/event/literature-as-politics-the-exodus-narrative/>.

◆ The Yiddish Book Center will hold several virtual events this fall: “From Smoked Fish to Pickles – Getting Jewish Food Delivered to Your Door” with Lisa Newman on Thursday, November 21, at 7 pm ([www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events/smoked-fish-pickles-getting-jewish-food-delivered-your-door-lisa-newman](http://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events/smoked-fish-pickles-getting-jewish-food-delivered-your-door-lisa-newman)); “Curating Yiddish Culture” with David Mazower on Thursday, December 12, at 7 pm ([www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events/curating-yiddish-culture-david-mazower](http://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events/curating-yiddish-culture-david-mazower)); and “How the Holocaust Changed the Yiddish Language” with Hannah Pollin-Galay on Sunday, December 15, at 2 pm ([www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events/how-holocaust-changed-yiddish-language-hannah-pollin-galay](http://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events/how-holocaust-changed-yiddish-language-hannah-pollin-galay)).

◆ Ritualwell will hold the virtual program “Spiritual Preparation for Election Day” on Wednesday, October 29, from noon-1:30 pm. The cost to attend is \$18. The class will “draw on spiritual and embodied practices for cultivating courage, resilience, and compassion to help find equanimity for the week ahead.” For more information or to register, visit <https://ritualwell.org/event/spiritual-preparation-for-election-day/>.

◆ Melton will hold the virtual program “Melton Meets the Moment – Voting: An American Jewish Cultural Experience” on Thursday, October 31, from 10-11:30 am. The cost to attend is \$18. Dr. Steven Windmueller will explore the significance of the vote for American Jewish audiences. For more information or to register, visit <https://events.org/events/calendarcourse?tid=969573f1-1f7a-4ac0-b36d-746d8c7d1914>.

◆ The Braid has announced its 2025 season. The programs are available on Zoom: “Traveler’s Prayer” (February 2 and 6), “Two Faiths, One Love” (April 6 and 10) and “For the Love of Animals” (June 8 and 12). The cost for a subscription is \$125 and offers additional benefits. For more information or to subscribe, visit [https://thebraid.my.salesforce-sites.com/ticket/PatronTicket\\_PublicTicketApp#/subscriptions](https://thebraid.my.salesforce-sites.com/ticket/PatronTicket_PublicTicketApp#/subscriptions).

◆ The American Jewish University will hold the virtual program “Unpacking Campus Antisemitism: Insights and Realities” on Wednesday, November 20, at 1 pm. Sarah Hurwitz and Jon Falk will seek to “unpack campus antisemitism, examining the challenges faced by students and how to address them.” For more information or to register, visit <https://open.aju.edu/event/unpacking-campus-antisemitism-insights-and-realities-2/>.

◆ Roundtable will hold the virtual course “Reading Blanche

Bendahan’s ‘Mazaltob’” on Sundays, November 3 and 10, from 4-5 pm. The cost to attend is \$88. Yaëlle Azagury and Frances Malino will discuss the novel “Mazaltob,” which was published in 1930 and has been called a “forerunner of modern Sephardi literature.” For more information or to register, visit <https://roundtable.org/live-courses/literature/reading-blanche-bendahans-mazaltob>.

◆ The Hadassah-Brandeis Institute will hold the virtual program “Israeli Women’s Midrashim after October 7” with Tamar Biala on Monday, October 28, at 10:30 am. Midrashim written by women from Kibbutzim Kfar Azza and Nir Oz, and others will tell of their experiences from October 7 and afterward. For more information or to register, visit <https://brandeis.zoom.us/join/register/tJAofuGupzkuHNC4DtnIyJpX5LRxuv9gT22#/registration>.

◆ Melton will hold the virtual course “Sacred Stones: The Journey of Jewish Nationhood through Israel’s Ancient Sites” on Wednesdays, October 30-November 20, from 1-2 pm. The course is offered on a sliding payment scale. The class will discuss “the formation of Jewish national and religious identity by exploring the creation of holy sites and the intricate relationship between faith, people, ritual, memory, and salvation.” For more information or to register, visit <https://events.org/events/calendarcourse?tid=62e76faf-d6c9-4ed4-9d27-5b95489de351>.

◆ The American Jewish University will hold the virtual program “Being Jewish Today” with author Rabbi Elliot Cosgrove on Tuesday, October 22, at 3 pm. Cosgrove, in conversation with his former classmate Rabbi Sherre Hirsch, will discuss his new book “For Such a Time as This: On Being Jewish Today.” For more information or to register, visit <https://open.aju.edu/event/being-jewish-today-with-author-rabbi-elliott-cosgrove>.

◆ Roundtable will hold “The Betrayal of the Duchess: France’s Other Antisemitic Affair” on Monday, November 18, from 6:30-8 pm. The cost to attend is \$44. Yale Professor of French Maurice Samuels explores “modern France’s first antisemitic ‘affair,’ a forgotten story of passion and political intrigue.” For information or to register, visit <https://roundtable.org/live-courses/history/the-betrayal-of-the-duchess-frances-other-antisemitic-affair>.

◆ Jewish Women’s Archive will hold the virtual class “Jewish Women’s Protest in the U.S.” on Thursdays, November 14 and 21, and December 5 and 12, at 8 pm. Four scholars will discuss how Jewish women’s voices and actions reshaped America’s cultural and political landscape. For more or to register, visit <https://jwa.org/events>.

◆ BAS Scholars Series will hold the virtual lecture “Women of Prominence and Power in First Temple Period Hebrew Inscriptions” with Chris Rollston on Sunday, December 8, from 3-4 pm. The cost to attend is \$10. The lecture will focus on Old Hebrew inscription that mention women in order to understand women’s lives and spheres of influence. For more information or to register, visit [www.biblicalarchaeology.org/travel-study/bas-scholars-series-with-chris-rollston](http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/travel-study/bas-scholars-series-with-chris-rollston).

◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold a variety of events: “Liberty Street: A Savannah Family, its Golden Boy, and the Civil War” on Tuesday, October 29, at 6:30 pm (<https://programs.cjh.org/event/liberty-street-2024-10-29>); “In Search of Greener Fields: Rurality, Nostalgia, and Ideology in Yiddish-American Folksong” on Wednesday, November 6, at 7:30 pm (<https://programs.cjh.org/event/greener-fields-2024-11-06>); “The Yiddish Supernatural on Screen” on Thursday, November 7, at 7 pm (<https://programs.cjh.org/event/yiddish-supernatural-2024-11-07>); Jewish Folk Medicine in Eastern Europe on Monday, November 11, at 1 pm (<https://programs.cjh.org/event/folk-medicine-2024-11-11>); and “Soviet Born: The Afterlives of Migration in Jewish American Fiction” on Tuesday, November 12, at 4 pm (<https://programs.cjh.org/event/soviet-born-2024-11-12>).

◆ T’ruah is offering weekly e-mail called (M)oral Torah, which features “Torah commentaries about democracy, human rights, and how we can make the world we want to see.” For more information or to sign up for the e-mails, visit <https://truah.org/moral-torah/>.

◆ Museum at Eldridge Street will hold the virtual program “Feminist Shtetl Horror Tales: ‘The Sweet Fragrance of Life & Other Stories’” on Wednesday, October 30, at 6 pm. The cost is pay what you wish. Elizabeth Schwartz will discuss her work of fiction, which is “a meditation on historic European Jewish culture seen through the lens of a woman’s point of view.” For more information or to register, visit [https://fareharbor.com/embeds/book/eldridgestreet/items/573897/calendar/2024/10/?flow=918844&full-items=yes&back=https://www-eldridgestreet-org.filesusr.com/html/c310b5\\_15c6ca89d-1dee2a57265c0f3f64d74d3.html](https://fareharbor.com/embeds/book/eldridgestreet/items/573897/calendar/2024/10/?flow=918844&full-items=yes&back=https://www-eldridgestreet-org.filesusr.com/html/c310b5_15c6ca89d-1dee2a57265c0f3f64d74d3.html).

◆ Roundtable will hold the virtual course “A History of the Jews in Modern France” on Mondays, November 4-18, from 11 am- noon. The cost to attend is \$132. The course will cover the Jewish history of France from the Enlightenment to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For more information or to register, visit <https://roundtable.org/live-courses/history/a-history-of-the-jews-in-modern-france>.

◆ Ritualwell will hold the virtual program “Compassionate Ink: Promoting Caregivers’ Wellbeing through Writing” on Thursday, November 7, from 12-1:30 pm. The focus will be on power of expressing personal stories. For more information or to register, visit <https://ritualwell.org/event/compassionate-ink-promoting-caregivers-wellbeing-through-writing>.

◆ The Jewish Theological Seminary announced the completion of a comprehensive digitization project, which will make more 1,750 audio and video files from its archives available to the public for the first time. The newly revealed Jewish cultural and historical material is now publicly accessible through the JTS Library’s web portal at [https://makor.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01JTS\\_INST:01JTS](https://makor.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01JTS_INST:01JTS).

For additional resources, see previous issues of *The Reporter* on its website, [www.thereporter.org/jewish-online-resources](http://www.thereporter.org/jewish-online-resources).

## Moving any time soon?



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## Beyond... Continued from page 10

When our attackers entered the *kibbutzim* on October 7, 2023 – Simchat Torah – they did not differentiate between the different “types of Jews.” Their desire to inflict death and destruction was agnostic to distinctions in terms of religious, political or any other alliances.

On the positive side, the unity and solidarity of the Jewish people this past year has been unparalleled. It expressed itself in the tens of thousands of IDF reservists flying into the war zone from all over the world, the daily shipments of hundreds of duffel bags filled with tactical gear and other essentials needs, the hundreds of solidarity trips to Israel, and the hundreds of thousands of Jews who donated money and time and/or undertook the observance of another mitzvah in honor of the swift release of the hostages and the success and safety of the IDF troops.

May we be blessed to take to heart the message of the celebration with the Torah: to always be able to appreciate the importance and strength inherent in our unity. Not only through challenging times, but in good times, as well.

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# Jerusalem history on display at Tower of David

By JNS staff

(JNS) – In the excavation site of a former barracks/prison known as the Kishle (Turkish for prison), the Tower of David Jerusalem Museum opened a unique art exhibition on recently. The space, part of the Tower of David complex just inside the Jaffa Gate to the capital's Old City, was created following the extensive archaeological excavation in 1999-2000 led by Dr. Amit Re'em, Jerusalem District archaeologist of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

The Kishle was built by the Ottoman Turks as a jail in the 1800s and used by the British in the 1940s to hold captured Jewish militia members. The former prison cells containing graffiti inscriptions by Irgun members held during the British Mandate were found on the stone walls during the excavations. In this narrow, arched structure, 450 meters long, one experiences the colorful and complex history of Jerusalem.

Proceeding along the newly improved walkways, the exposed history of thousands of years is now a carefully curated art exhibition along with the archaeologists' markings. For the first time, the vast space, with the history of Jerusalem of 2,800 years on its walls, has been the backdrop for a contemporary art exhibition.

The layers of history rest one on top of the other. Under the remains of the Mandatory prison and graffiti of Irgun

prisoners, they include a Jewish dyeing factory from the Middle Ages mentioned in the writings of Benjamin of Tudela (12<sup>th</sup> century C.E.), walls of Herod the Great's royal palace including a drainage and escape channel cut into the bedrock, impressive Hasmonean fortifications, and the earliest remains in the complex, an impressive wall resting on bedrock and dated to the days of Hezekiah, King of Judah, and the First Temple period.

The Kishle building, part of the Tower of David complex, is in the midst of a planning process in its preservation and renovation project. Before the completion of the archaeological excavation, with the sandbags, scaffolding and archaeological markings, the site was chosen to host the exhibition "Umbilicus Mundi" by curators Dr. Adina Kamien and Malu Zayon.

Eilat Lieber, director and chief curator, is excited to see the Kishle come alive and to recognize its potential to tell different stories of Jerusalem, the connection between old and new.

The modern works of artists Hannan Abu-Hussein, Sharon Balaban, Matan Daskal, Yehudit Sasportas, Merav Shinn Ben-Alon and Lihi Turjeman blend into the stone setting.

The Tower of David Jerusalem Museum reopened to the public after an extensive renewal project. The museum invites visitors to tour 10 exhibition galleries including



Contemporary art in the Kishle building, a former Ottoman and British prison in the Old City of Jerusalem (Photo by Sharon Altshul)

original artifacts, movies, video projections and interactive displays, tracing Jerusalem's historical progression toward becoming a central city for billions of believers across the world – Jews, Christians and Muslims – and its return to serve as the capital of

modern Israel.

The new exhibition in the Kishle is accessible only by climbing stairs, though access is greatly improved over the previous arrangement. However, plans are to make it accessible to those with disabilities.

## Canadian kosher-meat production protected by court

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Canadian Jewish organizations recently triumphed in their effort to maintain the legality of the country's kosher-certified meat preparation. Canada's Federal Court recently issued an interlocutory injunction against the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to halt the implementation of new guidelines that have disrupted *shechita*

("ritual kosher slaughter").

Canada's two top Canadian kosher certifiers – MK Global Kosher Certification Agency and the Kashruth Council of Canada – partnered with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs and other Jewish leaders.

"Significantly, the judgment recognized that the current CFIA guidelines are clearly discriminatory," said Kashruth Council of

Canada Managing Director Richard Rabkin. "This should dispel the false perception that *shechita* does not abide by the highest standards of animal welfare."

Shimon Koffler Fogel, president and CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, said, "All segments of the community and its institutions collaborated in this effort, and the contributions of Federation

CJA and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto were significant and deeply appreciated by all stakeholders."

Rabbi Saul Emanuel, CEP of MK Global Kosher Certification Agency, stated, "We are gratified that the court validated *shechita* as a legitimate and humane approach that takes full account of animal welfare and meets the scientific standards established by CFIA."

## Israel's Playtika acquires SuperPlay in mega deal

JNS staff

(JNS) – Herzliya-based online game developer Playtika Holding Corp. (Nasdaq: PLTK) has announced a definitive agreement to acquire Tel Aviv-based mobile gaming company SuperPlay. The deal, valued at up to \$1.95 billion, marks a "significant" milestone in the Israeli gaming landscape and highlights the country's growing influence in the global mobile gaming market.

Under the terms of the agreement, Playtika will pay an initial \$700 million for SuperPlay, with the potential for an additional \$1.25 billion in contingent consideration over the next three years, subject to meeting certain financial targets. The transaction, expected to close in the fourth

quarter of 2024, is poised to strengthen Playtika's position in the competitive mobile gaming industry.

SuperPlay, founded in 2019 by former Playtika employees Gilad Almog and Eyal Netzer, along with industry veteran Elad Drory, has quickly established itself as a "formidable player" in the mobile gaming space. The company's portfolio includes two successful titles: Dice Dreams, a fast-growing coin looter game, and Domino Dreams, a board game. As of August 2024, these games boasted a combined 1.7 million average daily active users, demonstrating SuperPlay's ability to create engaging and widely adopted mobile gaming experiences.

Robert Antokol, CEO of Playtika, em-

phasized the strategic importance of the acquisition, stating, "We see the acquisition of SuperPlay as a key move in strengthening Playtika's leadership in mobile gaming, driving growth with scaled titles and unlocking new opportunities. SuperPlay's proven talent and success in navigating complex environments align seamlessly with our team. Together, we're expanding our ability to deliver exceptional experiences to players worldwide."

The deal showcases the "innovative spirit" and rapid growth potential within Israel's gaming industry. SuperPlay, headquartered in Rosh Ha'ayin, has taken a "unique approach" to game development, combining high artistic standards with a solid technological foundation. This strategy has allowed the company to reimagine familiar games like Solitaire and Dominoes with innovative twists, appealing to a broad audience of mobile gamers.

SuperPlay's success story is particularly noteworthy given its relatively short history. Founded by childhood friends from Rosh Ha'ayin, the company has raised more than \$50 million from prominent investors, including NFX, North83, vgames, General Catalyst, Eyal Ofer's O.G Venture Partners and Key1.

Following the acquisition, Almog and Netzer will continue to lead SuperPlay as an independent studio within Playtika, ensuring continuity and fostering further innovation. The founders expressed their excitement about the deal, saying, "It is a testament to our amazing team who bring

creativity and passion to everything we make. With Playtika's backing and support, we'll continue growing the most memorable and engaging games in their category, and exchange knowledge that will propel each other to new heights."

Playtika, founded in 2010, has been a pioneer in free-to-play games on social networks and mobile platforms. With popular titles like Slotomania, House of Fun and Bingo Blitz, the company has established a strong global presence. Employing more than 3,000 workers, with about a third based in Israel, Playtika's acquisition of SuperPlay further cements its commitment to fostering local talent and expanding its footprint in the mobile gaming market.

The deal also highlights the global nature of Israel's tech industry. SuperPlay, while headquartered in Israel, has expanded its operations to include offices in Ukraine, Romania and India, tapping into a diverse pool of talent across Europe and Southeast Asia.

This acquisition follows Playtika's earlier move to buy Israel-based Innplay Labs for up to \$300 million in September of the previous year, demonstrating the company's ongoing strategy to strengthen its position through strategic acquisitions of innovative Israeli gaming startups.

The transaction is subject to customary closing conditions and regulatory approvals. Playtika has stated that it remains committed to its quarterly dividend and capital return program, indicating confidence in the financial stability of the combined entity post-acquisition.

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