

# THE REPORTER

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BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

# Happy Chanukah



## Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

## With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

My grandparent's home on Wedgewood Terrace in DeWitt, NY, was the center of our large Jewish family. With three first cousins, multiple second cousins, scores of aunts and uncles, and one neighborhood family that we adopted as our own, my sisters and I never ran out of playmates. For years, it was the place for Sunday night dinners. (Aunt Mollie hosted Shabbat dinners, but that is a discussion for another time.)

It was not unusual to have 15 to 20 people gathered around the kitchen for pizza or spaghetti. The children would run around outdoors for hours or spread across the living room floor for lengthy card games. Cousin

Dawn and my sister Daelah could not be beat at jacks. When Hanukkah came, there were always fresh latkes with applesauce, and plenty of M&Ms to "handel" over a game of dreidel. Thanksgiving meals and Passover seders were held in the basement because the extended family numbered in the 20s or 30s.

I did not know it then, but those gatherings were greatly informative. We learned socialization skills and the importance of family. We learned to clean up after ourselves and to share with one another. We learned Jewish rituals and that sharing a laugh with your loved ones is healing. The list goes on.

I truly miss those days. Grandma and Grandpa's house was full of joy and light. We always felt loved. It's a cliché, but life really was simpler then. There were no cell phones or computers to distract our attention, and the television had four channels. We had to make our own fun and we did.

As we start the celebrations of Thanksgiving and Hanukkah, my wish for all of you is to experience joy. I hope you are all able to wrap yourselves in the light of the season. Take the time to relish in God's simple blessings and remember to tell your loved ones how much you care. *Chag sameach.*

## American Jewish identity, three years after the Tree of Life shooting

By Aidan Segal

(JNS) – Three years ago today, we awoke to a world of our ancestors. In the breadth of Jewish history, the names Odessa, Warsaw, Kishinev, Kiev and Hebron represent the unspeakable barbarism many thought to have been resigned to a disconnected past or a faraway land. On a rainy Shabbat morning, however, the neighborhood of Squirrel Hill found itself thrust alongside those cursed names. The Tree of Life\*Or L'Simcha Synagogue – my synagogue – had been massacred; 11 of my fellow congregants murdered; and yet another generation of Jews became scarred with the reappearance of the undying hatred that has so viciously captured the lives of millions.

Three years ago today, we awoke to a world too late to turn back. Since the shooting in October 2018, Jews watched in horror six months later at the news of another synagogue shooting in Poway, CA, as well as one at a kosher supermarket in Jersey City, NJ. Orthodox Jews have been regularly assaulted in broad daylight in New York, Los Angeles, France and Germany have seen outbreaks of antisemitic violence. The Internet mainstreamed antisemitic conspiracy theories and blood libels. Israelis braved thousands of rockets from genocidal maniacs while activists across the world took to the streets demanding the Jewish

people be annihilated from the river to the sea. Elected officials and so-called social justice warriors hailed as America's future either gave it their sinister endorsement or their unforgivable silence.

We study pivotal moments like these in our people's history and ask ourselves what the Jews did on the eve of catastrophe. Perhaps because Jews have enjoyed unprecedented freedom in the United States, we have foolishly convinced ourselves that such a catastrophe couldn't possibly happen here. What happened at Tree of Life proved us terribly wrong. And now, American Jews are at a crossroads, confronting the very question fearful faces of generations past asked around dinner tables and synagogues: What do we do?

Essentially powerless, our ancestors did not have the privilege of achieving any realistic solution prior to Israel's founding. They packed what they could, moved elsewhere and carried with them the seeds of the antisemitism they hoped to be leaving behind. As for our generation, we're in a unique position where we can do something about it – and we aren't doing nearly enough.

In the aftermath of the shooting, the same outpour of lovingkindness the Tree of Life congregation welcomed my family upon joining enriched our neighbors near and

far. It's because our humanity is the very lifeblood of our people. God instructs the Jews to be "a light unto the nations" (Isaiah 42:6), but also to "fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives and your homes" (Nehemiah 4:14).

That lovingkindness exuded by Jewish leadership has since devolved into a dangerous passivity. Establishment Jewish leaders have failed to recognize and effectively respond to the broad range of antisemitism seen in government, college campuses and social media. Tree of Life was indeed a right-wing attack in the spirit of Nazism, and virtually every facet of American public and private life has been exhausted in extinguishing that strain of hate. But our leaders, to quote Charles Jacobs and Avi Goldwasser, have "ignored the changed battlefield for as long as they could. They deliberately, out of political consideration, minimized the assaults coming from radical progressives and Islamists."

Consider Pittsburgh's recent Eradicate Hate Global Summit inspired by the Tree of Life shooting. In a forum supposedly dedicated to the "united and unrelenting fight against the spread of hate," how could Jewish leaders allow antisemites a platform? How could Jewish leaders claim **See "Life" on page 14**

## In My Own Words

## Guilt by association

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

First, let's be clear: Jeffrey Epstein was a pedophile and a loathsome excuse for a human being. Why do I feel the need to say that before writing about a business associate of his? Because it seems like we are now condemning people as guilty by association.

The American CEO of Barclays Jes Staley resigned recently after his business connections to Epstein were being probed and, since he plans to fight any charges, he felt that staying would affect his ability to do his job. (Sorry, that's about as convincing to me as a belief in the tooth fairy. The bank wanted him to leave to avoid bad publicity. And some of the financial arrangements suggest that Staley received a very good deal in return.)

From what I've read, Staley is not being accused of taking part in Epstein's sexual activities or even knowing about them. It seems the problem has more to do with his not completely disavowing his connection to Epstein when he was accused of sex crimes. Staley is not the only one who has been criticized for not immediately turning away from Epstein and that's what interests me. People who had no connection to or knowledge of Epstein's crimes are being condemned because they supported a friend.

Most of us will be lucky enough to never be friends

with someone like Epstein. But we may have friends whose behavior will be questioned at some point in their lives. So, I ask myself, "What would I do for a friend if they were accused of something unethical or illegal?" I'm not talking about someone I barely know: I'm talking about the people whom I've known for decades and who have supported me, even when they felt I was making the wrong decision. They may have challenged me about my choices, but they never turned their back on me. How can I reject them if I disapprove of their thoughts or actions? Even if they were convicted of a crime, I would still be their friend because I can't imagine my life without them.

This raises another question: Would I reveal information about them if it would help prosecutors convict them? If they had committed a heinous crime, I hope I would be honest and testify against them. Please note, I mean a heinous crime, not some minor infraction. No one is perfect and if anyone gets through life without hurting another person, they should consider themselves blessed. Maybe I feel the way I do because I can't imagine my friends doing something so awful that I would regret having known them. I might regret their actions and wish they hadn't

taken them. I might even condemn their actions, but I don't think I could condemn their very being, nor could I ignore all the good they have done in their lives.

I know this is not currently a popular position. We are supposed to reject people who aren't perfect or say something that is not politically correct. We're supposed to boycott those who have a different opinion and reject any association with them. Yes, I can understand people feeling this way about someone like Epstein, but where do we draw the line, especially as we move from actions to thoughts? Should we separate ourselves from people who think differently than us? Do we condemn someone before they've been proven guilty, which also means they might not have committed the crime? Do we differentiate between diverse types of behavior – between minor mishaps and misunderstandings, and those that qualify as a crime?

There is a slippery slope here, one that includes turning "incorrect thought" into a crime punishable by abandonment. And who makes these decisions? Public opinion has been wrong about so many things, so we need to think for ourselves about what loyalty means and how we should, and can, still interact with those whose ideas and actions differ from our own.



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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

# JCC and Federation to host Hanukkah event on Nov. 30

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Community Center and the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will host a community Hanukkah celebration on Tuesday, November 30, from 5:15-5:45 pm, in the JCC parking lot. (The snow date is Thursday, December 2.) There is no cost to attend the outdoor event; the community is invited to attend. Representatives from community organizations are invited to participate. The event will include an outdoor torch lighting ceremony, a community Hanukkah video and kosher pre-packaged doughnuts.

"Even though our outdoor event is only half an hour, it will be packed with community spirit, including our annual

community Hanukkah video, which will include kids from all of the temples, Hillel and the JCC," said Sheryl Brumer, executive director of the JCC. "It's a little reminder that even during the darkest of times, a little light goes a long way, but we can't do it alone, so please come out and help us light the lights!"

"We're pleased to be partnering with the JCC to make this event happen," said Shelley Hubal, Federation executive director. "Coming together is a wonderful way to increase the holiday spirit and add light to the dark days of December. Last year's parking lot Hanukkah celebration was joyous. We look forward to seeing you there."

# Hillel Academy to hold "Hanukkah-Shabbat in a Bag" fund-raiser

Hillel Academy will hold its first ever "Hanukkah-Shabbat in a Bag" fund-raiser. The bag will include four *sufganiyot* (doughnuts), five latkes, one challah and apple sauce for dipping. All items will be kosher and prepared in the Temple Israel kitchen under the supervision of Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu. The cost is \$25 per bag.

The deadline to order is Tuesday, November 30. The bags can be picked up at Hillel Academy, 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, on Friday, December 3, from 11 am-2 pm. Orders may be made by e-mailing [frontoffice@hillelacademyofbc.org](mailto:frontoffice@hillelacademyofbc.org) or calling the main number at 723-7461.

# Giving Tuesday matching grant of \$500 for *The Reporter*

By Reporter staff

*The Reporter* announced that it has received its second \$500 matching grant for Giving Tuesday. The grant is again courtesy of the David and Virginia Eisenberg Fund. Donations will be accepted now through Giving Tuesday, November 30. Donations may be made several ways:

- ◆ Give online through The Reporter Group website, [www.thereportergroup.org](http://www.thereportergroup.org).

- ◆ Through Giving Tuesday e-mails that will be sent by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton. Anyone who does not receive Federation e-mails, but would like to be on the list, should e-mail [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org) with "Federation e-mail list" in the subject line.

- ◆ Mail donations to The Reporter, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850 with "matching grant" in the check's subject line.

"We are thrilled to again receive this matching grant," said Rabbi Rachel Esserman, executive editor of The Reporter Group. "If you are thinking about making a donation to the paper, this is the perfect time to do it. Every penny counts in this economic climate. So many Jewish newspapers are either going under or turning into online see "Grant" on page 8

## Save the date

# Federation to host virtual tour of Auschwitz on January 23

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will host a live virtual tour of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp on Sunday, January 23, at 9:30 am. The program is offered in partnership with the Center for Holocaust Education of the East Valley Jewish Community Center, AZ. The tour of the death camp will include historical footage, aerial photographs, drone videos and testimonies of survivors.

"We want everyone to save the date for this meaningful



Part of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp. (Photo courtesy of the Center for Holocaust Education)

event," said Shelley Hubal. "This January marks the 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of the camp. Many of us will never have the opportunity to travel to Europe to visit in person and this tour is the next best way to understand the atrocities of that time."

There is no cost for the tour due to a generous grant from the Victor and Esther Rozen Foundation. More detailed information will appear in future issues of *The Reporter*.

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Kimberly Shem-Tov on the death of her father, John Vassil

## DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
December 3-16.....	November 22*
December 17-30.....	December 8
Dec. 31, 2021-Jan. 13, 2022 ..	December 22
January 14-January 27 .....	January 5

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

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Off the Shelf

## Just after the war

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

### A novel for adults

Why would two Jews who escaped from Germany before the World War II want to return? That question underlies Ellen Feldman's excellent "The Lost and the Living" (St. Martin's Griffin). The answer for David Mosbach is simple: he joined the U.S. Army to fight against the Nazis. His sister, Millie, the novel's main character, volunteers to return to Berlin to help the army with its denazification process, but finds it difficult to separate her personal feelings from her work.

Even a relationship with one of her co-workers, a man who also lost relatives during the war, does little to help her escape the past: although she experiences pleasure, she doesn't feel close to him, perhaps because "with his eighteen relatives, several million strangers, and three others whom she tried not to think about, the bed had been too crowded for intimacy." What puzzles her is how her boss, Major Harry Sutton, can feel sympathy for the Germans; he strives to be objective, something she finds practically impossible. In fact, so much of life in post-war Germany baffles her, not the least being the American soldiers with German girlfriends. How can they be friends with someone who was just their enemy? How can they forgive or forget what the Germans did during the war? Hidden under these feelings is the secret of how she and David were able to escape, when her parents and younger

sister were not. But until Millie is willing to face her past, she will never find peace.

"The Lost and the Living" quickly got under my skin: at first, what drove my interest was wondering what happened to Millie's parents and sister. But the novel has far more depth than that suggests; for example, the author does a wonderful job not only showing what occurred in Germany before the war, but what life was like for the younger Millie in the U.S., especially the casual antisemitism she faced. What also struck me was the reason one character gives for remaining Jewish: "As long as it's a crime or a shame or even a disadvantage to be a Jew, I'll be one." However, the novel's main focus is on guilt and forgiveness in their many forms. This makes "The Lost and the Living" an excellent choice for book clubs.

### A novel for young adults

Two things drive Eva Gerst: one is to protect her friend, Brigit Heidelmann, whose experiences in the war have made her behavior so unpredictable that Eva fears she'll be placed in a sanitarium. The other is to find her father – not so they can be reunited, but so she can kill him before he offers dangerous medical knowledge to the Americans or the Soviets. These are the reasons Eva changed her name and lied in order to immigrate from Germany to the United States, where she believes her father is now living. In "Bluebird" by

Sharon Cameron (Scholastic Press), Eva discovers accomplishing those tasks may not be as easy as she hoped.

Not everyone in the U.S. is accepting of Germans after the war, but those helping Eva and Brigit show the two young women far more kindness than Eva expects. In fact, she is constantly surprised by their efforts. However, Eva worries she won't be able to escape her past, a past that is revealed in flashbacks showing what occurred during and after the war. These include meetings with a man who expects Eva to find her father so that the Americans can make use of the research he did for Project Bluebird, something Eva considers so dangerous, she is willing to kill to prevent it from falling into any government's hands.

This summary doesn't do justice to the complex plot, which is filled with fascinating twists and turns. Although this is a young adult novel, it doesn't need to be limited to that audience. This impressive work is perfect for book clubs, although Jewish clubs should note that the main character is not Jewish. However, seeing the war and its aftermath through her eyes makes for a very interesting and absorbing reading.

### A novel for middle grades

The main characters in Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch's "Traitors Among Us" (Scholastic Press) are also not Jewish, although their family would be considered Righteous Gentiles for helping Jews escape the Nazis.

The two narrators – Krystia (16) and Maria (14) – are sisters who were separated when Maria volunteered for German war work in order to save her Jewish friend, Nathan. That left Krystia in Ukraine with only their mother, who was later killed for hiding Jews in their home. Now the two girls are in a displaced persons camp in the American zone of Germany and plan to emigrate to the U.S. to live with a relative they've never met.

However, those plans go awry when another girl accuses the sisters of having collaborated with the Nazis. They are arrested by the Soviets and taken to a prison where they are interrogated. The sisters despised the Nazis, although Krystia wonders if she would have been able to resist their propaganda if she'd been born in Germany. What both sisters know is that Soviets want to crush any resistance to their rule of Ukraine, which means learning about those who fought against the Nazis. Will the girls break during their interrogations or will they keep protecting those fighting for their country?

"Traitors Among Us" is exciting and easy to read. The moral decisions the girls face are interesting enough that adults can also enjoy the book. This excellent novel is a great choice for parent/child discussion groups. My one quibble – that the ending seemed unrealistic – was answered in the author's note, which showed that her fiction is based on an almost unbelievable real-life incident.



Off the Shelf

## Black and a slave, white and a Jew

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

One fascinating section of Laura Arnold Leibman's "The Art of the Jewish Family: A History of Women in Early New York in Five Objects" discussed an ivory miniature portrait, and the life, of Sarah Brandon Moses. (See *The Reporter's* review of the book at [www.thereporter.org/streams/executive-editor/executive-editor-stream/off-the-shelf-exploring-history-through-objects-by-rabbi-rachel-esserman](http://www.thereporter.org/streams/executive-editor/executive-editor-stream/off-the-shelf-exploring-history-through-objects-by-rabbi-rachel-esserman).) The parents of Moses and her brother, Isaac Brandon, were never married: their mother was a slave of African descent and their father a Sephardic Jew. In the early part of their lives, the two children were Christian and slaves. The story of how they converted to Judaism and were later legally labeled as white is the subject of Leibman's excellent history "Once We Were Slaves: The Extraordinary Journey of a Multiracial Jewish Family" (Oxford University Press).

Moses and Brandon were born (1798 and 1792 respectively) in Barbados, an island that included a Jewish population made up mostly of Jews who'd escaped from Portugal and the Inquisition. Many of these Sephardic Jews emigrated to the West Indies to take part in the sugar trade. It wasn't long, however, before British planters sought to limit their success: they passed legislation limiting the number of slaves Jews could own. Since it was impossible at that time to run a sugar plantation without slaves, most Jews became merchants or shopkeepers. That doesn't mean they didn't own slaves: the cultural norms of the time took slavery as a given.

Although their father Abraham Rodrigues Brandon never married their mother (Sarah) Esther Lopez Gill, he didn't abandon his children. (Leibman notes that Gill is referred to in records as both Sarah

and Esther; to avoid confusing her with her daughter, she placed her first name in parentheses.) The first step Brandon took was to have his children freed from slavery. That was a complex process because he didn't own them, and their owner, Hannah Esther Lopez, was hindered by the fact that women were unable to legally free a slave without the aid of a man. To get around this fact, Lopez indentured the children to their father, which meant that if she died before they could be freed, they would belong to their father. After some missteps, Sarah and Isaac were finally freed in May 1801. It's important to note that Sarah's papers included a phrase noting that any children she had would also be free, something not to be taken for granted.

Due to prejudice in the Jewish community of Barbados, Sarah and Isaac traveled to Suriname in 1811 for their conversion.

The divide in the community was not only based on race: Jews of Portuguese descent held a higher place in society. In order to make certain that Sarah would be able to take her place in society, she was sent to London after her conversion to attend an exclusive Jewish school. As Leibman notes, "For a former slave and convert like Sarah Rodrigues Brandon, this education would have been almost as crucial to becoming a full member of the Jewish community as her conversion and early training in Suriname. London was the perfect place for Sarah to learn how to become part of upper-class Jewish society. An upscale education would place Sarah among the Jewish peers she would later be able to rely on to smooth her way in the Americas."

In 1817, Sarah married Joshua Moses in England and soon after the two moved. See "Black" on page 6



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# TE to host Hanukkah Film Festival

Temple Concord will partner with Menemsha Films and Chai Flicks to offer its congregation, along with the general Jewish community and friends, a different way to celebrate Hanukkah this year: a film festival. New films will be released for viewing each night of Hanukkah, which begins the night of November 28. The films will be available for viewing until December 12.

"This eight-night, 11-film package is normally \$48, but, if you enter the discount code of TCBING at checkout, your cost will be just \$36 and half of your payment will be donated to Temple Concord," said organizers of the event. "Enjoy the fun, invite others to join you to watch the films and talk with others about the films. Consider signing up for the festival for you and your

family. Give the festival as a gift to family and friends."

To register, visit [www.menemshafilms.com/hanukkahff2021](http://www.menemshafilms.com/hanukkahff2021) and enter discount code TCBING.

◆ Night one: Three films will be shown. "The Broken Candle" tells the story of Nira, a broken Hanukkah candle who becomes the *shamash* on the last night of Hanukkah. In "Unraveling," filmmaker Stacey Ravel Abarbanel delves into the memory, history and contemporary life in Columbus, NM, asking if Pancho Villa tried to kill her grandfather in the 1916 raid during the Mexican Revolution. "Xueta Island" explores the legacy of the Chuetas on Majorca, believed to be descendants of the island's Inquisition-era Jewish population.



Poster for the Hanukkah Film Festival (Photo courtesy of Menemsha Films and Chai Films)

◆ Night two: "Kiss Me Kosher" has been called "a subversive love story between clashing cultures and families when two generations of Israeli women fall for a German woman and a Palestinian man."

◆ Night three: Two films are featured. "The Tattooed Torah" tells the story of how a Torah from Czechoslovakia came to America. The film is narrated by Ed Asner and illustrated by Martin Lemelman, who spoke at Temple Concord twice about his graphic novels. "Mish Mish" explores the Egyptian animated films of the Frenkel brothers. Mish-Mish Effendi was called the Mickey Mouse of the entire region, and the film gives a glimpse into an Arab-Jewish golden age from the past.

See "Film" on page 19

## Rabbinical student to serve as TBE Oneonta's spiritual leader

Third-year rabbinical school student Amelia Wolf is serving as the spiritual leader of Temple Beth El, Oneonta, this year. Wolf is taking part in the Gladstein Fellowship in Entrepreneurial Leadership, a joint project between Jewish Theological Seminary and United Synagogue of

Conservative Judaism.

"I couldn't be more excited to join Temple Beth El," Wolf said. "I'm looking forward to bringing the skills I've learned in rabbinical school into practice during my time as a Gladstein Fellow. The congregation is such a warm and welcoming place,

which I'm sure will become like a second home to me."

Wolf also serves as rabbinic intern at Conservative synagogue Adath Israel of Riverdale in the Bronx, where she lives, and is one of the founders of Minyan Atara, the only daytime egalitarian *minyan* in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. Prior to her enrollment at the Jewish Theological Seminary, she worked at Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action and at Sefaria as the development and communications associate. She holds a B.A. in anthropology from Reed College and grew up in Portland, OR.

"As a community representing a variety of Jewish experiences, we are thrilled to welcome Amelia to our community," said Stephanie Bauer, president of Temple Beth El. "While here, we are looking forward to her leading services, working with our inter-

faith families, helping to prepare our *b'nai mitzvah* students, and bringing her wisdom and knowledge to the members of the congregation. We are so honored and grateful that she chose to come to rural New York for her Gladstein Fellowship experience."

The Gladstein Fellowship is designed to provide "an intensive experience" in practical rabbinics and community development for students studying for the rabbinate at JTS. "The fellowship inspires entrepreneurial leadership in its rabbinic fellows, teaching them to listen critically, think boldly, craft a vision, overcome obstacles, and lead a community in achieving its goals," according to JTS. "Students in the fellowship reside in one of two teaching congregations and serve as rabbinic leaders in a community poised to grow into its full potential."

### Federation Campaign spotlight

## Spotlight on JFNA partners

The last issue of The Reporter featured an article about the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's allocation to the Jewish Federations of North America. Below is a look at how two of the programs offered by its partners help Jews in different parts of the globe.

#### The Jewish Agency for Israel

Moving to a new country is never easy, even if the move represents the fulfillment of a lifelong dream, as it does for many Ethiopian immigrants. Despite their desire to live in the Holy Land, immigrants from Ethiopia face numerous challenges. Many individuals struggle with the basic norms of western society, are poorly educated and have very limited financial means.

In particular, many children of Ethiopian immigrants are disadvantaged as they arrive in Israel with educational delays in their development. Having to struggle to integrate into the mainstream education system poses an additional stress for the children and their families. Yesodot, which means foundations in Hebrew, enables

these children to bridge the academic, social and developmental gaps through targeted enrichment programs.

#### JDC (formerly the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee)

Eighty-one-year-old David Volgust lives alone in Tbilisi in the country of Georgia. Like the 1,000-plus other elderly Jews in the capital city, and the more than 400 across Georgia, he relies on JDC to survive. Having never married or had children, he lives off of his pension of just a few dollars a day, turning to JDC for food, medicine, winter relief and more. However, one of the most important things he receives from JDC is the help of his beloved homecare worker: "I've got a very nice, kind and honest homecare worker, and I couldn't manage without her." See "JFNA" on page 14



David Volgust turns to the JDC for food, medicine, winter relief and more. (Photo courtesy of the JDC)



Ethiopian children in Israel who take part in Yesodot enrichment programs. Names held on request. (Photo courtesy of the Jewish Agency for Israel)

### About the cover

This year's Chanukah cover was created by Julie Weber, production associate for The Reporter.

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**New in Books**

**New cookbook celebrates the rich and diverse cuisine of the Persian Jewish culture**

By The Trina Kaye Organization PR firm

*"Persian Delicacies: Jewish Foods for Special Occasions"* By Angela Cohan (Clyde Publishing Inc./September 2021)

Persian cuisine has long been called a major influence in food trends—the royal kitchens of ancient Persian empires were influential and famous for their cooking. Persia, now known as Iran, is considered geographically and historically significant since it connects the Middle East with the Far East, and contains influences from ancient Greece, Rome, and many other Asian and Mediterranean influences. Now a new cookbook celebrates the culinary culture of Persia. "Persian Delicacies: Jewish Foods for Special Occasions" by Angela Cohan celebrates the foods of her homeland along with traditions from her Persian Jewish heritage.

"I was inspired to compile the specialty recipes of my mother, my late grandmothers, other family members, and friends in this cookbook," Cohan explains. "This book is as much theirs as it is mine. It is a tribute to my heritage as a Persian Jewish woman, as well as an evolution of recipes since living and cooking in the United States for the past three decades."

Fruits, spices and herbs are used prominently in Persian cuisine. Cohan uses fresh and organic products in her recipes representing a fusion of traditional foods with a healthy, modern approach. Typical Iranian main dishes are combinations of rice, meat, vegetables and nuts. Although kabobs are always on the menu at Persian restaurants, they represent only a small sampling of the dishes Persians eat at home. Many of the recipes in the book can be prepared as vegetarian.

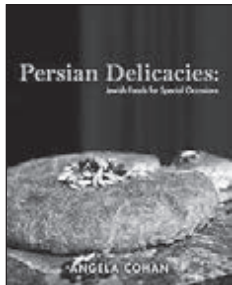
"To accommodate the different tastes and lifestyle choices of my readers, I present vegetarian and vegan alternatives to dishes that are traditionally cooked with meat. In addition, I offer many gluten-free and dairy-free options for readers who have food sensitivities or diet restrictions," says Cohan.

"Persian Delicacies" covers a full spectrum of recipes for any type of meal and occasion, including Avocado and Spinach Hummus; Pistachio Pesto; Aashé Anar (Pomegranate Soup); Latkas; Tahchin with Saffron, Barberries and Pistachios; Dolmeh (Stuffed Peppers); Paneer (Cheese); Joojeh Bademjan (Chicken with Eggplant); Chicken with Dried Apricots and Prunes; Ghormé Sabzi (Braised Beef with Herbs); Khoreshé Beh (Quince Stew); Salmon with Saffron Garnish; Baklava; Fig Cake; and Doogh (Yogurt Beverage).

"Recreating these dishes connects me to my roots and brings back the tastes and smells of home for me. I hope you enjoy this cookbook as much as I enjoyed creating it," says Cohan.



Angela Cohan (Photo from "Persian Delicacies")



The cover of "Persian Delicacies" (Photo from "Persian Delicacies")

**Gondi (Meatballs)**

Serves 8.

"Jewish Persian Americans serve Gondi (chickpea flour meatballs) on Friday nights for Shabbat dinner. Most of my family members eat Gondi as an appetizer by making a Gondi sandwich with lavash or pita bread, sweet basil, and radishes. Gondi can also be served as a soup," says Cohan.



Gondi (Photo from "Persian Delicacies")

- 1 medium onion
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled (optional)
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground turmeric
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- ¼ tsp. ground coriander
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 1 lb. ground chicken, preferably organic
- 1½ cups chickpea flour
- Soup ingredients:
- 6 cups chicken stock or vegetable stock (or broth)
- 2 tsp. salt

1. Place the onion and garlic in a food processor and process until smooth. Transfer to a bowl and stir in the oil, egg, salt, turmeric, cumin, coriander, and pepper.
2. Add the ground chicken and chickpea flour and stir gently.
3. In a large pot bring the stock to a simmer, then add salt and turmeric and bring to a boil.
4. Form the Gondi mixture into 3-inch balls and drop them into the broth.
5. Return to a boil, reduce the heat, cover the pot, and cook until the Gondi is tender, about 1 hour.

Serve with or without the broth. Serve warm.

**Olovieh Salad (Potato Salad) Serves 4**

This is a popular salad that can be served as an appetizer or as a sandwich. Some cooks add cooked chicken to their Olovieh salad. This is a vegetarian version. If you don't like to use mayonnaise, smashed avocado is a great alter-

native. Loaded with heart-healthy monounsaturated fatty acids and fiber, avocados have more potassium than bananas.

- 3 medium potatoes, peeled and cooked
- 2 eggs, hardboiled, room temperature
- 2 large pickles, chopped
- 6 oz. cooked or canned green peas
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 Tbsp. mayonnaise (or smashed avocado)



Olovieh salad (Photo from "Persian Delicacies")

- Cherry tomatoes and red radishes (optional, for garnish)
- 1. Once cooked, peel the potatoes and mash them in a bowl.
- 2. Peel the eggs and chop or smash them into 1-inch pieces. Add to the potatoes.
- 3. Add the pickles and the peas to the bowl.
- 4. Add the mayonnaise and mix the salad well. Top with tomatoes, sliced radishes, or pickles.

Serve with crackers, pita, or lavash bread.

Recipes and photos reprinted with permission from "Persian Delicacies: Jewish Foods for Special Occasions" by Angela Cohan, Clyde Publishing Inc./September 2021.

About the author: Angela Cohan moved from Tehran, Iran to southern California in 1979, where she continued her early education. She attended UCLA, where she studied psychology and achieved master's degrees in journalism and mass communications. Cohan formerly worked as editor for The Iranian Jewish Chronicle and is currently a contributing writer for Cultural Weekly. She is a member of PEN USA, an organization that defends and promotes freedom of expression domestically and internationally. She is a mentor at Young Story Tellers Foundation and a member of the National Honor Society. Her award-winning work has been featured in Wildbound PR, The Jewish Journal, Public Poetry Series, I'll Have Wednesday, FR&D and OntheBus literary journals. "Persian Delicacies: Foods for Special Occasions" is her first cookbook. Follow Cohan on Twitter; LinkedIn and Instagram @angelacohan; Facebook at Angela Cohan; YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7Pzic672Qc>; or her website, [angelacohan.com](http://angelacohan.com).

**Black.....Continued from page 4**

to New York City. In 1820, Isaac and their mother moved to Philadelphia. The family connections helped: Isaac married Joshua's sister, Lavinia, and also moved to New York City. It was there that the Rodrigues came to be classified as white. When the 1820 census was taken, those of mixed race could still be considered white. Leibman notes that, during this census, "Jews in the United States were described as white by census takers regardless of whether they were Sephardic or Askenazi, unless they had obvious African ancestry." There was no guarantee, though, that Sarah would be accepted as white. The census taker did label the complete household white except for one "free colored female." The result of this is that all the descendants of the family would be considered white in future censuses.

When Isaac applied for American citizenship, the question of his race was raised. By 1802, only "free white people" could become citizens. Leibman notes that there is no record of whether Isaac thought of himself as white or if he just wanted others to consider him so. Whatever his personal thoughts, one of his brothers-in-law, Moses L. Moses, swore about Isaac's good character and that he had fulfilled the residency requirements. His in-laws also helped him find acceptance in Shearith Israel, the synagogue to which the Moses family belonged. In their

records, there is no mention of his conversion to Judaism, something that was noted about Sarah when she and her husband joined the synagogue.

Leibman writes that the acceptance of Blacks and mixed race Jews was not universal. Many Jews owned slaves; others who freed their slaves still made them serve as indentured servants. Not everyone would accept members whose parents had not been married; that included a refusal to allow a Jewish marriage even after the non-Jewish partner converted. Shearith Israel seems more liberal than many others; Isaac found more acceptance there than the synagogue in Barbados to which he'd failed to obtain full membership.

This summary of "Once We Were Slaves" doesn't do justice to this complex and intriguing work. Readers may discover parts of American and Jewish history with which they were unfamiliar, including the 1741 slave rebellion in New York City and the backlash that followed; the 1819 yellow fever epidemic, during which large sections of the city were fenced off in order to prevent the spread of the disease; and the large number of children raised Jewish whose fathers were free men and whose mothers were slaves. Leibman's prose is dry; she is writing a scholarly work, rather than a popular history. The similarity in the names of the people she discusses makes it easy to confuse their relationships, though the family trees at the end of the work do help. That shouldn't deter readers interested in Jewish history in the Caribbean or 1800s America, though: they will want to add this engrossing work to their bookshelves.

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# On the Jewish food scene

## Latke toppings

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

The Hanukkah before the pandemic, I helped make latkes as part of my chaplaincy work. The staff helping me had never made latkes before and I usually find a way to get my latke-fix during the holiday without actually having to fry any of my own. To my surprise, they were wonderful! Maybe it was because we were eating them right after they left the pan. But what happened next surprised and shocked me.

First of all, you need to know that for most of my life, I took my latkes straight. That's right, no applesauce and no sour cream. I would eat applesauce separately, but never on

or mixed with a latke. However, a few years ago, I was in the mood to experiment and put sour cream on my latke. It was actually good! I now do a mix: I still take most of them straight, but I will put sour cream on a few.

We didn't have applesauce or sour cream when we made them at my chaplaincy work. That was fine with me. As I said above, they were really good and the person doing the frying made them big. Then one person requested a topping that blew my mind: they wanted ketchup to put on their latke. Horror! Desecration! Of course, I said yes, but it just felt so wrong.

Now, it's not that I'm against ketchup in general. Anyone who knows me well knows that I love ketchup. For a good portion of my life, the only time I used mustard was on a deli sandwich (those were the days I ate tongue and corned beef), but ketchup on everything else. That meant hotdogs, hamburgers, bologna sandwiches and french fries. I even use ketchup when I eat cold, white meat chicken. So, why did it feel so sacrilegious to put it on latkes?

Someone gave me a good explanation: she thinks of latkes as a variation of a baked potato and therefore sour cream fits. The folks requesting ketchup saw them as a variation of hash browns, something I do put ketchup on. That helped me understand what was happening, but I still can't imagine *ever* putting ketchup on my latkes.

Now, I know that it's fashionable to use a wide variety of toppings on latkes – from smoked salmon to nut butters to fruit chutney to olive tapenade. None of those appeal to me. If I want to fancy up my latkes, I'll try to convince someone to make sweet potato ones (with *nothing* on them). Note, please, that I said *try* to convince someone to make them for me. I love reading and talking about food, but I'm not as fond of making it myself.

Wishing you a happy Hanukkah no matter what topping you put on your latkes. Just, please, don't mention any unusual ones to me. I'm still recovering from watching someone eat latkes with ketchup.

# Chanukah Greetings

Warm Chanukah wishes to you and your family!

The Coker Family

HAPPY CHANUKAH

Bob Tomanek

Warm Chanukah wishes to you and your family!

From Jean & Lew Hecht and Family

Happy Chanukah!

Wishing the community a Happy Chanukah!

Rabbi Rachel Esserman

May the lights of Chanukah shine in your hearts forever

Rabbi Zev and Judy Silber

Wishing you a Happy Chanukah light • peace • love

Rhona and Richard Esserman

Wishing The Entire Community A Happy Chanukah

Rebecca Kahn

Maria & Bob Kutz wish all their friends a Happy Chanukah

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HAPPY CHANUKAH

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Susan & Ben Kasper

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Andy Rothe  
Alex, Ajay, Aria, and Sai Premkumar  
Jeff Shevach and Danielle Barcak

Happy Chanukah!

Ann C. Brilliant

## Israeli co. sets up vertical farms in retail stores

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Vertical Field, an Israeli agro-technology company that develops vertical farming systems, announced partnerships with major retail chains in Russia (Magnit) and Ukraine (Varus).

As part of the joint venture, Vertical Field – owned by Israeli businessman Mikhael Mirilashvili – will set up vertical farms inside of the retail partners' large branches. The first of these opened in October in Dnipro and Krasnodar to provide a steady harvest of healthy greens, which are sold at the retail stores.

Vyacheslav Krasnoyarov, director for in-house production at Magnit Retail Chain, said, "Produce will reach the shelf in a matter of minutes immediately after being harvested from the vertical farm, and customers will clearly see where the greens came from. This technology is environmentally friendly, optimizes processes and improves product quality."

Vertical Field's indoor farm is a mobile unit that grows leafy greens like lettuce, spinach and basil. The mobile soil-based platform uses 90 percent less water and land than required for growing greenery in a traditional field. LED lights, which can be controlled remotely through an application, are used for intensive growth of greenery and can provide each crop with the precise wavelengths it needs to flourish. The module is also equipped with sensors that allow real-time monitoring of the plants' condition.

Harvest is produced every two to three days. Direct sales will reduce logistic costs and supply fresh crops regardless of the season.

Menni Bushuev, vice president of business development of Beer Itzhak Energy, said, "We already have portable vertical farms that grow crops on four walls at various locations throughout the world. In Russia, we are integrating a nursery, as well, where seedlings will be grown for about 10 days before they are transferred See "Farms" on page 10

## Grant . . . . .Continued from page 3

publications only. Although *The Reporter* is now biweekly, I am pleased we are still able to produce hard-copy newspapers for our readers. I know that I prefer to read offline. Plus, a hard copy is great for those of us who like to read the paper on Shabbat, but don't get on the computer that day."

Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation, was also pleased that *The Reporter* received the grant. "I think the paper is a valuable addition to our community," she said. "It not only lets me know what local organizations are doing, but helps keep us connected. Thank you to the Eisenberg Fund for its gift. I know the generosity of our community will make this second Giving Tuesday mini-campaign a success."

Esserman noted that the paper received five writing awards this year. "We received two awards from the Syracuse Press Club and three from the American Jewish Press Club Simon Rockower Awards for Excellence in Jewish Journalism," she said. "That's pretty impressive for a paper with such a small staff. We try to be the one-stop shop for those interested in learning about Jewish events in our community."



## Jewish Baseball Players

# Jewish baseball roundup 2021 and the ascent of Gabe Kapler

BILL SIMONS

With its ups and downs, baseball 2021 proved interesting and significant for Jewish fans. Team Israel, staffed mainly by American Jews, made a valiant medal run in the Tokyo Summer Olympics that fell heartbreakingly short. Then, rebounding under new manager Nate Fish and an infusion of *sabras*, the Israel National Team upended expectations in September by taking the second spot in the European Baseball Championship.

In 2021, the late Marvin Miller, longtime executive director of the Major League Baseball Players Association, was formally inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame. The opposition of anti-union owners and their operatives stalled Miller's election for a generation – and it was then postponed another year by COVID. To the consternation of Jewish fans, the Miller induction ceremony took place on September 8, the second day of Rosh Hashanah.

After 14 MLB seasons, all with the Milwaukee Brewers, former All-Star and NL Most Valuable Player Ryan Braun, who walloped more career home runs (348) than any Brewer or Jewish player in history, announced his retirement. Braun's exit elicited debate about a legacy tarnished by drug use, falsehood and suspension.

Crafting strategies to speed up play, Theo Epstein remains an MLB consultant, but his visibility is more muted than in his front-office wunderkind years with the Boston Red Sox and Chicago Cubs. Former MLB and Team Israel outfielder Sam Fuld showed promise in his 2021 debut as Philadelphia Phillies general manager. Chief Baseball

Officer Chaim Bloom took the heat for the frustratingly inconsistent, but ultimately overperforming, Boston Red Sox.

Two teenage Orthodox pitching phenoms, Elie Kligman and Jacob Steinmetz, both committed to Sabbath observance, were drafted, respectively, by the Washington Nationals and Arizona Diamondbacks. Queens fans found some satisfaction in the September 2021 surge of Jewish outfielder Kevin Pillar, but new New York Mets owner Steve Cohen, despite an infusion of money into the franchise, endured unseemly personnel revelations, player injuries and poor performance, making a debacle of the Mets' season.

Injuries limited third baseman Alex Bregman, a perennial All-Star, to 348 at bats, but he returned to the lineup and helped the Houston Astros finish atop the American League West in 2021 before faltering in the post season. The Astros roster also included catcher Garrett Stubbs. Traded to the Atlanta Braves, outfielder Joc Pederson earned the sobriquet JOctober by slugging two dramatic pinch-hit home runs in the National League playoffs. During the second half of the season, Max Fried, Pederson's teammate, emerged as the NL's most dominant pitcher (eight wins-two losses, 1.74 ERA after the All-Star break). Fried pitched the Braves to a World Series title with a spectacular game six outing. And Gabe Kapler, the Jewish manager of the Giants, brought San Francisco to the cusp of baseball glory in 2021.

Kapler is not the first Jew to manage in the major leagues. That distinction belongs to Lip Pike, better known as an

outfielder, who was at the helm of National Association and NL teams back in the 1870s. Other Jewish managers followed. The winningest Jewish manager of all-time, Bob Melvin, thrice Manager of the Year, moved from the Oakland Athletics to the San Diego Padres following the 2021 season. Kapler looks ready to ascend into the elite group of managers.

American Jews are sometimes too eager to appropriate as landsman athletes whose religious and ethnic connections are dubious. In Kapler's case, the connections to Judaism and Israel are strong. Both social activist parents are Jewish. Kapler's father, a pianist/composer, shared his love of music. And Kapler's mother taught at a Jewish preschool.

Kapler was bar mitzvahed. The Star of David is tattooed on his left leg and the post-Holocaust dictum "Never Again" on the right calf. Seeking to "provide an example that the Jewish community can be proud of," Kapler asserts a visceral connection to the Holocaust: "The way we have been persecuted, and our drive and our survival, is mind-boggling."

Intellectual, culturally sophisticated and politically liberal, Kapler was a body builder and ballplayer before managing. Ripped and shirtless, the 6'2", 190-pound Kapler, a weightlifting and diet maven – nicknamed The Body – has appeared, with muscles glistening, on the cover of several fitness magazines.

Over the course of Kapler's 12 major league seasons See "Kapler" on page 14

# Chanukah Greetings

Warm Chanukah wishes to you and your family!

Rabbi Barry and Jill Baron

Warm Chanukah wishes to you and your family!

Terri Bennett

**CELEBRATE CHANUKAH**

Marilyn Bell & Family

**spread the light!**

**From Rabbi Geoffrey Brown and Elissa Brown**

**HAPPY CHANUKAH**

Shari & Rob Neuberger

Warm Chanukah wishes to you and your family!

From Suzanne Holwitt and Family

**Wishing the Community a Happy Chanukah**

Merri & Tony Linka Alexander, Anna, Maya, Dora, Ari & Max Preus

**Happy Chanukah**

Arieh Ullmann and Rhonda Levine

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Like the Maccabees, we need to light our candle and our world, looking toward the future when this pandemic will be a story we will tell.

Neil and Sima Auerbach

Warm Chanukah wishes to you and your family!

Shelley, Mark, Josh & Rae Hval

# Picture book explores response to antisemitism

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

It began with a stone thrown through the window of a Jewish family in Billings, MT, on December 2, 1993. The family had been displaying its Hanukkah menorah in the window and what occurred next surprised people. In fact, the events that followed were so powerful that the story still resonates almost three decades later. It also served as the inspiration for Lee Wind's new picture book "Red and Green and Blue and White," with pictures by Paul O. Zelinsky (Levine Querido).

"The heart of what really happened in Billings, MT, in December 1993 touched my heart," Wind said in an e-mail interview. "It was widely reported, in national media (National Public Radio, *The New York Times*, there was a PBS documentary, and it even inspired the formation of a nonprofit, Not in Our Town). When someone threw a stone through the window of a Jewish family who had decorated their home for Chanukah, there were two pivotal things that happened."

It was those two things that made this story different from many other instances of antisemitism. "The first is that the family (who had a little boy in kindergarten at the time, Isaac) put up their Chanukah decorations again after replacing the window. They stood up for themselves," he said. "And the second is that some of Isaac's friends who weren't Jewish drew menorahs in support. Isaac's classmate Teresa's family put their image of a menorah up in their window next to their Christmas decorations. That idea caught on, and



The cover of "Red and Green and Blue and White: Inspired by a true story." Picture by Paul O. Zelinsky. (All photos reprinted with permission from Levine Querido)

the local paper published an editorial with a full-page image of a menorah urging local residents to display it in their windows as a sign of solidarity, and 'our determination to live together in harmony.' In less than three weeks, over 10,000 menorahs were displayed all over their town. And when the whole community stood up for others, the haters backed down. And in Billings, love won."

These two reactions taught an important lesson. "That dual message – standing up for yourself and standing up for others who are different in some way – seemed like the perfect expression of what the holidays, and community, really mean," Wind added.

Wind has pondered the best way to talk to children about antisemitism. "The question I thought about a lot when writing this was how do we talk to kids – young kids like those in kindergarten, the age Isaac and Teresa were – about hard subjects?" he said. "As a parent myself, it feels like a balancing act between wanting to protect them and realizing that not having them know things puts them at risk. How do we let kids know bad things happen and not scare them, but instead have them feel supported and empowered?"

Although based on a real incident, Wind noted that he added to the story to create characters children can relate to. "As I explain in [my] author's note, Isaac and Teresa are real people, but I fictionalized their interactions and some details of how things unfolded," he said. "In doing so, it was important for me that Isaac and Teresa have agency in the story. They turn on the holiday lights – Teresa's house red and green (from their Christmas tree), and Isaac's house blue and white (from their decorative electric menorah). I made Teresa an artist, who draws the menorah and puts it up in their home's window to stand up for Isaac. And I made Isaac a poet, who writes rhymes that offer a second, kid-level perspective on what happens when the colors come together: 'Red and Green and Blue and White.'"

Wind offers several lessons in his story, including the idea that "every kid can be an artist and a poet." He also hopes that "kids who have this book read to them can realize that they don't have to wait to make our world a better place. They can do that, right now, by standing up for themselves, and standing up for others. *Tikkun olam* – healing the world. And it can be as simple as a drawing, or



Two pages from "Red and Green and Blue and White." Picture by Paul O. Zelinsky)

a poem. And knowing that can be so powerful, and spread so much light – 'Red and Green and Blue and White!'"

## Farms. . . . Continued from page 8

to our modular growing pods. After approximately three weeks, produce is ready for harvest and sale.

"The vertical farm has been designed to comfortably sit right on-site, adjacent to supermarkets, restaurants, institutions, city centers, hotels, educational institutions and more," he continued. "We have already developed protocols for growing 50 varieties of leafy greens and herbs, six varieties of mushrooms and now the protocol of everyone's favorite fruit – strawberries – is on the way."




The Israeli agro-tech company Vertical Field sets up healthy-greens farms inside of retail stores. (Photo by DJC.COM.UA)



Two pages from "Red and Green and Blue and White." Picture by Paul O. Zelinsky)


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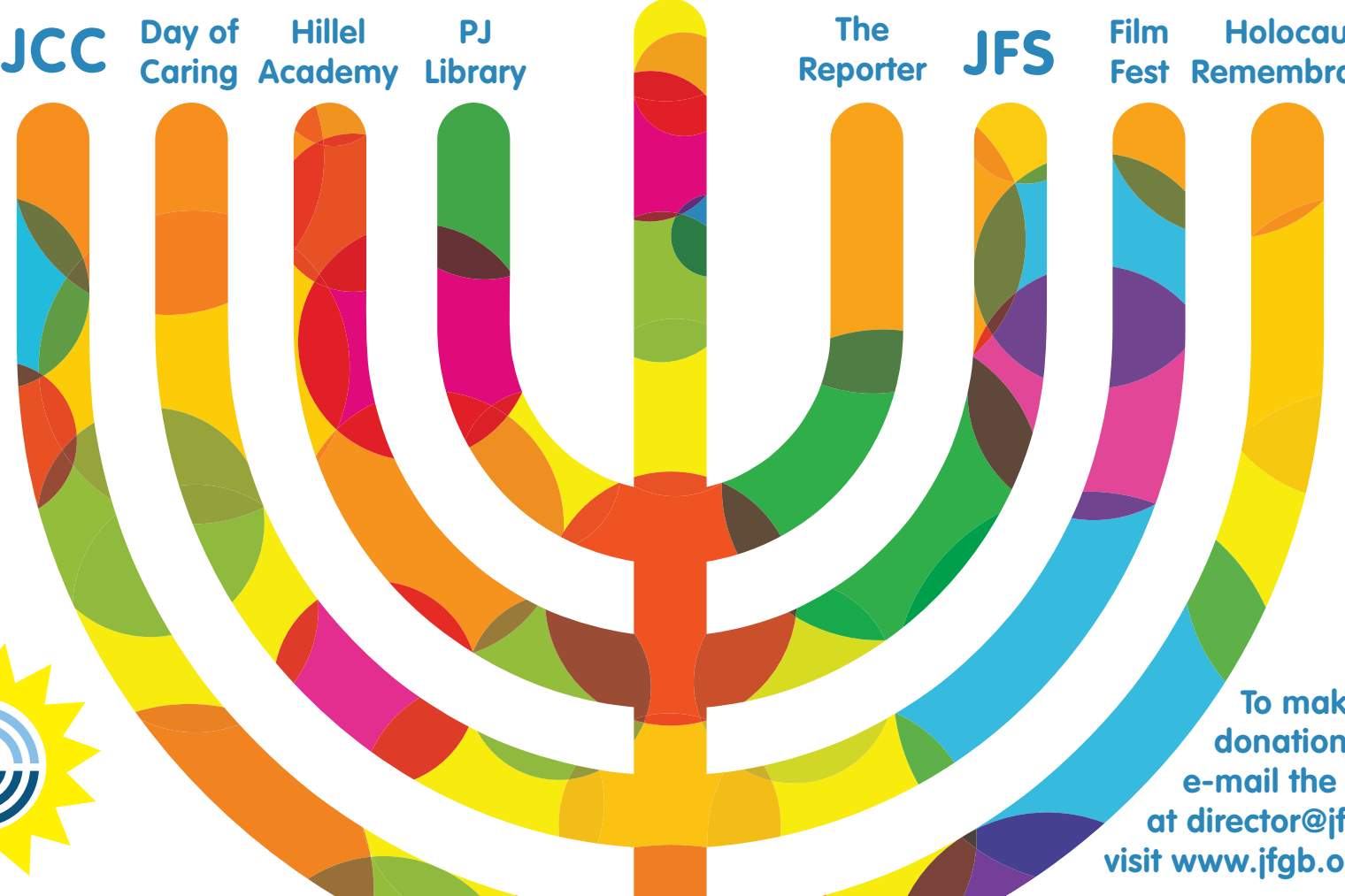
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# Jewish online resources

By Reporter staff

A variety of Jewish groups are offering educational and recreational online resources. Below is a sampling of those. *The Reporter* will publish additional listings as they become available.

◆ The Milken Archive of Jewish Music is holding the virtual exhibit “Jewish Art Song in America: A Composer’s Perspective” at [www.milkenarchive.org/articles/virtual-exhibits/view/jewish-art-song-in-america-a-composers-perspective](http://www.milkenarchive.org/articles/virtual-exhibits/view/jewish-art-song-in-america-a-composers-perspective).

◆ Reboot is celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of “The Golem” by cutting up the classic film into eight parts, creating an episodic series with new scores and commentary by scholars, composers and film historians discussing the significance of the film and its music. For more information or to view the episodes, visit <https://rebooting.com/golem/>.

◆ The Yiddish Book Center announced information about the 2022 Great Jewish Books Club. There is no fee and people can join anytime during the year. The books will be announced during the year and copies will no longer be sent to people, but they will be available at the Yiddish Book Center’s online and on-site stores, and elsewhere. For more information about the club and sign up for e-mails, visit [www.yiddishbookcenter.org/language-literature-culture/great-jewish-book-club/about-book-club](http://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/language-literature-culture/great-jewish-book-club/about-book-club).

◆ The Vilna Shul will hold the virtual program “Navigating the Current Climate Through Judaism” with author Sarah Hurwitz in conversation with Rav Tiferet Berenbaum on Thursday, December 2, at 7 pm. The cost is \$18 and registration is required. Hurwitz, author of “Here All Along: Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life—in Judaism (After Finally Choosing to Look There),” was a White House speechwriter from 2009-17. Berenbaum is rabbi of Congregational Learning and Programming at Temple Beth Zion in Brookline, MA. For more information or to register, visit <https://vlnashul.org/events/event/navigating-the-current-climate-through-judaism>.

◆ Ofek Hub will hold the virtual course “Love in a Postcard; the Holocaust Survival story of a Kindertransport Child” for children in grades four-six. There will be two chances to take the five-part course; five sessions will begin on Tuesdays, January 25 and February 1, 8, 15 and 22; or Tuesdays, March 22 and 29, and April 5, 12 and 26. Each class is 45 minutes in duration. The cost for the course is \$65. For more information, visit [www.ofekhub.org/courses/love-in-a-postcard-the-holocaust-survival-story-of-a-kindertransport-child-4th-6th-grade-winter/](http://www.ofekhub.org/courses/love-in-a-postcard-the-holocaust-survival-story-of-a-kindertransport-child-4th-6th-grade-winter/).

◆ The interfaith group 18 Doors will hold the virtual event “2021 Ignite the Light Celebration” on Tuesday, December 7, at 7:30 pm. The event will feature speakers, a complimentary drink recipe for to make at home, giveaways and photos and stories from interfaith families. For more information or to register, visit <https://18doors.org/ignite-the-light/>.

◆ Pardes will hold a virtual “Winter Break: A Learning Intensive for Students and Young Professionals” from Monday-Wednesday, January 3-5. No previous text-study experience is necessary; multiple levels are available. For more information, visit [www.pardes.org.il/program/shortterm/pardes-winter-break/](http://www.pardes.org.il/program/shortterm/pardes-winter-break/).

◆ Hadar’s will hold a Rising Song Intensive in partnership with B’nai Jeshurun on Wednesday-Thursday, December 22-23, with in-person and virtual options. It is designed for all backgrounds to create a space for musical expression, learning and community. The virtual sessions will take place from 9:30 am-12:30 pm both days. Included in the reservation will be one complimentary ticket to Joey Weisenberg and the Hadar Ensemble live in concert on December 23 at 7:30 pm, which will be available in-person or on Zoom. For more information or to register, visit [www.hadar.org/programs/rising-song-intensive](http://www.hadar.org/programs/rising-song-intensive).

◆ The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research will present a virtual book talk about “When I Grow Up,” a graphic nonfiction work that explores interwar teenage Jewish life, on Tuesday, November 23, at 3 pm. Cartoonist Ken Krimstein will be in conversation with scholar Jeffrey Shandler. Krimstein’s work is based on six of the hundreds of autobiographies of Eastern European Jewish teens collected by YIVO on the brink of World War II. The event is free. For more information or to register, visit [yivo.org/When-I-Grow-Up](http://yivo.org/When-I-Grow-Up).

◆ American Jewish Libraries has started a podcast, “Nice Jewish Books,” that focuses on adult Jewish fiction. For more information or to listen to the podcast, visit <https://jewishlibraries.org/nicejewishbooks/>.

◆ The Jewish Telegraphic Agency is offering a new e-mail newsletter showcasing Jewish communities on every continent. For more information or to sign up for the e-mail, visit [www.jta.org/sign-up-for-around-the-world](http://www.jta.org/sign-up-for-around-the-world).

◆ The Shalom Hartman Institute will offer Hartman at Home virtual courses this fall/winter, including “Pluralism, Exclusivism, and the Boundaries of Biblical Theology” (Wednesdays, December 1, 8, 15 and 22, from 7-8:30 pm), and “Old Jew, New Jew, Israeli Jew: A Fresh Look at the Jews of Zion” (Tuesdays, January 25 and February 1 and 8, from noon-1:30 pm). For more information about these and other courses, visit <https://athome.hartman.org.il/agenda>.

◆ The American Jewish University will hold the virtual program “A New Reading of Hanukkah: Text Study for the Holiday” on Tuesday, November 30, from 5-6 pm. Rabbi Lydia Medwin will guide students through text study, providing tools to help students to find meaning in the holiday. For more information or to register, visit <https://learning.aju.edu/event/a-new-reading-of-hannukah-text-study-for-the-holiday/>.

◆ The Jewish Studio Project will hold the virtual class “Have You Made Art About It Yet? Hanukkah Edition!” on Thursday, December 2, from 9-10:30 am. The session will explore the power of art making in a virtual community as a tool for personal and collective renewal. For more information or to register, visit [www.jewishstudioproject.org/public-programs/have-you-made-art-about-it-yet](http://www.jewishstudioproject.org/public-programs/have-you-made-art-about-it-yet).

◆ Brandeis University will hold the virtual program “Who is a Convert? The Law of Return and the Legality of Reform and Conservative Conversions in Israel” on Thursday, December 2, at 12:15 pm. The speaker will be David Ellenson, past director of the Schusterman Center for Israel Studies, professor emeritus of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis University, and chancellor emeritus and former president of Hebrew Union Col-

lege-Jewish Institute of Religion. For more information or to register, visit [https://brandeis.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_ocrbpbHeTU6QLNgMOB\\_cda](https://brandeis.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ocrbpbHeTU6QLNgMOB_cda).

◆ New Lehrhaus will hold the program “Jews of Color – Inside and Out” on Wednesday, December 8, from 10-11:30 pm. Prof. Bruce Haynes will speak about the lived experiences – now and historically – of Jews of Color. Prof. Bruce Phillips will talk about the Pew studies of 2013 and 2020, and other studies, and how they identified JOC. For more information or to register, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/jews-of-color-inside-and-out-tickets-184312011187>.

◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold the virtual program “Family History Today: Jewish Dress and Cultural History – What You Can Learn from Grandma’s Photos,” featuring Eric Silverman, on Tuesday, November 30, at 5 pm. Silverman, research professor of anthropology at Wheelock College and author of “A Cultural History of Jewish Dress,” will demonstrate how we can “read” the clothing in old family photos for clues about the wider historical processes that shaped our ancestors’ lives, aspirations and struggles. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/event/family-history-today-2021-11-30>.

◆ The New York Public Library offers “LGBTQ+ Jewish,” a guide that covers LGBTQ+ Jewish research from scholarly, communal and personal perspectives. For more information, visit <https://libguides.nypl.org/lgbtqjewish/about/>.

◆ One Book, One Hadassah will hold a virtual interview with Francine Prose about her latest novel, “The Vixen,” on Thursday, December 9, at 7 pm. Hadassah Magazine Executive Editor Lisa Hostein will conduct the interview. For more information or to register for the event, visit [https://secure2.convio.net/wzoa/site/Ticketing.jsessionid=00000000.app202a?view=Tickets&id=105390&NONCE\\_TOKEN=8D78E9F71C73E4F08E2C93E59EFFFCED](https://secure2.convio.net/wzoa/site/Ticketing.jsessionid=00000000.app202a?view=Tickets&id=105390&NONCE_TOKEN=8D78E9F71C73E4F08E2C93E59EFFFCED).

◆ The Skirball Center will hold online programs for Hanukkah, including a virtual “Hanukkah Happy Hour” on Saturday, December 4, at 9 pm, during which Skirball President and CEO Jessie Kornberg will share stories with Rob Eshman, national editor of the Forward, about the Skirball’s Hanukkah lamp collection ([www.skirball.org/programs/words-and-ideas/hanukkah-happy-hour](http://www.skirball.org/programs/words-and-ideas/hanukkah-happy-hour)); and “Cooking with ArtBites: Hanukkah and the Jelly Doughnut” on Sunday, December 5, from 1-2 pm (<https://www.skirball.org/programs/family-programs/cooking-artbites>).

◆ The Z3 Project will hold the hybrid program “Z3 2021: Futures Workshop” on Sunday, December 5, at noon. The interactive simulation will ask speakers and participants to take part in a plausible futuristic scenario that will impact the relationship between Israel and Diaspora Jewry. Through this experiment, it will explore potential ways for those communities to come together and ensure a continued sense of peoplehood and mutuality. For more information or to register, visit <https://z3project.virtualjcc.com/>.

◆ The Yiddish Book Center will hold two virtual events in December: “The Rich History of Jewish Papercuts,” with Deborah Ugoretz on Thursday, December 2, at 7 pm; and “Yiddish and Social Justice” on Thursday, December 16, at 7 pm. To learn more or to register, visit [www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events-and-store/virtual-public-programs-calendar](http://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events-and-store/virtual-public-programs-calendar).

◆ The Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy will hold the virtual program “New York, The Greatest Jewish City in the World,” a three-part presentation. Session I on “History” will be held on Monday, November 29, from 7-8:30 pm ([www.nycjewishtours.org/event-log/nyc-greatest-jewish-city-part-1](http://www.nycjewishtours.org/event-log/nyc-greatest-jewish-city-part-1)). Session II on “Culture” will be held on Monday, December 13, from 7-8:30 pm (<https://www.nycjewishtours.org/event-log/nyc-greatest-jewish-city-part-2>). The third session will be held in 2022. Participants can attend one or all sessions.

◆ Sefaria is offering four social justice and *shemita*-themed e-mails over the course of four weeks. Each e-mail will include texts from the Sefaria library, additional resources to deepen learning and “food for thought” sections. For more information or to sign up for the e-mails, visit [https://sefaria.nationbuilder.com/mjl\\_shemita\\_social\\_justice](https://sefaria.nationbuilder.com/mjl_shemita_social_justice).

◆ The Hadassah-Brandeis Institute will hold several virtual events: “In Search of Late Ottoman Sephardi Women’s Lives” on Monday, November 22, from 12:30-1:30 pm; “Navigating the Current Climate Through Judaism,” with author Sarah Hurwitz in conversation with Rav Tiferet Berenbaum on Thursday, December 2, at 7 pm; Rabbi Haviva Ner-David speaking about her book “Hope Valley” on Wednesday, December 8, from 12:30-1:30 pm; “Studio Israel” on Thursday, December 9, from noon-1 pm, which will look at the work of Israeli singer and visual artist Neta Elkayam; and Carole S. Kessner, Ph.D., speaking about “Marie Syrkin: Values Beyond the Self” on Wednesday, December 15, from 12:30-1:30 pm. For more information or to register, visit [www.brandeis.edu/hbi/events/index.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/hbi/events/index.html).

◆ Lilith Magazine will hold a virtual happy hour to celebrate the fall issue of the magazine on Wednesday, December 1, at 8 pm. Attendees are asked to have their *hannukiahs* ready to light. For more information and to register, visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwod-6vqT4jHNc94s-pDsCoxDYPBuUntfxS>.

See “Online” on page 13

Happy Chanukah!  
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# The miracle of Hanukkah, in more ways than one

By Ethel G. Hofman

(JNS) – Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights, is the eight-day celebration commemorating the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. We light each menorah candle to remember the Maccabees and the miracle of the oil that lasted much longer than expected. This year, another seeming miracle – that of rejoining with family and friends after two years of a pandemic that has lasted longer than many thought – will take place just a few days after Thanksgiving, making a wallop of a holiday weekend.

It always begins on the same day on the Jewish calendar, 25 Kislev, which corresponds to the evening of Sunday, November 28, lasting through the evening of Monday, December 6.

Hanukkah goodies go beyond latkes and *sufganiyot* (jelly doughnuts), but they are traditionally oil-based. For a contemporary take, to cater to well-traveled culinary tastes and for a bit of flavor from abroad after being stationed at home for far too long, these recipes feature international dishes.

Decorate holiday tables with gold-foiled *gelt* (money) and dreidels of all sizes and colors. Photocopy song sheets to “Maoz Tzur” (“Rock of Ages”) and other traditional tunes. Finish the pumpkin pie before a new round of sweets arrives. Continue the story.

From my table to yours, Happy Hanukkah!

## Bagna Cauda (dairy)

Serves 4-6. Cook's tips:

- ◆ To make pareve, substitute margarine for butter.
- ◆ Make ahead of time, cover and refrigerate. Warm in microwave.

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil  
4 Tbsp. unsalted butter, at room temperature  
1 can (2 oz.) anchovy fillets, drained  
1 Tbsp. bottled minced garlic  
Freshly ground pepper to taste  
Assorted vegetables cut into lengths and pieces  
Crusty bread cut into 2-inch pieces  
Blend oil, butter or margarine, anchovies and garlic in blender or food processor until smooth.

Transfer to a small saucepan. Bring to simmer. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring often. Don't worry if the sauce separates. Season with pepper to taste.

To serve: Pour warm sauce into a small pitcher. Place on platter, arrange vegetables around and bread cubes in a separate bowl.

## Smoked Salmon Latkes With Capers and Dill (pareve)

Makes 6-8. Cook's tips:

- ◆ Substitute dry breadcrumbs for matzah meal.

◆ Bake 3 large potatoes for mashed potatoes. Do not add butter, margarine or seasonings.

◆ Shred smoked salmon and snip fresh dill with kitchen shears.

◆ May prepare the mixture ahead of time. Cover and chill until ready to cook.

◆ Serve with store-bought salsa.

2 cups mashed potatoes

¾ cup matzah meal, divided

1 egg

½ tsp. hot sauce

3 oz. smoked salmon, shredded

2 Tbsp. capers, coarsely chopped

½ cup fresh dill, coarsely snipped, loosely packed

Vegetable oil for frying

Salsa

In a medium bowl, combine potatoes, ½ cup matzah meal, egg, hot sauce, salmon, capers and dill. Mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes to stiffen.

Place remaining matzah meal in a shallow dish. Shape about 2 rounded tablespoons mixture into patties. Coat on both sides with the matzah meal. Repeat with the remaining mixture.

Heat about ½-inch oil to 350°F in a large, deep skillet. (No thermometer? An easy, safe way to check on the temperature is to stick the end of a wooden spoon into the hot oil. When bubbles form around the wood and they float up, the oil is ready. If bubbling hard, oil is too hot. Reduce heat and check again.)

Arrange latkes in hot oil. Cook over medium heat until crispy and golden-brown, 2 to 3 minutes on each side. Drain on paper towels.

Serve hot with salsa.

## Pan-Fried Chicken Breasts, Basque-Style With Sized Black Olives (meat)

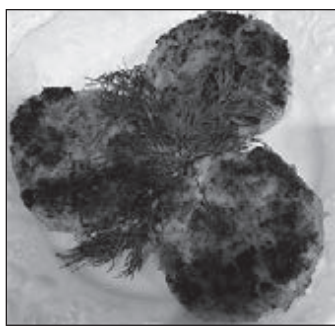
Serves 4-6. Cook's tips:

- ◆ Line baking pan with foil for easy clean-up.
- ◆ Cook the day before. Cover tightly and refrigerate. Remove from the fridge 20 minutes before reheating.
- ◆ Use a combination of seasonings, such as Trader Joe's 21 Seasoning Salute, for the tarragon, oregano, sage, garlic powder and salt, about 2 teaspoons.

4 chicken breasts (about 2½ pounds), skinless, boneless

½ cup bottled vinaigrette dressing

1¼ cups panko bread crumbs



Smoked Salmon Latkes With Capers and Dill (Photo by Ethel G. Hofman)

⅓ cup vegetable oil  
1 (6 oz.) can small pitted black olives, drained  
½ tsp. each tarragon, oregano, sage, garlic powder and salt

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Cut each chicken breast in half lengthwise. Set aside.

Pour dressing into a shallow dish. Pour panko into a separate shallow dish and stir in tarragon, oregano, sage, garlic powder and salt. Dip chicken in dressing to coat on all sides and then dredge in panko mixture.

Heat oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken. Brown in hot oil until golden-brown, about 3-4 minutes on each side.

Place on a baking sheet. Set aside. Add the drained olives to the skillet.

Heat over high heat, 3 to 4 minutes or until sizzling. Scatter olives and pan scrapings over chicken. Cover tightly with foil.

Bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes. Remove foil and bake 20 minutes longer, or until chicken is no longer pink at the thickest part.

Arrange chicken and olives on a serving platter. Serve hot.

## Dark, Sticky Gingerbread (dairy)

Makes 20-24 servings.

Cook's tips:

- ◆ To make pareve, substitute pareve margarine and oat, coconut or other dairy-free milk for whole milk.
- ◆ Substitute Chinese Five Spice for orange extract.

1 cup dark-brown sugar, packed

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened

¾ cup plus 2 Tbsp. molasses

2 eggs

⅓ cup milk

1 ⅔ cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp. baking soda

2 Tbsp. powdered ginger

1½ tsp. orange extract

1 tsp. freshly ground pepper

⅓ cup crystallized ginger, chopped

Preheat oven to 325°F.

Spray 11×7-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, beat brown sugar and butter until pale and fluffy. Add ¾ cup molasses, eggs, milk and ⅔ cup flour. Beat until smooth.

See “Hanukkah” on page 16



Dark, Sticky Gingerbread à La Mode (Photo by Ethel G. Hofman)

## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

### Israeli Cabinet approves \$160 million plan to strengthen Negev communities

The Israeli Cabinet on Nov. 14 approved a \$160.8 million plan to strengthen the communities of the Negev, the Prime Minister's Office reported. The plan, which comes in the framework of the relocation of Israel Defense Forces bases to the south of the country, was formulated by Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Finance Minister Avigdor Lieberman, the PMO said in a statement. According to the PMO, the plan includes building a hospital; creating a military-academic-industrial ecosystem; integrating residents in the regional-development process; encouraging positive migration to the area; and enhancing transportation and infrastructure.

### Online . . . . .Continued from page 12

◆ The Mussar Institute will hold several virtual programs for Hanukkah. For more information or to register, visit <https://mussarinstitute.org/hanukkah-2021/>.

◆ The Kripke Institute (Center for Relational Judaism) is offering information for a Hanukkah Homecoming Weekend December 3-5. The site lists more than 100 events (virtual or in-person) that are taking place that weekend. For more information, visit [www.hanukkahhomecoming.org/](http://www.hanukkahhomecoming.org/).

◆ The Nosh is offering a free e-book called “8 Latke Recipes for 8 Nights of Hanukkah.” For information about the e-book, visit [www.myjewishlearning.com/8-latke-recipes-for-8-nights-of-hanukkah/](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/8-latke-recipes-for-8-nights-of-hanukkah/).

◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold the virtual program “Under Jerusalem: The Buried History of the World's Most Contested City” with author Andrew Lawler on Wednesday, December 8, at 6:30 pm. Lawler will discuss the tombs, tunnels and trenches of the Holy City. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/tickets/under-jerusalem-2021-12-08>.

◆ The Nosh will hold three virtual Hanukkah cooking classes on Sunday, November 21, Monday, November 22, and Tuesday, November 23. All will begin at 7:30 pm. For more information or to register, visit [www.myjewishlearning.com/the-nosh/hanukkah-classes-2021/](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/the-nosh/hanukkah-classes-2021/).

For additional resources, see previous issues of The Reporter on its website, [www.thereporter.org](http://www.thereporter.org).


## Chanukah Greetings

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# Bobblehead menorah and dreidel revealed

On November 11, the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum unveiled the first Bobble Menorah and Bobble Dreidel. The Bobble Menorah features nine bobbling flames and comes in three color patterns. One version has blue candles, another has blue and white candles, and the third has a multi-color assortment of candles.

The Bobble Dreidel is on a *gelt*-shaped base with each side is inscribed with the dreidel's Hebrew letters – *nun, gimel, hey* and *shin* – in a different color. The limited-edition bobbles were produced



The Bobble Dreidel (Photo courtesy of the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum)

by the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum.

Each bobble is individually numbered to 5,782 to commemorate the current year. They are only available through the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum's Online Store (<https://store.bobbleheadhall.com/products/hanukkah>). The bobbles, which will ship out to customers the third week of November, are \$25 each plus a flat-rate shipping charge of \$8 per order.

The menorah is the nine-branch lamp used to celebrate, remember and honor the miracle of Hanukkah. It consists of a center branch with four branches on each side and holds candles or oil lamps. On each night of the eight-day holiday, one more light is lit than the previous night, until all eight branches are illuminated on the final night. The ninth branch is the *shamash* ("helper" or "servant" branch), which is used to light the other branches. The *shamash* must be offset on a higher or lower plane than the main eight candles or oil lamps. Since 1979, the White House has been represented at the lighting of the National Menorah in celebration of Hanukkah. Two large menorahs are

in New York City, each standing at 32 feet. One is at Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn, and the other is at Fifth Avenue and 59<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan near Central Park.

A dreidel is the four-sided spinning top typically made of wood, plastic or clay. It has Hebrew letters on each side and is commonly played during Hanukkah. It is a game of luck that uses candy, coins, nuts, or other betting tokens. The four sides of the dreidel are *nun, gimel, hey* and *shin*. *Nun* means the player does nothing. *Gimel* means the player gets all the tokens from the pot. *Hey* means that they player gets half of the tokens from the pot. *Shin* means that they player has to put one token in the pot. The four letters are an abbreviation for the Hebrew phrase "*nes gadol haya sham*," or "a great miracle happened there," in honor of the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem. According to some scholars, the dreidel developed from an Irish or English top introduced into Germany known as a teetotum, which was popular around Christmastime and dates back to ancient Greek and Roman times.

"We're thrilled to be releasing the very first Bobble Menorah and Bobble Dreidel just in time for Hanukkah," National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum co-founder and CEO Phil Sklar said. "Hanukkah has always been one of my favorite



The three styles of Bobble Menorah (Photo courtesy of the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum)

holidays, and it has been exciting watching this concept come to life over the past year. I hope people proudly display their Bobble Menorah and Bobble Dreidel to celebrate the Festival of Lights every year."

The National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum, which is located at 170 S. 1<sup>st</sup> St., Milwaukee, WI, opened to the public on February 1, 2019. The HOF and Museum also produces customized bobbleheads for retail sale as well as organizations, individuals and teams across the country.

**Happy Chanukah**  
from  
**The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton**

Shelley Hubal, Executive Director  
Suzanne Holwitt, President  
Jennifer Kakusian, Office Manager

## JFNA . . . . . Continued from page 5

While in many ways reliant on JDC and his local Jewish community, Volgust has also found his own way to give back. As a former guitar teacher, champion ballroom dancer and electrical engineer, he has channeled his energy into other endeavors – becoming a dedicated volunteer at his local JDC-supported Hesed social welfare center. Using his talents and zest for life, he even launched a program to keep other Georgian Jewish

seniors active and physically fit through ballroom dancing classes. "You know, I take life as it is, and I like it. I'm just happy that I get to live on this earth," he said.

Despite the pandemic, JDC, with the generous support of partners like the Binghamton Federation, has worked uninterrupted to ensure that Volgust – along with the more than 80,000 other elderly Jews aided every day by JDC – continues to live that life with dignity.

## Life . . . . . Continued from page 2

to protect us when they invite a Jew-hating terrorism apologist from an organization that once defended a Holocaust denier? In Israel, Jewish leaders defeat the antisemite, no matter who he is. In America, it pains me to say, Jewish leaders simply hand him a louder microphone.

It feels as though Jewish organizations sworn to protect us are prioritizing their political interests above our security, fearing that they may lose their status among the progressive establishment that would rejoice at the sight of Israel's destruction. We are paying the price for their fear. For it's the "fearful Jew," former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin once said, that leads to "humiliation, persecution, exile, beating, subjugation, and finally, the gates of Auschwitz."

"On the other hand," Begin continued, "when the Jew woke up and rediscovered

his inner courage, what was given to him? A flag, a homeland, an army, sovereignty, human dignity."

I hope in future generations when they ask what we did with this precious Jewish inheritance of ours that the history books will say we rose to the occasion. That we honored our fallen and strengthened our children by being unapologetic, uncompromising Jews. That we elevated our homeland and not covered behind it. That we discovered our inner courage and restored our dignity.

That we were inspired not by how Joyce Fienberg, Richard Gottfried, Rose Malinger, Jerry Rabinowitz, Cecil Rosenthal, David Rosenthal, Bernice Simon, Sylvan Simon, Daniel Stein, Melvin Wax and Irving Younger died, but rather, how they lived.

Aidan Segal is a student at the University of Pittsburgh.

## Kapler . . . . . Continued from page 9

(1998-2006, 2008-10), with six teams (Boston, Texas, Tampa Bay, Colorado, Detroit, Milwaukee), the journeyman outfielder accumulated solid career stats (1,104 games, .268 batting average, 82 home runs, 176 doubles, .420 slugging percentage, .983 fielding average). Playing for Detroit, Kapler had his best season in 2000, averaging .302 and connecting for 47 extra-base hits.

Kapler interrupted his MLB playing career in 2007 to begin his managerial apprenticeship with the Single-A Greenville Grasshoppers, suffering a 58-81 won-loss record. In 2012, Kapler coached Team Israel in the World Baseball qualifying round. Making his debut as an MLB manager, he guided the 2018-19 Phillies to a mediocre 161-163 record. During his first season at the Giants' helm, the 2020 pandemic-shortened season, San Francisco finished under .500 with a 29-31 record.

Predicted to finish last with 75 victories, the 2021 Giants, despite too many roster spots filled by aging veterans and reclamation acquisitions, stunned the baseball world by winning an MLB high 107 games and taking the National League West divisional championship. A teacher and motivator, informed by analytics and even more by

understanding players as people, Kapler, coming of age as a manager, assembled an outstanding group of coaches, modeled candid communication, created a clubhouse ethos that put the team above individual stats, and inspired constant hustle.

MLB's two best teams, Kapler's Giants and the Dodgers, the latter beneficiaries of a bloated payroll, met in the 2021 NL Division Series. Legend engulfs their fierce rivalry, a legacy of the last century when Brooklyn and New York, rather than Los Angeles and San Francisco, provided homes to the Dodgers and Giants respectively. The Dodgers game five victory in the 2021 Division Series advanced Los Angeles to the NL Championship Series – and ended a Cinderella season for Kapler's Giants.

Given Kapler's age (46), acumen and remarkable conditioning, however, more pennant and World Series opportunities beckon.

Bill Simons is a professor emeritus at SUNY Oneonta where he continues to teach courses in American 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.

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# IAC seeks to deepen understanding about Israel as challenges rise in public-school systems

By Jacob Kamaras

(JNS) – Long well-documented on college campuses, pro-BDS and antisemitic sentiments are now gaining traction in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade public-school systems.

The United Educators of San Francisco in May became the first teachers' union in the country to pass a resolution supporting BDS. In September, while United Teachers Los Angeles voted to postpone a pro-BDS resolution, San Diego's American Federation of Teachers Guild stated that "condemning Israel for its ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, occupation, apartheid and war crimes is not antisemitism." Audio leaked in October revealed a school-district administrator in Texas telling teachers to balance Holocaust-related books with "opposing" views.

"There is a rise in antisemitism in America, especially in the education system," Noa Peri-Jensch, national senior director of strategy for the Israeli-American Council, told JNS. "We are seeing committees and teachers' unions that I personally think, after two years of COVID, would have so much urgency about how to overcome learning gaps, how to take care of domestic abuse, and all kinds of issues students are facing. But out of all these burning issues, what we are seeing in some places is that the top priority is how to turn the teachers' union into a BDS-supporting union. Why? Where is that all coming from?"

One of the IAC's responses to this phenomenon is a recently launched pilot program for educators that aims to dispel misinformation and deepen understanding about Israel. The initiative, which the IAC aims to expand nationally, held its first event on October 17, a symposium for Nevada educators featuring sessions on Israel's contributions to innovation, technology, science and culture. Presenters included David Brog, executive director of the

Maccabee Task Force; Jake Bennett, IAC for Action's director of policy and legislative affairs; Idan Udi Edry, an Israeli serial entrepreneur; Karin Hochman, a professor of music and Hebrew at University of Nevada, Las Vegas; and Alexandra Emtsova, owner of the Burnt Offerings kosher restaurant in Las Vegas.

"We wanted to bring the teachers to the room and give them a positive way of looking at Israel – not so much showing the conflict, and instead, giving them tools that they can take into the classroom and teach about Israel in a positive way, to look at Israel as a place of innovation and technology, of literature and art," said the IAC's Las Vegas Region Director Ofra Etzion. "We know that when you educate the next generation, they are going to take it forward. They are going to be our ambassadors when they go to college."

Bennett's session covered inclusion and diversity in Israel. "To understand Israel's internal diversity and inclusion, people need to be presented with truth and facts to counter the lies and distortion of the BDS hate movement," he told JNS. "I started by sharing a number of photos of Israeli daily life – for instance, pictures showing Jewish, ultra-Orthodox and Muslim individuals sitting side by side at a café, in a university lecture or on a public bus. This negates the libel of anti-Israel hate groups that Israel is an apartheid state. I then showed some photos of Israeli Arabs, Druze and Bedouin who serve in the police, military, government, courts and hospitals, again to dispel the myth of apartheid and government-sanctioned discrimination."

Bennett proceeded to define the words "Zionism" and "indigeneity" for the educators with the goal of dispelling the myth of Israeli "colonialism."

"Zionism is the self-determination movement of the Jewish people in their ancestral homeland. Indigeneity is

defined by ethnogenesis, the origin of a people, followed by continuous links of language, history, blood, culture and spirituality to a place," he explained. "Everything about the Jewish people – whatever each family's pathway during the long Diaspora – ties us to the land of Israel."

Both Etzion and Peri-Jensch said their children have witnessed far different narratives on Israel taking root in Nevada schools, including when one of Peri-Jensch's daughters wore an Israel Defense Forces' T-shirt and was accused by fellow students of supporting a "military that kills babies."

Yet another classroom incident gave Peri-Jensch hope, as well as the motivation to launch the IAC educators' initiative. Four years ago, her older daughter's teacher told students that everyone had paid attention to Kim Kardashian's outfit, but "none of you know that Israel attacked Syria last night." Her daughter wrote to the teacher about how those comments made her feel, and that there is more nuance to the news report on Israel and Syria. The teacher acknowledged that Peri-Jensch's daughter "opened my mind" about the issue. Four years later, when Peri-Jensch's younger daughter took a class with the same teacher, the educator encouraged her to speak up when anything discussed in the classroom might be offensive or misleading.

"It made me think that there are so many teachers who want to know more, but they don't have the opportunity," said Peri-Jensch. "Israel is a fascinating subject, but it has become very controversial in the school setting. We wanted not to become the experts on the conflict or who 'rules' Israel. But if we are able to develop for educators a positive relationship to Israel through science and innovation and arts and history, and show how some things can be misunderstood, then next time there's a military operation See "IAC" on page 16

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# SCIENCE NEWS

## Sheba Medical Center initiates gaming program to combat child obesity

By JNS staff

(JNS) – The proportion of American children who are overweight or obese, which has climbed steadily for years, surged to unprecedented levels during the pandemic, according to new figures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Now, Sheba Medical Center has launched a smartphone gaming-based program to help overweight and obese children achieve a healthier lifestyle.

Headed by Professor Gal Dubnov-Raz, director of

sports and exercise medicine at Sheba, together with the Telemedicine team at Sheba’s ARC Innovation Center, the program was developed in collaboration with UVTAL, creator of Rumble, a popular active movement gaming app that plans to launch in North America by the end of 2021. It combines remote monitoring and professional health-care support by the medical staff alongside an engaging platform for children and youth aged 10 and up, who learn to adopt healthy habits through positive psychology, competition and games.

“Obesity is the most common chronic disease among children around the world, including in Israel. The COVID-19 pandemic, which forced children to remain in their homes – and kept them from outdoor exercise opportunities for weeks at a time, only exacerbated the See “Gaming” on page 17



The smartphone gaming-based program to address childhood obesity and physical health was developed in collaboration with UVTAL, creator of Rumble, a popular active movement gaming app that plans to launch in North America by the end of 2021. (Photo courtesy of Sheba Medical Center)

### IAC. . . . .Continued from page 15

in Gaza and social media is flourishing with hate and bias, those teachers will have that moment where they say, ‘Hold on, it doesn’t all sound true. Let me look into that before I go to class and say, ‘Israel bombed Syria last night.’”

Forty-five educators registered for the recent Nevada symposium – a room divided into thirds between educators with very little knowledge about Israel, those with some knowledge but “not enough” and those who attended mainly for the social networking aspect of the experience, according to Peri-Jensch.

Bennett said a number of teachers requested copies of his presentation. “Based on a few of those conversations, I think what attracted them was the big-picture context I provided that filled in some gaps for them, buttressed with the granular details, photos and maps,” he said. “I gather that many adults, educators included, are walking around with an overly simplified, Euro-centric narrative about the re-establishment of Jewish sovereignty in the land of Israel that starts either with Herzl or the Holocaust and ends with U.N. recognition and Israel’s War of Independence. But there is so much more to our story than that.”

He added that “the Jewish, Israeli and Zionist story is full of complexity, both ancient and modern at the same time, and encompasses a vast civilization, including various streams and traditions of music, culture, foods from far-flung lands, Torah-learning, God, film, fine arts, science, business, outdoor adventure, nature, geography, archeology, history, debate, politics, military and civil defense, romanticism and cynicism. Our teachers and our children need to be taught Israel’s beauty and complexity in order to appreciate it.”

The symposium was particularly important, Bennett noted, in light of the recent pro-BDS initiatives promoted among teachers’ unions and other entities in California and across the nation.

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” he said. “The BDS hate movement’s lies could not take root if educators had a basic foundation in the history of the Jewish people and the Middle East region. Lacking that, anti-Israel libels of colonialism, apartheid and racism are able to achieve their aim: playing off people’s general ignorance, demonizing Israel, and creating anti-Israel sentiment and activism.”

### Hanukkah. . . . .Continued from page 13

Gradually stir in the remaining 1 cup flour, adding baking soda, ginger, orange extract and pepper. Fold in the crystallized ginger.

Pour into prepared baking dish. Brush the remaining 2 tablespoons molasses over top.

Bake 30 to 35 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean (the center may fall slightly). Cool before cutting into squares. Freezes well.

Can serve with a dollop of whipped topping or vanilla ice-cream or frozen yogurt.

#### Funnel Cake (dairy)

Makes 4 cakes. Cook’s tips:

◆ Use vegetable oil, not olive oil (vegetable oil has a higher smoke point). It’s best for high-temperature cooking such as deep frying.

◆ To test oil temperature: Funnel cake (Photo by Justin When the oil is preheated, Matrose via Wikimedia dip the handle of a wooden Commons) spoon or a chopstick into the oil. Ready when the oil starts bubbling steadily around the handle. If bubbling vigorously, the oil is too hot. If only a few bubbles pop up, the oil isn’t hot enough. Or drop a 1-inch piece of white bread into the oil; it should brown (not darken) in 60 seconds, then the oil is ready.

◆ To use a funnel to pour, cover the bottom of the spout with your finger. Pour about ½ cup batter into the funnel. About 2-3 inches above the hot oil, release your finger from the funnel bottom and pour the batter in a spiral motion into the oil.

◆ Use a pitcher to pour.  
1 large egg  
½ cup milk  
½ cup water



2 Tbsp. sugar  
½ tsp. vanilla extract  
1½ cups all-purpose flour  
1½ tsp. baking powder  
Oil for frying  
Confectioners’ sugar to dredge  
In a medium bowl, whisk the egg, milk, water, sugar and vanilla to blend.

Stir in the flour, ½ cup at a time, with the baking powder in the last addition. The batter should be like heavy cream. If too thin, add a little extra flour.

In a deep, heavy pot or skillet, pour in oil about ¾-inch deep. Heat to 365° to 375°F.

Pour about ½ cup batter into hot oil, using a circular motion. Fry 1-2 minutes on each side, or until golden-brown. Use a spatula and a spoon, or two spoons, to flip. Drain on paper towels.

Dredge with confectioners’ sugar.  
Serve warm.

#### Pineapple Shrub (pareve)

Serves 4. Cook’s tips:

◆ Drain canned pineapple chunks. Place in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours until frozen.

◆ Frozen pineapple chunks are available in markets.

◆ Orange juice may be substituted for brandy.

◆ Serve in wine glasses.

3 cups frozen pineapple chunks  
2 Tbsp. confectioners’ sugar  
½ cup coconut milk  
2 Tbsp. brandy

Place frozen pineapple in a food processor. Add the sugar and process until coarsely chopped.

Slowly pour in the coconut milk and brandy. Process until smooth. Pour into small cups.

Serve immediately.

Ethel G. Hofman is a syndicated American Jewish food and travel columnist, author and culinary consultant.

## Quick Reference Guide to Planned Giving

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# SCIENCE NEWS

## Technion scientists create wearable motion sensor that identifies bending, twisting

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Scientists at the Technion–Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa have produced a stretchable electronic material and created a wearable sensor capable of precisely identifying bending and twisting motion. It is essentially an electronic skin capable of recognizing the range of movement human joints normally make, with up to half a degree of precision.

This breakthrough is the result of collaborative work between researchers from different fields in the Laboratory for Nanomaterial-Based Devices, headed by Professor Hossam Haick from the Wolfson Faculty of Chemical Engineering. It was recently published in *Advanced Materials* and was featured on the journal’s cover.

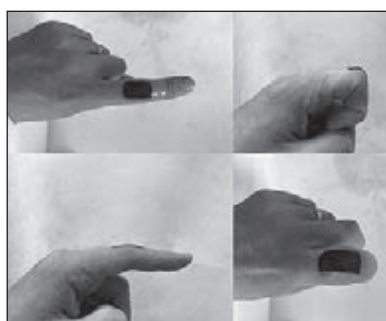
Haick’s lab is focused on wearable devices for various uses. Currently, existing wearable motion sensors can recognize bending movement, but not twisting. Existing twisting sensors, on the other hand, are large and cumbersome. This problem was overcome by Ph.D. candidate Yehu David Horev and postdoctoral fellow Arnab Maity.

Horev found a way to form a composite material that was both conductive (and thus, usable as a sensor) and flexible, stretchable, breathable and biocompatible that didn’t change

its electrical properties when stretched. Maity then solved the mathematics of analyzing the received signal, creating an algorithm capable of mapping bending and twisting motion – the nature of the movement, its speed and its angle. The novel sensor is breathable, durable and lightweight, allowing it to be worn on the human body for prolonged periods.

“This sensor has many possible applications,” said Haick. “It can be used in early disease diagnosis, alerting of breathing alterations and motor system disorders such as Parkinson’s disease. It can be used to assist patients’ motor recovery and be integrated into prosthetic limbs. In robotics, the feedback it provides is crucial for precise motion. In industrial uses, such sensors are necessary for monitoring systems, putting them at the core of the fourth industrial revolution.”

Yehu explained further, saying, “Electrically conductive polymers are usually quite brittle. To solve this, we created



*Pictured is an electronic skin capable of recognizing the range of movement human joints normally make, developed by Scientists at the Technion–Israel Institute of Technology. (Photo by Office of the Technion Spokesperson)*

a composite material that is a little like fabric: The individual polymer ‘threads’ cannot withstand the strain on the material, but their movement relative to each other lets it stretch without breaking. It is not too different from what lends stretch to t-shirts. This allows the conductive polymer withstand extreme mechanical conditions without losing its electrical properties.”

What makes this achievement more important is that the materials the group used are very cheap, resulting in an inexpensive sensor. “If we make a device that is very expensive, only a small number of institutions in the Western world can afford to use it. We want the technological advances we achieve to benefit everyone, regardless of their geographic location and socioeconomic status,” said Haick.

Among the laboratory’s other projects is a tuberculosis-diagnosing sticker patch, which is needed in developing countries.

## Gaming.....Continued from page 16

problem,” said Dubnov-Raz. “Now, especially in these challenging times requiring social distancing for health safety, technology like the Rumble app can be harnessed to support medical teams while also increasing the amount of physical activity among children, which is so critical to their and our future.”

To motivate children to be healthier and more active, the app runs in concert with a smartwatch that monitors their sleep, heart rate and physical activity. The more they perform actions that promote a healthy lifestyle, the more digital “health coins” they win.

Coins are earned through daily step accumulation, participation in training, reading and watching healthy lifestyle content, and answering customized questionnaires. With their earned coins, they can purchase healthy lifestyle-re-

lated prizes such as exercise equipment. In addition, each child can see how active they are compared to their peers within a closed group of the clinic’s patients, fostering healthy social competition and a desire to succeed.

“UVTAL creates a variety of technological solutions based on incentives from the fields of behavioral economics which are tailored to the needs of every organization, company or health-care provider,” said Alon Silberberg, CEO of UVTAL Health.

Throughout their participation in the program, children are accompanied by a team of experts from Sheba Medical Center’s Pediatric Sports and Healthy Lifestyle Clinic. A pediatrician and sports medicine specialist, a pediatric and sports nutritionist, a child exercise physiologist and a sports psychologist collaborate to monitor, counsel and encourage the children.

“This technology has a huge advantage in that it solves a problem that conventional medicine doesn’t always have the tools to address,” explained Iris Shtein, co-director of the Telemedicine Innovation Hub at ARC Innovation at Sheba Medical Center. “The incorporation of gamification has proven to keep kids connected and engaged for a much longer time. The success of this cooperation has the potential to reach the international arena and make a global impact of not just children and youth, but of people everywhere.”

“The key to the program’s success is that it’s fun,” said Dubnov-Raz. “The medical staff and the technology are the building blocks, but the Rumble app brings the fun element, which is ultimately what keeps the children active and healthy.”

For more information, visit [eng.sheba.co.il](http://eng.sheba.co.il).

# Giving Tuesday Matching Grant

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- Suzanne Holwitt, President., Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

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# Dina and #Times Up

RABBI AARON SLONIM, DIRECTOR, THE ROHR CHABAD CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDENT LIFE

The story of Dina's defilement by Shechem remains one of the most difficult of all biblical sagas. It also defies the conventional contours of the rape narrative, which is never about attraction, but rather brute strength and/or the rush of power, and most always ends with the victim left behind by the rapist like a crumpled tissue. In our *parasha*, however, Shechem expresses inordinate and tender desire for Dina. The verse tell us, "He became attached to Jacob's daughter, Dina; he loved the girl and spoke to her

heart." (Genesis 33:3) He seems drawn by a power that she exudes and begs his father to negotiate his marriage to her with her father.

One especially vexing aspect of this story has been the way in which Dina is indicted for her actions in some of the *midrashic* writings. The story begins with Dina "going out" to see the girls of that region, and that is interpreted as unseemly behavior. The "blame the victim" aspect adds another dark layer to this already challenging narrative.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, however, inverted the paradigm with his unique analysis of Rashi's commentary surrounding this saga. The Rebbe taught that Dina—who had extraordinary power to transform individuals and could even have brought Esav to *teshuvah*, repentance (Rashi 32:23)—actually "went out" for the purpose of seeing how she could influence the women of that region to come under "the wings of the *Shechina*." Rashi (34:1) compares Dina to her mother Leah. See "Dina" on page 19

## Congregational Notes

### Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative  
Rabbi: Geoffrey Brown  
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 723-7461 and 231-3746  
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-3:30 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm  
E-mail: titammy@stny.twcbc.com  
Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org  
Service Schedule: Tues., 5:30 pm; Fri., 5:30 pm; Sat., 9:30 am

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom and in-person (masks are required).

On Saturday, November 20, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Genesis 32:4-36:43 and the haftarah is Obadiah 1:1-21. At 6 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Wednesday, November 24, Torah study will be held from 4-5 pm.

The temple office will be closed Wednesday-Friday, November 24-26.

On Saturday, November 27, at 9:30 am, Shacharit services will be held at 10 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Genesis 37:1-40:23 and the haftarah is Amos 2:6-3:8. At 5:45 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Wednesday, December 1, Torah study will be held from 4-5 pm.

### Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Rabbi: Amelia F. Wolf  
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820  
Phone: 607-432-5522  
E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com  
Regular service times: Contact the temple 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, contact the temple.

Friday night services will be held on December 3; January 7; February 4; March 4; April 1; May 6 and Saturday morning, May 7; and June 3.

### Congregation Tikun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Tripphammer Rd. (corner of Tripphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY  
Phone: 607-256-1471  
Website: www.tikunvor.org; E-mail: info@tikunvor.org  
Presidents: Denice Cassaro and Nomi Talmi  
Rabbi: Shifrah Tobacman

Education Director/Admin. Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky  
Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin  
Services: Fridays at 7:30 pm unless otherwise notes. Contemplative morning services every Tuesday. Saturday mornings, Gan Shabbat, and other special services at least once a month Call for the weekly schedule.

Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE) for kindergarten through seventh grade meets on Sunday mornings. Sixth and Seventh grade also meets on Wednesday afternoons.  
Adult Education: Available throughout the year. Check the website or call the office for details.

### Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated  
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045  
Phone: 607-756-7181  
President: 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

### 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.

### 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](http://www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership).

### 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-safman@tbeithaca.org and secretary@tbeithaca.org  
Website: www.tbeithaca.org  
Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen  
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman  
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody  
Services: Friday 8 pm; Saturday 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekly 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, 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](http://www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE).

Friday, November 19, light candles before ..... 4:21 pm  
Saturday, November 20, Shabbat ends ..... 5:21 pm  
Friday, November 26, light candles before ..... 4:17 pm  
Saturday, November 27, Shabbat ends ..... 5:17 pm  
Friday, December 3, light candles before ..... 4:14 pm  
Saturday, December 4, Shabbat ends ..... 5:15 pm

### Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
Rabbi: Barbara Goldman-Wartell  
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm  
Phone: 723-7355  
Fax: 723-0785  
Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com  
Website: www.templeconcord.com  
Regular service times: Fri., 7:30 pm; Sat., 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.  
Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm on Tues. and Thurs. during the school year unless otherwise noted.

Some services and programs are online only.  
Friday, November 19: 10 am-2 pm, Judaica Shop open. At 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Transgender Day of Remembrance Prayer with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell. All are welcome to come in person, but a mask is required. To view on Zoom, visit <https://bit.ly/37UQSpK>, meeting ID 829 9450 3102 and passcode 708450.

Saturday, November 20: 9 am, Shabbat school; 9:15 am, Torah study in the temple library and on Zoom (to view on Zoom, visit <https://bit.ly/3CVxM14>, meeting ID 882 9808 7579 and passcode 676707); 10:35 am, Shabbat family service in the sanctuary; and at 7 pm, "Havdalah with a Bonus" at <https://bit.ly/3zd0atv>, meeting ID 897 4179 1260 and passcode 408279.

Sunday, November 21: noon-3 pm, Judaica Shop open.  
Tuesday, November 23: 10 am-2 pm, Judaica Shop open.  
Wednesday, November 24: 10 am-2 pm, Judaica Shop open.

Friday, November 26: 10 am-2 pm, Judaica Shop open; 11 am, unveiling for Earl Gordon at Westlawn Cemetery; and at 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Rabbi Rachel Esserman. All are welcome to come in person and no reservations are needed, but a mask is required. To view on Zoom, visit <https://bit.ly/37UQSpK>, meeting ID 829 9450 3102 and passcode 708450.

Saturday, November 27: No Shabbat school or Torah study; at 7 pm, "Havdalah with a Bonus" at <https://bit.ly/3zd0atv>, meeting ID 897 4179 1260 and passcode 408279.

Sunday, November 28-December 12: The Temple Concord Hanukkah Film Festival will be held online. (For more information, see the article on page 5.)

Tuesday, November 30: 10 am-2 pm, Judaica Shop open; and 5 pm, outdoor Hanukkah menorah lighting.

Wednesday, December 1: 10 am-2 pm, Judaica Shop open; 10:30 Temple Concord Book Club; 6 pm, outdoor Hanukkah menorah lighting; 6:30 pm, Sisterhood Schmooze; and 7 pm, Sisterhood board meeting.

Thursday, December 2: 10 am-2 pm, Judaica Shop open; and 5:15 pm, outdoor Hanukkah menorah lighting.

### 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.

### 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.

**NEWS IN BRIEF**

From JNS.org

**Watchdog group opens voting for third annual “antisemite of year” contest**

StopAntisemitism.org is inviting the public to vote in its third annual competition for the world’s “Antisemite of the Year,” a title given to the person who cultivated and propagandized the most hatred against Jews in 2021. Ten individuals who have been named by the watchdog group as semi-finalists competing for the title include Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA); social-justice activist Shaun King; Human Rights Watch executive director Ken Roth; Mohammed El Kurd, a Palestinian correspondent for The Nation; former Georgia Rep. Cynthia McKinney; Andrew Torba, founder and CEO of the far-right social-media platform Gab; British pop singer Dua Lipa; former porn star Mia Khalifa; talk-show host Trevor Noah; and Anuradha Mittal, who is head of Ben & Jerry’s Board of Directors and the vice president of the Ben & Jerry’s Foundation Inc. Three finalists will be announced on Dec. 6 with the winner revealed on Dec. 27. “This award is important because it exposes antisemites who think they can get away with their hate,” said StopAntisemitism CEO and founder Liora Rez. “Sadly, we’ve witnessed a spike in antisemitism this year, but we continue to work relentlessly to call out antisemites and hold them accountable. Our contest is one of the ways to do so.” Previous winners of the award include State University of New York (SUNY) law student Nerdeen Kiswani in 2020 and Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN) in 2019.

**U.S. Marines train in urban warfare with Israeli military**

The Israel Defense Forces and U.S. Marine Corps completed a two-week exercise in Israel that included joint urban-warfare training, the IDF announced on Nov. 13. In the past two weeks, the forces learned “various methods with an emphasis on open and urban field combat at the ground forces training bases,” said the IDF in a statement. “In addition to the exercise, annual discussions between the IDF and Marines were conducted, led by infantry officer and chief IDF paratrooper Brig. Gen. Guy Levy, establishing the 2022 joint training framework,” it added. Marines have arrived on Israeli soil for drills in the past, including in 2018, when they met with the IDF’s Egoz commando unit to gain information about its combat experiences in the Middle East. In 2016, IDF special forces and U.S. Marines held joint training in Israel’s Negev Desert as part of an exercise dubbed “Noble Shirley.” The forces practiced counter-terrorism tactics, including landing helicopters in combat zones, urban combat and storming positions. In 2013, IDF Givati Brigade forces exchanged information on urban warfare with the Marines – and were briefed on their experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq – during a joint training program in Israel.

**Report: New Shin Bet chief met with Abbas in Ramallah**

Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet) Director Ronen Bar met with Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah the week of Nov. 12, Israeli media reported on Nov. 16. The focus of the meeting was Hamas’ attempts

**Dina . . . . . Continued from page 18**

who “went out” for an exalted purpose. Why, the Rebbe asks, would we think Dina was up to no good?

The Rebbe’s explanation illuminates Dina’s accomplishments. Indeed, all of the men of that region did circumcise themselves, thus spiritually aligning themselves with the seed of Abraham. And all of the women and children were absorbed in Yaakov’s household, becoming God fearing and serving individuals. Fascinatingly, Dina’s daughter Osnath (fathered by Shechem) married Yosef; he, too, had all of the men in Egypt circumcised. (Rashi 41:55)

That which is contained must be released: Dina’s great power to transform could not be confined. In like fashion, taught the Rebbe, women of every generation who are gifted with the ability to bring their fellow Jews to *teshuvah*, must “go out” and utilize their capabilities for the very same purpose.

to increase its influence in and destabilize Judea and Samaria, according to Channel 12. Bar’s trip to Ramallah came just days before he headed to Cairo to meet with top Egyptian security officials. Among other things, the two sides discussed tightening security cooperation amid shared regional threats, the security situation in the Gaza Strip and a possible prisoner-exchange deal with the Hamas terrorist organization. Bar’s office refused to comment on any of his recent meetings, according to Channel 12.

**S. Africa drops support for “Miss Universe” contestant for refusing to boycott Israel**

The South African government withdrew its support for its contestant for the “Miss Universe” pageant to take place in December in the resort city of Eilat because she refuses to abide by a boycott against Israel, reported Reuters. The country’s Department of Sport, Arts and Culture said on Nov. 14 that it tried to convince Lalela Mswane to withdraw. Palestinian groups are calling on Mswane and the organizer of Miss South Africa to boycott the event. The beauty queen, who plans to represent her country in the 2021 “Miss Universe” pageant set to take place on Dec. 12, is facing online harassment by supporters of the anti-Israel, antisemitic BDS movement. Political parties, the ruling African National Congress and trade unions are supporting the boycott, according to the report.

**Gantz announces visit to Morocco, defense deal reportedly in works**

Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz plans to visit Morocco on Nov. 24, Israel’s Ministry of Defense announced on Nov. 15. While there, he is expected to sign a defense deal between the two countries. The United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco normalized relations with Israel last year under the framework of the Abraham Accords, which was brokered by the United States. Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid visited Morocco in August – the first by an Israeli minister since 2003. In October, the Israeli National Security Council canceled a travel alert that had been in effect for Morocco for more than a decade. Morocco has also started teaching Jewish history and culture in schools; an Israeli novel in Hebrew has been published for the first time into Moroccan Arabic; El Al and Israir have launched regular direct flights to Morocco; and Israeli universities have been forming partnerships with Moroccan ones to encourage joint research, primarily in the science and technology fields.

**Film . . . . . Continued from page 5**

◆ Night four: “Latter Day Jew” tells the story of H. Alan Scott: a gay, former Mormon, a Jew by choice, a cancer survivor, writer-comedian and his spiritual path preparing for his bar mitzvah at age 35.

◆ Night five: “Leona” tells the story of a young Jewish woman from Mexico City torn between her family and her forbidden love. The film shows the interpersonal conflicts she faces as she struggles to find her independent right path.

◆ Night six: “The Crossing” follows 10-year-old Gerda and her brother, Otto, who follow their parents’ path in the Norwegian resistance during World War II. After their parents are arrested, they find two Jewish children hiding in their basement. They decide to help the children cross the border to neutral Sweden to be reunited with their parents.

◆ Night seven: “A Starry Sky Above The Roman Ghetto” focuses on a group of young people who go on a trek to unravel the mystery behind an old photograph they find. Their journey helps them understand the history of Rome’s Jewish ghetto during World War II.

◆ Night eight: “Here We Are” is about a father, Aharon, and his autistic son, Uri. After raising Uri, some think it’s time for him to live in a specialized home. On the way to the home, father and son run away together.

“Add a new dimension to your celebration of Hanukkah this year with the Hanukkah Film Festival, and support our congregation at the same time,” organizers said. “We hope these Hanukkah films wets everyone’s appetite for the Jewish International Film Fest of Greater Binghamton Committee upcoming season.”

**U.S. Treasury partners with Israel to combat ransomware**

The U.S. Treasury Department announced on Nov. 14 that it was expanding cooperation with Israel to combat the threat of ransomware. The bilateral cooperation will take the form of a U.S.-Israeli Task Force on Fintech Innovation and Cybersecurity, the Treasury said in a statement. The launch of the task force comes on the heels of the Counter-Ransomware Initiative meeting, held virtually in October at the White House, with the participation of the European Union and more than 30 countries, including Israel, according to the statement. “Harnessing both the power of international cooperation and of technology innovation will position us to support economic competitiveness and prosperity, and to combat global threats, including ransomware,” said Treasury Deputy Secretary Wally Adeyemo, who met in Israel on Nov. 14 with Finance Minister Avigdor Lieberman and National Cyber Directorate director Yigal Unna. “As the global economy recovers, and ransomware and other illicit finance threats present a grave challenge to Israel and the United States, increased information exchanges, joint work and collaboration on policy, regulation and enforcement are critical to our economic and national security objectives.”

**Teen arrested in connection to arson at Austin synagogue**

An 18-year-old was arrested on Nov. 10 for allegedly setting a fire in front of a synagogue in Austin, TX, on Oct. 31 amid a rising number of antisemitic incidents in the city over the last few weeks. According to Austin Fire arson investigators, Franklin Barrett Sechreist of San Marcos, TX, was seen on video carrying a gas canister outside of Congregation Beth Israel. Authorities say he poured accelerant on the front entry of the building and set it ablaze. He was also filmed driving past the synagogue a few days before the fire. While no one was injured, the synagogue’s senior rabbi, Steve Folberg said that damage was “extensive” and included the destruction of “historic doors,” in addition to damage to the building’s exterior and to a stained-glass window. Additionally, “there is extensive smoke damage to our sanctuary, and remediation and restoration will take significant time and expense.”

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# Deciphering the past

## Rare biblical "Balm of Gilead" engraving found on seal in Israel

By JNS staff

(JNS) – The Israel Antiquities Authority announced on October 21 the discovery in eastern Jerusalem of an ancient amethyst seal bearing the first known depiction of the plant known as "Balm of Gilead."

The engraving on the 2,000-year-old seal apparently portrays the biblical persimmon plant – not related to the familiar fruit of the same name – used during the Second Temple period as one of the more expensive ingredients for producing incense, perfume, medicines and ointments, according to the IAA. The plant went by many names, including biblical persimmon, bosem or balsam, and Balm of Gilead.

The seal was found during excavations in the Emek Tzurim National Park along the foundation stones of the Western Wall in Jerusalem's Old City. The oval-shaped amethyst, with a hole for the insertion of a metal wire for use as a ring, is 10 millimeters (.38 inches) long, 5 millimeters (.19 inches) wide and 7 millimeters (.27 inches) thick.

"This is an important find, because it may be the first time that a seal has been discovered in the entire world with an engraving of the precious and famous plant, which until now we could only read about in historical descriptions," said archaeologist Eli Shukron, who conducted the excavation on behalf of the IAA and the City of David.

Shukron, along with researchers Shua Amorai-Stark and Malka Hershkovitz, characterize the engravings on the seal as a bird, probably a dove, and a branch bearing five pieces of fruit. After examining the engravings, they said they believe that the latter is the persimmon perfume plant mentioned in the Bible, Talmud and various historical sources.

"Toward the end of the Second Temple period, the use of stone stamps expanded and became more common, but most of the stamps discovered so far with plant engravings were of... vines, dates and olives," said Amorai-Stark, pointing out that the fruit engraved on the amethyst stone "is



A 2,000-year-old amethyst seal, bearing an engraving that depicts the Balm of Gilead or biblical persimmon plant, was found in Jerusalem in October 2021. (Photo by Eliyahu Yanai/City of David)

a positive motif in the Hellenistic, Roman and Jewish world, symbolizing wealth, happiness, goodness and success."

Noting that the engraving on the seal attests to the identity of the person who wore the ring, she said that "if it is indeed the famous and expensive biblical persimmon, then it is likely that the seal owner was a Jew with means since the production and trade that took place around the persimmon plant was tightly controlled at the time by Jews living in the Dead Sea basin, where the fruit was grown."

Amorai-Stark assessed that the owner of the seal was the owner of a persimmon orchard, "and when he came to the craftsman who made the ring for him, he may have brought a branch of persimmon, so that the craftsman would know what to carve on the stone."

Shukron concluded that finds like this one "allow us to get a glimpse into the daily lives of the people who lived in the days of the Second Temple – the glory days of Jerusalem."

unlike any we have encountered to date." "The balsam plant is a positive symbol," explained Shukron, "because magical and ceremonial properties were attributed to it." The dove, said Amorai-Stark, "is also

## Archeologists find evidence of Jerusalem earthquake described in Bible

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Archeologists have uncovered in the City of David National Park in Jerusalem the first evidence of the capital being hit with an earthquake that was mentioned in the Bible, reported i24News.

According to the first verse of the book of Amos, the earthquake occurred during the time of the Kingdom of Judah in the eighth century B.C.E. The Israel Antiquities Authority said recently that while evidence of the earthquake has been discovered across Israel, archaeologists have never un-



The Davidson Center Archaeological Park, adjacent to Jerusalem's Western Wall. (Photo by Wikimedia Commons)

earthed markings of the destruction that prove the natural disaster also struck Jerusalem, the capital of the kingdom of Judah.

Archeologists from the IAA found a layer of destroyed artifacts, including containers, bowls, lamps, kitchen utensils and storage jars, which were broken during the collapse of a building in the

City of David. Researchers found no signs of fire in the destruction, leading them to believe that the building was not damaged due to conquest or a violent act, but collapsed because of an earthquake,

noted *The Jerusalem Post*.

"We wondered what could have caused such a heavy layer of destruction and we looked for a reference in the biblical text," said Joe Uziel and Ortal Chalaf, the IAA's directors of excavations. "We then discovered that the earthquake that appears in the Bible in the books of Amos and Zechariah occurred when

the building we unearthed in the City of David collapsed.

"The combination of the findings on the ground with the biblical description," they continued, "led us to the conclusion that the earthquake that struck the land of Israel during the reign of Ozias, king of Judah, also struck the capital of the kingdom – Jerusalem."

## Archaeologists discover ancient private toilet in Jerusalem

By JNS staff

(JNS) – The Israeli Antiquities Authority announced on October 5 that archaeologists found a rare ancient archaeological structure in Jerusalem that almost certainly was used as a toilet. It is presumed to be more than 2,700 years old and dates back from the period of the First Temple.

The structure, made from limestone, was found in a royal estate in an area that

overlooks the Temple Mount. It was located in a rectangular-shaped room and was linked to a deep septic tank underneath carved in bedrock.

"A private toilet cubicle was very rare in ancient times – only a few were found to date," said Yaakov Billig, who is managing the excavation, in a statement posted on the Israel Antiquities Authority Facebook page. "Only the very rich could afford toilets."

Animal bones and pottery, including stone capitals and small columns from a window balustrade, reminiscent of the First Temple period were also found near the site.

Eli Eskosido, director of the Israel Antiquities Authority, said "it is fascinating to see how something obvious to us today, such as toilets, was a luxury item during the reign of the kings of Judah. Jerusalem never ceases to amaze."

The excavation project was initiated by the City of David (Ir David) Foundation, and funded by the Jerusalem Municipality and Israel's Ministry of Tourism.



The ancient toilet found in Jerusalem on October 5. (Photo by Yuli Schwartz, Israel Antiquities Authority)

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