

THE REPORTER

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BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

Federation offers funds for community programming

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton announced it has a limited amount of funding available for community programming. Local Jewish community organizations are encouraged to apply for funding to help cover the costs of programming in 2021. Grants up to \$500 will be available and will be awarded on a first-come first-served basis.

To be eligible, programs must meet the following criteria:

- ◆ Programs must be open and accessible to the entire Jewish community.
- ◆ Programs must further the mission of the Federation. (*See mission statement below.)
- ◆ The Federation must be listed as a co-sponsor of the event on all advertisements and at the event.
- ◆ Organizers must provide follow-up details about the program as requested.

◆ Special consideration will be given to programs that are directed at young families.

“Our community organizations offer a great deal of wonderful programming,” said Shelley Hubal, Federation executive director. “We are thrilled that we will be able to help them continue and expand these programs. I’m looking forward to seeing all they have to offer.”

Organizations interested in applying should call the Federation office at 724-2332, ext. 1.

**JFGB Mission statement: The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton strives to create a caring, vibrant, enduring community locally, in Israel and worldwide. The Federation uses its assets and contributions to strengthen local Jewish institutions and organizations, to support Jewish people in need, and to educate the people in the Southern Tier about Jewish values and identity.*

Federation Alert

Following assault on Capitol, Federations urge country to move forward

Jan. 7, 2021 – Below is a statement from The Jewish Federations of North America made by Mark Wilf, chair of the Board of Trustees, and Eric Fingerhut, president and CEO.

Following yesterday’s horrifying assault on our nation’s democracy, we were gratified that calm was restored quickly and Congress went back to their important work of certifying our election process. We all must return to the important work ahead.

Before us are a series of immense challenges and we cannot fully tackle them unless we come together. Death tolls related to COVID-19 are at alarming levels and we have seen domestic unrest rise to unacceptable proportions. Our social service sector has been overtaxed and under resourced.

As Jews, we know personally and painfully the dangers of unchecked hatred. We also know that with great determination and conviction to our core values, our country can heal and grow stronger. We affirm our belief in the stability of our government, its institutions and the peaceful transition of power. We are committed to devoting our communal energy to working with people of all faiths and creeds to heal and move forward.

Chabad offers JLI course “Journey of the Soul”

Chabad of Binghamton will offer “Journey of the Soul,” a new six-session course by the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute that will seek to answer a question that occurs to many self-reflective people: “What happens when we die?” The six-week course, which will be offered on successive Mondays at two time slots, 7-8:30 pm and 8:45-10:15 pm, will begin on Monday, February 1. The course will be offered over Zoom. Sign-in information will be provided to enrolled participants.

“Death is both mysterious and inevitable,” said Rivky Slonim, the local JLI instructor. “Understanding death as a continuation of life reveals the holiness of life while putting everything in a dramatically new context. The soul is on one long journey that is greater than each particular chapter. I think this course is

a journey that we will all find edifying and reassuring. It is both powerful and practical, reflective and relatable.

“‘Journey of the Soul’ considers what happens to the soul at birth and again at death, whether there is a ‘better place’ after this one, whether our loved ones continue to connect with us, the Jewish understanding of reincarnation, and how to relate to an afterlife even if we’re not spiritual,” added Slonim. The subtitle of the course, “How to look at life, death, and the rest – in peace,” is indicative of an approach to the topic that is “at once serious, but also relaxed and sometimes whimsical.”

“The topic of death and the afterlife is one that has always fascinated thinking people,” explained Rabbi Naftali Silberberg of JLI’s Brooklyn, NY, headquarters.

“But particularly during these tumultuous times when, sadly, so many have lost loved ones to COVID, the need has become even more pressing for a course that presents the uplifting Jewish perspective on mortality, death and the afterlife.”

Dr. John Martin Fischer, distinguished professor of philosophy at University of California, Riverside, finds “Journey of the Soul” to be “of interest to any human being, since we all think about dying, death, and the afterlife... The Jewish tradition offers unique answers to the intellectual issues and also strategies for coming to terms with death. I highly recommend the course.” Dr. Simon Shimshon Rubin, director of the International Center for the Study of Loss, Bereavement and Human Resilience at the University of Haifa, considers “Journey of

the Soul” “a timely and timeless opportunity [that] cannot help but deepen our appreciation of human connections and the way in which we find and make meaning in life.”

As with all of JLI’s programs, “Journey of the Soul” is designed to appeal to people at all levels of knowledge, including those without any prior experience or background in Jewish learning. All JLI courses are open to the public and attendees need not be affiliated with a synagogue, temple, or other house of worship.

The cost for the course per person is \$59, which includes the text book. People interested in participating must register by calling Chabad at 797-0015 or writing to rshea@chabadofbinghamton.com. Registrants should include complete mailing address for See “JLI” on page 3

Film Fest to hold virtual screening in January

By Reporter staff

The Jewish International Film Fest of Greater Binghamton will hold a virtual showing of the Israeli romantic-comedy “Born in Jerusalem and Still Alive” directed by Yossi Atia and David Ofek. The film is in Hebrew (with subtitles) and English. It was named Best First Film (Yossi Atia) – Jerusalem Film Festival in 2019. A discussion on “Born in Jerusalem and Still Alive” will be moderated by Stephen A. Lisman, Ph.D., distinguished teaching professor emeritus, Department of Psychology, Binghamton University.

People will be able to register on the Federation website, www.jfgeb.org. The film will be streamed free for up to 100 computers. After Shabbat ends on Saturday, January 30, 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 24 hours. On Sunday, January 31, at 7:30 pm, Lisman will facilitate the online video discussion of the film.

“Born in Jerusalem and Still Alive” begins when Jerusalem native Ronen Matalon (Yossi Atia) overhears a tour guide offering

a sanitized version of his hometown’s recent history. This inspires him to begin his own “Terror Tour,” taking tourists to famous bombing sites and giving them his take on the absurdity of everyday life during the terrorist attacks of the 1990s and 2000s. On one of his tours he meets Asia, an ex-Jerusalemite

living in Barcelona, and their relationship challenges him to begin healing from the trauma that envelops his emotional life.

Atia co-directed and stars in the film, which is based on his performance art piece “From Trauma to Fantasy” that was part of a 2010 public arts festival in Jerusalem.

Both performance piece and film were inspired by Atia’s experiences during the Second Intifada (2000-2005). Ofek, who co-directed the film with Atia, has been called one of the leading filmmakers in Israel. Working in both documentary and See “Film” on page 8

TC Sisterhood to offer Esserman’s annual book review on Jan. 24

Rabbi Rachel Esserman will discuss three books at the annual Temple Concord Sisterhood book talk on Sunday, January 24, at 11 am, on Zoom. The event is open to the public. Options to join the Zoom meeting include contacting Lani Dunthorn for the link at lani.dunthorn@yahoo.com, or joining the meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87826483246?pwd=VTRvZFA1NksleEFOLzVhclU2RU1hZz09>, meeting ID 878 2648 3246 and passcode 137825.



Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Esserman will review two novels – “Evening” by Nessa Rapoport and “The Lost Shtetl” by Max Gross – and one work of nonfiction, “Find My Father: His Century-Long Journey From

World War I Warsaw and My Quest to Follow” by Deborah Tannen.

“In August, I checked with the planning committee of Temple Concord Sisterhood about whether they thought we would still do my review even if we had to do it virtually,” Esserman said. “I was thrilled when they said ‘yes’ because this is one of my favorite things of the year. I start looking for potential books during the summer and like to find ones on different topics because that makes See “Book” on page 7

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Virtual events

TC will offer a livestreamed concert on Jan. 16; the TI-TC adult ed. program will be virtual.

..... Page 3

Tu B’Shevat

TC is offering virtual Tu B’Shevat programs and a local nature walk; and a look at holiday seders.

..... Pages 5-6

News in brief...

Antisemitic fliers on Staten Island; and Iran’s leader mocks the U.S. after Capitol riots.

..... Pages 4 and 8

Special Sections

Book Review 4
Financial Planning 4-5
Congregational Notes 6
Classifieds 8

Jewish resources to occupy your family during social distancing – part 29

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 Jewish Theological Seminary will hold the online mini-course “The Questions Jews Ask, The Answers Rabbis Give” with Rabbi Marcus Mordecai Schwartz on Thursdays, January 21 and 28, and February 4 and 11, from 1-2 pm. All sessions are recorded and recordings are accessible to registered participants. The class will look at some responses of rabbis to questions through the ages, related to communal governance, daily life, and rabbinic controversy. To register, visit <https://inspired.jtsa.edu/event/the-questions-jews-ask-the-answers-rabbis-give/e319105>.
- ◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold a virtual exhibit opening “Behind the Scenes of an Exhibition: Emile Bocian in Chinatown” on Thursday, January 28, at 4 pm. Co-cura-

tors Kevin Chu, collections manager at MOCA, and Lauren Gilbert, senior manager of public services at the Center, will share a behind-the-scenes look into Emile Bocian’s life, his collection and the genesis of the exhibition. Bocian’s grandniece and nephew will also be in attendance to share their memories. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/event/emile-bocian-2021-01-28>.

- ◆ Hartman@Home will offer several virtual events: “The Wondering Jew: Israel and the Search for Jewish Identity,” a conversation with Micah Goodman about his new book on Sunday, January 24, from 10-11 am (for information or to register, visit www.hartman.org.il/event/the-wondering-jew-israel-and-the-search-for-jewish-identity/); and a four-part course, “The Texts and Topics Shaping Modern Jewish Life” exploring “The New Jewish Canon” with Yehuda Kurtzer, Mijal Bitton, David Zvi Kalman and Elana Stein Hain on Wednesday, January 6, and Thursdays, February 4, March 11 and April 29, from 8-9:30 pm (for more information or to register, visit www.hartman.org).

[il/event/the-texts-topics-shaping-modern-jewish-life/](https://www.hartman.org.il/event/the-texts-topics-shaping-modern-jewish-life/)).

- ◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage will hold the virtual program “18 Voices: A Liberation Day Reading of Young Writers’ Diaries From the Holocaust” on Wednesday, January 27, at 7 pm. The excerpts will be read by actors and public figures, including Liev Schreiber, Mandy Gonzalez, Adam Kantor and Daniel Kahn. For more information or to register, visit <https://mjhnyc.org/18-voices-a-liberation-day-reading-of-young-writers-diaries-from-the-holocaust/>.

- ◆ The Jewish Review of Books will hold the webinar “The Blessing and the Curse: A Conversation with Adam Kirsch” on Tuesday, January 26, at 7 pm. Abe Socher will talk to poet and literary critic Adam Kirsch about his latest book, “The Blessing and the Curse: The Jewish People and Their Books in the Twentieth Century.” For more information or to register, visit https://tikvahfund.zoom.us/join/7616091756364/WN_K2-OU50FSqCqeAVzHv1txw.
- ◆ The National Museum of American Jewish History will See “Resources” on page 7

Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

Editor’s note: This column was written before the January 6 events in Washington, DC. For Jewish Federation of North America’s response to those events, see the Federation Alert on page 1. The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton is in agreement with JFNA’s response.

Looking for some inspiration, I called my number one fan and asked what I should write my next op-ed about. She said, “Hope for the new year.” So, thanks, Mom, here goes....

We are all hoping 2021 will bring a safe and speedy end to the COVID-19 pandemic. As of the day that I am writing this, Israel has vaccinated one million citizens with the COVID vaccine. Way to go, Israel! Let’s pray they are able to get their economy back on track as soon as possible, and that the U.S. will get its act together and

quickly follow suit. I am optimistic 2021 will see an end to intense isolation, but there is no telling what the new normal will be for everyday life. Will we be able to have social gatherings, travel or enjoy dining out? Will our summer camps, such an important part of the lives of many Jewish children, be able to reopen? I am hopeful these things will transpire, but there are many hurdles ahead in order to get there, not to mention several remaining months of isolation.

Allow me to dig a little deeper here. Several months ago, I came across the following quote by author Leo Rosten: “The purpose of life is not to be happy at all. It is to be useful, to be honorable. It is to be compassionate. It is to matter, to have it make some difference that you lived.”

This outlook on life is a framework for our time. We may not be in the happiest of times, but we have the opportunity

in this moment to expand our compassion for one another. Isn’t it our life’s purpose to become more compassionate and caring? Isn’t this how we get closer to God? So, too, in these days of fear and hostility, when we chose to live honorably, we open the door to further enrich our soul.

This dark year has been full of lessons. Many of us have discovered what matters most and for what we are most grateful. With a greater capacity for compassion comes more patience and forgiveness, and these are the things that will lead to the change our world so desperately needs right now. I am hopeful that we as a nation and community will take with us the lessons of 2020 and cultivate a more loving and compassionate world. Let us all go forward in the new year with hope, and let us live everyday with love, honor and compassion.

In My Own Words

A new beginning?

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Editor’s note: This column was written before the January 6 events in Washington, DC.

A new beginning? Does anyone really believe that 2021 and a new presidency really means a new beginning? Americans believe that we can always start anew, leaving the old behind like clothes we discard. Maybe that’s because we are a nation of immigrants: people changed their names, occupations and class status when they moved to this country. The American myth that says we can all become rich, reach the upper crust of society or become famous still resonates with people today. But for many, it is a myth, not a reality.

While the date of the year may change, people carry forward the same beliefs and prejudices that made the past decades so problematic. If you don’t think so, just consider what’s occurred this century. We had an African-American president, which supposedly proved the claim there was no systemic racism in our society. If the events that led to the Black Lives Matter Movement haven’t proven to you how untrue that is, then you haven’t been paying attention. The increased instances of antisemitism (and cries of “Jews shall not replace us”) and attacks on LGBTQ rights show that life has not really changed that much. It seems that for every one step forward society takes, it then takes two steps backward. The problem is that American citizens disagree on what progress means. For those who believe that America should be a white, heterosexual Christian

country, then every step forward of which I approve means two steps backward for them. We disagree on something as fundamental as basic human rights and who deserves them.

Think for a moment about personal rights: how do we decide when people can make their own choices without governmental interference and when the government has a right to interfere? Let’s start with something simple: Should people have to stop at red lights? Most of us have no objection to that, although some people will go through a red light if there are no cars coming and no one else is around see. However, we accept the government has a right to make rules of the road, if only to protect ourselves from other drivers. How about guns? Although I don’t want one in my house, I’m perfectly fine with people owning rifles, shotguns and pistols. Do I think the government has any right to limit the type of weapons people can own or place restrictions on who can purchase them? I do because that protects us from military weapons that don’t belong in the hands of civilians or from those who are not stable enough to use a weapon wisely.

Should the government be allowed to decide who you can marry? Governments have for centuries, but the definition of unacceptable marriages has changed. For example, in biblical times and in many countries, first cousin marriages were encouraged to keep property in the family. However, there are some states in the U.S. that forbid first cousins to marry. At one time, Black and white Americans were

not allowed to marry – and even where it was not illegal those who did so were often threatened with bodily harm. However, cultural changes occur and there is no going back to a golden age that never really existed. Well, there may have been a golden age for white, heterosexual, Christian men who owned property. The main reason poor, white, heterosexual, Christian men didn’t object was that they someday hoped to strike it rich and figured they would be part of this protected class. But that golden age was never a reality for the majority of U.S. citizens.

So I am not optimistic that our world is going to magically change. The past four years have revealed just how divided we really are and the depth of anger of those who feel they have lost their God-given privileges – privileges they don’t feel the need to share. The left has also been divisive, saying that if you don’t agree completely with the party line, then you don’t belong in its ranks. That’s left Jews who support Israel’s right to exist – even when they don’t agree with Israeli governmental policy – out in the cold. Of course, I hope that I’m wrong, but – if the last four years have taught me anything – it’s that the American dream I thought we all embraced – the dream of liberty, opportunity and equality for all – is just another myth. Then again, maybe this century is an anomaly and I’ll be proven wrong. Right now, though, I’m left hoping and praying that the country I love will regain its ideals of justice and freedom.



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OPINIONS

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

LETTERS

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

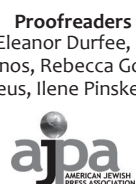
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www.thereporter.org

TC offers Afro-Semitic Experience in concert on Jan. 16

Temple Concord will join with several synagogues to offer a livestream concert featuring The Afro-Semitic Experience on Saturday, January 16, at 8 pm.

The Afro-Semitic Experience is a band of African-American and Jewish-American musicians who are dedicated to preserving, promoting and expanding the cultural and musical heritage of the Jewish and African Diaspora. The January 16 concert will honor and celebrate the memory and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"The group's music is a merging of the many elements of the two cultures," said organizers of the event. "Much of what they play has a strong spiritual center to it, and their repertoire contains a heavy dose of music from the Jewish synagogue and the African-American church. Their music brings joy and enthusiasm to their performances and audiences are invariably on their feet dancing to the music! During their performances, they tell stories about what the



The Afro-Semitic Experience (Photo by Carl Deutsch)

pieces mean, how they relate to us as individuals, and how they reflect upon the relations between Blacks and Jews. "Although the pandemic keeps us apart, this will be a con-

cert that connects us as the band plays music that embodies the radical notion that people of different faiths, races and beliefs can come together, and celebrate and build community," organizers added. "The group is planning a thoughtfully curated program that includes music from the Civil Rights era, Dr. King's favorite gospel songs and original songs centered around the themes of peace, unity and community."

David Chevan of the group writes: "We merge our musical roots, Jewish and Afro-diasporic melodies and grooves, combining the core concepts of ASE and shalom – power, action, unity and peace."

Contact Temple Concord at templeconcordbinghamton@gmail.com or 723-7355 for more information or a link to the concert.

TI-TC Adult Ed. to hold virtual program on Jan. 17

The Temple Israel/Temple Concord Adult Education Group will present the virtual program "Select Jewish Shorts" on Sunday, January 17, at 10:30 am. The program will be dramatic readings of select Jewish short stories. Members of Temple Israel and Temple Concord will receive the Zoom link in e-mails sent out by their synagogues. Anyone who does not receive those bulletins and wants to join the program should either contact Temple Israel at titammy@stny.twcbc.com or Temple Concord at TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com.

Ben Kasper, professor emeritus at SUNY Broome, who serves on the Executive Board of Temple Israel and is co-chairman of the Adult Education Committee, will read one of the short stories. Kasper's selection is from a collection titled "Scribblers on The Roof: Contemporary American Jewish Fiction."

Steve Gilbert, professor emeritus of psychology at

SUNY Oneonta, who is past president of Temple Israel, is co-chairman of the Adult Education Committee. He has selected a short story from Philip Roth's book "Goodbye Columbus." The book, along with the five short stories, received the National Book Award in 1960.

The feature presentation of the morning will also be a short story from Roth read by Andy Horowitz. Horowitz is a graduate of Binghamton University who also has an M.B.A. from Syracuse University. Horowitz is the artistic director of Galumph Dance Company. He is on the faculty at Binghamton University, lectures on entrepreneurship, and offers choreographic workshops at schools and conservatories on a global stage.

Horowitz is the co-winner of the Edinburgh Festival's Critics Choice Award and the Moers International Comedy Arts prize. He was the 2017 recipient of the Broome County Heart of the Arts award. He played the leading role in the dramatic reading of the play "My Name is Asher Lev," which was performed at Temple Israel in June 2018.

TI annual lottery fund-raiser

Temple Israel is holding its annual lottery fund-raiser again this year. As in the past several years, it is a way of helping raise funds for the temple while allowing givers a chance to win throughout the entire year.

It's not too late to participate. Select any three digit number and send Temple Israel \$25 for each number selected. These numbers serve for the entire year. The evening drawing of the New York State Lottery three-digit number is used to determine winners at Temple Israel. If a person's number is drawn, they win between \$25 and \$40. The prize amount depends on the day of the drawing (\$40 for Sunday; \$25 for Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; and \$30 for Wednesday). The Saturday drawing is not included.

Anyone in the community can purchase tickets for themselves or for out of town friends and family. Checks will be mailed to the winners.

For additional information, contact Temple Israel at 723-4261 or titammy@stny.twcbc.com.

JLI.Continued from page 1

receipt of book and indicate their preferred class time slot. In New York state, physicians and psychologists will be able to earn continuing education credits for this JLI course, which has partnered with Einstein College of Medicine – Montefiore Medical Center. Each class will be a self-standing event for which participants will earn 1.5 credits; participants must be present during the class (they cannot listen to a recording at another time) and must be registered for the continuing education credits before the start of the course. Those interested in earning the credits must indicate that when signing up for the course.

JLI, the adult education branch of Chabad-Lubavitch, offers programs in more than 1,600 international locations in the U.S., Argentina, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Panama, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Uruguay and Venezuela. More than 400,000 students have attended JLI classes since we were founded in 1998.

Bar/Bat photos needed

Can we have your mug? Kids mugging for the camera, that is. For *The Reporter's* annual Bar/Bat Mitzvah issue (coming January 29), we need photos of all teens who became bar/bat mitzvah during the calendar year of 2020.

Please e-mail photos, in TIF or JPG format, to TReporter@aol.com by Tuesday, January 19; please note in the subject line that a bar/bat photo for *The Reporter* is attached and include the name of the teen, parents names, and the date and location of the bar/bat mitzvah in the message.

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Harry Wiesel on the death of his mother,
Rachel Wiesel

DEADLINES

The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming *REPORTER* issues.

ISSUE	DEADLINE
January 29-February 11	January 20
February 12-25	February 3
February 26-March 11	February 17
March 12-25	March 3

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

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To advertise in this annual, pull-out keepsake section, contact Kathy Brown at 724-2360, ext. 244 or advertising@thereportergroup.org

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Off the Shelf

Relationships and money

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Money: it plays a major role in our relationships, even if we hesitate to admit it. Our sensibilities are offended if someone suggests we made a decision based on anything other than love. However, what we do for our family – or what we allow our family members to do – is often influenced by the funds available. Two recent novels show how money – or the lack of it – can bring people together or drive them apart. While “The Bright Side Sanctuary for Animals” by Becky Mandelbaum (Simon and Schuster) focuses on a parent-child relationship, Adam Wilson explores that of a husband and wife in “Sensation Machines” (Soho).

What happens when a person follows her passion, even though it negatively affects her relationship with her daughter and husband? In “The Bright Side Sanctuary for Animals,” Mona Siskin’s dream to open an animal sanctuary became real with money she inherited from her late father. Moving with her to a very rural section of Kansas were her poet husband and her daughter, Ariel. Mona’s husband leaves first, claiming he came second to the animals. By 2016, when the novel opens, Ariel has not

seen or spoken to her mother for six years, ever since she left for college against Mona’s wishes. Even though Ariel received a scholarship to go to a better school out of town, her mother expected her to go to a local community college and continue to work at the sanctuary. Reading about an antisemitic incident, the burning of the sanctuary’s barn, Ariel decides to visit the home she once loved.

The sanctuary is a mess and far too many of the animals aren’t well cared for. Mona is not welcoming, although she is happy to put Ariel to work. Ariel’s life is complicated by the fact she doesn’t tell her mother or the sanctuary’s hired help, Gideon, that she is engaged to her boyfriend, Dex. Her emotions about Dex are in flux and it doesn’t help that she still finds herself attracted to Gideon, who was her first lover. Dex, whose only career plans seem to be having a good time and playing video games, pales in comparison to the hardworking Gideon. Ariel wonders if it is possible to save the sanctuary, although Mona starts to welcome its loss. She is tired of the never-ending hard work and is looking forward to some peace.

Mandelbaum does an excellent job offering insights into the minds of Ariel, Mona and Dex, whose thoughts are featured in different chapters. While it is clear that they care for each other, they can’t always bridge the gaps that exist between their actions and their emotions. The novel manages to balance the past and the present to show how their dilemmas slowly developed – something that allows readers to care for all these characters, even when their words and actions could have been better chosen. It also portrays a love of animals – particularly dogs – and the sheer impossibility of saving all those who have been abused by humans. “The Bright Side Sanctuary for Animals” will warm readers’ hearts with its portrait of a stubborn mother and daughter reaching out to each other – each hoping that love remains.

While “The Bright Side Sanctuary for Animals” takes place in contemporary times, “Sensation Machines” offers a vision of our near future. Although it could be described as a dystopia, it’s not science fiction or fantasy. Its world is very real and close enough to our own to make its reality chilling. Homelessness is on the increase because of coastal flooding

and unemployment is high due to automation. Congress is poised to pass a universal basic income law, but there are strong forces opposed – forces that plan to manipulate social media in new and interesting ways. Societal changes haven’t stopped people from having problems in their personal life, though, in this case Michael and Wendy Mixner, whose marriage has been troubled since their child was born stillborn. Although he is a Wall Street trader, Michael has made some disastrous decisions concerning the couple’s finances and, to compound the problem, has not mentioned his losses to Wendy. Wendy, who works for a small, quirky public-relations firm, is tapped to lead the marketing charge for a product so secret its creator won’t even tell the PR firm what it is. When a Wall Street trader who is a friend of Michael’s is murdered, it also becomes clear that societal improvements have not included the justice system.

Although Wilson does an excellent job creating a wide variety of characters from different social classes, what stands out is his understanding of what led to the creation of the world he describes. He notes the people who inhabit this society “value entertainment over accuracy... [they] are the Twitter babies and their Instagram spawn, trawling cyberspace armed with vast qualities of speculation they can’t help but mistake [opinion] for fact. They accept the rules of the game in which what’s called the truth is simply the loudest sound. I am what you say I am.” He offers both sides of the debate about offering people a universal basic income, while also suggesting how much of their personal data people would be willing to give in exchange for a fee.

Yet, the Michaels and the Wendys of this story have it easier than many of the other characters about whom Wilson writes, particularly those who don’t have the advantages the Mixners see as their birthright. The only flaw in the novel is that its ending focuses on them, rather than on a miscarriage of justice. One might say, though, that the flaw is merely an echo of the world in which they (and we) live – a society more concerned with those who have money or who are of a particular social class. That makes “Sensation Machines” an interesting, challenging and absorbing novel.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

White-supremacist group distributes antisemitic fliers on Staten Island, NY

A white-supremacist group distributed antisemitic fliers on Staten Island over the Jan. 3 weekend. The fliers, which have a background of the Star of David, read: “Antifa is a Jewish communist militia” and “The original Antifa was a Jewish anti-Nazi militia ... There is a war against all non-Jewish European-American nationalists.” The fliers also stated: “600+ Jewish Orgs Support BLM Communist Terrorists ... The US will become minority white in 2045, Census predicts.” None of the allegations are true. The New York Police Department’s Hate Crimes Task Force is investigating the fliers made by the New Jersey European Heritage Association, whose organization and website are listed at the bottom of the fliers.



Estate planning: most people, alas, fail to make crucial decisions

(NewsUSA) – How best to put this delicately? We’re all going to go at some point, and – just because you’d rather not think about it – doesn’t make you somehow immune.

And then what? Maybe you think your estate will all get miraculously sorted out, and that squabbling relatives are only the stuff of TV dramas. But you’re not just leaving an estate. You’re leaving what Ken Cella, an

executive with the financial services firm Edward Jones, calls “a legacy. You want to be the one who’s in control of what happens to what matters most to you, such as minor children, dependents, financial assets, even your own health care decisions,” he says. “Without a properly planned estate, or legacy strategy, your assets could be subject to the time-consuming, expensive and very public

process where relatives and creditors can gain access to records and even challenge your will.”

And yet, according to a recent survey by Edward Jones, while 77 percent of Americans believe having such a strategy in place is important for everyone – not just the wealthy – only 24 percent have even taken the most basic step of **See “Estate” on page 5**

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

If Your Goal is to:

Make a quick and easy gift

Avoid tax on capital gains

Defer a gift until after your death

Receive guaranteed fixed income that is partially tax-free

Avoid the two-fold taxation on IRA or other employee benefit plans

Make a large gift with little cost to you

Reduce taxable income from IRA Required Minimum Distributions

Then You Can:

Simply write a check now or use a credit card

Contribute long-term appreciated stock or other securities

Put a bequest in your will (gifts of cash or a share or the residue of your estate)

Create a charitable gift annuity

Name a charity as the beneficiary of the remainder of the retirement assets after your lifetime

Contribute a life insurance policy you no longer need or purchase a new one and designate a charity as the owner

Make a qualified charitable donation directly from your IRA (after age 70½)

Your Benefits May Include:

An income tax deduction and immediate charitable impact

A charitable deduction plus no capital gains tax

Exemption from federal estate tax on donations

Current and future savings on income taxes plus fixed stable payments

Tax relief to your family on inherited assets

Current and possible future income tax deductions

Reducing taxable income



Jewish Federation
OF GREATER BINGHAMTON

TC to hold several Tu B'Shevat programs

Temple Concord will hold three programs for Tu B'Shevat, the New Year for the Trees, which falls on January 27-28 this year. For more information about the programs or to register for them, contact the temple office at Temple-Concordbinghamton@gmail.com or 723-7355.

Shabbat Tu B'Shevat seder in homes

A Shabbat Tu B'Shevat seder in people's homes will be held on Friday, January 22, at 7 pm. Temple Concord will provide a list of the categories of fruits, nuts and drinks people will need to have for the seder. People can choose which specific wine and fruit they have to eat. "Join us for an enjoyable Shabbat evening together celebrating the New Year of the Trees," said organizers of the event. Contact the temple office for the link to the seder.

The program will be held on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81957095574?pwd=SGRTU2lrZFMzMm12Mzk1dncyTlFuUT09>, meeting ID: 819 5709 5574 and passcode 097653.

"Jewish Values and Public Land" program

A "Jewish Values and Public Land" program will be held on Wednesday, January 27, at 7 pm. The program will explore the use of public land as *mipnei tikkun olam* – in the interest of public policy. A short video "Adamah: Faith and Land" will be part of the program. Resource materials will be from COEJL, Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life. The program will be on zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88963441405?pwd=L2JiMlRdThzeloxMmN3T3NaL1BTQT09> or enter meeting number 88963441405.

Tu B'Shevat Nature Walk

A Tu B'Shevat Nature Walk will be held on Sunday, January 31, at 1:30 pm. Barbara Thomas will lead the walk at Chenango Valley State Park. (The bad weather date will be Sunday, February 7.) The meeting place will be announced at a later date. There is no fee, but an RSVP is required, so if the weather or other safety concerns cause the walk to be canceled, everyone can be contacted. Attendance is limited to 20 people.

Those attending will be required to wear masks, even during the walk outside. Family units will social distance at eight feet apart since any wind can carry people's breaths further than six feet. The path chosen will be handicapped accessible and the walk will approximately take an hour. To register, contact the temple office.



On the Jewish food scene The foods of Tu B'Shevat

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

When I was growing up, I'd never heard of a Tu B'Shevat seder. The only thing we did to commemorate the day was to purchase trees in Israel through the Jewish National Fund. In Hebrew school, we didn't receive any mystical insights, or eat special fruit – at least, as far as I can remember. That's not to say that the Tu B'Shevat seder didn't exist then (it's said to have been started in the 16th century by mystics living in Safed, Israel), but it hadn't taken hold in the middle-class American Judaism of which I was a part.

I read three or four different seders for a class during my first year of rabbinical school. The teacher would open each session by asking if we had any questions about the reading. Mine was simple: Since the order of drinking wine was different in one (from white to red in most, but red to white in one), did that mean that there is no set order to the seder? His answer was yes. While most seders offer similar parts, there is not one on which everyone agrees.

That's partly due to the nature of the commemoration. I use the term commemoration rather than holiday because, while Tu B'Shevat may be called the New Year of the

Trees, it was originally more about taxes/tithes than it was a celebration. It simply set the yearly fruit tithes – fruit from trees – that was to be given to the priests. However, the beauty of Judaism is that we can take a discussion related to taxes and make something holy and special out of it.

Since the tithes were offered on trees located in Israel, many people now focus on the food native to that general area, or, at least the seven species listed in Deuteronomy that were offered at the Temple: wheat, barley, grape, fig, pomegranates, olives and dates. But if you look at enough seders (just Google Tu B'Shevat seders and you'll find way more than you might expect), you'll discover the main thing most have in common is that they include different species of fruit and a beverage, usually wine or grape juice.

As someone who loves fruit, I am thrilled to eat a meal focusing on that. Dried fruit – especially apricots – are sweeter than candy to me. (By the way, I mean plain dried fruits. Please don't ruin them by dipping them in chocolate.) Although oranges aren't mentioned in the Torah, they used to be considered the main fruit of Israel, at least when I was young. If you thought about fruit and Israel, Jaffa oranges

immediately came to mind. I know that some people think of the *sabra* fruit from the cactus as the real Israeli fruit since native-born Israelis are called *sabras*. That's because, like the fruit, they are prickly on the outside and sweet on the inside. However, I don't think I ever actually tasted the fruit during either of my trips to Israel.

During my 10 months in Israel during rabbinical school, I was thrilled to discover that not only were mangos plentiful for eight of the months I was there, they were cheap – way cheaper than I ever found them in the U.S. Also inexpensive was kiwi fruit and I learned a new way to eat it. Rather than peeling them, which was difficult, I cut them in half and scooped out the fruit with a spoon. (That may have been one of the most practical things I learned during my time in Beer Sheva.)

How should you commemorate Tu B'Shevat this year, which begins on sundown on Wednesday, January 27, and concludes at sundown on Thursday, January 28? Since there is actually no set way to observe, you can decide for yourself. But whether you hold a seder, plant a tree or just eat a piece of fruit, take a moment to appreciate nature and the beauty that is a tree.

Financial Planning

Estate..... Continued from page 4

designating beneficiaries for all their accounts. To avoid one of those "then what?" moments, here are some of the key elements to consider:

- ◆ A Will. What's the worst that can happen if you haven't written one? "Plenty," as U.S. News and World Report has written, "depending on your situation, the personalities of the people in your life – and the estate laws that your state has on the books." In other words, not only could some court judge be deciding who gets everything down to your Beatles records if your family can't agree on their own, but he or she could also wind up appointing a guardian for your minor kids.
- ◆ A Living Trust. Do you own out-of-state property, such as

a vacation home? Or maybe you want to leave more to one child than the others? Assets you register into a revocable living trust are there for your benefit during your lifetime, can be managed by your named trustee if you become incapacitated, and – here's the kicker – are harder to contest than wills.

- ◆ A Health Care Directive. The same way you don't want some judge deciding who gets your Beatles albums, you definitely don't want the courts having to settle an inter-family fight over whether you'd rather go on living in a vegetative state or be taken off hospital feeding tubes. And, yes, it's happened. Shivering at the thought? Then you'll recognize the importance of appointing someone

to carry out your medical treatment wishes in the event you're no longer able to communicate or are incapable of giving consent.

- ◆ Beneficiary Designations. Suffice it to say you don't want to be among the 76 percent the survey found hadn't even bothered, for starters, to fill in a beneficiary's name on accounts like their 401(k) or other savings.

For some, estate planning is as simple as a written will. But a financial advisor can work with you and your tax and legal professionals to employ a strategy that among other things potentially avoids the court process known as probate – there, we said the "P" word – while also making sure your investments are aligned with your goals.

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Vaera, Exodus 6:2-9:35

Reshifting of priorities and the blessings of a pandemic

RABBI LEVI Y. SLONIM, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND CO-DIRECTOR OF CHABAD DOWNTOWN, ROHR CHABAD CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDENT LIFE AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

The pandemic has gotten all of us thinking and reassessing all kinds of things: our relationships, our work ethics and, indeed, so many aspects of our lives. In no area, perhaps, are our ruminations as acute and necessary as in reconsidering our “needs vs. our wants.”

A *Wall Street Journal* article in 2011 found that “Americans spend about \$1.2 trillion a year on non-essential items.” Imagine how many people could have been helped in the pandemic with that kind of money.

A lot of this boils down to priorities in life: what’s

most important to us at the end of the day? Where does our passion lie?

In this week’s *parasha*, we learn about seven of the famous 10 plagues, the first of which was the plague of **See “Priorities” on page 7**

Congregational Notes

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 7:30 pm in January.

Friday, January 15: 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Rabbi Goldman-Wartell and Jason Flatt at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81957095574?pwd=SGRTU2lrZFMzZml2Mzk1dncvTlFuUT09>, meeting ID: 819 5709 5574 and passcode: 097653.

Saturday, January 16: 9 am, Shabbat school; 9:15 am, Torah study at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88298087579?pwd=eTVkMDRVVlpwTmZvMkdYU2l1OK0w1Zz09>; and 7:30 pm, “Havdalah with a Bonus” at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89741791260?pwd=MzZlNQ0trQWYhcGFZdzloczExUkhXdz09>.

Saturday, January 16: at 8 pm, The Afro-Semitic Experience Concert; contact the temple office at TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com for registration information. (For more information, see the article on page 3.)

Friday, January 22: 7 pm, Tu B’shevat Seder Shabbat Celebration at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81957095574?pwd=SGRTU2lrZFMzZml2Mzk1dncvTlFuUT09>, meeting ID: 819 5709 5574 and passcode: 097653. Contact the office for a list of food and drink needed for the seder that will take place in individuals’ homes.

Saturday, January 23: 9:15 am, Torah study, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88298087579?pwd=eTVkMDRVVlpwTmZvMkdYU2l1OK0w1Zz09>, meeting ID: 88298087579; and 7 pm “Havdalah with a Bonus” at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89741791260?pwd=MzZlNQ0trQWYhcGFZdzloczExUkhXdz09>, meeting ID: 89741791260.

Sunday, January 24: 11 am, Sisterhood Annual Book Talk with Rabbi Rachel Esserman. Join Zoom meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87826483246?pwd=VTRvZFA1Nks1eEF0LzVhclU2RU1hZz09>, meeting ID: 878 2648 3246 and passcode: 137825. Join via phone 646-558-8656, meeting ID: 878 2648 3246 and Passcode: 137825. (For more information, see the article on page 1.)

Wednesday, January 27: 7 pm, Tu B’shevat program “Jewish Values and Public Land” led by Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell, using materials from COEJL. The program will be on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88963441405?pwd=L2JiMlIrdThzeloxMmN3T3NaL1BTQT09> or enter meeting number 88963441405.

Thursday, January 28: 8 pm, Hebrew Union College and Jewish Institute of Religion’s Commemoration of Debbie Friedman’s legacy on her 10th yahrzeit. Register at <http://huc.edu/sing-unto-god-january-28-2021-8pm-est>.

Friday, January 29: 7:30 pm, Shabbat Shirah service with Cantor Ellen Dreskin celebrating Debbie Friedman’s music.

Saturday, January 30: 9:15 am, Torah study; and 7 pm, “Havdalah with a Bonus.”

Sunday, January 31: 1:30 pm, Tu B’shevat Nature Walk. Advance registration required through Temple Concord and can be made by contacting Temple Concord.

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: 607-756-7181
President: Carol Levine, 315-696-5744
Cemetery Committee, 315-696-5744
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/>
Service leaders: Lay leadership
Shabbat services: Either Friday evening at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 10 am from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot. Holiday services are also held. Check the Facebook page or weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.
Religious School: Students are educated on an individual basis.
Temple Brith Sholom is a small equalitarian congregation serving the greater Cortland community. Congregants span the gamut of observance and services are largely dependent on the service leader. The Friday night siddur is “Likrat Shabbat,” while the Saturday morning siddur is “Gates of Prayer.” The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences.

Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

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

Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union
Rabbi: Zev Silber
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Phone: 722-1793, Rabbi’s Office: 722-7514, Fax: 722-7121
Office hours: Mon. closed; Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Wed. closed; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm; Fri. 10 am-1 pm
Beth David e-mail address: bethdavid@stny.rr.com
Rabbi’s e-mail: rabbisilber@stny.rr.com
Website: www.bethdavid.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton

Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi-Cantor: George Hirschfeld
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820
Phone: 607-432-5522
Website: www.templebetheloneonta.org
E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com
Regular service times: visit the temple website for days of services and times
Religious School/Education: Religious School, for grades kindergarten through bar/bat mitzvah, meets Sunday mornings. For the schedule of services, classes and events, see the website.

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.

Norwich Jewish Center

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

Congregation Tikun 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.

Friday, January 15, light candles before..... 4:39 pm
Saturday, January 16, Shabbat ends 5:41 pm
Friday, January 22, light candles before..... 4:47 pm
Saturday, January 23, Shabbat ends 5:49 pm
Friday, January 29, light candles before..... 4:56 pm
Saturday, January 30, Shabbat ends 5:58 pm

Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative
Rabbi: Geoffrey Brown
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 723-7461 and 231-3746
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-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, January 16, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Exodus 6:2-9:35 and the haftarah is Ezekiel 28:25-29:21. At 6 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

There will be an Adult Education program on Zoom on Sunday, January 17, at 10:30 am. The program will consist of Jewish short stories read by Steve Gilbert, Ben Kasper and Andy Horowitz. Contact the temple office at titammy@stny.twcbc.com for the Zoom address before the program. (For more information, see the article on page 3.)

The temple office will be closed Monday, January 18, for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

On Saturday, January 23, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Exodus 10:1-13:16 and the haftarah is Jeremiah 46:13-28. At 6 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, January 24, at 12:30 pm, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study services via Zoom.

Penn-York Jewish Community

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

Temple 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
Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen
Sisterhood President: Julie Paige
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody
Administrative Assistant: Jane Griffith
Services: Fri. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced.
Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sundays and legal holidays).
Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday afternoons, 3:45-5:45 pm. The Midrashah (eighth grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers.
Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.

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

Kol Haverim

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

Resources.....

hold the virtual program “The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America – Virtual Book Talk with Richard Rothstein and Lila Corwin Berman” on Wednesday, January 27, at 6 pm. A donation of \$10 is requested. A limited number of Zoom spots are available, but will be available live on the museum’s Facebook page and website. For more information, visit www.nmajh.org/#events.

◆ The Hadassah-Brandeis Institute will hold several virtual events, including “Finding Matilda: Uncovering the Life and Death of a Jewish Lithuanian Poet” on Wednesday, January 27, at 7 pm; “Israel in the Spanish-speaking Media: The Case of Latina Entrepreneurship” on Thursday, February 4, from 7-8 pm; “American Jewish Women Craft Resilience and Community: Making Meaning Through Everyday Action” on Thursday, February 25, from 2-3 pm; “From Miniskirt to Hijab: A Girl in Revolutionary Iran” on Wednesday, March 3, from noon-1 pm; and “On Jewish Women’s Writing, HBI Virtual Conversations with Dr. Nora Gold” on Wednesday, April 28, from 2-3 pm. For more information or to register, visit www.brandeis.edu/hbi/events/index.html.

◆ Case Western Reserve University’s Siegal Lifelong Learning will hold several virtual events. Each lecture is free for members of Siegal or \$5 for nonmembers. “A Conversation with Eyal Rob: From Hava Nagila to Sticker Song – Game Changing Songs in Israel’s Society” will be held on Tuesday, January 26, at 11 am. For more information or to register, visit [https://case.edu/lifelonglearning/lectures/israeli-speaker-se-](https://case.edu/lifelonglearning/lectures/israeli-speaker-se)

ries-eyal-rob-remote. “A Conversation with Emuna Elon: House on Endless Waters” will take place on Wednesday, February 10, at 11 am. For more information or to register, visit <https://case.edu/lifelonglearning/lectures/conversation-emuna-elon>. “Autonomies (Remote)” with Yehonatan Indursky will place on Tuesday, March 16, at 11 am. Indursky, the creator of “Shtisel,” will speak about his show “Autonomies,” a dystopian drama set in an alternate reality of present-day Israel. For more information or to register, visit <https://case.edu/lifelonglearning/lectures/autonomies-remote>.

◆ The Orthodox Union offers “In Conversation: Rabbis Schmoozing with You” on Saturday nights after Shabbat. For more information, visit <https://outorah.org/series/4098>. Some conversations are on www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQBX-rE6pgmtRJE4lxej-Gs4Q-rlubkH5K.

◆ The bilingual streaming production of “The Dybbuk” by S. An-ski (Shloyme Zaynvl Rapoport), which was performed at the Theater for the New City by New Yiddish Rep on the play’s 100th anniversary has been edited for video-on-demand and will be presented through midnight Sunday, January 31, by New Yiddish Rep. The cost to view the play is \$5. To access the video, visit www.stellartickets.com/events/new-yiddish-repertory-theater-inc/the-dybbuk?aff=websit. For more information about the play, visit www.newyiddishrep.org.

◆ The National Arts Club, in recognition of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, will present member Elizabeth Bellak, with her daughter Alexandra, discussing

the journal of her sister Renia Spiegel on Wednesday, January 27, from 3-4 pm. Spiegel was a Jewish teenager in southeastern Poland when she began writing her diary, months before the advent of World War II. For more information or to register, visit www.eventbrite.com/e/holocaust-remembrance-day-registration-131472693365.

◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust will offer a performance of Carolyn Enger’s “Mischlinge Exposé,” live from Edmond J. Safra Hall on Tuesday, January 19, at 2 pm. The performance will be followed by a discussion between Enger and Rachel Stern, founding director and CEO of the Fritz Ascher Society. For more information or to register, visit <https://mjhnyc.org/events/live-from-edmond-j-safra-hall-carolyn-engers-mischlinge-expose/>.

◆ The National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene will hold “Soul to Soul,” a theatrical concert that explores the parallels of African American and Jewish history, on Monday, January 18, at 4 pm. The event will include a combination of English spirituals, civil rights songs, Yiddish folk songs and the-

atre songs. All Yiddish songs will include English translation subtitles. The event will not be shown on the theatre’s Facebook page. The cost to attend is \$12. For more information or to register, visit <https://nytf.org/soul/>.

◆ The Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion will hold the virtual program “Sing Unto God” celebrating the music of Debbie Friedman on Thursday, January 28, at 8 pm. For more information or to register, visit <http://huc.edu/sing-unto-god-january-28-2021-8pm-est>.

◆ The Jews of Color Initiative aims to have 1,000 Jews of Color complete a survey at JoCsurvey.org, part of the first-ever study to understand the lived experiences and perspectives of Jews of Color in the United States. Anyone who identifies as a Jew of Color is asked to fill out the survey, which addresses such questions as what do Jews of Color think about Jewish identity; what has been JoC’s experiences in Jewish communities; and more.

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

Priorities.....

“blood.” God commanded Moses to strike the Nile River and behold, “it will turn into blood.” What is the significance of water turning into blood?

Water is cold and void of life, blood is hot; we even talk about it “boiling.” The economy of Egypt was fueled by the Nile River, which when overflowing irrigated Egyptians’ agricultural pursuits. Water, when considered through the prism of mysticism, represents in this respect the “coldness” of materialism toward spirituality. For the Egyptians, there was no need for them to focus on a “higher power” of spirituality because the Nile would annually overflow and provide them what they needed. In contrast, Israel is a land that is perpetually dependent on rain, and its inhabitants are always turning their eyes upward to God, relying on His blessing and presence.

The first step to transforming the indifference of the Egyptians toward Godliness – the first aspect of transforming their “passion” for materialism – was transmuting the waters of the Nile from dispassionate waters to torrid blood.

In “re-shifting” our priorities in life from materialism to the transcendent, the first step is ridding ourselves of dispassion. We must cultivate an enthusiastic and vitality filled approach to our relationship with God and observance of his *mitzvot*. When we focus on that, we will be able to leave our microcosmic “Egypt” – leave the slavery of materialism and “limitations” – that is the literal translation of the biblical word for Egypt, *Mitzrayim* – we previously perceived as our “identity” and be elevated to a higher plane.

Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe of righteous memory.

Book.....

it more fun. I like to read the books closer to the review and am looking forward to what sounds like some fascinating reading.

“For the first time, I’m reviewing a non-fiction work,” she added. “I’ve been a big fan of Deborah Tannen’s writing, and have read all her popular non-fiction books and some of her scholarly ones. I’m looking forward to seeing how she turns her sociological and linguistic eye to her father’s life. I’ve read Nessa Papoport’s work – fiction and nonfiction – for years and so was glad to see that she had a new book out. ‘The Lost Shtetl’ is a debut novel, but the subject matter was one I could not resist. Judaism with a touch of fantasy? That always engages my interest.”

“Evening” by Rapoport is about two sisters, lost youth and youthful obsessions; organized by day as the family sits *shiva*. According to critics, the novel “unfolds the paradoxes of love, ambition, siblings and the way the past continues to infect the present, sometimes against our will.”

“The Lost Shtetl” by Gross is a debut novel about a small Jewish village in the Polish forest that is so secluded no one knows it exists... until now.

“Find My Father: His Century-Long Journey From World War I Warsaw and My Quest to Follow” by #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Tannen traces her father’s life from turn-of-the-century Warsaw to New York City and has been called “an intimate memoir about family, memory and the stories we tell.”

Continued from page 1

Esserman is the executive editor and book reviewer for The Reporter Group. Her editorials and reviews have won awards from the American Jewish Press Association and the Syracuse Press Club. She won a Syracuse Press Club Award 2019: Third Place Print Editorial for “Broken promises and lost lives.” She also won the 2019 American Jewish Press Simon Rockower Award: First Place Award for Excellence in Arts and Criticism News and Features-Critical Analysis/Review (newspapers 14,999 circulation and under) for “Turning Jews Into Americans.”

She serves as the Jewish chaplain for Broome Developmental Disabilities Service Office. Her work has been published in “The Women’s Torah Commentary” and “The Women’s Haftarah Commentary” (both by Jewish Lights Publishing). She also has had a book of poetry, “I Stand By The River,” published by Keshet Press of Temple Concord. A Reconstructionist rabbi who says her first love is teaching, she sees her position at *The Reporter* as an opportunity to educate the public about Judaism.

She is a freelance rabbi who deals with lifecycle events, hospital visits, chaplaincy and is rabbi-on-call when needed by local Reform and Conservative synagogues. Her education includes a bachelor of arts degree in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania, and rabbinic ordination and a master of arts in Hebrew letters from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Wyncote, PA.

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Jews in Sports

Marshall Goldberg, the NFL years: part II: the second half

BILL SIMONS

As discussed in a previous issue of *The Reporter*, Marshall Goldberg acquired national celebrity as a dominant football running back in the late 1930s. Twice, he led the University of Pittsburgh to national championships (1936 and 1937); received First-Team All-American honors at two different positions, halfback (1937) and fullback (1938); and finished second (1938) and third (1937) in Heisman Trophy voting. Enshrined in the College Football, Pitt Athletics and International Jewish Sports halls of fame, "Biggie" Goldberg was selected to Sports Illustrated's 1930s College Football Team of the Decade. cursory examination of Goldberg's subsequent NFL career, however, brings to mind an observation attributed to novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald: "There are no second acts in American lives."

Clearly, Goldberg's professional football career didn't match his exploits on the collegiate gridiron. Over 77 games during seven plus seasons with the Chicago Cardinals (1939-43, 1946-48), Goldberg gained an unremarkable 1,644 yards rushing. Many college superstars have faltered in the pro game. Usually, however, the performance deficit derived from either an Achilles heel in their skills set and/or the differences between the pro and collegiate game. For example, Tim Tebow, the Florida Gators' Heisman Trophy sensation, excelled in the collegiate game as a scrambling quarterback, but lacked the arm prowess necessary for a NFL pocket quarterback. Goldberg, however, had the explosive power, speed, agility and size (filling out to 195 pounds) requisite for an NFL running back of his era. In Goldberg's case, the answer lies in the difference between the indomitable Pitt Panthers and the hapless Chicago Cardinals.

The Chicago Cardinals, year after year, were the football equivalent of baseball's artless 1962 New York Mets. Football is a team sport, and running backs, no matter how good, need blockers. Most contempo-

rary football fans have never even heard of the Chicago Cardinals (1920-59). The team moved to St. Louis in 1960 and then relocated to Phoenix in 1988, taking on their current Arizona Cardinals designation in 1994. The Cardinals' won-lost-tied record during Goldberg's first four plus seasons, typically prime time for a running back, was so abysmal that it looks like a typographical error: 1939 (1-10), 1940 (2-7-2), 1941 (3-7-1), 1942 (3-8) and 1943 (0-10). Although Goldberg was the best player on the inept and scorned Cardinals, he did not even have the distinction of being the best Jewish footballer in Chicago, that honor went to the great Sid Luckman, quarterback of the NFL championship Bears.

Despite the indignities of playing for Chicago's other team, Goldberg carved out a substantive NFL career with the Cardinals, much of it as a 60-minute man – offensive running back, defensive safety and kick/punt returner. Given the supporting cast, he had credible seasons in 1939 and 1940. Named to the NFL All-Star Game in 1941, his best season, Goldberg, with 117 carries in 11 games, gained 427 yards rushing, third best in the NFL. During the 1941 campaign, he also gained 313 yards, receiving as well 152 on punt returns, an NFL-high 290 on kick returns, and another 54 from his league-leading 7 interceptions. For the 1941 campaign, Goldberg paced the NFL with an impressive 1,236 all-purpose yards on the ground, with 110 more passing. Mad Marshall was also stellar on defense. Another stalwart Goldberg performance followed in 1942, but a fractured left ankle limited Biggie to a single game in 1943. And then came World War II service, with Goldberg donning a different uniform, that of the U.S. Navy.

Following demanding Scouts and Raiders training, Goldberg served on a Navy cargo ship in the Pacific during World War II. Two months after the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Lieutenant Goldberg walked the

remains of that devastated city. Although he believed dropping the bomb may have shortened the war and saved lives, including his own, he wished that future policymakers could witness what he could never forget.

Testicular injury and cancer, related to military service and possibly Goldberg's exposure to radiation at Hiroshima, necessitated surgery. Nonetheless, he returned to Cardinals in 1946, four years after this last full football season.

Although Goldberg accounted for 527 all-purpose yards in 1946, he evolved into an outstanding defensive specialist during his final years in the NFL (1946-48). Perhaps the best safety in the game, he intercepted four passes in 1946. Biggie's dramatic interception against the Philadelphia Eagles sealed the much-improved Cardinals only NFL Championship in 1947. The 1948 Cardinals paced the Western Division, but, by then, Goldberg was primarily a defensive substitute, and he retired from the game at the end of the season.

Post-football, Chicago remained Goldberg's home. After a stint in the insurance field, he purchased a used machine-tools business. Marshall Goldberg Machine Tools evolved into one of the largest firms in its sector.

Goldberg's first marriage produced two children, but ended in divorce. Cancer claimed his second wife. With his third wife, Rita Berger, who was raised in a traditional Jewish home, Goldberg found marital happiness.

Goldberg's Jewish identity found expression in Passover seders, contributions to Jewish charities, raising money as chairman of the Illinois Committee for the Maccabiah Games, support for Israel and pride that fellow Jews knew that a Goldberg played a tough brand of football.

Playing in the era of the leatherheads, Goldberg took a lot of hard hits to the head during his gridiron career, sustaining perhaps 15 concussions. The term Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy was just emerging as part of public dialogue prior to Goldberg's April 3, 2006, death at age 88, and there was no postmortem examination of his brain. It appears likely, however, that the old football hero's final years were beleaguered by a form of dementia symptomatic of the disease. His family established The Marshall Goldberg Fund for Traumatic Brain Injury Research to honor his memory by providing assistance to other athletes threatened by cognitive maladies.

The Marshall Goldberg Fund is a good legacy, complementing Biggie's memorable run as a standard bearer during a difficult passage in Jewish history.

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.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Confederate flag found tied to door of NYC Jewish museum

A Confederate flag was discovered tied to the front door of the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust in New York City on Jan. 8 in the early morning. The museum, located in Battery Park City in Lower Manhattan, said that it has filed a police report and is working with authorities to identify those who carried out the vandalism. "This is an atrocious attack on our community and on our institution and must be met with the swift and forceful response by law enforcement," Jack Kliger, president and CEO of the museum, said in a statement. "The Confederate flag is a potent symbol of white supremacy, as evidenced by the events at the U.S. Capitol this week."

Khamenei mocks America after "fiasco" on U.S. Capitol

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei mocked the United States on Jan. 8, following the mob invasion of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6. In a 50-minute televised speech, Khamenei said: "This is their democracy; this is their elections' situation." In a tweet, also on Jan. 8, the Iranian leader posted, "The US openly says its interests require instability in this region. The US wanted to start a civil war in Iran in 2009, & now God has afflicted them with the same predicament in 2021. The recent chaos reached a point where Congress members had to escape through secret tunnels." In his speech, Khamenei also said that Iran is in no rush to see the U.S. rejoin the 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The U.S. withdrew from it in May 2018, reimposing sanctions lifted under it, along with enacting new sanctions as part of what the Trump administration has called a "maximum pressure" campaign.

Film Continued from page 1

drama, Ofek is said to "peel away the layers of Israeli reality, presenting a picture that is at times complex and uncomfortable, but always with a caring caress."

Critics have called the film "a sensitive and hilarious debut from director, writer and star Yossi Atia" that "deftly blends romantic comedy with the complexities of modern life in a style reminiscent of Albert Brooks." The film has also been described

as "a darkly quirky semi-autobiographical romance, between Ronen, who guides tours around the famous terror attack sites in Jerusalem as a way of coping with his own nightmares, and a girl with a thirst for life."

"The Film Fest Committee thought a good way to beat the early winter blues would be to screen a film and have a lively discussion," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton. "Plus, there's no need to worry about snow! You can watch the film and participate in the discussion without having to leave the warmth and safety of your home."

Hubal added, "The Federation continues to look for ways to keep our community connected during the pandemic. Our motto for this year is 'Socially Distant, Spiritually Connected' and the Film Fest is just one of the ways we are making that come true. Join us for this exciting event."



Ronen Matalon (Yossi Atia) led a specialized tour of Jerusalem. (Photo by Shai Goldman)

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