

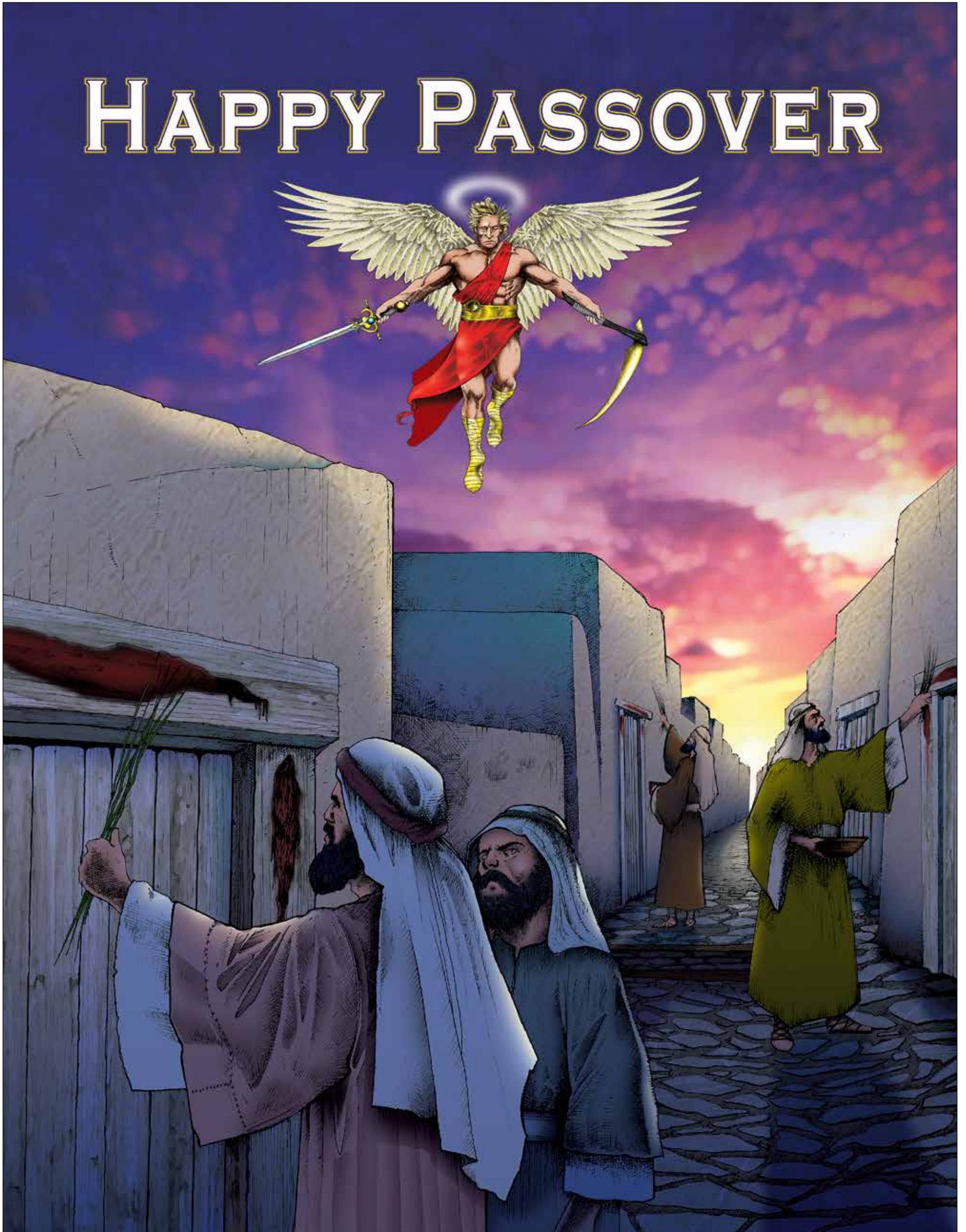
THE REPORTER

Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

April 3-9, 2020
Volume XLIX, Number 14

HAPPY PASSOVER



Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

Last Tuesday night, my family and I participated in our first virtual minyan with Temple Israel. There were 29 computers or phones logged in to participate. I am surprised by how touched I felt by this event. It was nice to see so many faces, most connecting locally, although there were some from Florida and even the Bahamas. I left the minyan with my heart full, knowing that we may be apart, but we are still a community and are truly all, in this difficult time, together. If you have not tried a virtual event, you should. Virtual events are the new reality. Participating may cut down on feelings of isolation. I am no expert with modern technology, but my experience has been that the virtual meeting spaces are generally user friendly. If you want someone to talk you through it, give me a call at 724-2332.

Speaking of virtual events, I just got the go ahead from the chairmen of our film fest, Susan Hubal and Ben Kasper, to host a virtual film screening. To participate, you would register and be given a link with a window of time to view the film. Then we would all come together at a designated time on a video chat with our film facilitator to discuss. Is this ideal? Of course not, but staying connected and stimulated is important. So I say let's give it a try! Keep an eye out in *The Reporter* and your e-mail for specifics on registering for a virtual film screening sometime in April.

After careful consideration of the community's needs, the annual Campaign chairwoman, Marilyn Bell, and I have decided to move forward with the Chesed Matching Gift Challenge. This matching gift challenge of up to \$10,000 is more important now than ever. We know that

our Jewish organizations and community members will be hit hard by this crisis and we want to help. Several community members have already stepped up and are willing to commit to this challenge. We hope that you will join them in making a donation; whatever the size, it will be doubled. The Chesed Challenge will run through the month of April. See *The Reporter* article on page 3 or check your e-mail for Chesed Challenge information, or go to www.jfgeb.org to give.

Please know that I am keeping you all in my thoughts and prayers during this challenging time and look forward to being together again soon. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have any ideas for virtual programming or just want to say hi. Wishing you all peace and comfort during this time of crisis.

Israel's First World problems are real, but so is its progress

By Jonathan S. Tobin

JNS – Spend enough time in Israel not immersed in history and sight-seeing or awed by its spiritual and physical beauty, and you can easily understand why so many of its citizens spend so much of their time complaining. The Jewish state may be a regional superpower – a place where brilliant thinkers made the desert bloom and created a “startup nation” that rivals Silicon Valley with its venture capitalism, patents and high-tech development. Its cities may be bustling and its farms productive. Still, much in Israel either remains lacking or just doesn't work.

Getting from place to place in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem can be a nightmare, as can any effort to go between the two cities, despite the creation of a rail system to ease congestion. Traffic seems to be always snarled within the big cities or even along the coastal corridor. There are too many cars and not enough roads to accommodate them and their owners.

And as a lengthy feature published in a recent Sunday

New York Times – timed to pour cold water on the idea that the last 11 years under the leadership of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have been successful for the Jewish state – the problems aren't limited to the commuting time many Israelis suffer. Israel needs more hospital rooms to deal with the needs of its growing population. Its educational system is also seen as failing much of the population, especially the poor, *haredi* Jews and the Arab minority, even if the country actually does spend more on schools than on its vaunted military establishment.

Poorer Israelis and those in the middle class don't feel empowered by the fact that some high-tech entrepreneurs have gotten rich. As is the case in many other prosperous nations, many feel left behind.

What's more, Israel's political system seems incapable of dealing with these challenges. That's true even when it is not locked in a political stalemate with the prospect of a possible fourth election later in 2020 to break the logjam. Entrenched interests block constitutional reform and make

it difficult, if not impossible, to fund solutions to any of the infrastructure problems that the nation faces.

Throw in arguments between secular and religious Jews, as well as Mizrahi and Ashkenazi Jews – not to mention those between Jews and Arabs – and you can paint a portrait of a nation in both an economic and spiritual crisis. And that's true even if, unlike *The New York Times*, your purpose is not to trash the country and depict Netanyahu as a charlatan.

But before you write the place off as a crowded, unpleasant failure of a country, a little historical perspective is needed.

Israel is only 71 years old. A century ago, Zionism was a dream dismissed by most Jews as a fantasy that would not come true. And even after the state was declared, smart people thought it could not survive.

Who among Zionism's critics could have predicted that a poor *yishuv* of 600,000 Jewish souls could withstand See “Progress” on page 12

In My Own Words

A second chance

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

A little known section of the Torah is giving people hope during the coronavirus crisis. At least that was the buzz on a Jewish list serve to which I belong. What am I talking about? Verses six-12 in chapter nine in the biblical book of Numbers speak about Passover *Sheni* – a second opportunity to celebrate Passover.

When it comes time for the Israelites to perform the Passover sacrifice during the second year they are in the desert, some men are unable to do so because they are ritually impure. God then tells Moses that these people can offer their sacrifices on the 14th day of the next month, which is known as Passover *Sheni*. This idea is resonating with people who are worried about celebrating Passover or *simchas* (happy events), which are either not going to take place or are taking place with far fewer people than normal.

Since we don't know when life will go back to normal, I suggest we broaden the idea of Passover *Sheni*. For

example, if a bar/bat mitzah is celebrated with only the immediate family, there is no reason that there can't be a larger celebration in three months, or six, or nine, if God forbid it takes that long for the crisis to be over. What if people can't afford that because they couldn't get refunds on their deposits or are in financial trouble because of the crisis? Well, that's what friends and family are for: We can create the celebration for them. Will it be the bash they might have had? I don't think that really matters: what does matter is that the *simcha* is celebrated with those you love and those who love you.

What about funerals? Some states are only allowing the immediate family to be present. People are talking about virtual *shiva* minyans, which, while they may solve part of the problem, do not offer the same consolation. However, if you knew the person who passed away, how about writing a letter to the family? Tell them how much the deceased meant to you or share a story they might not know. Being able to savor those letters at their leisure may actually give them more comfort than if you were one of a hundred people they talked to during a day when they were in such shock and pain they might not remember your words. For those who still feel the need, a larger crowd at an unveiling, complete with speeches about the deceased, is another possibility. Or, if that's not possible,

the same thing can take place on the person's *yahrzeit* (the anniversary of their death).

Of course, while some events can be postponed, others have to be permanently cancelled. That's a great disappointment to many of us, but think of the important thing you are doing: keeping everyone healthy and alive. This may be harder for younger folks because they don't have the same perspective as older people. Wisdom comes when you realize that every life contains disappointments and setbacks: this is only one of them. The hope is that, when life returns to normal, there will be different trips, concerts and theater performances to enjoy.

This is also a good opportunity to look around and appreciate what we do have. I'm not saying that we should never complain. In fact, feel free to *kvetch* – that's actually healthy, as long as it doesn't take over our lives. But we need to also keep an eye on the future: this crisis is going to be a big financial and emotional hit on the most vulnerable people in our community. We need to remember there are people who have it far worse. While this crisis is not easy on any of us, we need to believe we can make it through this – that the world and our community will continue. Well, that may not be true of everyone, so I remind you once again to make certain to tell those whom you care about and love just how much they mean to you, just in case.

Correction

In last week's issue of *The Reporter*, the condolence notice on page 3 incorrectly spelled Caryn J. Isaac's name incorrectly. *The Reporter* apologizes for the error and any confusion it may have caused.



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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.

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Keeping the community strong: Chesed Challenge to take place

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton announced that the Chesed Challenge will take place. "I spoke to our donor and we've agreed that in this time of great need, we should hold the challenge," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. The Chesed Challenge, a matching gift campaign, will continue until April 30. An anonymous donor has pledged to double any new gift, up to \$10,000 total.

"We are a strong, wonderful community, but our local organizations will be hurting once this crisis is over," she said. "People in the community who have been furloughed or lost their jobs or closed their businesses will need community help, and this challenge will help us keep our community safe and whole."

Hubal has kept in touch with other Jewish organizations, including taking part in a webinar, to learn what is happening across the country and the best way to help the local community during the current medical and financial crisis.

"We appreciate that this is a very difficult time for everyone," Hubal said. "We are all in this together. I know our community and our connections are too strong to break. What we - all of us - do now can make a difference to our future."

Hubal continued by noting that some community members have already committed to making pledges during the challenge: "I've been contacted by people who have let me know how important the work we do is for our community and that they plan to donate so we can continue that work. Please join them in helping keep our community strong."

Hubal noted that the Federation is committed to helping people during this difficult time. "Although we may not be able to see you in person, we are still available through phone calls and e-mail, and we are planning several community events on a video platform. Jewish Family Service is still busy helping our neighbors in need," Hubal added. "The Reporter is publishing information about closings and postponements, and the activities - local and national - that are taking place online. Donations to the Chesed Challenge will keep us strong for the future. The current challenge to our community will pass and the Federation is here to help during and after. We are dedicated to keeping us all healthy and safe."

Donations may be sent to the Federation, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850, with "Chesed Challenge" on the subject line. To donate online, visit www.jfgeb.org and click on donate.

Jewish Federation's new website goes live

By Reporter staff

The new website of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, www.jfgeb.org/, has gone live. "We are very excited about our new website, which offers features that were not available on our old one," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation.

"During this time of crisis, the new website can help the community keep up to date on cancellations and postponements," Hubal said. "It will bind us together as a community."

Hillel Academy studies continue by virtual means

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Although the school year has been put in hold for some students, those attending Hillel Academy of Broome County are continuing their Jewish and secular studies through the use of G Suite for Education, a Google app designed for schools.

"The last [few] weeks have been a complete whirlwind here at Hillel Academy," said Sarah Thomas, head of secular studies, in an e-mail interview. "We basically took our traditional private school and created an online school in about a week. This included creating a new schedule, teaching ourselves how to use an assortment of new programs and gathering, and copying and sending materials home to the students. It was exhausting, but, by the end of the week, we had students logging in and learning new material over the computer. While it is not a perfect system by any means, it is amazing what we have been able to accomplish by working together as a school community. Plus, getting to see our students and listen to them joke with their classmates has made it all worthwhile."

Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu, the head of Judaic studies, also spoke about the new system in an e-mail interview. See "Hillel" on page 5

A new feature gives people a way to donate online. "This is a great secure and easy way to take part in the Chesed Challenge," Hubal noted. "We're hoping to match the \$10,000 our donor has offered and no one has to leave their house to make a gift." (See the article on the Chesed Challenge on this page for more information.)

Suzanne Holwitt, president of the Federation, commented on the website's new look. "The site looks much cleaner and is far easier to navigate," she said. "Shelley did a wonderful job creating a beautiful look along with deciding which features to highlight. The site is a great way for people to learn about the Federation."

Hubal noted that this was her first time creating a website. "It was a new experience for me," Hubal said. "I found it challenging, but I'm really pleased with the results and I think the community will be too."

In addition to the community calendar, the site offers links to "World Jewish News" from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. The "Why I Give" section highlights why community members think it's important to give to the Federation. It also features columns by Hubal that appeared in *The Reporter*. In addition, there is information about local Jewish organizations.

"Visit our site and see just how much we have to offer," said Hubal.




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The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Michael and Pauline (Polly) Grenis on the death of their daughter,
Gayle Grenis Farman

Early deadlines for The Reporter

The Reporter will have early deadlines for the following upcoming issues. No exceptions will be made.

Issue.....	Deadline
Friday, April 17.....	Monday, April 6
Friday, April 24.....	Monday, April 13




Town of Vestal Councilwoman
Patty Fitzgerald

Welcome to our newest practitioner, Heather Nannery, FNP!

Heather serves women seeking care that includes annual well woman visits, IUD's, and other gynecology concerns.

Request an appointment with Heather Nannery, FNP, or one of our other providers, by calling our office at 607.754.9870 or by visiting our website at www.womensobgynassociates.com



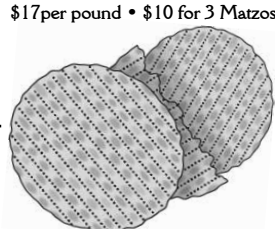
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About the cover

This year's Passover cover was illustrated by Art Edel, a freelance artist and graphic designer who lives and works in Savannah, GA.

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Off the Shelf

New York City and cemeteries

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

When historians examine how social systems develop, they sometimes find surprising reasons drive societal change. At least, it may seem that way to readers of “Dust to Dust: A History of Jewish Death and Burial in New York” by Allan Amanik (New York University Press). Amanik, an assistant professor of American Jewish history at Brooklyn College, CUNY, is interested in “how family and financial concerns when dealing with death gained equal importance to communal cohesion and other traditional priorities as the city’s funeral industry developed over the centuries.” In simpler terms, while at one time synagogues controlled Jewish cemeteries and limited who could be buried within them, that changed as other groups rose to circumvent synagogue control. Yet, in the end, synagogues retained important ties to the funeral industry.

In the mid-1700s, when Jews arrived in New Amsterdam, as New York City was called at the time, they wanted to bury their dead in Jewish-only cemeteries. While in Europe Jews were not allowed to be buried in Christian cemeteries (there were no secular cemeteries at the time), that was not true in New Amsterdam, which had a common burial ground for all its citizens. Amanik notes that “Jewish separation after death stood out under Dutch rule as a rare and perhaps the only case of a European group not burying in the common group.” The synagogues decided who could be buried in their cemeteries and used that as a means of social control. For example, Jews were expected to be members of the synagogue and not only pay dues, but follow a certain level of ritual and ethical behavior.

This began to change in the late 1800s as benevolent societies, lodges and social groups began to purchase land that would be used as cemeteries for their own members. While these groups expected their members to pay dues, Jewish ritual observance was not required. As membership in these groups increased, synagogue membership began to

decline. The groups – which included B’nai Brith and the Independent Order of the Free Sons of Israel, to name only a few – were greatly influenced by American democratic ideas. They gave funds to sick members, organized funerals and protected widows and orphaned children. While this was an ambitious program, as time passed, these groups were often unable to fulfill the needs of their members. This was partly caused by restrictions in immigration – no new immigrants to take the place of those who died – and the fact that Americanized children did not always want to join these organizations.

Another change occurred when funeral homes began to offer the same services as synagogues and social groups. By this point in time, New York City no longer allowed burials in Manhattan, and synagogues and other groups purchased land in the countryside. Many of the funeral homes began as transportation services, transporting the deceased and/or his family to the cemetery. Then the homes began to offer more services: Jewish undertakers could prepare the bodies. Funerals could take place in the funeral home, which would also provide a rabbi to perform the service. The big difference was that people didn’t need to affiliate to use their services. The funeral homes were on call as needed. To combat this, synagogues and fraternal organization began to market themselves in a different way: They “assumed new intermediary roles. They championed themselves as brokers between members and chapel and promised to hold undertakers accountable for dissatisfactory service. They also adjusted monetary benefits that had long covered funeral costs and bereavement rituals to now apply to services beyond the parlor purview.”

Synagogues did become popular again as Jews moved from New York City to the suburbs. This was especially true of families with young children: these families “sought out new forms of community beyond the neighborhoods

of their youth.... The life-cycle provisions and other social needs that the synagogue offered drove the renaissance, especially amid lacking Jewish infrastructure in new areas of settlement.” An additional impetus was the increasing costs charged by funeral homes, which were criticized in the magazines, newspaper and books. The synagogue defined itself as an organization that would prevent this. However, as the Jewish community moved further into the 20th century, additional changes to the Jewish way of death and burial were already occurring.

“Dust to Dust” does an excellent job showing how the desire for a Jewish burial continues to change as society changes. Although the subject matter was surprisingly interesting, the text is dry as is befitting a scholarly work. Anyone looking for a different take on Jewish American social history should enjoy this work.



People of the Pod

AJC and Times of Israel are partnering to present “People of the Pod,” a weekly podcast analyzing global affairs through a Jewish lens. “People of the Pod” examines political events, the people driving them and what it all means for the Jewish people and Israel.

Episodes can be found at www.ajc.org/ and searching for “People of the Pod.” It’s also available at some online media platforms.

LEGAL NOTICE

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

1. The name of the limited liability company (“LLC”) is JJ’S GRILL AND CATERING @ EN-JOIE, LLC.
2. The date of filing of the Articles of Organization with the Secretary of State is February 13, 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: 1120 A Farm to Market Road, Endwell, NY 13760.
5. The character or purpose of the business of the LLC is any purpose allowed by law.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY: The name of the limited liability company is: Front Street Residences LLC (the “Company”). The date of filing of the Articles of Organization of the Company with the Secretary of State was February 14, 2020. 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 Front Street Residences LLC, 237 W. Lincoln Avenue, Mount Vernon, NY 10550. 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 Wesley’s Corner Store, LLC.
2. The date of filing of the Articles of Organization with the Secretary of State is February 18, 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: 345 Conklin Ave, Binghamton, NY 13903.

5. The character or purpose of the business of the LLC is any purpose allowed by law.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY: The name of the limited liability company is: STAN Property Holdings, LLC (the “Company”). The date of filing of the Articles of Organization of the Company with the Secretary of State was February 7, 2020. 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 Steve W. Pancoast, 154 Clifton Blvd., Vestal, NY 13850. The purpose of the business of the Company is any lawful business purpose.

Anna Warfield Art, LLC, Art. of Org. filed with SSNY on 1/6/20. Off. loc.: Broome Co. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process may be served & shall mail: 151 Chapin St., Binghamton, NY 13905. Purp.: any lawful purp.

Zalvis Properties LLC, Art. of Org. filed with SSNY on 1/22/20. Off. loc.: Broome Co. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process may be served & shall mail: 424 Clayton Ave., Vestal, NY 13850. Purp.: any lawful purp.

Tugs and Hugs, LLC, Arts of Org. filed with Sec. of State of NY (SSNY) 1/29/2020. Cty: Broome. SSNY desig. as agent upon whom process against may be served & shall mail process to Vikki Wiener, 20 Sylvan Ave., Asheville, NC 28801. General Purpose.

Notice of Formation of TZ Development LLC

Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 03/02/2020. 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, 168 Susquehanna Street, Binghamton, New York 13901. Purpose: any lawful activities.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY: The name of the limited liability

company is: 220 Stage Road, LLC (the “Company”). The date of filing of the Articles of Organization of the Company with the Secretary of State was March 9, 2020. 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 Hinman, Howard & Kattell, LLP, Attn: Christina J. Graziadei, 80 Exchange Street, Ste. 700, Binghamton, NY 13901. The purpose of the business of the Company is any lawful business purpose.

Notice of Formation of THE HAIR KITCHEN, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 02/25/20. Office location: Broome County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: 15 Penna Rd., Johnson City, NY 13790. Purpose: any lawful activities.

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

1. The name of the limited liability company (“LLC”) is Trinity Valley Dairy LLC.
2. The date of filing of the Articles of Organization with the Secretary of State is March 12, 2020.
3. The County within the State of New York in which the principal office of the LLC is located is Cortland.
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: 2859 Route 13, Cortland, NY 13045.
5. The character or purpose of the business of the LLC is any purpose allowed by law.

NOTICE OF FORMATION of VitalUS Real Estate LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 02/20/2020. Location: Broome County. SSNY designated as agent for service of process on LLC. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to: VitalUS Real Estate LLC at 23 Oakdale Rd, Johnson City, NY, 13790. Purpose: Any lawful purpose

182 WIN, LLC NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (“LLC”)

Articles of Organization of 182 Win, LLC filed with the NYS Secretary of State (NYSS) on 3/9/20. Office of LLC is in Broome County. The Secretary of State designated as agent for service of process against it. NYSS shall mail process to 182 Baldwin Street, Johnson City, NY 13790. Business purpose: any lawful activity.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY: The name of the limited liability company is: Tammy S. Lippman LCSW, PLLC (the “Company”). The date of filing of the Articles of Organization of the Company with the Secretary of State was February 25, 2020. 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 Hinman, Howard & Kattell, LLP, Attn: Ryan M. Mead, 80 Exchange Street, Suite 700, Binghamton, NY 13901. The purpose of the business of the Company is any lawful business purpose.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY: The name of the limited liability company is: Channel Investors, LLC (the “Company”). The date of filing of the Articles of Organization of the Company with the Secretary of State was March 11, 2020. 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 Hinman, Howard & Kattell, LLP, Attn: Jon J. Sarra, Esq., 80 Exchange Street, Binghamton, NY 13901. The purpose of the business of the Company is any lawful business purpose.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY: The name of the limited liability company is: People Grow Together, LLC (the “Company”). The date of filing of the Articles of Organization

of the Company with the Secretary of State was February 20, 2020. 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 Attn: Daniel Mastey, 256 State Line Road, Windsor, NY 13865. The purpose of the business of the Company is any lawful business purpose.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY: The name of the limited liability company is: The Self Stories, LLC (the “Company”). The date of filing of the Articles of Organization of the Company with the Secretary of State was March 17, 2020. 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 Hinman, Howard & Kattell, LLP, Attn: Richard C. Lewis, 80 Exchange Street, Ste. 700, Binghamton, NY 13901. The purpose of the business of the Company is any lawful business purpose.

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1. The name of the limited liability company (“LLC”) is 33 South Washington St LLC.
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The online seder open to the Jewish community

Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell will lead a community Passover seder the first night of Passover, Wednesday, April 8, starting at 5:30 pm. The evening will begin with songs to give everyone time to get connected. People can join through Zoom, <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/918953756>, or by calling in at 1-929-205-6099, then entering the meeting ID: 918 953 756. The seder will break for dinner at each person's home, then resume at a set time for blessing the concluding two cups of wine or juice, Elijah's cup and Passover songs.

"We hope each home will have matzah and other seder foods," said organizers of the event. "If you can't purchase or make all of them, be creative for bitter herbs/foods, spring greens and a charoset mixture."

Anyone planning to attend should e-mail templeconcordbinghamton@gmail.com or contact Goldman-Wartell. "Anyone are not able to be together with others for the seder should consider joining Rabbi Barbara by phone, computer or tablet," organizers added.

Chabad seder update

"Every year there are people who join us for the seder. We take the responsibility and privilege of providing a seder to our community very seriously," said Rabbi Aaron Slonim. "Because of our present challenges, it is unfortunately too early at this time – even two weeks before Pesach begins - to say with certainty that we will be able to host the community seder. In fact, at this time, we would have to say that we will not host a community seder. However, if things turn around miraculously and gathering are permitted, and medical authorities deem it

safe, we will open our doors, even on very short notice. Interested parties should call Chabad on Sunday, April 5, to check on the status of our seder."

Shmura matzah

Handmade *shmura* matzah will be available for purchase through the Chabad Center for \$17 a pound (three matzahs can be purchased for \$10) as long as the supply lasts. Interested parties are urged to place their orders as soon as possible. To order *shmura* matzah, call the Chabad Center at 797-0015.

Chabad seder in a box

In light of the precautions being taken in the face of the coronavirus, Chabad of Binghamton announced that it will deliver a "seder in a box" to any older or immunologically compromised individual who fears attending a seder with a group of friends or family. Passover begins this year on the evening of Wednesday, April 8.

Interested parties are asked to e-mail aslonim@Jewishbu.com or call the Chabad office at 797-0015 to reserve a box for themselves, a family member or a friend. The box will include matzah, grape juice, dinner and all of the

ceremonial items necessary for a seder. A haggadah will be included as well.

The subsidized cost of the "Seder in a Box" is \$36. Community members who wish to assist in this effort can help with delivery, can underwrite a box or two, and/or can help with the cooking of the food and packaging of the boxes.

To offer assistance, contact the Chabad office. Checks earmarked for this purpose may be sent to Chabad, 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

Hillel..... Continued from page 3

"The online method we have established at Hillel Academy greatly helps during this time by allowing us to keep in touch with students, to maintain the continuity of the material being taught and to develop important skills that will contribute to their learning when the system returns to normal operation," he said. "We basically built a model of the regular classroom into the computer."

Thomas gave additional information about how the system works. "Teachers at Hillel Academy have been using GSuite for education to connect with our students," she said. "This includes Google classroom, Google meet, Google calendar, Google forms and a variety of other programs. Our second-fifth grade students each had their own chromebook here at school, which we were able to send home. Our younger students, those in Ganeinu through first grade, were each sent home with an iPad, which also runs the Google programs, along with a variety of educational apps. We are lucky enough to be able to provide each of our students with their own device to learn from at home, as well as connect with their teacher through video conferencing on Google meet."

She noted one of the good things about the experience: "At the end of this, the students will have become quite tech savvy. They are already helping the teachers answer tech questions and picked up new programs much faster than we have."

There are some difficulties, though. "It has been quite an adjustment to adapt in-person lessons to distance-learning lessons," Thomas said. "When students struggle to understand a concept, it is harder to look over their work. Keeping students engaged while sitting in front of a screen is also a challenge, especially for our youngest students. We have adjusted our schedule to allow for plenty of breaks and screen free time. Learning this new technology on the run

with little guidance has also proven difficult, but working together and sharing what works and what doesn't with each other has helped the staff adapt."

Shmaryahu also noted that online learning is not a replacement for the classroom. "It is still impossible to rely on distance learning as a complete substitute for a regular classroom," he added. "Because, in my opinion, students are looking for the human touch. They need the framework, the meeting and the ability to allocate time. Distance learning cannot replace acquiring skills the same as in a physical classroom. People of almost all ages have difficulty with self-learning."

One parent has been impressed with the result of online learning. "I am very happy with Hillel's online program," said Malvinia Sambursky. "The education continues, children are learning new lessons in both Judaics and secular classes. My son is enjoying the online classes provided by our talented teachers."

Both Thomas and Shmaryahu are pleased with the results of the experience. Thomas noted, "The ability to see our students during this required break is also a good thing. We are very lucky. I know there are many teachers out there that want to teach and simply do not have the tools or setup to do so. Even if we do not cover as much curriculum as we normally would, providing our students with a sense of normalcy during this chaotic time leaves me feeling accomplished and I know that the entire staff at Hillel Academy feels the same."

Shmaryahu agreed: "I have a lot of pride and joy to see our dear students every morning, praying, learning Chumash, learning Hebrew and the Passover haggadah, and feeling that nothing will stop us and the school from continuing to take care of Jewish education and impart Jewish tradition to all students."

ACA to hold online memorial

The American Civil Association announced that it has cancelled its April 3 memorial service, which local rabbis and members of the community have attended in honor of the late Roberta (Bobbie) King. Instead, the ACA plans to share messages of unity and support on its social media platforms and website on April 3. For more information, visit americancivic.com/memorial-service.

A parent's guide to this year's nuclear family seder

By Deborah Fineblum

(JNS) – "Even if all of us were wise, all of us understanding, all of us knowing the Torah, we would still be obligated to discuss the Exodus from Egypt; and everyone who discusses the Exodus from Egypt at length is praiseworthy..." – The Haggadah

Grandma's famous stuffed cabbage? Auntie's lighter-than-air matzah balls? Your cousin's beloved chocolate-orange sponge cake? Not this year.

And it's not just the world-class Passover food; it's the celebratory scene: Relatives and friends packed into the dining room (in pre-social-distancing days), tantalizing smells wafting in from the kitchen, cousins chasing each other around the house.

"It's the first time in my life that I won't be with my parents in St. Louis for seder," says Mandy Silverman of Sharon, MA. "I almost can't imagine seder without the family."

See "Seder" on page 10

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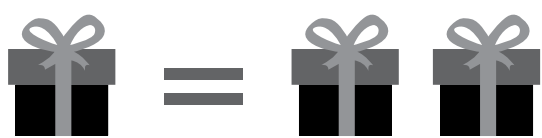
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A festive Passover table, with hints of east and west

By Ethel G. Hofman

(JNS) – For American Jews, observant or secular, Passover is a big deal. In fact according to a Pew Report, almost 70 percent American Jews attend a Passover seder. It's a time when friends and family come together to read the haggadah and hear the ancient story of the Hebrews' flight from Egyptian slavery to freedom.

Of course, food is another highlight of the multi-course meal. In fact, the entire eight-day celebration (seven days in Israel), which begins on the night of Wednesday, April 8, revolves around specific foods and the prohibitions around leaven. But today, eating remains less of an issue than ever before. There are literally thousands of types of kosher-for-Passover food and wine (gluten-free, lactose-free, nut-free, whole-grain), though items disappear quickly from supermarket shelves. Buy necessary staples and products when you see them.

Though matzah takes the place of bread during Passover, there's no need to eat it with every dish. Although Ashkenazi Passover dishes are heavy on matzah, eggs and dairy products, which were easily available in Eastern Europe, these traditional dishes can be lightened with fresh fruits and vegetables, in tune with contemporary dietary recommendations. In contrast, Sephardic Passover dishes are light and lively, heavy on fresh produce, exotic spices and zesty seasonings – all part of the ancient Mediterranean diet.

At the Hofman house, the first seder features an Ashkenazi meal with dishes that have been adapted to add generous amounts of fruits and vegetables. The second night features a Sephardic meal, definitely more appealing to the diet-conscious. Consider serving fish along with the traditional brisket or chicken. Instead of salmon, look for steelhead trout. It looks an awful lot like salmon, but it's not; it's softer and flakier. Don't try to divide it into neat portions; just spoon into pieces. Native to Alaska and the West Coast, it's one of the healthier types of fish with plenty of lean protein and omega-3 fatty acids. Just make sure you buy farm-raised, as wild steelhead is an endangered species, depending on where it's from.

The recipes below do not include *kitniyot* (legumes and seeds such as rice, corn, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds,



A Passover table setting. (Photo by Wikimedia Commons)

soybeans, peas and lentils), which are not consumed by Ashkenazi Jews during the holiday. Sephardic Jews do maintain their tradition of eating rice.

Happy Passover!

Sephardic Apricot-Cherry Charoset (pareve)

Makes 2-2½ cups

Cook's tips:

Use kitchen scissors to cut up dried fruits.

May be prepared a week ahead.

Place in serving bowl, cover tightly with saran wrap and refrigerate.

1 cup dried apricots, cut up

¼ cup dried cherries

3 large dried peaches (about 4 oz.) cut in chunks

¼ cup walnuts or pecans

2 Tbsp. packed fresh mint leaves

3-4 Tbsp. sweet wine

2 Tbsp. honey or to taste

Place dried fruits in a bowl and cover with boiling water. Let stand 30 minutes or so to soften. Drain well.

Place in a food processor and pulse to chop coarsely.

Add the nuts, mint, 3 tablespoons wine and honey. Process to chop finely. Transfer to a bowl. Add more honey or wine as desired.

Serve at room temperature.

Springtime Vegetable Soup (pareve)

Makes 6-8 servings

The ingredient list may seem long, but it's easy with pre-prepared items.

Cook's tips:

Use a good packaged vegetarian broth.

Zucchini is available precut in strips or use the shredding attachment in food processor.

Shredded carrots available in market.

Prepare one or two days ahead, cover and refrigerate.

May substitute packaged kosher chicken broth for vegetarian to make a meat soup.

1 Tbsp. olive oil

½ medium sweet onion, sliced thinly

1 medium green zucchini (about 1½ cups), cut julienne

1 medium yellow zucchini (about 1½ cups), cut julienne

3 medium tomatoes, snipped coarsely

1 cup shredded carrots

½ cup grated parsnip

¼ cup snipped fresh dill, packed

¼ cup snipped fresh parsley, packed

6-7 cups vegetarian broth

2 tsp. lemon-pepper seasoning or to taste

In large pot, heat olive oil over medium heat.

Add all the remaining ingredients. Bring to boil.

Reduce to simmer. Cook for 10-15 minutes, or until veggies are softened.

Serve hot.

Sweet and Zesty Passover Kugel (pareve)

Serves 10-12

Packed with fruits and veggies, this is a variation of a much-requested recipe.

Cook's tips:

Chop potatoes and apple in food processor.

Wrap thawed spinach in double layer of paper towels to squeeze dry.

Zap frozen orange juice concentrate for 10-15 seconds in microwave to thaw.

May be prepared one day ahead and refrigerated.

Bake as in recipe below.

2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cut in chunks

1 medium baking potato, peeled and cut in chunks

2 Granny Smith apples, unpeeled, cored and cut in chunks

4 oz. (1 stick), plus 2 Tbsp. margarine, melted

1 (10 oz.) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry

1½ cups bagged shredded carrots

½ cup canned crushed pineapple, well-drained

½ cup raisins

½ cup matzah meal

⅓ cup sugar

⅓ cup frozen orange-juice concentrate, thawed

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Spray a 9-inch square baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

Coarsely chop the potatoes and apples in the food processor. In a large bowl, place potatoes, apples, about 1 stick melted margarine and all remaining ingredients. Stir to mix well.

Spoon into prepared baking dish. Drizzle with remaining margarine.

Bake in preheated oven for 1¼ hours, or until firm and nicely browned. If browning too quickly, cover loosely with aluminum foil.

Serve warm or at room temperature.

"Za'atar" Baked Steelhead Trout (pareve)

Serves 8

Cook's tips:

Line baking pan with aluminum foil for easy cleanup.

Use fresh lemon, not bottled.

2-2½ pound fillet steelhead trout

3 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice

1 tsp. kosher salt

2 tsp. fresh ground black pepper

1 Tbsp. za'atar

2 Tbsp. finely snipped parsley

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Place steelhead trout fillet on prepared baking pan.

Sprinkle all over with lemon juice, salt, pepper and za'atar.

Bake in preheated oven for 18 minutes. Cooked when a knife is inserted and flakes are opaque. Before serving, sprinkle with parsley.

Serve hot, warm or even at room temperature.

Sweet Fruit Ratatouille (pareve)

Serves 8

Cook's tips:

Substitute 3 cups canned drained pineapple for fresh.

May be prepared one or two days ahead and refrigerated.

If made ahead, scatter pistachios over top just before serving.

Substitute slivered almonds or other nuts for pistachios.

1¼ cups pineapple or apricot preserves

3 Tbsp. orange juice

1 tsp. potato starch

½ tsp. cinnamon

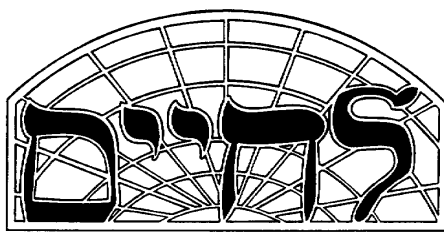
See "Table" on page 7

PASSOVER GREETINGS



This year,
may we all be free!
Happy Passover

Rebecca and Jeff Kahn



Francine Stein & Family



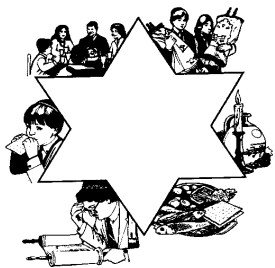
Maria and Bob Kutz
wish all their
relatives and friends
a
Happy Passover



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PASSOVER

Susan and Ben Kasper



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Passover!

Rhona & Richard Esserman



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from
Steven, Gail,
Michael and
Emily Feuer
of Otego, NY

HAPPY
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Passover
Greetings

from
Linda & Dennis Robi
and Family



More Jewish resources to occupy your family while self-distancing

By Reporter staff

A variety of Jewish groups are offering online resources—educational and recreational—for those who are not allowed out of the house. Below is a sampling of those. *The Reporter* will publish additional listings as they become available.

- ◆ Jewish Fiction Net, <https://jewishfiction.net>, has uploaded its spring issue early. The issue contains 16 stories, including some translated from Hungarian and Hebrew. There is no charge to read the stories, two of which are about Passover.
- ◆ Rabbi Simon Jacobson will be offering “Daily Spiritual Antidotes” on YouTube. Visit www.youtube.com and search for his name.

- ◆ The Yiddish Book Center, www.yiddishbookcenter.org, offers a wide variety of material online. Sign up for the weekly update that will now offer information about items found in its collection.
- ◆ The Center for Jewish History has made videos of past programs available on Youtube. Visit www.youtube.com and search for Center for Jewish History.
- ◆ YouTube, www.youtube.com, has a wide variety of Jewish music available. There is everything from religious songs to contemporary Israeli pop. Use the search feature to find music by song title, artist or musical genre.
- ◆ The organization 18Doors has a variety of resources for Passover available at https://18doors.org/additional_pass-over_resources/.

- ◆ The Orthodox Union has videos available to help people prepare for Passover at <https://oukasher.org/passover/preparing-for-pesach/>. They include a variety of information about how to *kasher* different parts of a kitchen.
- ◆ Ami Magazine is offering free activities for children. Visit www.amimagazine.org/ and click on the box that says “Aim! Click here for free fun activities.”
- ◆ JewBelong, www.jewbelong.com, has a variety of resources, including a free haggadah to download or print at www.jewbelong.com/holidays/passover/. The site will also host a Virtual Seder on Thursday, April 9, at 7 pm. For more information, visit the site and sign up for its newsletter.
- ◆ The Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy will host a virtual book talk by Paul Kaplan about New York’s Penn Station on Tuesday, April 21, from 7-8 pm. Inspired by Rome’s Baths of Caracalla and the Gare d’Orsay in Paris, Penn Station was called “one of the most beautiful stations in the world” at its opening in 1910. To sign up for the talk, visit www.eventbrite.com/e/new-yorks-penn-station-a-virtual-book-talk-about-an-american-landmark-tickets-100827407490. Those who sign up will be sent a link and instructions how to connect a day or two before the talk.
- ◆ For educational material, visit the websites of different Jewish movements: ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal, <https://aleph.org/>; Chabad, www.chabad.org; Orthodox Union, www.ou.org; Reconstructing Judaism, www.reconstructingjudaism.org; Society for Humanistic Judaism, <https://shj.org/>; Union for Reform Judaism, <https://urj.org/>; and United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, <https://usej.org/>.

For more resources, see page 1 of last week’s *Reporter* or visit www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5484.

On the Jewish food scene “Roadkill and cardboard”

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

“Roadkill and cardboard” was how someone described gefilte fish and matzah when she was a guest at her first seder. I know many people who agree with her description, at least when it comes to gefilte fish. Some people see it as a gross lump that doesn’t deserve to be called food. However, that’s because they never tasted my Aunt Naomi’s gefilte fish.

Maybe we didn’t make it to Scranton, PA, every year for Passover, but those are the seders I remember best. I can’t say much about the actual seder ritual: my grandfather chanted the whole thing in Hebrew, except for the four questions, and it went by in kind of a blur. What I do remember, though, is the food, or, at least, part of the food.

In fact, the opening part of the meal was always the best part. That meant the charoset (the version with apples, nuts, cinnamon and wine – which is still my favorite), the gefilte fish and the chicken soup with matzah balls. The rest of the meal could not live up to this opening. In fact, I could have lived on charoset, gefilte fish and chicken soup for the whole holiday. And, by the way, my aunt’s gefilte fish was a perfect dish for breakfast, if there was any left over. It was so good I never used horseradish on it, which, to me, is the ultimate sign of good gefilte fish. Horseradish is what you use when you need to hide the taste. (By the

way, I do like horseradish, which does a wonderful job clearing my sinuses.)

Even in college, I enjoyed going to the seder and always arrived as early as possible. I would help my aunt by taking the shells off the hard-boiled eggs and making certain the charoset had attained its normal excellence. Fortunately, the gefilte fish was already made by the time I arrived, so I never had to deal with the smell or do any of that hard work.


Over the years, I’ve had some homemade and store-made (meaning not from a jar or can) gefilte fish that were pretty good. A local caterer, who unfortunately moved, made a very different kind that I really enjoyed. A former editor at *The Reporter* used to return home with gefilte fish her parents bought at a store on Long Island and that was also very good. Sigh, now that she doesn’t work at the paper, I no longer get to taste that.

Of course, none of those compare to the gefilte fish my aunt made. The last time I tasted it was during my college years, more than 40 years ago, so I can’t confirm that it really tasted as good as I remember. My aunt had four sons and, as far as I know, none of my cousin’s wives have ever made that recipe. At least I’ve found brand I enjoy eating, but I can’t help waxing nostalgic during this holiday season – remembering the fun of being in my aunt’s kitchen waiting for the holiday to begin.

Table Continued from page 6

- 2 (15-oz.) cans tangerine sections, drained
 - 1 pineapple, peeled, cored and cut in 1-inch cubes
 - 1 cup blueberries
 - ¼ cup pistachio halves or slivered almonds (optional)
- In large saucepan over medium heat, stir together the preserves, orange juice, potato starch and cinnamon. Stir constantly until melted and combined.
- Bring to boil. Cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly
- Remove from heat. Fold in the tangerines, pineapple and blueberries. Transfer to a serving bowl.
- Just before serving, scatter pistachios or slivered almonds over top.
- Serve at room temperature.

PASSOVER GREETINGS




May your Passover be filled with miracles

Bonnie, Rachel, Brittany & Arielle Rozen




Suzanne Holwitt and Family




Shari & Rob Neuberger

Wishing you health... happiness... and the joyous spirit of Passover now and always.



Sima & Neil Auerbach



Wishing all of our friends a Happy Passover

Arieh Ullmann & Rhonda Levine

Happy Passover

Wishing you and your family peace, health and happiness this Pesach

Have a Joyous Passover



Rabbi Rachel Esserman



Wishing our friends & family a Happy Passover

Merri & Tony Zander, Anna, Maya, Dora & Ari Linka Preus



Shelley, Mark, Josh & Rae Hubal



We wish everyone a sweet & healthy Pesach.

Harold & Toby Kohn and Family



Off the Shelf

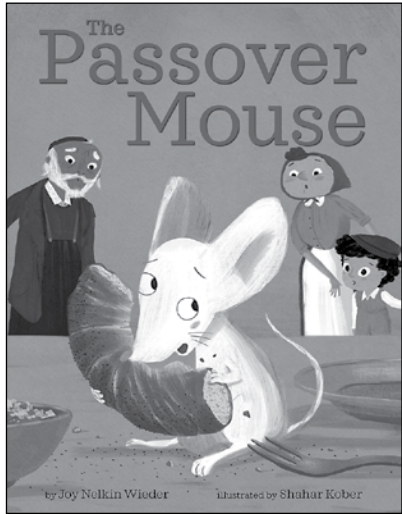
Passover picture books and a new children's haggadah

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman
Picture books for Passover

Even though I am approaching my Medicare birthday (you should be able to figure out my age from that), I still love reading children's books, including picture books. It's always interesting to see the clever ways authors and illustrators combine words and pictures to create something greater than the sum of its parts. Two new examples are "The Passover Mouse" by Joy Nelkin Wieder and illustrated by Shahar Kober (Doubleday Books for Young Readers) and "Welcoming Elijah: a Passover tale with a tail" by Lesléa Newman and illustrated by Susan Gal (Charlesbridge).

The illustrations showing a Jewish village in Europe quickly set the time and place in "The Passover Mouse." Rivka, a lonely widow, is doing her final Passover cleaning the day before the seder. However, when she enters her kitchen the next morning, she sees a mouse eating the bread she'd prepared to ceremonially burn. She chases the mouse, but he runs from her house, taking the bread with him and leaving crumbs behind. The mouse then runs into neighboring homes and soon the whole village is in an uproar. Will everyone have to do another Passover



The cover of "The Passover Mouse"

cleaning before the holiday begins?

The villagers ask their rabbi what they should do. Unfortunately, he notes that, since the sages came to no firm conclusion about this type of problem, everyone needs to clean and search their houses again to make certain that no chametz (leaven) remains. But what is poor Rivka to do since she still needs to prepare food for the seder? The answer to that question is a beautiful example of community support. There is also a lovely touch on the last page showing the importance of sharing.

The illustrations in "The Passover Mouse" are well done, particularly the facial expressions of the people, which clearly show their worry, frustration, anger and happiness. An author's note shares the question from the Talmud that inspired the story, something adults will appreciate. This is a perfect book to read both when preparing for Passover and during the holiday itself.

While "The Passover Mouse" takes place in the past, "Welcoming Elijah" occurs in contemporary times. The book shows two aspects of the world at the same time: one inside a warm house filled with light and,



The cover of "Welcoming Elijah"

in the other, the dark, cold outdoors. Inside, an unnamed boy welcomes family and friends as they gather for the seder. Outside, a kitten lives on his own struggling to survive. The book introduces readers to the different parts of the seder the boy experiences, while at the same time the kitten continues wandering alone in the cold. The two sections of the story come together when the boy opens the door for the prophet Elijah and finds the kitten outside. Welcomed into the house, the kitten, now called Elijah, finally finds a home.

"Welcoming Elijah" is an excellent way to introduce younger children to the basic outline of the seder and can also be used to generate greater discussion. The drawings create a mood that works to highlight both parts of the story: the inside is brightly lit and friendly, while the outdoor scenes are gloomy and clearly suggest the cold weather. The guests at the seder are multi-cultural, which adds a nice touch. Best of all, the sweet ending will warm the hearts of readers, young and old.

A new haggadah

Still want to hold a traditional seder and appeal to grade-school aged children? "The Koren Youth Haggadah: The Magerman Edition" developed by Dr. Daniel Rose, with illustrations by Rinat Gilboa and designed by Tani Bayer (Koren Publishers Jerusalem) may be the answer to your prayers. In addition to the traditional Hebrew text and simple English translation (there is no transliteration), it includes information about the seder and questions/activities to stimulate discussion. The quotations offered from both traditional Jewish writing and contemporary figures are excellent and thought provoking. The introduction also mentions that a parent's guide is available to help adults better utilize the material.

This haggadah encourages readers to think about the way the story relates to their own lives. It also offers a very short version of the history of the Jewish people from Abraham to the Exodus. An English language version of "Dayenu" ("It Would have Been Enough") focuses on the state of Israel from the early Zionists to Israel's contemporary role in cutting edge technology. The traditional Hebrew version is also included.

What will stand out for adults who collect haggadot (the plural of haggadah) are the beautiful and colorful illustrations. Gilboa offers her vision of everything from the plagues to a family sitting down to the meal. Especially clever was her use of stacking dolls when picturing the four sons. So, even those who aren't looking for a haggadah to use with children may want their own copy, if only for the illustrations.

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The plagues by Rinat Gilboa from "The Koren Youth Haggadah"

151 **CONCLUSION**

הסל סדור פסח גדול. ככל משפטו וזקתו כאשר וביטו לקדור אותו, בן נטה לעשותו. אך שוכן מעונה, קומם קהל עזרת מי מנה קרב נהל נטיע כנה, פרויים לעין ברנה.

לשנה הבאה בירושלים הבנויה.

If you are outside of Israel, count the first night of the Omer on the second night of Pesach.

ביום יום אהוד בעמנו.

You are blessed, Hashem our God, King of the universe, who has made us holy through His commandments, and has commanded us about counting the Omer.

TODAY IS THE FIRST DAY OF THE OMER!

152 **נרצה**

Close your eyes and think of a time you experienced Seder night in Jerusalem (or what you imagine it would feel like). Did it make your Seder night more meaningful? How so?

Jerusalem became the destination of the Jewish journey, which began with Abraham and Sara and will be complete only at the end of days... To be a Jew is to join the journey of our people, the story of Pesach and the long walk across centuries and continents from exile to homecoming. There is no story like it, and the journey is not yet complete.

The Jonathan Sachs Haggadah

? What does Jerusalem have to do with the Seder?

The concluding pages of the seder with illustrations by Rinat Gilboa from "The Koren Youth Haggadah"

Community Calendar

The Community Calendar can be found on the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's website, www.jfgeb.org, by clicking on "calendar." Updates or additions of events for the calendar can be made by contacting the Federation through its website (click on "calendar" and then "click here to request a change to the calendar") or by calling 724-2332.

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Israeli universities, institutes lead fight against coronavirus

By Eliana Rudee

(JNS)—Israeli universities and institutes – and their affiliated academics, researchers, doctors, scientists and students – are leading the fight against the coronavirus. Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, Rambam Health Care Campus, Migal Galilee Research Institute and the Sheba Medical Center are each at the forefront of medical technologies and innovation, task forces, methods and vaccines in the making that are working to protect the spread of the COVID-19 virus that has become a global pandemic over the last few months.

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev’s president Professor Daniel Chamovitz recently announced a task force to “harness the university’s vast brain power, research skills and ingenuity to help cope with the coronavirus pandemic,” maintaining that it is “our moral obligation to contribute to coping with this pandemic.”

In a meeting attended by 50 scientists from diverse departments within the university, ideas were presented and the task force broke into several groups working on the most promising projects and collaborations, including self-sterilizing facemasks, medical emergency drones, a coronavirus test that could take just five minutes using chip technology, and a telemedicine and remote triage system.

“BGU is working to be the leading university in Israel in providing a comprehensive multidisciplinary coronavirus response effort,” said Doug Seserman, CEO of the American Associates of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

Professor Nadav Davidovitch, director of the School of Public Health at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, shared his optimism with JNS that “this is not Armageddon, and these situations can lead to innovation.

“Since we have national health insurance, we have excellent electronic records and integration between clinic and community,” he added.

“Israel has been preparing for this kind of event for at least two decades with the establishment of an epidemiological response and intervention team,” said Davidovitch. “We have a very strong system for lab testing, a strong surveillance system for influenza outbreaks and a strong public health system well-trained to do epidemiological investigations.”

Researchers at Israel’s Technion-Israel Institute of Technology and Rambam Health

Care Campus have successfully tested a new method called “pooling,” which they claim will dramatically increase the country’s ability to test for COVID-19 efficiently.

Enabling simultaneous testing of dozens of samples, according to the researchers, the method will greatly accelerate the rate of COVID-19 testing and detection. Only in rare cases where the joint sample is found to be positive will individual tests be needed for each of the specific samples.

Applying the test when the frequency of infection in the population is low, Idan Yelin, a researcher in the Technion Faculty of Biology, told JNS, will “allow for identifying infection cases very early on, before an outbreak is apparent.

“The great thing about this method is that it can be used immediately,” he said, as “it uses the same equipment and kits that are being used routinely, while conserving scarce reagents.

“Many people throughout the world found our method interesting and have contacted us,” added Yelin.

“As far as we know, this method is not currently being used anywhere [else],” he further maintained, noting that “the idea itself is not new; it is just that a proof of concept was lacking.

“We showed that it works for this virus with the commonly used test and believe that implementing it can be extremely useful in the months to come for pandemic surveillance,” he continued, “both for identifying the scope of infection in the wide community and for routine monitoring of populations at risk.”

A newly developed Israeli vaccine for coronavirus will likely be ready for testing in less than 10 weeks, said Migal Galilee Research Institute’s CEO David Zigdon.

Funded by the Israel’s Ministry of Science and Technology and in cooperation with Israel’s Ministry of Agriculture, the research institute has been working for four years towards a vaccine that can be adapted for various viruses, which is now being focused to create a vaccine against COVID-19, the human strain of coronavirus.

According to the institute, this possibility was identified as a byproduct of Migal’s development of a vaccine against IBV (Infectious Bronchitis Virus), a disease affecting poultry. Now, Migal has made required genetic adjustments to adapt the vaccine to COVID-19, and is working to achieve the safety approvals that will enable in-vivo testing.

According to Zigdon, the institute’s goal

At right: Researchers on the COVID-19 response effort at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, from left: Professor Angel Porgador, deputy vice president for research and development; Dr. Roi Gazit; and Avishay Edrir. (Photo by Dani Machlis/BGU)



is to produce the vaccine during the next seven to nine weeks, and to achieve safety approval in another few weeks.

“This will be an oral vaccine, making it particularly accessible to the general public,” he said in a press release. “We are currently in intensive discussions with potential partners that can help accelerate the in-human trials phase and expedite the completion final product development and regulatory activities.”

Rated among the 10 best hospitals in the world in 2020 by Newsweek, experts at Israel’s Sheba Medical Center are currently on the frontlines of the coronavirus pandemic with doctors who have innovated telemedicine in treating the virus, while protecting medical staff and setting the standard of care for telemedicine during this time.

“Sheba Medical Center has emerged as a global leader when it comes to telemedicine in the fight against this pandemic,” Dr. Galia Barkai, head of telemedicine at Sheba Medical Center, told JNS.

Barkai laid out the three main ways Sheba is using telemedicine to treat and save patients, while protecting vital health-care workers. First, the facility is “transitioning standard services, such as outpatient care, to virtual visits.”

Secondly, Sheba is using telemedicine to support isolated coronavirus patients in a special facility. “We have created a new standard that has now become a national standard in Israel,” she said. “We do this via telemedicine kits containing innovative technology patients can use at home, which report to doctors in real time.”

The third, she continued, is for critically ill patients. “We designed our new dedicated COVID-19 Critical Care ICU so that nurses and physicians can treat the patient continuously at a safe distance, using various methods such as AI [artificial intelligence] to predict patient deterioration, robotics and even a minicar that allow them to get close to the patients.

“It was only possible to implement these new services so quickly at Sheba because we have been working on advanced telemedicine capabilities for years,” said Barkai. “This allowed us to scale quickly at the moment of crisis.”

While it’s not “brand-new technology” Sheba is inventing, explained Barkai, the medical center excels at leveraging existing technology and embedding it in their workflow, setting a new standard of care for hospitals and medical centers around the world.

At right: A view of a laboratory at the Migal Galilee Research Institute. (Photo courtesy of Migal Galilee Research Institute)



View of the Haifa Bay from the campus of the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in the Israeli city of Haifa on February 19. (Photo by Hadas Parush/Flash90)

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Israel Aerospace Industries works with startups developing quantum technology

By Yaakov Lappin

(JNS) – Israel’s largest aerospace company has announced a new program for assisting startups, some of which develop up-and-coming quantum technology.

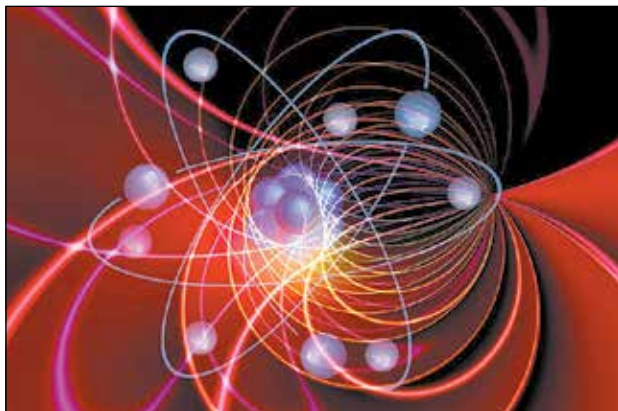
Elta systems, a division of Israel Aerospace Industries, is teaming up with the Boston-based MassChallenge startup accelerator, which will assist startups developing an array of sensors and quantum-based technology. MassChallenge also maintains a headquarters in Jerusalem.

“Our collaboration with IAI is growing closer, providing MassChallenge with a strategic partner for creating a high-quality infrastructure for startups that seek to transform their innovation into trailblazing products for the global market,” Yonit Serkin, managing director of MassChallenge Israel, said in a statement.

Israel Lupa, executive vice president and chief technological officer of Elta, told JNS that his company has been cooperating with the accelerator for a third consecutive year. Elta mentors select startups and go on to accompany some in their development process.

This year’s program will seek out startups that develop high-frequency sensors, quantum computing and other systems – some of which could be integrated with Elta’s own airborne intelligence, cyber, ground, air-defense and space systems.

“This year is unique since we set the topic: future sensing technology,” said Lupa. “This is a part of Elta’s area of activity. It is about any kind of sensing technology – optical, thermal or magnetic. Dozens of startups have signed up. Most are from Israel, but some are from Europe, Asia and



An illustration of quantum particles (Photo courtesy of Pixabay)

South America,” he noted.

The cooperation will see Elta help startups develop, meet with investors, receive assistance with marketing and sales, and receive tips on how to reach target audiences.

Quantum technology covers several fields, including computing, communications and radars – all of which have functions in the military and civilian worlds. “We are active in all of these areas,” said Lupa.

Elta is a member of the Israeli quantum consortium, established in 2019 and involving universities, the Israel Institute of Technology and private corporations. The consortium promotes the development of quantum magnetics and clocks, which provide more effective results in

products such as sensors.

A quantum-based communications system is significantly more immune to enemy eavesdropping, Lupa said, while a quantum-based radar can detect targets far more sensitively.

“What enables these capabilities is the way we gather information from basic particles like photons. We can pair photons. If we send one to a certain location and hold on to the other, we can know whether the photon we sent arrived or whether it was replaced by someone,” explained Lupa, referring to a quantum-based communications system.

A quantum radar would still send out radio-wave beams, but these would be made up of single photons and could detect the return of such photons, he added.

Quantum computing, for its parts, replaces the traditional 1 and 0 computer binary system with a system that calculates the chances of 1 and 0 – meaning that it could have both 1 and 0 at the same time, but with different probabilities. “This enables the computing of certain aspects far faster and in a more efficient manner. The computing time could be 1,000 or 10,000 times faster,” said Lupa. When combined with artificial intelligence, machines could learn on their own with the speed of quantum computing, he stated.

At the moment, only massive quantum computers exist, while quantum communications are still at the proof of concept stage. Quantum radars have made some progress. But all of this is expected to change.

“In the end, it will be a revolution,” said Lupa. “But it will not happen tomorrow. When these things become accessible to everyone, then it will be revolutionary.”

Seder

Continued from page 5

Without the grandparents and other extendeds around the seder table, each parent is going to be responsible for making this night a “powerful learning experience” for their children, as well as a joyful celebration of freedom without the usual fanfare, and gaggle of kids looking for the *afikomen*.



The Silverman kids, Phoebe and Aiden, of Sharon, MA, were getting into the Passover spirit. (Photo courtesy of the Silverman family)

Because at seder (April 8 and April 9 in the Diaspora, and just April 8 in Israel, where one seder is the rule), the kids are the intended audience, the grown-ups tasked with telling over the story of the Israelites’ release from Egyptian slavery in such a way as to keep it alive in the next generation. A story made all the more gripping with its frogs, its blood and its boils, its dramatic midnight escape to freedom, and all the more fun with its boisterous off-key renditions of “Dayenu” and “Chag Gadya.”

In fact, the haggadah makes it clear that “in every generation a person is obligated to regard himself as if he had come out of Egypt, as it is said: ‘You shall tell your child on that day, it is because of this that the Lord did for me when I left Egypt.’”



Rabbi Manis Friedman (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

Engaging the kids is why, since time immemorial, the youngest has been called on to ask “The Four Questions,” usually to the applause of adoring parents, grandparents, and aunts and uncles.

With most nuclear families having seders alone this year, who’s going to applaud? And how do the parents effectively recreate the “memory” of the escape from Egypt in their children’s minds and hearts? “The mitzvah is to keep the memory alive,” says Rabbi Manis Friedman, dean of Chabad’s Bais

Chana Institute of Jewish Studies and author of “Doesn’t Anyone Blush Anymore?” But the only way to transmit it to the kids, he adds, is “to keep it alive in yourself.”

Which means that parents would be wise to brush up on the details of the story and customs. (Whom were those 10 plagues designed to impress? Why did God let the Jewish people go free? Who visits every Jewish home on seder night? Why do we spill drops of wine on our plates?)

“This will be a difficult *Pesach*,” acknowledges Jonathan Sarna, author of “American Judaism: A History,” among other titles and the Joseph H. and Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University. “But I think we will all gain a better understanding of the plagues, which we will be able to pass on to our children.”

And for many there may be advantages of the more nuclear seder. In fact, Mandy Silverman and her husband, Danny, suspect that their kids, ages 11 and 14, will enjoy a deeper engagement with the miracles our forebearers witnessed during this powerful juncture in Jewish history. “We’ll be able to target the service for them in ways my parents can’t,” she says. “And we’ll encourage them to ask the questions they might not have asked in a bigger crowd – I’m 100 percent sure that, since they won’t be busy playing with their cousins, they’ll actually learn more.”

Indeed, when it comes to opening up this chapter of Jewish history to their children, parents are free to enhance the learning and the fun with age-appropriate activities. One such, says Rabbi Sarah Bassin, associate rabbi at Temple

Emanuel in Beverly Hills, CA, is turning the *afikomen* into a scavenger hunt “and not just a random search, but with the parents leaving clues related to the Passover story in different spots that will help guide the children to finding the matzah.”

Indeed, chief among the parents’ challenges will be to create the special seder feeling, minus the usual cast of characters. “This is the year for families to focus on the moments of joyful togetherness that are abundant in the seder, such as the passages of how Miriam led the Israelites in exuberant song and dance upon crossing the Red Sea,” says Shira Epstein, dean of the William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education of the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Because even though this year’s may be smaller and far quieter, every seder is about memory-making – for the individual child, the family and the Jewish people.

“We’ll all be storing up experiences which will, in time, become part of family lore. Imagine: no school, no *shul*, no company – our descendants will be astonished,” says Sarna. “The important message is next year we expect to get back to normal. In other words, ‘this too shall pass.’”

Contributors to this story offer the following to jumpstart parents’ seder plans:

- ◆ Make decorations in advance with Passover themes such as matzahs, the splitting of the sea and, of course, those always colorful plagues.
- ◆ Even in a small seder, dressing up as your favorite Passover character (you too, parents!) is a festive way to start things off, with older kids telling what their character did and felt like.
- ◆ During the seder, after “The Four Questions,” give each child a chance to ask a question of their own and answer it as best you can. Then turn the tables and ask each one questions on their level (some families give a nut or other treats for each right answer).
- ◆ To highlight the themes of freedom and creativity, invite family members to bring to the seder one item that reflects creativity (a drawing, a photograph they took, something they wrote).
- ◆ Older kids may be able to honestly explore how being homebound without the extended family and friends feels at Passover time. And be prepared, their answers may surprise you!

This day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations.

Exodus 12:14



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Sommelier festival gathered wine-lovers to celebrate Israel's thriving bottling industry

By Eliana Rudee

(JNS) – In the course of the last decade, Israel's wine industry has bloomed, with many Israeli bottles earning the recognition of the world's major wine experts for their quality, and becoming appreciated anew by wine lovers and connoisseurs alike.

The annual sommelier exhibition in Tel Aviv, which took place in February, provided an opportunity for professionals and the public to witness the new quality and variety of Israel's wines, as well as to experience the remarkable landscape from which Israel's wines have emerged.

The event featured tastings of Israel's award-winning vintages from both large commercial and small boutique wineries, opportunities to meet Israel's new wave of internationally trained winemakers and to talk with professionals connected to the wine industry.

Michael Averi, winemaker at Galil Mountain Winery, reflected on the changes he has seen in the industry in the last 15 years. Since moving to Israel after growing up on Australian vineyards and studying winemaking in Adelaide, Australia, Averi has seen a "revolution" in Israel – first starting with Israel's culinary scene, which carried over to the boom in its wine scene.

"The quality of smaller boutique wineries and even larger ones have jumped up," he told JNS at the Sommelier exhibition. "When I went out for a drink 10 years ago in Israel, I'd tell my friends who wanted to try local wines, 'Oh, you don't want to drink that,' but now, you get a very good level of quality for your money."

According to Averi, as the Israeli palate matured with its grapes, Israelis began to drink more Mediterranean blends, especially white and sparkling varieties that have trended in the global market, and are suitable for the climate and food in the region.

Now, he said, Israel's wine industry is moving toward more R&D, international collaboration and sustainability. Referring to these various trends, he said, "it will happen, but it will take time. Wine is a slow-moving industry compared to high-

tech because it's traditional."

He continued, "Because it is a small industry here, collaborating and education, as well as understanding our climate and terroir are important," explained Averi. "We will need to share knowledge and resources to make that jump."

According to Averi, Galil Mountain Winery is leading the push toward sustainability by using fewer chemicals and pesticides in its wine-making process.

"Eventually, we will all have to go in this direction, and reducing chemicals makes the wine taste better," he maintained.

Katalin Pintacsi, managing director of European Coopers, has been selling Hungarian barrels to Israeli wineries this past decade as the industry has developed. Distributing to more than 10 wineries in Israel, including Yatir, Tulip, Psagot, Gvaot and many others, she told JNS that she has seen some Israeli wine surmount even some of France's iconic wine. "I've been in the wine industry for 15 years and now... I couldn't imagine that I'd find such high-quality wines," she said. "Israel is small, but within the country there are big differences in the climate, which create different and high-quality varieties of wine."

Though aware that some European countries boycott Israeli products such as wine, Pintacsi maintained that "we separate politics from our business."

Adir winery's wine-bar manager Mordecai Kohelet Israel, who has worked for the company for eight years and participated in the Sommelier festival this year for the first time, called it the "best wine event to date."

He noted that the Israeli wine industry "has grown rapidly over the last decade, and we are now producing excellent wines. Almost all the wineries are successful with very few closures."

Some 50 percent of Adir's 200,000 bottles produced per year, Israel told JNS, are exported, mainly to the United States.

Making *aliyah* to the Jewish state in 1994 from London, he said the move "made me a more complete Jew by coming home and retaking the gift God

gave us thousands of years ago."

At the same time *aliyah* is central to the Jewish faith, so, too, is wine, he stated. "Wine was part of the libation sacrifice in the Temple. God only wants the best, and Adir and all the other Israeli wineries are working on just that!"



At right: Katalin Pintacsi, managing director of European Coopers, has been selling Hungarian barrels to Israeli wineries this past decade as the industry has developed. (Photo by Eliana Rudee)



At right: A view of the Adir winery (Photo by Eliana Rudee)



At left: Adir Winery CEO Yossi Rosenberg at the sommelier festival in Tel Aviv. (Photo by Zohar Halal)

Progress Continued from page 2

the might of the rest of the Middle East and then, with the financial help of the Diaspora, provide homes for hundreds of thousands of survivors of the Holocaust in Europe and a still larger total of Jews who were forced to flee their homes in the Arab and Islamic world?

Since then, Israel has faced existential challenges, as well as daunting economic, political and military problems.

For the last five decades, we've been told that Israel cannot thrive or survive in the long run without peace with the Palestinian Arabs, only to see it grow stronger and wealthier during that period even though an end to the conflict is nowhere in sight.

In the 1980s, it wasn't clear how Israel – still a poor country where consumer goods like appliances or even jeans were in short supply – could navigate an economic crisis that had wrecked the value of its currency in an inflationary crisis.

Several years after that, it was uncertain how the Jewish state could afford to house more than a million new immigrants from the former Soviet Union and then integrate them into its society.

The Socialist ideals of the *kibbutz* had morphed into an economic model that was a disaster. State control of industries and services had created a situation in which growth was strangled by a bureaucratic culture in which it took years to get a phone installed.

But less than three decades later, a Third World backwater has become a First World powerhouse, with many of its enemies recognizing that the nation is simply too strong and too wealthy to be destroyed. Though the process of change was hampered by

corruption and inefficiencies, the result has still been a dramatic makeover that is the envy of the world.

It's once insoluble water problems have been ameliorated, if not solved, by high-tech solutions of desalination and recycling. And the discovery of natural-gas fields gave the lie to the old joke about Moses leading the Children of Israel to the only place in the region without natural resources.

The Israel of today is unrecognizable to those who last saw it decades ago. Jewish genius and hard work have already made miracles many times over the course of its history. Its success has, as the *Times* reported, bred new and serious problems hard to imagine being solved by the current crop of leaders.

And yet, these problems will eventually be solved, though undoubtedly imperfectly and with the maximum noise, fuss and political controversy that is evocative of Israel. The Jewish state recognizes that it escapes doom every day. In less than the average life expectancy of an American or Israeli, it has been transformed over and over again into a place that both delights and infuriates its inhabitants and its millions of visitors.

No matter who finally wins Israel's election, today's dilemmas will eventually be replaced by tomorrow's difficulties. Those who lament that it is unlivable should remember that its current crop of First World problems are a lot better than the ones it used to face. And by now, we should all know that betting against Israel is always a losing proposition.

Jonathan S. Tobin is editor-in-chief of JNS – Jewish News Syndicate. Follow him on Twitter, @jonathans_tobin.

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Whirlwind week ends with unity government in Israel, Netanyahu remaining at the helm

By Dov Lipman

(JNS) – After nearly a year of political paralysis, Israel is finally on its way toward a national unity government as the nation battles against the unprecedented coronavirus pandemic.

ANALYSIS

Benny Gantz, who has stood as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's chief rival through three

consecutive election cycles, announced that his party faction would join Netanyahu's right-wing coalition to form a new government.

According to the terms of the agreement, Netanyahu will serve as prime minister for 18 months before handing the premiership as part of a rotation to Gantz, who will serve under Netanyahu as deputy prime minister and defense minister for the first 18 months, and then become prime minister in September 2021.

Gantz's dramatic move jolted Israel's political system. The agreement led to the collapse of Gantz's own Blue and White Party.

Senior party members Yair Lapid and Knesset member Moshe Ya'alon, who each led separate factions within the larger Blue and White alignment, rejected joining a government led by Netanyahu. The pair have officially split from Gantz, and filed a motion to retain the name Blue and White as they prepare to sit in opposition to the government.

From the Knesset floor, where he currently serves as temporary speaker, Gantz explained his decision, saying, "This is not the time for fighting and splits. This is the time for responsible statesmanship, patriotism and leadership."

He called to the citizens of Israel and said, "Let's join hands and lead Israel out of this crisis."

Likud Knesset member Yoav Kisch told JNS that his party "blesses Netanyahu and Gantz for this courageous step. We are dealing with a health and economic crisis like we have never seen, and the public demanded that we as leaders act with responsibility."

Israeli Defense Minister Naftali Bennett, of the right-wing Yamina Party, told JNS that "this is the right thing for Israel in this emergency."

Knesset member Yair Lapid attacked Gantz for breaking Blue and White's promise not to sit with Netanyahu as he awaits the start of a trial on three separate counts of bribery and breach of trust. "He crawled into Netanyahu's government... gave up without a fight," said Lapid. "Over a million voters feel cheated, and that their votes were



Blue and White Party leader Benny Gantz passed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at a memorial ceremony in the Knesset marking 24 years since the assassination of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, on November. (Photo by Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

stolen and given to Netanyahu.

"Corona," he said, referring to the pandemic spreading around the globe, "is not a permit to give up on our values."

Knesset member Merav Michaeli of the Labor Party sarcastically congratulated Gantz for "joining a government led by an indicted prime minister." She then turned toward him and said, "You promised not to join with Netanyahu. There is no unity with those who are destroying Israel."

The details of the new coalition are still being worked out, but it will most likely include 75 seats: Likud (36), Gantz's Israel Resilience (15), Shas (9), United Torah Judaism (7) and Yamina (6), along with MKs Tzvi Hauser and Yoaz Hendel from the Telem faction. Hauser and Hendel are former Netanyahu advisers who have been the strongest advocates for a unity government.

Preliminary reports indicate that Netanyahu will give Gantz's party an equal number of ministries to his own much larger Likud Party. Netanyahu has agreed to appoint former Israel Defense Forces' chief of staff and Gantz ally Gabi Ashkenazi as minister of foreign affairs, and Chili Tropper as justice minister.

It is unclear what role Netanyahu will have in 18 months once Gantz becomes prime minister because the law only permits that governmental position to maintain office while under indictment. Ministers with other portfolios are required by law to resign. The new government could pass a revised law allowing a minister to serve while under indictment.

Gantz has also requested the economy, agriculture, environment, communications and culture ministries.

Several ministers, including from Netanyahu's Likud, will be forced to relinquish their portfolios. Bennett, chairman of Yamina, who is set to vacate his current post as defense minister, told JNS that so far, "the news about portfolios is fake news. Netanyahu has not spoken to me about this issue as of yet."

In a turnabout, Knesset member Yuli Edelstein, who resigned recently when the Supreme Court required him to call a vote for a new speaker of the Parliament, will most likely return to his post in the new government.

The opposition will now likely be headed by Knesset member Yair Lapid, whose remaining Blue and White will be joined by the Labor-Meretz alignment, Avigdor Lieberman's Yisrael Beiteinu Party and the Joint Arab List.

Despite Gantz receiving the recommendation of 61 Knesset members to serve as prime minister, it quickly became clear that he could not form a government without linking up with Likud.

While the Joint List recommended Gantz over Netanyahu, the Arab alliance of parties was not set to join Blue and White in a coalition government, and many members of Blue and White also opposed such an alliance. Members of Netanyahu's 58-seat right-wing and religious bloc similarly refused to join a Gantz-led government, leaving Gantz with few options and steering Israel towards a fourth consecutive election.

Netanyahu put out a direct public appeal while dealing with an escalating coronavirus crisis on March 24, saying, "Benny Gantz, this is a moment which tests leadership and national responsibility. The citizens of Israel need a unity government that will work to save their lives and their livelihoods. This is not the time for a fourth election. We both know that the gaps between us are small, and we can overcome them. Let's meet now and establish a unity government. I am waiting for you."

While the parties have agreed to form a government, "intense" negotiations are now taking place on the technical makeup of the coalition. Gantz's party seeks legal mechanisms to ensure that Netanyahu will indeed turn the post of prime minister over to Gantz in September 2021, and not simply collapse the government and call for a new election once his 18 months as his term as prime minister come to an end.

It's been quite a month – quite a political year, in fact – from start to finish, with this agreement ending one of the most bitter and protracted election seasons in Israel's history.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

U.S. and Israel conduct F-35 exercise without face-to-face bilateral meetings

The United States and Israel conducted a joint F-35 exercise on March 29 in the Jewish state. The Enduring Lightning training exercise consisted of "a wide variety of operational theaters while strengthening the cooperation between the forces," said the Israeli Air Force in a statement. The drill consisted of F-35s from the USAF's 34th fighter squadron training alongside Israeli Adir F-35s aircraft from the IAF's 140 Golden Eagle Squadron, in addition to the IAF's 122 squadron, which manages the Nahshon Gulfstream G-500 aircraft. The leader of the exercise, Maj. M, was quoted on IAF's website as stating that "this will be the second time we'll fly alongside an American F-35. We aspire to stay as connected as possible to countries involved in its development project, and training with the Americans presents an excellent opportunity to do so since they have a lot of knowledge and expertise on the matter. The exercise we conducted was intimate. The forces flew in two formations of four and communicated directly, as opposed to through an indirect channel." There was no person-to-person contact due to the coronavirus pandemic. Instead, according to the statement, "the IAF and the USAF teams engaged only in the air, and briefed and debriefed all parties via remote video conference."

Jerusalem Orchestra goes virtual with original piece written by conductor

The Jerusalem Orchestra East and West performed virtually recently with its 36 musicians playing music from their

homes in New York and Israel. Under the leadership of Tom Cohen, the orchestra's artistic director and chief conductor, the musicians played a new original piece called "Darbuka La Corona," written by Cohen. The nearly three-minute clip of their performance was posted on the orchestra's Facebook page and has already garnered more than 1,000 views since being uploaded on March 25. Cohen wrote on the orchestra's Facebook page: "One morning during the first week of this corona frenzy, I suddenly realized that for me, as well as for my orchestra's members, this is the first time in 11 years we do not wake up for days of rehearsals, concerts, arrangements, composition and other creative activities that have become our daily routine. When I realized that the orchestra's WhatsApp group continued to be vibrant and active – I immediately sat down to do the only thing I know how ... I wrote a small piece that aims to make us all happy and show our love and familiarity (sic), that is more powerful than anything else. I wanted it to be both very simple yet complexed, 'high' but at eye level – just like us." He added, "I hope these sounds and images, of all 35 members of the orchestra, regardless their age, religion, gender or origin – from Majd al krum to Ashkelon, from Jerusalem to New York – celebrating love and longing for friendship and music, will help us all go through this period together."

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Millennials search for meaning and authenticity when it comes to Judaism

By Deborah Fineblum

(JNS) – When Rebekah Paster moved to New York City, she was just out of college and knew almost no one there. “So when a friend insisted I had to go to the nearest Moishe House,” she said, “I was blown away with how warm and welcoming they were. And I can say now I’ve met a lot of my really good friends through Moishe House, people I’d never have met otherwise.”

Not only did the place make her feel at home in a big city full of strangers, but at 25, Paster is now one of the three young adults living in the Moishe House in the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn. The trio is responsible for hosting everything from Shabbat dinners and holiday parties to rooftop yoga classes, rock-climbing outings and social-justice activities, like collecting books to send to prisons. Events can pull in more than 1,000 young adults each year.

“Moishe House has taught me that I can infuse my Jewish life in ways that may or may not be explicatively religious,” she says. “That I can be proud of my Jewish identity in whatever form that takes.”

And the form Jewish expression takes is changing for many millennials – a generation defined by the Pew Research Center as those born between 1981 and 1996, and sandwiched between Generation X (born 1965-1980) and Generation Z (1997-present).

Today’s millennials (they are also referred to as Generation Y) find themselves with all kinds of organizations in hot pursuit – from advertisers to graduate schools to employers. And in Jewish America, where indications abound that most of them (more about the observant ones later) are less traditionally identified and engaged than earlier generations, there’s a new and growing crop of initiatives designed to pull them into Jewish life, if not the mainstream then some millennial-flavored version of it.

Driving many of these strategic efforts is a number of studies pointing to millennials’ dwindling Jewish identity and engagement, and seeking to pinpoint the generation’s patterns of belief and behavior. Just out: one commissioned by Hakhel the Jewish Intentional Community Incubator, based on responses by 125 Jewish millennials, all of whom are active in one of Hakhel’s “intentional” communities (involving young Jews in activities around shared values and interests) in 35 countries.

A division of Hazon, an organization that describes itself as “strengthening Jewish life and contributing to a more environmentally sustainable world for all,” Hakhel commissioned the Do-Et Institute to conduct the study to identify this generation’s values and priorities. So says Hakhel founder and general director Aharon Ariel Lavi, noting, “It showed overwhelmingly that they don’t drift away from their Jewish identity, but from old-fashioned institutions.”



Young adults participated in a “Downtown Cocktail Shabbat” with Chabad Young Professionals. (Photo courtesy of Chabad Young Professionals)

Indeed, only 30 percent of respondents said they had any interest in joining a synagogue, and only 7.5 percent were interested in the work of Jewish Federations and community centers. But in what Lavi calls “the silver lining,” 84 percent were interested in Jewish learning and holiday/life-cycle activities, and 46 percent were attracted to Jewish arts and culture.

“The organized Jewish community has been aware of the drifting of millennials from its ranks for many years,” adds Lavi. “What this research shows is the extent of that disengagement on the one hand, but also the creative alternatives that are sprouting from below on the other.”

The study’s results echo many of the findings of a recent Jewish People Policy Institute report on millennials concluding that “hyper-individualism and slackening trust or interest in institutions and authority leads many young Jews to eschew denominational identity and affiliation with establishment institutions. This leads to seeking alternative and more ‘niche’ expressions of Jewish identity.”

This shift reflects a larger trend, according to a leading observer of the Jewish scene. “America is in the midst of a religious recession; it’s not just a Jewish issue,” says Jonathan Sarna, the Joseph H. and Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University. “Pew has clearly documented millennials moving away from traditional religion, most of them claiming to be ‘spiritual but not religious.’”

This reflects fundamental demographic shifts from previous generations, he adds. Chief among them: Intermarriage and the age of marriage is older than any time in human history. For the so-called “Seinfeld” generation, many remain single until their late 30s, and those who do have children often don’t become parents until they’re nearing 40. “By that time, for many of them it’s been 20 years since they’ve been in a synagogue because most synagogues are not seen as welcoming to singles,” says Sarna.

The exception, typically ignored by the studies, he notes, are the roughly 10 percent of American millennials who are Orthodox, and tend to marry and have children younger and be more involved in synagogue life.

According to the JPPI report: “Engaging young Jews, who often feel out of place in mainstream institutions, due to low Jewish literacy or other identity components (sexual orientation, political views, etc.) requires a vastly different approach.”

So what kind of approach does attract this generation? Many of the initiatives that are most successful in pulling in young Jews, according to the report, are “independent of established denominational or national movements. They question the benefits of belonging to a national denomination and stress nimbleness as an advantage.”

Or as Hakhel community participant Bradly Caro Cook puts it: “Our generation is looking for something authentic,” says the Las Vegas millennial. “We’re not going to do Judaism by the numbers and metrics.”

Among the crop of new organizations designed to meet this new generation of Jews where they live:

◆ Moishe House was among the first on the millennial scene: “When we started out in 2006, there was a black hole for post-college Jewish young adults,” says founder and CEO David Cygielman. “Some have a strong Jewish identity, but are disengaged; others never had it. But they all want to be part of a meaningful Jewish community where you know everyone and they know you; we’re combating loneliness at a time when it’s rampant.” The Moishe House formula: Find a neighborhood with a population of young Jews and a Jewish community (most often, the Federation, local donors and family foundations) committed to supporting the Moishe House model. That has resulted in 115 of them – and they just signed a lease for No. 116, in Rome. Some 70,000 young adults turned



A OneTable Shabbat dinner for young Jewish adults. (Photo by Natalie Zigdon Photography)

out for programs last year in “vibrant home-based Jewish communities,” says Cygielman, adding that they’re adding more immersive Jewish learning and Israel programming.

◆ Base Hillel was born in 2015, when Faith Leener and her freshly ordained rabbi husband Jonathan moved to Brooklyn and began hosting Shabbat dinners. “We started thinking, how can we impact the young people asking for Jewish learning without knowing they’re asking for it?” she says. “We saw that they wanted meaning and community, but weren’t going to syna-

gogue for it.” With friends Rabbi Avram Mlotek and Yael Kornfeld, they soon linked up with Hillel International’s office of innovation, and were off and running with a brand of “radical hospitality” featuring Jewish learning, holiday celebrations and social-justice projects. Now the executive director, Leener lives in Base Brooklyn with her family, and oversees the nine bases run by young rabbinic families and underwritten mostly by local grants from Federations, Hillel and others. The Bases, mostly along the East Coast – with one in Ithaca – and another in Berlin – serve 6,000 young Jews annually. “We’re post-denominational, but deeply rooted in Jewish tradition,” says Leener. “It’s not do-it-yourself Judaism, but letting go of the labels and immersing in each Jewish communal experience – be it in text, ritual, Shabbat, holidays or life-cycle counseling.”

◆ OneTable was designed to welcome young Jewish adults to Friday-night Shabbat dinners hosted by their peers. Each week, OneTable, which has been described as “a social dining app that helps people of all religious backgrounds celebrate inclusive Shabbat meals,” averages 190 dinners across the United States. Support comes from grants from Federations, local philanthropists and Jewish foundations that help underwrite the meals served in participants’ homes. The idea has caught on, and in the last five years since founding Executive Director Aliza Kline cooked up the idea, more than 30,000 Friday-night dinners have been served to young adults. According to their website, its ultimate goal: for the Shabbat dinner experience to become “a platform for community building... for those ‘who otherwise would be absent from Jewish community.’”

◆ GatherDC, unlike the initiatives above with locations in a number of communities, began a decade ago to offer community-based Jewish experiences to young Jews in the Washington, DC, area. On tap: interactive Jewish learning, twice-yearly retreats, social-justice projects, and Shabbat and holiday celebrations. They also have coffee with every newcomer – “not just to find out what they want to do, but who they are,” says its community rabbi, Ilana Zietman, a millennial born in 1989. “We offer them a Judaism they never got growing up,” she adds. “They say, ‘This Torah portion has so much of my life in it. I never knew it existed.’ Meaning we have to work harder to showcase what’s beautiful about Judaism, and build community people are craving and where they feel valued.” GatherDC is supported by Jewish family foundations, local Federations and private donors.

“The identity of American Jews for most of the 20th century was rooted in ethnicity, love of the Jewish people, fear of antisemitism, horror and guilt over the Holocaust, commitment to Soviet Jewry, and love of and concern for the state of Israel,” writes Barry Shrage who, after 31 years at the helm of Boston’s Federation, Combined Jewish Philanthropies, is now a professor in Brandeis University’s Hornstein Jewish Professional Leadership Program. “But assimilation inevitably erodes ethnic identification... and there’s never been a more powerful assimilating culture than America in the 21st century.”

The best defense against assimilation, argues Shrage, is “Jewish peoplehood. You can’t learn Jewish identity; See “Millennials” on page 16

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U.S. State Dept. offers up to \$1 million to address inclusion for marginalized communities in Israel

By JNS staff

(JNS) – The U.S. State Department is offering a grant between \$750,000 and \$1 million for project to address inclusion for marginalized communities in Israel.

The department’s Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (or DRL) seeks to address “the barriers to economic opportunities in marginalized groups, particularly the Arab-Israeli and Ethiopian communities, with a specific focus on political and civic engagement, improving the socio-economic inclusion of minorities within these communities, and reducing discrimination and community-based violence,” said the department in an announcement

on March 20. Between one and two grants are expected to be awarded, and the project would be between 18 and 24 months long, according to the announcement.

Proposals surrounding “economic empowerment activities or vocational training will be considered technically ineligible. Program activities are intended to address systemic barriers, not create short-term livelihoods or vocational training opportunities.”

Examples include “opportunities for beneficiaries to apply their new knowledge and skills in practical efforts; solicitation of feedback and suggestions from beneficiaries when developing activities in order to strengthen

the sustainability of programs and participant ownership of project outcomes; and input from participants on sustainability plans and systematic review of the plans throughout the life of the project, with adjustments made as necessary.”

The program could also include “inclusion of vulnerable populations; joint identification and definition of key concepts with relevant stakeholders and stakeholder input into project activities; and systematic follow-up with beneficiaries at specific intervals after the completion of activities to track how beneficiaries are retaining new knowledge, as well as applying their new skills.”

Israeli teens learn public diplomacy skills to serve as ambassadors abroad

By Shiryn Ghermezian

(JNS) – Itay Green, 16, wants to improve the way Israel is perceived by people outside the country. When traveling with his family to visit British relatives in London or even to the United States, the Tel Aviv resident said he’s heard horrible things about Israel and disapproval when he mentioned where he’s from. It bothered him so much he felt he had to do something about it.

Merav Habte, 16, from Ma’ale Adumim, whose parents were born in Ethiopia, wanted to learn about the rise of antisemitism in the world and how to counter it, as well as ways of expressing her own personal stories about Israel and her family’s experiences to others.

That’s why they signed up for an initiative, started in November by the pro-Israel organization StandWithUs, called Tevel (“universe” in Hebrew), which focuses on teaching Israeli high-schoolers about leadership and diplomacy – namely, how to present Israel accurately abroad.

The participants, all in 10th grade, meet weekly either in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv and hear from speakers – many of them StandWithUs alumni or team members – about Israel’s history, development, economy and perception, among other topics.

Some of the subjects Green and Habte, along with other teens in the program, analyze include how to differentiate legitimate and illegitimate criticism about Israel; the image of Israel from an outside perspective; the goals of the BDS movement; complexities in Israeli society and how they appear outside of the country; Israel’s history in an activist’s perspective; minorities in Israel; debate skills

and how to answer tough questions about Israel; how to speak in front of a camera; and the history of the United Nations, with its biases and often negative influences on Israel, and about its policies and military.

Muhammad Zuabi, an Arab-Israeli soldier in the Israel Defense Forces, spoke to the students about his decision to defend his homeland, the eventual support he got from his parents – despite their initial shock and confusion – and also how the fight for Israel’s right to exist is “not only a Jewish fight, but an Israeli fight,” said Green.

“The goal of Tevel is to be an educational platform that gives young Israeli leaders a place to grow as leaders with a strong connection to their country,” its director, Alon Sternberg, told JNS. “I want to teach the students about the challenges that Israel face in the global arena and how to respond. I want to find the young passionate students that won’t have the chance to express themselves in school and give them a chance to blossom.”

Currently, 40 students are enrolled in the program, half girls and half boys, with half from Tel Aviv and half from Jerusalem.

Field trips complement the lectures and in-class learning. During a recent visit to the Knesset, for example, they met with Giora Furdís, a spokesperson of the Israeli election committee who offered ideas about how to make the voting process easier.

Participants must also volunteer to boost their hands-on knowledge of Israel’s culture, heritage, history and demographic composition to use in sharing personal stories and experiences abroad. Some students collect and donate food to those who can’t afford meals; others work with Holocaust survivors, young children or those with special needs.

Green has been volunteering at a senior-care facility near Tel Aviv for a month now. He said he has been inspired by the residents, including one man who was 14 when he helped with the war effort in 1948, just as the state of Israel was established. “The incredible things that he did when he was 14 I can’t imagine doing when I’m even 18,” acknowledged Green. “I’m just generally in awe of the amazing stuff that they’ve done.”

As for Habte, she and a friend are starting their own project, where a chef will teach Arab and Jewish children how to cook each other’s cuisines in an effort to improve relations and stress commonalities of living in the Middle East.

Tevel participants attend different high schools in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and come from diverse backgrounds and beliefs, both religious and secular. What unites them is their passion for Israel and the desire to help tell Israel’s



Itay Green at the Tevel opening ceremony at the StandWithUs education center in Jerusalem. (Photo by Or Tsfati)

story to the world. The students are encouraged to use English to communicate with non-Hebrew speakers when traveling outside of Israel.

During one session focused on “answering tough questions,” students practiced (and then were coached on) how to respond to accusations against Israel, such as it being a racist country, an “apartheid state” and not a democracy.

Green remembers practicing in class how to respond to the claim that the West Bank is “the largest prison on earth,” run by Israel.

He said students were taught why the security wall was erected in the first place – to help protect Israeli civilians against violence and terrorism encouraged by Palestinian leadership – and step-by-step techniques on countering such arguments to “get the message across in the most optimal way,” including making sure that askers not feel attacked or offended, so they can really listen to responses.

“At first, we need to sympathize with them,” said Habte. “Tell them, ‘OK, this is a really good question’ and try to get to know the person first. That’s how we’ll get people to listen to us.”

The session on how to answer tough questions has been Habte’s favorite in the program so far and also one of the most important things she has ever learned, she told JNS.

She recalled an instance in Chicago when someone told her that Israel does not exist – that it’s really Palestine. Habte said, “To be honest, I had no idea what to say. I was just shocked and quiet. So this session really helped me know what I need to do. Now I have more confidence in myself that I know what to say and how to respond.”

See “Teens” on page 17



Tevel participants next to the Green Line with Yoni Zierler, director of StandWithUs Discover. (Photo by Or Tsfati)

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Millennials Continued from page 14

you have to experience it to create a love for the Jewish people.” What’s more, he adds that “one of the most powerful experiences for this generation is Birthright Israel,” the 10-day trip to Israel which nearly half of them have taken. “It’s having a powerful impact on them.”

Indeed, studies show the 750,000 Birthright travelers are much more likely to marry other Jews, raise Jewish children and stay connected to Israel, says Len Saxe, who directs both the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies and the Steinhardt Social Research Institute at Brandeis. Still, he acknowledges that times have changed. “These young Jews are broadening what it means to be involved Jewishly and doing it in new ways.”

Saxe says it reminds him of Israel, where more than half the country is not religious, “but Friday nights are for family to eat together. So for young Jews here having Friday night at OneTable, who’s to say they’re less engaged?”

Evidence abounds that young Jews are seeking religious communities that are alive and warm, and that can add real meaning to their lives, says Shrage. Among congregations experiencing success in drawing in millennials are Boston’s Temple Israel, whose Riverway Project is designed to meet their young members where they live (among them, many studying medicine down the street) and Sixth & I, a synagogue as well as a center for arts, entertainment and ideas in Washington, DC, that “reimagines how religion and community can enhance people’s everyday lives.”

Another young-flavored variation on the synagogue theme is The Den Collective, whose rabbis conduct a range of services in suburban Washington homes and elsewhere. They describe themselves as seeking to “build spaces of meaning that invite people to deepen their connection to Judaism, feel part of a community and enrich their lives. The Den strives to be collaborative, experimental, transparent and radically welcoming.”

Says Sarna: “Of the Jewish religious start-ups today – the emergent congregations, partnership services, independent minyanim and more – many of them will not survive, but some of them will make it very, very big and reshape American Judaism in the decades to come.”

Also pioneering meeting this generation of Jews is the Chabad-Lubavitch movement, which has long made an art of including Jews of all backgrounds. Specifically, in the last seven years, it’s been drawing millennials to Chabad Young Professionals International, which has about 120 couples around the globe serving young Jews with a range of programming, meals, workshops, and Shabbat and holiday celebrations in areas where they tend to live and work.

“They went into neighborhoods where few young Jewish adults were engaged and where now there are big vibrant communities of young Jews,” says the network’s director, Rabbi Beryl Frankel. “They’re looking for a sense of community, and also to make friends and meet their significant other, but they have to feel ‘It’s not my parents’ Judaism. It’s my Judaism,’ and based on that, we’ve seen them go from apathy to ‘I love this, I care about this, I want to pass it onto my kids someday.’”

One CYP couple is Rabbi Sholom and Mushky Brook, millennials themselves working with their peers in Uptown Minneapolis. “There’s something unique about our generation; we’re empowered to do things independently. We want the full truth, and we want to be part of something bigger,” says the rabbi. “We tell them that labels are for T-shirts, and you don’t have to be ‘religious’ to be 100 percent Jewish, and to be involved in our networking programs, holiday events or social-justice projects, or even just to enjoy my wife’s cooking on Friday night.”

Judaism’s largest movements are also working in creative ways to welcome this new generation.

“With the average age of marriage and having children so much higher than in the past, it’s a nomadic period for many young adults, so we can’t sit around waiting for them to come to us,” says Rabbi Joshua Rabin, senior director of



Kayla Phillips in New York hosted a OneTable Shabbat dinner for young Jewish adults. (Photo courtesy of OneTable via Facebook)

synagogue leadership at the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. In an effort to be proactive, synagogues, especially in urban centers, are sponsoring events designed just for them. “Many of these are a separate brand and hold user-friendly events outside the walls of the synagogue, in private homes or public spaces.” The advantage: By connecting with one aspect of the congregation, they will “always have a place to come back to when they’re ready. We need to understand their desire for meaning and purpose, and give free samples instead of assuming it’s like the old days when first you join a synagogue and then you find out what it has to offer.”

Within the Reform movement, they’ve researched how and why young people engage, identified who’s having success with the age group and “developed a pipeline to engage the disengaged or unaffiliated,” says the Union of Reform Judaism’s director of emerging networks Rabbi Adam B. Grossman. “What we consistently find is that this age group has a lot of positive qualities that are going to reshape the Jewish world today and ultimately tomorrow. And, as the largest and most diverse movement, we’re able to do some incredibly innovative work in our congregations to create a framework for opportunities to connect and grow, and to create meaning for the individual and the community, plus develop the leaders to support that communal growth.”

The Orthodox Union also recently held a conference to explore best practices for engaging young adults, says Rabbi Adir Posey, OU’s director of synagogue and community services. “We had lots of millennials and stake-holders sharing wisdom because, even though the Orthodox community has the strong advantage of having the traditional family as a central component, we also need to create best practices that can bridge the gap between traditional organizations and this generation.” On the table were emerging communities, both online and off, and creative ways to meet millennials’ needs within pre-existing communal structures “without having it feel stodgy.” One theme that came across loud and clear: “People become engaged only if and when they feel they actually have an impact.”

A backbone institution in Jewish life, the Federation system has as its primary task to care for the needs of the Jewish community around the world. But how does such a gigantic enterprise – the Jewish Federations of North America, or JFNA, represents 146 Federations and more than 300 Network communities, which raise and distribute more than \$3 billion annually, as well as lobbying government agencies for another \$10 billion in public funds to support thousands of human-services agencies serving people of all backgrounds – pull a new and often disinterested generation into this work?

Some preliminary answers emerged from a study designed to “get a better understanding of their lifestyle, needs, goals and the role that being Jewish plays in their lives” released by the New York Federation in 2016.

The findings included young adults turning out for programs that “focus on millennials’ life goals in a Jewish context, and in a way that strengthens Jewish identity or

builds Jewish relationships.” Examples: a bike ride to raise money for a cause or mentorships or job listings, and “other efforts to help millennials pursue their career goals while building Jewish relationships.”

“What we found was that millennials don’t go to synagogue except when they do, won’t do organized activities except when they do and won’t pay for services except when they do,” notes Hana Gruenberg, managing director of Jewish Life UJA-Federation of New York. Look for different points of entry for different young Jews, she adds: “Some were engaged for social reasons, others for social justice, still others who just want to have big Shabbat dinners at their house.”

Like many Federations, New York’s awards grants to such independent millennial-focused initiatives as Moishe House, “giving them both our funding and expertise to help them be even more creative and organized,” says Gruenberg.

But when it comes to “nurturing a sense of responsibility to give back to the Jewish community,” Federations are providing opportunities for young professionals to meet with mentors and each other around what philanthropy means to them, Gruenberg adds. “It’s about taking something that already exists and creating ways in for them.”

Indeed, this awareness of the new generation’s singular qualities, coupled with the challenges of reaching them, is resonating throughout the Federation system, according to Rebecca Dinar, spokeswoman for JFNA. At the recent FedLab, bringing together 900 lay and professional leaders from across North America, discussions included the importance of social justice and environmental work to this generation, and of “bringing in new voices to help create our community agendas.”

Much of the success of Federation’s work in this space has been driven by “an understanding that young people are powered by involvement in networks and their ability to shape their own Jewish journeys,” she adds. “This has required a shift in the way many of our institutions operate, but we still need the institutions – to influence and drive this new thinking and ensure its continuity over time.”

Creative outside-the-box initiatives like Moishe House, she maintains, “have been able to scale the way they have because of Federations’ infrastructure – and funds – working in partnership for a common goal. Now, being touched by these experiences, young Jews can find Federations a ladder to engagement and influencing the future.”

Adds Eric Robbins, president and CEO of Atlanta’s Federation, which, like many others, supports OneTable and other programs designed for (and in most cases also by) millennial Jews, “It’s a generation looking for meaning and also a place at the table.”

Still, the cold hard truth is that the American Jewish community is at a crossroads, says Shrage. “We must take advantage of every opportunity to reach out to this generation.”

But he stops short of taking millennial studies as gospel. “In my experience, young adults respect adults who actually believe in something and offer compelling beliefs. An older generation that crafts its beliefs based on research of next generation opinions is not worth following.”

And abandoning the traditional synagogue model “would be a huge disservice to God and the Jewish people,” he argues. “Where will they go when they have families and need a *shul*?”

Indeed, a marriage of the best of the old and the new may be in the Jewish future. “We can learn from them, and they can learn from us,” says Base Hillel’s Leener. “Traditional synagogues and other Jewish organizations were built for a different time and a different culture, but they have so much experience and knowledge we need. If we can respect that, and they are willing to take risks and empower newcomers and not see change as failure, then both sides can shift and we can do amazing things together.”

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Tension between Israel’s legislature and judiciary raises unprecedented questions

By Israel Kasnett

(JNS) – It really is all about the Benjamins. Pending any last-minute crisis,

ANALYSIS

Is Israel’s judiciary overstepping its authority? Or is the legislature undermining the judiciary? Where the

boundaries of the judicial branch end and where the boundaries of the legislative branch begin is clearly an issue that will require further discussion, regardless of whether or not a new government is sworn in.

Moshe Koppel, founder of the Jerusalem-based Kohelet Policy Forum, told JNS, “Edelstein believes, correctly, that the court exceeded its authority in interfering in the affairs of the legislature. Consequently, rather than calling a vote on election of a new chairman in accordance with the court’s unprecedented ruling, he tendered his resignation in protest. This is the only course of action he could have taken that would prevent a constitutional crisis.”

At the foundation of this issue is the intent by the Blue and White, Joint Arab List and Israel Beiteinu parties to remove Netanyahu from power, as he is under indictment in three separate cases.

The struggle between the left and right to control the parliamentary agenda in this case landed on the desk of Knesset Speaker

Edelstein. Whoever controls this office determines the Knesset’s agenda. This means that it’s Edelstein who determines whether the left can bring a vote to the plenum to remove Netanyahu from power. For this reason, the left wants to replace him with their own appointee so that they can move their anti-Netanyahu legislation forward.

According to Simcha Rothman, legal counsel for the Movement for Governability and Democracy, and author of the recently published book “The Ruling Party of Bagatz—How Israel Became a Legalocracy,” the Supreme Court “sadly behaves like a political party that is part of the left.

“This is good for the left; Blue and White benefits from this politically,” he told JNS.

A key principle of any modern democracy is the separation of powers between its judiciary, executive and legislative branches, with each assigned distinct and limited roles. According to an analysis of government powers by the Congressional Research Service, “Most powers granted under the [United States] Constitution are not unilateral for any one branch; instead they overlap.”

The CRS document notes that “the vagueness of much of the Constitution

also creates political conflict between the branches... much of it is open to a variety of interpretations. Not surprisingly, political actors in the different branches are likely to interpret its dictates in ways that enhance or expand their own authority.”

This mirrors exactly what appears to be happening in Israel. For Israel’s political left and right, it all comes down to how one interprets Israel’s Basic Law: The Knesset and the Knesset House Rules.

In any democracy, there are often cases where the Supreme Court rules on matters that overlap with the judiciary. Where the differences emerge, however, is whether the Supreme Court can rule on when its ruling – in this case regarding the office of the speaker – must be carried out.

According to Rothman, “The law is very clear. The inner management of the Knesset is to be determined by the Knesset.”

Indeed, the Basic Law: The Knesset explicitly states that the Knesset’s work order will be determined by the Knesset, through law or by procedure.

“This is unheard of,” exclaimed Rothman, referring to the Supreme Court’s See “Tension” on page 19

Teens.....Continued from page 15

She also appreciated hearing from Charlotte Korchak, director of international student programs at StandWithUs, who compared the Jewish state’s history with Israel’s image around the world, and focused on the country’s ancestral roots – topics not explored in a typical high-school history class, stressed Habte.

The program is also geared to emphasize and develop valuable life skills.

“Every other session deals with how to speak in front of people – whether it’s debate skills, or body language and how to move yourself in space, and move your arms in order to get your message across in the most optimal way,” explained Green. “We recently did a session about how to answer really tough questions about Israel and learned that sometimes you have to admit that you don’t really know the answer, which is important. If you pretend you know the answer for everything when in fact you don’t, it gives the wrong message across.

That’s a good thing to learn. Also how to be in front of a camera, give a speech or statement, and even this interview right now is highly effective by the skills that I acquired there.”

He said his favorite part about Tevel is the open forum that leaves opportunity for a wide range of discussions – whether it’s about minority groups in Israel or even the Australian bushfires – because it keeps the sessions interesting and “very stimulating.”

“The program is not just about coming and listening to lectures every week. It’s about expressing personal stories from our point of view,” added Habte.

Sternberg said that young people “have to confront the issues that they see on social media, and they have questions. And in the educational system, they don’t talk about these kinds of issues. They teach them things they need to know about [Israel’s] history, but they don’t talk about it from a strategic point of view or from an activist point of view.

“Some kids have an interest in being involved in politics one day, and they know a lot more than most grown-ups, and this

program challenges them,” he said. “It gives them a place to structure their own point of view for the future.”



Tevel students outside the Israeli Knesset with Alon Sternberg, far left, the program’s director. (Photo by Or Tsfati)

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.

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Global warming

RABBI BENNY RAPOPORT, CHABAD OF THE ABINGTONS-JEWISH DISCOVERY CENTER

In our *parasha* this week, Tzav, God commands Moses concerning the various sacrifices that were brought on the Temple's altar.

The Torah outlines how the *kohen*, the priest bringing the offering, should be dressed, how the animal should be prepared, and how and when the firewood should be set up on the altar.

And then, says the Torah, that fire, which burns upon the altar, should never ever go out, it should always keep burning.

Leviticus chapter 6, verse 6, says, "*aish tamid*, a continual fire, shall remain aflame on the altar, you shall not extinguish it."

Now, why would the Torah require that the flames never burn out? Learning to kindle a fire is not that complicated; each and every one of the *kohanim* serving in the Temple

should be trained in how to build a fire. If the Boy Scouts can do it, why couldn't they? Why the need for the altar's fire to remain constantly aflame?

Furthermore, having a fire burning continuously sounds like a colossal waste of perfectly good firewood—especially if you're in a desert region! And who knows what it would do to the environment? That type of combustion would carry a huge carbon imprint and undoubtedly add to the greenhouse gases, further contributing to global warming.

In all seriousness, there must be a message, a lesson, something that we can learn from this enigmatic commandment.

The Jerusalem Talmud, which was compiled in the land of Israel, in approximately the fourth century, adds a few words of explanation to this law: "It shall burn continuously, even on Shabbat, and even in times of impurity."

Our sages tell us that the words of the Torah carry multiple layers of meaning. Even laws that do not physically apply to our times have a latent spiritual message and application that rings true for eternity.

The Temple's altar is symbolic of man's heart. Just as each day, in Temple times, various material offerings were sacrificed up upon it, so, too, each day in our lives, we offer up ourselves, our material possessions, we focus our time and our energy, we lift ourselves up, so to speak, to dedicate our day to seeking goodness and Godliness, to live a life of spiritual fulfillment.

God commands us that the passion in our heart, the fire in our soul, the warmth and excitement that drives our behavior should never be extinguished.

See "Global" on page 19

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

Rohr Chabad Center

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

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

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.

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.

Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

Area synagogues have announced that they are limiting face-to-face gatherings. That means there will be no services or programming held until further notice. Some meetings, services and classes will be available online or by phone. For specific information regarding services (including online services), meetings and classes at any of the area synagogues, contact them by phone or e-mail.

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.

All Friday night Shabbat services will start at 7 pm for the month of April.

Friday, April 3: Shabbat services at 7 pm on Zoom, <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/350204323>, or on the Temple Concord Facebook page.

Saturday April 4: Torah study at 9:15 am on Zoom, <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/342411102>, or call 1-929-205-6099 put in the meeting ID # 342 411 102.

Wednesday, April 8: Erev Passover – first seder in the evening, watch for online options with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell (see article on page 5).

Friday, April 10: Virtual Shabbat services at 7 pm on Zoom, <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/350204323>, or on the Temple Concord Facebook page.

Saturday, April 11: Torah study 9:15 am on Zoom, <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/342411102>, or call 1-929-205-6099 put in the meeting ID # 342 411 102.

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.

Friday, April 3, light candles before 7:14 pm
 Saturday, April 4, Shabbat ends 8:15 pm
 Wednesday, April 8, light candles before 7:19 pm
 Thursday, April 9, light candles after 8:20 pm
 Friday, April 10, light candles before 7:21 pm
 Saturday, April 11, Shabbat ends 8:23 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.twbc.com
 Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org
 Service Schedule: Tuesday, 5:30 pm; Friday, 5:30 pm; Saturday, 9:30 am

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom.

On Saturday, April 4, the Torah portion is Leviticus 6:1-8:36 and the haftarah is Malachi 3:4-24.

Temple Israel is collecting for CHOW during regular business hours. The bin is between the two sets of glass doors at the entrance. Buzz to come in the first set of doors to access the bin.

The temple office will be closed Wednesday-Friday, April 8-10, and Wednesday-Thursday, April 15-16.

The bar mitzvah of Zev Rosales has been postponed.

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.

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.

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 egalitarian 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.

Jewish organizations, leaders see relief in bill passed by Congress offering assistance to nonprofits

By Jackson Richman

(JNS) – Following a week of frantic negotiations, Congress passed an unprecedented spending bill to provide \$2.1 trillion in assistance to Americans and businesses affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or the CARES Act, passed unanimously in the U.S. Senate on March 25 and passed the U.S. House of Representatives on March 27 in a voice vote. U.S. President Donald Trump signed it into law that afternoon. The Jewish community, specifically its nonprofit sector, is expected to receive assistance from the legislation.

The Jewish Federations of North America, which has been helping Jewish communal organizations and individuals navigate the crisis, applauded the bill. “It’s very significant, and it will benefit the Jewish community in many ways, and we’re very appreciative of the work that the Congress did,” Eric Fingerhut, JFNA president and CEO, told JNS.

Individuals earning up to \$75,000 annually and heads of household (often, single parents with children) earning up to \$112,500 annually would receive a \$1,200 check, while couples earning up to \$150,000 annually would earn \$2,400. Those who exceed the income caps would have their benefits reduced by \$5 for every \$100 in additional income. Those ineligible to receive a check would be individuals who earn at least \$99,000; \$146,500 for heads of household; and \$198,000 for couples.

While large companies, such as airlines, are set to receive \$500 billion in loans and other investments, small businesses and nonprofits, including those that receive Medicaid funding, would receive \$349 billion in forgivable

loans from the Small Business Administration. This would include \$10 billion through the SBA’s Economic Injury Disaster Loans in which nonprofits and small businesses with no more than 500 employees would be eligible.

The provision to allow nonprofits that receive Medicaid funds to receive loans was a “huge development for the Jewish community because all of our human-services agencies do receive Medicaid, as well as philanthropic support,” said Fingerhut.

The EIDL funds, which can’t have loans that exceed 4 percent, would convert into grants that don’t need to be repaid for money spent on payroll, mortgage payments, rent, utilities or other items through the end of June. They cover annual wages up to \$100,000. The grants would be reduced when workers are terminated.

Most Jewish nonprofits will be eligible under EIDL, as the vast majority of them have fewer than 500 employees, according to Fingerhut. Those that do, such as a handful of Jewish health-care facilities, would be eligible for the funds that big businesses are set to receive.

Nonprofits would also receive unemployment insurance expansion, employee retention tax credits, payroll tax-credit deferrals, assistance for nonpublic schools and FEMA disaster loans. Additionally, hospitals and community health centers, including Jewish ones, would get \$100 billion. Some \$65 million is set to be allocated for housing for seniors and those with disabilities, including a number of those linked to the Jewish community.

In a statement, B’nai B’rith International said it supported the bill for the provisions related to small businesses and nonprofits and senior housing.

Moreover, the bill would allow individuals to deduct up to \$300 in charitable contributions only made this year even if they do not itemize on their federal tax returns; usually, taxpayers must itemize in order to receive such a deduction. The 2020 tax break would be in addition to the standard deduction under the 2017 tax law (\$12,400 for individuals and \$24,800 for married couples filing jointly).

More than three-dozen nonprofits, including JFNA, sent a letter recently to congressional offices, requesting \$60 billion in relief funding due to the outbreak.

On March 25, Trump held a conference call with more than 140 leaders of nonprofit organizations, when he “thanked the nonprofits for their tireless acts of service to Americans in need, such as delivering meals to children and hosting blood drives and donation drives for medical supplies,” according to a readout from the White House.

Fingerhut stressed the importance of nonprofits, including Jewish ones, in American society. “Just as the country doesn’t want [to lose] its major industries, so it does not want to lose its world-class nonprofit infrastructure and the Jewish community is at the front of that world-class status,” he told JNS.

The Orthodox Union expressed appreciation, but also some criticism, in response to the bill. “As the coronavirus pandemic strikes communities across the United States, we are grateful that the Senate passed this legislation, and we are particularly thankful to Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer, the primary architects of the CARES Act, who ensured it contains important aid to nonprofit organizations,” said OU Executive Director for Public Policy Nathan Diament in a statement. “We also thank [Oklahoma Republican] Senator [James] Lankford and [Democratic Delaware] Senator [Chris] Coons and other legislators who tirelessly advocated to ensure that it contained provisions to help the charitable sector.

“At the same time, we are disappointed that Congress did not include a number of provisions in earlier drafts that would have offered much greater and much needed assistance to nonprofits, and those we serve, especially during this uncertain and precarious time,” continued Diament. “We are committed to continuing to work with our elected leaders so that we can serve as a safety net for those who most need us.”

Duvi Honig, founder and CEO of the Orthodox Jewish Chamber of Commerce, an umbrella organization of various-sized businesses based in New York and New Jersey – two of the hardest-hit areas in the United States by the outbreak – told JNS that Jewish businesses, like others throughout the United States, “are in a standstill,” particularly kosher establishments, including caterers. “Many restaurants I know are struggling in debt and under no circumstances will be approved for any loan, even from the SBA.”

Moreover, many Orthodox Jewish families stand to not benefit from the U.S. spending package considering that they “tend to be large, with five to eight children or more being the norm. An Orthodox lifestyle is costly, especially considering religious-school tuition, which runs anywhere from \$5,000 to \$15,000 per child,” according to Honig.

“The stimulus income threshold of \$150,000 a couple does not account for the number of children in the household,” he continued. “So a couple with eight children that earned \$151,000 in 2018 starts seeing a reduction in benefits and receives nothing if they earned over \$198,000 two years ago.”

The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism applauded the SBA part of the bill that would aid nonprofits.

While the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism declined to talk about the specifics of the bill, RAC Director Rabbi Jonah Pesner told JTA, “We’re not separate. There will be Jewish people who get fired, Jewish small businesses who will go under, Jewish elderly, Jewish people with disabilities. This is about the Jewish community and about the other. There’s no dichotomy.”

Fingerhut said that ahead of Passover, which begins at sundown on April 8 and ends at nightfall on April 16, the legislation “will give people reassurance... that everything that could possibly be done is being done.

“It won’t change the fact that we’re all in our own homes, we’re not together, we’re not traveling, we’re not sharing our seders,” he continued. “But I do think people will see the response of the community.”

Tension. . .Continued from page 17

demand for Edelstein to call for a vote by a specific date. “It is a usurpation of the power of the parliament,” he said.

“What the Supreme Court did is the first time in Israel and, to the best of my knowledge, the first time in any democratic country,” he said. “The court has zero basis in law or custom or any other known legal mechanism that I know of in Israel or anywhere in the world, to say you must appoint a new speaker by [March 26].”

“The only other country where this could happen is in the Islamic Republic of Iran,” he added, half-jokingly.

A look back at the famous landmark American case of *Brown v. Board of Education* could be insightful. In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled segregation in public schools to be unconstitutional, but it took more than a year for it to determine how to actually apply the law. In 1955, it declared that all local courts must arrive at a remedy “with all deliberate speed.” This meant that while each state was required to abolish all forms of segregation in its schools, it was given the freedom to decide when the decision was to be implemented.

The vagueness of “with all deliberate speed” should have been applied in the case at hand, according to Edelstein’s thinking, and Israel’s Supreme Court should have been flexible in allowing him, as speaker of the Knesset, to choose the date on which he would comply.

Koppel seemed to agree with this line of thinking. He feels the court has been overreaching since the days of former Supreme Court President Justice Aharon Barak: “They’ve done away with restrictions on standing and justiciability, and have been using poorly defined standards of ‘reasonableness’ to block government policies. This is just the latest red line they have crossed, and it is leading us to chaos.”

According to Rothman, “You can tell the executive or legislature to do something as soon as possible, but the interpretation of ‘as soon as possible’ is left to the legislature,” he said.

But Supreme Court President Justice Esther Hayut was having none of it, writing that “the continued refusal to allow the Knesset to vote on the election of a permanent speaker is undermining the foundations of the democratic process.”

Edelstein responded by saying he “cannot carry out the ruling because it goes against my conscience.”

Rothman believes that Edelstein’s resignation was an honorable move, and that Edelstein was right to say, “I will not give the power of the seat of the speaker of Knesset to the court. That is a breach of democracy.”

“If you let the court be the speaker of the house, there is no separation of powers,” he noted.



Supreme Court President Esther Hayut arrived to a hearing at the Supreme Court in Jerusalem on March 19. (Photo by Olivier Fitoussi/Flash90)

Global. . . .Continued from page 18


The Talmud’s cryptic words carry a very deep message. “Even on Shabbat” symbolizes one who has already reached a very high level of service. He or she has already attained a lofty level, where like Shabbat, they are to a degree disengaged from the world. Materialism and the mundane don’t pose such a great challenge to their divine service, anymore.

Now, even one who is on that supreme level needs to constantly breathe passion and verve into their observance. It is not nearly enough to perform the commandments out of rote, to study and observe mechanically, with little feeling or enthusiasm. The fire, says the Torah, shall burn continuously in their hearts.

On the flip side, is the one who is in a state of “spiritual impurity” one who feels quite distant from God and His Torah? That individual must know that he or she is not all distant, but rather has a divine spark burning deep in their hearts, that is ready and waiting to burst into flames.

He or she must do all in their power to nourish that flame, encourage it to grow strong and bright, allowing its heat and light to radiate into their lives and cast a luminescent glow of spiritual warmth into the world around them.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Europeans complete first transaction to Iran on trade mechanism

European countries have completed their first transaction to Iran through a joint trade mechanism, despite the threat of U.S. sanctions that the mechanism seeks to circumvent. The United Kingdom, France and Germany announced the move on March 31 through the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges, or Instex, founded in 2019. It exemplifies the difference in Iran policy between Europe and the United States, with the former seeking to work with Iran and preserve the 2015 nuclear deal, and the latter exerting a "maximum pressure" campaign since withdrawing from the agreement in May 2018, reimposing sanctions lifted under it, along with enacting new financial penalties. Although the details of the transaction are unknown, it was "the sale was equipment related to blood treatment from a German exporter and had been in the works for several months," reported The Wall Street Journal, citing people familiar with the matter, who said that the transaction was worth approximately \$548,000. The equipment is unrelated to the coronavirus pandemic. Iran is one of the hardest-hit countries by the outbreak of COVID-19. As of March 31, there are 44,605 such cases and 2,898 deaths. U.S. officials were notified of the Instex transaction, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

Pentagon considers keeping paratroopers in Middle East amid Iranian threat

The Pentagon is looking into keeping a reaction force of roughly 3,500 U.S. troops sent to the Middle East in January in response to Iranian-backed riots at the U.S. embassy in Baghdad. The Daily Beast reported on March 30 about the possible extension of the deployment of the 1st Brigade Combat

Team of the 82nd Airborne Division to Kuwait. Such a move would indicate that the coronavirus pandemic, in which Iran is one of the hardest-hit countries by the outbreak, will likely not reduce the risk of military escalation with Iran. U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper issued a 60-day freeze of U.S. troops overseas this month due to the virus. The extension request to Esper was made by Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, head of the U.S. Central Command, and was "not a result of the freeze, although the extension would last through the end of the freeze," reported The Daily Beast. "We hate that this was an unplanned deployment, and that it's impossible to have any certainty about when we will get home," a soldier in the brigade told the outlet. "Even if it's stupid and we have to deal with Iranian militias, it's part of the job. But we just hate the uncertainty." Tensions have risen between the United States and Iran since the former withdrew in May 2018 from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal – reimposing sanctions lifted under it, along with enacting new financial penalties against the regime – and the Jan. 3 U.S. elimination of the head of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' Quds Force, Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, at Baghdad International Airport.

Israel-Palestinian cooperation in fighting virus applauded during U.N. call

The U.N. Security Council held its monthly discussion on the Middle East via a video conference on March 30. Special Coordinator for the Middle East Nickolay Mladenov opened the discussion by praising the recent cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic. Mladenov also updated the council on U.N. involvement in joint efforts to prevent the spread of the virus in the region. Mladenov previously lauded the "excellent coordination and cooperation that has been established with all Israeli and Palestinian interlocutors" when briefing

members of the Middle East Quartet about the effects of the coronavirus in the Gaza Strip. A recent "emergency situation report" published by the Palestinian branch of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs also noted "unprecedented cooperation on efforts aimed at containing the epidemic" between Israeli and Palestinian authorities, and stated that "representatives from both ministries of health, as well as from Israel's Coordinator for Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), have been meeting on a regular basis to agree on matters of mutual concern, such the understandings concerning Palestinian workers employed in Israel." Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon and the representative from the Palestinian delegation were on the video call. "Even in this new and difficult environment, we continue to take part in the ongoing diplomatic work within the family of nations," said Danon. However, he added, "at this time, despite Israel's aid to the Palestinian Authority, we hear inciting comments coming from the Palestinian prime minister, who accuses IDF soldiers of spreading coronavirus to the P.A. There is no place for such senseless statements by the leadership of the P.A. The U.N. must condemn these remarks."

ADL: Virtual meetings being disrupted by antisemites

With the coronavirus pandemic pushing meetings to go virtual, antisemites have taken the opportunity to disrupt them on the video conferencing platform Zoom, according to a report on March 29 from the Anti-Defamation League. The ADL cited one March 24 incident where a webinar about antisemitism hosted by a Massachusetts Jewish student group was interrupted by a white supremacist who pulled down his shirt collar to show a swastika tattoo on his chest. The ADL believes the perpetrator to be white supremacist and hacker Andrew Alan Escher Auernheimer, also known as "weev," who has a history of expressing antisemitic and other bigoted views. People such as Auernheimer have been interrupting and promoting their hatred online. It's known as "Zoom bombing," according to the ADL, which cited online sessions at Arizona State University and the University of Southern California, in addition to a children's storytelling session in New Jersey. Additionally, a March 22 virtual Torah lesson was disrupted by multiple people sharing antisemitic images and words. "While some of these reported 'Zoom bombing' incidents can be attributed to Internet trolls without particularly malicious intentions, there is concern that extremists could exploit the increasing reliance on video conferencing technology to target certain groups or advance their hateful messages," according to the ADL. It added that while "there has been limited online chatter among extremists about the specific strategy of abusing video conferencing technology, Auernheimer's recent actions in Massachusetts demonstrate the potential for extremists to exploit these systems."

Rocket launched from Gaza Strip lands in Sderot

Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip fired a rocket at southern Israel on the night of March 27, according to the Israeli military. There were no reported injuries or damage. The rocket fell in the town of Sderot, and in response Israeli tanks and aircraft attacked three Hamas sites, according to the AP. The Israel Defense Forces said the attacks targeted "infrastructure used for underground activity." The rocket fire broke a calm on the border that has prevailed since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. Separately, the army on March 29 deployed hundreds of soldiers to support police on the country's streets to enforce the coronavirus lockdown, the IDF announced on March 27. About 500 soldiers will help police "in patrolling, isolating and securing certain areas, locking routes and additional similar assignments," according to Reuters. The week of March 27, Israel issued strict lockdown directives according to which people must remain within 100 meters (110 yards) of their homes unless they need to purchase food or medical supplies.

Israel mulling Bnei Brak quarantine after police report difficulty enforcing lockdown

The Israeli government is considering placing the ultra-Orthodox city of Bnei Brak under quarantine, Israeli Finance Ministry director general Shai Babad told the country's parliament on March 29. With police reporting difficulty in enforcing lockdown directives in the city, which has an infection rate higher than the national average, Babad told the Knesset's Special Committee on Dealing with the Coronavirus, "We are having more than a few problems with ultra-Orthodox society in areas like Bnei Brak." Babad made the comment hours after hundreds of residents gathered for the burial of Rabbi Tzvi Shenkar, with thousands reportedly attending a funeral procession just before. Videos show hundreds gathering in close proximity to one another, breaking social-distancing directives. Several clashes between residents and police attempting to enforce the lockdown have taken place in ultra-Orthodox neighborhoods in recent weeks. According to internal Health Ministry data published in *Haaretz*, infections in Bnei Brak are increasing eightfold every three days, compared to the twofold national average. In Jerusalem, which also has a high ultra-Orthodox population, the cases are quadrupling in the same time period. The Knesset discussion of a potential full lockdown, said Babad, is centered on "how we could put a closure in place and isolate those areas," referring to the ultra-Orthodox areas with high infection rates and non-compliance with government orders intended to decrease spread of the outbreak.

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