

THE REPORTER

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TC-TI to hold virtual *Selichot* concert with Dan Nichols

Temple Concord and Temple Israel invite the community to join them for a *Selichot* concert featuring Dan Nichols on Saturday, September 12, at 8:30 pm. "A number of congregations have joined together to bring about this concert for *Selichot* as we move closer to Rosh Hashanah and all the holidays we observe and celebrate in Tishrei," said organizers of the event. Anyone interested should contact Temple Concord (templeconcordaa@gmail.com or 723-7355) or Temple Israel (titammy2stny.twcbc.com or 723-7461)

for the Zoom information for the program.

"Dan Nichols is a singular talent in the world of Jewish music," said organizers of the event. "He is one of the most dynamic, influential and beloved Jewish musicians in North America. Dan's melodies have become an integral part of the spiritual and liturgical experience of countless individuals and Jewish communities."



Dan Nichols

Nichols is a product of the Jewish camping movement. He spent 10 summers at the Goldman Union Camp in Zionsville, IN, before receiving his degree in vocal performance at the University of North Carolina. In 1995, realizing the potential of music to make a "meaningful connection" with Jewish youth, Nichols established the Jewish rock band Eighteen. Since that time, he and Eighteen have re-

leased 11 full-length studio albums. "Each one has received critical acclaim and has been celebrated by Jewish adults and youth alike," organizers added.

"Dan's anthology includes a wide range of sounds and styles, from energetic Jewish rock anthems to moving interpretations of traditional Jewish liturgy. Jewish youth and adults from around the world draw inspiration from Dan's music and its positive message of Jewish values, identity and pride," they said. "Dan's See **"Concert"** on page 3

Film Fest to hold virtual film event in September

By Reporter staff

The Jewish International Film Fest of Greater Binghamton will hold a virtual showing of the film "They Ain't Ready for Me" directed and produced by Brad Rothschild. "They Ain't Ready for Me" is a full-length documentary about Tamar Manasseh, an African American rabbinical student who is leading the fight against senseless killings on the south side of Chicago. It explores the challenges and motivations of the community leader as she works to prevent more people from being killed by gun violence. A discussion on the film with Rothschild will be led by Ben Kasper, professor emeritus of social science at SUNY Broome and a member of the Temple Israel Executive Board.

People will be able to register on the Federation website, www.jfjb.org. The film will be streamed free for up to 100 computers. After Shabbat ends on Saturday, September 12, a link to the film will be sent to those who sign up in advance. The film will be available for viewing on personal devices for 48 hours. On Monday, September 14, at 7 pm, Kasper will facilitate the online



Poster of "They Ain't Ready for Me"



Producer/director Brad Rothschild

video discussion of the film.

"As isolation due to COVID-19 continues, we wanted to do another film screening as a way to stay connected to community members," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "They Ain't Ready for Me" is an inspirational film that shows the power of one person deciding to make a difference in this world. It is the perfect film to reflect on before the High Holy Days. "

"Tamar and the organization she founded, MASK, Mothers and Men Against Senseless Killings, are proving that violence can be prevented," said organizers of the event. "With just her presence on the block – talking, joking and hanging out – she is making the forgotten members of the neighborhood believe that there are people who care whether they live or die. But she is more than just a concerned mother of two children – she's also a rabbinical student. Her unique background and upbringing give her a perspective that few people can claim. Both authentically Jewish and authentically Black, she brings an understanding of both communities, even as she struggles for acceptance in the Jewish world."

See **"Film"** on page 3

JFS seeks donations for We Remember You project

Jewish Family Service is seeking donations for the We Remember You Project. The project, which is now in its 13th year, supports Jewish families locally who struggle to make ends meet.

Due to the pandemic and participant concerns with the risk of exposure to COVID-19, JFS has decided not to deliver food baskets for this year. In an effort to

maintain safety while supporting Jewish community members in need, JFS is asking for monetary donations for the purchase of grocery gift cards along with a monetary gift. Tax deductible donations should be sent to JFS by Wednesday, September 9, with "We Remember You" written on the memo line. Checks should be mailed to Jewish Family Service, 500 Clubhouse Rd.,

Vestal, NY 13850.

"The We Remember You Project is a wonderful way to give *tzedakah* during this time of self-reflection and gratitude," noted Rose Shea, JFS director. "The Binghamton community has always been compassionate and generous. This is just another way to show our neighbors they are not forgotten and the community really cares."

Shea noted, "The We Remember You Project has been a success all these years and I know the recipients appreciate all that is done for them. Let's make this another successful year. Projects like this are what Jewish Family Service and the Jewish Federation are all about."

Contact Shea at director@jfjb.org for further information.

Spotlight

Jewish resources to occupy your family during social distancing – part 19

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.

- ◆ The Clal virtual program "American Jewish New Year in JazzTime" will be a concert of American jazz, blues and Negro spirituals mixed with old world klezmer. Joining the Klezmer Company Jazz Orchestra will be Clal's Rabbi Irwin Kula. The event will take place on Saturday, September 19, from 11 am-12:15 pm. The cost per household is \$36. For more information or to sign up, visit www.clal.org/project/american-jewish-new-year-jazztime.
- ◆ Literature lovers can watch a video of

the 2020 Sami Rohr Prize ceremony at www.samirohrprize.org/ceremony. Also on the page are videos featuring information about the finalists and the ceremonies that took place in 2018 and '19.

- ◆ Rachel Korazim gave a lecture and reading celebrating the 50th anniversary of Israeli poet Nathan Alterman's passing. This was originally part of an offering of the Shalom Hartman Institute. The video can be found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ud-IEO2zhxTA&feature=youtu.be.
- ◆ The Geshher Multicultural Film Fund offers a variety of independent short films, as well as those made by students in Israeli film schools. For more information or to view films, visit <http://tportmarket.com/partners/gesher-vod>.
- ◆ CCAR Press Speaker Series will hold

the program "Inside Mishkan HaNefesh: A Conversation on Today's Machzor" with Cantor Evan Kent, Rabbi Leon Morris and Rabbi Hara Person on Thursday, September 3, at 12:30 pm. To register for the event, visit https://ccar.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_a0W0w19oTbi6gtmtg_rrmA?fbclid=IwAR3DPQB6t2Y5QxZfhjwHnQEtOM-JtNrneiJD6bqtIRGaErORKy3RJEqCcnv.

- ◆ The Pardes Community Education offers a variety of online classes. The Elul schedule includes classes from August 31-September 24 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. For more information about these classes, and online fall and spring classes, or to register, visit www.pardes.org.il/program/community/pardes-community-education/.
- ◆ The Jewish National Fund continues to offer online programming. Upcoming

programming includes "Virtual Shabbat Experience (For Ages 22-40)" on Friday, September 11, at 5:30 pm, and "Spice Up Your Life" with Chef Lior Lev Sercarz on Wednesday, September 16, at 8 pm. For more information on programs or to register, visit jnf.org/ondemand.

- ◆ The Israel-American Council will hold a three-day e-summit called "The Parenting Puzzle: Piecing It Together" from September 23-25. The summit hopes to help parents reboot their parenting skills – and re-imagine their roles inside the home – during the pandemic. For more information and to register, visit www.parentingpuzzle.org.
- ◆ Birthright Israel is offering virtual tours of Israel. The interactive video allows users to choose their own adventures and visit

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Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

There are many reasons and ways to cultivate gratitude in one's life. These last several months, I have been working to create more moments when my attention is fully focused on the present. In the unfiltered, present moment, gratitude comes easily. However, this is a challenge for a busy mind that is used to making lists and checking boxes. Today, in this moment, I am feeling some emptiness. My second adult-child, Rae (who uses plural pronouns), has returned to school, but I am grateful that I had the chance to be with them these last few months and rediscover their quiet, loving presence. Long morning walks have also become a time to quiet my mind and reconnect with God. What a pleasure to feel awakened by birdsong and cool morning breezes. Last week, I felt a surge of joy when I took some time to really be present with my son as he sang along to a

favorite song in the car. His joy became my joy!

The isolation of the COVID pandemic has given many people the time and opportunity to reconnect with God and what they really value in life. I hope this is the case for all of you. As we near the end of summer and turn our attention toward the Jewish High Holy Days, it is the perfect time to turn inward and give thanks for all we have. We here at the Jewish Federation have been preparing for our busiest season. Preparations for the annual Campaign and allocations process have been in the works for months. I want to express my gratitude for Marilyn Bell, annual campaign chairwoman. Her willingness to work hard and carefully choose the best path for the work ahead is an inspiration. Federation President Suzanne Holwitt has also been working diligently behind the scenes to steer our community forward

during this difficult time. A big thank you to Suzanne. I treasure your support.

On behalf of Marilyn, Suzanne and myself, I want to ask a favor of all of you. The annual Campaign is a labor intensive effort, done by many volunteers. In an effort to reduce the possibility of exposure to COVID, we are asking each community member to please take a moment to make your 2021 pledge ahead of Super Sunday, which will take place on October 18. You can e-mail director@jfgb.org, call 724-2332 ext. 1, mail in the coupon in this week's *Reporter* (see page 5) or go to www.jfgb.org and click "make a pledge now." I give you all my thanks in advance. During this challenging time, your gift and early pledge is more important than ever.

With lots of love I am wishing you all a peaceful, joyous end of summer.

For High Holidays, do the unexpected: Double down

By David Suissa

(*Jewish Journal* via JNS) – With Jewish communal life turned upside down during these pandemic times, and the High Holidays fast approaching, the anxiety of uncertainty is reaching a peak.

How will we deal, for example, with the fact that synagogues – those sacred gathering places many of us cherish – are expected to remain closed throughout the holidays and beyond?

One of the more vexing questions is whether synagogue members and others will make their usual donations at this time of year. After all, why donate to an empty space? Who wants to buy tickets to a Zoom service?

In communities where digital technology is not permitted, the question is: Do I want to pay for a virus-restricted indoor prayer service, especially if I have access to a more

comfortable private backyard service?

At a time when so many people have taken financial hits, and so many are now used to living online, these are not idle questions.

The same applies to other Jewish institutions, such as schools, museums, community centers and the like: How much revenue can an inactive space generate? How much will people contribute for an online experience that competes with a million others?

Whether we're talking about huge malls, fancy restaurants or tiny synagogues, "inactive space" is the defining reality of the COVID-19 era. Let's face it, this is a social and communal upheaval – our physical spaces have become health liabilities.

How does one react to such radical disruption? In the case of synagogues, perhaps the easy answer is to "opt out"

of the traditional membership model – give less, engage less – until things return to normal.

I'd like to suggest a more radical response: Let's double down. Yes, during this extraordinary crisis, let's not just opt in, let's double down.

For those who can afford it, double down and give more to your synagogue than you normally would. For those who can't afford it, find ways to do more and engage more. Bring more Judaism into your home. Deepen your learning. Find more ways to help others.

Doubling down is a two-way street. Synagogues and other institutions must go beyond simply putting their regular programming online. They must add value by being creative and imaginative. The more they do, the more their members will do.

See "Holidays" on page 8

In My Own Words

The summer of 2020

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

The title of the article was not meant to be ironic. At the time the magazine was written (usually six months before it appears), it was still possible to imagine we could have "(the) Best Summer Yet." The article asked readers to list answers to the following: "it wouldn't be summer without....," "this summer I want to try," "must-have moments," etc. So, I decided to actually think about it. For me, it wouldn't be summer if I wasn't able to sit outside (in the shade) and read. Meeting friends for ice cream has ranked as an important activity the past few years. I didn't have plans to try anything new because I am not adventurous, but going for walks in local parks and arboretums would have been pleasant change of pace. (I usually walk on the streets near my house.)

One question provoked the strongest, and strangest, reaction. The question asked readers to pretend it was fall and to think about what moments we would have not wanted to miss. My immediate thought was not what the magazine would have expected. My biggest hope for the summer? I wanted to be alive – to not catch the coronavirus and, if I unfortunately did become sick, I wanted to survive with few side effects. That's certainly different from the plans I had for the summer earlier in the year. August is my birthday month and, by the time you read this, I will have already turned 65 (and if for some reason that's not true, I'm hoping my staff will publish this posthumously). There was supposed to be my regular birthday ad that appears in this paper when my age has a zero or five at the end. (I just couldn't get my act together to do it.) I planned to visit a hotel that I like, where I would sit on its porch looking at the water and enjoy the incredible buffet breakfast. The hotel

is open, but I don't want to risk going." "I can live without it" is a phrase that has a very different meaning this year.

I've had people scheduling birthday celebrations for me so please don't feel that I'm actually missing anything. (In fact, between my first draft of this column and the second, I had a surprise birthday car parade in front of my house.) Birthdays have always been a big deal in my family, at least for me and my brother, Larry. When I was little, my mom used to joke that someday I would take out a full page birthday ad in the local paper. I actually thought that was a good idea. We had set celebrations when Larry was alive because everything had to be done the same way for each birthday. I've also been known to make my own celebration if nothing have been scheduled on the actual day. And I'm known for my extended celebrations, which began in college when college friends would say, "We'll celebrate when we get back to school." Then the first few weeks would be busy so we would postpone it to a bit later. Post-college years, one of those celebrations took place in November because that's when I managed to visit one friend. Now, we tend to just send gifts by snail mail.

August has been a particularly difficult month, though, even without birthday expectations. My mother is in a nursing home and I haven't been able to visit her since March. The expected dates of visitation keep being postponed due to staff testing positive (although as of this writing, no residents in her home have tested positive). Earlier this month, my mother was diagnosed with pneumonia and dehydration. She is improving and I trust the staff to take care of her, but she's not bouncing back as quickly as we all would like. I still manage to talk to her on her private

phone line, but what I really want to do is be with her – to just sit together in the same room. One of the nicest visits I had with her before the pandemic was on New Year's Eve day. I bugged out of work early and spent several hours with her in her room. She was watching a movie and I was half reading a book and half following the film. We did a lot of that – just being together in the same room – when she was at home and that made us both happy. I've accepted the fact that my mother won't live forever. What's harder to accept is that I might not have more time with her while she's still alive. A friend has suggested sending blessings to my mom every time I think of her, which is a nice way to acknowledge both my feelings and the difficulty of the situation, while offering me something positive to do.

As for what will happen when fall and winter arrive, well, no one really predict that. Fall is usually my favorite season, but this year it may mean the last times I can visit with friends because it will still be warm enough to sit outside. If there is no viable vaccine, winter promises to be difficult, but I'm already making plans on how to handle that, including listening to more music. (I am so grateful for the cochlear implant, which makes this possible.) Financial considerations may also play a role in how the winter goes, but there is so much that I can't control. I remind myself of that and try not worry about things that are out of my hands. But as I learned when I had to deal with turmoil in my life before, the important things don't change: family, friends, community and love. It seems almost a cliché by now to say that we are all in this together, but, we are and we can help each other survive mentally, emotionally and, if needed, financially. Everything else pales in comparison.



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BD Sisterhood cancels opening meeting

The Beth David Sisterhood canceled its opening meeting of the new season, which was to be held on Wednesday, September 9. No Zoom alternative has been scheduled.

"We had looked forward to seeing all our friends and members in person, but due to health concerns, we have decided that the well-being of our members was more important than our need to connect socially," said organizers of the event. "We were looking forward to once again

hearing what we are sure would have been inspirational words from Judy Silber putting us in the proper state of mind for the upcoming High Holidays. Judy's talks are always interesting and educational, and we will miss hearing from her this year."

Sisterhood organizers said that they hoped to find a safe and socially acceptable way to hold the October meeting, which is currently scheduled for Wednesday afternoon, October 14. Members will be informed when

a decision is made about whether or not the meeting will be held.

"On behalf of the Executive Board of Beth David Sisterhood and our membership, we wish that the entire community will be blessed with a happy and healthy new year," said Cathy Velenchik, co-president. "May we all soon be able to meet safely and without fear of COVID-19. Now more than ever, we are responsible for each other's welfare in addition to our own."

Beth David Synagogue held virtual lecture



On August 6, Beth David Synagogue held a Zoom lecture given by Eitan Morell on "Connecting Archeology and the Bible" in memory of his father, Samuel (Shmuel) Morell, who passed away in April. Shown are some of those attending.



People listened to the Beth David Synagogue Zoom lecture on August 6.



People listened to the Beth David Synagogue Zoom lecture on August 6.

"Operation Home" lands new olim from Mexico, as well as Israelis stranded abroad

By JNS staff

(JNS) – A first-of-its-kind charter flight from Mexico carried 230 new immigrants to Israel on August 11. Dubbed "Operation Home," the flight was organized by the Jewish Agency for Israel and Hanoar Hatzioni, with support from Keren Hayesod.

Taking off from Mexico City, the flight carried 50 new olim and 150 Hanoar Hatzioni graduates who will take part in Masa, a project co-founded by the Jewish Agency and Israeli government that connects young adults with immersive, long-term experiences throughout the Jewish state. "Operation Home" also brought back dozens of Israelis who have been stranded due to the limited availability of

flights during the coronavirus pandemic.

After visiting Israel last year, Carlos and Miriam Mercado, and their four children, knew they wanted to make aliyah. "Here, I feel truly at home," said Miriam Mercado. "In Mexico, we are always viewed as 'those Jews' and never felt safe to go out with a kippah. We knew we would always be a minority."

See "Mexico" on page 12

FilmContinued from page 1

In his review of the film on the website Unseen Films, Nate Hood wrote, "Whether she's cruising the streets blaring Lauryn Hill, saving a group of terrified 4-year-old boys from the cops, or visiting the graves of her enslaved ancestors, Manassah is a mesmerizing presence, a living embodiment of tikkun olam for Black America, both Jewish and otherwise."

Rothschild is an award winning producer and writer with both a creative and a business background. He received a master's in international affairs and a master's in business administration, both from Columbia University. From 1995-97, he served as the speech writer and director of communications for the Mission of Israel to the United Nations. Rothschild produced the award-winning documentary feature "Kinderblock 66: Return to Buchenwald," which was screened at the Jerusalem Film Festival and at more than 20 festivals in the United States and around the world. He directed the documentary film "African Exodus," about the plight of Israel's African refugees, and the documentary film "Tree Man," about the people who come to New York City to sell Christmas trees every holiday season. "Tree Man" won the Audience Award at the St. Lawrence International Film Festival. Rothschild is currently directing a documentary film about Raoul Wallenberg.

ConcertContinued from page 1

live performances are legendary for their unrestrained energy and infectious spirit."

Nichols' studio concerts during the pandemic have continued his impact. His URJ "Campfire on Tour" concert in late June was the impetus for the program. Rabbi Steve Weisman reached out to him to put together an online Selichot musical and storytelling program.

Nichols has been featured at the conferences and conventions of nearly every major Jewish movement, including the URJ Biennial, NFTY Convention, BBYO International and Limmud. In addition to his musical talents, Nichols has been called a gifted teacher.

In Memoriam

Joe Miller aka "Yosl Der Kluger"


Ach, tsiz geven zayr a shver supriz far unzer JCC Yiddisheh Grupeh tsu hern dem naves. Yosl is gven azoi gut, azoi ziss, azoi interesting, azoi muzikalish, oon azoi klug! (Derfar, zayn nick-nomen!)
Mir vinchn tsum Mishpocha Miller oon Mishpocha Cubic az dos troiyerikeh tsayt gayt shnel oon az zey kenst gayn tsurik tsu denkn foon Zisse Yosl mit a groisn shmaichl afn punim! Mir visn az zayn nomen iz far a b'rucha!

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of
Joe Miller

REPORTER DEADLINES
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September 11.....	September 2
September 25	September 16
October 9.....	September 30
October 23.....	October 14

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Off the Shelf

Jews and Shanghai

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Most Jewish histories focus on Europe, the United States or the Middle East. That's understandable since the majority of Jews throughout the centuries lived in those areas. While perhaps not as rich in Jewish history, China offers some lesser known, but fascinating, stories about two Jewish families – the Sassoons and Kadoories – both of whom left Iraq and made their fortunes in Asia. A look at their lives and accomplishments can be found in "The Last Kings of Shanghai: The Rival Jewish Dynasties That Helped Create Modern China" by Jonathan Kaufman (Viking). Kaufman, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter, notes the unusual role the families had in China and that their doings have often been dismissed or ignored.

Kaufman's clear and easy prose offers great details about the most important members of the family. The Sassoon dynasty began when David Sassoon left Iraq in 1829 after backing the wrong political party. Fortunately, his influential family was able to help him when he moved first to India and then to Shanghai. The family made its fortune through a variety of industries, including the opium trade. David needed workers he could trust and opened Sassoon schools for Jewish refugees. The teenagers were taught a variety of approved subjects and then hired as clerks in Sassoon warehouses or sent to purchase supplies for Sassoon industries. David also built his own hospital, offered additional training at another Sassoon school, helped retirees who had no family to aid them and endowed a cemetery where they could be buried.

One of these workers was Elly Kadoories, who began working for Sassoon when he was 15, but who quit after Sassoon management rebuked him for giving out disinfectant without permission to Chinese workers during a plague. Unlike the Sassoons, who generally partnered with the British, Elly formed some partnerships with the Chinese. Both families became enormously successful and that success continued for more than a century. Unfortunately, both families misread what was happening in China

after World War II: they underestimated the appeal of the Chinese communists and just how resentful the Chinese were of outsiders who profited off their country, but cared little for the natives who lived in poverty.

While the details of the businesses and the different personalities from both families were absorbing and interesting, what stood out was the families' interactions with other Europeans and Chinese. For example, the Sassoon family had little difficulty becoming British citizens and believed they belonged to the upper crust of society, especially when members of the family became friends with Edward (Bertie), the prince of Wales. Kaufman notes, though, "The Sassoons, collecting knighthoods and royal invitations and enjoying dinner and weight-loss cures with the heir to the British throne, saw themselves as British. The Chinese, seeing the Sassoon business interests advancing beneath the Union Jack, saw the Sassoons as British. But many British saw the Sassoons as Jews." This is particularly true for the Chinese during the years the family was involved in the opium trade. At the time, the trade was legal and the Sassoons were concerned with making money, not with people's health. But the racism underlying this response is noted by the fact that, as Kaufman notes, "The Sassoons avoided the drug themselves, and they, like many British in Shanghai, scolded and rebuked any Westerners they saw using it, especially when they developed the sallow yellow color of an addict."

Both families helped Jewish refugees before and during World War II, although they also suffered at the hands of the Japanese once the United States entered the war. Ho Fen-Shan, a Chinese diplomat in Austria, helped create the influx of refugees by issuing visas to Shanghai, which allowed them to leave the country. When the Japanese captured Hong Kong, they treated the Jewish community relatively well at first. They believed the Jewish community of Shanghai could influence U.S. government policy, even though few Jews in China had any American connections.

The relationship between the Japanese and the Jews became more difficult after the U.S. entered the war and Nazi influence in China increased.

The Kadoories had far more trouble becoming British citizens and always felt like outsiders. This may help explain why, after World War II, Horace Kadoorie helped Chinese refugees who were fleeing from the communists. He began loaning money interest free to Chinese farmers, helping them to buy land and livestock. With the formation of an agricultural aid society, he continued making small loans, which, when repaid, were given to another farmer. Horace also arranged for other improvements, including building the first paved roads in the area. In addition, he funded research to find a heartier breed of pigs that were easier for the farmers to raise. Even though Horace kept kosher, he knew that pork was a popular meat in China. Kaufman notes that "the [Chinese] farmers had a saying: 'The Kadoories know everything about pigs except the taste.'"

Kaufman's summation of the families' histories may leave readers with mixed feelings. Their business accomplishments were remarkable. But, as the author notes, "The fortunes made by the Sassoons and the Kadoories were built on low wages and unfair competition. They exacerbated inequality that left the Chinese dying in the streets of Shanghai even as the Kadoories danced at Marble Hall and [one of the Sassoons] presided over his extravagant parties at the Cathy Hotel. They fueled the rise of the Chinese Communist Party and its triumph." They also inspired the Chinese to follow their example and helped move China from a feudal country to a modern one. The Sassoons believed in a global economy; the Kadoories were active in charity and *tikkun olam*. The families made their fortunes in the 19th and 20th centuries when laissez-faire capitalism ruled the world. Whether it's fair to judge them by 21st century standards is for readers to decide. But this fascinating chapter of Jewish life is worth exploring for anyone interested in Jewish or Chinese history.



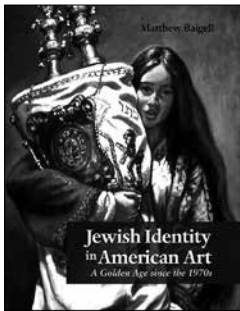
Off the Shelf

Jewish artwork

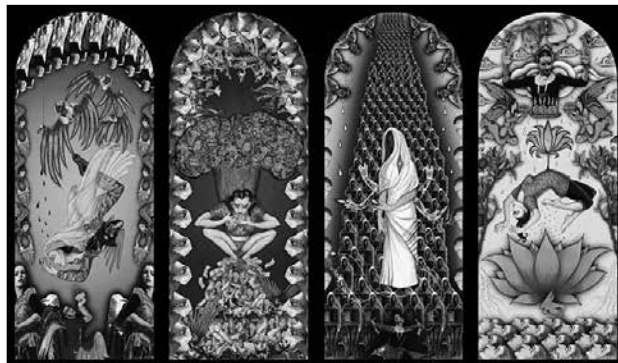
RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

A great deal has been written about the current flowering of Jewish literature. There has been far less discussion about Jewish art. In "Jewish Identity in American Art: A Golden Age Since the 1970s" (Syracuse University Press), Matthew Baigell notes that this artwork deserves far more attention than it's been getting. He believes that this generation of artists – those born from the 1930s-60s – are "the most vital and interesting artists within the history of contemporary Jewish American art, the ones most willing to take risks with their material, the ones who have opened up new ways of thinking about art with Jewish religious and secular content." After noting how these artists differ from those of previous generations, the author discusses 20 artists in greater detail.

Baigell writes that the majority of these artists focus on their American identity ("Americans who happen to be Jewish, not Jews who happen to be American") and most prefer to be labeled as artists who are Jewish, rather



The cover shows Brian Shapiro's "Girl Blessing the Torah" (1997). (© Brian Shapiro)



Siona Benjamin, "The Four Mothers Who Entered Pardes (Paradise)" (2014). (Photo courtesy of the artist and ACA galleries NYC: www.artsiona.com)

than Jewish artists. Yet, their work focuses on themes and stories found in the Bible, Talmud and *midrash*, although they are given contemporary meaning. These artists are not looking for religious answers in their work and research; instead, they are exploring their heritage and how it relates to their life. This is particularly true of the artists who are women; their works offer feminist interpretations of Jewish texts and stories. The 20 artists



Mark Podwal, "Expulsion 1492" (2013). (© Mark Podwal)

works that speak to their generation.

The major artists under discussion are Mark Podwal, Ruth Weisberg, Janet Shafner, Siona Benjamin (the only non-American born artist), Carol Hamoy, Robert Kirschbaum, Tobi Kahn, Richard McBee, David Wander, Archie Rand and Joel Silverstein. For this reader, much of the religious meaning of the works – especially the more abstract pieces – would not have stood out without Baigell and/or the artist's explanation. That doesn't mean the works weren't beautiful or didn't strike an emotional chord, but their specific relationship to Judaism sometimes felt hidden.

"Jewish Identity in American Art" is a beautiful book with more than 90 color illustrations. It is more than an coffee table art book since Baigell offers scholarly insights into the artists' work. Baigell believes that what makes members of this generation "unique" is that they are completely comfortable with both their American and Jewish identities, something that allows them "to perpetuate Jewish memory materially through their religiously themed art." Anyone interested in this chapter of Jewish American art history will want to explore "Jewish Identity in American Art."

Quick Reference Guide to Planned Giving

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

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

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Play Ball! Jews in the outfield (and the infield, too)

The Israel Baseball League: field of dreams in the promised land

By Bill Simons

Kibbutz Gezer, located in central Israel, was originally founded by Holocaust survivors following World War II. Despite heroic resistance, Gezer suffered massive casualties during the 1948 War of Independence, creating a trajectory of painful social dislocation that led to the disbandment of the *kibbutz* in the early 1960s. Kibbutz Gezer arose anew in the mid-1970s with the arrival of American Jews making *aliyah*. The American-born residents of Gezer served

in the Israel Defense Forces. They learned to drive bulldozers, build homes and grow crops. Reflective of their American cultural inheritance, these Israeli immigrants built a baseball field. The ballpark is close to the site of an ancient Maccabean encampment. In 2007, Kibbutz Gezer, a demographic backwater of less than 300 residents, improbably, hosted two professional baseball teams on its ballfield.

The Israel Baseball League, thus far the Middle East's only professional baseball

circuit, was born—and died—in 2007. Armed with press credentials, I was lucky enough to witness the miracle of a professional variant of America's national pastime transplanted to the Jewish homeland. The creation of American baseball by Abner Doubleday is myth. The creation of the IBL by Larry Baras is reality. A Jewish-American businessman, Baras' invention of the UnHoley Bagel, pre-stuffed with cream cheese, had led to prosperity for his Boston-based business, SJR Food Inc. An epiphany at an independent minor league baseball game in Brockton, MA, led Baras to believe that pro baseball, despite evident obstacles, could be viable in Israel.

Prominent and respected Jewish-American leaders bought into Baras' dream. Daniel C. Kurtzer, former U.S. ambassador to Egypt and Israel, agreed to serve as the commissioner of the IBL. MLB Commissioner Bud Selig, New York Yankees President Randy Levine and Smith College Professor of Economics Andrew Zimbalist joined the IBL Advisory Board. Opening day for the IBL was on Sunday night, June 24, 2007, at Yarkon Field at the Baptist Village in Petach Tikva, near Tel Aviv, with an impressive official fan attendance of 3,112.

In addition to the ballfields at Yarkon and Gezer, IBL games were also played at Sportek in Tel Aviv, the latter facility inadequate and unsafe. Infield tiles with cement backing, corroded metal and glass counted amongst Sportek major problems. Each park hosted two home teams. Handicapped by a player draft conducted without relevant evaluative information, team rosters varied

greatly in talent, impeding competitive balance among the six IBL teams – the Bet Shemesh Blue Sox, Modi'in Miracle, Netanya Tigers, Petach Tikva Pioneers and Ra'anana Express.

With no spring training practice, the IBL regular season commenced on June 24 and ended on August 15. Some teams played 40 regular season games, others 41. Bet Shemesh finished first during the regular season and went on to win the August 16-19 post-season playoffs.

The biggest names in the IBL were the managers. With 174 MLB victories, Ken Holtzman, manager of the Petach Tikva Pioneers, remains the winningest Jewish pitcher in major league history. A hitting hero of the iconic 1969 New York Mets, Art Shamsky piloted the Modi'in Miracle. Another potent batter, former New York Yankee Ron Blomberg, became, in 1973, MLB's first designated hitter. Holtzman, Shamsky and Blomberg all lacked previous managerial experience and did not have name recognition amongst most native Israelis. Only one Israeli, Ami Baran, managed an IBL team.

As for the IBL players, there was a significant range in their skills and baseball backgrounds, encompassing those with minor league, international and college experience, as well as those whose last uniformed team represented a high school. The multinational, 120-player IBL drew athletes from diverse places, including Australia, the Dominican Republic and Japan. Most of the players were Americans. Jews, 18 See "Dreams" on page 9

Resources. Continued from page 1

different sites around the country. To see the video, visit <https://video.eko.com/v/AJm2Ly>. For more information about Birthright Israel, visit <https://www.birthdayisrael.com/>.

- ◆ The Lower Eastside Jewish Conservatory will hold "Auschwitz #34207 – The Joe Rubinstein Story: A Book Talk on Zoom" with author Nancy Sprowell Geise on Wednesday, September 9, from 7-8:30 pm. The talk is limited to 100 registrations. For more information or to register, visit www.nycjewishstours.org/event-log/auschwitz-book-talk-with-author-nancy-sprowell-geise.

- ◆ The YIVO Bruce and Francesca Cernia Slovin Online Museum's digital exhibition "Beba Epstein: The Extraordinary Life of an Ordinary Girl" is available now at museum.yivo.org. The online exhibition draws on YIVO's archive of more than 23 million documents and artifacts to illustrate 20th century Jewish history through the interactive narration of one young girl's story.

- ◆ The Center for Jewish History has several upcoming programs, including "Live from the Archives: Rosh Hashanah Recipes – Live on Zoom" on Tuesday, September 8, at 1 pm; "Hank Greenberg and Yom Kippur" on Tuesday, September 22, at 1 pm; "Sukkah in the Sky" on Tuesday, October 6, at 1 pm; and "Jews and Crime" on Tuesday, October 20, at 1 pm. Register at forms.office.com to receive a link to the Zoom program. For information about more programs, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/>.

- ◆ A free online-tool-kit of music and inspiration, 40 Holy Days, features Jewish artists from around the globe. More information can be found at <https://40holydays.org/>.

- ◆ Hadassah-Brandeis Institute will hold the program "Braided: A Journey of a Thousand Challahs" on Thursday, September 10, from 7-8 pm. The program will feature real-time challah baking with Beth Ricanati, M.D., author of "Braided: A Journey of a Thousand Challahs." For more information or to register, visit www.brandeis.edu/hbi/events/index.html.

- ◆ ChaiFlicks is the first Jewish streaming service focusing on Jewish and Israeli entertainment and culture. There is a charge for the service. For more information, visit www.chaiflicks.com/.

- ◆ The Streicker Center's fall catalog can be found at <https://streicker.nyc/catalog-fall-2020>. There are cooking lessons, looks at "hot topics in archeology," lectures on biblical writings called "Agreeing to Disagree: How Jewish and Christians Read Scripture Differently," "Conversations Live from Israel" and more.

- ◆ The Jewish Museum of Florida: FIU will hold "Thursday at Three: Jacqueline Goldstein with Billy Corben" on Thursday, September 3, from 3-4 pm. Miami filmmaker Billy Corben will talk with JMOF-FIU Curator Jackie Goldstein about filmmaking in South Florida. For more information or to register, visit <https://secure.qgiv.com/form/jmoffiu/event/818713/>.

- ◆ MyJewishLearning.com is offering free classes, prayer services, moments for reflection, and more. For more information, visit www.myjewishlearning.com/article/

[join-my-jewish-learning-live-online-for-the-high-holiday-season/](https://www.join-my-jewish-learning-live-online-for-the-high-holiday-season/).

- ◆ Rabbi Jill Zimmerman is offering a free guided workbook and soul-journey for the High Holiday season. For more information or to receive the free workbook online, visit <https://ravjill.com/return>.

- ◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage is offering a recording of prize-winning Sephardic historian Sarah Abrevaya Stein's talk on her book "Family Papers: A Sephardic Journey Through the Twentieth Century." To view the program, visit <https://mjhnyc.org/family-papers-a-sephardic-journey-through-the-twentieth-century/>.

- ◆ The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College is offering graduate level courses open to the public. All course sessions will take place in real time on Zoom. The fall semester runs from September 1 to December 15, including holiday breaks. There is a charge for the classes. For more information, visit www.rrc.edu/courses-open-public/graduate-level-courses-open-public.

- ◆ Respectability offers a free toolkit called "Opening Your Virtual Gates: Making Online High Holiday Celebrations Accessible to All." For more information or to access the toolkit, visit www.respectability.org/high-holidays-2020/.

- ◆ Reboot's annual 10Q annual reflection project will send participants a question a day for 10 days starting Friday, September 18, which is during the High Holiday period. The annual 10Q questions are not intrinsically religious and are focused on life, personal goals, plans for the future, relationships, our place in the world and more. For more information or to sign up, visit www.doyou10q.com.

- ◆ Ritualwell will hold "Return to Self through the Writings of Etty Hillesum: A Five-Day Intensive" on Monday, September 21, at noon. It will offer ways to engage in spiritual practices inspired by the writings of Etty Hillesum. For more information about the program or how to register, visit www.reconstructingjudaism.org/recon-connect.

- ◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold "Family Affairs: Writing Personal Histories – Live on Zoom" on Thursday, September 17, at 3 pm. The program cost is "pay what you like." The program explores researching and writing about Jewish experiences from a personal perspective. The two authors featured will be Daniel Mendelsohn ("The Lost: A Search for Six of Six Million") and Omer Bartov ("Erased" and "Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz"). For more information or to sign up, visit <https://familyaffairs.bpt.me/>.

- ◆ The Breman Museum will hold the Zoom panel discussion "Married to the Rabbi" on Tuesday, September 1, at 2 pm. The discussion is inspired by the book "Married to the Rabbi: Sixty Spouses of Retired Reform Rabbis in Their Own Words" edited by Naomi Patz and Judy Maslin. There is no charge for the event. For more information or to register, visit www.thebreman.org/Events/Upcoming-Events/Panel-Discussion-Married-to-the-Rabbi.

For additional resources, see previous issues of *The Reporter* on its website, www.thereportergroup.org.

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PREPARE FOR ROSH HASHANAH

High Holiday services at area synagogues

All information was provided by the synagogues listed below. Other area synagogues are still in the process of planning their services to ensure the safety of their congregants. See the Congregational Notes on page 10 for contact information for all of the area synagogues and further information on all of their services.

Beth David Synagogue

Note: The times and services listed are those that would be observed in a normal year. Due to COVID-19, not all services will be held and the times of services in the synagogue are subject to change. The actual times and services to be held will be distributed by e-mail prior to the holidays. If you do not get e-mails from Rabbi Zev Silber, e-mail him with your e-mail address requesting to be included in the e-mail distribution list. His e-mail address is rabbisilber@stny.rr.com.

Saturday, September 12, Selichot

Selichot service - 10:30 pm

Thursday, September 17

Selichot service - 7:30 pm

Friday, September 18, erev Rosh Hashanah

Candle lighting - 6:48 pm

Mincha - 6:50 pm

Saturday, September 19, Rosh Hashanah I

Shacharit - 8:15 am

Mincha - 6:35 pm

Candle lighting - after 7:47 pm

Sunday, September 20, Rosh Hashanah II

Shacharit - 8:15 am

Shofar - 10 am

Tashlich at Confluence Park - 6 pm

Mincha - 6:50 pm

Yom tov ends - 7:45 pm

Monday, September 21, Tzom Gedaliah/Fast of Gedalya

Fast begins - 5:27 am

Shacharit - 6:50 am

Mincha - 6:30 pm

Fast ends - 7:44 pm

Tuesday-Thursday, September 22-24, Aseret Yemai Teshuvah/Days of Repentance

Shacharit - 6:50 am

Mincha - 6:40 pm

Friday, September 25, Aseret Yemai Teshuvah/Days of Repentance

Shacharit - 6:50 am

Mincha - 6:40 pm

Shabbat Shuvah

Candle lighting - 6:36 pm

Shacharit - 9:30 am

Shabbat ends - 7:35 pm

Sunday, September 27, Aseret Yemai Teshuvah/Days of Repentance

Shacharit - 8:30 am

Mincha - 6:30 pm

Candle lighting - before 6:33 pm

Fast begins - 6:33 pm

Kol Nidre - 6:35 pm

Shacharit - 9 am

Yizkor - 11:45 am

Mincha - 5:30 pm

Shofar, fast ends - 7:31 pm

Candle lighting - 6:24 pm

Mincha - 6:25 pm

Shacharit - 9:30 am

Mincha - 6:10 pm

Candle lighting - after 7:23 pm

Shacharit - 9:30 am

Mincha - 6:25 pm

Yom tov ends - 7:21 pm

Shacharit - 6:50 am

Mincha - 6:15 pm

Candle lighting - 6:12 pm

Mincha - 6:15 pm

Shacharit - 9:30 am

Mincha - 6:25 pm

Yom tov ends - 7:21 pm

Shacharit - 6:50 am

Mincha - 6:15 pm

Candle lighting - 6:12 pm

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Shacharit - 9:30 am

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Shacharit - 9:30 am

Mincha - 6:10 pm

Candle lighting - 6:12 pm

Mincha - 6:15 pm

Norwich Jewish Center

The Norwich Jewish Center will not hold any services this year.

Penn-York Jewish Community

The Penn-York Jewish Community will not host services this year. Members will attend the virtual services offered by Congregation Kol Ami in Elmira, NY. For further information, visit www.kolamielmira.org.

Temple Beth-El, Ithaca

A full listing of Temple Beth-El's activities may be found at www.tbethaca.org.

Temple Beth El, Oneonta

Final plans have not yet been made. Check Temple Beth El's website, templebetheloneonta.org, for dates and times closer to the holidays.

Temple Israel

Note: For families with young children, please contact the office to assess need/support for child care.

Saturday, September 12, Selichot

TI/TC Selichot Zoom service - 8:30 pm

Friday, September 18, erev Rosh Hashanah

Erev Rosh Hashanah service - 7:30 pm

Saturday, September 19, Rosh Hashanah I

Preliminary service (online only) - 8:45-9:30 am

Break

Main Service A (sanctuary/online) - 10-11:30 am

Junior Congregation (chapel/online) - 10-11:30 am

Break

Main Service B (sanctuary/online) - noon-1 pm

Break

Mincha (online only) - 5 pm

Sunday, September 20, Rosh Hashanah II

Preliminary service (online only) - 8:45-9:30 am

Break

Main Service A (sanctuary/online) - 10-11:30 am

Shofar service - 11:15-11:30 am

Junior Congregation(chapel/online) - 10:30-11:30 am

Break

Main Service B (sanctuary/online) - noon-1 pm

Break

Tashlich (behind Newman House) - 4:15 pm

Sunday, September 27, erev Yom Kippur

Visiting TI Cemetery - 10:30-11:15 am

Kol Nidre service (sanctuary/online) - 6:30 pm

Monday, September 28, Yom Kippur

Preliminary service (online only) - 8:45-9:30 am

Break

Main Service A (sanctuary/online) - 10-11:30 am

Junior Congregation (chapel/online) - 10:30-11:30 am

Break

Main Service B (sanctuary/online) - noon-1:30 pm

Martyrology/Yizkor (sanctuary/online) - 1-1:30 pm

Break

Mincha (online only) - 5-6 pm

Neilah (sanctuary/online, ark open) - 6:30-7:30 pm

Break fast (at home only, no food at temple) - 7:31 pm

Wednesday, September 30

Building the Temple Israel sukkah - 10 am

Saturday, October 3, Sukkot I

Services (details TBA) - 10:30 am-noon

Sunday, October 4, Sukkot II

Study session - 12:30-1:30 pm

Friday, October 9, Hoshana Rabbah

Study session - 10:30-11:30 am

Saturday, October 10, Shemini Atzeret

Services - 10:30 am-12:30 pm

Yizkor - noon

Erev Simchat Torah party/service - TBA

Sunday, October 11, Simchat Torah

Study session - 12:30-1:30 pm

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Sixth & I to fill seats with celebrities (sort of) for virtual High Holiday services

Members of the historic Sixth & I Synagogue in Washington, DC, will be able to sit next to Jewish celebrities, including U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, during High Holidays services in September - kind of. The synagogue's virtual High Holidays services will feature its members next to cardboard cutouts of Jewish celebrities - something members can get for contributing \$36 to the synagogue's "You in a Pew" fund-raiser, which was launched on Aug. 19. Other celebrities include, but are not limited to, CNN news anchor Wolf Blitzer, TV and radio host Andy Cohen and comedian Amy Schumer. Funds raised will go toward the synagogue's production of virtual Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah services.

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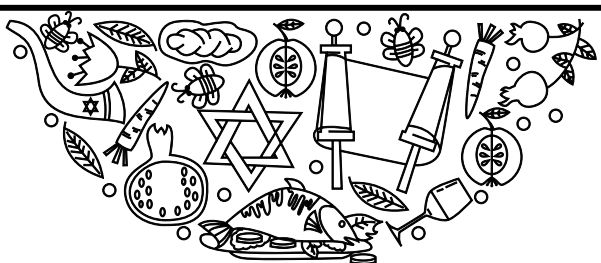


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Please help fund this program with monetary contributions by **Sept. 9** to: Jewish Family Service, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal NY 13850.

Congregation Tikkun v'Or - Ithaca Reform Temple

Congregation Tikkun v'Or will hold High Holiday services via Zoom, available to all, led by Rabbi Shahar Colt. Contact info@tikkun.org for additional information, registration and links.

Saturday, September 12, Selichot

Selichot Zoom session with Rabbi Shahar Colt - 8 pm
Colt will explore core High Holiday traditions, including the tradition of *teshuvah* - returning to one's core intentions - for the holidays.

Friday, September 18, erev Rosh Hashanah

Services on Zoom - TBA

Saturday, September 19, Rosh Hashanah

Services on Zoom - TBA

Sunday, September 20

Holiday programs for children - 9:30-10 am and 10:30-11:15 am

Sunday, September 27, erev Yom Kippur

Services on Zoom - TBA

Holiday programs for children - 9:30-10 am and 10:30-11:15 am

Monday, September 28, Yom Kippur

Services on Zoom - TBA

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Israel and UAE reach U.S.-brokered deal to normalize relations between nations

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Israel and the United Arab Emirates reached a peace agreement on August 13 to begin the process of normalizing relations between the two Middle Eastern countries, in part brokered by U.S. President Donald Trump and his administration. The deal was finalized in a phone call that day between Trump, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the crown prince of Abu Dhabi.

In a joint statement by the United States, Israel and UAE posted by Trump on Twitter, it said that this was a “historic diplomatic breakthrough” and will “advance peace in the Middle East.”

The statement said that in the coming weeks, Israeli and Emirati delegations will meet to sign bilateral agreements on security, tourism, direct flights, investment, telecommunications, technology, health care, reciprocal embassies, culture, energy and the environment.

“HUGE breakthrough today! Historic Peace Agreement between our two GREAT friends, Israel and the United Arab Emirates!” Trump tweeted.

Additionally, Israel and the UAE will “immediately expand and accelerate cooperation regarding the treatment of and the development of” a vaccine for COVID-19.

Under the deal, however, Israel has agreed to suspend



U.S. President Donald Trump and other administration officials announced the deal between Israel and the United Arab Emirates on August 13. (Photo courtesy of JNS)

applying sovereignty to parts of the West Bank, also known as Judea and Samaria.

“The United States, Israel and the United Arab Emirates are confident that additional diplomatic breakthroughs with other nations are possible,” added the statement. In recent years, Israel has had visits and warming ties with other Gulf Arab states, including Bahrain and Oman. Clandestine relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia have also reportedly grown, as well.

In retweeting Trump, Netanyahu called it a “historic day.” “Together we can bring a wonderful future. It is an

incomparably exciting moment,” Netanyahu said in a statement. “I have the great privilege to make the third peace treaty between Israel and an Arab country, the UAE.”

Bin Zayad confirmed on Twitter that an agreement was reached to “stop further Israeli annexation of Palestinian territories,” and that Israel and the UAE “also agreed to cooperation and setting a roadmap toward establishing a bilateral relationship.”

In an Oval Office announcement, Trump said that the deal would be known as the “Abraham Accord” after the “father of all three great faiths.”

U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman, who was also in attendance at the Oval Office, said that “no person better symbolizes the potential for unity of these three great faiths.”

Trump also thanked his senior advisor and son-in-law Jared Kushner, who had been leading the administration’s efforts to broker a peace deal between Israel and the Palestinians, and for his efforts in securing the new deal.

“The president, like with all things, urged us to take an untraditional approach,” Kushner said in the Oval Office. “You can’t solve problems that have gone unsolved the way people have done before you and failed.”

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo touted the “vigorous diplomatic outreach” by America, Israel and the UAE. See “UAE” on page 11

Holidays

Either way, we must let our rabbis and leaders know we won’t let them down during this crisis. Our buildings may be empty, but our hearts are full. Our communities and favorite causes need us now more than ever.

Why am I arguing to do more when many of us feel like doing less? Because it’s unexpected, because it’s as radical as the nasty virus trying to shut us down.

And, lest we forget, because being responsible for one another is the Jewish way. Isn’t that how we’ve survived for so long? Isn’t that how we’ve managed to maintain, against all odds, a Torah tradition that goes back thousands of years?

As Rabbi Nicole Guzik of Sinai Temple wrote in her “Bis! Torah” recently, for the sake of our community, this is not the time to opt out of our responsibilities.

“In choosing whether to belong to a synagogue or sup-

port nonprofit institutions,” she wrote, “many are deciding to take a ‘year off’ and consider rejoining the following year. Jewish professionals across the world are reaching out to colleagues and peers, understanding that if enough people decide to opt out, the Jewish world that once was will never look the same.”

It was a cry from a rabbi’s heart: “The COVID-19 era has devastated the world – stolen lives, impaired people’s health, injured financially, stricken mentally and emotionally. There are many who cannot afford to rejoin our communities, yet these are the members of our faith communities who must hear our support and feel our love.”

Guzik’s piece struck such a nerve, she has expanded it into a longer, “open letter” to Jewish parents, part of which includes the following: “Parents, many of us wonder how to teach our children the value of community. We ask each

Continued from page 2

other how our children will understand what it means to be something bigger than themselves, part of a greater cause, and feel the essence of being Jewish. There is no greater way of imparting this lesson to our children than with the following answer: Show them. Your actions pave the way for every decision they will make in the future.”

Indeed, this is a moment of truth for the Jewish future. We can shrink from the pandemic challenge and resign ourselves to a sad reality. Or we can rise to the occasion and double down on a legacy that has sustained us for 5,780 years.

Who among us will rise to the occasion as we approach 5781?

David Suissa is editor-in-chief and publisher of Tribe Media Corp and Jewish Journal. He can be reached at davids@jewishjournal.com.

This article was first published by the Jewish Journal.

Fall Home & Real Estate



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From clogs to backups: three simple DIY plumbing fixes

(StatePoint) – If the idea of doing-it-yourself where plumbing is concerned sounds intimidating, fear not. There are many simple fixes to common plumbing problems that just about anyone can take care of without professional assistance. More importantly, performing these simple maintenance tasks as they are needed can prevent larger problems from occurring.

Not sure where to start? Try these quick plumbing tips from Roto-Rooter and Jeff Devlin, a licensed contractor who’s appeared on several TV home improvement shows.

◆ Hair clogs: If you are accustomed to calling the plumber or snaking the drain when your tub is clogged, consider a simpler solution. Hair clog removers, available at your local hardware store or supercenter, are formulated with specific ingredients that work to dissolve hair and clear a drain on contact. You can also help slow down the forming of new clogs by ensuring all of your drains have strainers to catch hairs and other debris.

◆ Kitchen clogs: Grease, soap and food can get trapped in kitchen sinks – it happens in every home sooner or later. The easiest way to clear these tough clogs is to use a solu-

tion designed specifically to cut through grease and food and open up a drain. Use 16 ounces of solution and wait about 10 minutes before flushing with water. While a great clog remover can do wonders, you should dispose of larger amounts of grease in the garbage. Keep this in mind next time you are deep frying dinner!

◆ Septic backups: If you have a septic system, know that anything poured down any drain in your home will end up in the tank. So it’s very important to keep that system healthy. A septic system is not unlike the human digestive system – it contains bacteria and enzymes which help to eliminate waste. However, sometimes the good bacteria and enzymes get destroyed by the things that get dumped into drains. Just as you can add a probiotic to your personal digestive system to keep things in balance, in a septic system you can maintain balance by adding a septic treatment to your toilet. To avoid costly and messy backups, do this quick task once a month.

“Performing simple routine maintenance can save you time, money and a headache down the line,” says Devlin.

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The quiet race between the Israel Navy and Gaza's armed terror factions

By Yaakov Lappin

(JNS) – As it conducts its mission to defend southern Israeli communities and vital strategic sites, the Israel Navy is also engaged in a quiet arms race with Israel's adversaries in the Gaza Strip – namely, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

A senior IDF source told JNS about the ongoing activities of the Ashdod Naval Base, which is responsible for a substantial part of Israel's coastal waters, stretching from central Israel to southern Gaza.

This area of jurisdiction, known as the Ashdod Arena,

sees naval vessels securing Israel's borders and keeping watchful eyes on developing threats, explained the source. "We also guard our strategic assets, such as the [offshore] gas rigs and natural-gas production facilities – the whole complex coastal area."

The ways in which the Israel Navy conducts its daily security missions is changing at a "dizzying pace," stated the source, due to technological improvements in the IDF and advances made by the enemy.

"Each side is very dynamic," said the source. "Hence, we always have to think a few steps ahead."

On the Israeli side, the Navy is developing new combat systems, while activating its force in quickly changing ways as part of its broad mission of finding answers to the range of threats.

One of the changes includes closer-than-ever cooperation between the Navy and the ground forces of the Israel Defense Forces, particularly the Northern Gaza Brigade, which is active on land to protect Israel from the same adversaries, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

This cooperation is a "force multiplier," said the source. See "Navy" on page 11

Dreams Continued from page 5

from Israel and about twice that number from other nations, primarily the U.S., fell just short of a majority within the IBL. The Jewish ballplayers varied in their orientation to Judaism, but, for many, that identification was core, resulting in visits to places central to Israeli history and culture.

As the Israeli flag flew, games began with the playing of "Hatikva," the national anthem. Observing proper protocol, spectators and players left their hats on their heads as they stood respectfully for "Hatikva." Kosher food at the concession stands and the conversational style of fans, a few of whom wore yarmulkes, added to the Jewish ambience. In the middle of the fifth inning, IBL games were punctuated by a call for a minyan, a quorum of 10 adult Jews, so *davening*, public prayer, could take place.

The IBL did not play on the Jewish Sabbath. Moreover, as the surrounding physical history and ubiquitous security concerns attested, the IBL operated in a Jewish homeland. American and Jewish identities, pecuniary interests, status confirmation and love of baseball all contributed to the IBL ambience.

There was no second IBL season. Native-born Israelis – often abrupt and ready for military engagement – are drawn to basketball and soccer, but found baseball too slow and overly nuanced. Overall IBL attendance was disappointing, largely limited to American-born Israelis, tourists and the parents of players. By the standards of entry-level profes-

sional baseball, fan numbers and enthusiasm suggested potential at Yarkon and Gezer, but game attendance at Sportek was generally poor, sometimes topping out no more than 50 paying fans. Player room and board at the Kfar Hayarok youth village proved problematic. Unappetizing chicken schnitzel as the dinner entrée night after night led to weight loss. Equipment was insufficient. Shortstop Brendan Rubenstein, for example, could not obtain bats to meet his specifications (33"/ 30 ounces). At mid-season, the IBL was failing to pay its bills on time. The lack of advertising signs along the outfield fences at Sportek, a staple of American minor league baseball, reflected the failure of the IBL to make successful outreach to sponsors. At season's end, the American players found that their checks bounced. Financial, marketing and organizational problems led to the demise of the IBL.

Despite its travails, the IBL provided a good on-field product, perhaps comparable to a Single-A league, not a negligible achievement in a debut season. The players cared and they played like they cared. Many continued to play baseball in other venues and carried with them memories of their IBL. Matt Comiter pitched a gritty complete game before three generations of his family, who had made the trek from Florida to cheer him on. Pitcher Jason Bonder put the Hebrew names of young autograph seekers on balls that he signed, making his grandparents, Marvin and Son-

ny Thal, visiting from Commack, Long Island, NY, very proud. At age 46, pitcher Ari Alexenberg finally fulfilled his dream of playing pro ball. Pitcher Aaron Pribble led the IBL in ERA, found romance with a Yemenite Jewess and felt a heightened Jewish consciousness at Masada. An 18-year-old IBL utility infielder and spot pitcher, Alon Leichman, a native of Kibbutz Gezer, went on to pitch for the University of California, San Diego, and Team Israel before signing on as the pitching coach for a Seattle Mariners' minor league affiliate.

Baseball amongst native-born Israelis is still a work in progress, but the IBL legacy lives. In 2017, Team Israel defeated the vaunted Cuban national team in the World Baseball Classic competition. Former Jewish-American MLB players Ian Kinsler, Danny Valencia and Jeremy Bleich have acquired dual U.S.-Israeli citizenship in order to take the field for Team Israel. Rescheduled for 2021, the Tokyo Olympics will host baseball medal competition between six qualifying teams. One of those teams represents Israel. A veteran of the Israel Baseball League, Eric Holtz will coach Team Israel in the Tokyo Olympics.

Bill Simons is a professor of history at SUNY Oneonta, whose course offerings include sport and ethnic history. He is also the co-director of The Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture, and served as a speaker for the New York Council on the Humanities.

Fall Home & Real Estate

Home fire risks increase as weather cools

(NAPSI) – The fall and winter seasons bring cooler temperatures, holidays and images of cozy nights by the fireplace. Yet the change in seasons also comes with the chance of severe weather and an increase in fire risks. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, more home fires occur in winter than in any other season.

"Holiday decorations, space heaters, generators and fireplaces all present fire hazards if not properly used and maintained," said Steve Hirsch, chair of the National Volunteer Fire Council. "Residents should be aware of the dangers and take the steps to make sure their families and homes are protected."

Follow these tips to minimize home fire and safety risks:

- ◆ Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area and on every level of the home. Test monthly to ensure they work.
- ◆ Install carbon monoxide alarms and test them at least once a month.
- ◆ Know where the gas, electric, and water main shut-off controls are and how to use them.
- ◆ Place fire extinguishers in the kitchen, garage and living room,

and make sure all household members know how to use them.

- ◆ Develop a home fire escape plan and practice it with the entire family.
- ◆ Keep portable generators outside and away from the home.
- ◆ Install a screen in front of each fireplace or wood stove. Store cooled ashes in a metal container outside the home.
- ◆ Have chimneys professionally inspected and cleaned every year.
- ◆ Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from fireplaces, radiators, space heaters, or other heat source.
- ◆ Never leave lit candles unattended, and keep them out of the reach of children and pets.

Residents can also take an active role in protecting their communities from hazards such as fires, medical emergencies and much more. Fire departments across the country are looking for volunteers to serve as firefighters, EMS providers and auxiliary members. "The majority of firefighters in the U.S. are volunteers – neighbors helping neighbors in an incredible and rewarding way," said Hirsch. "We need more people to answer the call to serve."

Training is provided by the department and volunteers can serve in a variety of roles, from providing life-saving emergency response services to conducting fire prevention programs and disaster preparedness planning. Learn more and find a volunteer fire service opportunity by going to www.MakeMeAFirefighter.org.



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Weekly Parasha

Ki Tetze, Deuteronomy 21:10-25-19

Seventy-two

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Seventy-two.

Seventy-two *mitzvot* – commandments.

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that include instructions on how to treat lost animals, what to do when one comes upon a bird's nest, how to take care of captives and defiant children and how parents are to deal with guilt, defining rights of the stranger, fair business practice, inheritance regulations, establishing *tzedakah*-forms of charity for the poor and constructing roof railings.

Central to the *parasha* is a short phrase that encapsulates the importance of people-to-people and people-to-animal actions. Following the what if scenario during which a neighbor's ox or sheep has gone astray, we are instructed specifically to *not* ignore a lost animal.* Not only are we not to ignore it, but we must try to repatriate the animal. See "Two" on page 11

Congregational Notes

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: Tues., 5:30 pm; Fri., 5:30 pm; Sat., 9:30 am
On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom.

On Saturday, August 29, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19 and the haftarah is Isaiah 54:1-10. At 8:30 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, August 30, at 12:30 pm, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study services via Zoom.

On Saturday, September 5, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8 and the haftarah is Isaiah 60:1-22. At 8:30 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, September 6, at 12:30 pm, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study services via Zoom.

The Temple Concord Annual Congregational meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 1, at 7 pm via Zoom.

The temple office will be closed Monday, September 7, for Labor Day.

The Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 15, at 7 pm, 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 enter the first set of doors.

Penn-York Jewish Community

President-Treasurer-Secretary: Harvey Chemosky, 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.

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.

Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

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

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi: Rachel Safman
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: Frid. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekly morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sun. 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.

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

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
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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.

Kol Haverim

Affiliation: Society for Humanistic Judaism
Address: P.O. Box 4972, Ithaca, NY 14852-4972
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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.

Friday, August 28, light candles before..... 7:25 pm
Saturday, August 29, Shabbat ends 8:24 pm
Friday, September 4, light candles before 7:13 pm
Saturday, September 5, Shabbat ends..... 8:12 pm
Friday, September 11, light candles before 7:01 pm
Saturday, September 12, Shabbat ends..... 8 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 August and September.

Friday, August 28: Shabbat services honoring Labor Day led by Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell at 7 pm. Services can be viewed on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3fqUG3q> (meeting ID: 927 0369 1881) or on www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, August 29: 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. "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/526246866>, or by calling 929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 526 246 866, or on www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Monday, August 31: A Sisterhood article-based discussion will take place from 7-8:30 pm.

Friday, September 4: Shabbat services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell and Jason Flatt at 7 pm. To attend, visit Zoom at <https://bit.ly/34dUPFj> (meeting ID: 853 4440 7579), or visit www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, September 5: 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. "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/526246866>, or by calling 929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 526 246 866, or on www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Sunday, September 6: Rummage sale from 10 am-2 pm in the basement. Shoppers should use the Oak Street entrance. Masks must be worn and social distancing must be maintained. Hand sanitizers will be provided throughout the sales area. The number of people allowed in the sales area at any one time will be limited.

Tuesday, September 8: Executive Board meeting at 6:30 pm and the board meeting at 7:30 pm.

Friday, September 11: Shabbat services with a remembrance of the 9/11 tragedy with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell and Jason Flatt at 7 pm. To attend, visit <https://bit.ly/3fqUG3q> and enter meeting ID # 927 0369 1881, or visit www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, September 12: Torah study at 9:15 am on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/34dUPFj> (meeting ID: 853 4440 7579) and entering meeting ID # 342 411 102, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/. "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/526246866>, or by calling 929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 526 246 866, or on www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, September 12: Selichot concert with Dan Nichols at 8:30 pm. Contact Temple Concord (templeconcordaa@gmail.com or 723-7355) or Temple Israel (titammy2stny.twcbc.com or 607-723-7461) for the Zoom information for the program. (For more information, see the article on page 1.)

Norwich Jewish Center

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Navy

“We analyze the territory and threats together. A threat that in the past was only the responsibility of the Northern Gaza Brigade is a threat that interests us as well today. We can assist in many ways, and they can help us. It’s a joint challenge.”

This cooperation has seen naval and ground forces share resources and means while activating a joint command network. Training and inquiries are also held together on a regular basis to create a common language. “Each side has to learn much about the other, about the other side’s platforms and capabilities,” said the source.

Addressing the activities of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the source said that “they are trying to build up their force in every sphere – the air, on the surface and underwater. We, of course, are providing an answer to this in every domain.”

As part of this effort, the Navy is upgrading its air defenses, its ability to protect itself on the surface, and its underwater threat detection and response capability. It’s also working on new ways of striking targets in Gaza. “We are preparing for these in a massive way,” said the source.

As the option of smuggling weapons via tunnels is vanishing for Gaza’s terror factions, they increasingly turn to sea-trafficking attempts – as an interception of a weapons ship in February, traveling from the Sinai Peninsula to Gaza – illustrates.

“When one thing closes off, they try somewhere else. And we foil these attempts,” said the source. “Our border defense is highly dynamic. We conduct daily situation assessments.”

Meanwhile, the Navy conducts ongoing, daily patrols off the Gazan coastline under all weather conditions. It



A fleet of Israel Navy boats patrolled the waters in the Mediterranean Sea from threats emanating from the Gaza Strip. (Photo courtesy of IDF Spokesperson’s Unit)

often detects Palestinian fishing vessels that violate Israel’s naval restrictions on where they can operate, which are designed to prevent bomb boats and other threats from approaching the coasts.

In such cases, the Navy must be able to distinguish between vessels simply seeking to catch more fish from those gathering hostile intelligence or attempting an armed attack.

“That’s the million-dollar question,” said the source. The Navy changes its procedures and drills to find out what the intent behind those operating the vessels are. “We have many sensors, and we produce data before approaching the vessel,” he said.

Hamas often seeks to disguise its activities and uses civilian guises to do so. “They try to improve their existing capability and to create new ones. We must always think like them and breakthrough our own conceptions,” insisted the source.

In recent months, the Navy has also had to tackle a new and prolonged challenge in the form of the coronavirus pandemic. It has learned to operate under new restrictions. Commanders have had to conduct a “daily battle” with the new situation and ensure that the Navy remains “vigilant at all times, and that our operational forces are strong,” noted the source.

That readiness includes the personnel’s mental resilience. Many sailors have had stay on base for lengthy periods to prevent the risk infection, and the Navy has

communicated these needs to their families. As the source said, control-room operators have had to work in smaller teams, and the navy was forced to “reinvent ourselves from scratch as we deal with the pandemic.”

UAE

“The United States congratulates Israel and the Emirates for this remarkable achievement, which is a significant step forward for peace in the Middle East. Blessed are the peacemakers. Mabruk and Mazal Tov,” Pompeo said in a tweet.

Israeli Ambassador to the United States Ron Dermer commended the UAE for joining Egypt and Jordan in forging peace between Israelis and Arabs, tweeting: “A great day for peace! Israel commends the courage of MBZ for the historic decision of the UAE to join Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994) in making peace with Israel. Israel deeply appreciates all @POTUS Trump has done to make this breakthrough possible. More to come!” – Amb. Ron Dermer (@AmbDermer) August 13, 2020.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Austrian authorities arrest Syrian suspect for assault on Jewish leader

Austrian authorities on Aug. 24 announced the arrest of a 31-year-old Syrian refugee in connection with the assault on the head of the Jewish community in Graz on Aug. 22. “Investigators believe that there was an Islamist motive. Corresponding evidence was seized at his apartment,” said Austrian Interior Minister Karl Nehammer, according to AP. The victim, Eli Rosen, was attacked with a piece of wood after approaching the suspect, who had been throwing stones into the courtyard of a synagogue, according to the report. Rosen escaped the incident without harm, and the assailant fled the scene. The suspect had been living in Austria since 2013.

Two

to its owner. And, if we cannot find the owner, we must care for it until such time we can return the animal to their rightful owner. A talmudic story illustrates the point.

Rabbi Chanina of talmudic lore was known to have accidentally appropriated several hens left on his doorstep by a random passer-by. The hens in short order began producing eggs, so much so that he had nowhere to store them. Rabbi Chanina waited and waited for the hens’ owner to reappear and reclaim his hens and their bountiful egg-producing reservoir. Rabbi Chanina, adhering to the specific Torah-itic law, knew that the responsibility to care for his neighbor’s animals was a set obligation. He resolved the issue by selling the productive hens and purchasing goats in their stead. Sometime later, the accidental hens’ owner found his way back to Rabbi Chanina’s house. The great rabbi presented the hens’ owner with the goats!

What phrase could so succinctly capture the mandate proscribed to be mindful to the maximum, caring for lost animals? Deuteronomy 22:3 says it all: “You must not remain indifferent.”

When we become indifferent, we become less human.

If we are to be truly caring for our neighbor’s possessions, with examples in Ki Tetze, how much more so for the welfare of our neighbor’s lives? Any indifference today can easily be identified and unfortunately, politicized. We are living through a pandemic. We have not come to the end of its invisible rampage, which is causing too many human lives to be lost and untold personal economic hardship.

Wearing a mask, washing our hands, maintaining social distancing, careful inside building group gatherings – all bare the two-sided edge sword of indifference. When we choose to be mindful, thoughtful and conscious of the consequences that our actions may manifest, we can not only protect the lives of those around us, but we can overcome the pandemic’s effects. When we choose to shuck basic known safe behaviors, we risk both our precious lives and the lives of those around us; we become indifferent and therefore less human.

Let us all adopt the teachings imbedded in Ki Tetze and take care of others’ hens (and others’ lives) as if they were our own.

*Parashat Ki Tetze spells out that not only lost animals are to be returned owners, but also lost fruit in a vessel, money in a purse, homemade loaves of bread and fleeces of wool. The list is robust and the point is made that a lost possession does not follow the “finders keepers losers weepers” adage, but rather a “finders holders losers returns” one.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Federal judge rules weekly anti-Israel protests outside Michigan synagogue protected by First Amendment

Weekly anti-Israel protests outside a Michigan synagogue are protected under the First Amendment, a federal judge ruled the week of Aug. 21. “Peaceful protest speech such as this – on sidewalks and streets – is entitled to the highest level of constitutional protection, even if it disturbs, is offensive, and causes emotional distress,” wrote U.S. District Judge Victoria Roberts of the Eastern Michigan District Court in her 11-page order. Every Saturday since 2003, a group of protesters has harassed congregants outside of Beth Israel Congregation and placed in front of the synagogue signs that say “Jewish Power Corrupts,” “Zionism is Racism” and “RESIST Jewish Power,” among other statements. The judge also wrote, “There is no allegation that the protestors prevent plaintiffs from attending sabbath services, that they block plaintiffs’ path onto the property or to the synagogue, or that the protests and signs outside affect the services inside. Plaintiffs merely allege that the defendants’ conduct causes them distress and ‘interferes’ with their enjoyment of attending religious services.” “They fill our sidewalks with hate speech to harass our worshippers, and then claim it’s just a good public location,” said Rabbi Nadav Caine in a statement following the ruling. The plaintiffs in the lawsuit were Beth Israel Congregation member Marvin Gerber and Ann Arbor resident Miriam Brysk, a Holocaust survivor. Ann Arbor Mayor Christopher Taylor, protester Henry Herskovitz and his two organizations – Jewish Witnesses for Peace, and Palestinian Friends and Deir Yassin Remembered – were listed as defendants. The protesters are in violation of the city’s existing ordinances; however, Ann Arbor has done nothing to limit the protests.

IDF continues retaliatory strikes on Hamas as Gaza enters COVID-19 lockdown

The Israeli Defense Forces struck Hamas installations in Gaza, following another day of cross-border arson attacks from the Hamas-ruled enclave, the IDF said in a statement on Aug. 25. According to the statement, IDF jets and tanks hit Hamas “military positions and underground infrastructure,” in response to “incendiary and explosive balloon” attacks on southern Israel on Aug. 24, which Israel’s Fire and Rescue Service said ignited dozens of fires in open fields. Terrorists in the Hamas-ruled enclave resumed the cross-border arson attacks several weeks ago following months of relative calm, starting dozens of fires in the western Negev region. Multiple rockets have also been fired into Israel from Gaza in recent weeks, including attacks on Sderot and Ashkelon. In response, Israel has repeatedly struck Hamas installations in Gaza, in addition to closing the Kerem Shalom crossing and the Gaza fishing zone in an attempt to pressure Hamas into reining in the attacks. Meanwhile, Israel’s public broadcaster Kan reported four Palestinian Islamic Jihad terrorists were killed in a blast in Gaza City late the night of Aug. 24, citing a PIJ spokesman as confirming that their deaths were caused when bombs they were building, with which to attack Israel, accidentally exploded. The above reports come as Gaza went into a 48-hour lockdown on Aug. 25, after recording its first cases of coronavirus infection outside of the quarantine centers for people crossing into the Strip from Israel and Egypt, according to Al Jazeera. A government spokesman confirmed four cases of COVID-19 in a single family in a refugee camp. As of early August, 78 people at the quarantine centers were diagnosed with the coronavirus and one patient died, Reuters reported.

Israeli, UAE health ministers discuss COVID-19 cooperation

Israeli Health Minister Yuli Edelstein and his United Arab Emirates counterpart, Abdul Rahman Mohammed Al Owais, spoke by phone on Aug. 24 and agreed on cooperation

between their two countries with regard to the coronavirus pandemic and other health-related matters. Edelstein said he had been impressed during the discussion by the potential for cooperation between the two countries: “In our conversation this morning, we agreed to appoint focal points for strengthening the cooperation between our countries, especially regarding the fight against COVID-19. In the near future, we will convene joint delegations of businesspeople. I was impressed by the potential for exceptional cooperation for the benefit of our countries.” Israel and the UAE agreed earlier in August to normalize diplomatic relations as part of a U.S.-sponsored deal, making the UAE the third Arab country in 26 years to have formal diplomatic ties with Israel after Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994).

Report: Morocco rejects normalization with Israel

Moroccan Prime Minister Saad-Eddine el-Othmani on Aug. 23 announced his rejection of any normalization agreement with Israel, claiming such agreements were prejudicial to the Palestinian cause. “We refuse any normalization with the Zionist entity because this emboldens it to go further in breaching the rights of the Palestinian people,” el-Othmani told his Islamist PJD party, Israel’s Channel 12 reported. El-Othmani’s remarks came in the context of the planned visit to the region of U.S. President Donald Trump’s senior adviser and son-in-law, Jared Kushner, who aims to advance negotiations between Israel and other unspecified Arab nations, according to the report. On Aug. 13, the United Arab Emirates announced it had agreed to normalize ties with Israel, and according to numerous media reports other Arab states, including Oman and Bahrain, are likely to follow suit.

Holocaust-denying graffiti found on wall in French village burned down by Nazis

French politicians from across the political spectrum condemned Holocaust-denying graffiti written on a wall in the village of Oradour-Sur-Glane, where the Nazi massacre of many of its inhabitants took place during World War II. French President Emmanuel Macron promised that “all will be done” to locate the perpetrators behind the graffiti, which was discovered on Aug. 21 in the village that has been maintained as a memorial and museum since it was burned down by the German army in June 1944, and 642 of its civilian residents were murdered, AP reported. According to a separate report in the local paper, *Le Populaire du Centre*, the town covered the graffiti with a tarp that included the word “lie.” “Shame on those who did this. Everything will be done to find and judge the perpetrators of these sacrilegious acts,” French Justice Minister Eric Dupond-Moretti tweeted on Aug. 22.

Birthingright launches online interactive tour as pandemic halts trips to Israel

For the first time in its history, Birthingright Israel has postponed all trips since mid-March due to the global coronavirus pandemic. “While tens of thousands of Jewish young adults were planned to visit Israel this summer, the organization quickly turned to online high-quality engagement with its alumni and prospective participants. Since mid-March, we have reached 4.4 million people around the world,” says Noa Bauer, Birthingright’s vice president of global marketing. It is now launching an interactive video “Choose Your Own Adventure” on a platform called Eko, allowing people to select in real time what sites in Israel they want to “visit.” This means that the online tour led by Navee, a real Israeli guide, allows users to choose between visiting Masada or the Western Wall, stopping at a vegan restaurant or winery, seeing Birthingright’s Tel Aviv Center for Israeli Innovation, and then “floating” in the Dead Sea or “surfing” the beach. In each location, Navee introduces visitors to local Israelis providing a deeper perspective about Israeli culture. The tour takes about eight to 10 minutes. Users can pick different choices in multiple visits. “We invite the thousands of Birthingright applicants whose trips have been canceled, as well as past and future participants, their families and loved ones, to take part in a virtual tour of Israel,” says Bauer. “It is available for anyone who wants to get a glimpse of what Israel has to offer – from historic sites to Israeli technology in a fun, innovative way.”

Mexico. Continued from page 3

While they hesitated to take the final step, she said, moving far from family and barely speaking Hebrew, the COVID-19 crisis prompted their decision. They are now headed to their new home in Ra’anana. “Being at home alone for three-and-a-half months under lockdown in Mexico City taught us that we’re a strong family, and a family capable of making this change,” said Mercado.

Mexico is home to the third-largest Jewish community in Central America (after Argentina and Brazil) with about 50,000 Jews. The Mexican Jewish community maintains ties with Israel, and has an extensive education system featuring Jewish day schools and Zionist youth movements.

The Jewish Agency has opened 493 *aliyah* cases with Mexican Jews since January – an increase of 32 percent from last year.

Those who landed on August 11 began the required two-week quarantine in compliance with Israel’s Ministry of Health guidelines and other COVID-19 regulations. At the end of their quarantine, they will leave for local communities and absorption centers throughout the country.

Hanoar Hatzioni members will begin Masa’s Israel Challenge and Shnat Hachshara programs, where they will volunteer on *kibbutzim* and for Magen David Adom,



Jewish Agency Chairman Isaac Herzog gave an elbow-bump welcome to kids descending a charter flight as part of “Operation Home” on August 11. (Photo by Dudi Salem/The Jewish Agency for Israel)

among other sites and organizations. “*Aliyah* has never stopped, even during the most difficult crises the state of Israel has experienced,” said Jewish Agency Chairman Isaac Herzog. “Even now, during a global crisis, Jews from all over the world are realizing the Zionist vision and making their new home in Israel. This is a story that touches all Israelis, as most of us are part of our family’s first, second or third generation here in Israel.”



At left: Families from Mexico arrived in Israel as part of “Operation Home” on August 11. (Photo by Dudi Salem/The Jewish Agency for Israel)

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