

THE REPORTER

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One week remains in the Chesed Challenge

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton announced that the Chesed Challenge is entering its final week. An anonymous donor has pledged to double any new gift, up to \$10,000, given to the Federation by Thursday, April 30.

"We are entering our last week of the Chesed Challenge," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "I am

so proud of our community and the way we have stepped up to this challenge, even during these difficult times. We are all in this together and the community has shown just how strong and caring we are."

Hubal noted that, although she was disappointed that the brunch with Rebekka Goldsmith never took place, the community response has exceeded her expectation. "We had debated whether

or not to hold the Chesed Challenge, but community members stood up immediately to show that we should continue," she said. "Chesed means loving-kindness and that is what our community has shown these last several weeks. I am proud to

call Binghamton my home."

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

JFS to host video conference on COVID-19

Jewish Family Service will hold a video conference on "How to Manage Isolation, Anxiety and Stress Around COVID-19" on Friday, May 1, from 1-2 pm. It will be an interactive video conference lead by Rita Bleier, chairwoman of the Jewish Family Service Committee, and Rose Shea, director of JFS. Both are licensed clinical social workers.

Topics will include various strategies for dealing with the stress and uncertainty around the pandemic. The conference will

be geared toward the aging population and their support network. Resources will be shared. Bleier and Shea will answer participants' questions.

"We know that most people are stressed out because of the virus," said Shea. "For those who are older and/or alone, the stress can be greater due to isolation. Join us to learn how to deal with your anxiety and stress, and share your ideas with others."

To register for the event, visit www.jfgeb.org.

Virtual Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration on April 29

The Jewish Federations of North America will hold a virtual Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration on Wednesday, April 29, from 2-3 pm.

"We invite you to be part of an extraordinary virtual event," said organizers of the event. "Join celebrity guests, world leaders and people from all around the globe for a worldwide celebration of Israel's 72nd Independence Day! Livestream this one-

hour, star-studded event. And be sure to stay tuned in. You won't want to miss a minute of the day's festivities – all planned by top organizations from across North America and around the world on the theme of "What Israel Means to Me. What Israel Means to Us."

To sign up now to register for the live event, visit <http://jfeds.org/YomHaatzmaut>.

Film Fest to go virtual

By Reporter staff

The Jewish International Film Fest of Greater Binghamton is going virtual. "Rather than cancelling the Film Fest, we have decided to transform it," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, which sponsors the Fest. "This was not how we expected the Film Fest to happen, but online gatherings are the new normal, and I'm excited to jump in and try this."

The Film Fest will show "Crescendo" (106 minutes, in German and English), which has been called "a remarkable theatrical movie and contribution to the worldwide efforts toward understanding, humanity and peace." People will be able to register on the new Federation website, www.jfgeb.org. The film will be streamed free for up to 100 computers. On Saturday, April 25, after Shabbat ends, a link to the film will be sent to those who sign up in advance. The film will be available for viewing on your personal devices for 48 hours. On Monday, April 27, a local professor will facilitate an online video meeting to discuss the film.

"Crescendo," directed by Dror Zahavi, tells the story of world-famous conductor Eduard Spörck (Peter Simonischek), who



A scene from "Crescendo"

accepts a job to create an Israeli-Palestinian youth orchestra. He finds himself dealing with what seem to be unsolvable problems. The young musicians on both sides are unable to form a team due to the continuing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. The question becomes whether Spörck can help both sides overcome their distrust and hatred, and perform together in a concert due to take place in three weeks. The film is loosely inspired by the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, conducted by Daniel Barenboim.

"Join us for a film the committee unanimously agreed was a must-see," Hubal said. "I'm looking forward to hearing people's comments on the film. If this is successful, we may screen other films the same way."

Spotlight

Jewish resources to occupy your family during social distancing – part 5

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.

◆ Yad Vashem is offering a new online exhibition marking the 75th anniversary to the liberation of the Buchenwald Concentration Camp by U.S. Armed Forces and the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II. The exhibition's online collection of artifacts relating to liberation can be found at www.yadvashem.org/artifacts/featured/liberation.html.

◆ Reconstructing Judaism is offering "Resources for Living in the Time of COVID-19" at <http://evolve.reconstructingjudaism.org/covid19resources>. It is also offering a variety of other pandemic

resources, including a "Virtual Shabbat Box," at www.reconstructingjudaism.org/connect/pandemic-resources.

◆ YIVO announced a new initiative to collect first-hand accounts of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Jewish life. The online form can be found at yivo.org/share-your-story.

◆ Jewish Women Archive has a new section of interactive tools for students and adults, <https://jwa.org/teach/activities>. The worksheet can be downloaded and printed. Answer keys are also included where applicable. New worksheets will be added periodically.

◆ Respectability, an organization that seeks to ensure children and adults with disabilities receive education, training and employment opportunities, has been holding virtual events. For more information, visit www.respectability.org/category/events.

◆ The Yiddish Book Center has a podcast called The Shmooze, which "includes conversations with Jewish culture makers, plus news and stories related to Yiddish literature, language and culture." Current and previous episodes can be found at www.yiddishbookcenter.org/language-literature-culture/the-shmooze/.

◆ The Museum of the Jewish People at Beit Hatfutsot in Israel is offering online tours at www.bh.org.il/live-online-tour-beit-hatfutsot/. The tour is done over Zoom using an iPad, and lasts around 45 minutes. According to its website, "The tour works best if each participant has a computer that they can sit at with headphones during the tour. Due to time differences between Beit Hatfutsot in Tel Aviv and participants around the world, we will do our best to accommodate your schedule."

◆ The Jewish Book Council is now holding virtual events. The next event is "Virtual Unpacking of the Book: Borders of Home," which will take place on Thursday, April 30, from 7-8 pm. This event will feature authors Esther Safran Foer and Keith Gessen in a conversation with Stephanie Butnick of Tablet Magazine. Registration is free, but requested in advance. For more information, visit www.jewishbookcouncil.org/events and click on the title of the event.

◆ The Book of Life is hosting the series "Books in the Time of Coronavirus," which allows authors or illustrators of new Jewish books for children or adults to speak about their books. The podcast can be found at <https://jewishbooks.blogspot.com/2020/04>.

◆ The Zionist Organization of America has started a ZOA Online Book Club. The club is open to anyone, even those who have

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Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

A little piece of chocolate around 3 pm has always been my guilty pleasure. During these challenging times, I have added a new way to reduce stress and bring a glimmer of hope to my day. It is a surprise to me that listening to Andrew Cuomo's press conferences are a comfort. His candidness eases my mind. I like that he is not above groveling for what he needs. I like that he explains the minutiae of what is going on. He is genuinely a man in the middle of mayhem, who is doing his best to work his way out of this for the good of the people. Among the charts and graphs outlining the devastation, he often sprinkles in short, mundane stories about his Catholic school days or his upbringing. He looks and sounds exhausted, but he genuinely has hope that we will get through this pandemic. You can't fake that. It has been a refuge for me to know the person in charge is not perfect, but who is giving it his all and will stop

at nothing to remove any barriers to keeping us safe.

There are other ways to reduce stress. Music has the power to heal. I am blessed to have a son and husband who, most nights, like to pick up the guitar, filling the house with their singing and strumming. Walking has been my favorite form of exercise and a mental health tonic for many years. Starting the day with a peaceful walk always quiets my mind and now that the days are longer, I treasure an after dinner walk with my husband. Connecting with community members on the phone, in a Zoom meeting or Zoom minyan, also brings some light to the day. Is it work to stay connected and upbeat during this unprecedented time? You bet it is. If you are looking for some extra support, I hope you will join Jewish Family Service on May 1 for a special video conference on easing anxiety and stress. Please go to the Federation website, www.jfgeb.org, to register.

Working on the Chesed Matching Gift Challenge has been a gift to me during this time of isolation. There is comfort in continuing the work I have come to love. So many have called or written or sent a gift. All are appreciated and I hope that people continue to reach out and give. Your contributions are making a difference for us all. I want to give a shout out to Marilyn Bell, the Federation Campaign chairwoman. Her energy and commitment are second to none. I send Marilyn my genuine gratitude for all she does. A big thank you, too, to our anonymous donor. Your support of our work and community is an inspiration.

My prayer is that you are all staying in good health and finding ways to have some comfort in your day. We are sharing the fears and sorrows of the world right now, but the goodness of humanity is there, too. Looking forward to being together again, hopefully soon.

Why is this night different from all other nights?

By Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu

The story of the Exodus is known to all, and we repeat the Passover celebration every year. It's something like a birthday for each one of us, which we celebrate with great joy every year.

For me, this Passover is the most special one I have celebrated in my entire life.

A sentence we read in the haggadah says that man must see himself as having been freed from Egypt. Until now, I did not really know what that meant. I wonder, "What do I, a person in the 21st century, have in common with an event that happened 3,332 years ago?" In fact, today I see no really big difference between what happened then in Egypt and what is happening today.

The Israelites were forced to stay in their houses on Passover, both because of God's command, and because there was a raging plague outside. The people were isolated from one another, and everyone was in danger of death. The Israelites were slaves; they were without

freedom. Aren't we, here in the 21st century, experiencing something similar? Aren't we isolated from one another and without many of our freedoms?

Even though most people are obeying instructions, many are still losing their lives, though the reason for the deaths today is different. Research to defeat the coronavirus is progressing, and the necessary medicines will be found. We will then be free of this pandemic, just as the Israelites were freed from Egypt. They overcame their obstacles and came to their destination in peace. Once again, with God's help, we will do the same.

After the people became free, God told the Israelites that, if they do not want the plague to return, they must obey his laws and do what is right and good in His eyes and in the eyes of man. We, too, need to learn and follow the same path: doing good and right, as we prepare solutions for our challenges and obstacles.

There is an important question, here, perhaps a fifth question: "Why did God bring us the 11th plague, and why does it seem that nature is fighting us?" As I teach

my students from kindergarten through grade five at the only Jewish school in the area, questions are important. They must learn to ask questions and learn to deal with different answers.

We must admit that the Creator gave us a perfect world with a balanced ecosystem in place. Do we humans behave correctly and in balance with the ecosystem? Man seems to enjoy the world at the same time as exploiting it. There is not proper planning to prevent plant gases from destroying the delicate balance in the atmosphere. This adds to the warming of the earth. Man is destroying our valuable Amazon rainforest, without thinking about the future of the earth and the future of our children. These selfish actions are man's sin. I hope we will learn how to protect nature, and how to correct the mistakes, because, if we don't, with our own hands we are bringing the end of humanity closer.

Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu is the head of Judaic studies at Hillel Academy of Broome County.

In My Own Words

Playing with our lives

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Hubris: that's one of my coworker's favorite words. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines it as "exaggerated pride or self-confidence." A person with hubris thinks he knows more than anyone else and, therefore, makes better decisions than anyone else, even those with more experience and knowledge than he has.

If you think I'm describing President Donald Trump, then you are right. A video showing his numerous "I-know-more-about-[fill in the blank]-than-anyone-else" statements made for a funny video a few months ago – that is, a few months before the world experienced the crisis caused by COVID-19. Before you complain we are not supposed to talk politics during this time, I'm not. I'm not talking about the election, or Democrats and Republicans. I'm talking about saving people's lives.

I would love to hear our president use these words at a press conference: "I was wrong not to take this more seriously. I am now going to listen to the medical experts and

let them guide my hand. I am going to stop worrying about money and think about people's lives. I'm going to stop thinking this is a conspiracy to undermine my presidency, but rather one of the worst crises the world has ever faced. I am going to do everything in my power to help *all* the citizens of this country."

If President Trump did this, I would stand up and cheer. I would be proud of him and admire his courage. Being able to admit that you were wrong is a real sign of leadership. Being willing to admit that you don't know everything is the *only* way to learn and grow. Being willing to change at any age is a sign of maturity. I keep praying he will assume a real mantle of leadership, but with each COVID-19 death, my hope fades.

Whatever you may think of Governor Andrew Cuomo's politics (and there are times I have not agreed with him), I admire his leadership in this crisis. He's made tough, and sometimes controversial, decisions. But it's clear he's

doing so because he's trying to keep *all* New Yorkers alive. He's admitted when he doesn't know something, including the science of COVID-19, or the best way for us to return to normal life. He's also stated that he's worried about a second wave of illness. Letting us know that there is so much we don't know – that we don't have the medical science or experience for – makes me feel more secure than someone who acts as if he knows everything or that this problem is easily solved.

As of this writing, I know one person who has died of the virus. I know several people who became sick, including a young man who is still not feeling well several weeks later. There is no way to predict how many deaths will occur. So, please, Mr. President, set your ego – your hubris – aside and help *all* the citizens in *all* our states – regardless of whether they voted for you, or whether their governors were "nice" to you. Become a president of whom we all can be proud.



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Readings by Rosenberg

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Most people are looking for ways to keep active and connected while social distancing. Some are able to find a way that brightens other people's lives. That's true of Liz Rosenberg, a novelist, poet and professor at Binghamton University. Rosenberg is doing weekday readings on Facebook: Stories for Children at 11:11 am and Poems for Adults at 11:11 pm. The readings are open to the general public, not just to those who are

Facebook friends with Rosenberg. Plus, the readings are taped so those unable to watch at those times can view them later.

Rosenberg wanted to make good use of her time at home. "I wanted to find some way to be helpful," she said in an e-mail interview. "And, since I write children's books, reviewed children's books—reviewed them



Liz Rosenberg

for the *Boston Globe* for 20-plus years – and still read children's books, this seemed like a natural fit. As a Binghamton school board member, I kept thinking about kids and their families stuck at home all day."

Her decision about which book to read each day is simple: "I pick whatever book makes me happiest at that time and seems

to fit what people might want or need." The same is true for the poems she chooses, although she noted, "I am trying to choose a wide variety of poems and poets that I love."

Rosenberg said that she enjoys doing the readings and believes others feel the same. "It's a danger-free party every morning and night," she added. "And everyone is welcome. It's been amazing to see all the people who stop by to watch – including some of my favorite living authors."

News analysis

Netanyahu cements electoral victory with large "national emergency government"

By Alex Traiman

(JNS) – After a protracted battle across three successive national elections and several weeks into an extended coronavirus crisis, Israel's political stalemate ended on the eve of Yom Hashoah, Israel's annual Holocaust Remembrance Day, with the formation of a national emergency government.

The agreement was signed April 20 between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and challenger Benny Gantz after weeks of negotiations. It brings the political rivals into the same coalition government and averts a costly fourth election that had been tentatively scheduled for later this year.

The unity alignment finally cements Netanyahu's electoral victory, as the embattled prime minister is now widely expected to add another year and a half to his terms now lasting 11 consecutive years and 14 years in total.

Knesset Member Yariv Levin, who led Likud's negotiating team, said that "a national emergency government is the right and logical thing at this time," and explained that unity is necessary to "address the economic and health challenges that are facing us." Levin is expected to be appointed Knesset Speaker.

"I congratulate the prime minister and MK Benny Gantz on the important agreements they reached, and am convinced that together we can lead Israel toward a better future," he said.

As part of the arrangement, Netanyahu will remain prime minister for the next 18 months, with Gantz serving as defense minister and vice prime minister, after which Gantz will assume the nation's top

post with Netanyahu serving as vice prime minister. The two opposing parties will split portfolios in an excessively large and expensive 36-member cabinet, stretched to satisfy the outsized ministerial demands of Gantz's political camp.

In addition to Netanyahu's Likud Party – by far the largest faction in the new coalition with 36 mandates – and Gantz's half of the former Blue and White alliance with 17 mandates, the government will be joined by Israel's two ultra-religious parties, Shas and United Torah Judaism totaling 16 seats, which back Netanyahu, as well as three small independent political factions – Labor, Gesher and Derech Eretz totaling five seats, which each supported Gantz in the third election.

The unity arrangement was facilitated by Gantz's splitting of the larger Blue and White alliance that had challenged Netanyahu in the three successive polls. Two factions, led by secularist Yair Lapid and hawkish former Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon, respectively, chose to break ranks with Gantz and head to the opposition, where they will be joined by Netanyahu nemesis Avigdor Lieberman and his Russian Yisrael Beiteinu Party, the far-left Meretz faction and the larger Joint List of anti-Zionist Arab parties.

Polls over the last several weeks showed that Netanyahu was likely to increase his already large electoral advantage, receiving as many as 40 mandates and firmly establishing a right-wing government in an upcoming fourth election. By forcing Gantz into dividing his large Blue and White alliance, Netanyahu cut his political opposition down to size.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held a press conference at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem on March 12. (Photo by Alex Kolomoisky/POOL)

Meretz MK Tamar Zandberg attacked Gantz for aligning with Netanyahu, stating that "the one who was supposed to be the 'Prime Minister of Change' chose to raise a white flag tonight." She added that Gantz "sold the mandate we gave him," and said that the new coalition "isn't an emergency government, but a government that poses an emergency to Israeli democracy."

Meanwhile, the small right-wing Yamina Party, which has long supported Netanyahu and is led by outgoing Defense Minister Naftali Bennett, is weighing whether or not to join the government. The party will

be forced to relinquish multiple ministerial portfolios in the new alignment and seems likely to have little influence over government policy, despite Netanyahu's insistence that he will maintain the principles of his right-wing political bloc.

Even without Yamina, the national emergency government creates a large parliamentary majority, with at least 72 MKs out of 120. During the first six months, the government will focus specifically on the continued public safety hazard and economic repercussions of the coronavirus crisis.

Alex Traiman is the managing director and Jerusalem bureau chief of Jewish News Syndicate.

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of **Ronald Greenblott**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of **Barbara Phillips**

Resources. Continued from page 1

not read the books. To receive information, sign up for its newsletter at <https://nyc.zoa.org/?s=Online+book+club>.

◆ EarthCam, www.earthcam.com/world/israel/einharod/?cam=einharod, shows viewers the farms in Ein Harod, Israel, with a live streaming webcam.

For more resources, see the last four issues of *The Reporter* or visit www.thereportergroup.org/Article.aspx?aID=5484, www.thereportergroup.org/Article.aspx?aID=5499, www.thereportergroup.org/Article.aspx?aID=5502 and www.thereportergroup.org/Article.aspx?aID=5512.

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Off the Shelf

Yiddish in America

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

I never learned to speak Yiddish, except for a few words almost everyone knows, for a reason that will resonate with many people. Yiddish was the language that my grandparents spoke when they didn't want my mother to understand what they were saying. My mother only knew a smattering of the language and that very limited vocabulary was passed on to me. However, Yiddish language and culture did influence American life and, if you believe "How Yiddish Changed America and How America Changed Yiddish" edited by Ilan Stavans and Josh Lambert (Restless Books), America also influenced Yiddish.

In their preface, the editors note that Yiddish has been called a language without an address or homeland, or thought of as just a list of funny words. They want to show readers the true Yiddish – or perhaps Yiddish culture – that they think is sexy and radical. This is not a nostalgic look at one's grandparents or great-grandparents – although the essays, articles and poems feature authors from the late 1900s to contemporary times – but a way of showing that Yiddish is still alive. The editors also note that Yiddish language and culture was not monolithic: it was as diverse as the number of Jewish immigrants who came to the western hemisphere. These immigrants and their offspring changed American culture, while also being influenced by that same culture.

The book is divided into six sections, although the decision about what to place where seems arbitrary for

some of the works. My favorite sections were "Eat, Enjoy, and Forget" (about food) and "The Other America" (about Yiddish culture outside the United States). The very short selection taken from Aaron Lansky's memoir "Outwitting History" reminded me how wonderful that book was. Lansky tells of how, when recovering books from older speakers of Yiddish, they needed three people: two to carry the books and one to sit with the owner and eat all the food they'd prepared. "Kosher Chinese" by Matthew Goodman talks about the development of Jewish food in America, including those that became part of mainstream American culture. The section also included discussions on particular kinds of Jewish foods and two sets of recipes (some from the makers of Crisco, which appeared in a pamphlet originally published in 1933).

The selections in "The Other America" offer a different view of Jewish life. In "A Room Named Ruth," novelist Ruth Behar presents a political and personal look at Jewish life in Cuba. Goldie Morgentaler discusses teaching Yiddish in Canada in "Bontshe Shvayg in Lethbridge," which also includes a Jewish history of the area. This section also offered my favorite short story in the collection: "Camacho's Wedding Feast" by Alberto Gerchunoff, a delightful tale of thwarted love in Argentina.

Many of the Yiddish short stories were not particularly cheerful, whether it was the opening tale "A Ghetto

Wedding" by Abraham Cahan (which seems an accurate portrayal of the hard times immigrants faced), I. B. Singer's "The Cafeteria" (with its not-very-pleasant characters) or Blume Lempel's "Oedipus in Brooklyn" (that left me shuddering). My preference was the essays. For example, Paul Buhle's "Di Freifheit, A Personal Reflection" not only tells of his time at the Yiddish paper, but offers a fascinating look at Jewish politics, particularly the left who supported communism in Russia before learning just how horribly wrong that experiment went. The selection from the play "Messiah in America" by Moyshe Nadir was a satirical look at messiahs, show business and capitalism that left me wishing the whole play had been included. Cynthia Ozick's "Sholem Aleichem's Revolution" offered not only an excellent look at the writer and his work, but an analysis of how he made writing in Yiddish literarily acceptable. Several of the essays about Yiddish as a language – from the section "The Mother Tongue Remixed" – were also interesting.

"How Yiddish Changed America and How America Changed Yiddish" contains a wide variety of material, some of which was more appealing than others. However, the volume, which fills 400 pages, did show just how vital Yiddish was and the potential it contains today. Lovers of Yiddish will, of course, want to get their hands on this collection. Anyone curious about American Yiddish culture may also find it of interest.

Saying "I Do" when the world keeps issuing "Don'ts"

By Eliana Rudee

(JNS)–Despite the expanding limitations on events and gatherings in the context of the rising global coronavirus pandemic, Jewish couples in Israel are finding innovative ways to continue with their wedding plans. Jewish Israeli couples Shira and Ronen Raz, and Miriam and Mickey Polevoy planned their weddings for March and April, respectively, both wedding on March 19 in the presence of close family and friends, a rabbi and photographer, and both postponing their larger receptions with guests.

Shira and Ronen had originally planned a "big Jewish Israeli wedding" with 250 guests in Israel's north on March 19, but as their wedding date was just two weeks away, Israel began to limit the number of people allowed at gatherings and began ordering quarantine for people coming from abroad. Shira's immediate family, coming from the United States, made it to Israel just hours before they would have needed to quarantine for two weeks upon arrival.

"It was really stressful," Shira told JNS. "During the process, we were living one day at a time."



Miriam and Mickey Polevoy celebrated a "significantly smaller" wedding in Jerusalem due to restrictions from the coronavirus pandemic. (Photo by Avigail Tresgallo Photography)

She said that every time Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced new restrictions, "I held my breath. It was horrible."

"It was really, really stressful, and it was a strange process leading up to the wedding because every time a new restriction was put in place, we thought by the time our date came around, we'd all have to be quarantined and couldn't get married," Ronen similarly told JNS.

"I calmed down once we postponed the reception because I couldn't not have a date – something to look forward to," said Shira.

Adena Mark Kapon, event planner and founder of A to Z Events Israel, has been working with her clients who still want to get married within regulations, as well as wedding vendors who are struggling to survive. Working with clients over the past several weeks, she told JNS, has indeed been "more emotions than logistics."

"It's changing constantly, and it is not the same today as it was a week ago," she said.

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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.

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.

To advertise, contact Bonnie at 724-2360, ext. 244 or bonnie@thereportergroup.org

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.

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

1. The name of the limited liability company ("LLC") is 33 South Washington St LLC.
2. The date of filing of the Articles of Organization with the Secretary of State is March 19, 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: 21 Timberbluff Court, 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: Beston Home Inspection Services, LLC (the "Company"). The date of filing of the Articles of Organization of the Company with the Secretary of State was April 8, 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: Robert W. Carey, 80 Exchange Street, Suite 700, Binghamton, NY 13901. The purpose of the business of the Company is any lawful business purpose.

607 Construction LLC NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY ("LLC")

Articles of Organization of 607 Construction LLC filed with the NYS Secretary of State (NYSS) on 4/8/2020. 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 434 Cloverdale Road, Chenango Forks, NY 13746. Business purpose: any lawful activity.

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“HoloCoin” cryptocurrency offers users to buy/sell ashes of Jews burnt in Holocaust

By Shiryn Ghermezian

(JNS) – A antisemitic website that is now shut down offered users the opportunity to trade a cryptocurrency called the “HoloCoin,” a reference to the Holocaust, in which Jews and the ashes of Jews burnt can be purchased or sold. TheHoloCoin.net, which was purchased on April 2 and registered with the website-building platform SquareSpace, is no longer accessible. However, the valueless virtual currency is still being traded on trading platforms such as ForkDelta.

StopAntisemitism.org was one of the first to draw attention to the antisemitic cryptocurrency. “This has to be one of the most vile and atrocious antisemitic incidents we have yet to come across,” Liora Rez, executive director of StopAntiSemitism.org, told JNS. “For someone to erect and orchestrate a plan where they can buy the ashes of dead Jews as currency on a trading platform clearly shows the blatant hatred of Jews that exists in society today.”

HoloCoin.net offered two currencies – “JEWS” and “ASH” – and its founders are online users that go by the usernames “Smaug Hitler” and “30YearOldHimmler.” The virtual currency is being promoted as an “ERC-



A screenshot of a thread on the site 4chan discussing the “HoloCoin.” (Screenshot courtesy of StopAntisemitism.org)

20” token, which means it is designed for use on the Ethereum platform, an open-source blockchain-based distributed computing platform, and may be transferred to a cryptowallet.

The cryptocurrency quickly found its way onto online forums and social-media sites. A page on the website Reddit that promotes HoloCoin describes it as “a cryptocurrency that recreates the Holocaust” and says that “15,300,000

JEWS were created, the team is airdropping JEWS and [it] is up to you if you wanna save them or let them burn.”

A thread on the website 4chan about the HoloCoin discusses those who purchased the cryptocurrency, saying, “Thank you to everybody who signed up and received your initial shipment of 500 JEWS. While initial shipments have ended, any wallet that registers according to instructions on TheHoloCoin.net will receive 50 JEWS every other week. JEWS may be purchased anytime.”

The message continued saying, “Any JEWS neither airdropped nor purchased will continue to burn at the rate of 4,107 per day – the rate at which 6 million are burned in four years. Thank you goyim for saving JEWS. Please continue to save JEWS, before they are burned and turned to ASH.”

The 4chan thread also features the cryptocurrency’s emblem: a large circle with “Remember The 6 Million” around its border with a large blue Star of David in the center, along with the letters “HC.” The banner photo for HoloCoin’s Twitter page has a Star of David that says “ash” around it, with a shadow in the background of the Pepe the Frog meme.

Israel sells record \$25 billion in bonds as investors show confidence in economy

By Israel Kasnett

(JNS) – To cover the rising costs of the coronavirus pandemic, and a near total economic shutdown, Israel’s treasury sold a whopping \$25 billion in long-term bonds. The sales, which took place as the world grapples with economic uncertainty, represent an indication of confidence by investors in the nation’s economy and future, experts say.

Israel priced the three-part dollar transaction with maturities of 10, 30 and 100 years, which was the first time the country offered 100-year or century bonds. Additionally, while the Israeli government initially only aimed to sell \$5 billion in bonds, it instead attracted more than \$25 billion with 400 investors from 40 different countries taking part in the offering.

Israel’s Accountant General Rony Hizkiyahu, the man responsible for the offering, said, “The largest-ever bond issue in the history of the state demonstrated the confidence among large and quality investors worldwide in the strength of Israel’s economy, especially as the country copes with the coronavirus crisis.”

The reason for this sale was due to Israel’s need to fund a substantial stimulus package announced recently by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He said that his government plans to assist individuals and small businesses with a NIS 80 billion (\$22 billion) package to help the economy weather the global pandemic.

During a video conference arranged by the Israel Democracy Institute, former governor of the Central Bank of Israel Karnit Flug commended the bonds offer, and told JNS that as the world is entering into recession “it was a very important move to go ahead, not wait and issue bonds.

“We saw a very successful issuance of bonds by the Ministry of Finance,” she said. “The issuance of 100-year bonds is also a statement of confidence in the Israeli economy.”

Flug said that the measure came as a result of a necessity for financing the massive government, and “it was very well done.”

“This was an important statement by investors that they really believe in the Israeli economy,” she added.

Zvi Wiener, professor of finance and the dean of the Je-

rusalem School of Business Administration at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, told JNS that the sale of century bonds is “very not common” and “shows the great confidence that the world financial market has in the Israeli economy.

“It is great evidence of our ability to raise funds even in difficult times, and the amount offered is very important,” he said.

“The economy is not going to do well in 2020,” he acknowledged. “For this reason, during such a difficult time, the Israeli government must step in and provide some support, and for this it needs a lot of funds.”

“The 100-year issue is a testament to the country’s financial strength and its solidification in international markets,” said Hizkiyahu. “The offering will be an important pillar in financing government activity in the near future.”

The offering included \$2 billion of 10-year bonds at an annual interest of 2.75 percent and \$2 billion of 30-year bonds at an annual interest of 3.875 percent. Israel sold one billion of the century bonds at 4.5 percent annual interest. See “Bonds” on page 8



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Tazria-Metzora, Leviticus 12:1-15:33

Blood and impurities

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR, THE REPORTER GROUP

The Torah has interesting reactions to the spilling of blood of animals and humans. For example, Jews are not allowed to eat an animal's blood. This was true even when Jews were not prohibited from hunting, as biblical law requires hunters to drain the blood from an animal after killing it. One of the rituals performed at the Temple in Jerusalem was the sprinkling of blood on the altar during sacrifices. Blood was thought to contain the life force of animals and humans. Losing blood through an injury or illness could easily mean death. However, there are other times that humans produce blood – times that do not equal loss of life – and both appear in the two *parashot*, Tazria and Metzora, read this week. One is childbirth and the other menstruation.

In *parashat* Tazria, we read about childbirth. Not only is childbirth dangerous (women still die when giving birth) and bloody, but it's the one time humans do

something that only God usually does: create life. The blood that accompanies a birth is most likely the reason for the rules concerning what occurs after childbirth. The woman who has given birth is considered impure for a period of time – seven days if she gives birth to a boy and 14 days if she gives birth to a girl. Added to this is another period of time – an additional 33 days of impurity for a boy and an additional 66 days for a girl.

Parashat Metzora speaks of two types of bodily secretions: male and female. The Torah focuses on bloody discharges for women, whether it's during her menstrual period or any other time she bleeds. (For example, a miscarriage, although that is not specifically mentioned in either *parasha*.) The biblical restrictions were far less than rabbinic ones – she only has to wait seven days total after her discharge begins before she can become pure again. The ancient rabbis added another seven clean days.

What does it mean to be impure? In contemporary times, impurity is considered a negative thing. That's not true in biblical times. Bodily secretions – whether semen from men or menstrual blood from women – were just a few of the ways people become impure during the course of their lives. This impurity was *not* a sin, but a fact of life. Almost everyone would at some point in their lives become impure, whether through bodily discharges or touching an impure object. What is interesting is that, after the destruction of the Second Temple, the rules changed. While men were no longer considered impure if they had an emission and objects were no longer considered impure, the rules surrounding menstruation were not only kept, but the time period of impurity increased in length. That was just one of the ways the ancient sages adjusted and adapted biblical law.

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

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.

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
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E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com
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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.

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 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.

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.

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.

Friday, April 24, light candles before 7:37 pm
Saturday, April 25, Shabbat ends 8:39 pm
Friday, May 1, light candles before 7:45 pm
Saturday, May 2, Shabbat ends 8:46 pm

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Rabbi: Barbara Goldman-Wartell
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm
Phone: 723-7355
Fax: 723-0785
Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com
Website: www.templeconcord.com
Regular service times: 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 services and programs are online only. Friday night Shabbat services will start at 7 pm for the month of April.

Friday, April 24: Shabbat services at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/350204323>, by calling call 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 350 204 323, or visiting www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, April 25: Torah study at 9:15 am at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/342411102>, or by calling 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 342 411 102.

Saturday, April 25: Havdalah with a bonus at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/526246866>, by calling 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 526 246 866, or visiting www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Temple Israel

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

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.

Penn-York Jewish Community

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

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: 607-756-7181
President: Bruce Fein, 607-423-3346
Service leaders: Lay leadership
Shabbat services: Either Friday evening at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 10 am from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot. Holiday services are also held. Check the weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.
Religious School: Students are educated on an individual basis. Temple Brith Sholom is a small equalitarian congregation serving the greater Cortland community. Congregants span the gamut of observance and services are largely dependent on the service leader. The Friday night siddur is "Likrat Shabbat," while the Saturday morning siddur is "Gates of Prayer." The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences.

Saying.....Continued from page 4

Shira's stress was also partly eased by social-media support groups for brides during the outbreak of the coronavirus, she said, where brides-to-be discussed possible refunds if venues canceled or postponed; posted photos of their weddings; and supported each other emotionally throughout the changing world around them. In an Israeli WhatsApp group, Israeli venues and companies also showed their support, offering their venues and free gifts for couples negatively affected by the new restrictions.

In Jerusalem, Mayor Moshe Leon opened a room in City Hall for couples that needed a venue, free of charge, with food provided for the 10 or fewer people present at the ceremonies. "We did two weddings there last week," Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Fleur Hasson-Nahoum told JNS. "We were looking for ways to make people's lives easier and have a lot of space in City Hall, with our committees meeting much less," she said, which resulted in "this lovely initiative from the mayor."

Leon, who sang one of the traditional Jewish blessings at one of the wedding ceremonies, told JNS of the "great privilege" it was to offer the blessing to the bride and groom. "We are in a hard time, but we will pass it together," he said, wishing luck to the newlyweds.

With Shira and Ronen's immediate families present, and as older family members and guests coming from abroad began to cancel, they decided to have a smaller ceremony in a synagogue that could hold up to 20 people, and postpone their celebration at their planned venue to August so they could "still celebrate with family and friends like both of us dreamed of doing."

"We had been engaged for a year and four months before the wedding, so we were ready to get married," Ronen told JNS, who had also heard from his rabbi that Jews are not supposed to wait to get married if they are able to keep their wedding date.

While those in the wedding industry are asking couples to postpone their weddings for economic purposes, explained Kapon, many are indeed going forward with them in accordance with the Jewish tradition. "In Jewish history, Jews have risked their lives to continue having Jewish weddings, circumcisions, women going to the *mikvah*,

as these are important traditions and commandments that make us who we are and keep us going as a nation, even under threat of life, such as pogroms and concentration camps," she said.

In 2015, recalled Kapon, a bride (Sarah Techiya Litman) who lost her father in a terrorist attack got up from sitting *shiva* to get married in Jerusalem, inviting the public to her wedding.

"While I agree with social-distance guidelines that we should take seriously, people are forgetting the significance to the wedding date, even under such challenging circumstances. The same way that your husband or *besheret* is chosen before you're born, they say that about the wedding date as well, so it is important to keep [it]. That's what we do," related Kapon.

Shira similarly pointed out that "there were Jewish and Israeli brides who got married in grocery stores and on rooftops in order to keep their wedding date."

In the end, Shira said, "it wasn't my dream idea, but it worked out perfectly. I believe everything happens for a reason, and the atmosphere was really relaxed and intimate. Our vows were pretty long, and we felt comfortable enough to say them in front of everyone, the rabbi danced and sung, and it was really fun and a good vibe that fit us [as a couple]."

"If I had to do it again, I wouldn't have changed a thing," she added.

Ronen agreed: "It feels it worked out perfectly and for the best, and we are both super happy."

On the same night of March 19, about 80 miles southeast of Shira and Ronen, Miriam and Mickey Polevoy made the "day of" decision to get married at midnight at a family friends' Jerusalem apartment with about 10 people present. With Miriam's mother in town from Australia for their expected April 16 wedding, who needed to return before any borders were closed and as flights were being canceled, Miriam and Mickey scrapped their original plan of getting married in front of 350 guests in central Israel—a wedding that they planned as "a combination of an Israeli and *chutznik* [foreign-born] wedding – classy, but down to earth and not formal."

"At 9 pm [on March 19], Prime Minister Netanyahu got on the screen and declared that a new regulation was to come into effect once it was signed, and that Israel's mobility would be severely hindered," Mickey told JNS. "We didn't know whether this regulation would prohibit our chuppah. With everything that we planned put into question already twice, we just decided that we weren't going to wait just to hear that our chuppah is prohibited, so we decided that right there, in the middle of the night, we were getting married."

His brother came to his wedding in work clothes, and his dad wore an older suit of Mickey's.

"Planning a new chuppah in two hours at midnight can only be done in Israel. Only Israelis are flexible and daring enough to pull that off," he maintained.

Apart from the "sad moment" when Miriam realized that she would have to exclude people from the ceremony because of the regulations, "there was no question in my mind that this was a race against the clock. There's



Shira and Ronen Raz had originally planned a "big Jewish Israeli wedding" with 250 guests in Israel's north on March 19. (Photo by Orange Photographers)

a concept to run to do *mitzvot*, and I really experienced that," she told JNS.

Miriam, who was a part of the same WhatsApp group as Shira, noted that "it seems quite common [in Israel] for brides to do a quick ceremony and push off the party. There is something Jewish or Israeli about it, both in terms of the importance of bringing light during this difficult time, as well as superstition around postponing weddings."

"With 10 people, we got married right then and there," said Mickey. "I got into my tuxedo and Miriam into her wedding dress. I could not have planned a more beautiful, better or happier wedding in an eternity. My beautiful bride, Miriam, was all that mattered. She shined brighter than the sun in her wedding dress walking up to our pre-determined chuppah at midnight, as she was obviously always meant to do."

"We were joined by our closest family and friends for an intimate and joyful chuppah in Baka," said Miriam.

After the wedding, Mickey related that he felt "very relieved of months of pressure."

"Planning a wedding during the corona pandemic isn't easy at all," he said. "Every time you plan, something gets canceled or changed. But the moment we got married, all that disappeared. It didn't matter anymore," continued Mickey. "I couldn't have dreamt, hoped or prayed for a more beautiful, better or happier wedding in my wildest dreams."



Miriam and Mickey Polevoy scrapped their original plan of getting married in front of 350 guests in central Israel. (Photo by Avigail Tresgallo Photography)

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NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

UMass Amherst Hillel spray-painted with word "Palestine" in Arabic

Hillel at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst was spray-painted in red with the word "Palestine" in Arabic, announced Hillel on April 21. Officials at the Jewish organization on college campuses said it is in communication with the Amherst Police Department. "This cowardly act of hatred towards the Jewish community amidst a time of global crisis and on Yom Hashoah, the Holocaust Remembrance Day, is reprehensible," posted UMass Amherst Hillel on Facebook. It continued, "Our UMass Jewish community is resilient and strong, and in the face of this hate we will only deepen our commitment to empowering students to build vibrant community based on values of love, respect, justice and peace."

Judge rules Monsey machete-attack suspect deemed unfit for federal trial

The suspect accused of the Dec. 28 machete attack at a home and prayer hall known as Rabbi Rottenberg's Shul in Monsey, NY, injuring five of the 100 or so celebrants at a Hanukkah candle-lighting party and leading to the death of 72-year-old Yosef Neumann, is unfit for federal trial, a judge ruled on April 20. Grafton Thomas, 37, was previously indicted by a federal grand jury and pleaded not guilty to five counts of obstructing the free exercise of religion in an attempt to kill, a federal hate crime. Judge Cathy Seibel said that "the defendant is presently suffering from a mental disease or defect rendering him mentally incompetent to the extent that he is unable to assist properly in his defense." She ordered Thomas to be hospitalized for up to four months, after which his status will be re-evaluated. The April 20 ruling does not apply to the state charges Thomas also faces. Reportedly, Thomas could face an upgraded state murder charge due to Neumann's death.

Syria claims that Israeli jets carried out strike near Palmyra

Syrian state media on April 20 reported that the country's

air defenses had downed several missiles near the central town of Palmyra fired from Israeli fighter jets. This is the third such attack reported in the past three weeks, according to the AP. According to the U.K.-based monitoring group Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, the strikes targeted Iranian facilities and Iran-backed fighters in the desert near Palmyra, in Homs Province. It said that the Israeli jets had entered Lebanese airspace. The alleged attack comes soon after Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was in Damascus meeting with Syrian President Bashar Assad and his Syrian counterpart, according to the report. A week earlier, an Israeli drone fired two missiles at a vehicle near the Syria-Lebanon border carrying a pair of Hezbollah members, according to a Hezbollah official. Neither of the Hezbollah members was wounded in the attack, the official said. Speaking to the AP on condition of anonymity, the official said that one of the missiles detonated near the vehicle while the second hit after the driver abandoned it.

Cyprus: Turkish gas drilling is an "act of piracy"

The Cypriot government accused Turkey on April 20 of again attempting to drill for gas in its waters where it has exclusive economic rights. "This new illegal 'act of piracy' constitutes a further severe violation of the sovereign rights and jurisdiction of the Republic of Cyprus, contrary to international law," the Cypriot government said in a statement, according to the AP. The government said that Turkish drilling ships were heading for waters south of Cyprus in an area it has exclusive rights over and which it has licensed energy companies Eni of Italy and France's Total to carry out exploratory drilling in. Cyprus said that it was the sixth time in less than a year that Turkey had tried to drill in Cypriot waters, with Ankara first sending a drill ship to the area in July with a warship escort. The European Union has repeatedly condemned Turkey's exploration in Cypriot waters, and has imposed asset freezes and travel bans on two top officials for the Turkish-owned Petroleum Corporation, according to the report. Earlier this year, Israel, Cyprus and Greece inked a massive new pipeline deal to transport natural gas from the eastern Mediterra-

nean to markets in Europe. Turkey, with decades of tensions with Greece and Cyprus, and more recently with Israel, has strongly opposed the pipeline. It also recently signed an agreement with Libya's Tripoli-based government setting maritime boundaries that conflict with those envisioned by Israel, Cyprus, Greece and Egypt.

Trump to "temporarily suspend immigration" due to pandemic

U.S. President Donald Trump said on April 20 that he would sign an executive order temporarily suspending immigration to the United States due to the coronavirus pandemic. "In light of the attack from the Invisible Enemy, as well as the need to protect the jobs of our GREAT American Citizens, I will be signing an Executive Order to temporarily suspend immigration into the United States!" Trump tweeted. No other details were given about the move. Trump previously stopped travel from China and Europe in an attempt to slow the spread of the virus throughout America. Visa processing by the State Department has been suspended for weeks because of the virus, according to the AP.

Israel transfers advanced coronavirus detection device to Gaza hospital

Israel's Coordinator of Government Activities in the Palestinian Territories (or COGAT) announced on April 12 that it had transferred an advanced medical device used to detect coronavirus to the Gaza Strip. The device, called a PCR machine, is used for detection of COVID-19, said COGAT on Twitter, adding that it will be at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City. The machine, also called a thermal cyclor, was donated by an unspecified international organization with help from the World Health Organization to greatly increase the number of coronavirus tests being carried out in the Gaza Strip. According to Gaza authorities, there have only been a few confirmed coronavirus cases in the Gaza Strip as of April 12. In recent weeks, COGAT has also donated medical supplies, food, drugs and antiseptics to the coastal enclave, which is run by the Hamas terror organization.

Danon slams claims Israel is impeding P.A. efforts to combat coronavirus

Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon "strongly criticized" a letter by the Palestinians to the U.N. Security Council accusing Israel of impeding efforts by the Palestinian Authority to combat the coronavirus pandemic in the West Bank. "As Israel remains open and able to help the Palestinians living under P.A. rule to combat the spread of the coronavirus, the P.A. only remains interested in continuing its diplomatic warfare against Israel," Danon said in a recent statement. "The Palestinian leadership will have to choose between slandering or receiving support from Israel. It cannot have both," he continued. "Its rhetoric against Israel, the [Israel Defense Forces] and the Jewish people is inciting, baseless and threatens to undo any progress we've made in combating the virus." In his letter to the U.N. Security Council, Palestinian representative to the United Nations Riyad Mansour claimed that IDF soldiers are spitting on Palestinian cars and homes, and dumping trash, needles and used gloves between villages. He also accused Israel of forcing Palestinian workers to return to P.A.-controlled territory through wastewater tunnels, so to smuggle them past P.A. authorities mandating coronavirus testing. In last March, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Nickolay Mladenov praised the recent cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

Bonds. . . . Continued from page 1

Wiener noted that historically, Israel bonds were not a very strong financial market, and that it took many years for Israel to improve its financial situation. Along those lines, the sales represent "a strong indication of the economy and market confidence. This is important because the other ways to raise funds, such as raising taxes, is difficult to do during a crisis."

Wiener emphasized that a great way to raise funds without placing additional stress on a financially strained population during a crisis "is not to put an additional burden on the Israeli population and businesses, but to allow foreigners to lend the state money."

While Israel is not the first country to sell century bonds - other countries such as Mexico, Argentina and Austria have also done so - it is a milestone for the Jewish state and demonstrates its financial stability, as well as the confidence investors have in its future.

In what is perhaps proof that world financial organizations have huge confidence in Israel's financial future, Bank of America Securities, Barclays Bank, Goldman Sachs and Citibank acted as underwriters for the bond issuance.

Credit ratings by Moody's, S&P and Fitch standing at A+ Stable, AA- Stable and A1 Positive, respectively, demonstrate why Israel has gained the confidence of prominent investors.

Israel is now projected to increase its deficit spending from between 3 percent to 4 percent to 8 percent to 9 percent as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, forcing the country to think about ways to cover the gap.

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