

Film Fest to hold virtual screening of "Space Torah"

By Reporter staff

The Jewish International Film Fest of Greater Binghamton will hold a virtual showing of the short documentary "Space Torah" on Thursday, March 4, at 7 pm. The showing will be followed by a discussion moderated by its executive producer, Rachel Raz. "Space Torah" tells the story of NASA astronaut Dr. Jeff Hoffman, who participated in five space missions and brought a small Torah with him on one mission.

People will be able to register on the Federation website, www.jfgeb.org. There is no charge for the film, but donations will be accepted. In addition, viewers will be invited to a follow-up question-and-answer session with Hoffman on Monday, March 15, from 7:30-8:30 pm. The link to the Federation discussion and viewing, and the link to make

a reservation for the Hoffman meeting will be sent after the reservation is made.

During his five space missions, Hoffman brought a variety of Jewish objects with him into space. On his last mission in 1996, he brought along a small Torah scroll on board the Space Shuttle Columbia and, on one Shabbat while orbiting the Earth, read from the book of Genesis. Hoffman noted that taking religious objects into space allowed him to bring his own tradition with him during his missions, but that the Torah scroll had special meaning – serving as a symbol of the holiness of human life.



NASA astronaut Dr. Jeff Hoffman (Photo used with the permission of NASA, courtesy of the Space Torah Project)

Hoffman, who became an astronaut in 1978, performed four spacewalks during his missions, including the first unplanned, contingency spacewalk in NASA's history and the initial repair/rescue mission for the Hubble Space Telescope. He was the first astronaut to log 1,000 hours of flights aboard the space shuttle and the first Jewish American male astronaut to fly into space.

In addition to her position as executive producer of "Space Torah," Raz is the director of the Early Childhood Institute of the Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education of Hebrew College in Massa-

chusetts. She also directs the Boston-Haifa Early Childhood Educators' Connection, serves on the Israeli American Council advisory committee of KESHET and is a board member of UMass Amherst Hillel. In addition, she is the author of the children's books "ABC Israel" and "The Colors of Israel."

"Join us for this fascinating documentary," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "I have had the pleasure of viewing this short film and it was wonderful to learn about Dr. Jeff Hoffman, the first Jewish astronaut, and why it was important to him to bring Jewish objects on his missions. I look forward to hearing what Rachel Raz has to say about the film and hearing from Dr. Hoffman in March."

JCC reinstating more programs

The Jewish Community Center has been slowly reinstating programs for members and non-members alike.

"There is nothing more important than maintaining your physical health and well-being during a pandemic, so we have been working around the clock to reopen our programs to the community at large,"

said a representative of the JCC. "All of our programs have been revised to meet CDC and local health department guidelines, which includes limiting the number of people participating at one time as well as mandatory use of masks upon entering the facility."

JCC members can sign up to use the pool by calling the JCC office between the hours

of 9 am-5 pm, Monday through Friday. To make an appointment, people must call the day before they would like to swim. For Monday swim times, a person must call the previous Friday. Time slots are 45 minutes long. Before signing up, it's necessary to read and agree to all of the COVID pool procedures that have been put in place.

Children may come to swim with a parent or guardian by signing up for the shallow or deep end slots, or if they are signed up for a lesson.

Since February 8, non-members are allowed to call the day of to book a spot to swim for a fee if there are any openings. See "JCC" on page 4

TC Sisterhood to hold "Voices of Biblical Women and Food" program

Temple Concord Sisterhood will welcome Rabbi Rachel Esserman and Deb Daniels for "The Voices of Biblical Women and Food" program to be held on Sunday, February 28, at 11 am, via Zoom. Esserman will discuss Leah and Hannah and Daniels will cook plant-based kosher pareve-vegan recipes inspired by these two biblical women. The recipes and discussion come from "Feeding Women of the Bible, Feeding Ourselves" by Kenden Alford.

The program is free and 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/3897224889?pwd=VHFbTXljazF-WTjB4aHMxc3RicVhZUT09>, meeting ID 389 722 4889 and passcode 335836; or join via phone: 1-646-558-8656 (New York), meeting ID: 389 722 4889 and passcode 335836.

Esserman said, "The first time we did this it was just for Temple Concord Sisterhood members. We had such a good time that Deb and I

decided to do it again (with different biblical women and different food) and open it to the whole community. Deb did such a wonderful job demonstrating the recipes that we've been calling her Sisterhood's own Rachael Ray.

Join us for some food for thought and some healthy food for your body. The questions offered in the book are relevant today and give us much food for thought. The recipes offer us a different way to explore the lives of

these women and our own view of the world."

Daniels said, "The description given in the book is 'Uplifting the Voices of Hebrew Biblical Heroines and Honoring Them with Simple, Plant-Based Recipes.'"

TBE Ithaca to host 22nd annual Jewish stories, poetry and music evening

Temple Beth-El, in Ithaca, will hold its 22nd annual evening of Jewish stories, poetry and music on Saturday, March 6, at 7:30 pm. The evening will be held virtually this year.

"A celebration of life, community and the arts will take place on March 6," said organizers of the event. "The event celebrates 22 years of original stories, traditional tales, jokes, folk and contemporary poetry, and dynamic live music from around the world."

Organizers added, "This event has become extremely popular over the years, drawing participants together for an inti-



Lenny Rosenfield and Albert Alexander are shown performing at a past event. (Photo by Marjorie Hoffman)

mate and cozy evening; a real reminder of times past. Although we are not able to be physically together this year, we will create the opportunity to enjoy the warmth of our community and richness of our heritage. With a virtual presentation, people who live in other locales can easily attend."

Register in advance for the event at https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0pcOCrrT4oGNS_Hpgj5UCjsDgNni-HyGgeQ. For further information, contact the temple at 273-5775 or visit its website at www.tbeithaca.org.

Binghamton Philharmonic's Wallenberg Legacy project

The Binghamton Philharmonic is looking for donations for its Wallenberg Legacy project, which will digitize vintage Philharmonic recordings from 1958-76, the era of its founder Fritz Wallenberg. In summer 2020, the Binghamton Philharmonic was given 20 years of recordings of performances conducted by Wallenberg. The recordings, made by Marvin Fred Kelley Jr. of Custom Recording Studio in Binghamton, date from a Christmas concert

on December 14, 1958, and carry through 1978. Most of the 150-plus reel-to-reel tapes come with documentation, including timings, printed programs, and newspaper articles and reviews.

Through a partnership with Newclear Studios of Windsor, NY, the BPO has embarked on a project to digitize Wallenberg's recorded legacy. Once digitized, recordings will be shared with local radio for broadcast and uploaded to the BPO website, Bing-

hamtonPhilharmonic.org, and its YouTube channel for free access.

Wallenberg, who was co-founder and conductor of the Binghamton Symphony, was born in Germany and moved to Columbia before World War II. He immigrated to the United States in 1940 and lived in Indianapolis and New York City before moving to Binghamton in 1947. He was an engineer, in addition to playing the cello and being a conductor. Before retiring in 1975,

he conducted the Binghamton Symphony and the Choral Society for 25 years.

Anyone who would like to be part of the Wallenberg Legacy can contact BPO Executive Director Paul Cienniwa at 607-723-3931, ext. 4, or pcienniwa@binghamtonphilharmonic.org, or visit BinghamtonPhilharmonic.org. Donors will receive a CD copy of the archived recording and be honored on the BPO website through recognition connected to the sponsored recording.

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Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

I wept last night. I felt it coming for days and I am glad it finally bubbled up and spilled out. There were several reasons for the tears. The mid-winter blues are hitting hard this year. Not leaving the house for days because of the weather, a sore back and the pandemic has certainly played a role. Saying good-bye to my second child, Rae, last weekend when they went back to college has roused mixed emotions. It is a great pleasure to see your offspring happy, independent and successful, but the house feels empty without Rae's gentle presence. I miss my mother and sister who live in Arizona. FaceTime is great, but what a comfort it would be to share a meal or hug with them.

What is weighing most heavily on my mind and spirit is the reaction of some community members to the Jewish Federation of North America's statement in response the

the Capitol insurrection that was printed in the January 15 issue of *The Reporter*. The criticism is that the statement's call to move forward from that horrific event gave a pass to the perpetrators and political leaders that incited the riotous mob. I have said before in this column that I am not comfortable discussing politics. My grandfather, a respected attorney, was a proponent of keeping your political views to yourself and letting your vote do the talking. It is not a far leap to say my reluctance to jump into the political scum colored my judgment when we decided to print the benign JFNA statement.

What happened on January 6 at our nation's Capitol, our sacred home of democracy, was disgusting and heartbreaking. That the insurrection was fueled by disinformation from the U.S. president and antisemitic conspiracy theories is terrifying and is a cause for great alarm to Jewish

people worldwide. I apologize that these statements were not made clear.

What I will not apologize for is working to keep our community unified during the conversations that have taken place after the insurrection and the JFNA response was printed. Didn't Hillel sum up the Torah as "what is hateful to you, do not do to another"? If we let the viciousness of our American politics infect our small Jewish community, there will be no winners. We will lose the next generation of leaders. We will lose friendships. We will lose our Jewish institutions. Not every Trump supporter is a racist or antisemite, just as not every Democrat is a crazed, anti-Israel liberal. There are supporters of our former president who have legitimate policy opinions. I might not agree with those positions, but since when did that become a reason to hate? I don't like being

labeled and I will not do that to others.

There is important work to do to keep the Federation on a clear path that keeps our organizations whole and upholds our Jewish values. The most meaningful part of this work is the people. Our Jewish neighbors, be they Republican or Democrat, are what matter most. I consider it a blessing and an honor that this community entrusts me with the responsibility to be a leader. As the second impeachment trial of Trump begins, there will certainly be no end in sight to the name calling and rhetoric. On a personal front, I know the lessons of January 2021 are not over and I will continue to search my soul for what I feel is just. It is my sincerest hope that each of us take a long look at what we value most. Only from unity of purpose we will find the strength to endure the difficult times and enjoy the best of times.

In My Own Words

Thoughts during a pandemic

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

The first draft of this column was written on January 27, the day that would have been my little brother Larry's 59th birthday. I usually note the day, but this is the first time since he died in 2010 that I thought about how old he would be. I have to admit feeling teary at the thought. That's partly because of the pandemic. Every emotion feels amplified during this time.

It doesn't help that I can't discuss this with my mother. Some of you may know that she survived a bout of COVID. I don't think I ever felt as alone in my life as when the nursing home called to tell me she tested positive. I walked around the inside of the house crying and feeling lost. With the help of a wise friend, I realized my feelings were getting ahead of reality, but never

before did I so feel the loss of not having someone beside me. Again, the pandemic took a simple emotion and magnified it.

My mom has also been less responsive since she was sick. I'm not sure if it's a lasting effect of COVID or just a problem all folks with dementia are facing due to the fact they aren't able to see families and friends in person. Even when I haven't been able to visit, my

mom and I would talk on the phone, but now she barely responds to me. My brother and I have arranged for regular Zoom calls with her, not that she interacts with us during those, but at least we can see her. What's also hard is not to be able to visit. My last scheduled visit was supposed to take place on October 20, her 94th birthday, but it had to be cancelled due

See "Thoughts" on page 3

Letters

Responses to Federation statement on Capitol attack

To the Editor:

We believe it necessary to respond to the statement of the Jewish Federation of North America that appeared on the front page of *The Reporter* dated January 15-28, 2021.

Precisely two weeks following the attempted January 6 cooption of our democratic processes – the vandalism of our U.S. Capitol and a concurrent attack on its principles – we have a new administration. This is an opportunity to move past these horrendous events, but not before we rectify them and hold accountable those responsible for this unprecedented assault on our principles and institutions.

We would do well to remember George Washington's words to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport: "The citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy – a policy worthy of imitation... the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens... May the children of Abraham who dwell in this land continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitant – while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree

and there shall be none to make him afraid."

The horrific actions of January 6 were in opposition to both American and Jewish values.

Unchecked inflammatory rhetoric, disinformation and irresponsibility have dangerously sown the seeds of distrust in our republic. Three core Jewish values must be pursued before we can move forward.

Justice

"Justice, justice shall you pursue." (Deuteronomy 16:18-20)

This admonition is essential to all, leaders and citizens alike. Justice is immutable. It is not defined by individuals; it is a collective understanding that transcends any particular political stance. Prosecution of the elected leaders who for months incited their followers, blatantly lied and questioned the legitimacy of a fair election as well as the law-breakers responsible for invading our national Capitol is essential.

Accountability

"When a man or a woman commits any wrong toward a fellow man, thus breaking faith with Hashem, and that person realizes his guilt, he shall confess the wrong that he has done." (Numbers 5:5-7)

The Capitol was invaded by people who sought to overturn the outcome of a

See "Capitol" on page 5

To the Editor:

In 2018 following the tragic shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, our community came together quickly and peacefully as we shared our grief over the loss of lives catalyzed by hatred and antisemitism. Leaders from our local places of worship came together with prayers and hopes for better days.

Just a short year later, we gathered again at our local mosque to acknowledge and collectively grieve the loss of lives in yet another terrorist attack in New Zealand.

The relative silence following the violent attack to our core democracy at our country's Capitol on January 6 leaves me deeply disappointed and concerned. Have we become so complacent in the face of constant assaults upon humanity that real-time images of domestic terrorism no longer resonate within us? We watched as American citizens invaded our Capitol proudly waving Confederate and Nazi flags, as they desecrated our democracy. Has the constant rhetoric and divisiveness in our country made the unacceptable acceptable?

I know that our community is better than this. I know that because each year, as I have called so many of you to ask for support for our Jewish institutions, you have responded generously.

The statement by The Jewish Federations of North America printed in the January 15 issue of *The Reporter* following this recent attack did not come close to acknowledging the depth of destruction on January 6.

Yes, we need to heal our country and focus on coming together. But we cannot downplay the horror we saw displayed in vivid images on our televisions.

The reality of COVID clearly makes it impossible to gather and gain strength from our collective despair. But it does not prevent us from taking positive action against the hatred and destruction so evidently becoming yet another pandemic raging our country.

Our silence makes us complicit. We have safe avenues available to us to come together, to respond to this violence with calls for peace and democracy, and to do so proactively. Call your elected officials and make your concerns heard. Volunteer in safe spaces to help those in need across our community.

Our nation and the world are at a historic crossroad. As historians record this moment in time, let's choose a path that prioritizes honesty, respect for our democracy and a willingness to engage even when it's uncomfortable.

Susan Walker



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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.

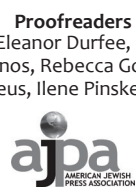
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TI Sisterhood to hold virtual chair yoga

Temple Israel Sisterhood will offer a virtual chair yoga class on Thursday, February 18, at 3 pm. Angela Clark, a certified yoga and Pilates instructor, will lead a 35-minute program that is designed for all levels of activity and strength. "You will have so much fun, you will forget it's

exercise!" said Arlene Osber. The cost of the class is \$5. To register, call the temple office at 723-7461; the Zoom link will be e-mailed to participants.

"This revitalizing workout can be enjoyed from the comfort of your own chair at home," said organizers of

the class. "Angela's infectious manner makes her classes a joy. There will also be some surprises to enhance your experience. We hope you will join us!"

Kilmer Mansion \$30K match met

The Kilmer Mansion fund raised \$30,000 to meet its matching grant thanks to the generosity of 139 donors. Every dollar of the Kilmer Mansion matching fund was used to double the donations. That means there is a total of \$60,000 toward rebuilding the mansion.

"These kind gifts have brought us a giant step closer to the day when we'll all be able to celebrate together on the newly restored porches and terraces," said Lisa Blackwell, Temple Concord president. "I cannot thank everyone enough for their support!"

Initial construction is expected to begin in the spring.

Federation Film Fest held Jan. 31



At left: Sixty-three households signed up to see the film "Born in Jerusalem and Still Alive," which was part of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's virtual Film Fest. On January 31, 30 households took part in a Zoom discussion of the film led by Stephen A. Lisman, Ph.D. Shown are some of the people who attended the Zoom discussion.

Thoughts.....Continued from page 2

to COVID cases and no one has been allowed to visit since. Add to this friends having health problems – whether COVID or otherwise – and other friends losing relatives – some from COVID, but others from different illnesses – and it's easy to feel overwhelmed. This serves as a reminder that normal life doesn't stop even during a pandemic. Unfortunately, it's mostly the bad things that continue, rather than the good. So, life feels out of balance in a way it didn't before COVID hit.

But I try to take pleasure in the good moments because allowing myself to slip into a dark hole isn't helpful. So, I focus on the good things, like the fact we live in the 21st century when technology allows us to connect in ways our ancestors would have never thought possible. For example, I didn't have to skip one of my favorite things: my Temple Concord Sisterhood book review took place via Zoom this year. It wasn't the same, but I reminded myself that I didn't have to go out into the cold or worry about snow. Even better, I was given a wonderful surprise the day before the review. The week before, I'd made an off-handed remark to someone on a Zoom call about how I was going to say the food this year wasn't as good as usual. (For those who've never attended, there is always a wonderful brunch before the event.) Well, the person who heard me discussed this with someone else from the Sisterhood and they arranged for me to receive my own personal brunch. A small bag of food may not sound that important, but it's hard to describe how much it lifted my mood and made my week.

And I've been doing other things to keep my mood steady. The last time I lived alone, I never kept sweets in the house. The idea was that if I wanted something, I had to get in the car and drive somewhere to pick it up. Since that normally happened around 9 pm, I managed to keep my sweets consumption to a minimum because there was no way I was leaving the apartment at that time of night. But, with the pandemic, I've been keeping something sweet in the cupboard or freezer. It's not always easy to limit how much of it I eat, but the treat feels important to help keep me on an event keel.

No one will be surprised to hear that I'm reading a great deal. (According to the Goodreads website, I read 207 books and 62,217 pages in 2020.) Since I'm working from home, there's no commute, which gives me extra time in the morning and evening. (It is so wonderful *not* having to deal with the flyover during rush hour.) But I've also started watching repeats of two shows I never watched during their first runs. It's embarrassing to admit one of them is "NCIS: New Orleans" because the characters continually violate the way investigators should behave. But I find myself watching it even when I shake my head at the plot and action. I've also been watching "Blue Bloods," an interesting choice for me because its characters are far more conservative than I am. The show does offer some interesting debates – some well reasoned ones – even when I take a different view myself. And, OK, I like Tom Selleck, which is funny because I was not a fan of "Magnum PI," which was his first big hit.

The roller coaster of emotions I'm experiencing probably feels familiar to many people, even though their ups and downs will be different. It's not that we didn't have many of the same problems before the pandemic, but it is easier to focus on them now because we don't have as many ways to distract ourselves. I told (well, e-mailed) someone about Larry this morning and said if we were in the office, I would suggest that we go out for ice cream, something he would have enjoyed. That's not something I'll do right now. But I am hoping that what was once an easy, fun thing to do will once again become an easy, fun thing to do when the pandemic is over. I also hope that when that happens, I'll remember to cherish it – to not take for granted the simple pleasures life offers.

OF NOTE

Preus

Alexander Preus and Anna Binstock announced the birth of Max Isaac Preus, who was born on December 7. Grandparents are Merri Pell-Preus and Tony Preus of Binghamton; Debbie Berlyn; and Stuart Binstock. Great-grandmother is Shirley Berger.



Max Isaac Preus

Wedding and engagement photos wanted

The Reporter is looking for photos of couples who became engaged or married in 2020 for the annual Wedding, Prom and Party Guide issue (coming March 12). Please e-mail photos, in TIF or JPG format, to TReporter@aol.com by Tuesday, March 2; please note in the subject line that a wedding/engagement photo for The Reporter is attached. Please include the names (including maiden) of the newlyweds or engaged couple, date of the wedding and city/state of residence.



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The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of **Barbara K. "Bubsie" Stearns**

DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
February 26-March 11	February 17
March 12-25	March 3
March 26-April 8 (Passover)	March 17
April 9-22	March 31

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

Hillel Academy is selling holiday Purim gift bags with 5 hamantaschen, chocolate drizzled popcorn, an orange & Kedem grape juice. Quantities are limited, so reserve yours today. Purim bags are \$20 each. All money raised goes toward education & extra curricular activities. All baked items are OU/Kosher, and baked in the Temple Israel kitchen. Products may contain nuts. Contactless pick up.

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Off the Shelf

Religion, gender and time

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

“Time is one of the most basic examples of something that is socially constructed. We collectively create the meaning of time – it has no predetermined meaning until we give it meaning. To say that something, like time, is a social [construct] is not to say that it doesn’t exist or it is merely an illusion, but instead that humans have created systems of meaning that [create] the concept of time.” – Karen Sternheimer, sociologist at the University of Southern California

Time plays a very important role in Judaism. The Mishnah begins with the word “from what time” followed by an analysis of the appropriate times to say particular

prayers. How the ancient rabbis viewed time tells us a great deal about their culture, something Sarit Kattan Gribetz discusses in “Time and Difference in Rabbinic Judaism” (Princeton University Press). In her fascinating yet very complex work, she looks at “the central role that time played in how [the ancient] rabbis attempted to construct Jewish identity, subjectivity, and theology – indeed, how they constructed their worlds – during this formative period in the history of Judaism.” The need to formulate time differently occurred because of the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. Before that, the Temple was the

temporal center of Judaism, with its rhythms and rhymes organizing sacrificial and cultic practices. That’s not to say that the influence of the Temple rituals disappeared, but they had to be reconstructed to fit a new world.

By looking at rabbinic texts, Gribetz explores four different realms of time, offering information based on a comparison of rabbinic time to Roman time, Jewish time to Christian time, men’s time to women’s time, and God’s time to human time. Her work is detailed and difficult to summarize, but it’s possible to give an overview of what she discusses.

◆ **Rabbinic vs. Roman time:** The written Roman calendar contained a listing of all the empire’s festivals and celebrations. Since Palestine was under Roman rule, it was impossible for Jews living there to avoid the Roman calendar since its holidays were the law of the land. The ancient rabbis attempted to undermine that calendar, though, to keep rabbinic identity separate from Roman. This included noting the days Jews were not allowed to do business with non-Jews before and after Roman festivals – even those festivals that might have been considered civic holidays, rather than religious ones. The rabbis also formulated new rules of Jewish holiday observances that took the place of the Temple cult and sacrifices. It’s important to note that, in this time period, rabbinic identity was not the same as Jewish identity since not all Jews followed the rabbis. Some assimilated into Roman culture, while others followed different Jewish paths.

◆ **Jewish vs. Christian time:** Most of this discussion centers on the observance of Shabbat. It’s important to note that the Greco-Romans had a negative attitude toward the observance of Shabbat. They thought that Jews were lazy to stop working once every seven days. Plus, they did not adhere to a seven day week so stopping work on that particular day seemed arbitrary. To differentiate themselves from Jews, Christians denigrated using Saturday as a Sabbath and declared that Sunday would be the Lord’s Day. They also claimed Jews had been given the Sabbath to atone for their sins and with the coming of Jesus, that rule did not apply to Christians. The rabbis, on the other hand, entered into great discussion about the laws of Shabbat. Gribetz cites scholars who believe this discussion was a polemic against Christians, although other scholars suggest that, for the most part, the rabbinic world ignored the Christian one. In addition, the author offers information about the development of the seven day week and how thoughts about the Sabbath changed as the Roman world became predominately Christian.

◆ **Men’s vs. women’s time:** Gribetz begins by noting rabbinic innovations when dealing with time, for example, dividing commandments between positive ones

(which only men were required to perform) and negative ones (which both sexes were required to observe). This meant that women were excluded from many rituals and requirements that make up the majority of religious practice in the post-Temple period. The author focuses on two examples: saying the *Shema* for men and *niddah* (the rules of family purity) for women. She suggests that the idea of being commanded to say the *Shema* twice a day was a rabbinic innovation since the Torah verse was originally taken to mean that one should always keep God in one’s mind, rather than the need to recite those words at a particular time. Gribetz also talks about the increase of rituals relating to *niddah*, with women being required to check themselves twice daily to make certain they were not menstruating. She suggests this was a rabbinic innovation – one not required by biblical law. Although the laws of ritual purity relating to women increased during this time, the ones relating to men lessened or were ignored. Gribetz does question whether the rabbis intended to separate men and women’s time, or if it was simply the result of actions taken for other reasons.

◆ **Human vs. Divine time:** The question of Divine time in rabbinic discussion often focuses on God’s activity since the creation of the world. For example, what actions does God perform to fill the day? Answers vary, but the rabbis believed God’s time mirrors that of humans, which includes spending time studying Torah. Although God does not just focus attention on Israel, the rabbis note that a certain amount of time is set aside for their nation. One humorous suggestion sees God as the ultimate matchmaker; the rabbinic story features a Roman woman who attempts to do the same with her slaves with disastrous result. Gribetz also discusses how human and Divine time differ when it comes to knowing the exact time, with only God truly knowing the hours, days, months and years. One example mentioned is that while God knows the exact time Shabbat begins, humans must begin Shabbat early so they don’t accidentally start at the incorrect time.

In her conclusion, Gribetz notes how the ideas she examines continued to develop and change over time. In fact, many of them are still being debated in contemporary times. She does realize the limitations of her study, but believes that understanding how the rabbis viewed time can better help us understand their worldview. “Time and Difference in Rabbinic Judaism” is not an easy work to read. It is definitely aimed at scholars, but the ideas discussed are so intriguing that, at least for this reader, it was worth the struggle.

Editor’s note: “Time and Difference in Rabbinic Judaism” was the winner of the 2020 National Jewish Book Award’s Nahum M. Sarna Memorial Award.

JCC.....Continued from page 1

JCC members can also sign up to use the fitness center following the same guidelines mentioned above for swim registration; however, only one person may use the facility at a time. Two people may sign up together as long as they live in the same household.

In addition, the JCC is offering various fitness classes. All of the “Pilates Apparatus” classes are full; however, there are openings in several other group classes. “Tai Chi for Energy” is offered Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30-11:30 am for a fee of \$50 for members and non-members. (People 80 and older can attend at no cost.) The class is taught by Peg Swarts, who is a certified instructor through Tai Chi for Health Institute. Tai Chi has been called “a good way to start your journey to better health. The gentle, graceful movements are a safe way to gain balance, strength and flexibility.” This session will include warm-up and cool down exercises, as well as qigong movements. It will include elements of Dr. Lam’s “Tai Chi for Energy” program, as well as movements from Tai Chi 24 Forms. No previous experience is necessary.

SilverSneakers® Classic is offered Thursdays from 10:45-11:30 am and is free to Silver Sneakers and JCC members, and \$4 per class for non-members. “Have fun and move to the music through a variety of exercises designed to increase muscular strength, range of movement and activities for daily living,” said a JCC representative. Hand-held weights, elastic tubing with handles and a SilverSneakers ball are offered for resistance. A chair is available if needed for seated or standing support.

Gentle Yoga began recently on Tuesdays from 10-11 am. There is a drop-in class fee of \$8 for JCC members and \$10 for non-members. The class is for all ages. The moves incorporate bending, stretching and balance. “Holding poses builds and strengthens muscle and stamina,” said a JCC representative. “The class aids in meditation and general well-being.”

“Everyone is welcome at the JCC,” the representative added. “Please call the main office at 724-2417 Monday through Friday between the hours of 9 am-5 pm for more information.”

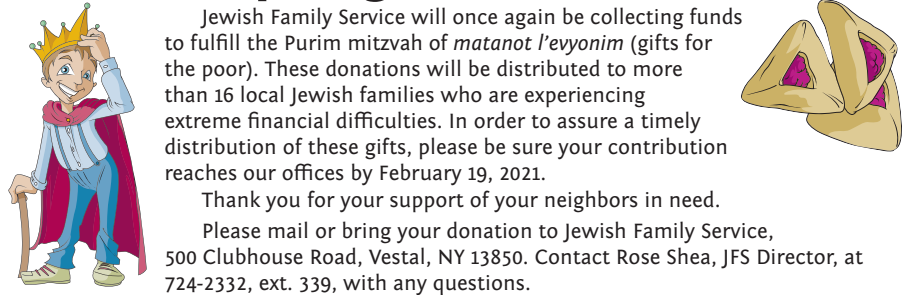
 This issue’s “Jewish Resources to occupy your family during social distancing” can be found on **The Reporter’s website**. Visit www.thereporter.org, click on Features and then Miscellaneous Feature to find out what’s happening online.



JFS Accepting Purim Donations

Jewish Family Service will once again be collecting funds to fulfill the Purim mitzvah of *matanot l’evyonim* (gifts for the poor). These donations will be distributed to more than 16 local Jewish families who are experiencing extreme financial difficulties. In order to assure a timely distribution of these gifts, please be sure your contribution reaches our offices by February 19, 2021.

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



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Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton



On the Jewish food scene Chocolate for Purim

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

My father, who was so non-observant that he never went to High Holiday services, would declare his Jewishness on Valentine's Day – saying that because it was not a Jewish holiday, he wasn't going to buy anyone a present. Some folks consider the day a secular holiday, although their rabbis have been known to frown on that. For example, decades ago, when the Sisterhood of the former Temple Beth-El of Endicott was planning a Valentine's event, the Orthodox rabbi, who was spiritual leader at the time, was horrified.

So, when I received information about Divine Chocolate that was aimed at Valentine's Day, I knew that if I wanted a sample, I needed to find another angle. First, though, I e-mailed to ask if the chocolate is kosher. The answer? In

addition to being the only Fairtrade chocolate company in the world co-owned by cocoa farmers, it is indeed kosher with a Triangle K certification appearing on all its packages.

The PR person was happy to send me some samples and I was even happier to receive them. What came were two packages: one of milk chocolate hearts (dairy) and the other of dark chocolate hearts (vegan). In the opinion of both myself and *The Reporter* bookkeeper (who was in the office when I stopped in to pick up the chocolate), they were absolutely delicious. The milk chocolate is smooth and melts in your mouth. The dark chocolate is satisfying and a great way to scratch your chocolate itch with a much lower sugar intake.

Then I thought, how can we share this chocolate without celebrating a non-Jewish holiday? "Of course," I said to myself, "Purim comes at the end of February this year." Now I know that we give gifts of food for the holiday, but, since we are supposed to feast on the day, what better way to conclude a meal than with chocolate? The hearts are also perfect for *shalach manot* packages, whether you want to put in a few pieces (the hearts are individually wrapped) or a whole 2.8 ounce box. Or if you're just looking for an excuse to eat chocolate, you can buy some for yourself. Either way, Divine Chocolate lives up to its name.

For more information about Divine Chocolate, visit its website at <https://shop.divinechocolateusa.com/>.

BD Synagogue and Sisterhood to hold Purim Zoom party

Beth David Synagogue and its Sisterhood will host a Purim Zoom party on Wednesday, February 24, at 7 pm. Since the synagogue does not anticipate being able to hold in-person Purim celebrations this year, it will hold this celebratory event 24 hours before the first megillah reading.

"In keeping with the Purim tradition of poking fun at just about anything through parodies of well-known stories or songs, we hope to share a selection of items, which were found on the Internet," said organizers of the event. "While not all the selections will directly relate to Purim, all will have a Jewish slant and be just plain fun."

Organizers also noted that they hoped to include a short program prepared especially for the party by students of Hillel Academy under the direction of Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu. There will be a short Sisterhood business meeting before the virtual party begins.

"Purim is a joyous holiday, despite the Fast of Esther the day before Purim which reminds us of the seriousness of Haman's wicked plot to exterminate the Jews," organizers added. "For centuries, after hearing the reading of the megillah and learning of Haman's downfall, Jews dressed in costumes, enjoyed a festive meal, drank alcohol, ate hamantashen and often enjoyed humorous and often satirical skits known as Purim spiels. We look forward to

seeing you and wish you all 'a freylachen Purim.'"

The link to the Purim Zoom party will be e-mailed to those who receive e-mails from either Beth David Synagogue or Beth David Sisterhood. Anyone who does not

receive those e-mails and wants to receive a link should contact Rabbi Zev Silber at rabbisilber@stny.rr.com, or Beth David Synagogue at bethdavid@stny.rr.com, and request to be placed on either mailing list.



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For more information, call 607-221-1225 or e-mail kristyphotography@gmail.com. You can also see a portfolio and more information at www.kristysphoto.com.

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Specialty: Residential real estate, new construction, relocation specialist, land
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Office: 607-217-5673
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Whatever your real estate needs, Susan "Sue" Stephens can assist you. Sue, Licensed Associate Real Estate Broker, ABR®, SRES®, GRI, PSA, is a Relocation Specialist, Multi-Million Dollar Producer and Award Winning Agent with Warren Real Estate. She provides full-time real estate services for buyers and sellers at all price levels, and has the regional knowledge and proven track record necessary to successfully help you buy or sell a home or land.

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Capitol. . . . Continued from page 2

fair and democratic election. Incited by repeated lies and inflammatory rhetoric promulgated by elected politicians right-wing extremists, antisemites and white supremacists sought to prevent the legitimate and peaceful transfer of power. Witnessing these images of open insurrection and violence demand holding the perpetrators accountable for their actions. Silence is acquiescence.

Truth

"The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies, neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth." (Zechariah 3:13)

The individuals who are responsible for spreading untruths must be named and called to account. We have suffered through four years of political and social division provoked by irresponsible and egotistical leaders. Our new administration deserves the support of our nation. Healing requires justice, accountability and truth, which will open a path forward.

We as members of the Binghamton Jewish community recognize our responsibility to move always with the impulse to justice, accountability and truth. Only by reiterating and living these values can our nation begin healing. Then can we move on with our common pursuit of a more perfect union.

In the words of Amanda Gorman, the National Youth Poet Laureate: "being American is more than a pride we inherit, / it's the past we step into / and how we repair it. / We've seen a force that would shatter our nation / rather than share it."

Arieh Ullmann and Brendan Byrnes

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Weekly Parasha

Mishpatim, Exodus 21:1-24:18

Outlining the rules of society

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR, THE REPORTER GROUP

Parashat Mishpatim offers an interesting list of laws that the Israelites were now required to obey. As former slaves looking to form a new society, they needed laws and rules to define their relationship to each other. Rather than being subject to the whims of the Egyptians who ruled them, they now learn to take responsibility for their actions as defined by the laws God gave to Moses. In contemporary times, many of these rulings would be considered secular, rather than religious, law, but the Torah makes no distinction between the two. Some particularly interesting laws are considered below.

- ◆ Taking action to prevent injury: There are several examples of rules that speak to this. For example, if your ox injures someone and it's the first time it's happened, you aren't punished. However, if the ox is known to have injured people, then you are considered responsible because you knew the ox is dangerous. It's up to you to prevent injury. A second rule concerns a pit or hole, even if it is on your private property. If you dig a pit and don't cover it and someone is injured, you are liable for the monetary loss the person suffers due to that injury.
- ◆ Manslaughter: In a culture that allowed for personal re-

venge, the Torah offers protection to those who accidentally injure or kill someone. What is particularly striking is that the text acknowledges that a person most likely won't be safe if he/she remains in their community. The text notes that God will appoint a place where that person can flee to and be safe. The complete rules of sanctuary cities are outlined elsewhere, but the idea is clearly presented here.

◆ Dealing fairly even with enemies: The text demands that even if someone is our enemy, we still have the responsibility to treat them fairly. That means returning their animal to

See "Rules" 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 February. There are also new Zoom links for Torah study and "Havdalah with a Bonus."

Friday, February 12: 7:30 pm, Reproductive Rights Shabbat services with Rabbi Goldman-Wartell and Jason Flatt on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81957095574?pwd=SGRTU21rZFMzMl2Mzk1dn-cyTlFuUT09>, meeting ID: 819 5709 5574, passcode: 097653.

Saturday, February 13: 9 am, Shabbat school; 9:15 am, Torah study; and 7:30 pm, "Havdalah with a Bonus" with Rabbi Rachel Esserman at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89741791260?pwd=MzZlN0trQWhycGFZdzlo-czExUkhXdz09>.

Thursday, February 25: 7 pm, Purim spiel "Pandemic in Persia!" Temples Concord and Israel are joining together to celebrate Purim.

Friday, February 26: 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with a guest rabbi and Jason Flatt on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81957095574?pwd=SGRTU21rZFMzMl2Mzk1dn-cyTlFuUT09>, meeting ID: 819 5709 5574, passcode 097653.

Saturday, February 27: 9 am Shabbat school; 9:30 am-12:30 pm, "Misrashin' the Megillah"; Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell will teach "The Upside-Down World of the Megillah" at 9:30 am on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88298087579>; and at 7 pm, "Havdalah with a Bonus" on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89741791260?pwd=MzZlN0trQWhycGFZdzlo-czExUkhXdz09>.

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.

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
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 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.

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.

Friday, February 12, light candles before..... 5:14 pm
 Saturday, February 13, Shabbat ends 6:16 pm
 Friday, February 19, light candles before..... 5:23 pm
 Saturday, February 20, Shabbat ends 6:25 pm
 Friday, February 26, light candles before..... 5:32 pm
 Saturday, February 27, Shabbat ends 6:34 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; Satt., 9:30 am
 On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom.
 On Saturday, February 13, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is 21:1-24:18 and the haftarah is II Kings 12:1-17. At 6:15 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, February 14, at 10:30 am, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study via Zoom.

The temple office will be closed Monday, February 15, for Presidents Day.

There will be a Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday, February 16, at 7 pm.

A Sisterhood "Chair Yoga" event will be held on Thursday, February 18, at 3 pm, on Zoom. (For more information, see the article on page 3.)

On Saturday, February 20, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Exodus 25:1-27:19 and the haftarah is 1 Samuel 15:2-34. At 6:20 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, February 21, at 10:30 am, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study via Zoom.

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.

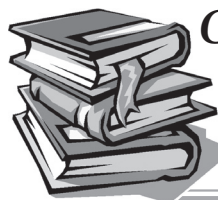
Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

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 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.

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.



Off the Shelf

Nils Shapiro returns

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

While I read a few classic mysteries in college (the works of Dashiell Hammett and Dorothy L. Sayers, for example), I didn't follow any contemporary series. That changed after reading Stuart Kaminsky's "Murder on the Yellow Brick Road," which arrived as a bonus book from a mail-order book club to which I subscribed. The series featured Toby Peters, a wise-cracking detective who had several interesting sidekicks. The story took place during the filming of "The Wizard of Oz" and each work in the series featured a different real life actor. Soon I was not only hooked on Toby Peters, but the rest of Kaminsky's series and far too many others featuring wise-cracking detectives. My interest wasn't so much the mystery – although I enjoy a good whodunit – as it was the main character.

All this is a long way to say that I was really happy to receive "Dead West" by Matt Goldman (Forge), which features wise-cracking Nils Shapiro. Nils is a great character: he's got a big mouth, is willing to go the extra step

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them, rather than leaving it wandering. The text then asks even more of us: if our enemy's animal is struggling, we are required to help our enemy raise it from its burden. That not only means helping the animal, but working with someone whom we would normally prefer to ignore.

◆ The stranger: Twice in this portion we are told not to mistreat the stranger because we were once strangers in Egypt. Strangers are usually treated with suspicion: Can they be trusted? Will they know or follow our customs? We may be tempted to mistreat those we don't trust, but we are forbidden to do so.

Of course, there are parts of this portion that are troubling for those of us living in contemporary times – for example, that slavery is treated as a normal and acceptable part of society. However, I prefer to focus on its more positive aspects. We are religiously required to take responsibility for our actions – to think about how what we do affects others. We are required to treat others well – whether we like or dislike them, or whether they are family, a close friend or a total stranger. If we follow those laws in our religious and secular lives, we can create a better and more just world.

to solve a case and is extremely loyal to his friends. He's also Jewish, which is why I can ask for a review copy. However, if you're looking for Jewish content in the plot, there really isn't any. But, while with other novels that might be a problem, I don't care when it comes to Nils.

Nils' life has changed since the last book in the series: he is now engaged to be married and has a baby daughter with his ex-wife. (That may sound confusing, but Goldman offers enough examples that those who haven't read the previous books can still enjoy this one.) That means Nils discovers he has more to live for than just work, which also means that he has something precious to lose. That explains why

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Netanyahu: Israeli COVID-19 cure "could change the fate of humanity"

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met on Feb. 8 at his office in Jerusalem with the head of the research project at the Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center (Ichilov Hospital), where an anti-coronavirus drug is being developed and has shown promising results. "If this succeeds, it will be huge, simply huge," Netanyahu said to Professor Nadir Arber about the new drug, called EXO-CD24, according to the Prime Minister's Office. "This is of global significance. ... This little thing could change the fate of humanity." Arber said that the project involved out-of-the-box thinking, and explained that the drug could be produced quickly and efficiently. The week of Feb. 4, Ichilov researchers announced that 29 out of 30 patients with moderate-to-severe cases of COVID-19 who were administered EXO-CD24 experienced a marked recovery in just two days, and were released from the hospital three to five days later. The remaining patient also recovered, but in a longer time span. The researchers explained that the drug works by fighting the cytokine storm, a potentially life-threatening systemic inflammatory syndrome that is believed to be responsible for many coronavirus deaths. "The medicine is administered through inhalation, once a day, in a procedure that takes only a few minutes, for five days," said Arber.

he takes an easy, lucrative job traveling to Hollywood to answer a question when a quick Internet search would serve. Well, money is partly the reason: Nils travels with his friend Jameson White, who has been having difficulty coping with serious job issues. Nils hopes the trip will be good for him.

Of course, the simple case gets complicated once Nils decides someone has been murdered, even though he's the only person to believe that. But since the autopsy came back accidental death, he decides not to get involved and returns to Minneapolis to be with his family. Unfortunately after he's home, another murder takes place and Nils feels the need to return to Hollywood to unravel what happened.

The best parts of "Dead West" are Nils' comments on the Hollywood types he encounters. They not only seem to speak a completely different language, but look at life through a different lens – one that questions whether everything that occurs would make a great movie or TV show. The ending of the novel was more serious than I expected, but it made sense in context of what was occurring in Nils' life. It also left me wondering if there are going to be more books in the series, although it's my hope this is not the last we see of Nils.

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PASSOVER 2021 Greetings

March 26 (Deadline: March 18) Personal Greetings and Health Care Greetings
Passover is traditionally a time for sharing with family, friends and strangers. While your seder table may not be large enough to fit all these people, you can share the warmth of this holiday with the entire local Jewish community by placing a Passover greeting in *The Reporter*. You may choose from the designs, messages and sizes shown here - more are available. You may also choose your own message, as long as it fits into the space of the greeting you select. (Custom designs available upon request.) The price of the small greeting is \$20 (styles C & D), the medium one is \$38 (styles A & B), and the next sizes are not shown. The next actual size is 3.22" x 2.958" and is \$57. The largest size is 3.22" x 3.95" and is \$76. To ensure that your greeting is published, simply fill out the form below and choose a design that you would like to accompany your greeting, or contact Kathy Brown at 724-2360, ext. 244 or advertising@thereporter.org. Checks can be made payable to *The Reporter* and sent to: *The Reporter*, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

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Your Name(s)

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