

» SUMMERTIME

Jewish Observer of Central New York

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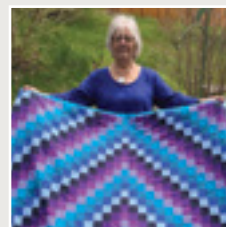
Temple Concord Takes Bold Steps into the Future



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From the Editor



Barbara Davis

It's amazing how resilient we are. We are relentlessly adapting to new norms, even though it is challenging at times. Many of us, even those in their sixties, seventies and even eighties, are suddenly attending Zoom meetings, participating in virtual birthday and holiday celebrations and holding video chats with our families, friends and neighbors.

We are working from home, shopping online and consulting with our physicians via telehealth. All ages are engaged in e-learning. Our synagogues are streaming services; orchestras are performing asynchronously; libraries are lending digital media instead of books.

At the same time, there are things we are missing so much. We had thought that this issue of the Jewish Observer would be filled with stories of camps, travel and trips to Israel. We never anticipated that instead we would be masked, gloved and still "paused" in quarantined. Still, there is light even in that darkness. People have rediscovered the joy and necessity for sewing. They're baking so much bread that there is a yeast shortage. They're growing their own vegetables and visiting museums online.

And news is still happening. There is soon to be a major change in our community's profile as Temple Concord, our oldest congregation, vacates its historic building and begins to share space with Temple Adath Yeshurun. There's new lay leadership at the Federation and new rabbinic leadership at Congregation Beth Shalom-Chevre Shas.

This issue of the *JO* features an armchair travel page, about a trip to Africa taken by the Jezers and a trip to Morocco taken by members of Temple Concord. Instead of stories about camps taking place this summer, we take a retrospective look at one of the JCC's earliest camps, Bradley Brook, which is so positively embedded in so many people's memories. We feature a bucket list of ten Jewish books, perfect for reading in your armchair or hammock as you while away the days of summer. An article about local Jewish quilters is sure to capture your attention as you read about this fascinating craft which you might even be tempted to try yourself. We hope you enjoy the insights into our community and its members as much as the *JO* enjoys bringing them to you.

Of particular note is Rabbi Shore's d'var Torah about unity. The rabbi writes, "United we stand, divided we fall." If the pandemic has had one good result, it is that it has brought many of us closer together, working for the common good. We have seen it in the filling of the Matan b'Seter cabinet at Menorah Park, secretly stocked by members of our Jewish community and regularly emptied and used by the healthcare workers whose lives and livelihoods are so seriously affected by COVID-19. We see it in the joint Zoom programming that the Rabbinical Council has put together for all of us – a prayer service for coronavirus victims and a study session for Shavuot. And we see it in the generosity of those who donated to the COVID-19 emergency fund and who are making (and even increasing) their donations to the Federation's annual Campaign for Jewish Life, so that the institutions that serve our community can be sustained and strengthened, not only today but in the future. When our resources are pooled, we can accomplish more than any of us can do on our own. The *Jewish Observer* is proud to be the voice of our Central New York Jewish community – strong, united and working together in what is certain to go down in history as one of the most challenging periods of 21st century life.

D'var Torah

by Rabbi Evan Shore



Many articles written about the COVID-19 experience and ensuing isolation have portrayed a society in flux, lacking cohesion and bewildered. I beg to differ. I am amazed at how the human spirit, when faced with obstacles, devises tactics to go around or overcome the hurdle. We, as a community, along with hundreds of others, are suffering jointly. No shul in Syracuse has escaped the effects of the coronavirus. Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller writes: "Our perception of reality is a fragment of the total picture. It's as though we open up a 500-page book to page 126 and read ten pages. Those are the only pages we see. We don't see anything that happened before; we don't see anything that will happen afterwards. Can you imagine judging the characters or understanding the action based on reading ten pages?"

However instead of dwelling upon "why," many have chosen the "what" path. What can be done to help, change or make an impact upon others? On Wednesday May 27th the Syracuse Rabbinical Council sponsored a pre-Shavuot Tikkun Study session. Seven rabbis, representing different streams of Judaism, came together presenting d'verei Torah to over sixty people on Zoom. The obstacle of social distancing was overcome for the sake of Torah and unity.

The Torah in the Book of Shmot teaches:

לֹאֲרָשִׁי קִשְׁוֹתַי הַבְּדַמְב וְנִחְוִי יִנִּיס הַבְּדַמ וְאֲבִיו מִיִּדְיִפְרַמ וְעִסִּי
רָהָה דָּגָן:

Having journeyed from Rephidim, they entered the wilderness of Sinai and encamped in the wilderness. Israel encamped there in front of the mountain.

Rashi, the classical Bible commentator, explains: The Jewish people encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai were compared to one person, with one heart. The three and a half million people in attendance at Mount Sinai achieved a level of unity that became the catalyst required for the Jewish people to receive the Torah.

A similar unity manifested itself during the pre-Shavuot Tikkun Study Session. This level of unity must continue. During the month of July, Jews will observe the Fast of the 17th of Tammuz. This day marks the beginning of a three-week period filled with mourning, ending on the 9th of Av. Tisha B'av (9th of Av) is the day world Jewry mourns over the destruction of both Holy Temples in Jerusalem. Our rabbis teach that the main cause of the destruction of the Second Holy Temple was **מִנַּח תֹּאנָשׁ**, needless hatred.

The Zohar (a mystical work also known as Kabbalah) teaches us that all souls in the world, the work of the Almighty, are mystically one. However, when the souls descend to earth, they are separated. Our task is to bring these souls together, strengthening unity, and at the same time eliminate needless hatred from our lexicon and behavior. The need for this behavior is crucial to our wellbeing and survival.

King David in the Book of Psalms writes:

וְהִפְדְּרוּ מוֹלַשׁ שָׂקֵב

Seek peace and pursue it.

The Malbim (Rabbi Meir Leibush ben Yehiel Michel Wisser, 1809-1879) explains it is not sufficient to want or desire peace, rather it must be pursued and sought after. The rabbis of the Syracuse Jewish community are all working together to make unity, peace and limitless love a reality in our community. There is room for all to join and together we will make it happen. United we stand, divided we fall.

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President/CEO.....Michael Balanoff
Board Chair.....Neil Rosenbaum
Editor.....Barbara Davis



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PUBLISHING & DESIGN

Publisher/Chief Revenue Officer.....Barbara E. Macks
bmacks@buffalospree.com
Creative Director.....J.P. Thimot
jpthimot@buffalospree.com
Vice President/Production & Sales.....Jennifer Tudor
jtudor@buffalospree.com
Lead Designer.....Kimberly Miers
kmiers@buffalospree.com
Senior Graphic Designers.....Josh Flanigan, Andrea Rowley
Graphic Designers.....Kristen Thomas, Nicholas Vitello
Production Manager.....Adam Van Schoonhoven
Sales Director.....Cynthia Oppenheimer
coppenheimer@buffalospree.com
Sales Executives.....Keren Green
kgreen@buffalospree.com

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Introducing Neil Rosenbaum, New Chair of the Board of Directors



Neil Rosenbaum, the new chair of the Federation Board of Directors, grew up in Gloversville, NY. He graduated from Union College and went to work for Xerox in Syracuse where, on his first day, he met Debbie, who was to become his wife. Five years later, he got his MBA from Syracuse and a position with GE. Ten years and four children later, GE decided to move his division to Indianapolis, but Neil and Debbie were determined to raise their family in Syracuse. They were members of Temple Adath and their kids were at the day school and having a fantastic experience.

Three years later, on the day that Neil and Debbie had decided that Neil would take a position with Stanley Tools in Connecticut, he ran into Steve Goldberg who asked him what was new. Five days later, including two days of interviewing, the Goldbergs offered him a position as vice president of eCommerce. He spent fourteen years with Raymour and Flanigan, the last as senior vice president of merchandising. After three decades in corporate life, Neil decided that he wanted to follow in the footsteps of his father and become an entrepreneur. With two partners, he launched a leadership and business development company which focuses on Central New York and the Mohawk Valley. "We are committed to being a catalyst in the reinvigoration of Upstate that is taking hold," Neil declares.

Neil's interest and connection to the Federation stems from his belief that Central New York is given a bad rap by residents and outsiders. He sees the area as a terrific place to live, raise a family and "age in place." "We can't control the weather," he says, "but we can control

how we think of what the area has to offer, the quality and values of the people and what the future holds if we work at it and believe."

Neil joined the Federation Board because he believes that its work is essential. Once on the board, he learned more about the specific roles that the organization plays, and his commitment grew. "I was incredibly impressed with the professional staff and the engaging, passionate and knowledgeable perspective of the board," he remarks. "As we updated the mission and vision of the organization I was particularly driven by the words 'works to build a strong Jewish future in Central New York and Israel and worldwide through philanthropy, engagement, education, and advocacy.' I find that these words represent the unique role that the Federation can play in the uplifting of the community's future."

Neil says that he "was anxious to take on this role because of my respect and love for the community, those that have led the organization in the past, and my desire to drive positive, collaborative work among all community agencies, organizations and agendas. We have raised four children in this hometown that we chose and which welcomed us. I want to be part of ensuring that this gift is provided to as many people as possible in the future. I believe that my varied leadership roles in business and community organizations have given me the background to make a difference. I see the Federation continuing to become an ever more positive, supportive part of the future of the Central New York Jewish and greater community."

In the short term, Neil wants to focus Federation's efforts and resources "on recovery from the pandemic crisis and providing support to the people, agencies and organizations we serve." In the longer term, he wants to continue to build "a collaborative, unified and forward-thinking community that is ready to adapt to the realities facing Jewish communities locally, nationally and world-wide."

Michael Balanoff President/CEO



There are so many kinds of Jews: Sephardic, Ashkenazic, Mizrahi, Ethiopian, Hasidic, Haredi, Orthodox, Modern Orthodox, Conservative, Reconstructionist, Reform, observant Jews, shomer shabbat Jews, 2-day-a-year Jews, lapsed Jews, good Jews, bad Jews, not sure I'm a Jew, patriarchal Jews, matriarchal Jews and the Jewishly-adjacent. No one can categorically say what it means to be a Jew. There are probably as many answers as there are Jews. So what does it mean when we put the word "Jewish" in front of a name. What makes our Jewish Federation Jewish? What makes our Jewish Community Center Jewish? What makes the Jewish Home Jewish? What makes our community Jewish? What makes you Jewish?

What does it mean when we say that a person has a "yiddische kup"? Is there such a thing as a "Jewish head" or a Jewish way of thinking? What do we mean when we say a person "looks Jewish" or "acts Jewish"? What do white supremacists mean when they chant "Jews will not replace us"?

I have been called "a dirty Jew." I was told I was not "an authentic Jew." I was told, "Hitler didn't do a good enough job." These comments stung, but they also served a purpose. They made me think about what it means when I call myself a Jew.

I refuse to let anyone else define my Jewishness. I think every day about what it means to put Jewish in front of the name of the organization for which I work, the

building in which I work, the community which I serve. We know that in the weeks and months ahead we will see increased antisemitism, economic turmoil, institutional reorganization and perhaps even collapse. Is there a way to address these issues from a Jewish perspective? Is there a way to solve these problems in a Jewish way? What does it mean to have a Jewish perspective? A Jewish identity? A Jewish purpose? Does it mean the same thing to everyone?

In the coming weeks and months, the Federation Board will be compelled to examine every aspect of our Jewish communal life. The leaders of the Jewish community will have to reflect on how we spend our finite funds, what our community needs to be a community, and how we fulfill our mission in a post-pandemic 21st century. And as we do so, the crucial question we must continually ask ourselves is: What does it mean when we put the word "Jewish" in front of our Federation's name?

To help us address this, I would like to invite you, the members of our Central New York Jewish community, to share with me your answers to the question: What do you mean when you put "Jewish" in front of your name? And what Jewishness do you expect from the Jewish institution you belong to?

Please send your thoughts to mbalanoff@jewishfederationny.org. We are all in this together and Federation is all of us.

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CONGREGATIONS

New Rabbi for Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas

Rabbi David Kunin will become the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas on July 1. Raised in Croton-on-Hudson in Westchester County, Rabbi Kunin grew up in the Reform movement, but switched to the Conservative movement after he and his twin brother, Seth, spent a high school year abroad studying and working at Kibbutz Ein Dor. He graduated from Brandeis University with a degree in medieval history and then was ordained and received a master of arts degree in Judaic Studies from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He has served as rabbi for communities in Glasgow, Elmira, San Diego, Edmonton and, most recently, as rabbi of the largest synagogue in Tokyo.

Rabbi Kunin has a strong commitment to Jewish learning and spiritual growth as continuous parts of Jewish life. He believes in the central role that a strong laity plays in the religious leadership of a congregation and in the importance of good and harmonious relations between people from diverse religious communities. Interfaith relations have been a hallmark of his rabbinate.

Recently Rabbi Kunin blogged about the coronavirus pandemic, writing, "I wonder what the world will be after the post-COVID-19 pause. Will we learn anything about what it means to be part of an interrelated human community, or will we maintain our selfish individualism, thinking mainly of ourselves? The media has so many uplifting stories, illustrating the courage of not only caregivers but also the usually invisible workers – e.g., delivery people and grocery workers – who have been there as the heroes of the pandemic. Sadly, I have also read and heard an equal number of stories about selfishness, which ignore the needs of others (even the easy provision of food) for the maintenance of unnecessary pleasures and 'so-called individual rights.' The importance of community cooperation and interconnectedness is not new."

"Rabbi Kunin brings a wealth of experience and maturity that will allow him to fit right in to the Syracuse Jewish community," says CBS-CS



president Jeffrey Sneider. "His international and interfaith experience and writings will allow him to quickly become a part of the interfaith community as well. I am really looking forward to hearing more about his experiences in Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia, where he has extensive contacts."

In his spare time the rabbi enjoys photography, hiking and skiing. His wife Shelley is a craniosacral therapist with an interest in weaving, knitting and other crafts. "Shelley and I are very excited about the opportunity to move to Syracuse and become part of the Beth Sholom Chevra-Shas Community," Rabbi Kunin says. "We have lived in and visited communities all across the Jewish world, but when we visited Syracuse in January we really felt like it was coming home."

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Temple Concord to Sell Building, Move to Temporary Quarters at Temple Adath Yeshurun

If all goes as planned, Temple Concord will embark on its next 180 years by selling its building at 910 Madison Street in Syracuse and relocating temporarily to shared space at Temple Adath Yeshurun while envisioning its 21st century home.

Change is part of the heritage of Temple Concord. Syracuse's first congregation, then known as *Kneseth Sholom*, was founded in 1839 by twelve peddlers who first met at Bernheimer & Block's in Syracuse seeking items for resale and coreligionists with whom to worship on Shabbat. German was still the language of the congregation. Ten years later, the Society of Concord built a synagogue on Harrison and Mulberry Streets. The new building contained elements reflecting its Orthodox origins, such as separate seating for men and women and a *mikvah*. But due to the growing influence of the Reform movement, the Torah reading table was moved away from the center. Within a decade or so, an organ, a choir and English prayers were intro-

duced and women sat with men, who were ordered to uncover their heads during services. Those opposed to such heresy left to form Adath Yeshurun, also known as the "Rosenbloom shul," after its leader. The congregation continued to prosper, and in 1911 dedicated the present temple, located at 910 Madison Street. A school wing was added in 1961. Other reforms continued, including the elimination of the assigned pew system and the installation of women on the Board of Trustees.

The 21st century has brought a new challenge. The 180-year-old congregation, the ninth-oldest still-active Reform congregation in the United States, is currently confronting the existential crisis afflicting many Jewish congregations: its membership is down, its building is old and in need of repair and it has insufficient financial resources.

Last year, the temple received an offer from Landmark Properties Student Housing Developers to purchase its building for

nine million dollars and convert the property to a 202-bedroom student apartment building. The congregation voted to accept the offer. Its president, Ken Steiger, said, "The sale is a matter of life or death for the congregation, which otherwise would have run out of money in less than three years. Without the sale of this building, it would have been very difficult for us to continue on in the way we have been structured. It would have required drastic changes to how we function, the services we provide and the people that are involved."

Opposition to the sale and razing of the building focused on its historic sanctuary, which was added to the National Registry for Historic Places in 2009. After lengthy negotiations and a vote by the Syracuse Common Council, it was agreed that the sanctuary would be saved but additions built in 1929 and 1960 would be razed. It was reported that the developer would construct an L-shaped building that would wrap around the sanctuary.

The next issue for the congregation was where to go on a transitional basis while envisioning its next home. Several options were considered until an agreement was reached with Temple Adath Yeshurun on a space-sharing arrangement, through which Temple Concord would have co-equal use of the TAY building. TAY co-president Chaim Jaffe said, "Temple Adath Yeshurun is proud to be able to help Temple Concord during its transition. We look forward to welcoming the members of Temple Concord and enabling them to continue their rich and vibrant history." Temple Concord's newly-elected president Sally Cutler said, "While this is a space-sharing arrangement, I'm sure we'll find opportunities for collaboration in our community programs, such as our lecture series, our film series, and our music series, in addition to social action initiatives and involvement." She added, "Not only is this sale a boon to us financially, it also is enabling us to begin creating our 21st century Temple Concord, and we are actively engaged in the process of envisioning what will ultimately be our new home. Temple Concord is committed to being the robust Reform congregation that we have always been in Central New York."

Here for CNY. As always.

Faster Treatment = Better Outcomes

People have been avoiding emergency rooms fearing they will be exposed to the COVID-19 virus.

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#TakeMeToCrouse

Shabbat with the Abayudaya

by Rabbi Daniel Jezer and Dr. Rhea Jezer

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to spend a weekend with a remote African tribe?

We have traveled to nine African countries on safari, staying in elegant lodges or visiting modern cities. We also visited rural areas, seeing barefooted villagers carry water jugs on their heads, grass-covered huts, and children in dusty clothing playing made-up games without toys. Although guides sometimes took us to small villages for brief stops, we wondered what life there was really like.

So when we were invited to join a group of twenty rabbis and spouses to spend Shabbat with a Jewish tribe in Uganda, we jumped at the opportunity. Getting there was arduous. After a 22-hour flight from Syracuse to Entebbe, we travelled in three old unairconditioned vans which periodically broke down on the hot nine-hour trip on rutted and cratered dirt roads.

When we reached our destination, to our amazement, villagers crowded around us with greetings of “Shabbat shalom.” Although they looked and dressed like any villagers in a poor dusty village, the men wore kippot and spoke some Hebrew along with their native tongues. They were so excited to see us because we were the first rabbinic mission ever to visit the Abayudaya, which means, literally, “The Jews.”

Who are these people? The Abayudaya became Jewish more than 100 years ago. The British were attempting to convert the population to Christianity. The chief of the tribe had a falling out with the British, and announced that he liked the Hebrew Bible and not the New Testament, and therefore, he and his tribe were now Jewish. They practiced Judaism



as they read it in the Torah with no knowledge of rabbinic Judaism. Although they realized that Judaism had changed since biblical times, they did not know how. Over the past several decades the Conservative and Reform movements reached out to the Abayudaya, teaching them to become part of the mainstream world Jewish community. Some converted to Judaism following halachic practices. The leader of the tribe spent six years studying at the Conservative rabbinical school in Los Angeles and is now an ordained rabbi. Some studied in Israel. A few young adults staff Conservative and Reform summer camps in the United States. There are about 2,000 members of the tribe spread over nine villages.



The highlight of our trip was Shabbat. The service was almost exactly like any Conservative service in the U.S. Ever wonder what happens to the prayer books our synagogues discard? There they were. Kabbalat Shabbat was amazing. Although the melodies are similar to ours, they were accompanied by drums using African rhythms and native dancing. The joy and spirit of the service were exhilarating. Shabbat morning celebrated three b'not mitzvah. Each young woman read fluently and flawlessly from the Torah and led parts of the service. Each of the American rabbis gave a short d'var Torah, translated into the Abayudaya language. After services we broke into study sessions. Their knowledge of the Torah and the sophistication of their insights and questions were impressive. The groups included teenagers as well as adults. We were surprised to learn that there are similar Jewish tribes in other parts of Uganda and Kenya.

Before the trip, we had read about the tribe. Poverty is widespread. Salaries begin at \$2 a day. We inquired as to how we could contribute. Although lunch at the high school is only fifteen cents a day, many students could not afford even that. We decided that as emissaries from Syracuse, we would ask our community to help. About thirty people contributed \$2,600, enough to provide lunch for 550 students for an entire semester. We wish that each donor had been with us when the principal and teachers expressed their thanks, as the students did an African dance while singing todah rabah!

Our trip was vigorous, exhausting but extremely worthwhile. It opened our eyes to a tribe that loves Judaism, coming to it from a history that is radically different from ours. They have deepened our appreciation of our Jewish life.

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Temple Concord's Encounters with Jewish History in Morocco

By Carol Radin

Eighteen Temple Concord congregants with family and friends, led by Rabbi Daniel Fellman, got a close-up view of Jewish history in a country where the Jewish community was once the largest in the world. The group visited the Moroccan cities of Casablanca, Fez, Rabat and Marrakesh, touring old Jewish quarters (*mellahs*) with narrow winding streets, beautifully-restored synagogues and sun-blached cemeteries. From the 15th to the 20th centuries, at least 250,000 Jews resided in Morocco, swelling with a wave of immigrants banished from Spain in 1492. Today, with only about 2,500 Jews in the country, synagogues are few and far between. Some are cultural sites only, although a few remain active. The Moroccan government continues to promote restoration of Jewish cultural sites and respect for its Jewish residents.

Rabbi Fellman reflected on the timing of the trip, saying, "As I've been more engaged with my Muslim partners here and come to know them and become friends with them, I wanted to learn more about the country where Moroccans and Jews co-existed peacefully and warmly." Temple members were surprised and pleased to tour a Jewish museum in Casablanca. They visited the restored Ibn Danan Synagogue and the El Fassiyin Synagogue, both in Fez, and the still active Slat Al Azama Synagogue in Marrakesh. Slat Al Azama, which dates from 1492, was particularly enthralling with striking walls of azure blue and white ornamented contrasts. Seat after seat was marked with the names of current congregants and individual prayer books.

Another active Marrakesh synagogue, Bet-El, welcomed the group for Friday Shabbat services. While women sat in their separate section and peered through the divider of bars, the fifteen men in attendance chanted prayers in rich reverent voices. Afterwards they participated in a lively dinner at the home of a Bet-El congregant. In a small apartment, their host's family set service for twenty at long tables



in their living room, and brought out heaping bowls of squash soup, a gefilte-like fish course, enough chicken for a regiment, pickled and stewed vegetables and a bounty of fresh fruit. After dinner, their exuberant host led the singing of *H'nei Matov*, *Am Yisrael Chai* and a standing finale of *HaTikvah*. With hugs and cries of "We love Shabbat!", everyone truly felt the joy of Shabbat.

Many other encounters were equally rich and unique. Rachel Rothman experienced a transformative connection when she and her daughter, Jamie, were able to discover the roots of their Moroccan ancestors. With a childhood address in hand, she found her grandmother's house in an old Jewish quarter of Marrakesh. On an afternoon Rabbi Fellman considered the most moving of the trip, he said *Kaddish* with Rachel, Jamie, and other congregants at the grave of Rachel's great-grandparents.



Bonnie Leff was impressed with a presentation by a young Muslim man from the *Mamouna* Society, an organization which promotes Muslim-Jewish understanding, who explained that, "In the past in Morocco, instead of locking up their *chametz*, the Jewish community would give it to their Muslim neighbors. The Muslim neighbors would hold a *mamouna*, a feast celebrating the end of Passover for their Jewish neighbors." The group also enjoyed a Moroccan cooking class, where they made a tagine of colorful squashes, peppers and onions sunken in olive oil and fragrant spices. Joe Greenman loved the food, especially the lemon-oiled roasted lamb. Everyone enjoyed the marketplaces where bargaining was required for leather goods, gauzy shirts and colorful *djellabas*. Snake charmers, jugglers and camel rides were part of the high-energy scene.

What made the strongest impression on all of the participants, though, was the enlightening journey into Jewish history in a country where one major world religion acknowledges the value of another.



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Day School Rises to Pandemic Challenge

by Amira Kipnis Goldberg

The Syracuse Hebrew Day School could not have been better prepared for the coronavirus pandemic. Celebrating its sixtieth year, the school has a well-earned reputation for offering a stellar general/secular curriculum and a superb Jewish studies/Hebrew curriculum. It came as no surprise, then, that SHDS made a shift from in-person to online schooling without missing a day of instruction.

Last fall, Head of School Laura Lavine began preparing SHDS's teachers for the possibility of online schooling in the event of an extended closure. While the coronavirus was unknown at the time, it seemed possible that the need for online schooling might occur due to extended snow days or an influenza outbreak. With professional development on topics such as literacy and online resources, followed by becoming a Google School, SHDS quickly became well-positioned to continue its students' academic progress over the internet.

When it became clear that Covid-19 was going to cause large-scale disruption, Lavine was the first in Onondaga County to announce the closing of a school. "Because my first priority is the safety and security of our students and staff, and because we are a non-public school, we did not have to wait for elected officials to figure things out. Our last day of in-person instruction was on Friday, March 13, and we shifted to direct, synchronous online schooling the following Monday."

Since then, SHDS's kindergarten

through sixth graders have continued their education utilizing platforms such as Google Meets, Zoom, iReady, email, telephone calls and other technology. "Our students interact with their teachers every day in real time. We're not sending packets of worksheets to be completed and returned. All curricula are being taught including music, instrumental music lessons, art and physical education," reported Lavine.

Parental reaction was extremely positive. One parent said, "The transition to online learning was seamless due to the planning and teacher training that took place in the weeks leading up to the school closure. My daughter was prepared for online school, since the teachers and staff had discussed the possibility in school and provided a daily schedule of classes. I feel that the public school district was less prepared, and my older children didn't have a clear idea as to what to expect. Teachers offered instruction via video or other asynchronous methods and assigned work for the students to do at home. While they

may have occasional 'check-ins' with their teachers, the students do not receive regular synchronous online instruction in the same way that my younger daughter does at SHDS." In a departure from many parents' experience, another parent remarked, "I did not feel that I was homeschooling at all. My daughter was taught by her teachers, and I helped with homework as always. I realize that this is probably because of her age as well, but I think the older elementary/middle school students in the public schools did not experience this same type of structured online learning, which puts a burden on parents, especially if they are trying to work from home."

Another parent strongly agreed, saying, "It's not even a contest. SHDS for my younger child takes every category, and by FAR. My older child's experience has been terrible in public school - mostly because of equity regulations that the teachers must follow. She'd be one hundred times better off if she could have face-to-face classes, or even smaller classes, but they can't do any of that. It's really bad for a kid like her, who thrives on social interaction." Another said, "We have one child at SHDS and one older sibling at public school. The public school made a significant effort to continue education during this gap, but their offerings have been almost-entirely asynchronous and self-directed. We've spoken with friends who have children in the public elementary schools, and they spent much more time than we did as teaching assistants for their children."

None of this is to say the process was simple. "There were challenges at the beginning," notes Lavine, "for example, the debate over Google Meets versus

Zoom." And the school had to adapt to the unique needs of different families. "Some families were staying apart because health care providers did not want to expose their spouses and children to risks," Lavine continued. "Other parents recruited grandparents to facilitate online schooling; still others had to orchestrate working from home while their children were learning from home." Day School staff and families agreed, however, that the children's happiness was more important than their reading levels. As online fatigue set in, teachers began doing more fun things with the children. "Our students have shown tremendous fortitude especially at handling the disappointments wrought by the pandemic. We wanted to engage them in some less academic, more social events before the end of school," Lavine says.

Lavine says that it is too soon to tell what will happen in September. "What is certain, however," says SHDS Board Chair Jay Sinclair, "is that whatever happens, SHDS's small class size, pedagogical expertise and talented faculty will usher the school into its seventh decade prepared for whatever comes its way. With class size limited to ten, it will be easier for us to distance our students than for public schools with large classes. We are already vigilant about hand washing. It is scheduled throughout the day but with small classes, we are much more on top of what our students need and are doing. We are ready."

Lavine has been offering online tours to prospective parents. Parents interested in learning more about enrolling their children in the fall are invited to contact her at llavine@shds.org.

Hillel – Needed in New Ways

As Jewish college students face campus closures, anxiety, isolation and food insecurity, they need Hillel more than ever. "Many of our students are feeling a deep sense of loss and anxiety," says Jillian Juni, Executive Director of Syracuse Hillel, "and they're turning to us as their Jewish community and spiritual leaders to bring them joy and spaces for healing during this challenging time."

Once Syracuse University suspended residential learning and students left campus, Hillel had to radically change its operations. They pivoted from a 400-person on-campus Passover seder to Passover learning opportunities with Hillel's campus rabbi using a Syracuse Hillel *haggadah*



supplement that students and their families could incorporate into their own at-home seder experiences. They have provided weekly programming over Zoom and social media including regular student-led workout classes, "A Day

in the Life of Quarantine" series on Instagram led by SU students around the country, Tuesday Schmoozeday, a virtual check-in with students led by Hillel staff, and *Café Ivrit*, a virtual Hebrew check-in with students to discuss issues relating to Israel led by the Jewish Agency Israel Fellow to Syracuse Hillel, Ronen Tzadok. Hillel's weekly learning cohorts -- Senior Seminar, Jewish Learning Fellowship, and Israel Learning Fellowship -- continued without pause and a movie club where students screened and discussed a different film each week was set up. Students and staff also post how-to baking and cooking videos on Instagram.

The Hillel team has also been hard at work selecting their student leadership cohorts for next year. These leaders will continue to create meaningful experiences for students in the fall no matter what the scenario. "Our main goal is to provide comfort and calm for our community during this time," said Director Juni. Hillel's incoming student president, Ronni Isenberg, said, "The dedication that our Hillel staff has put into programming has been nothing short of incredible and has provided a sense of normalcy during this unprecedented time. It has been an honor to work alongside this remarkable team to learn how I can engage my peers and continue to better Syracuse Hillel for the much-needed and exciting return in the fall."

» SHDS Alumni Profiles

Epstein School Says Farewell to Cantor Pepperstone

Cantor Paula Pepperstone joined the Epstein School as Director in 2013, when there were 23 students enrolled and instruction ended in the 10th grade. She immediately embarked upon an ambitious campaign to revitalize the school and make it relevant to today's Jewish teens. Over the course of her tenure, Cantor Pepperstone expanded the school's core curriculum and also offered a wide range of electives taught by members of our community with expertise in a variety of subjects. She received a grant to offer a Packing for College course to juniors and seniors to help their transition to an on-campus Jewish college experience. With the financial support of the Jewish Federation, Cantor Pepperstone created the popular shalshet program, which provides a stipend for students who serve as madrichim in synagogue religious schools and the Syracuse Community Hebrew School. In addition, due to generous funding from the Syracuse Jewish Community Foundation, Cantor Pepperstone helped organize and accompanied the school's first Teen Taste of Israel Trip for 9th and 10th grade students. Since 2015, the Israel trip has taken place every two years and is now a regular part of the Epstein School experience. Most important, under Cantor Pepperstone's leadership, Epstein School graduation occurs in 12th grade. She instituted the school's annual siyyum to celebrate its graduates and showcase student learning.

Cantor Pepperstone's vision, enthusiasm and hard work resulted in an increase in Epstein's enrollment each year. In 2019-2020, the school had a record enrollment of 61 students. At this year's siyyum, held on May 26th, Cantor Pepperstone was recognized by the entire Epstein community for her dedication and achievements. She leaves Epstein with a lasting legacy, and we wish her all the best in the next chapter of her life.

Sarah McKenzie, SHDS '81

"I feel privileged to be able to help working people improve their lives and get better wages so they can care for their families, have health benefits and safe workplaces," says Sarah McKenzie, who graduated from the Day School in 1981. "I work on a global scale with the Solidarity Center, a labor rights organization with more than 230 staff, working in more than 60 countries around the world with over 400 partner unions and worker-based organizations."

A graduate of St John Fisher College with a degree in political science, Sarah did graduate work in leadership development through Capella University and Cornell's Labor Relations program. She also trained with the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute, Cornell's National Labor Leadership Initiative, and the Martin Luther King Non-Violence Training program.

Sarah has always been interested in social and economic justice. "I thought I would be a civil rights attorney and I wanted to intern under Thurgood Marshall." After completing her undergraduate work, she took a break. "It was supposed to be a gap year, but it lasted much longer," she says. During the break, Sarah was introduced to labor. "I worked for the Urban League and then for Rhea Jezer for Congress. Through the congressional campaign I was introduced to members of the



Paperworkers Union, who encouraged me to attend the Organizing Institute. From there I became a union organizer with the Service Employees International Union."

In her current position as director of program coordination for the Solidarity Center, Sarah meets with working people in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and Europe: domestic workers, miners, grocery workers, nurses, teachers and government employees. "We work with them on organizing to make their workplaces better, on taking a proactive legal approach to create policies that support working people, promote gender equality and migrant rights. My colleagues and I are able to strategize and help build the capacity of the organizations we work with to promote democracy and social and economic justice in their societies. I love campaigning around these issues and seeing

the change that is made through them."

Sarah is a proud graduate of the Syracuse Hebrew Day School. "Through the Day School I learned that your history helps to make you who you are as a person. It is that very history that motivated me to be a social and economic justice advocate and to be a part of bringing social and cultural awareness. My experience at SHDS informed my current work with the intersectionalities between culture, gender, race, religion and economics. I am more open to all people and experiences."

Sarah made lifelong friends and her connection to Rhea Jezer, who was her SHDS music teacher, changed her life. She has fond memories of the school, particularly the weekly oneg shabbat celebrations, "which I now make sure to do with my nieces and nephews. I wanted them to also have those same traditions." Other members of Sarah's family graduated from the Day School and she proudly enumerated their successes. Her sister Deborah McKenzie is a chemist with AOAC International and is a rabbi with Jewish Universalists. Her twin sisters Ann McKenzie Hester and Anna McKenzie work in the field of human resources. Ann, a mother of two, works for Facebook and Anna is HR director at Motiv Power Systems. Leah McKenzie has four children and is a pension analyst for Samba, a not-for-profit federal employee benefit association.

RECC Community Comes Together to Appreciate Teachers

by Sonali McIntyre

It is said that when life gives you lemons, you make lemonade. The COVID-19 pandemic has offered some truly sour lemons for millions of people. That fact also rings true for the children, parents and teachers at Rothchild Early Childhood Center (RECC), the early childhood center at Temple Adath Yeshurun.

Nationally, the first week of May is Teacher Appreciation Week. Traditionally, parents have come together to show their gratitude to the teachers through gifts, special meals, and monetary donations. The Parent Advisory Council of RECC found a creative way to honor the amazing teachers



and staff, while maintaining social distancing - a car parade! In addition to the car parade, teachers received reusable tote bags filled with self-care items, snacks and treats, as well as a donation from the Emergency Teacher Fund, started at the beginning of the pandemic. RECC families came together to raise just under \$30,000 to give to the teachers to offset the financial hard-

ship caused by COVID-19.

Staff members spaced out and parked in Temple Adath Yeshurun's large parking lot and families paraded among the parked cars. Families decorated their cars with balloons, signs, and photos that offered love, appreciation, and words of encouragement. Everyone's joy and happiness was clear with honking horns, cheering and smiling faces.

RECC Director, Alicia Gross stated, "It was an afternoon full of emotions, yet it is comforting to know that the heart of RECC is still beating strong. We are lucky to have such a tight-knit, loving community of teachers and families."

Embarking on the Road to Reopening

The Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center's Jerome and Phyllis Charney Early Childhood Development Program kicked off preparations to reopen on Monday, June 8 after being closed for nearly three months due to the coronavirus pandemic. The program's managers trained staff on all the new safety and cleaning protocols before teachers started cleaning and reconfiguring their classrooms. Everyone was upbeat about reopening and excited to see the children again after being away for over two months. As of early June, about 25 percent of the program's children were scheduled to return the week of June 8, although that number was expected to rise for the summer program. *For more information about the JCC's Early Childhood Development Program, call 315-445-2040, ext. 120, or visit www.jccsyr.org.*



From left, teachers Anmol Sadana and Peggy Bray clean and prep their infant classroom.



From left, teachers Levi LeRuzic and Kristy Browne gather up artwork, projects and other items created by the children for their parents.



From left, teacher Shenice Stinson cleans and sorts a table full of books and other items while teacher Amanda Eckrich cleans the refrigerator.



Staff training on reopening the JCC's Early Childhood Development Program took place in the gym and followed all social distancing guidelines.



ECDP teacher Alana Raphael repositions items in her infant classroom in preparation for reopening.



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Senior Lunch Curbside Pickup at The JCC Up and Running

For local seniors who have been missing the Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center's chef Donna Carullo's cooking due to the coronavirus pandemic, their wait came to an end on June 1. That's when the JCC started curbside pickup for its Senior Kosher Lunch Program. On the first day, more than twenty lunches were picked up by appreciative seniors. It was a happy occasion to see familiar faces once again after having been apart for over two months. You can't tell from the photos, but everyone was smiling underneath their masks.

Curbside pickup for the JCC's senior lunches runs Monday-Friday from 12-12:30 pm. There is a \$4.25 suggested contribution per meal. Cash or JCC Senior Meal Coupons only are accepted. Reservations are required at least one business day before the meal date by calling 315-445-2360, ext. 100. *Questions? Email Cindy at cstein@jccsyr.org.*

The JCC's Senior Kosher Lunch Program is funded in part by Onondaga County Adult and Long-Term Care Services, New York State Office for the Aging, and the Jewish Federation of Central New York. Additional funds are provided by the JCC.



» Book Review

Ten Jewish Must-Reads You Will Always Remember

by Jackie Kassel

The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah

This book club favorite takes place in France during WWII. It follows the stories of two young sisters and their difficult and dangerous lives during very difficult times. Each plays a central role in the Resistance, though in very different ways. This historical fiction novel provides insight into what happened in France during the war, educating readers while holding their interest as a great read.

In the Garden of Beasts by Erik Larson

It's 1933 in Berlin. William Dodd is America's ambassador to Germany while under Hitler's rule. Much of the story revolves around his daughter Martha and her lifestyle while in Germany. However, the important theme of the book is Dodd's role in reporting the political climate in Germany at the time, and the world's inability to recognize the tragedies unfolding under Hitler. As all of Larson's books, this is masterfully researched and written.

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

Beautifully written, this book tells the story of Liesel, a young girl growing up in Germany during WWII. She steals books to quench her thirst to read and learn, but the heart of the story is the relationship she develops with Max, the Jewish man her family protects. This is a powerful, moving read with many themes--the mystery and power of words, the kindness and cruelty of man and relationships that cross a generation.

Exile by Richard North Patterson

David Wolf, a Jewish lawyer on his way to becoming a Congressman, defends a former girlfriend, who happens to be Palestinian, accused of killing the Israeli prime minister. In his quest to solve the mystery of the assassination, David faces not only danger, but questions and resolve about his own beliefs and future. This book of fiction is well-written and presents both sides



Jackie Kassel

and many questions about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

The Secret Chord

by Geraldine Brooks

This historical fiction revolves around the life of King David. While the reader may or may not choose to believe some aspects of King David as presented, the book provides a fascinating picture of what life was like in his lifetime. It is beautifully written and highly recommended. Take a close look at the lyrics of "Hallelujah" by Leonard Cohen. It is strikingly similar.

Orphan #8 by Kim van Alkemade

This book follows the fictional life of Rachael Rabinowitz from ages 4-40 in New York City. At age 4, she and her brother are placed in New York's Orphaned Hebrew's Home, following their mother's death and their father's disappearance. The conditions of the home and medical experimentation are central themes to this book. It is disconcerting that such conditions and atrocities could happen in a Jewish facility, yet this piece of historical fiction is well-researched and documentation accredits the themes exposed by the author.

Lilac Girls by Martha Kelly

This is the fictional story of three

young girls whose lives are intertwined during and after WWII: an American "do-gooder," a Polish girl who suffers experimentation in a prison camp and a young female German doctor. This is a graphic piece and often difficult to read, but also one that opens the eyes of the reader to atrocities during the war. It's an important read, though not for the faint-of-heart.

People of the Book

by Geraldine Brooks

The reader is drawn back in time by this prolific journalist-turned-author, Geraldine Brooks. As in all her books, extensive and credible research is clear. This book traces the mystery of the Sarajevo *Haggadah* from 1996 back in time to 1480. Some readers may find this confusing, some challenging, and others quite enjoyable. Either way, this book offers answers to questions about the history and mystery of the *haggadah*.

The Zookeeper's Wife by Diane Ackerman

In 1939, the Warsaw Zoo was administered by Jan Zabinski. But on September 1, with the German invasion, the city was forever changed. This true account of perseverance, empathy and

bravery in the light of severe danger is a testimony to those who persevered during German occupation. The zookeeper's wife played a vital role in rescuing countless Jewish children from starvation, cruelty and death. Because the book is extracted directly from diary entries, it becomes an important documented source of history.

All Other Nights by Dara Horn

The Civil War is about to begin and so too the surprises and intricacies this book lays forth. The most astonishing piece of history, for one not familiar with details of the war, is the role that Jews played in supporting the Confederacy. If for this reason only, one learns that human conflicts of the past can continue to the present. If readers are not familiar with the name Judah Benjamin before the read, they will be astonished by the role of this man in American history.

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Camp Bradley Brook – Jewish Summer Experiences That Lasted

“We welcome you to Bradley Brook. We’re mighty glad you’re here. We’ll send the air reverberating with a mighty cheer!!!!!!”

The Jewish Community Center ran two camps in the 1930s, Camp Winnie Taska and Camp Sun-Fun. In the summer of 1943, they were combined into the coeducational camp Bradley Brook. Bradley Brook no longer exists. The facilities are now Camp Lookout, a Madison County children’s camp.

But Camp Bradley Brook will live forever in the memories of those who went there. Ellie Hayman worked at Bradley Brook as a counselor. She says that “it was a wonderful camp for children during the days and equally as great in the evening for the counselors.” She recalls, “I loved sitting around the campfire toasting marshmallows and singing camp songs. Sometimes the counselors told the kids ghost stories while sitting around the fire. I also remember teaching kids how to row a boat.”

A Facebook page is filled with greet-



ings, reminiscences and photographs of its 250+ members. Following are some quotes from campers whose memories will never fade.

“Does anyone remember the gum tree on the way to the lake to swim? We’d

stick our gum on it before going swimming.” Sheila Gallin

“I went to camp at BB for three years. I remember the plays and was in “Bells Are Ringing” and “Guys and Dolls” (funny that they were both about organized gambling). I remember singing “When the Night Winds Blow” and could probably still play the chords. Remember walking down to the lake on Friday evenings? Also, walking all the way around the lake one time, and going to buy penny candy--watermelon slices, those sugar dots on paper, root beer barrels, etc. And the elections for--was it Mayor of the camp? I can still remember picking the splinters out of the sides of my hands from playing jacks on the porch of our cabin.” Judy Brown

“I was at camp in the ‘50s. The cabins were all in ‘Wilderness,’ no Israeli names at that time; stainless steel water and ‘bug juice’ pitchers on the table, and pink-eye spreading thru the camp like wildfire! Visitors Day when our folks would bring deli sandwiches from Meltzer’s, and lug home our laundry bags in Army green duffel bags; the jelly roll blanket at the foot of the bed, orange crate cubbies, double-deck bunk beds, swimming across the lake, making boondoggle keychains, ceramics in

the craft center, big sings before meals...Wonderful summer days for weeks on end!” Judie Cynkus Rice

“I attended the camp in the ‘40s and ‘50s. Loved every second. Great memories! Now at age 82, I’ll never forget the friendships from those days. I remember the Wilderness, the Lake, the cabins, parents visiting day, Capture the Flag, making things with Boondoggle, listening to the William Tell Overture on the lawn, walking to West Eaton....” David Dana

“Great memories of Bradley Brook: Wilderness, diving backwards off the diving board, sing-a-longs, Shabbat services, macaroni and cheese, Capture the Flag, and loads more. I taught my kids all the songs I learned at camp. Way out here in the West my kids know ‘Oh, the Erie was a-rising!’” Sue Alderman Winestock



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Sew Jewish

It has been said that, historically, quilters were not Jewish and Jews did not quilt. While there were notable exceptions to this axiom in the past, it is no longer true in the present. Jewish quilting has come of age. The *Observer* recently interviewed four very talented local quilters to learn more about their work.

Hanita Blair began quilting as a child, piecing simple doll quilts by hand. She began making usable bed quilts in 1973 as an art school graduate. “In those pre-internet days,” she notes, “quilting was a seat of the pants DIY enterprise unless you were embedded in a community with direct transmission. It was a Southern thing, and I was a displaced Southerner who was never going home again, so I had to teach myself.” **Rabbi Vicki Lieberman** likewise began when she was young. “I have been doing needle work since I was a child. My great-aunt was a finisher for a furrier in Manhattan starting in the 1940s and I think I got my love for sewing from the little items she would gift to us from her remnants. When I had my first pulpit, I received a call from a United Church of Christ reverend who wanted to bring her youth group to our Friday night service. I went to her office and she had this lovely quilt hanging. It wasn’t some mish-mash of old fabric from old clothes – it was art! I asked her if she would teach me how to quilt. She said no, so I learned on my own, and we’ve been best friends ever since, traveling the quilt scene together for over 25 years.”

For **Laura Lavine**, quilting was a family tradition. “My grandmother taught my mother to sew, and my mother taught me. My sister made clothes for my dolls and since I copied everything she did and sewing seemed to be in my DNA, I started learning. I made clothes for myself as a young teenager and continued on a limited basis throughout college but eventually lost interest. When I discovered quilting, it seemed easier than fitting garments so it was more appealing.” **Shirley Gnacik** started quilting about eleven years ago. She had retired and thought she would have time to pursue a new craft. It was another dimension to sewing, which she had done for many years. She took classes, bought books and watched YouTube videos.



Hanita Blair



Rabbi Vicki Lieberman



Laura Lavine



Shirley Gnacik

Shirley likes the social aspect of quilting. She joined a quilters guild where they do community projects together. “I have made quilts with my sister and my friends who had a project they wanted to make. I love the creativity of colors and patterns and seeing it all come together. When I travel, I look for different fabrics. In Alaska I found fabrics with red salmon. I made a table runner that we use when we have lox and bagels breakfasts with guests.”

Vicki likes the fact that quilting is forgiving. “Unlike clothing, if you have a seam out of place or a fabric turned wrong – it doesn’t matter. I don’t stress about any of it needing to be perfect. In fact, I prefer to start a quilt not knowing all the fabrics I’ll use or how big it’ll be or even what pattern I might add to a border. And if I run out of a fabric in the middle of a project, so what? I just find a substitute and you’d never know it wasn’t part of the original plan, because I don’t start with a complete plan.” Laura also appreciates the flexibility of quilting. “I’m the least creative person I know. I have literally no artistic talent. When I realized that I could cut fabric into pieces only to sew them back together

but in new ways, and not have to fit it as one would a garment, I had finally found something creative that I could do and enjoy. I won’t go so far, though, as to call myself a quilter. I’m really just a fabric-collecting, quilter wannabe.”

Hanita’s love of quilt-making involves other values, including community activism, making art, and frugality. “Overarching is the urge to wrap my loved ones in comfort, warmth, and beauty,” she says. She likes everything about quilting from the process to the result. “I like how it integrates physicality with the intellect and the artistic. I especially enjoy creating functional art with a little a. Planning, solving the puzzle of construction; colors, patterns, the feel of the fabric under my hand, the hum of my sewing machine, the portability of handwork, the meditative aspect of the work, soothing repetitive motions, sleeping under quilts, learning new techniques and helping other quilters, belonging to the quilting community, working solo, gifting warmth.”

A craft not traditionally seen as Jewish nonetheless has many Jewish qualities. “Every night in the bedtime *Sh’ma* we ask

God to bless the work of our hands. *Eishes Chayil*, the woman of valor, works willingly with her hands, and makes for herself coverlets,” Hanita explains. “In the avoidance of graven images, in following the injunction against waste, in taking something from here and something from there, in the putting together of scattered shards, in the fixing of the world by blanketing people in warmth and caring, clothing the naked, in *hiddur hamitzvah*, making the necessary beautiful, quilt-making is essentially Jewish.”

The length of time to make a quilt varies. “It depends on the destiny of the quilt,” says Vicki. “Am I making it for a particular person? Then I have to audition the fabrics and that could take days or weeks. Will it be a wall quilt? Then not only is there a lot of auditioning fabrics – it is a lot more intricate piecing and ultimately quilting.” Shirley concurs, noting that “a quilting project can take a weekend or many months depending on the size, detail and my motivation.” Laura likewise finds that time loses meaning when quilting. “I get so immersed that I stay up until 3 or 4 in the morning and have to force myself to go to sleep.”

All four women make their quilts to be gifted to family, friends or charitable organizations. Giving them away seems to be very much part of the joy of their creation. All the quilters encourage others to try it. “There are so many wonderful entry points to quilting,” says Rabbi Lieberman. As long as you are willing to learn to sew with a $\frac{1}{4}$ seam, you are prepared! You can make quilts as simple as you’d like or very complicated and artsy. There is really no limit. Check out a local quilt shop for classes, inspiration, and materials.” Laura emphasizes the ease of quilting. “If you are not artistic but want to be creative in some way, quilting is a great outlet. I’ve also made some wonderful friends through quilting. We share photographs and encourage each other. Their work motivates me to learn more and branch out of my same old patterns. In addition, I don’t know where I’d be without YouTube. I watched the same video at least ten times to learn how to use 2 1/2” strips to bind a quilt so that you almost can’t tell where it begins or ends. If I can miter those corners, then anyone can!” The only caution, Shirley observes, is that “when you start quilting, it can become addicting. Every quilter laughs about the stash of fabrics they have hidden away for the next project.”

All you need is a straight stitch sewing machine, some cutting tools, and fabric. Start small and enjoy the journey.

MAXINE PAIKIN SKURK

May 16, 2020

Maxine Paikin Skurk, our hero, entered eternal peace, Saturday, May 16, 2020 at her place of choice, at home with her family. Maxine was born in NYC, to the late Abraham and Lucille Schaefer. Maxine would like you all to know her work is done, and that she is in a wonderful place with “Ma,” and brother Barry.

Dear God, all loving and merciful, we ask for her peaceful ascension unto your kingdom. This, so we may be greeted by our beloved, at your gates, when our homecoming awaits us.

“Max,” was our beloved daughter, mother, sister, aunt, cousin, niece, and friend. She is a graduate of Central High School, Syracuse, class of 1950. For many years she worked as a HR administrator for the RX place in Syracuse. She had various jobs, but only one major one: she was our matriarch. Dedicated to her children, Max raised two sons and a daughter with unconditional love and support. She will forever be remembered for family and friends holiday dinners, picnics, and ceremonial events. Words are sometimes inadequate to define, or give justice to a concept; sometimes it is better to understand by example. This is the case in trying to exemplify what “family” is and means: it’s Maxine. She epitomizes

to us what family is all about, and we are forever grateful.

A special acknowledgement and thank you to Keith, Scott, Kimberly, Deiter, Marygrace, and Andrew, all of who made Maxine’s transition joyous. They never left her side throughout the last days, and hours. Her stairway to heaven was filled with “I love you,” “you are my best friend forever,” “thank you for all you have given us,” and finally, “it’s ok.” Up to and including her last breath drawn, she kept her smile. Max, you are the wind beneath our wings, and you will live on in all of our hearts eternally.

Maxine is predeceased by Lucille Schaefer, Barry Schaefer, Lester Paikin, and Bob Skurk.

Survived by her three children, Keith (Val) Paikin, Scott (Marygrace) Paikin, and Kimberly (Deiter) Anken; grandchildren Scott Paikin and Brianna Paikin; sister Karine Fisher, and son-like nephew Andrew Fisher.

Due to the current restrictions and social distancing regulations, a private funeral service and burial was conducted. Details of a future memorial service will be announced at a later date.

Contributions should be made to local organizations supporting essential workers of your choice.

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SHERWIN IRA GLAZER

June 7, 2020

Sherwin Ira Glazer, 95, of DeWitt, NY passed away June 7. He was a lifetime resident of Onondaga County, an alumnus of Nottingham High School and Syracuse University’s College of Business Administration. He was an executive and co-owner of J. Glazer & Sons, Inc., a local furniture and appliance retailer which was founded by his father Julius Glazer in 1927.

Sherwin was a member of Temple Adath Yeshurun, Jewish War Veterans Onondaga Post #131, the American Legion, Philo-Mt. Sinai Masonic Lodge #968, the National Home Furnishings Association, 8th Air Force Historical Society, the 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association, Phi Epsilon Pi and The Prince Society.

He also was a volunteer for the American Cancer Society, Lighthouse of Central New York, Jewish Welfare Association, University Hospital, a 2200 hour volunteer with WCNY-FM Read-Out and a four gallon blood donor to the American Red Cross.

As a decorated veteran of World War II, and a B-17 lead navigator of the 385th Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force, he participated in bombing missions in Europe. He was awarded the Air Medal and the Oak Leaf Cluster for his service. His bomb group received two Presidential Unit Citations and

he was awarded both the Conspicuous Service Cross and Conspicuous Service Star by New York State.

Besides being a loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, he was an avid Syracuse University sports fan and had a keen interest in politics, current events and music. He played clarinet in the Nottingham and Syracuse University marching bands. He also played piano and particularly loved “Clair de Lune.”

Survivors include his wife of 68 years (less one day) Lillian Glazer, son Bradley S. Glazer (Laurel Rubin), University Heights, OH and daughter Julia Abbe Glazer Reina, Somerville NJ. Sherwin had 5 grandchildren Stephanie Walcoff (Jeffrey), Andrew Glazer (Jillian), Michael Reina, Leanne Reina-Paolazzi (Thomas) and Jonathan Reina (Lakeya Daniel). His 5 great grandchildren include Madeline Walcoff, Noah Walcoff, Juliana Paolazzi, Jonathan Reina, Jr. and Michael Ira Reina. Also surviving are his former daughter-in-law Janie Louff Glazer and former son-in-law Michael Reina. He was pre-deceased by his father Julius, mother Lillian and brothers Aaron and Nathan.

Any donations in remembrance can be made to Temple Adath Yeshurun or Menorah Park, both of Syracuse, NY. Private graveside services were conducted in Adath Yeshurun Cemetery.

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COVID-19 EMERGENCY FUND

With a pandemic threatening our lives, everyone needs assistance. Those served by our local Jewish beneficiary agencies, synagogues and senior facilities are suffering in this time of crisis. The loss of income, canceled fundraising events and stretched resources have greatly impacted the ability of organizations to meet exigent needs and will continue to impact their ability to fulfill their respective missions in the future. The Federation is working with our partners to coordinate community efforts to anticipate needs that may arise as the pandemic progresses. **A COVID-19 Emergency Fund has been set up to help organizations meet current and evolving needs.** Your help is crucial and your contribution, in any amount, is needed now more than ever. **Donations to the Federation for this designated fund may be made online at www.jewishfederationcny.org.** Your dollars will enable us to provide the maximum amount of assistance at a time when the needs are greater than ever.

MARJORIE SIMMONS FINK

June 14, 2020

Marjorie Simmons Fink, a Palm Beach, Florida resident who quietly gave to many worthy causes, died June 14 of natural causes while vacationing with friends in South Carolina. Mrs. Fink would have turned 81 on June 20.

Born in New York City to Herbert and Augusta Simmons, Fink attended Ethical Culture Fieldston School and received an English degree from University of Wisconsin. She worked as a Bergdorf Goodman buyer before marrying furniture executive Rodney Fink of Syracuse, NY. She eventually joined the management team of Sibley’s department stores. The Finks had homes in Fayetteville, NY and Palm Beach.

Rodney Fink died in 2001 of non-smoker’s lung cancer. Shortly after, Marjorie began a relationship with The Scripps Research Institute, a nonprofit focusing on medical breakthroughs. From an earlier Scripps press release: “After Mr. Fink’s illness and death, his wife Marjorie’s interest in medical research was captured by the announcement of the Scripps Florida project. She has become a pivotal figure

in the development of Scripps Florida, and a motivating force behind our pioneering science.” Fink joined Scripps’ Board of Trustees, and was named a Scripps Florida Founder. In 2009, Scripps dedicated the Rodney B. Fink Pavilion at its Jupiter, FL campus.

Fink, who loved books, theater, art and world travel, maintained a residence in New York City. She was a member of Temple Adath Yeshurun in Syracuse, and a benefactor of Menorah Park of Central New York. The Rodney & Marjorie Fink Institute at Menorah Park for Applied Research on Aging carries their names.

Fink cared deeply about women’s rights and the needs of the underserved. In Palm Beach, she supported the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts as well as the Jewish Women’s Foundation.

She is survived by several cousins and her dear friends. She will be buried in a private graveside service next to her husband at Temple Adath’s cemetery.

In Marjorie’s honor, donations may be made to a favorite charity.

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SHERMAN CHOTTINER

May 20, 2020

Sherman Chottiner, 81, died at his home on Wednesday morning. He was born in McKeesport, PA on August 22, 1938, the son of Abraham and Lillian Parker Chottiner. He grew up in Clairton, PA, a neighboring mill town, where he graduated from high school. He attended college at Carnegie Tech, now Carnegie Mellon, graduating in 1961 with a major in chemical engineering. His first job was in Buffalo, NY with the Lindy division of Union Carbide where he met his future wife Carol Keller.

Sherman began his graduate education at New York University and earned his MBA with an award for the highest grades. He continued his education in the NYU PhD program with a Ford Foundation Fellowship and majored in statistics; applied math and finances.

Sherman and Carol married in 1964 and moved to Syracuse in 1966 with their daughter Lauren. Both of their sons, Jeffrey and Marlund, were born in Syracuse. Sherman began his career of 35 years at Syracuse University School of Management as a professor in the department of Quantitative Methods where he taught statistics and applied math.

Sherman was known for his ability in teaching and won an award as Teacher of the Year at University College of SU. He was chairman of his department for eight years and helped develop an Independent Study MBA Program.

He has written two text books which included humor along with the subject matter. Calculus: Math Alive and Applied for Business, Economics and Life Mathematics: Alive and Applied for Business, Economics and Life.

Sherman enjoyed playing sports, his favorite being volleyball. He also played baseball on his department team. He was an avid SU basketball fan and enjoyed football and lacrosse as well. He was interested in the stock market, current news, and could always tell you the weather report.

Most of all, Sherman was a family man. He and his wife Carol were partners for 55 years. He enjoyed being with his children and his most recent pleasure was bonding with his grandchildren.

Sherman is survived by his wife Carol (Keller) Chottiner; daughter Lauren (Avi) Maza; sons Jeffrey Chottiner and Marlund Chottiner; and grandchildren Seth, Liana and Jessica Maza, and Victoria Chottiner.

Private graveside services are in the Congregation Shaarei Torah section of Oakwood Cemetery.

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WILLIAM WOLF GERBER III

March 29, 1944 to May 23, 2020

Bill "Froggy" Gerber's life was full of family, golf and adventure. He was a life-long resident of Syracuse and the Thousand Islands until he moved to Palm Beach Gardens, Florida in 2008.

A Nottingham High School (1961) graduate, he worked for his father as a salesman at Gerber Distributing (record distributors). In 1964, he jumped at the opportunity to start Shoppingtown Music and Record Shop. With his father, he helped grow the business to Gerber Music with three stores and a warehouse that became a springboard for the careers of many local musicians. In 2014, he was honored when Gerber Music was inducted into the Syracuse Area Music Hall of Fame.

Bill was an accomplished athlete and excelled in everything he did, most notably, golf. A scratch golfer, Bill was inducted in the Greater Syracuse Golf Hall of Fame in 2003. Empire Magazine named him amateur golfer of the decade in the 70s. From the Onondaga Junior Championship in 1961 to qualifying for the British Amateur in 1981, he was Syracuse's winningest amateur golfer for two decades. In between, his wins included the Syracuse District Championship three times, Craig Wood Amateur Championship in Lake Placid twice, and three Syracuse Herald amateurs. He played in 5 U.S. Amateur golf championships, 5 British Amateurs, 3 Canadian Amateurs, 1 French Amateur, and a record 18 straight New York State Amateurs (he medaled in NYSA four times).

On May 23, 2020, William Gerber III gave cancer the win after beating it for many years. Hopefully, he has his game back wherever he is.

He is survived by his three children of whom he was immensely proud: Lisa (Patrick) Werry, Jacqueline (Raymond) Hobson, William (Kerry McMullen) Gerber; step-daughter Bess Storch; Bill's three siblings Leonard (Linda) Gerber, Terri (David Gardiner) Gerber, and Heidi (Bob) Greenbaum; six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and a host of nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his parents, William W. Gerber Jr, and Jean Rosenbloom Gerber and nephew.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the William W. Gerber III Golf Scholarship. www.gofundme.com/f/wwgscholarship

A life celebration will take place in Syracuse at a date TBD.

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BURNIS METZ

June 9, 2020

Burnis Metz, 94, died at her home on June 9. Born on August 13, 1925 in Syracuse to Samuel and Rose Nadler, she was a life resident of Syracuse. Burnis graduated from Central High School and in 1947 she married Irving, her high school sweetheart. They settled in Syracuse and raised their four children here.

Burnis was a former member of Temple Adath Yeshurun, and an active member of the Kimry Moor book club. What really mattered to her was being a wonderful mother and grandmother. She taught important life lessons, like how a jacket should fit or the way the best fresh vegetables should look and smell. Everyone knew her by her well-earned title of "soup goddess." Her love will endure forever.

Burnis was predeceased by her husband Irving in 1991. Her family includes her children Philip (Robin) Metz, Linda (Allen) Birnbaum, Jill (Jay Lurie) Metz Brooks, and Samuel Metz; 9 grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren; and her sister-in-law Esther Janoff.

Private graveside services for the immediate family are in Beth El Cemetery.

Contributions in her memory may be made to Clear Path for Veterans or Honor Flight.

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SANDRA GAIL SARKIN

June 1, 2020

Sandra Gail Sarkin (Hoffman), 84, passed on Monday, June 1, 2020. She was a loving wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother. Sandy was born on October 11, 1935 in Syracuse, NY to Ida (Orester) and Jules Hoffman. She was a graduate of Nottingham High School, Class of 1953.

On December 26, 1954, she married Harold Sarkin. Together they had four children. Sandra loved her family and enjoyed summers boating on the St. Lawrence River and winters in south Florida where they eventually moved.

She is survived by her four children, daughters Joni (Yael) Even of Israel, Barbara Geffen of Los Angeles, sons Jeffrey Sarkin of Fort Lauderdale and Lee Sarkin of Palm Beach Gardens, five grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and one brother, Dr. Erwin Hoffman (Arlene) of Los Angeles.

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