

THE REPORTER

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The Reporter to publish bimonthly

By Reporter staff

The Reporter announced that it will now be publishing bimonthly. Issues will appear on the second and fourth Friday of each month. This change means there will be 24 issues a year, rather than 26. It also means that when there are five Fridays in a month, there will be three

weeks between the second issue of that month and the first of the next month, rather than two.

“Even with our successful matching gift campaign, we still have to watch our finances carefully,” said Rabbi Rachel Esserman, executive editor of *The Reporter*. “The impact of this change will

not be great, but it should help us with our bottom line.”

Esserman added, “There is no change for deadlines for January issues, but, since there are five Fridays in that month, there will be three weeks between the second January issue and the first February one. However, we will be sending out new

deadlines to community organizations so they can plan ahead. Our deadlines can also be found on page 3 of each issue of the paper. If anyone has questions about the best issues to publish material in, they should contact us at Treporter@aol.com. We’re always happy to help people publicize their events the best way possible.”

TC/TI adult ed. talk on Jan. 12 to feature Dina Danon

The Adult Education Committee of Temple Concord and Temple Israel will hold a program and brunch on Sunday, December 22, from 10 am-noon, at Temple Israel, 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal. Professor Dina Danon will offer a talk called “The Transformation of the Marriage Market in the Eastern Sephardi Diaspora.” The entire community is welcome to attend. There is a suggested donation of between \$5-20 per person. For more information and to RSVP,

contact Temple Israel at 607-723-7461 or Temple Concord at 607-723-7355 by Friday, January 3, so enough refreshments can be prepared.

Danon will speak about transformation of the Jewish marriage market in the Ladino-speaking Diaspora during the modern age. Her talk will provide an overview of the traditional marriage market and discuss the various ways in which it changed in the late Ottoman period (late 19th and

early 20th centuries), focusing specifically on forms of bridal capital such as dowries and trousseaux. Danon’s talk will draw on the research she conducted last academic year at the National Library of Israel and the Ben Zvi Institute in Jerusalem, and will showcase Ladino-language sources such as matchmaking registers, trousseau inventories and press articles.

Danon is an associate professor of Judaic studies at Binghamton University where

she teaches courses on Sephardi Diasporas, Jews and Muslims, modern Jewish history, and gender and Jewish history. Her research focuses on the eastern Sephardi Diaspora during modern times and draws heavily on previously unexplored Ladino language archival material. Danon is particularly interested in social history and how its tools help revise prevailing scholarship not only on the Sephardi world, but on Jewish modernity as a whole.

Her first book, “The Jews of Ottoman Izmir: A Modern History” (Stanford University Press, 2020), was a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award in Sephardic Culture. She has begun work on her second book, which explores the marketplace of matchmaking, marriage and divorce in the modern Ottoman Sephardi world, as a fellow at the Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

BD luncheon on Jan. 11 to feature Shelley Hubal

Beth David Synagogue’s next Shabbat Luncheon will be held on Saturday, January 11. The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton’s Executive Director Shelley Hubal will speak on “Why the Jewish Federation Matters: Executive Director Shelley Hubal Leads the Way.” 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.

“May will mark the sixth-year anniversary of Shelley’s tenure,” organizers said. “She is looking forward to sharing the his-

tory of Greater Binghamton’s Federation, as well as giving us a solid sense of what See “Hubal” on page 8

The Reporter matches matching grant

By Reporter staff

The Reporter announced that it matched its \$5,000 matching grant from the David and Virginia Eisenberg Fund. The Reporter raised more than \$8,700.

“We were thrilled to receive a matching grant again this year,” said Rabbi Rachel Esserman, executive editor of *The Reporter*. “We owe a special thank you to the David and Virginia Eisenberg Fund that was gracious enough to offer the grant. We are also grateful to readers of the paper who generously donated money.”

Esserman noted that this support is even more important now than it was in the past. “In the past, one of our main sources of income was advertising,” she said. “But all print newspapers have had difficulty getting ads because of the Internet and social media websites. That makes readers’ and foundations’ donations even more important.”

She also noted the difference between *The Reporter* and the local secular newspaper. “We offer a service to the Jewish community by giving them a one-stop place filled with news and features they won’t find anywhere else,” she said. “Those include Bill Simons’ columns and our award-winning book reviews and editorials.”

Esserman offered thanks to Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, for helping to arrange the grant and *The Reporter*’s production associate, Julie Weber, for creating the ad that appeared in the paper and on *The Reporter*’s website.

Although the matching grant is over,

Esserman noted that the paper is still accepting donations. “Every penny is appreciated to help keep our paper going,” she said. Donations can still be made online through The Reporter Group’s website, www.thereportergroup.org, or by mailing donations to The Reporter, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

Visions FCU makes donation to Federation

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton announced that it has received a donation of more than \$800 from Visions Federal Credit Union. The gift will help fund Jewish Family Service’s We Remember You program and *The Reporter*.

“Visions is a staple of generosity in our community,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. “The Federation is so grateful to be nominated to receive this gift from the employees of Visions FCU. We will use the gift to support *The Reporter* and Jewish Family Service’s We Remember You program.”

“The funds donated were collected by Visions employees, through the Denim Days program, which is part of Visions Cares,” said Mandy DeHate, AVP Marketing for Visions. “Employees can elect to pay \$5 per paycheck to wear jeans on Fridays and the collected funds are disbursed to deserving organizations within our communities. To make it even sweeter, the recipients are based on nominations from staff so they can help direct where the funds go.” Visions Cares is Visions’ charitable giving program. To learn about Visions Cares or apply for support, visit visionsfcu.org/cares.

L-r: Mandy DeHate, AVP Marketing, Visions Federal Credit Union; Shelley Hubal, executive director, Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton; and Jocelyn Bailey, community development liaison, Visions Federal Credit Union.



Matching Grant Goal Surpassed

More than

\$8,700

raised as of 12/18/24
Goal: \$5,000

Thank you to everyone who donated! The community’s support is greatly appreciated.

THE REPORTER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Events around town

A Hanukkah party at BD; hockey event; the annual book talk at TC Sisterhood; film fest continues.

.....Page 3

Federation year in review

The Jewish Federation held or co-sponsored more than 20 events during 2024.

.....Page 5

Seeking to serve

Children of foreign workers in Israel seek to serve in the IDF to protect only home they know.

.....Page 11

Special Sections

Book Review..... 4
Federation Donor Honor Roll..... 6-7
Safe Driving 8-9
Classifieds 12

Opinion

One Perspective from Israel

Three simple, very horrible words

JEREMY M. STAIMAN

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

Almost 200 years before Telegram was an app where you could send furtive messages or order sketchy things without getting caught, the telegram was an instrument of communication. One could use the services of a telegraph to send a telegram, which was typically very brief. As a radio operator during World War II, my late father was extremely proficient in sending Morse code messages via the telegraph, and he tried to teach us how to use the code when we were young. He churned out those signature staccato beeps far faster than our untrained ears could possibly interpret them.

The reason that telegraphed messages were kept short was because of their high cost. Words had a limit on how many letters they could contain, and messages generally had only as many words as absolutely necessary. The word “stop” was used to denote the end of a sentence, because the charge was higher for punctuation than for letters.

When my grandfather received a telegram sent from Palestine in the early 1930s, it contained three words. From what I can figure, it cost over \$50 in today’s value.

The message read: “Your father died.”

Those three words must have come as a shock, but perhaps not a great one. My great-grandparents had made *aliyah* (though I wonder if that was even what they called it 100 years ago) several years prior – in their very senior years – to an undeveloped Holy Land. She had passed away perhaps a year after their arrival, followed by his demise a short number of years later. Their graves on Har Hazeitum were restored after Israel reclaimed that area in the Six-Day War. The weather in the subsequent decades was not kind to those monuments, and they were refurbished once again in more recent years.

So, while those three words, “your father died,” were undoubtedly very sad, we are able to visit his resting place,

and his legacy lives on in hundreds of descendants, some of whom carry his name a century later.

I was checking my LinkedIn feed a month or two back, when I saw that a colleague of mine had given birth. Although I don’t know her in real life, our paths crossed once, decades ago, when she was a student in Bais Yaakov, and came to our office for Career Day, to see if she might want to consider graphic design as a profession. I take not the slightest bit of credit for her estimable success, mind you, but I do hope that day was helpful in her eventual choice of profession.

She explained her recent, uncharacteristic silence on social media by saying that she prefers not to announce a pregnancy until she has the baby to show for it. Now the baby had arrived, and her absence could be explained. Fair enough.

The first line of her announcement, though, stopped me in my tracks: “Cleared for Publication.”

Fourteen months ago, I probably would have thought that to be a very cute way to break the news of her newborn to the world. But today we live in a different, post-October 7 world. And for those of us living in Israel and consuming the English-language news, those three words cause our stomachs to fall and our hearts to misfire.

“Cleared for Publication” are the introductory words followed by the announcement of a death of one, or two, or five, or six of our soldiers.

The Israeli army, unfortunately, has all-too-vast experience in notifying families of soldiers’ deaths. Whenever possible, they send teams to every family member, timed to knock on their various doors at the same moment, so that no one has to receive the dreaded news second-hand from a different family member, or from the news. No names are publicized in the media

until this notification has taken place.

“Cleared for Publication” means that the family members have all been notified.

“Cleared for Publication” means that the military censors have released this information to the public.

“Cleared for Publication” means that there will be yet another funeral in a military cemetery. That another widow will somehow have to put aside her searing pain, and muster the strength to get out of bed to get her kids off to school every morning, with no one to help her. And that those kids’ lives have just been irreparably torn asunder.

I messaged the mother of the newborn, wishing her a sincere *mazel tov* and good wishes, but also informing her that her innocently-chosen words, while clever and cute to her audience in the U.S., were a serious trigger here in Israel. A great supporter of Israel herself, she was shocked by my explanation and her inadvertent faux pas, and quickly deleted those words from her post.

“Your father died.” A tragic part of every family’s life-cycle. There’s no denying it and no escaping it.

“Cleared for publication.” The horrible reality that’s been imposed upon us by those whose sole aim is to see us all dead and gone. Our nation is valiantly and ceaselessly battling to put an end to this collective nightmare.

Cleared for publication.

Cleared for publication.

Maybe if we whisper it enough, the horror will dissolve away. Maybe our gut will stop tightening and our breathing will remain steady.

For now, probably not. But we can hope. We can pray.

May we soon see the day when those three simple, currently-horrible words can once more grace witty birth announcements, and never again be the harbinger of heartbreak and sorrow.

In My Own Words

Holding two contradictory ideas

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

The *USA Today* headline said, “Subway killing divides country.” The article announced the acquittal of Daniel Penny. For those unaware of the trial, Penny was found not guilty of the killing of Jordan Neely, an unhoused person who suffered from mental illness. The event took place on a New York City subway car: Neely was placed in a chokehold for six minutes by Penny after Neely acted irrationally and yelled that he was going to kill someone. Some see Penny as a racist murderer who unfairly subdued Neely and who should be punished for his deed. Others see Penny as a hero who rescued innocent people being threatened with injury by Neely.

The import of the article is people’s opinions are split along political lines. That makes sense: almost every act in our society is now judged along political lines. But I think it’s possible to see both sides of the issue here. First, we need to admit that the mentally ill in the U.S. are often

unable to get the healthcare they need, especially if they are poor or unhoused. If Neely had had somewhere to live and been given the care that he needed, it is unlikely he would have been considered dangerous. His behavior was not voluntary, but rather part of his illness. Plus, systemic racism mostly likely played a role: the fact that he was Black would have made him seem more dangerous.

However, it’s also unfair to assume that Penny acted in bad faith. At that moment, the former Marine felt he needed to protect the people on the subway car. The real question at the trial was not whether it was illegal for him to subdue Neely, but whether his specific actions were reasonable or unreasonable at that time. I don’t know all the specific details of that part of the case, but a jury acquitted because they felt his actions were reasonable. Would they have been considered reasonable if the person was white and not suffering from mental illness? If someone was actively trying to kill someone on that subway car, then we probably would say yes. The problem is that we don’t *know* if Neely would have actually hurt anyone. Penny wasn’t willing to take that chance; it’s difficult to judge if he was right or wrong. But what is wrong is that this event would *not* have taken place if Neely had had the medical care he needed and if we solved the unhoused problem.

We need to find ways to educate the public about how to deal with people with disabilities and mental illness. I’ve read of trainings for police so they can learn how to interact with those who are autistic. Some recommend that

information about a disability can be written on a card so they can share it with the police. I actually have something like that in my purse about my hearing impairment. It can be dangerous for someone with a hearing impairment to be stopped by the police: we may not hear their instructions correctly or even know we’ve been spoken to. Before my cochlear implant, I couldn’t hear someone speaking behind me: that means that if police yelled at me to stop, I would have disobeyed a direct order and continued walking because I had no idea I was even being spoken to. Just think about how much more difficult this is for people with mental health issues or who have difficulty processing information.

Neely died partly because our society refuses to help those in need. That made his death unnecessary: we should have done better. But I can’t condemn Penny if he truly believed he was trying to save people’s lives. I imagine he was horrified to learn that he killed Neely, when all he was trying to do was prevent him from harming someone else. The bottom line is that we need to start working together to make certain something like this never happens again. We need help for the unhoused; we need medical care for those with mental illness; and we need education for the rest of us. Do I think this is a realistic wish? It can only happen if we stop taking sides and work together. I’m pessimistic, though, because, in our current culture, we refuse to reconcile difficult ideas. If we continue to refuse to consider more than one side of an issue, Neely’s death will not be the last one.

Moving any time soon? Or just leaving town for a few months?



Whether you’re moving across town or across the country, please let *The Reporter* know so you can stay up to date on community news!

E-mail treporter@aol.com with “Reporter Address change” in the subject line to let *The Reporter* know about your new address.



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of Greater Binghamton

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BINGHAMTON, NY

OPINIONS

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

LETTERS

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

ADS

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

DEADLINE

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

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www.thereporter.org

BD Sisterhood and Men's Club to hold Hanukkah party on Dec. 29

The Sisterhood and Men's Club of Beth David Synagogue will once again co-sponsor a Hanukkah party at Beth David Synagogue. The event will take place on Sunday, December 29, at 5 pm. Thanks to the generosity of the Eisenberg Foundation, which will again be covering the major expenses, a donation of only \$10 will be requested from attendees at the door.

The entire community is invited to join in the celebration, which will include refreshments, dreidels to play with (or bring one from home) and the lighting of the Hanukkah menorah. Steve Gilbert, professor emeritus of psychology at SUNY Oneonta and past president of Temple Israel, will



Steve Gilbert (Photo by Denise Gilbert)

entertain by playing his baritone ukelele, which he began playing at the age of 4. Attendees may also choose to participate in a gift grab bag for a donation of \$5.

Donations for CHOW will be accepted, as will payment for Sisterhood dues or for any Mitzvah Cards that have been requested.

Those who are on Sisterhood's e-mail list or receive Rabbi Zev Silber's weekly newsletter should receive a flyer designed by Rabbi David Serkin announcing the party. Anyone who wishes to be added to either list should send their request and e-mail address to the Beth David Synagogue office at bethdavid@stny.rr.com.

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:

- ◆ January 2
- ◆ January 16
- ◆ January 30
- ◆ February 13
- ◆ February 27
- ◆ March 14
- ◆ March 27
- ◆ April 9
- ◆ April 24

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

Jewish Film Fest to hold virtual showing of "Golden Voices"

By Reporter staff

The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest will hold a virtual showing of the film "Golden Voices." Andy Horowitz, founder and director of the Galumph dance troupe, will moderate a Zoom discussion of the film. To register for links to the film and discussion, visit www.jfjb.org/film-fest. The film will be available for viewing from Thursday-Sunday, January 23-26. The discussion will be held on Sunday, January 26, at 7 pm. The film is in Russian and Hebrew with subtitles. The film fest is co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton and the Ithaca Area United Jewish Community.

"Golden Voices" tells the story of Victor and Raya Frenkel (Vladimir Friedman and Maria Belkin) who were the golden voices of Soviet film dubbing. In 1990, with the collapse of the U.S.S.R., they decided to immigrate to Israel, just like hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews. The Frenkels' attempts to use their distinctive talent in a country that doesn't need it turns the beginning of the new chapter of their lives into "an amusing, painful, and absurd experience."

"Golden Voices" has won numerous awards and nomi-



Vladimir Friedman and Mariya Belkina in "Golden Voices" (Photo courtesy of Music Box Films)

nations at film festivals, including being the 2019 winner of the Israeli Film Competition Award for director Evgeny Ruman; and the winner of the 2019 Nominee Grand Prize for Best Film at the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival, along with jury prizes at that festival for best director, best cinematographer, best music and best script. It was also the Best Film Director in 2020 Winner International Competition Award at BIFEST - Bari International Film Festival for Evgeny Ruman and the 2020 Dorfman Best

Film Award Winner at the UK Jewish Film Festival.

Glenn Kenny at *The New York Times* called the film "a winning comedy-drama." Gary Goldstein at the *Los Angeles Times* wrote that it is a "bittersweet, heartfelt comedy." Tablet noted that it is "a sensitive and heartwarming film about immigration, growing old, love, and new beginnings"

"Join us for this well acted, touching film, that also contains moments of humor," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "The insights into the lives of these immigrants offers a different picture of life in Israel."

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of
Mathew Epstein

Federation to sponsor community hockey event on Jan. 18

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will sponsor a community hockey event at a Binghamton Black Bears game at the Visions Veterans Memorial Arena, 1 Stuart St., Binghamton, on Saturday, January 18, at 7 pm. Tickets will be available at the discounted rate of \$9. The deadline to purchase tickets is Sunday, January 12. Tickets can be purchased on the Federation website, or



by contacting the Federation office at 607-724-2332 or director@jfjb.org. A limited number of seats are available, so those interested are asked to reserve early.

"This event is for people of all ages and is just for socializing," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "If you are looking for a way to get out on a winter night and have some fun, then I hope you will consider joining us."

DEADLINES

ISSUE	DEADLINE
January 10-23	December 30 (early)
January 24-February 13	January 15
February 14-27	February 5
February 28-March 13	February 19

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

TC Sisterhood to hold annual book review on Jan. 26



Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Temple Concord Sisterhood will hold its annual book review by Rabbi Rachel Esserman on Sunday, January 26, at 11 am, at Temple Concord, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. The event is open to the public. Esserman will speak following a brunch. The snow date for the event will be Sunday, February 2. The suggested donation is \$5 to cover the cost of the brunch. Reservations are due by Wednesday, January 22, to Phyllis Kellenberger at 607-727-8305 or pweinste@stny.rr.com.

"I am once again looking forward to what is one of my favorite things of the year," Esserman said. "It's always a pleasure to talk to Sisterhood members about books and I'm certain this year will be no exception. My book choices this year should offer something of interest to most members."

Esserman will review "Operation Bethlehem" by Yariv Invar, a spy thriller that won the National Jewish Book Hebrew Fiction in Translation Jane Weitzman Award in 2023. The author (whose name is a pseudonym) was a former Israeli intelligence officer. In addition to being an espionage-archeological thriller, it looks at moral dilemmas its characters face.

The second novel will be "Long Island Compromise" by Taffy Brodesser-Akner. Her first novel, "Fleishman is in Trouble," was a big hit and was turned into a TV series. Her second novel looks at how an American family tries

to overcome a trauma that took place decades before. It also focuses on Jewish American life.

Esserman will also review the nonfiction work "Third Ear: Reflections on the Art and Science of Listening," by Elizabeth Rosner. Rosner is a novelist who previously wrote about being the daughter of Holocaust survivors. Her new work reflects on growing up in a home where six languages were spoken. The book contains personal reflections, along with a scientific discussion of the art of listening. See "TC on page 4

THE REPORTER

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Off the Shelf

Halachah and women's roles in Judaism

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

A growing trend within the Modern Orthodox movement allows women to study *halachic* (legalistic) sources, such as the Talmud and other writings, so they can better understand not only how to follow Jewish law accurately, but be informed about the discussions and reasons behind those decisions. Nechama Goldman Barash is one of these women: as she notes in “Uncovered: Women’s Roles, Mitzvot, and Sexuality in Jewish Law” (Urim Publications), her “book is the result of decades of immersion in the vast sea of Torah and Talmud as an observant Jewish woman, gradually moving from frustration to acceptance to empowerment by finding a ‘seat at the table,’ so to speak, of halachic discourse.”

To place her work in context, her biography notes that Barash is a rabbanit (a title that does not appear on the cover or title page of her book). In addition to a B.A. from Stern College and a master’s degree in Talmud from Bar-Ilan University, Barash attended Matan’s Advanced Talmud Institute and graduated from Nishmat’s Yoatzot Halacha program. The latter education makes her a certified advisor to individuals on questions of marital intimacy. This means that those to the right of Modern Orthodox may not accept her decisions as binding, while those to the left of her (those who don’t accept the authority of *halachah*) may not consider the laws under discussion binding. However, Modern Orthodox women will find her work relevant to their lives. Plus, for those interested in the development of *halachic* rulings, her book offers an excellent look at the development of Jewish law.

“Uncovered” focuses on a wide variety of legal issues related to women and features discussions about differ-

ences in gender roles, whether Jewish law allows advance study for women, women’s dress (including whether pants are acceptable clothing), women’s voices in public and private, women’s head coverings, the question of how best to observe the laws of family purity (and how those affect both spouses in a marriage) and premarital relationships. It should be noted that Barash believes there are fundamental differences between women and men, which translates into her not looking to overthrow the *halachic* system, but rather to allow women to better fulfil their specific roles.

Barash begins with looking at which *mitzvot* women are obligated to observe. While the usual term for *mitzvot* women are not required to perform are called time-bound *mitzvot*, the author prefers to call them time-caused. She uses this term because there are time-bound laws women are required to observe (for example, observing Shabbat and eating matzah on Passover), so time-caused makes the issue clearer. Barash discusses how the concept of time-caused *mitzvot* is not found in the Bible, but rather is first considered in the Talmud. The first mentions refer only to those *mitzvot* that women would not be able to do for physical reasons (for example, those dealing with not shaving a beard). It is impossible to do justice to her discussion, which features rabbinic writings from over the centuries. Barash’s purpose is to encourage women to do as many *mitzvot* as possible and to have them count in the same way that men’s do.

The most interesting sections focus on the difference between *daat moshe*, meaning the laws as explicitly stated in the written Torah, and *daat yehudit*, which refers to

the customs of a particular Jewish community, customs that can differ across the world. Observant communities differ on issues that range from head coverings (not only on what type of head covering is used and how much hair needs to be covered, but whether a woman is allowed to remove her head covering in her home) to what clothing is considered appropriate for women to wear. The book includes a long discussion on whether pants can be worn since they are no longer considered only men’s clothing in most countries and may be allow for more modesty than short or tight skirts. When discussing these topics, Barash includes minority voices that allow for change, but which have often been ignored. The author also looks at the traditional reasoning behind the rules, which tend to focus on men’s inability to control themselves or on women as temptresses men can’t resist.

Since Barash offers texts from across the centuries, it’s impossible to offer a complete discussion of any particular subject. Her work is complex and thorough, while also accessible to those unfamiliar with the subject matter. While “Uncovered” may appeal to a limited audience, its discussion of *halachah* is a welcome addition to women’s writing about Jewish law. Its appendix features an article Barash wrote about what she hopes to accomplish: she notes her work is an “attempt to find a more nuanced and authentic ways to teach the sources but simultaneously admit that not everything is texted-based and the values and traditions that have passed through the generations are as much at the core of our Jewish identity and observance as the text itself.” In “Uncovered,” Barash has succeeded in her mission.



Off the Shelf

Reality and fantasy for the young at heart

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

I know that when some readers see that the books I’m reviewing are for teens/tweens, they figure the works have nothing to offer them and turn the page. However, the novels in this review aren’t only for the young and young at heart. “The Judgment of Yoyo Gold” by Isaac Blum (Philomel) is a book parents should read with their teenagers, while R. M. Romero’s “Tale of the Flying Forest” with illustrations by E. K. Belsher (Little, Brown and Company) manages to enchant and offer life lessons for every age.

“The Judgment of Yoyo Gold” is Blum’s second novel and it is as well done as his first. (To read *The Reporter’s* review of “The Life and Crimes of Hoodie Rosen,” visit www.thereporter.org/features/off-the-shelf-novels-for-teens-and-tweens-and-some-adults-422719.) Both of his books take place in Orthodox communities and focus on the difficulties teenagers face trying to reconcile the modern world and their Orthodox practice. It’s important to note that neither work is anti-Orthodox. The struggles Yoyo faces come from her deep connection to her family and community.

Yoyo has always been the perfect teenager, at least according to her parents: the daughter of a rabbi, she takes care of her siblings and does the grocery shopping, helping the household run smoothly. Her teachers adore her and expect her to help her classmates and organize school events. She also makes the schedule for the local Jewish food bank deliveries and helps deliver the packages. Yoyo has been content with her life: she’s organized and loves being helpful. However, when her best friend is sent away to boarding school for inappropriate behavior, Yoyo feels

lost. There’s no one she can truly be herself with, rather than the perfect version she presents to the world.

Since Yoyo doesn’t think her friend should have been banished for what she sees as a minor transgression, Yoyo begins to note that others are not living up to community standards either. The front these people present frequently doesn’t match their inner selves. And the punishments some people face – for example, a friend of her brother’s having been kicked out of his yeshiva in Israel – are far harsher than their actions or questions deserved. Although unfiltered cell phones are forbidden in the community, Yoyo learns about TikTok and, in order to prevent her increased frustration with people’s behavior from boiling over, she begins to post her own videos, speaking about what she sees as the hypocrisy that surrounds her. However, as she ventures further from her world, she discovers that she is just as imperfect as everyone else.

Blum does an excellent job creating three-dimensional characters. Not only do their dilemmas feel real, readers come to understand the difficulties they all face. My only quibble is that I would have liked to know more about Yoyo’s sister, Naomi, who spends her free time reading fantasy novels, rather than helping around the house. While it’s clear she is trying to escape her surroundings, that issue is never fully explored. However, since the novel is narrated by Yoyo, Blum concentrates on her thoughts and actions.

While “The Judgment of Yoyo Gold” is a realistic novel and “Tale of the Flying Forest” is a fantasy, they both have something in common: fathers who have difficulty communicating with their daughters. Yoyo’s father is only able to express himself in Torah stories and parables, which leaves her to puzzle what lesson he is offering. The same is true for 11-year-old Anne Applebaum, the main character

in “Tale of the Flying Forest,” whose father offers her poetry, rather than hugs and commiseration, after the death of Anne’s mother. Unfortunately his actions leave Anne feeling even more alone. In fact, she’s always felt there was something missing in her life. That might be the twin her mother thought would be born with Anne. Her mother was so certain she was having twins that she picked out his name: Rainer.

When Anne’s mother was alive, the two of them would read from a book called “The World to Come,” which offered stories about life in a flying forest called Bei Hai. Imagine Anne’s surprise when she learns that not only is Bei Hai a real place, but her missing brother lives there. Unfortunately, he was stolen by an evil witch. Remembering her late mother’s words of encouragement – *chazak ve’ematz* (be strong and courageous) – Anne leaves her home to save her brother. Her journey is filled with fascinating characters and exciting adventures.

The novel’s enchantment is aided by a narrator who offers hints and suggestions about the action, many thought-provoking enough for adults to also ponder them. The illustrations by Belsher are beautiful and make the text come alive. In an author’s note, Romero writes that she was inspired to write “Tale of the Flying Forest” after learning that the Talmud mentions a mystical forest called Bei Hai. When she realized that the Talmud made no further mention of the enchanted place, Romero decided to create her own version. Her novel is infused with Jewish lore and Jewish sayings, something which will enthrall tween, teen and adult lovers of Jewish fantasy. It is also creative, sweet and warm. In fact, it’s difficult to find the right words to describe just how captivated I was by “Tale of the Flying Forest” from its opening to its conclusion.

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TC..... Continued from page 3

Esserman is the executive editor and book reviewer for The Reporter Group, and has won numerous American Jewish Press Club Rockower Awards and Syracuse Press Club Awards for her opinion columns and book reviews.

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In addition to her work at *The Reporter*, she serves as a chaplain for the Broome Developmental Disabilities Service Office. Her writing has been published in “The Women’s Torah Commentary” and “The Women’s Haftarah Commentary,” both by Jewish Lights Publishing. She also has had a book of poetry, “I Stand by The River,” published by Keshet Press of Temple Concord.

A Reconstructionist rabbi who says her first love is teaching, Esserman sees her position at *The Reporter* as an opportunity to educate the public about Judaism. She also serves as a freelance rabbi for lifecycle events, hospital visits and chaplaincy, and has been a rabbi-on-call when needed by local Reform and Conservative synagogues.

Her education includes a bachelor of arts degree in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania, and rabbinic ordination and a master of arts in Hebrew letters from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Wyncote, PA. In 2023, she was awarded an honorary doctor of divinity degree from RRC for 25 years of service.

Federation year in review 2024

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton held or co-sponsored more than 20 in-person and virtual events during 2024. "This has been another robust year of programming," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "Events ranged from commemorations of the October 7th tragedy and all that followed, to Holocaust commemorations, security classes, and fun gatherings that I hope brought meaning and joy to the lives of people in our community. We are looking forward to an exciting 2025."

◆ The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest held a virtual showing of the documentary "The Narrow Bridge." A discussion of the film was moderated by Dr. Terence M. Keane, Ph.D., director of the Behavioral Science Division of the National Center for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, on January 7.

◆ The Federation held a virtual gathering on January 14 to commemorate the 100th day of captivity of the hostages taken during the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack in Israel.

◆ The Federation held a Zoom event "Conversations about the Day After" with David Rittberg, senior director at the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies, on January 31. Rittberg discussed life after the October 7 attack on Israel.

◆ The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest held a virtual showing of "Our Almost Completely True Love Story." On February 4, a discussion of the film was moderated by Richard Mattson, an associate professor and director of the undergraduate program in psychology at Binghamton University.



Mark Henderson, the director of community security for the Jewish Community Federation of Greater Rochester, led a "Guardian/Greeter Safety Training" on August 27.

◆ The Federation sponsored a community hockey event at a Binghamton Black Bears game on February 24.

◆ The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest held a virtual showing of "March '68." A virtual discussion of the film was moderated by Ben Kasper, professor emeritus at SUNY Broome, on March 17.

◆ The Federation held a "Stop the Bleed" and a "Security Update" program on March 27. The program was presented by United Health Services Trauma Services.

◆ The Federation sponsored a two-hour virtual tour of the Auschwitz concentration camp for the sophomore class at Susquehanna Valley High School on April 29. The tour was part of the Federation's community outreach, which seeks to educate the local community about Judaism, antisemitism and the Holocaust.

◆ The Federation held a Yom Hashoah commemoration on May 2. The event was co-sponsored by Beth David Synagogue, Hillel at Binghamton, Temple Israel and Temple Concord. It began with readings of psalms and poems followed by testimony from survivor Samuel (Shmuel) Rind.

◆ The Federation held a Security Tabletop event on May 21.

◆ The Federation, in conjunction with the PJ Library and Hillel Academy of Broome County, held a Shabbat in the Park event on June 28 that was open to all families with young children. It included Shabbat refreshments, music and storytelling.

◆ The Federation held a vigil/program on August 8. The event started with a vigil featuring area rabbis and the reading of the names of the hostages held by Hamas, and then concluded with a one-hour long presentation by Eitan and Varda Morell, whose son, IDF Staff Sgt. Maoz Morell, was wounded on February 15 while fighting in Gaza and died on February 19 at the age of 22.

◆ The Federation held a "Guardian/Greeter Safety Training" on August 27. Mark Henderson, the director of community security for the Jewish Community Federation of Greater Rochester, led the session.

◆ The Federation held a Campaign 2025 kick-off event on September 8. The event included a brunch and talk by author Joan Leegant called "Israel's multi-culture: it's not just the Ashkenazim and Sephardim anymore – and never was."

◆ The Federation held a memorial service at the Holocaust Memorial Monument in the Temple Israel Cemetery on October 6. More than 30 people attended the event. See "Year" on page 9



The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton held a memorial service at the Holocaust Memorial Monument in the Temple Israel Cemetery on October 6.



The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest held a virtual discussion of the documentary "The Narrow Bridge," which was moderated by Dr. Terence M. Keane, Ph.D., director of the Behavioral Science Division of the National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, on January 7.



Families enjoyed the Shabbat in the Park event on June 28.



L-r: On Super Sunday, September 8, speaker Joan Leegant posed with Federation President Suzanne Holwitt, Federation Director Shelley Hubal, Merri Pell-Preus, who introduced the speaker, and Federation Campaign Chairwoman Marilyn Bell.



The Federation co-sponsored the annual Pauline and Philip Piaker Memorial Lecture on October 29 that featured Orit Mark Ettinger.

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This information is updated as of December 18, 2024. We acknowledge contributions from several anonymous donors and sincerely apologize if we have accidentally omitted anyone or made other errors.



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Federation/JCC/Discovery Center hosted Hanukkah celebration



At left: The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, the Jewish Community Center and the Discovery Center hosted a PJ Library "Discover Hanukkah" event on December 15. More than 80 people were in attendance. Raychel Reilly, chief operating officer of the JCC, read a Hanukkah story during the event.



At right: Rabbi Zalman Chein, of Rohr Chabad Center for Jewish Student Life, posed with the Rumble Ponies' mascots at the event.



The "Discover Hanukkah" event included music and refreshments.



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Hubal Continued from page 1

she and her dedicated team have accomplished in that short period of time. She will also offer of a view of future endeavors and challenges."



Shelley Hubal (Photo courtesy of Shelley Hubal)

Raised in Syracuse, Hubal obtained her B.A. in studio art from the University of Buffalo and a master's in art therapy from The George Washington University. A longtime resident of Binghamton, she and her husband, Mark, have always been actively engaged in the Jewish community. In her role at the helm of the Federation, Hubal emphasized how inspired she remains by the work of Sima Auerbach, her predecessor. "Sima left a wonderful legacy," Hubal said, "including the Jewish Film Fest and the Holocaust Memorial commemoration at the Temple Israel Cemetery. These important events keep our community connected."

Hubal said she strives to continue to build upon and enhance that legacy. She is particularly proud of some of her accomplishments. "With the help of Dr. Steve Malkin, I am super proud of our security initiative and the work we have done to educate the community and to raise funds for security infrastructure," she noted. Hubal also mentioned the challenges that COVID posed, and how grateful she is to her team of devoted board members and volunteers. She said that they succeeded in pivoting so the community could continue to be connected virtually – something she feels continues to this day.

"Shelley has a remarkable gift for bringing the various members of the community together," organizers said. "Everyone loves working with her. All of us have events or services that we consider memorable, be it Hanukkah celebrations, Community Hockey Night, Tea and Talk (which is co-sponsored with Chabad), the Super Sunday

Campaign Kickoff brunch and guest speaker, the gathering of all synagogues and community members after the October 7 attacks, or this summer's visit by Eitan and Varda Morell to share their story of their son Maoz's heroic actions in Gaza."

Organizers also mentioned that Hubal "is modest to the core, doing everything in her quiet and caring way." "I am not in it for accolades," Hubal said. "Having a positive impact on the community is what sustains and

fulfills me. What I love most about being Federation director is creating meaningful opportunities to bring people together and to witness the generosity of our small and compassionate community!"

"Beth David's Committee is excited to have the community get to know more about Shelley, the Federation's mission and the awe-inspiring work she is doing as its executive director," organizers added. "Come and feel free to bring friends to what is sure to be a great event!"

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.

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Jewish Baseball Players

Jewish baseball roundup, 2024

BILL SIMONS

In life, *tsuris* and *naches* often nip at each other's heels. So, it went in Jewish baseball 2024.

On July 24 at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City, the Diamondbacks' Joc Pederson connected for a solo home run in the fourth inning, contributing to Arizona's victory over the Royals. It was his 200th career home run, a significant milestone for the much-traveled 32-year-old, making him only the sixth Jewish player to attain that distinction. A designated hitter employed against right-handed pitchers, Pederson registered offensive stats (.275 BA, 23 HR, 64 RBI, .393 OBA, .515 SLG) good enough, in this era of depressed batting averages, to be this writer's 2024 Jewish Most Valuable Player.

No longer dominating as he was at his 2018-19 peak, Astros third baseman Alex Bregman's Gold Glove defensive play and still productive hitting (.260 BA, 26 HR, 75 RBI) contributed to Houston reaching the American League Wild Card Series. Despite intermittent offense (.236, 12 HR, 51 RBI), the outstanding defense play of centerfielder Harrison Bader was a factor in the New York Mets reaching the National League Championship Series. In addition to Bader, the Mets have a vocal Jewish fanbase, befitting a team with a Jewish owner, Steve Cohen, and president, David Stearns.

September 6 marked the apogee of Jewish baseball 2024. During night games, the Atlanta Braves' Max Fried, one of the best Major League Baseball pitchers over the past half decade, and the Baltimore Orioles' Dean Kremer, inconsistent but with flashes of potential brilliance, both turned in outstanding mound performances. In seven innings at Atlanta's Truist Park, Fried yielded but five hits, one walk and one unearned run, while striking out eight on the way to the Braves besting the Toronto Blue Jays 3-1. Fluent in Hebrew and the son of IDF veterans, Kremer also pitched masterfully that evening. Against the Tampa Bay Rays at Baltimore's Camden Yards, Kremer surrendered only two hits and three walks while striking out seven in six scoreless innings, helping the Orioles to a 2-0 win. Alas, injuries and bad breaks kept Fried (11 W-10 L, 3.25 ERA), and Kremer (8 W-10 L, 4.10 ERA) from fulfilling 2024 pre-season expectations. The year before, they had an eye-catching aggregate won-loss record of 21-6.

Jewish fans of the Dodgers persuasion, stretching from ancestral Brooklyn to sun-kissed L.A., lost one of their bragging rights during the season past. The Dodgers have had their share of power hitters. But the all-time Dodgers single season home run leader was part of our minyan, right fielder Shawn Green, who walloped 49 round trippers in 2001. With his historic 2024 campaign, the phenomenal Shohei Ohtani eclipsed Green's record by connecting for 54 home runs.

Green's displacement represented a notable feat being superseded by an even more notable feat. However, Jewish baseball 2024 also included a performance of historic ineptitude. Some denizens of Queens long expressed perverse pride in claiming the worst team in modern Major League Baseball annals: the 1962 Mets lost an astounding 120 games during the team's debut year. With 41 wins against 121 losses, the 2024 White Sox eclipsed the futility of the Casey Stengel/Joe Ginsberg Mets of yore. During his 17-game stint with the White Sox, Jewish right fielder Kevin Pillar hit a disappointing .160, and pitcher Jared Shuster lost five games against two wins. Chicago's ignominious descent was a hard blow for the longtime Jewish owner of the White Sox, Jerry Reinsdorf, and the team's Jewish fans. Chicago-area Rabbi Jeremy Fine, quoted by the JTA's Jacob Gruvis, lamented the absence of emotional respite at Guaranteed Rate Field: "It was obviously a very tough year for the Jewish people. Having a great baseball season... would

have been... [a] great distraction from torment."

Admittedly, 2024 was not an iconic Jewish baseball year. Although six Jews were on teams that reached the playoffs, none appeared in the World Series or came anywhere close to a Hank Greenberg, Al Rosen, Sandy Koufax, Ryan Braun MVP-caliber season. But the sheer number of MLB players identifying as Jews – 17 (one less than the record 18 in 2023) – while confronting war in the Middle East and resurgent American antisemitism merits note. A Star of David adorned Bader's belt and Kremer's hung from a chain over his Orioles jersey. Bregman announced he's considering playing for Team Israel.

In addition to Bader, Bregman, Fried, Kremer, Pederson, Pillar – whose play improved considerably after signing with the Los Angeles Angels – and Shuster, 10 others, identified with the help of Jacob Gruvis, were part of the 2024 Jewish MLB contingent. With team, won-lost record and ERA noted, pitchers Jake Bird (Rockies, 2-2, 4.50), Scott Effross (Yankees, 0-0, 5.40), Evan Kravetz (Reds, 0-0, 0.00), Max Lazar (Phillies, 0-0, 4.61) and Kenny Rosenberg (Angels, 0-1, 6.00) trod the mound with mixed results. For non-pitchers, team, position, batting average and home runs follow: Zack Gelof (Athletics, 2B, .211, 17), Spencer Horwitz (Blue Jays, 2B/1B/DH, .265, 12), Matt Mervis (Cubs, DH/1B, .115, 0), Garrett Stubbs (Phillies, C, .207, 1), and Rowdy Tellez (Pirates, 1B, .243, 13).

With six of the minyan – Bader, Bregman, Fried (already signed by the Yankees for a compensation package setting new benchmarks for lefty pitchers and Jewish ballplayers), Pederson, Pillar and Tellez – free agents and some of the minor leaguers potentially ready to advance to the show, winter may change the landscape of Jewish baseball. Although he needs more work in the minors, pitcher Jacob Steinmetz, an observant Orthodox Jew, continues to elicit future aspirations. Looking further

down the line, six young Jewish prospects were selected in this year's draft.

Since 1871, when the National Association emerged as the first professional league and Jewish outfielder Lip Pike led the circuit in home runs, Jews have provided a continuous presence in America's game. However, there were seasons when a Jewish fan had difficulty finding a landsman to root for. That is no longer the case. As players, managers, coaches, media, GMs and owners, Jews are an important part of the contemporary game. Underlying that MLB Jews are no longer a rarity, on August 10, in Phoenix during the eighth inning, the Phillies battery – pitcher Lazar and catcher Stubbs – as well as the Diamondbacks batter (Pederson) were all Jewish. And the rookie Lazar, pitching his debut game, recorded his first Major League Baseball strikeout against a landsman, the veteran slugger Pederson.

Bar/Bat photos needed

Can we have your mug? Kids mugging for the camera, that is. For *The Reporter's* annual Bar/Bat Mitzvah issue (coming January 24), we need photos of all teens who became bar/bat mitzvah during the calendar year of 2024.

Please e-mail these photos with identification, including name, date and place of the bar/bat mitzvah ceremony. Please send them by Tuesday, January 14. Photos can be e-mailed, in TIF or JPG format, to TReporter@aol.com; please note in the subject line that a bar/bat photo for *The Reporter* is attached and include the necessary information in the message.



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Year.Continued from page 5

- ◆ Federation co-sponsored the annual Pauline and Philip Piaker Memorial Lecture with Chabad Center on October 29 that featured Orit Mark Ettinger, who told her life story and the lessons she's learned in a presentation titled "Broken Ray of Light; Finding the Light through the Darkness."
- ◆ The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest held 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, moderated a Zoom discussion of the film on November 10.
- ◆ The Federation co-sponsored with local synagogues the Global Day of Jewish Learning event, which was held on November 17.
- ◆ The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest held a virtual showing of the film "All About the Levkoviches." Bill Simons, Ph.D., professor emeritus of American history at SUNY Oneonta, moderated a Zoom discussion of the film on December 8.
- ◆ The Federation held a PJ Library "Discover Hanukkah" event on December 15 at the Discovery Center. (See photos on page 8.)

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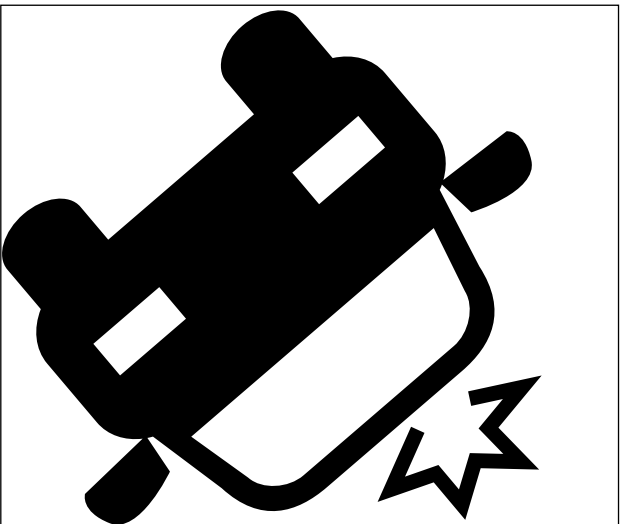
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Miketz, Genesis 41:1-44:17

Looking and listening

CANTOR ABBE LYONS, HILLEL AT ITHACA COLLEGE

By the time his brothers come to Egypt to buy food, Joseph is well into his role as Pharaoh's prime minister. It's not surprising that his brothers don't recognize him. Rather than a sassy teenager, insisting on telling his dreams of everyone bowing down to him, Joseph looks and sounds like a mature, powerful Egyptian man. They had trafficked him into slavery, where it was more likely that his life would be shortened, not put him on track to become an Egyptian power broker. Now, they can hardly even see him as they are literally bowing down with their faces to the ground.

Radak acknowledges that Joseph "deliberately misrepresented himself to prevent their suspecting that it might be him," and the Or Hachaim notes: "Joseph's exalted position stifled any glimmer of recognition there might

have been on the part of the brothers." Joseph spoke to them in Egyptian, with deliberate harshness, so they would have heard the alienation in his tone even before hearing his words translated by the interpreter. And they are forced to listen to whatever Joseph says, not knowing that Joseph can listen as they speak amongst themselves.

And now Joseph – whether to test them, to have them experience a similar impact, or giving in to a vengeful impulse – accuses them of espionage. He ignores their protestations and pleas. They say, "We are all the sons of one man," which one *midrash* characterizes as each of the brothers having "a spark of the Divine Spirit." (Breisheet Rabbah 91:7) But Joseph gives no outward indication that he perceives or appreciates this spark in any of his brothers,

even when they acknowledge that they have two other brothers. Torah doesn't reveal Joseph's inner experience at this point, only his actions, but it must have been a compelling moment for him to hear them speak those words including him and Benjamin, yet admitting their absence.

Yet, Joseph continues to accuse them of espionage and imprisons them, and, although he ends up releasing them in three days' time, when they go into prison, they have no idea how long he will hold them hostage. The brothers link this predicament to having turned a blind eye and a deaf ear to Joseph when he was their infuriating younger brother. Even after the three days, they are forced to listen to Joseph's harsh tone of voice and the frightening words. See "Looking" 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, December 28, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Genesis 41:1-44:17 and the haftarah is Zechariah 2:14-4:7. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 5:30 pm.

The temple office will be closed Tuesday-Wednesday, December 31-January 1.

On Saturday, January 4, Shacharit services will be held at 9:45 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Genesis 44:18-47:27 and the haftarah is Ezekiel 37:15-28. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 5:45 pm.

There will be an Executive Board meeting on Tuesday, January 7, at 7 pm.

Congregation Tikvun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY
Phone: 607-256-1471

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

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.

Penn-York Jewish Community

President-Treasurer-Secretary: Harvey Chernosky, 570-265-3869

B'nai B'rith: William H. Seigel Lodge

Purpose: To promote Jewish identity through religious, cultural, educational and social activities in the Southern Tier of New York and the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania, including Waverly, NY; Sayre, Athens and Towanda, PA, and surrounding communities.

Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

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

Beth David Synagogue

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

Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch
Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors
E-mail: aslonim@binghamton.edu
rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com
Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 607-797-0015, Fax: 607-797-0095
Website: www.Chabadofbinghamton.com
Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education
E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com
Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development
Chabad Downtown Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton
E-mail: lslonim@Jewishbu.com, hslonim@Jewishbu.com
Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming
E-mail: yohana@Jewishbu.com, gohana@Jewishbu.com
Regular service times: Daily 7:30 am, Friday evening 6 pm, Shabbat morning 9:30 am, Maariv and Havdalah one hour after candle-lighting time, Sundays 9:30 am.
To join the mailing list, for up-to-date information on adult education offerings or to arrange for a private tutorial, for details concerning the Judaica shop and resource center, or for assistance through the Piaker Free Loan Society or Raff Maasim Tovim Foundation, call Chabad's office at 797-0015.

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

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, December 27, light candles before..... 4:20 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, December 28 5:22 pm
Friday, January 3, light candles before..... 4:26 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, January 4 5:28 pm
Friday, January 10, light candles before..... 4:33 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, January 11 5:35 pm
Friday, January 17, light candles before..... 4:41 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, January 18 5:43 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, December 27: At 6 pm, the Hanukkah Celebration will be in-person only, with a vegetarian/dairy potluck dinner and a short service, including candle lighting for both Hanukkah and Shabbat, wine blessing and the Mourner's Kaddish. Those attending are asked to bring their hanukkiot (menorahs) and four candles.

Saturday, December 28: No Shabbat school; at 9:15 am, Torah study in person and on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87897900994?pwd=bOMvwx-DuovoaBInB4aVfH0TL5amj.1>, meeting ID 878 9790 0994 and passcode 743506. To dial in, call 646-931-3860.

Tuesday-Thursday, December 31-January 2, at 5:30 pm: Evening prayers with Rabbi Leah Moser, in-person only.

Friday, January 3: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service with Rabbi Leah Moser in person, on Zoom or on Facebook. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, dial in at 646-931-3860 or watch on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, January 4: No Shabbat school; and at 9:15 am, Torah study in person and on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87897900994?pwd=bOMvwx-DuovoaBInB4aVfH0TL5amj.1>, meeting ID 878 9790 0994 and passcode 743506. To dial in, call 646-931-3860.

Sunday, January 5: From 10 am-2 pm, Sisterhood Rummage Sale. Shoppers are asked to use the Oak Street entrance.

Tuesday, January 7: At 10:30 am, Tuesday Morning Book Club: "Gangsters vs Nazis: How Jewish Mobsters Battled Nazis in Wartime America" by Michael Benson (non-fiction). For more information, contact Merri Pell-Preus at 607-222-2875 or merrypell.preus@gmail.com. The Zoom link is <https://bit.ly/3CXVd9b>, meeting ID 881 6469 4206 and passcode 653272.

Tuesday-Thursday, January 7-9: At 5:30 pm, evening prayers with Rabbi Leah Moser, in-person only.

Wednesday, January 8: At 7 pm, Sisterhood Board meeting on Zoom only. The Zoom link will be provided by Nancy Dorfman. For answers to questions, contact Carol Herz at 607-222-7144.

Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815
Phone: 334-2691
E-mail: fertigg@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 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.

Children of foreign workers fight to serve in IDF

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Several children of foreign workers who grew up in the Jewish state are petitioning and pursuing legal avenues to be allowed to serve in the Israel Defense Forces. Mariel, one of the initiators of the request submitted to Interior Minister Moshe Arbel, spoke during a recent interview with Kan News about the importance of enlisting in the IDF for her and her peers: “Israel is the only place I know; it’s my home.”

Dozens of young people, whose parents are foreign workers without legal status in Israel, have come together and approached Arbel, the Defense Minister Israel Katz, Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi and the Prime Minister’s Office, asking to become citizens and enlist in the IDF.

Mariel said she became aware of the fact that she would not be called to enlist when she hit 11th grade and all the other students received draft notices. “Since the beginning of the [Iron Sword] war, I’ve been volunteering in any way that I could to help,” she explained during the interview. “Together with several other friends, we went out and volunteered on our own, because we felt that the war effort was something that everyone needed to get involved with in whatever way they can.”

Mariel and her friends went to the Arava and the Negev to help farmers with their crops, specifically farmers whose

land had been hit hard by the war, or who were called up for reserve duty. She told the interviewer that her private efforts to enlist failed, due to her lack of status as a citizen of Israel. She therefore decided to enlist the help of a lawyer to push for her and others like her to be able to enlist.

Individual requests of this nature were submitted at the beginning of the war, by Mariel and others, but went unanswered. Several of the young people banded together and hired attorney Zari Hazan, who based their request on a clause in the Citizenship Law, 5712-1952 that allows granting status to individuals who contribute significantly to the state.

When asked why it was so important for her to enlist, Mariel responded, “I am part of this country. I was born here, I grew up here and I want to give back to the country.”

As she began to cry, she added, “This is the only place that I have ever known. It is my home. It is incredibly frustrating to me that I have to go on the news to explain why I am an Israeli and why I belong. This is what I feel in my heart. My friends and I only want to give back. We don’t see any other place in the world as our home, except Israel.”



Sgt.-Maj. (res.) Cedrick Garin, 23, was killed in action in the Gaza Strip in January. (Photo courtesy of StandWithUS/X)

Mariel added that she would not give up until she received her draft order and is able to join the IDF.

Separately, a letter, sent by the Tel Aviv-based Hotline for Refugees and Migrants organization, was addressed to Arbel and signed by 120 young people. In it, Rain, the daughter of Filipino parents living in Tel Aviv, wrote, “I feel that this is my home. Israel has given me so much, and I want to give back to the country.”

Some children of foreign nationals have managed to serve in the IDF, such as Cedrick Garin, the son of Imelda and Enrico Basilio, two workers from the Philippines. Enrico was deported in 2002, when his son was 2 years old. Cedrick was raised by his mother. Cedrick had difficulty getting the IDF to agree to his enlistment, but eventually succeeded, and he received citizenship upon completing his regular service. In January of this year, Sgt.-Maj. (res.) Cedrick Garin was killed in action in Gaza while fighting Hamas. Enrico has since been granted permanent residency status.

An Eritrean man, Mulugeta Tsagi, received permanent residency status in November 2023 after saving the life of an Israeli soldier during the Hamas-led October 7 invasion, in a similar case where the clause from the Citizenship Law was utilized.

In July, then-Defense Minister Yoav Gallant told a meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that the IDF requires an additional 10,000 soldiers to meet operational demands.

In October, IDF chief Halevi told high ranking officers: “The IDF needs to be larger, both in the standing army and reserves, which is why we’re establishing more units.”

On the Jewish food scene More on bagels

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

It seemed like everywhere I turned today, something controversial concerning bagels occurred. The first instance came during my chaplaincy work. My time generally overlaps most staff and individuals’ lunch times. The food can look and smell really good, which is difficult because I normally have to wait another hour or two before I can eat lunch. Anyway, today a staff member was eating a beautiful bagel sandwich. I could tell it wasn’t lox and cream cheese, so I asked what it was. She answered, “Ham and cheese.” She also noted that it tasted really good.

Now, the staff person was not Jewish, so there is no reason for her to know I would never eat ham and cheese on a bagel (or on anything else). The two just don’t go together, but that’s because the only fillings for bagels when I was growing up were lox or whitefish. (By the way, I also love a toasted bagel with butter, especially if it’s an onion bagel. I don’t need to put anything else on it.) This reminded me that bagels are now an all American food and that most people who eat them will not be using traditional Jewish fillings. As hard as it can be to admit that bagels are no longer an exclusively Jewish food, it’s clear that’s now true.

But this was not my only time I heard something controversial about bagel choices. Later the same day, I saw an article in a Hey Alma e-mail about the actor Adam Brody, who was called “everyone’s favorite TV hot rabbi.” I haven’t seen the Netflix show “Nobody Wants This,” where he plays a rabbi, but the Jewish press loves

publishing articles debating the show’s plot and characters. The Hey Alma article discussed an interview Brody gave that appeared in the UK magazine The Stylist. It included information about when he worked at a bagel shop. While he liked savory bagels, he noted that one of his old favorites (which he claims not to have eaten in years) is a chocolate chip bagel with strawberry cream cheese. The author of the Hey Alma article objected to his choice, although she still thinks he’s the hot rabbi of the season.

I’ve written before about how I don’t consider chocolate-chip challah real challah and must confess I feel the same way about bagels. Except, perhaps, for cinnamon raisin, bagels should be savory. As for strawberry cream cheese: that actually sounds good, although I wouldn’t want to put it on an onion or garlic bagel. The flavors just clash. However, I could see it on plain bagels, or, even better, banana bread.

By the way, not everyone I’ve met over the years thinks of bagels as Jewish food. When I spent 10 months in Israel during rabbinical school, I had three Israeli roommates. After a trip to Jerusalem with American friends, I brought some bagels back to our apartment, One roommate absolutely refused to even try it a bite. I explained that it was just bread in a different shape, but, even though she was Jewish, to her, bagels were a foreign food that no good Israeli would eat. Maybe we should keep that in mind before we criticize someone else’s choice in bagels or bagel toppings.

Looking.....Continued from page 10

they hear through the interpreter, and to watch as one of them is bound and sent back to prison as a hostage.

“They said, each one to his brother, ‘Alas, we are being punished on account of our brother, because we saw his anguish, yet we didn’t listen as he pleaded with us. That is why this distress has come upon us.’ Then Reuben spoke up and said to them, ‘Did I not tell you, ‘Do no wrong to the boy’? But you didn’t listen. Now comes the reckoning for his blood.’ They did not know that Joseph was listening, for there was an interpreter between him and them. But he turned away from them and wept. Then he returned to them; he spoke to them and took Simeon away from them and imprisoned him before their eyes.” (Genesis 42:21-24)

When there are unequal power dynamics, the person or group with more power can choose whether to pay attention to what they see and hear, especially from those with less power. And they can force the person or group with less power to see and hear unwelcome sights and unwelcome words. Yet, sometimes even someone with less power can bear powerful witness through their presence as well as their words, and we see this in Joseph pleading from the pit and in his brothers pleading that they are not spies. Among the many questions that call out from the story of Joseph and his brothers, are questions about seeing and being seen, hearing and being heard. When have we looked and listened deeply, and when have we closed our eyes and ears? When have we felt ignored or silenced? When have we felt deeply seen or heard? Have we heard discrepancies between someone’s spoken words and their tone of voice or their actions? And does our own tone of voice match our words and our actions?

Later, when the brothers return, Joseph “lifted up his

eyes and saw Benjamin his brother, his mother’s son.” (Genesis 43:29) Midrash Tanchuma says, “He was deeply moved, for he saw in him the image of his father,” though the Tur says that “Benjamin’s features reminded him of the looks of his mother.” Orchot Tzadikim 7:3 teaches: “as you learn in the case of Joseph, ‘whose mercies were kindled’ (Gen. 3:30). And it is fitting for the intelligent person that the quality of Mercy and Graciousness should be firmly fixed and present in his heart at all times.”

May we all learn to embody this teaching and may it lead us to speak more authentically, to listen more deeply, to lift up our eyes and see when others are in distress, and to perceive the spark of the Divine Spirit within them.

Want to stay in the know?

Send your e-mail address to treporter@aol.com (with “e-mail blast” in the subject line) to stay up-to-date on the latest news between *The Reporter’s* bimonthly issues! We promise not to share it with anyone and we won’t send you junk, just good stuff!



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.

◆ Roundtable will hold the virtual course “Spinoza and Jewish Modernity” on Fridays, February 14-28, from noon-1 pm. The cost to attend is \$132. Jewish historian Daniel B. Schwartz will examine Spinoza’s thought, asking why his past and our present interpret his ideas so differently. For more information or to register, visit <https://roundtable.org/live-courses/history/spinoza-and-the-jewish-enlightenment>.

◆ The American Hebrew University will hold the virtual course “Hebrew Through Israeli Songs” on Sundays, February 23-March 23, at 4 pm. The cost to attend is \$110. The course is for intermediate and advanced Hebrew students and celebrates Israel’s musical journey from the 1970s through contemporary times. For more information or to register, visit <https://open.aju.edu/event/hebrew-through-israeli-songs-5/>.

◆ Qesher will hold the virtual program “Get to know the Haver Foundation of Hungary – Fighting Antisemitism by Building Connections” on Tuesday, January 21, at 3 pm. The talk will explore “explore how Haver Foundation fosters understanding and mutual acceptance between Jewish and non-Jewish students in Hungary.” For more information or to register, visit www.qesher.com/haver-foundation/.

◆ The Five Books podcast, <https://link.chtbl.com/vqvi-HYMw?sid=JBCweb>, explores “the role of books in our lives.” Each week, Tali Rosenblatt Cohen will talk with a Jewish author about five books in five categories.

◆ The Institute for Jewish Spirituality will hold the virtual course “Meeting Antisemitism with Mindfulness” with Rabbi Angela Buchdahl on Thursdays, January 16-30, from 3-4:15 pm. The full tuition cost is \$199 and the reduced tuition cost I \$149. The course will help attendees See “Online” on page 12

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For information, contact Kathy Brown at 607-724-2360, ext. 244 or advertising@thereportergroup.org January 10, 2025 issue Ad Deadline: January 2



Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

Never Again Education Reauthorization Act passes

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC), chair of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, lauded the passage of the Never Again Education Reauthorization Act of 2023. “Expanding the presence of Holocaust education programs in schools will increase the knowledge of basic facts related to the Holocaust, and that’s important,” Foxx said on the House floor.

“But more importantly, it will give high school schools optional resources to help provide students a greater understanding of the ancient scourge of antisemitism and provide them intellectual and moral tools to fight against it and to prevent genocide, hate, and bigotry against any

group of people,” she added.

The legislation, which passed the U.S. House of Representatives on December 17, reauthorizes a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum program that provides funding and resources for schools to properly educate students about the horrors of the Holocaust. Funding will be extended for the program through Fiscal Year 2030.

Foxx said the Hamas-led terror attacks in southern Israel on October 7, 2023, marked “the worst day in Jewish history since the Holocaust.” This legislation, she said, “will ensure that the lessons of history are not forgotten in these troubling times.”

Rep. Earl “Buddy” Carter (R-GA), sponsor of the House

companion bill, said following the legislation’s passage that “we must speak out against hate and educate our students on the history of antisemitism to ensure that the horrors of the Holocaust are never repeated.”

In his remarks, Carter noted the “staggering” rise of antisemitic incidents on college campuses, highlighting the “morally reprehensible” demonstrations seen at Columbia University, Harvard University and George Washington University. “We must set a better example than that for our children, and the recent pro-Hamas demonstrations happening at colleges and high schools across the nation are proof of that,” he added. “When we say, ‘never again,’ we mean it.”

Israel: Tens of thousands of archaeological relics uncovered in 2024

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Amid the ongoing wars against Hamas and Hezbollah, countless artifacts from the Second Temple era, the Late Roman period and more were uncovered across Israel in 2024.

“Despite the difficult year we experienced due to the war, the Israel Antiquities Authority continued to carry out rescue excavations throughout the country,” said the body’s director-general, Eli Escusido.

“Over the past year, approximately 120 sites were excavated (compared to the usual average of 250-300 in a regular year), where tens of thousands of significant finds were uncovered, ranging from prehistoric periods to modern times. The most notable excavations were in Jerusalem – in the City of David and the Ophel Garden-Yavne, Yehud, Kiryat Gat, Caesarea and more,” he added.

The IAA has donated some of its findings to museums and research institutes across Israel for visitors to enjoy. The IAA also offers a volunteer program for individuals over the age of 18 who want to get in on the action and be a part of a team uncovering the past. There are additional companies and tour operators throughout Israel that offer excavating experiences for all types of travelers.

“This region has an incredibly rich and vast history that dates back thousands of years including all the way to the time of the Bible and beyond. Sites are regularly uncovered helping archaeologists piece together the story of the land’s ancient history of cultures, religions and historic leaders,” said Dina Orenbach, consul and director of the Western Region of the United States for the Israeli Ministry of Tourism.

“Our country is filled with wondrous artifacts, and if you feel like rolling up your sleeves and being an active participant, you might consider joining a ‘dig for a day’ or a guided archaeological dig. The incredible historical and religious landmarks discovered in Israel will resonate with people from around the world,” she added.

The artifacts archeologists have discovered in Israel this year include:

- ◆ Ancient stone road, possibly walked on by Jesus: In Mount Hotzvim in northern Jerusalem, a group of archaeologists in an excavation project with the IAA discovered an array of rocks and a paved road that dates back to the end of the Second Temple period. This discovery matches another creation uncovered in 2019 called “Pilgrim’s Road,” which is believed to have been walked on by Jesus in ancient Jerusalem.
- ◆ Cargo ship dating back 3,300 years: Found 56 miles away from Israel’s Mediterranean Sea shore, a 3,300-year-old cargo ship was discovered during a standard survey executed by Energean plc, an international hydrocarbon ex-

ploration and production company with a focus on natural gas, and was donated to the IAA. This ship dates back to the Late Bronze Era, a time with only two documented shipwrecks in the Mediterranean Sea, and was found intact after years of sitting on the sea floor.

◆ An 1,800-year-old ring discovered in Haifa: Yair Whiteson, 13, was hiking in Haifa and discovered an 1,800-year-old bronze ring engraved with an image of the Greek goddess Athena, which is believed to have been owned by woman or girl during the Late Roman Period. This ring was given to the IAA and is now on display for visitors as part of the IAA summer tours at the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein National Campus for the Archaeology of Israel in Jerusalem, adjacent to the Israel Museum.

◆ Rare multi-compartment stone container found in Jerusalem: In a recent excavation, a multi-compartment stone container, dating back 2,000 years to the days of the Second Temple, was discovered and is now on display at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem for visitors to view. Based on research conducted by the IAA, it is believed that this box was used for commercial purposes, as a way for mer-



An 1,800-year-old ring engraved with a Goddess of War from Roman and Greek mythology. (Photo by Emil Aladjem/Israel Antiquities Authority)

chants to display their products, and highlights daily life and trade during this period.

◆ Stone seal from time of the First Temple: A black stone seal was discovered in the City of David National Park by the IAA that dates back 2,700 years, to the time of the First Temple. This seal showcases that literacy was not exclusive to upper-class citizens, that individuals at all class levels had basic knowledge of reading

and writing. The seal depicts a winged genie, providing insight to the cultural zeitgeist in the region during the seventh and eighth centuries B.C.E. The seal is marked with the first and last name of the seal’s original owner, Yeho’ezer ben Hosh’ayahu.

◆ Jewish kitchenware unearthed in capital’s ancient drainage: In August, the IAA announced it discovered Jewish kitchenware in Jerusalem’s ancient drainage channel, which ran through the city’s main street during the time of the Second Temple. Archaeologists found expensive oils, grape seeds and 2,000-year-old eggshells outside the Old City walls, which showcases evidence of daily life during a time of rebellion against the Roman Empire.

Resources. Continued from page 11

“discern the difference between fear and danger, address internal and external antisemitism, and understand our agency to respond.” For more information or to register, visit www.jewishspirituality.org/go-deeper/meeting-antisemitism-with-mindfulness.

◆ The Qesher Book Club will hold a virtual discussion of “The Anatomy of Exile” by Zeeva Bukai on Tuesday, February 4, at 3 pm. The novel focuses on “a modern-day Romeo and Juliet story between a Palestinian and a Jew ends in predictable tragedy.” For more information or to register, visit www.qesher.com/anatomy-of-exile/.

◆ Roundtable will hold the virtual course “Jewish Life in Medieval Spain” on Wednesdays, January 8-22, from 4-5 pm. The cost to attend is \$132. Georgetown University’s Jonathan Ray will explore this time period, which includes “examples of Jewish cultural achievement, while the Inquisition and expulsion in 1492 rank among the most devastating events ever to befall the Jewish people.” For more information or to register, visit <https://roundtable.org/live-courses/history/jewish-life-in-medieval-spain>.

◆ Siegal Lifelong Learning will hold several virtual classes during the winter. The cost to attend is \$10. Classes include “The Kibbutz: Past, Present, Future” on Thursday, January 30, from 10:30 am-noon (<https://case.edu/lifelonglearning/lectures/kibbutz-past-present-future-remote>); “From Here to Utopia: The Rise and Fall (and Rise) of Israel’s Kibbutz Movement” on Thursday February 6, from 7-8:30 pm (<https://case.edu/lifelonglearning/lectures/here-utopia-rise-and-fall-and-rise-israels-kibbutz-movement-remote>); “Why Do Jews Become Comedians? The Source of Jewish Laughter” on Tuesday February 11, from 7-8:30 pm (<https://case.edu/lifelonglearning/lectures/why-do-jews-become-comedians-source-jewish-laughter-remote>); “Social Dilemmas in the Kibbutz – How to Create an Equality-based Society” on Thursday, February 13, from 10:30 am-noon (<https://case.edu/lifelonglearning/lectures/social-dilemmas-kibbutz-how-create-equality-based-soci>

ety-remote); “Shared Roots: Childhood Experiences in the Kibbutz” on Thursday, February 27, from 7-8:30 pm (<https://case.edu/lifelonglearning/lectures/shared-roots-childhood-experiences-kibbutz-remote-person>); and “The Imagined Kibbutz: Disillusionment and Late Inspiration in Literature and Beyond” on Thursday, March 6, from 7-8:30 pm (<https://case.edu/lifelonglearning/lectures/imagined-kibbutz-disillusionment-and-late-inspiration-literature-and-beyond-remote>).

◆ The Hadassah-Brandeis Institute has listed its winter/spring programs at www.brandeis.edu/hbi/events/index.html. Upcoming lectures include Kerry Wallach, author of “Traces of a Jewish Artist: The Lost Life and Work of Rahel Szalit” on Wednesday, January 22, at 7 pm; “Birthing Authority: Early Modern Jewish Midwives and their Records” with Dr. Jordan Katz, HBI scholar-in-residence, on Monday, February 3, at noon; “Will Draw Our History? Graphic Witnessing by Jewish Women Holocaust Survivors” with Dr. Rachel Perry, HBI scholar-in-residence, on Monday, February 10, at noon; Tova Mirvis, author of “We Would Never,” on Wednesday, February 26, at 4 pm; and “As It Were, Suspended in Midair,” photography of Hannah Altman, artist talk on Thursday, March 20, at 6:30 pm.

◆ Literary Modin’s February virtual author event will take place on Sunday, February 16, at 1 pm. Featured writers will be Zeeva Bukai (“The Anatomy of Exile”), Lihi Lapid (“On Her Own”) and Ruth Franklin (“The Many Lives of Anne Frank”). For more information or to register, visit www.juliezuckerman.com/event-info/literary-modiin-february-2025-author-event.

◆ The Jewish Women’s Archive will hold three virtual book talks in January, all at 8 pm: on Thursday, January 16, Anya Liftig will talk about “Holler Rat: A Memoir”; on Thursday, January 23, Maira Kalman will talk about “Still Life with Remorse”; and on Thursday, January 23, Rachel Somerstein will talk about “Invisible Labor: The Untold Story of the Caesarean Section.” For more information or to register, visit <https://jwa.org/events>.

◆ Tikvah will hold the online class “Creativity and Confrontation: The History of Medieval Jewry” taught by Rabbi Dr. Jacob J. Schacter. In 10 lectures, he will offer “a journey through the events, debates, and formative figures of the Jewish Middle Ages.” For more information or to register, visit <https://lp.tikvahfund.org/medieval-jewish-history>.

◆ The Braid’s StoryNosh presents “Tastes of Tradition,” which is a video series that invites viewers into the kitchens of five diverse Jewish families as they share recipes and the stories behind them. The videos can be found at <https://the-braid.org/tastes>.

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

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