

THE REPORTER

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BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

Jeff Kahn to speak about business at BD luncheon on Feb. 8

Beth David's Saturday, February 8, luncheon speaker will be Jeff Kahn, who will speak on "Building a Community: Jeff Kahn and the History of Cyber Café West." Kahn was the owner of Cyber Café West for 22 years. 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.

During its 22-year history, the Cyber Café West hosted approximately 5,000 shows by various local and visiting singers and bands. It was called a popular venue for not only college students, but also for the local community, as well as for visitors. When it closed in June 2019, social media posts lamented its end. One fan described the place as a "keystone of our musical,

saucy, buoyant and brilliant community. A building rooted in historical Binghamton with a 20+ year history of its own as Cyber Café West. I honestly don't know how I would have found my friends, my sense of community... my entire life here in Broome County without finding this place."

Kahn graduated from Binghamton University in 1984, with a degree in philosophy. Following other business ventures, he bought the building at 176 Main St., Binghamton, and, in 1997, opened the Cyber Café West. What was it about the building's rumored history that inspired Kahn to save the building from demolition? What did Binghamton



Jeff Kahn

University's Public Archaeology Facility discover about the building's past when it did excavations under its parking lot in 2007? What was Kahn's vision of what Cyber Café would become when he started it, and what are some of the highlights of its 22-year history? These are some of the questions that Kahn will address in his talk which will focus on the satisfaction and the challenges encountered when creating a community that is also a business.

"Through Cyber Café West, many of us were introduced to performers who became some of our favorites, and whom we would never have heard of had it not been for Jeff and the laid-back, congenial

and inviting setting his place provided," organizers say. "We look forward to a talk that will bring us closer to appreciating the specialness of what Jeff created for our community."

Since the monthly series' continuation depends on the generosity of contributors, Beth David welcomes 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.

"Evening of Jewish Stories, Poetry and Music" in Ithaca on Feb. 8

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca will host the 21st annual "Evening of Jewish Storytelling, Poetry and Music" on Saturday, February 8, at 7:30 pm. The celebration will take place downstairs in the social hall of Temple Beth-El, located at the corner of Court and Tioga streets, in downtown Ithaca. A donation of \$4 per individual and \$8 per family is requested to cover costs. The event will end at about 9:30 pm and will

have an intermission. Families with children are welcome.

"Join us for this magical celebration of life, community and the arts," said organizers of the event. "We will be celebrating 21 years of original stories, traditional tales, folk and contemporary poetry, and dynamic live music from around the world.

"This event has become extremely popular over the years, drawing participants

together for an intimate and cozy evening," organizers continued. "It is a real reminder of times past. People who might otherwise never cross paths listen, laugh and perhaps shed a few tears together, and get to know each other. The idea is to get people away from their computer and television screens and share a moment of slower pleasures together. In addition, there are always complimentary, traditional homemade treats to

be enjoyed, which people can enjoy while listening to the treasures of the night. This year's celebration offers an exciting and diverse selection of storytellers, poets and musicians both young and old."

For more information, contact the temple at 273-5775 or visit the website at www.tbethithaca.org.

Ukrainian *olim* land in Israel on International Holocaust Remembrance Day

By JNS staff

(JNS) – A total of 184 new immigrants (*olim*) making *aliyah* from Ukraine via the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews landed in Israel on six separate flights on January 27, International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Many noted that antisemitism was a factor in their decision to make the move.

According to a report on antisemitism

by the Israel's Diaspora Ministry published on January 27, the same day as the flight, Ukraine was one country in the former Soviet Union that had actually seen a decline in the number of antisemitic incidents overall. Nevertheless, some say such sentiment is still far from being eradicated. In fact, the Eastern European nation saw an increase in the use of antisemitic rhetoric during the second half of 2019.

Alexander Shopotinsky, 38, said, "The situation has become very difficult – one of the worst in Europe as a whole." He said that for his family, moving from the city of Kryvyi Rih to Israel was a decision he and his wife, Victoria, 35, made for their two children – Sergey, 13, and Elizabetha, 7 – without reservation.

"I have always been proud of my Judaism. Despite the mocking and scorn I received from every angle, I did not change my family name," he related. "They would harass me and call me various insults attacking my Jewish identity. These challenges made it clear that there was no way we would allow our children to grow up with similar, unfortunate experiences. It was therefore critical for us to bring our family to Israel, where our children can live openly as Jews and be proud of their Judaism."

The Shopotinskys plan to settle in Haifa. The Fellowship said, "We are delighted to start the year by already helping dozens of *olim* from around the world move to Israel. Unfortunately, antisemitism is still lifting its head in many parts of the world. On this symbolic day, it is important to take note of how great it is that the Jewish people have a home where Jews can live with pride and without fear."

See "Olim" on page 4



Franny Alani and Rebecca Couillard performed at last year's event.



The Shopotinsky family – Alexander, Victoria, Sergey and Elizabetha – left Ukraine on January 27 to make their new home in Israel, partly due to rising antisemitism in Eastern Europe. (Photo by the Fellowship)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2020
Bar/Bat Mitzvah
Planning Guide



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Science news

A new approach can slow and even reverse cognitive decline; creating a decoy for viruses.
..... Page 5

News in brief...

UCLA to host American Jewish music festival; Abbas trashes peace plan; and more.
..... Pages 7-8

Special Sections

Legal Notices 4
Book Review 4
Classifieds 8
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Guide 1A-4A

Opinion

Antisemitism on the college campus is evolving

By Eitan Fischberger

(JNS) – True to its chameleonic nature, antisemitism on campus is constantly changing colors. Some of the earliest documented campus antisemitism occurred during the early to mid-20th century, when American universities were faced with a large influx of Jewish students who emigrated from Europe. Back then, campus antisemitism manifested itself in the form of Jewish quotas, including at prestigious Ivy League universities like Harvard, Yale, Columbia and Princeton, until they were effectively outlawed in the 1960s and 1970s.

But in the past few decades, campus antisemitism has taken on more threatening forms, such as ultra-right white nationalism, Holocaust denial, anti-Zionism and, more recently, the BDS movement. The constant evolution of campus antisemitism means that to an extent, pro-Israel campus activism is reactive, rather than proactive, since we never know what form it will take next.

We must learn from our mistakes, anticipate where the winds are blowing and formulate a plan to stop the next iteration of campus antisemitism before it manifests itself. In order to predict what will be, we must first identify what is taking place. The BDS movement realized that having a fringe contingent of radical Jewish organizations like Jewish Voice for Peace and IfNotNow in their ranks lends them credibility. By hiding behind the veil of their token Jews, they legitimize themselves on campus, even if their attacks don't reach all the way to the Jewish state.

Additionally, while antisemites on the far-left constantly try to distinguish anti-Zionism from antisemitism, their actions tell a different story. Anti-Zionists are targeting Zionist students on a broad scale – not because of any Israeli government policies, but because of their Jewish identity.

Many of us have heard the disturbing story that the

University of Toronto Graduate Student Union opted out of making kosher food available on campus since such food is “pro-Israel” (they later apologized, as if that rectified the injustice in any way). Also in Canada, a Jewish student at McGill University faced pressure to resign from the Student Union for accepting a Hillel-funded trip to Israel and the Palestinian Authority. (Un)coincidentally, a non-Jewish student who registered for the same trip received no such pressure.

Another phenomenon has arisen, wherein antisemitic students have openly advocated not only for a boycott of Israel, but of pro-Israel students as well. This was evident in a recent op-ed in Arizona State University's student-run *The State Press*, as well as 53 student groups in New York University that refused to co-sponsor events with pro-Israel campus groups.

It's now likely that anti-Zionist students will intensify intimidation toward their peers by not simply threatening to boycott pro-Israel students, but the “undecided” ones, too. They will offer an ultimatum: join us or face certain social ostracization.

Perhaps most alarming, the antisemites on both fringes of the political spectrum are uniting against their common enemy, as noted in the groundbreaking new study on “The New Anti-Semites,” published by stopantisemitism.org and the Zachor Legal Institute. One would think that given how the extreme left justifiably hates white supremacy and how the extreme right unjustifiably hates everything that isn't white, they would target one another. Yet they both operate on campuses in a bizarre harmony without obstructing each other, instead channeling their obsessive hatred toward Jewish and Zionist students. It's entirely possible that the unofficial truce between the sides could give way to open friendship.

And lest you think this friendship is one-sided, it's worth remembering that a former executive director of the pro-BDS Jewish Voice for Peace was twice interviewed on a podcast run by the American Free Press, an antisemitic media outlet founded by Holocaust-denying Willis Carto, labeled by the Anti-Defamation League as “one of the most influential American antisemitic propagandists.”

There are two counterarguments to the above assertion: that white supremacy is too maligned in mainstream American life for the far-left to align with, and that they are too ideologically opposed to join forces.

Well, yes and no.

Far-left antisemitic groups like SJP have engaged in open support for violence and terror against the Jewish state, and yet have not been marginalized by the entirety of the left. Thus, it's unlikely that an alliance with the extreme right would cause people to change their tune if it hasn't happened by now, as the anti-Zionist sympathizers would likely just ignore it.

Likewise, ideological opponents have long embraced one another for what they believed to be the greater good. As the Horseshoe Theory states, extremes are closer to each other than to the center. The Nazis and Soviet Union were diametrically opposed to one another, but identical in their execution of brutal fascism (they even signed a non-aggression pact in 1939). More recently, on American college campuses, a bipartisan coalition of 100 or so student groups has united to fight climate change. The point is that even groups that ostensibly disagree with each other can still find common ground when faced with an adversary they both hate more than they hate the other.

A possible way to prevent a formal alliance between both groups of antisemites is to show them that they are two

See “Campus” on page 7

In My Own Words

Peace plans

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

During my annual book review for the Sisterhood of Temple Concord, I reviewed a work written in the 1990s, “From a Sealed Room” by Rachel Kadish. The novel, most of which took place in Israel, ended on an optimistic note since a peace treaty was signed shortly after the events took place. Looking back more than 20 years later, I realized how that optimism was not exactly unfounded, but rather never fully realized.

As I write this, a peace plan by President Donald Trump is being revealed. I don't plan to talk about the specifics because I haven't looked at them closely. I do know that some are praising the plan, while others condemn it. That's actually to be expected. Everything our current president

does raises emotions – good and bad. I would actually love the plan to succeed because what matters is *not* whether you are a fan of the president, but that the endless waste of life on both sides ends.

I won't feel optimistic about this or any other plan, though, unless they take into account a fundamental problem: two groups of people claim the same land. Please understand that I am a Zionist and a supporter of the state of Israel, even when I disagree with the politics of any particular administration. But it came to me as I was reading commentary on the Bible portion Shelach Lecha (Numbers 13) that the Israelites who left Egypt faced a similar problem when they approached the Promised Land.

The Israelite spies thought they would never be able to conquer Canaan. Why? Because they were afraid of the inhabitants of the land.

What struck me about this is that those spies recognized something that the original Zionists did not: That the land was inhabited. Not only were people already living there, but that they had been living there for generations, and loved and felt as connected to the land as we Jews have. I am not denying the Jewish attachment to the land: the cry “next year in Jerusalem” at the end of the Passover seder raises great emotion in many of our hearts. That land is our holy land and I feel a religious connection to it. And throughout the centuries, there have always been Jews living in what is now called Israel; the various expulsions did not force every Jew from their home.

However, I also recognize that many non-Jews – Muslims, Christians, Druze, etc. – who called Palestine their home found it hard, if not impossible, to accept that their land was now going to be part of a Jewish state. I don't want to argue about what these people should be called. After all, before 1948, *no one* was called Israeli, so I'm fine with a people's self-definition as Palestinian. Something new began in 1948, something I consider a miracle – a safe place for Jews if they are persecuted or expelled from their homes, something that has happened far too many times over the centuries.

But I also understand that others didn't rejoice when Israel became a state. Until we find a way to change the way they feel about Israel, I fear there won't be peace. Jews over the centuries seemed to accept exile, but, as the state of Israel shows, the desire for a homeland remained. The desire we feel is not unique to Jews. So, no matter what proposal is made, I fear that it will not result in peace. I so, so hope that I am wrong. I hope and pray for the day that there will be peace across the globe – across Israel and for all the inhabitants of every land. May we see it in our lifetime.

David and Davi-Linda Friedman

Letters

Temple Concord grant

To the Editor:

Thank you for the article on the new grant Temple Concord recently received from the Sacred Sites Department of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. As you can imagine from the story below, the Friedmans were filled with *nachus* when we received our *Reporter*.

The director for the Sacred Sites Department of the Landmarks Conservancy is Ann Isabel Friedman (Maerowitz), who grew up in Binghamton and attended Sunday School at Temple Concord.

Ann's parents are Davi-Linda and David Friedman, who also grew up in Binghamton and later returned when David accepted a job at Link Singer. Both of us attended Hebrew school at the Center's original location. Davi-Linda went to Sunday School at Temple Concord and David went to Sunday School at Temple Israel. David graduated Johnson City High School as

salutarian and Davi-Linda graduated Binghamton High also as salutarian.

Both of our parents were deeply connected with Jewish life in Binghamton. Davi-Linda's father Leo Katzin was a partner in Chernin and Gold (later absorbed into Levine Gouldin and Thomson). Davi-Linda's father Leo served as a president of Temple Concord. David's father, Dr. Joseph Friedman – a world famous organic chemist working for Ansco – served as president of the ZOA. David's mother Bertha Friedman (later Bertha Friedman Katzin) taught ceramics at the Center.

Davi-Linda and I look forward to receiving our *Reporter* every week, allowing us to keep up with our many friends in Binghamton. And of course to decide on what books to put on our “must read” list by after reading your amazing book reviews.



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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.

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“Simply Streisand” at Tri-Cities Opera on Feb. 29

The Tri-Cities Opera will present “Simply Streisand” on Saturday, February 29, at 7:30 pm, at the Forum Theater. The show stars Carla DelVillaggio, who is an alumna of Binghamton University’s master of music in opera program and the TCO Resident Artist Training Program. She is

known internationally as an award-winning Streisand tribute artist and has sung to critical acclaim, being praised as “the next best thing to seeing Streisand herself!” by the *New York Post*.

The single performance of “Simply Streisand” will include duets with TCO’s

current resident artists, a silent auction starting at 6:30 pm and an intermission with refreshments. Orchestra tickets are priced at \$19, \$39 and \$59, and may be reserved online or by calling the box office at 772-0400.

The Tri-Cities Opera was founded in

1949 by the late Peyton Hibbitt and Carmen Savoca. It has been honored by the National Board of Directors of Opera America, has received the President’s Medal from Binghamton University and has been awarded the New York State Council on the Arts Governor’s Award.

Israel to lead diplomatic campaign at U.N. following reveal of Mideast plan

By JNS staff

(JNS) –The office of the Israeli Mission to the United Nations said on January 28 that it will lead “a concerted diplomatic campaign with the U.S.” at the world body following the announcement of the Trump administration’s Middle East peace plan.

“Ahead of an expected Security Council debate, the Palestinians are working to generate support from council member states and to promote a protest vote in the General Assembly. The Israeli Mission to the U.N. is working to thwart these efforts and will lead a concerted diplomatic cam-

paign with the U.S. in advance of the Trump administration’s announcement,” it said in a released statement.

Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon said “the Palestinians have to decide whether to continue down the path of rejection and continue to raise protests in the U.N., or to come to the negotiating table.”

Trump unveiled his long-awaited “deal of the century” with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by his side at the White House on January 28, calling for a two-state solution to resolve the Israeli-Pal-



Israeli Ambassador Danny Danon (Photo by Wikimedia Commons)

estinian conflict. He later tweeted a map of the proposed state of Palestine, which would have a capital in parts of eastern Jerusalem.

While Netanyahu praised the “great” peace plan and said Trump has “charted a brilliant future for Israelis and Palestinians toward a lasting peace,” Palestinians pre-emptively rejected it and have refused even to speak with Trump, claiming that he is biased in favor of Israel. Hamas called the plan a “theatrical presentation to sell illusions”

in a comment to Fox News.

Palestinian Authority officials on January 26 threatened to withdraw from key provisions of the Oslo Accords in protest against the U.S. administration’s Mideast peace plan prior to its unveiling. Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat told AFP that the U.S. initiative would turn Israel’s “temporary occupation into a permanent occupation,” and that the P.A. reserved the right “to withdraw from the Interim Agreement.”

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Sherrie Saluc on the death of her brother,
Robert Saluc

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JFS Accepting Purim Donations

Jewish Family Service will once again be collecting funds to fulfill the Purim mitzvah of *matanot l'evyonim* (gifts for the poor). These donations will be distributed to more than 16 local Jewish families who are experiencing extreme financial difficulties. In order to assure a timely distribution of these gifts, please be sure your contribution reaches our offices by February 21, 2020.

Thank you for your support of your neighbors in need.

Please mail or bring your donation to Jewish Family Service, 500 Clubhouse Road, Vestal, NY 13850. Contact Rose Shea, JFS Director, at 724-2332, ext. 339, with any questions.

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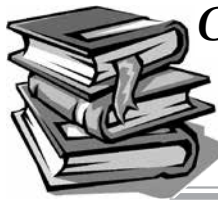
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Off the Shelf

Bookstores, historians and Nazis

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

The range of books about World War II and the Holocaust allows readers with very different interests to learn something new about what occurred before, during and after the war. Take two recent books: "A Bookshop in Berlin" by Françoise Frenkel (Atria Books) and "Citizen 865: The Hunt for Hitler's Hidden Soldiers in America" by Debbie Cenziper (Hachette Books). The former offers a personal narration of a woman's escape from France, while the latter portrays how members of the U.S. Department of Justice sought to expel those who had taken part in the Nazi killing machine.

"A Bookshop in Berlin" was originally published in Switzerland in September 1945 under the title "No Place to Lay One's Head," which serves as a far better description of the memoir than does its current title. While the Polish author did run a French bookstore in the German capital, that only plays a minor role in her tale. Frenkel, who grew up in Poland, went to school in France and wanted to own a French bookstore. A store in her native Poland seemed unlikely to succeed, so she opened one in Berlin. The store was a success until the Nazis came into power. Frenkel moved to France, but faced similar problems once the Germans conquered that country. Her memoir offers heart-warming stories of those who helped her survive. She also mentions the horrors that occurred to others who were not so lucky.

I've specifically not called Frenkel Jewish because, even though she speaks of what is happening to Jews, at first, she only talks about the difficulty of her origin or race. This struck me as curious and I carefully watched to see when or if she would ever say that she was Jewish. Frenkel talks around and around the issue. When the Vichy government took a census of its citizens, asking that Jews declare themselves as such, Frenkel notes she made a "truthful declaration," but still does not say she is a Jew. It is only when she is trying to renew her visa that a reader definitively learns her status. The words, though, come from the official who declares "I hope you are not Jewish" and, after looking at her status papers, notes that he can't give her an exit visa because foreign Jews are not being allowed to leave the country. She never explicitly calls herself Jewish: she declares she is of the "Jewish race."

OlimContinued from page 1

Of the 184 former Ukrainians that landed on January 27, 31 are children under 18, with the youngest being a year-old baby. The oldest is an 83-year-old Holocaust survivor. Haifa is absorbing 20 new immigrants, followed by Netanya with 16, Nahariya with 14, Bat Yam and Acre each receiving 12, with Rishon Letzion and Kiryat Yam resettling 11 olim.

The Fellowship has been a "major contributor" to the Jewish Agency for Israel and helped establish the Nefesh B'Nefesh organization. In 2014, the Fellowship began operating independently in the field of immigration. Since then, it has brought more 20,500 olim to Israel from 30 countries around the world.

Frenkel had friends in Switzerland who were able to get her a visa so that she could live legally in that country. She attempts to escape France and is arrested, but is lucky enough not to be shipped to a camp before trying—and this time succeeding—to cross the border, which is where her book ends. None of this is actually a surprise to the reader because the preface speaks about her attempts to escape and the fact that she made it to safety in Switzerland. Little is known of what occurred to her during her later years, although there are records of her receiving compensation for some of her losses.

"A Bookshop in Berlin" lacks suspense due to the fact that readers know the author is going to survive, but Frenkel's prose is beautiful and captures both the places and people around her, and her feelings. In the work's preface, Patrick Modiano writes about some of the choices Frenkel made in her work, noting the records show she was married, but the memoir includes no mention of her husband. The work concludes by offering photographs and documents that support her story. In her original forward, Frenkel noted the importance of bearing witness to what occurred during the war. "A Bookshop in Berlin" succeeds in that task.

While "A Bookshop in Berlin" focuses on one person's experience, the author of "Citizen 865" has a far wider scope. The work includes two separate stories: parts one and three take place during the war and offer the experiences of two survivors—Feliks Wojick and Lucyna Stryjewska—and focus on the loss of their families and the horrors they faced. The other two sections tell of how the lawyers and historians of the U.S. Justice Department managed to discover information about a little known slaughter that took place in a European Jewish village and those—Germans and others—who took part in the massacre. When the Justice Department historians discover documents in Prague that contain a list of names of the murderers, Justice Department lawyers began the process of deporting any of those who had become U.S. citizens. One of them was Jakob Reimer, also known as Citizen 865.

What was particularly interesting is that the Justice Department couldn't try these men for the crimes they committed in Europe. What they could do was show how they had lied when they applied to enter the U.S. or when they applied for citizenship. There was no guarantee these former Nazis would be punished in their prior homeland. In fact, they could not be deported until the Justice Department found a country willing to accept them. There were also members of Congress and refugee groups that opposed the deportations. In one case, it's clear that the judge felt sympathy for the defendant, and questioned a trial taking place so many years after the war. The Justice Department lawyer noted that, although it had been a long time, "there are still people who remember." He, and other members of his department, felt there should be no statute of limitations for the crimes committed by the Nazis and their accomplices.

Cenziper does an excellent job showing the different personalities of the lawyers and historians who worked for the Justice Department. What's clear is how dedicated

they were and how deeply they felt about bringing justice to those who were killed in the Holocaust. One thing that didn't quite work for me was the lack of a direct tie between the survivors of whom Cenziper writes and the Justice Department cases. Although their experiences did illuminate what occurred during the war, I kept expecting them to be called to testify at one of the trials. In addition to the work's contribution to Holocaust research, "Citizen 865" also offers a portrait of American justice of which we should be proud.



Mailbox Shorts

Great Jewish Books Summer Program for teens

The Yiddish Book Center's Great Jewish Books Summer Program. This year's program, taking place July 26-31 in Amherst, MA, will give rising high school juniors and seniors an opportunity to discover the treasures of modern Jewish literature, explore their identity and connect to Jewish culture through a wide-ranging literary canon.

The Great Jewish Books Program offers social, cultural and recreational opportunities—and no grades. Students will spend mornings discussing diverse texts with college professors, afternoons engaging in social activities and evenings listening to guest authors.

For information about applying for the program, visit <https://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/educational-programs/great-jewish-books-summer-program/apply-great-jewish-books>. Applications are due March 9.

Exhibit on freeing Soviet Jews

The National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia is hosting the exhibit "Power of Protest: The Movement to Free Soviet Jews" through March 15. The exhibit explores what has been called "one of the most successful human rights campaigns to date." The panel exhibition showcases Americans' efforts in the late 1960s through 1990 to free *refuseniks*—Jews who lived in the Soviet Union and were denied the rights to live freely, practice Judaism, or leave the country due to their religion. For more information, visit NMAJH.org or call 215-923-3811.

Judaism and the environment

Living Under Water: A Jewish Exploration of Climate Change, www.livingunderwater.org, offers a free 60-page e-zine (www.livingunderwater.org/zine-download) that features 10 essays by Jewish scientists, rabbis, activities, teachers and philosophers on the topic. It also includes drawings, photographs, mixed media art and journals done by a variety of artists.

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of formation of ASP SMOKE SHOP LLC. Articles of Organization were filed with the Secretary of State of NY (SSNY) on 02/12/2019. Office location: Broome County. SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process served to: The LLC at 2444 RHONDA DR., VESTAL NY 13850. Purpose: any lawful act.

Notice of Formation of Peranich Real Estate, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 12/12/19. Office location: Broome County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: 39 Ambsry St., Binghamton, NY 13901. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Madison Management, LLC, Arts of Org. filed with Sec. of State of NY (SSNY) 10/23/2019. Cty: Broome. SSNY desig. as agent upon whom process against may be served & shall mail process to P.O. Box 58, Endicott, NY 13761. General Purpose.

Notice of Formation of Professional Limited Liability Company (PLLC) Name: Michele L. Summers, Nurse Practitioner in Family Health, PLLC. Articles of Organization filed with Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on October 16, 2019. Office Location: Broome County. SSNY designated as agent of PLLC upon whom process against it may be

served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to: 5 Emerson Road, Castle Creek, N Y 13744. Purpose: to engage in any and all business for which PLLCs may be formed under the New York LLC law.

Ro's Famous Empanadas, LLC, Art. of Org. filed with SSNY on 10/18/19. Off. loc.: Broome Co. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process may be served & shall mail: 98 Pennsylvania Ave., Binghamton, NY 13903. Purp.: any lawful purp.

Xpress Convenience, LLC, Art. of Org. filed with SSNY on 11/20/19. Off. loc.: Broome Co. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process may be served & shall mail: 41 W. State St., Binghamton, NY 13901. Purp.: any lawful purp.

Halladay Landscaping LLC, Art. of Org. filed with SSNY on 7/11/19. Off. loc.: Broome Co. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process may be served & shall mail: 1218 Ballyhack Rd., Chenango Forks, NY 13746. Purp.: any lawful purp.

HIP NY Developments LLC, Auth. filed SSNY 12/17/19. Off. loc: Broome Co. LLC org. in DE 12/20/18. SSNY desig. as agent upon whom proc. may be served & shall mail: 595 Pacific Ave., 4th Fl., San Francisco, CA 94133. DE off. addr.: 1209 Orange St., Wilmington, DE 19801. Cert.

of Form. on file: SSDE, Townsend Bldg., Dover, DE 19901. Purp: any lawful purp.

Notice of Formation of Kelly Pi, LLC

Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 12/30/19. Office location: Broome Co. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: The LLC, 126 Robinson Street, Binghamton, NY 13904. Purpose: any lawful activities.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY:

The name of the limited liability company is: Northside Property Developers, LLC (the "Company"). The date of filing of the Articles of Organization of the Company with the Secretary of State was September 23, 2019. The county in which the principal place of business of the Company shall be located is Broome County. The Secretary of State has been designated as agent of the Company upon whom process against it may be served. The Secretary of State shall mail a copy of any process against the Company, to Michael Romeo, 521 Oak Hill Avenue, Endicott, NY 13760. The purpose of the business of the Company is any lawful business purpose.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY UNDER NEW YORK LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY LAW

1. The name of the limited liability company ("LLC") is Reach PPL, LLC.
2. The date of filing of the Articles of Organization with the Secretary of State is January 9, 2020.
3. The County within the State of New York in which the principal office of the LLC is located is Broome.
4. The Secretary of State of the State of New York is hereby designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. The post office address to which the Secretary of State shall mail a copy of any process against the LLC served upon him or her is: 2520 Vestal Parkway East PMB #227, Vestal, NY 13850.
5. The character or purpose of the business of the LLC is any purpose allowed by law.

Notice of Formation of Incubate Media, LLC. Arts. Of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 1/17/2020. Office Location: Broome Co. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom service of process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: Roger L. Brooks, 120 Hawley Street, Suite 118, Binghamton, New York 13901. Purpose: any lawful activities.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY

Articles of Organization of 775 Myrtle, LLC ("LLC") filed with the Secretary of State of New York ("SSNY") on January 15, 2020, effective on the date of filing. Office Location: Broome County. SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY may mail a copy of any process to the LLC at 116 Murray Street, Binghamton, NY 13905, which shall be the principal business location. The purpose for which the LLC is formed is to engage in any lawful act or activity for which limited liability companies may be organized under the NYS Limited Liability Company Law.

Babushka Eats LLC, Art. of Org. filed with SSNY on 11/14/19. Off. loc.: Broome Co. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process may be served & shall mail: 274 Chenango St., Binghamton, NY 13901. Purp.: any lawful.

Cerroni Services LLC. Art. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 10/29/19. Office: Broome County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, PO Box 357, Endicott, NY 13761. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

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2020

*Bar/Bat Mitzvah
Planning Guide*



Mazel Tov from

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Bar & Bat Mitzvah Planning Guide

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About the cover

This year's Bar/Bat Mitzvah Planning Guide cover was created by Diana Sochor, layout editor for *The Reporter*.

For transgender teens, Jewish rite of passage is a multi-layered transition

By Maayan Jaffe-Hoffman
JNS.org

A young woman is in the process of transitioning to be a young boy. While the rabbi and close family members are aware of the transition, the congregation is not. Such was the scenario faced nine years ago by Rabbi Eric Gurvis, senior rabbi of Temple Shalom in Newton, MA. It was among the handful of bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies he has performed for transgender boys and girls.



At left: Rabbi Eric Gurvis of Temple Shalom in Newton, MA, has performed a handful of bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies for transgender teenagers. (Photo courtesy of Temple Shalom)

"There were a lot of details involved, even in the language around the celebration.... [For] people who did not know [about the gender transition], we had no interest in making a spectacle of any kind that day, rather than just celebrating with the child," recalls Gurvis.

Instead of naming the ceremony a bar or bat mitzvah, Gurvis called it a "mitzvah journey to becoming a responsible adult Jew." The synagogue removed the bar/bat mitzvah label from the certificate that it gave the teenager.

The term "transgender" defines anyone who knows him or herself to be a gender that is different than the gender he/she was assigned at birth. This could be a girl who now sees herself as a boy or, in some cases, a person who identifies as neither male nor female. Some transgender individuals modify their bodies through medical means and some do not.

"For me, it is remembering that every individual is created *b'tzelem Elohim* (in the image of God)," says Gurvis, who has worked as a Reform rabbi for more than 30 years. Over that time, he says, the Jewish community has "become more comfortable" with what is transpiring in terms of not only

transgender issues, but also lesbian, gay, and bisexual issues. His synagogue has for more than a decade had multiple versions of the *Misheberach* blessing that parents say at their child's bar/bat mitzvah, including the traditional blessing, one that accommodates two parents of the same gender and one that doesn't mention gender at all.

Eight or 10 years ago, Gurvis says, the Jewish community was unavailable to families in need of LGBTQ support for one reason: lack of understanding. "Today, there is more understanding and sensitivity," Gurvis says. "There is a higher degree of comfort in some places with children coming out to their parents and friends, and the parents [are] seeking out clergy and educators to talk about it. We are there to help support in any way we can."

That doesn't make things easy – just easier. In an article that ran on MyJewishLearning.com, Britt Rubenstein, mother of Lily (once a boy), talks about her daughter's transition, which occurred around the time of his/her bar/bat mitzvah. "During the first year, we cancelled the bar mitzvah that was fast approaching," writes Rubenstein. "This was a huge loss for us because we did not think we could get her to do a bat mitzvah. She spent a great deal of time being angry with God. As happiness set in, confidence continued to grow and support continued to flow from our Jewish community, Lily announced that it was time to start scheduling her bat mitzvah.... Two years after my child told us she was transgender, she would chart new territory for our congregation. Lily led Shabbat services, read from our Holocaust Torah and took her place as an adult woman in our Jewish community."

Lily's story is becoming more common. Casey Cohen, communications director for Camp Tawonga in Groveland, CA, says, "We want all kids to connect to Judaism and spirituality in a way that is personal and meaningful for them." To that end, Tawonga launched the "Beyond the Bimah" program in the fall of 2016. The program is designed to offer an individualized approach to *b'nai mitzvah*.

"In talking to trans families, they want their child to have an individualized journey as a human being. It is coming at it from a Jewish lens, without a focus on being a man or a woman, but a person," says Jamie Simon-Harris, Camp Tawonga's associated executive director.

Simon-Harris tells the story of one child she met who was grappling with gender issues. He requested that his bar mitzvah focus on character and less on "boy-girl stuff." The child explained how he was born male and uses a male pronoun to refer to himself, but doesn't feel like a boy. Simon-Harris says she believes he could have very powerful experience if the people who work with him are able to tailor his Jewish See "Rite" on page 4A

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Bar & Bat Mitzvah Planning Guide

2019 B'nai Mitzvah



Victoria Heilveil
March 30, 2019
Amy and Jeffrey Heilveil
Temple Concord



Laura Klotzkin
May 27, 2019
David and Shari Klotzkin
Temple Concord



Charles Edwards
May 25, 2019
Sara Edwards
Temple Concord



Ari Green
June 29, 2019
Wendy and Brett Green
Temple Israel



Ellie Friedman
May 25, 2019
Randy Friedman and Brenda Schlaen
Temple Israel



Georgia Blackwell
October 12, 2019
Lisa and Jason Blackwell
Temple Concord



Aiden Silva Levine
Paul Levine and Licia Pacheco
October 26, 2019
Temple Concord

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2019
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Planning Timetable

At birth:

When the child is born start saving! Only joking. But if you can, it's not a bad idea to start a "bar/bat mitzvah club" savings account. If you don't use it, put it toward college.

1-3 years ahead:

- Set bar/bat mitzvah date
- Set a budget
- Reserve synagogue hall for *kiddush*
- Reserve hall for additional receptions
- Arrange for caterer/party planner and band/music for occasion (if desired)
- Buy a loose-leaf binder with dividers, or start a filing system for keeping business cards, estimates, notes, lists, etc.

10-12 months ahead:

- Begin bar/bat mitzvah lessons
- Begin attending weekly Shabbat services
- Arrange for photographer and/or video
- Book hotels and investigate transportation for out-of-town guests



6 months ahead:

- Plan color scheme and/or theme
- Arrange for florist and/or decorations' coordinator
- Make guest list

4-5 months ahead:

- Order invitations, thank you notes, imprinted napkins and personalized party favors
- Shop for clothing and shoes
- Purchase *tallit*, *tefillin*, etc.
- Choose a calligrapher, if desired

3 months ahead:

- Plan Sunday brunch (if applicable)
- Order printed yarmulkas, if desired

2 months ahead:

- Meet with photographer
- Meet with florist and/or decorations' coordinator
- Mail out-of-town invitations

6 weeks ahead:

- Order tuxedos (if applicable)
- Take care of clothing alterations
- Order wine for *kiddush*
- Mail in-town invitations

4 weeks ahead:

- Prepare bar/bat mitzvah speech
- Finalize hotel reservations and transportation
- Meet with caterer(s)
- Make up welcome gifts for out-of-town guests (if desired)
- Arrange *aliyot*
- Send honorary gift to synagogue
- Meet with rabbi
- Make up seating charts for reception

2 weeks ahead:

- Give final count to caterer
- Check with florist and/or decorations' coordinator
- Meet with rabbi
- Order bar/bat mitzvah cake, etc. for Friday night *oneg*

A few days ahead:

- Have bar/bat mitzvah rehearsal and take *bima* photographs
- Xerox copies of speeches, room and table layout, etc. and give them to a friend to hold or drop off at synagogue and reception hall, in case you forget to bring your copies that day.

Special Day:

- Prepare to enjoy your *simcha!*

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Bar & Bat Mitzvah Planning Guide

Mazel tov to these 2020 b'nai mitzvah

All information was provided by representatives of local synagogues.

B'nai mitzvah	Parents	Date	Synagogue
Leeyam Hadar	Mirit Hada and Ilan Hadar	January 25	Congregation Tikun v'Or
Alexandra Elia	Melanie Lefkowitz and Anthony Elia	February 1	Congregation Tikun v'Or
Zev Rosales	Cherese Wiesner-Rosales and Andre Rosales	April 18	Temple Israel
Jonathan Bael	Sandy Thananart and Tim Bael	May 9	Congregation Tikun v'Or
Eve Krasno	Jonathan and Amy Krasno	May 9	Temple Concord
Charlotte Coker	Rachel and Eric Coker	May 23	Temple Concord
Jackson Ratterree	Michelle and Brian McIlroy	May 30	Temple Concord
Anna Grills	Sara and Brian Grills	June 6	Temple Concord
Evan Grills	Sara and Brian Grills	June 6	Temple Concord
Laura Weinstein	Jason and Kim Weinstein	June 27	Temple Israel
Matthew Ostrom	Jed and Sarah Ostrom	July 4	Temple Beth-El of Ithaca
Owen Simons	Michael and Aleza Simons	July 25	Temple Beth-El of Ithaca
Solomon Shapiro	David Shapiro and Pamela Weisberg-Shapiro	August 1	Temple Beth-El of Ithaca
Shayna Foreman	Abbi and Brett Foreman	August 29	Temple Concord
Jacob Friedman	Felix and Viktoriya Friedman	October 24	Temple Israel
Shai Fuller Eli	Gabriel Fuller and Tish Williams	October 24	Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

New York twins donate \$122,000 in bar mitzvah gifts to Israeli groups

By JNS staff

(JNS) - Benjamin and Brian Barth, now 14-year-old twins from New York City, say they are passionate about the state of Israel and the transformative power of sports.

To celebrate their 2019 bar mitzvahs at Park Avenue Synagogue, they worked with UJA-Federation of New York's "Give a Mitzvah-Do a Mitzvah" program to raise a total of more than \$122,000 to donate to two Israeli nonprofits that work to empower people through sports.

When they're not watching their favorite teams, the boys enjoy playing tennis, sailing, biking, golfing and skiing. The twins have also visited Israel several times, which has helped them build a stronger connection to their Jewish heritage and identity.

Through "Give a Mitzvah-Do a Mitzvah," the teens were

able to design projects that reflected their passions and were personally meaningful to them, and requested donations in lieu of gifts to support their projects.

Benjamin, a tennis enthusiast, raised \$61,199 for Israel Tennis Centers' programs, which teach children peaceful coexistence through tennis and programs offering academic support, enrichment and mentoring.

"I just love playing tennis, and to find out that there was a place that plays tennis and supports coexistence excited me a lot," Benjamin said. "I am glad I was able to fund it."

Brian, who loves sailing and cycling, chose to donate to Etgarim, which utilizes the two activities to rehabilitate individuals with cognitive, sensory and physical disabilities. He raised \$61,199 to encourage children in Tel Aviv, Nahalal and Holon to pursue athletic excellence and participate in otherwise inaccessible sports.

"I continue to enjoy the state of Israel, and it was perfect for my bar mitzvah project to be in and associated with it," Brian said. "As cycling and sailing are two of my personal passions and interests, being able to contribute to an institution that gives people with disabilities the opportunity to

have fun with these endeavors is truly an honor for me." For more information on "Give a Mitzvah-Do a Mitzvah," call 212-836-1460 or e-mail benjamine@ujafedny.org.

Bar/bat mitzvah service prep timeline

By Temple Concord's Religious School Committee

Editor's note: Some of these things may only apply at Temple Concord, but many are generally applicable. The Religious School Committee's original guidelines have been edited here.

2 years before:

- Parents set date of bar/bat mitzvah service with rabbi
- Decide priorities: bar/bat vs. sports, music, etc.
- Work on Hebrew prayerbook

1 year before:

- Parents and bar/bat mitzvah meet with rabbi
- Obtain Torah and *haftarah* sections
- Start tutorials in/out of Hebrew school/evaluate
- Sign contract for facility use at temple
- Go to/observe other bar/bat mitzvahs
- Seek out parent-parent mentor

9 months before:

- Lock in on *tzedakah* project/gift
- Work on Torah portion in Hebrew
- Decide on chanting as option
- Work on *haftarah* blessings
- Attend Friday night (Saturday morning) services
- Tallit* and *kippah*: Place orders

6-5 months before:

- Know minimum verses from Torah
- Start reading Torah without vowels
- Review Hebrew prayerbook selections with rabbi
- Begin *haftarah* in Hebrew

4 months before:

- Begin practicing Hebrew parts in sanctuary
- Arrange for music at services

3 months before:

- Read English translation of Torah and *haftarah* (3 times)
- Attend Friday night (Saturday morning) services

2 months before:

- Discuss speech with rabbi
- Begin practicing English parts in sanctuary (with parents)
- Review Friday night (Saturday morning) parts with rabbi
- Add cues to service book/Hebrew names?

1 month before:

- Write speech with rabbi
- Work on parents' speech

2-3 weeks before:

- Full rehearsals in sanctuary

1 week before:

- "Welcome" pamphlet (office)
- Family rehearsal
- Stay cool!

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Rite. Continued from page 2A

journey into adulthood to meet his needs.

But Simon-Harris is also careful to point out that it is not just transgender youths who require creative and intentional b'nai mitzvah training. All teens are unique, she says, and all are feting their bar and bat mitzvahs at a complicated time in their lives - puberty and sexuality are on the minds of all middle school youths. "Each teen needs support and a lot of thoughtfulness to take this Jewish journey," Simon-Harris says.

Her advice is to let teens decide what they want to share and what they don't - and to educate yourself. She says that any rabbi or teacher who works with teens needs to learn how to handle teens with greater sensitivity.

In an article published by *Ha'aretz*, teen Tom Chai Sosnik (formerly Mia), who had a bar mitzvah and Jewish naming ceremony at his school after coming out as a boy, says, "Being trans doesn't make you unclear; it doesn't make you weird or different. People that are trans are just doing what we all should be doing: they're embracing who they really are."

Louis Bordman - former senior director of the URJ (Union for Reform Judaism) Eisner and Crane Lake Camps, which have welcomed several transgender teens - adds, "I would hope that a transgender child would be bar/bat mitzvah as the gender that they identify."

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SCIENTIFIC BREAKTHROUGHS

New drug, diagnostic techniques slow and even reverse cognitive decline from aging

By JNS staff

(JNS) – A groundbreaking clinical approach has been developed combining new diagnostic techniques to detect a leaking blood-brain barrier with a new anti-inflammatory drug that for the first time slows or reverses age-related cognitive decline. In two related studies published in the journal *Science Translational Medicine*, researchers from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and the University of California, Berkeley, report that when given the new drug to reduce inflammation, senile mice had fewer signs of dysfunctional brain electrical activity and were better able to learn new tasks, becoming almost cognitively adept as mice half their age.

Other findings indicate two practical pathways – measuring the leakiness of the blood-brain barrier via MRI and abnormal electrical brain activity via EEG – that can be used to screen people for a leaky BBB.

“These findings represent real hope that we can stop, and even reverse, the deterioration that until now we considered an inevitable part of aging,” said the senior author of the study, BGU Professor Dr. Alon Friedman, and his research partner, Professor Daniela Kaufer at UC Berkeley Department of Integrative Biology. “It is the first diagnostic, coupled with personalized drug intervention, targeting the BBB.”

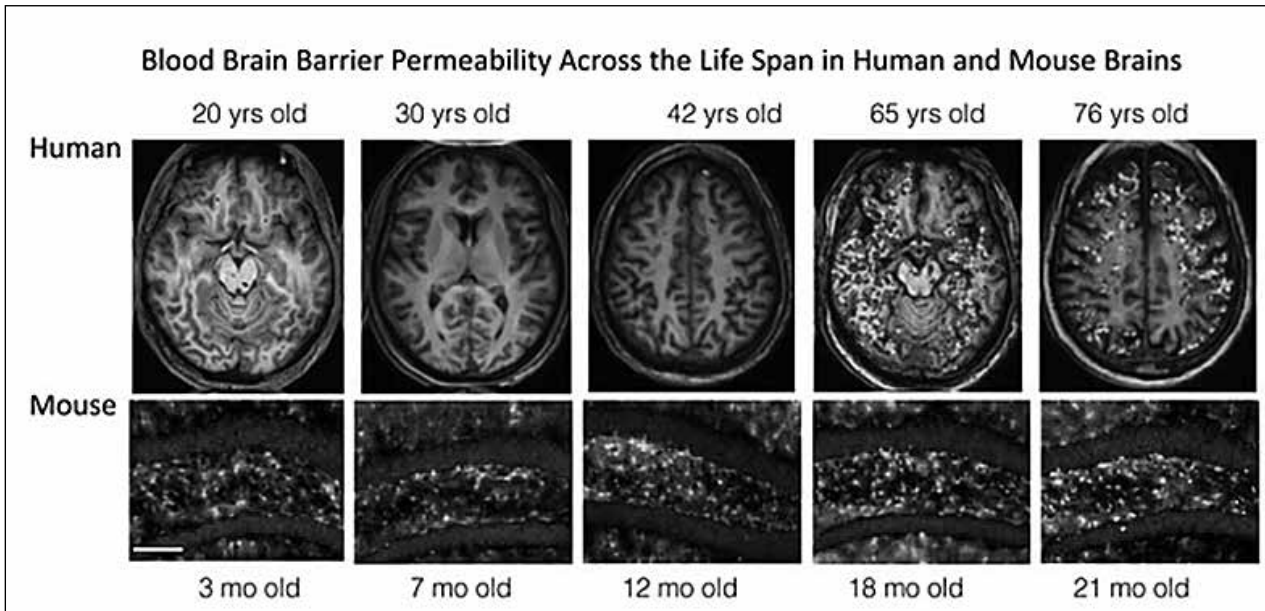
“We tend to think about the aged brain in the same way we think about neurodegeneration: Age involves loss of function and dead cells,” said Kaufer. “But our new data tell a different story about why the aged brain is not functioning well; it is because of this ‘fog’ of inflammatory load. But when you remove that inflammatory fog, within days the aged brain acts like a young brain. It is an extremely optimistic finding in terms of the capacity for plasticity that exists in the brain and indicates that we can reverse brain aging.”

The BBB is a semi-permeable interface that separates circulating blood from the brain. It also prevents the transfer of unwanted molecules or infectious organisms from the blood to the brain. Increasing evidence shows that breaching the integrity of this barrier causes many brain diseases and neurodegeneration as a result of aging.

In analyzing brain tissue from humans, Kaufer found evidence of albumin in aged brains, as well as increased neuroinflammation and production of TGF- β , a protein that controls cell growth. Because albumin is typically synthesized only outside the BBB, increased albumin within the brain indicates BBB damage leading to inflammation.

Kaufer and Friedman also showed that introducing albumin into the brain can, within a week, make the brains of young mice look like those of old mice in terms of neuronal functions and their susceptibility to seizures. These albumin-treated mice also navigated a maze as poorly as aged mice.

The Friedman group in the BGU Brain Imaging Center developed an MRI imaging protocol – dynamic contrast-enhanced (or DCE) imaging – and mathematical algorithms that quantify leakage in the BBB. “When we infuse albumin into the brains of young mice, we recapitulate aging of the brain: the gene expression, the inflammatory response, resilience to induced seizures, mortality after seizures, and performance in a maze. And when we record their brain activity, we find these paroxysmal slow wave events,” said Kaufer. “And all is specific to the site we infuse, so doing this is sufficient to get an aged phenotype of this very young brain. Our new data tell a different story about



In mice and humans, the blood brain barrier becomes leaky with age. Researchers at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and the University of California, Berkeley, have found new diagnostic ways to measure leaking and are developing a drug that can reverse the effects, and enhance cognitive ability with age. (Photo courtesy of JNS)

why the aged brain is not functioning well; it is because of this ‘fog’ of inflammatory load. But when you remove that inflammatory fog, within days the aged brain acts like a young brain.”

Administering a new anti-inflammatory drug that specifically targets TGF- signaling decreased the PSWE occurrences in BBB leakiness. The drug, a small molecule called IPW, not only helps to alleviate the effects of a leaky BBB, but seems to also heal the barrier. “These PSWEs may explain some of the symptoms we see in Alzheimer’s disease patients; therefore, lowering the PSWE burden may help those patients,” said Dr. Dan Milikovsky who led the project in Friedman’s laboratory.

“Together, the evidence points to a dysfunction in the brain’s vasculature as one of the earliest triggers of neurological aging,” said Friedman. “This combination of two biomarkers and a drug gives us the innovative ability to diagnose and treat patients with blood-brain barrier leakiness, and cease treatment once the BBB closes and danger decreases.”

Kaufer added, “We got here through this back door, starting with questions about plasticity having to do with the blood-brain barrier, traumatic brain injury and how epilepsy develops. But after we’d learned a lot about the mechanisms, we started thinking that maybe in aging it is the same story. This is new biology, a completely new angle on why neurological function deteriorates as the brain ages.”

The researchers have started a company to develop IPW and other therapeutics with the goal of reducing brain inflammation, and thus permanent damage after stroke, concussion or traumatic brain injury. The drug may eventually help older adults suffering from early dementia or Alzheimer’s disease with demonstrated BBB leakage.

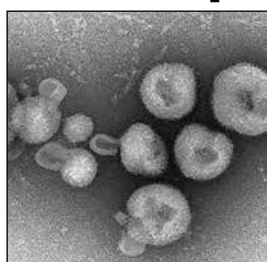
This work was supported by the National Institutes of Health (R01NS066005, R56NS066005), Bakar and Archer Foundations, European Union’s Seventh Framework Program, Israel Science Foundation, and the Binational Israel-USA Science Foundation.

Israeli researchers create decoy to prevent viruses from spreading in humans

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Researchers led by scientists at Israel’s Weizmann Institute of Science have created a decoy for disease-causing viruses that may keep them from spreading in the human body, the Institute announced on January 7.

Two disease-causing arenaviruses called Junin and Machupo, found in rodent populations mainly in South America, can



A view of an arenaviruses called Junin. (Photo by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

infect humans that come in contact with affected rodents. These diseases can cause the body to “bleed out,” similar to Ebola, and the only treatments available are risky and complex since they are taken from the blood of survivors.

Dr. Ron Diskin of Weizmann’s Department of Structural Biology and his team discovered that based on a rodent receptor, the creation of decoys, also called “sticky” molecules, could effectively attract to virus proteins and prevent them from spreading in the body.

Dr. Hadas Cohen-Dvashi, a member of the Diskin lab, “surgically removed” the tip of the rodent receptor to which

See “Decoy” on page 7

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www.binghamtonjcc.org 607-724-2417
JCCOffice@binghamtonjcc.org

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Beshalach, Exodus 13:17-17:16

The magic of our tradition

MAGGID JIM BRULÉ, SYRACUSE, NY

In the portion Beshalach, we have the triumphant end to our escape from Egypt – the parting of the Red Sea. Who among us can forget the scene as depicted by Cecil B. DeMille? Walls of water to the right and left, our people scrambling to the other side, making it up the opposite bank just in time!

In the last two decades, linguistic analysis has rendered the Hebrew *Yam Sûp* as the Sea of Reeds, rather than the Red Sea. The principal motivation for this change, reflected in the Stone Chumash, “Etz Hayim” and the Reform Chumash, extends beyond the simplistic translation of *sûp* as “reed.” It is, instead, an attempt to make the story more believable. Most of us find it difficult to imagine the Red Sea splitting, then swallowing the Egyptians. It is much easier to imagine the wheels of the oppressors’ chariots becoming stuck in a marsh, or being washed down a wadi in a sudden spring flood.

Years ago, I went to see the movie “Mission Impossible” with some friends. At one point the hero pursues the villains, who are in a high-speed train, by riding on the windshield of a helicopter. The train races into a tunnel and the helicopter diligently follows, its blades narrowly clearing the stone walls. A villain shoots at our hero, missing him, but hitting the helicopter, which explodes, propelling our hero safely onto the back of the train.

At that moment, one of my friends exclaimed, “Now that’s unbelievable!” Flabbergasted, I could only reply, “What part of that did you find *believable*?”

I maintain that we do our tradition a great disservice when we attempt to reduce its magic to explainable events. We see this happen most often in regard to the plagues: the water in the Nile didn’t turn to blood, it was an algae infestation; the day didn’t turn to night, it was a sandstorm; and so on.

There are, indeed, great parallels between the world of science and the world of Torah. The Big Bang is nicely mirrored in *y’hi or* (let there be light); the evolutionary appearance of life bears a strong resemblance to the order of the first six days; Jacob’s success with the flocks predates Mendel by centuries. Yet – is that all there is? Good stories in search of a “real” explanation?

Contrary to what the rationalists proclaim, we do not have to choose between physics and spirit. We do not need to rob our lives of either magic or reason, for both worlds are filled with truths and beauties that would be hollow without the other. As Albert Einstein so eloquently said, “Science without religion is lame; religion without science is blind.”

May we each be blessed with the vision to see the magic and wonder that Torah shines into all our worlds, both spiritual and material.

Congregational Notes

Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union
 Rabbi: Zev Silber
 Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
 Phone: 722-1793
 Rabbi’s Office: 722-7514
 Fax: 722-7121
 Office hours: Mon. closed; Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Wed. closed; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm; Fri. 10 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
 Shabbat Services:
 Shabbat, Feb. 8 9 am
 Mincha after kiddush
 Weekday Services:
 Mornings:
 Sun., Feb. 9 8:30 am
 Mon.-Fri., Feb. 10-14 7 am
 Evenings:
 Sun., Feb. 9 5:15 pm
 Mon.-Thurs., Feb. 10-13 7 pm
 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: 797-0015, Fax: 797-0095
 Website: www.Chabadofbinghamton.com
 Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education
 E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com
 Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development
 Chabad Downtown Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton
 E-mail: lslonim@Jewishbu.com, hslonim@Jewishbu.com
 Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming
 E-mail: yohana@Jewishbu.com, gohana@Jewishbu.com
 Regular service times: Daily 7:30 am, Friday evening 6 pm, Shabbat morning 9:30 am, Maariv and Havdalah one hour after candle-lighting time, Sundays 9:30 am.
 To join the mailing list, for up-to-date information on adult education offerings or to arrange for a private tutorial, for details concerning the Judaica shop and resource center, or for assistance through the Piaker Free Loan Society or Raff Maasim Tovim Foundation, call Chabad’s office at 797-0015.

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.

Kol Haverim

Affiliation: Society for Humanistic Judaism
 Address: P.O. Box 4972, Ithaca, NY 14852-4972
 Phone: 607-277-3345
 E-mail: info@kolhaverim.net
 Website: www.kolhaverim.net
 Chairwoman: Abby Cohn
 Kol Haverim: The Finger Lakes Community for Humanistic Judaism, is an Ithaca-based organization that brings people together to explore and celebrate Jewish identity, history, culture and ethics within a secular, humanistic framework. KH is part of an international movement for Secular Humanistic Judaism and is affiliated with the Society for Humanistic Judaism, a national association with over 30 member communities and congregations around the country. Established in the spring of 1999, it offers celebrations of Jewish holidays, monthly Shabbat pot-lucks, adult education, a twice-monthly Cultural School for children, and a bar and bat mitzvah program.
 KH welcomes all individuals and families, including those from mixed religious backgrounds, who wish to strengthen the Jewish experience in their lives and provide their children with a Jewish identity and experience.

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
 Rabbi: Barbara Goldman-Wartell
 Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
 Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm
 Phone: 723-7355
 Fax: 723-0785
 Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com
 Website: www.templeconcord.com
 Regular service times: Friday, 8 pm; Saturday, 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.
 Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the school year unless otherwise noted.

On Friday, February 7, Shabbat evening services will be held at 8 pm.

On Saturday, February 8, religious school will meet at 9 am; Tot Shabbat will meet from 9-10:30 am; Torah study will be held at 9:15 am; and Shabbat morning services will be held at 10:35 am.

On Sunday, February 9, a Cook for a Cause event with Michelle McIlroy will be held at 3 pm at The Phantom Chef Catering.

On Friday, February 14, Shabbat evening services will be held at 8 pm.

Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
 Rabbi-Cantor: George Hirschfeld
 Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820
 Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820
 Phone: 607-432-5522
 Website: www.templebetheloneonta.org
 E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com
 Regular service times: visit the temple website 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, see the website.

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
 Rabbi: Miriam T. Spitzer
 Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass
 Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292
 Phone: 273-5775
 E-mail: rabbi@tbeithaca.org and secretary@tbeithaca.org
 Website: www.tbeithaca.org
 President: Randy Ehrenberg
 Sisterhood President: Julie Paige
 Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody
 Administrative Assistant: Jane Griffith
 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 Midrashah (eighth grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers.
 Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.

An adult ed. class, “The Song of Songs: Ancient Israelite Love Poetry and An Allegory of the Love between God and Israel,” will conclude on Thursday, February 13, at 7 pm. Those planning to attend should register by e-mailing rb23@cornell.edu or calling the temple office.

On Saturday, February 8, at 7:30 pm, there will be “An Evening of Jewish Stories, Poetry and Music” in the social hall. Refreshments will be served; there is a requested donation of \$4 per person or \$8 per family. (See article on page 1.)

Friday, February 7, light candles before 5:07 pm
 Saturday, February 8, Shabbat ends 6:09 pm
 Friday, February 14, light candles before 5:16 pm
 Saturday, February 15, Shabbat ends 6:18 pm

Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative
 Rabbi: Geoffrey Brown
 Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850
 Phone: 723-7461 and 231-3746
 Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-4 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm
 E-mail: titammy@stny.twcbc.com
 Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org
 Service Schedule: Tuesday, 5:30 pm; Friday, 5:30 pm; Saturday, 9:30 am

On Saturday, February 8, Shabbat services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown. The Torah portion will be Exodus 13:17-17:16. The haftarah will be Judges 4:4-5:31. The kiddush will be sponsored by Rabbi Eliav Bock and Lynne Green.

The kiddush following services on Saturday, February 15, will be in honor of Steven Gilbert’s birthday.

There will be no Hebrew school on Sunday, February 16.

The temple office will be closed on Monday, February 17, for Presidents Day.

A Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 18, at 7 pm.

A Temple Israel/Temple Concord Adult Education program will be held at Temple Israel on Sunday, February 23, from 10 am-noon. Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu will perform Sephardic music.

Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive
 Rabbi: David Regenspan
 Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815
 Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 336-1523
 Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.
 Adult Ed.: Saturday morning study is held at 10 am. Call for more information and to confirm.

Congregation Tikkun v’Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
 Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY
 Phone: 607-256-1471
 Website: www.tikkunvor.org
 E-mail: info@tikkunvor.org
 Presidents: Lauren Korfine and Shira Reisman
 Rabbi: Brian Walt
 Religious School Director/Admin. Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky
 Services: Fridays at 7:30 pm unless otherwise noted. Intergenerational Shabbat, music services, and other special services. Call for the weekly schedule.
 Religious School: Preschool through seventh-grade classes meet on Sunday mornings.
 Sixth-grade Hebrew and seventh-grade b’nai mitzvah classes meet on Wednesday afternoons.
 Adult Ed: Mini courses throughout the year. Adult Hebrew offered regularly. Call the office for details.

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
 Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
 Phone: 607-756-7181
 President: Bruce Fein, 607-423-3346
 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 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.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

UCLA to host its first-ever American Jewish Music Festival

UCLA will host its first American Jewish Music Festival on March 1 under the banner “Music Crossing Boundaries.” The all-day event is funded by the Lowell Milken Fund for American Jewish Music at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music, with some additional support. It is co-sponsored by the UCLA Alan D. Leve Center for Jewish Studies. “From classical to klezmer, tango to Middle Eastern, bluegrass to Broadway—hear how Jewish music and culture has interacted with and been influenced by other cultures and music,” said a description of the event. The festival will feature concerts, workshops and more, including “JAM (Jewish American Music) Talks,” where artists will open up about their musical influences, and share if and how their music reflects their Jewish identity. Festival programmer Lorry Black, who also is the associate director of UCLA’s Lowell Milken American Jewish Music Center, told the Jewish Journal that the festival will show Los Angeles “what there is globally in terms of Jewish music and Jewish music innovation.” He added, “There’s this idea of any genre being a monolith, but anyone who’s dug into Jewish music realizes that’s just a term of convenience. There’s just so much out there, and there are so many ways to look at it.” Black said the festival is titled “Music Crossing Boundaries” because it offers the opportunity to look at the “different hybridities that exist in Jewish music, and how the intersection of Jewish culture and identity with different types of American culture and identity can create something beautiful.” He told the publication that he hopes the audience will leave thinking “Jewish music is incredibly diverse, alive and a mirror of the American Jewish experience.”

Decoy Continued from page 5

the virus binds and engineered it onto part of an antibody, explained Weizmann. The newly resulting molecule was called “Arenacept.”

The group tested this molecule in collaboration with labs at Tel Aviv University, the University of Texas and the Institut Pasteur in Lyon, France. They found Arenacept to be “highly effective at sticking strongly” to the viruses before the latter could bind to the human receptors and saw activation of the immune response.

“It might even be effective against viruses from the same family that have not yet been discovered or newly emergent ones,” said Diskin. “All signs suggest Arenacept is non-toxic, and that it is also heat-resistant and stable, meaning it could be delivered to the remote areas where these diseases are endemic. And the idea of creating decoys from mammal receptors might be applied to all sorts of other diseases that cross to humans from animals.”

Yeda Research and Development, Weizmann’s technology transfer arm, has a patent for Arenacept and is working with Diskin to advance clinical research.

Jewish Community Center

“Women in the Torah” talk on Feb. 10

By Paige Bartholomew

The Jewish Community Center, located at 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, will hold an open talk on “Women in the Torah” on Monday, February 10, from 4-5 pm. Rabbi Rachel Esserman will lead the presentation. The event is free; a donation of \$10 per attendee is suggested. Donations of any amount will be collected at the door. The entire community is welcome and encouraged to attend.

Esserman will discuss the diverse stories of the many women of the Torah. The lecture will examine the Torah through the lens of female empowerment. Emphasis will be placed on the varied roles women played throughout Judaic history and the struggles many women had to go through, but ultimately triumphed over.

For more information about “Women in the Torah,” the JCC’s Adult Programming, or the JCC, contact the JCC office at 724-2417.

JCC Friendship Club

The JCC Friendship Club met on January 29 and heard Steve Gilbert play the ukulele and sing. His comments were just as interesting as his music. He explained that he was playing a baritone ukulele that is larger than a regular ukulele, but smaller than a guitar. The difference is that a guitar has six strings and a ukulele has four.

He started with a song he said we should all know, “Back in the Saddle Again.” We remembered Gene Autry singing it. We sang along with “I’m Looking Over a Four Leaf Clover.” Bruce Orden sang an alternate version that I can’t write about. Steve played a few pieces that girls would scream when they heard them. One was “Love Me Tender,” which was sung by Elvis Presley. Sylvia Diamond said that, when they were screaming, nobody could hear the singing.

Steve told us that when the Beatles played “I’ll Send All My Love To You” they could not hear each other playing, so they watched the drummer (Ringo Starr) and played according to his beat.

These incidents were not the beginning of this behavior. Steve told us about a violinist named Paganini who paid women to scream and throw things on the stage, such as undergarments, scarves, etc., when he played. It caught on and he did not have to pay anyone anymore.

Liszt also had women screaming and passing out when he played the piano. He had the piano turned sideways so the audience could see his handsome profile and long blond hair. When he turned his head so his hair would fly in the air, the women would go into a frenzy. Back to recent times (1956), when Dean Martin sang “Sweet Sweet The Memories You Gave To Me.”

The meeting was called to order by Sylvia. We moved to a smaller room and did not have a flag, so we said the Pledge of Allegiance to a virtual flag. Ann Brilliant said the blessing over the cookies. While having refreshments, we shared some funny stories. What is it called when a person loses his walking cane? Answer: A cane mutiny. If you liked that one, here is another one. Why did the blind man fall into the well? Answer: He could not see that well.

In February, we will hear a book review given by Rabbi Rachel Esserman and at another time eat out at a local restaurant. Come join us at the JCC at 1:30 pm on Wednesdays. Call the JCC at 724-2417 to be sure we are meeting there on that day.

Sylvia Diamond
President

Campus . . . Continued from page 2

sides of the same bigoted coin. If we can prove that they are indeed mirror images, then some of them may begin to change their mind. At the very least, we may be able to convince moderates of their similarities and prevent them from being indoctrinated by the fringe.

It is entirely possible that these predictions above may not come to fruition. What is undeniable, however, is the urgent need for us to be proactive. We must stop reacting on the antisemite’s terms and set the rules of engagement ourselves.

Eitan Fischberger is the Israel campus coordinator for CAMERA on Campus and a former intern for the Israeli Mission to the United Nations in New York. His articles have been published by The Jerusalem Post, the Daily Wire and the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

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Quick Reference Guide to Planned Giving

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

For further information or assistance, please contact Shelley Hubal at 724-2332 or director@jfgb.org

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- Current and possible future income tax deductions
- Reducing taxable income



NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Islamic State claims attack on Sinai gas pipeline

The Islamic State (or ISIS) terrorist group on Feb. 3 claimed responsibility for an attack on a pipeline in the Sinai Peninsula on Feb. 2 which it claimed connected Israel and Egypt. The group did not provide any evidence for its claims, according to Reuters. ISIS posted on its Telegram account that "caliphate soldiers targeted ... the natural gas line linking the Jews and the apostate Egyptian government," the AFP reported. Gunmen attacked a gas pipeline in the northern Sinai late on Feb. 2, according to Egyptian security sources. The attackers, suspected Islamist terrorists, blew up the pipeline west of el-Arish, causing a fire but no casualties, according to Reuters. Egypt began importing gas from Israel's Leviathan field in January through a pipeline that includes a sub-sea section that connects el-Arish to the coastal city of Ashkelon, Israel. Following the initial report of the pipeline attack, the companies developing the Leviathan field denied gas flow from Israel to Egypt had been disrupted. "The flow of gas from Leviathan to Egypt is continuing as normal," they said in a statement, according to the report.

Chinese embassy in Israel apologizes for comparing virus travel ban to Shoah

The Chinese embassy in Israel apologized for remarks made by its acting ambassador to Israel on Feb. 2, who compared the country's travel ban for arrivals from China to Jews being denied international refuge during the Holocaust. Israel has barred entry to non-Israelis who were in China in the last few weeks because of the coronavirus, which originated in the Chinese city of Wuhan. The virus has already caused more than 300 deaths, infected

17,000-plus and spread to 25 countries. Ambassador Dai Yuming at a press conference said the Israeli travel ban "actually recalled [for] me, the old days, the old stories, that happened in World War II, the Holocaust. ... Many Jewish [people] were refused when they tried to seek assistance. Only very, very few countries opened their doors, one of them is China. I hope Israel will never close their door to the Chinese," he added. "In the darkest days of the Jewish people, we didn't close the door on them. I hope Israel will not close the door on the Chinese." The embassy later issued a statement apologizing for Yuming's comments, saying, "There was no intention whatsoever to compare the dark days of the Holocaust with the current situation and the efforts taken by the Israeli government to protect its citizens. ... We would like to apologize if someone understood our message the wrong way," the embassy said.

MLB faces backlash for promoting concert by BDS supporter Roger Waters

Jewish groups have criticized the Major League Baseball's promotion of anti-Israel activist and BDS supporter Roger Waters' upcoming North American tour. MLB.com is among the organizations sponsoring ticket presales for Waters' "This Is Not a Drill" tour. MLB e-mailed baseball fans an advertisement featuring its logo, along with the logo of Waters' tour, and offered fans an opportunity to purchase presale tickets. The promotion was part of an ad buy by AEG/Concerts West for multiple concert tours, according to the Associated Press. In a Jan. 29 letter sent to MLB commissioner Robert Manfred, B'nai B'rith president Charles O. Kaufman and CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin expressed "deep dismay" at MLB.com's advertisement. "Waters is an avowed antisemite whose views on Jews and Israel far exceed the boundaries of civil discourse," they wrote, adding that they

were "saddened and outraged that baseball ... would use its online resources to publicize an individual with an alarming history of antisemitic hatred. We call on MLB to cease providing Roger Waters a platform." The Zionist Organization of America said it was "horrified" by the MLB's involvement in selling tickets for Waters' tour, "especially in an era when attacks against American Jews have become an epidemic." "We call on Major League Baseball to immediately sever its ties to Roger Waters, cease promoting his upcoming concert tour, and repudiate Waters' vile lies about Jews and about the Jewish State of Israel, which incite Jew-hatred," ZOA President Morton Klein, Chair Mark Levenson and ZOA Regional Director Steve Feldman said in a statement. "MLB's promotion of Waters give Waters' Jew-hatred its stamp of approval and legitimizes Israelophobia," continued the statement. "ZOA demands that Major League Baseball stop promoting Jew-hatred and evil Israel-bashing by MLB's unconscionable promotion of Jew-hater Israelophobe Roger Waters and his group Pink Floyd."

Antisemitic incidents in South Africa fall to 15-year low

The number of antisemitic incidents in South Africa fell to a 15-year low, according to the country's Jewish umbrella organization. A total of 36 antisemitic incidents were recorded in 2019, compared to 62 the previous year, according to the South African Jewish Board of Deputies. Only one incident consisted of physical assault, and no cases of desecration to Jewish property was recorded. Some 75,000 Jews live in South Africa, most of them in Johannesburg, with the next largest Jewish community in Cape Town. "We can be proud that at a time when attacks against Jews are everywhere growing both in number and severity, our country has consistently bucked the trend," said Shaun Zagnoe, the Jewish board's national chairman, in a statement. "As a result, South Africa continues to be a country where Jews can fully identify with and practice their religion without fear."

Abbas rips Trump, Mideast peace plan at Arab League meeting in Cairo

Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas and leaders of Arab countries expressed their disapproval over the newly revealed U.S. Mideast peace plan at the Arab League summit in Cairo over the Feb. 2 weekend. "I am profoundly convinced that [U.S. President Donald] Trump does not know the first thing concerning this plan. He has no link to it," Abbas told journalists in Cairo on Feb. 2. The plan, he said, was the product of Trump's senior Trump adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner, former special envoy to the Mideast Jason Greenblatt and U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman, who he said had just put "[Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu's ideas" to paper. The Arab League issued a statement on Feb. 1, saying it "rejects the U.S.-Israeli 'deal of the century' considering that it does not meet the minimum rights and aspirations of Palestinian people," adding that it would not take part in the plan's implementation. Nonetheless, representatives of the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Oman, attended the plan's unveiling at the White House on Jan. 28, while Saudi Arabia issued an official statement accepting it as a basis for negotiations. The day after the plan was announced, Abbas sent a handwritten note to Netanyahu declaring that the P.A. now saw itself as free from its obligations under the Oslo Accords, including security coordination with the Jewish state. However, a senior P.A. official told *The Times of Israel* on Feb. 2 that the P.A. had not yet taken any concrete steps to end security coordination with Israel. "Until now, the coordination is ongoing, but relations are extremely tense," the official said, adding that should Israel begin extending its sovereignty to Judea and Samaria and the Jordan Valley, the situation would change drastically.

Russia: U.S. peace plan contravenes U.N. resolutions

The peace plan presented on Jan. 28 by U.S. President Trump at the White House contravenes several U.N. resolutions and its viability is doubtful, Russian news agencies quoted a Kremlin spokesman as saying on Feb. 2. "There is a whole number of respective resolutions of the U.N. Security Council," said Dmitry Peskov, according to Russia's TASS news agency. "It's obvious that certain points of this plan are not in full compliance with the U.N. Security Council resolutions." The reaction of the Palestinians and a number of Arab states to the plan raised doubts about its viability, added Peskov. "We see the Palestinians' reaction; we see the reaction of the whole number of Arab states, which show solidarity with the Palestinians in opposing this plan," said Peskov. "This certainly raises doubts over its viability." While some media outlets have reported "muted" responses and even loud objections to the U.S. plan from Arab and Muslim countries, with a few exceptions most of the Arab states seem to tacitly support the proposal. The Palestinian Authority has rejected the deal out of hand, with P.A. leader Mahmoud Abbas reportedly refusing to answer phone calls from Washington ahead of its unveiling. Abbas informed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Jan. 29 that in the view of the P.A., the Trump peace plan voids the Clinton-era Oslo Accords, freeing the Palestinians from all obligations under the Oslo agreements.

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