

Jewish Observer of Central New York

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2 JEWS
3 OPINIONS



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From the Editor



Barbara Davis

We have all heard the expression, “Two Jews, Three Opinions.” I even used it as the title of a book I wrote. But what exactly does the expression mean? Searching the world-wide web for an answer produced the following responses:

“It might derive from an inner cultural commentary about us. Having multitude of opinions is regarded as breeding wisdom. Or it might be a call to compromise. So if two Jews meet with differing opinions, they are allowed to make a compromise - hence the third. Or maybe it’s a jeer. An outside commentary saying that we as a people can’t make up our mind. We CAN - we just choose not to.”

“It’s not that we choose not to, it’s that we fail to find that compromise most of the time. (That or we’re stubborn.)”

“My guess is from the Mishnah, Gemara or any discussion of Halacha, I mean that’s pretty much what ends up happening. Person 1 has an opinion brought down from Rabbi X, Person 2 refutes person 1 with an opinion brought down from Rabbi Y, Person 1 counters person 2 with an opinion brought down from Rabbi Z.”

“Two Jews, Three Opinions’ is at the start of the argument. They each have one opinion, let them be x and y. They both agree that position z is thoroughly incorrect. Within a few minutes, position x might be partially refuted, the its proponent modifies it slightly to account for the partial refutation which means it has evolved into position a. Now, a shares some similarity with position z which both parted initially agreed was incorrect, so now it seems that position z might have some merit to it after all. This goes on for several pages in any masichta you care to point at in the Talmud Bavli.”

And that pretty much sums up the meaning of the expression. Or, as one wag wrote in answer to the question, “Where does the phrase ‘two Jews, three opinions’ originate?” “Probably from two Jews with three opinions.” (Or, an alternate position: “Each Jew has 1.5 opinions.”)

The *Jewish Observer* does not generally publish opinion pieces, no matter how well-reasoned, well-grounded in fact or well-written, about contemporary issues that are time sensitive. The reason is that we are a monthly, and articles for this September issue, for example, were collected in July, as they had to be submitted to the publisher by August 1st. This means that articles related to “breaking news” will be sadly out of date by the time they appear in our readers’ mailboxes. But we Jews are definitely people with opinions, about many subjects, especially in the age in which we live. So we decided to dip a foot in the water of opinion journalism, that is, journalism that makes no claim of objectivity. (Opinion journalism is distinguished from advocacy journalism, although both forms feature a subjective viewpoint, usually with some social or political purpose. And it is clear that the *JO* is an example of advocacy journalism when it comes to Israel, Jewish life in all its aspects and our local Jewish community.)

So this month’s issue has three articles, submitted by their authors, which represent their personal views on subjects adjacent to the current political situation in the United States and the Jewish world. The *JO* did not solicit these columns and their content represents solely the writers’ opinions. They fall into the category of “Op Eds,” that is, pieces which express the opinion of an author with no affiliation with the publication’s editorial board. The term is short for “opposite the editorial page,” referring to the practice of newspapers placing op-eds on the opposite side of their editorial page. We are giving these op-eds their own page because we thought that, at the close of 5784, it might be worthwhile to see how readers respond to the inclusion of these personal essays.

We invite you to share your thoughts at jo@jewishfederationcny.org.

And as long as we’re dipping our toes into controversy, another feature of this month’s issue are reviews of four books, all of which could be considered provocative, particularly in today’s polarized political climate: *Uncomfortable Conversations with a Jew*, *Bad Jews*, *Jews Don’t Count* and *Trouble in the Tribe*. We are grateful to the four knowledgeable community members who volunteered to read and report on these books and share their insights with the *JO*’s readership.

We also celebrate excellence in this issue, as we profile three extraordinary professionals who run the largest synagogues in Central New York and report on the wonderful experiences enjoyed by the young families who participated in Camp Zeke 2024. We are also proud to share the stories of two young community members who travelled to Israel to volunteer in the aftermath of October 7th, work which was partially subsidized by grants from the Federation. Lastly, we are very pleased to share with the community the remarks of Rabbi Irwin Huberman, who spoke so meaningfully at Federation’s annual meeting in June. They deserved a wider audience and our community newspaper is providing that forum.

We hope *JO* readers will enjoy reading this issue and learning more about the many ways our community members provide the work and wisdom that benefits us all.

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From the Jewish Federation of CNY

Rabbi Irwin Huberman of Congregation Tifereth Israel in Glen Cove, NY was the keynote speaker at the Federation's 2024 Annual Meeting. The Jewish Observer wanted the community to be able to appreciate his insights and wisdom (edited slightly for space), which accord so perfectly with this issue's theme:

It's Day 6 of Creation. God looks at all that was built. There are animals, babbling brooks, blue skies, and a light breeze. Beautiful—but stagnant. So, God asks the big question. "Should I create humanity?"

He consults the Angel of Truth who says, "Don't do that, because in the future, *this* person will say they have the truth, and *that* person will insist they have the truth, and then there will be a third person who claims they have the truth. And this beautiful world you've just created will be destroyed in the name of truth."

God thanks the Angel of Truth, turns to the Angel of Peace and poses the same question. The Angel of Peace says "Do it. Because over time this person will realize that they don't possess the ultimate truth—and the other will conclude the same. Ultimately, they will learn to truly respect the core of each other's truth. They will learn to compromise. And that is how your new world will be brought to completion."

And that is why we Jews study Talmud in pairs, why we cherish the asking of questions—challenging each other—but always as *Pirkei Avot* teaches, *L'Shem Shamayim*—in the name of heaven. What a tragedy it is that these days so many have lost the ability to listen with an open heart—appreciating the questions and perspective of the other. We tend to make declarations — rather than posing open-ended questions.

Every day since October 7, I've been flooded with emails. "Rabbi, you must read this." At our Kiddush, I regularly heard "I saw," or "I read." But these were primarily second- or third-hand information, opinions or theories. Consternation, within this horrible and painful war between Israel and Hamas, caused my wife and me to finally said, "Dayenu. Enough." We decided to travel to Israel and registered for *Livnot U'Lehit-vanot* ("To Build and Be Built"), a volunteer agency dedicated to repairing and rebuilding the communities which



Rabbi Irwin Huberman

were attacked on October 7.

Once there, from Sunday to Thursday, the group worked hard—painting, cleaning, knocking down walls and preparing kindergartens for children to return to. But above all—we were there to listen and to bear witness, to understand how we got to this point, to ascertain and to challenge ourselves as we watched the news from Gaza each evening, "Is there something we have missed?"

It was so profoundly shattering, appalling and upsetting, 80 years after the Holocaust and 22 years after 9/11, to observe what happened on that day. "It's too upsetting. I can't watch," so many within the Jewish community and beyond said. But bearing witness to October 7 is essential, and we cannot look away, for the sake of history but perhaps even more importantly to truly understand how we got here.

On that day, more than 2,000 terrorists rushed the border and attacked 22 Jewish settlements—too often led to exact addresses by many of the Gaza workers who were provided jobs in landscaping, construction and in communal kitchens. The barbaric slaughter, sexual assault, killing of children and seniors may have been news for a few days, but too often "news" becomes "olds." But I believe that the images of October 7 need to be replayed every single day within the news cycle. And that reality must be reflected upon daily to fully understand, as terrorists hide behind children, under schools and health centers within the context of Hamas' repeated statements: "We will do this again and again and again."

We heard repeatedly that, with hundreds of hostages abducted, Israelis feel abandoned by their neighbors,

their government and the world. As our group toiled, we observed and spoke with survivors and bore witness. Indeed, there is too much of a divide between Israel and rest of the world—because too many are reluctant to fully feel the profound pain of that day.

While there are many who have taken the time to achieve a sense of balance, too many have not. Admittedly, it is hard to watch—but it is within the heinous attacks of October 7 is where this all began. I have seen it with my own eyes.

So how does a community like Syracuse embrace challenging sometimes conflicting perspectives? We do so by creating space, to respect the essence of what the other is saying, like Hillel and Shammai, respecting the core of the question, rather than declaring the sometimes incomplete truth of the answer.

We need to unite in support of Israel—in spite of imperfections and differing opinions because, without Israel, in time there will be no vibrant Jewish community here, or anywhere.

We need to stand together as you do on *Yom HaShoah*, involving other faith communities and political figures, stating publicly the community's condemnation of hatred, no matter where it rears its head.

We need to stand together on *Yom Ha'Atzma'ut*, when we celebrate the achievements of the Middle East's most dynamic democracy, where gender fluidity and the LGBTQ community are integral to Israeli society, where secularism and religious pluralism are embraced.

Where none of this would be tolerated

under a world of Hamas.

About four months ago, I attended a conference regarding October 7, and one piece of advice in particular spoke to me: In matters of differing opinions, stop talking only to the people who agree with you. Rather, speak with others, many of whom rely solely on the images on the nightly news but not the context which created them. Attend and speak at church services. Talk to political leaders.

I am not a big proponent of organizations releasing statements of support or condemnation. I'm not sure they change anyone's mind. Rather one by one, we can build relationships, explain our truths.

As we move Jewish communities into the future, we need to give up our longstanding attitudes and mindsets. Too many are locked in the past. The Talmud teaches, *Eilu V'eilu Divrei Elohim Chayim*: "These words and those words are the words of living God." Perhaps the current Israel and Hamas war, and perhaps the recent Covid epidemic, have forced us to shuffle the deck and revisit who we are, as we move into the future.

Most importantly, we must develop communities where we do not out-volume each other, but rather respect differences and compromise.

Above all let us truly embrace the Jewish value of listening. Not in the name of our own truth—but rather *L'Shem Shamayim*: "In the name of heaven." For it was God at the beginning of time, in consultation with the angels, who initiated the sacredness of the question. That has been God's way, and our way, since the dawn of creation.

It is contained within what I consider the mission statement of all of Israel: *Shema Yisrael, Adonai Elohenu, Adonai Echad*. For in the beginning, and in the end, we are one.

The Great Awesome Holy Selfish Day

by Rabbi Daniel A. Jezer

A number of years ago, Rhea and I joined a three-week expedition ship to the Antarctica. For several days, we sailed through the South Ocean and the Antarctic Sea. Every day there were lectures by faculty members, preparing us for our upcoming experiences. The captain invited us up to the bridge, and with fascination we watched the captain and crew monitor all the dials and radar, monitoring the surroundings with binoculars. All were obviously very well-prepared for the voyage. Periodically the captain would tell the helmsman to change course. The helmsman repeated the order and steered the ship to the prescribed course. Then I noticed that the helmsman, to maintain the course, kept moving the wheel to the right and to the left, continuously making course corrections. The seas, being dynamic, would move the ship off course and the helmsman would correct the deviation.

In our own lives, on our voyage through life, we plot a course for ourselves. We think about our values, our circumstances and decide how we wish to lead our lives. The voyage through is not a calm sea. Circumstances challenge us. Our own resolve is at times not sufficiently strong to buffer us and keep us on course when the current and waves push and pull. At times, we are aware that we deviated from our course and, at times, the movement had been

so subtle that we are unaware that we now off course.

We have a day set aside during the year in which we have the luxury to devote the entire day to introspection, looking at ourselves, figuring out what our course should be, where we have deviated and how to establish the direction for the next year. It is a day entirely devoted to the self, a day of “self”-ishness. It is Yom Kippur. The rituals of the day, the prayers, the music, the sermons are all for the singular purpose of



setting the stage for each of us to do our work, the work of introspection, the work of *tshuvah*, returning to the course from which we have deviated, or setting a different course.

On our expedition, we were prepared for what we would experience. We would not have appreciated Antarctica without this preparation. The captain of our ship and his crew prepared for the expedition; they could not safely navigate in a sea beset with icebergs. We also need to prepare ourselves for this great day. It is almost impossible to accomplish what we need to accomplish on Yom Kippur without adequate preparation.

Traditionally, preparation for Yom Kippur begins 40 days prior to Yom Kippur. During the month before

Rosh Hashanah, we begin with a reminder that the time for introspection is coming. In the synagogue, the shofar is sounded each weekday morning and Psalm 27 is added to the service each day to help us focus on our task. The intensity of the reminder increases as the Selichot service, a prelude to Rosh Hashanah, brings us together the week prior to the holiday. Then the intensity of the preparation rises exponentially as we celebrate Rosh Hashanah, the major theme of which is *tshuvah*, repentance (literally returning to the right course). Although Rosh Hashanah for us is a “high holiday,” the Torah describes it as a rather minor holiday. Its only feature was the blowing of the horn. Later, it became a prelude to Yom Kippur, the beginning of the ten days of repentance, and attained the significance that it has today. By the time we reach Yom Kippur, the hope is that we will be prepared to do our Yom Kippur work, spending a full day on ourselves, with a minimum of distractions, a time of introspection, of *tshuvah*, of repentance. I don’t know of any other religion or civilization that has as much time built into it for this most important work. I hope that we all use it wisely so that we can correct ourselves and plot a course for a better year.



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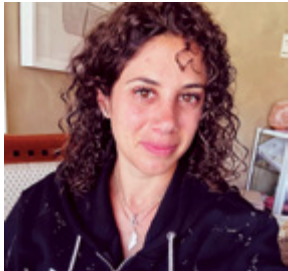
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» BOOK REVIEW

Uncomfortable Conversations with a Jew

by Noa Tishby and Emmanuel Acho



Reviewed by *Samantha Garelick*

Delving into the thought-provoking book *Uncomfortable Conversations with a Jew* by Noa Tishby and Emmanuel Acho is a journey that goes beyond mere reading—it’s an exploration that cultivates deep understanding and sparks crucial conversations. The book addresses some of the most challenging questions:

- Does the “Jewish race” exist?
- Will there be another Holocaust?
- Is it possible to be anti-Zionist but not antisemitic?
- Will antisemitism ever go away?

Uncomfortable Conversations with a Jew serves as a catalyst for introspection and, most importantly, empowers through knowledge.

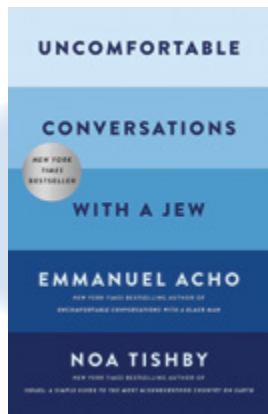
As someone well-versed in Jewish identity and the significance of Israel, I was pleasantly surprised by the depth of insights and fresh perspectives offered by the book. The authors, Acho, a Black Christian pro-athlete and sports analyst, and Tishby, a secular Israeli actor who once served as Israel’s Special Envoy for Combating Antisemitism, form an unexpected yet harmonious pairing. Their respectful and thought-provoking dialogue navigates uncomfortable truths and emotions, challenging entrenched beliefs with authenticity and candor. The transformative power of open and honest communication, coupled with vulnerability in discussing emotionally charged subjects, is a resounding theme throughout the book.

Diving into the myriad of uncomfortable topics regarding Jewish identity and Zionism within the book sheds light on touchy stereotypes such as Jews and money, power dynamics in industries like Hollywood and business, the nuanced complexities of historical and modern antisemitism, and the ever-evolving Jewish tropes. The authors’ authenticity and vulnerability not only illuminate uncomfortable truths but also provide a guiding light for navigating difficult dialogues with grace and compassion. Beyond shedding light on uncomfortable truths, the book provides valuable answers as the authors skillfully navigate challenging stereotypes with facts and insights that are invaluable for both Jewish and non-Jewish readers.

A particularly resonant moment for me was the conversation surrounding the tragic October 7th attack on Israel, where emotions ran high as Tishby and Acho navigated the discussions surrounding the Hamas’ 2023 assault from differing viewpoints. The raw tension in the dialogue almost led to the breakdown of the book, but through introspection, reconciliation and a commitment to engaging in uncomfortable conversations, they found a way forward.

I strongly encourage all individuals, particularly those within the Jewish community, to not only read this book but also share it with loved ones and peers. This isn’t just a suggestion—it’s a call-to-action to foster connections, nurture empathy and combat division in an increasingly fractious world. The conversations within the book not only illuminate the shadows of societal prejudices but also offer a glimmer of hope for a future defined by unity and understanding. By engaging with discomfort and embracing challenging dialogues, we pave the way for a more inclusive and compassionate world—one conversation at a time.

Samantha Garelick is executive director of Pro-Israel America and a Jewish community activist, wife and mother of four.



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On Conflict Resolution



by Michael Gordon, Ph.D.

Tensions have mounted in our community around the war in Gaza. It's a situation so complicated, so confusing, so heart wrenching for so many that even expressing the simplest of opinions can ignite a fury. Many of us have become hesitant to even discuss the situation with others for fear of provoking upset.

Nothing I could say here will make a dent in how we humans tend to handle conflict and stress. Those coping mechanisms are hard-wired and have evolved over millennia. Prime among them is that we'll huddle together with others of similar mind so we don't have to deal with ambiguity or analyze alternative positions. It's our side versus their side, and our side is right without question.

We also feel better when we alight on information whose only virtue is that it supports our point of view. We'll cherry pick the data that support our contention and dismiss or distort information we find inconsistent or troubling. It's a way of converting the messy grays of life into clear blacks and whites. Psychologists call this phenomenon "confirmation bias" and it rears its ugly head at every turn.

This tribal and rigid approach to managing any controversial topic calms us. We can walk around with confidence, less torn by doubt, more comfortable that we're right, and forever supported by others who concur. Circling the wagons has salvaged many a conflicted soul.

But it is not a productive method of conflict resolution and sure has its downsides when we engage others in a discussion. You won't make much progress changing opinions (or keeping friends) when you listen not to understand the other side but to first prove your point.

We can all become so focused on being completely right (or proving the other person completely wrong) that we forget to make sure we understand what the other person is trying to say, why they might be saying it, and that they might actually be making a valid point.

What makes talking about the Gazan conflict especially difficult is that there are no saints in war. When survival is at stake, nations will do whatever they feel necessary to ensure a lasting security, even if that might entail crossing lines perhaps best not crossed.

Because no fool proof method exists for fighting a terrorist organization who uses civilians as shields, the situation in the Middle East provides ample opportunity for debating thoroughly debatable decisions.

It's just a shame (but sadly predictable) that those discussions too often proceed as if the "right" answers are unassailably clear and that anyone who offers a differing opinion is flat out wrong -- and detestable. That stance might be personally reassuring, but it's unrealistic, divisive, and, ultimately, counterproductive.

Michael Gordon, a clinical psychologist, is professor emeritus of psychiatry at Upstate Medical University.

Victimhood



by Dennis Lerner, J.D.

We might argue about the reason, but there is little question that we are living in an age that finds victimhood everywhere. Societies here and around the world have parsed themselves into groupings that are characterized by their suffering victimization. There is seeming competition to be the most victimized. Women are victims of institutionalized male misogyny. Men, are threatened with displacement or disadvantage. Maleness itself is threatened. We have seen an explosion in the number of ever-narrower groupings. Homosexuals became gays and lesbians, which then became LGBTQI+, each and all of whom see themselves as victims and their group, as disadvantaged. Victimization trauma is easy to come by when the cultural commandment is that no one is allowed to be disadvantaged. No one gets left out. Certificates for participation for all, no slight, insult, or unpermitted discomfort, is tolerable.

There is a paradox in all this. We, society's universal, all-time victims—the Jews, aren't victims now. The Jews of Israel are not victims. They stand astride their (our) land and defy those who would limit or control their actions in their self-interest. We hear about a surge in antisemitism, about threats and name-calling, here and elsewhere in the world. I am not denying that terrible things can and do happen, but our position in American society has never been as strong or as secure. It is our power and strength, and the loss of underdog status, that accounts for the surge in name-calling—along with Palestinian mastery in spreading the mantle of victimhood.

Some of us, perhaps many, are comfortable in our old role as victims, but at this moment it no longer fits. I, too, am of the school that says every Jew who claims any degree of wisdom always has a pair of sturdy shoes and a heavy coat at the ready. But for the moment, while the whole world is staking out their share of victimhood, we are strong, and our best defense against those who would make us victims again is to shake off their efforts as what they are—indications of their insecurity, not ours.

I am not suggesting that what is will always be or that we should puff out our chests when we have positions of strength and power. But we shouldn't waste the moment either. We should instead use this long-awaited period of merited justice to further our mission of Tikkun Olam. Part of that is to project that we will not be counted as victims again.

Dennis Lerner is a retired attorney and third generation Syracusan who is well known for his pies and scones.

Zer0 Tolerance for Antisemitism



by Neil Bronstein

Since the horrific October 7th attack, I have grappled daily with weighing the horrendous details of that day against what the appropriate Israeli response should be. Furthermore, I have read and seen how over the last number of years, antisemitism has steadily grown. We get the statistics regularly from organizations such as the ADL of how Jewish hate crimes are increasing exponentially. The reasons for it are many but a common

theme is that when there are times of strife throughout history, antisemitism growth goes hand in hand.

Not too long ago, I was invited to attend a presentation sponsored by SAMED which is a local group of Arab-Americans and American Jews who meet regularly to pursue open dialogue. It is a group that I applaud, as open discussion is one of the best ways to resolve differences. I can only imagine the tightrope both sides must walk balancing their own ideals while finding ways to a middle ground.

The guest speaker that night was a visiting professor from Notre Dame University, an

expert on the Middle East. A question was asked of the professor, "What was his definition of antisemitism?" The answer that he gave was that BDS, the movement to boycott Israel, clearly defines antisemitism as it singles out one country when there are many other countries throughout the world with far worse human rights violations. If one is so concerned about human rights, why not boycott those other countries? I argue the same holds true by singling out Israel now with what has grown into a massive outpouring of demonstrations on our college campuses. And, as a result, Jewish students are being harassed and abused.

Too many of us watch the talking heads on nightly television and turn a blind eye.

I refer to the continual bashing and false narratives on FOX about Zelensky, Adam Schiff and most notably their favorite whipping boy, George Soros, all of whom happen to be Jewish. Ever since October 7th, there has been repeated nightly bashing of Israel on MSNBC with little or no counterbalance. The misinformation on social media is massive and further enflames the growing inferno.

If we have learned anything throughout history of the oppression of Jews is that when antisemitism begins to rise, there must be zero tolerance. I close with one of my favorite quotes written long ago, but timeless, penned by George Santayana, "Those who forget history are condemned to repeat it."

Neil Bronstein is the Immediate past chair of the Jewish Community Foundation and a retired business owner.

Volunteering With Israel's National Food Bank

by Sarah Steinmann

As I scrolled the news and social media in the days and months that followed October 7th, I felt hopeless and helpless—and couldn't shake the feeling that I should be *doing* something. So, when the opportunity to volunteer in Israel arose, I jumped at the chance to participate.

In the weeks leading up to the trip, I thought a lot about what I was about to experience: what the mood in the country would be, what type of work I'd be doing, how difficult it would be to bear witness to the atrocities perpetrated by Hamas. Somehow, I



didn't give much thought to who my fellow volunteers would be. I was blown away by the character, resolve and

resilience of the men and women who traveled from across the globe to help Israel in crisis. Our group included American, Argentinian, Brazilian, French, German and British Jews. A profound sense of commitment and unity defined the group and gave new meaning to the phrase "Jewish peoplehood."

We began our trip volunteering at a *moshav* in central Israel. The farmer we assisted employed foreign laborers prior to the war, but now only two workers remained from a crew of over 20. Over two days, we harvested cucumbers, prepared greenhouses for future plantings and picked cherry tomatoes. Although it doesn't sound like much, our assistance allowed the farmer to bring fresh vegetables to market, rather than lose crops before he could harvest them. It also provided Israelis with locally grown vegetables, which reduces the need to import produce from other, sometimes hostile, countries.

A few days later, we traveled to the Gaza envelope where we visited the site of the Nova music festival, the city

of Sderot and volunteered at a *moshav* just a few miles from the border. We could hear bombs dropping – and feel the reverberations—for most of the day.

Our time at this *moshav* in the Gaza envelope was the most meaningful experience of the trip. Like so many communities that close to Gaza, the *moshav* was invaded by Hamas terrorists on the 7th. The residents fought back and, miraculously, no Israeli lives were lost. We worked with a farmer who, despite being older than the reservist age limit, had spent the previous five months in Gaza. Together, we planted delicate tomato seedlings and, being right before Pesach, it was impossible not feel a sense of hopefulness and rebirth.

As I reflect on my trip—proud of the work we did together and frustrated by all the work left to be done—I've found inspiration and hope in *Pirkei Avot* which teaches us that "you are not obligated to complete the task, but neither are you free to desist from it."

Sarah Steinmann is an attorney at Lippes Mathias LLP and a graduate of Barnard, JTS and Emory Law.

Volunteering with Birthright

by Nicole Engel

Over my spring break, I took a trip to Israel. And it wasn't like any of my previous trips. I had been to Israel three times prior: the Epstein School trip, Birthright and on a MASA internship. (All of these are great trips, in case anyone is wondering). This one was different. But also the same. I still made some amazing friends, connected to the land and the people. But my purpose was different. This time, I went to help people. I didn't know what kind of work I would be doing, or for how many hours, or anything, but in the midst of all this chaos, I knew that I wanted to do something real, to feel like I was doing something to help.



After receiving permission from my teachers, I committed to be a Birthright volunteer for two weeks. I spent most of my days there picking clementines and strawberries in the hot Israeli heat. When you're doing that, sometimes it doesn't feel like you're making a big impact, but when you meet an Israeli, one who can tell you his own story of heroism from October 7th, he still says "Thank you."

You and I are so privileged. We're not worrying about rockets. When I'm in school, the most I have to do is worry about my upcoming final. But when you choose to leave the safety of your cushy life in the

United States, they recognize that.

But by being there, you also recognize their strength so much more as well. You hear tales of a man in a shelter. When Hamas threw a grenade into it, he picked it up and threw it out of the shelter seven times, before he wasn't fast enough. You hear stories of friends driving towards Gaza hoping to save their friends. You see the people every Friday night who go to Hostage Square, wrapped in their Israeli flags and come together to pray for the hostages. They speak about their loved ones, they sing, and they are united. As Jews, we felt a part of that tribe as well. We also recognize the humanity of the other side as well, and this is one quote that has stuck with me, "What are you supposed to think when the only contact you have is rocket fire?"

Nicole Engel is a graduate student in speech language pathology at Gallaudet University.

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BAD JEWS: A History of American Jewish Politics and Identities

by Emily Tamkin

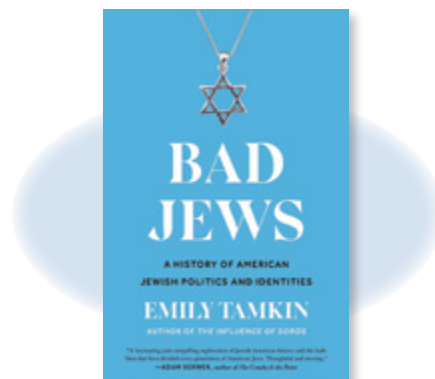
Reviewed by Mark Savad

Bad Jews is a provocative and inviting title for this engaging history of American Jewish politics and identities. Author Emily Tamkin offers a personal exploration of issues that have generated considerable differences within the Jewish community. Can this be a surprise to anyone? Ideas and debate have always been central to Jewish life. And “Bad Jew” is a term that Jews have used to describe other Jews they disagree with. This book was written a few years ago, and it can help us to increase our understanding and perhaps even an acceptance of the broad ranges of Jewish opinion.

The book is well written and organized. The author addresses immigration, organized labor, civil rights, Zionism and intermarriage, as well as Jewish philanthropy. How do we consider human rights when it seems to conflict with the safety and security of the Jewish community here and in Israel? Is antisemitism largely from the right or is it a left-wing problem? How to appreciate Jews in politics? What do Sheldon

Adelson, Jared Kushner, Bernie Sanders and Michael Bloomberg have in common? Tamkin thoughtfully demonstrates that, throughout American Jewish history, there have been a wide variety of approaches on every major issue.

While the book explores the landscape, the author personally favors a fairly progressive political perspective but skillfully finds a way to objectively describe differing perspectives. The book describes



the Jewish component in the rise of “neo-conservatism,” varied perspectives on immigration over the century as well as different voting patterns and experiences of the Sephardic and Ashkenazic communities.

In addition to scholarly research Tamkin delivers personal warmth. She interviewed over 150 ordinary Jews in addition to her dive into history. When asked “What

do you think of when you think of the term ‘Bad Jews’? The most common answer was not Bernie Madoff, Ivan Boesky or Jack Abramoff. It was “I think of myself.” I find this to be a very positive response. Somehow, we seem to accept that as Jews there is some expectation to contribute positively to life, to study, to learn, to be charitable, to be responsible. She concludes that her favorite part of being Jewish is the ongoing and endless challenge to figure out how to be Jewish, be a part of the community, be willing to make mistakes, learn from them and try again. Not bad.

Mark Savad, PhD, LCSW-R, is a mostly retired psychotherapist. He has been a member of the community and a congregant of CSB-CS for 45 years. He had the good fortune to spend nearly a decade working for the Jewish community locally and nationally for a rich variety of organizations including SJF, AIPAC, and NIF.

Jews Don't Count: How Identity Politics Failed One Particular Identity

by David Baddiel

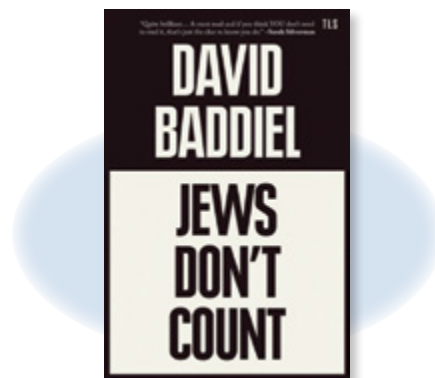
Reviewed by Richard D. Wilkins

A common feature of medieval courts was the jester, the only subject who could tell the truth without fear. David Baddiel, a famous Jewish British comedian, is no fool, but he here performs a similar service for today’s Anglosphere “progressives.” “Identity Politics” now holds baneful sway over much of their public discourse. A “hierarchy of victims” is a central feature, encompassing virtually every conceivable racial, ethnic, sexual, class, even physically distinct, marginalized minority cohort, seen as in need of special protection.

Except for one glaring blind spot: the Jews.

They certainly qualify as a marginalized minority, historically despised and still

subject to overt and covert prejudice. Yet they ill fit into a stark binary division of humanity into “Oppressed” and “Oppressor,” seen simultaneously as



“lying,” “thieving,” “dirty,” sub humans, and “rich,” “shrewd,” privileged, safe and powerful, hyper-white, secret masters of humanity. They’ve historically served as scapegoats for their host society’s greatest failings. Unlike most minorities, they can “pass” as non-Jews, their “lived experience” of little interest. Even the term, “antisemitism” is sanitized “Jew hatred.” “Jew” uniquely serves both as a noun and pejorative adjective, as in “Jew banker.”

This thin book is thick with examples that mostly Jews have perceived as offensive. A comprehensive list of Holocaust victims, subsuming Jews as “white Europeans.” A London mural depicted obviously Jewish bankers playing Monopoly on the backs of a huddled mass, imagery that other onlookers thought merely anti-capitalist.

General interest books by well-known Jewish authors relegated to the “Books of Jewish interest” ghetto. Jewish cuisine unmentioned in a comprehensive guide to various ethnic foods. Despite English football’s absolute ban on racist chants, the ‘Y’ word (Yid) shouted at a Jewish-associated team, still is ignored. While only minority actors can represent their like, non-Jewish actors are repeatedly cast in often mocking (thanks to Jewish writers and producers) stereotypical Jewish roles. Jews complaining about such “Jewface” portrayals are castigated as unwelcome competitors in the Victim Olympics.

Baddiel wrote this book well before last October’s Hamas atrocities that have led to a worldwide explosion of virulent antisemitism. This book isn’t for such haters. It’s aimed at well-meaning but currently clueless “progressives,” as to the casual antisemitic tropes, images and imaginings, swirling all around them. Jews can’t combat that alone. They need allies. Thus, the daunting, but critical, task of reaching out to those amenable to persuasion, to convince them that Jews should indeed count.

Richard D. Wilkins’ opinion pieces have been widely published in Jewish and general print media.



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Trouble in the Tribe: The American Jewish Conflict Over Israel

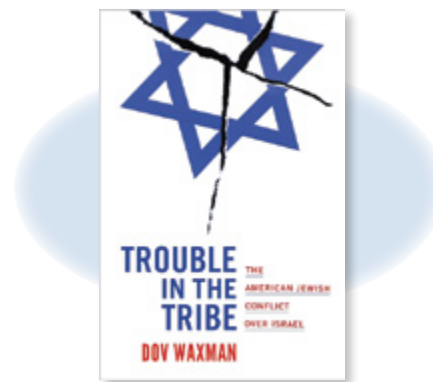
by Dov Waxman

Reviewed by Dan Olson-Bang

In reading *Trouble in the Tribe: The American Jewish Conflict Over Israel*, it is hard not to wish that the 2016 book reflected the developments on and following October 7th. Yet what is eerie about author Dov Waxman's book is how prescient it is, how much it anticipates and describes our fractious moment. In tracing the progression of American Jewish opinion on the state of Israel from initial indifference to Zionism prior to 1948, to "Israel, Right or Wrong" after 1967, to the current, vehement and public debates among American Jews about Israel and the Israel-Palestine conflict, Waxman helps us understand how the debate for Israel in American Jewry came to this point. Waxman does so while diligently remaining as objective as possible. The overall effect is of a meticulous, careful chronicling of a very thorny issue that, as he points out, isn't going anywhere.

While many inside and outside of the Jewish community treat the American Jewish position on Israel as monolithically supportive—a position Waxman refers to as "pro-Israelism"—, he takes great pains to dismantle this view. The reality of divergent views within the Jewish community, as he carefully outlines through Israel's history, is important for us all to remember. Waxman describes the period of consensus about Zionism

and Israel as quite brief (from the Six-Day War in 1967 to the First Intifada in 1987), occupying a blink of the eye in the history of the Jewish State and Zionism more generally. Waxman demonstrates this wide range of views among American Jews, from those who see Israel as Jews' best hope and greatest achievement to those who, for love of Israel, see their own ethical, Jewish commitments as necessitating strong



criticism of the actions and positions of Israel, particularly regarding Palestine, the occupation and the future of peace in the region.

In chronicling the rise of dissent and disagreement from many angles (from AIPAC and the Jewish lobby to fissures between Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews), the author's careful and meticulous arguments have the positive effect of demonstrating that debate and disagreement are central to and vital for the future of Judaism. If American Jews

can constructively engage in this debate, which "already exists, and will not go away," we stand to gain much, and indeed may change the course of history, for both America and Israel.

Dan Olson-Bang, Ph.D. works in career advising with graduate students at Syracuse University and is on the Board of Trustees of Temple Concord.

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Rain Couldn't Dampen Camp Zeke 2024 Success

“Camp Zeke was so much fun! It was our first time going. We are so happy we went. The employees are so sweet and helpful. It was just so lovely to get away and get to know people that we don't see so often. Our children had so much fun! All the kids played together, and I basically didn't see them except for bedtime. Our daughter didn't want to leave on Sunday! She kept saying 'I stay!' We didn't really even mind the rain, as it didn't stop the good times.”

That enthusiastic endorsement of Camp Zeke 2024 was echoed by many of the twenty families who participated in this year's JFAM community camping experience. “It was a lovely weekend. It was so nice to not have anywhere to run to and just have endless amounts of time to chat with people,” enthused another participant. “This was my first year attending, and I really see the power in having the families come together to spend time outside Syracuse together in a camp setting. Camp Zeke is a wonderful place with great memories created and stronger bonds made,” said another. A fourth camper father commented, “It was great and very nostalgic for me, reminding me of sleep away camp. We got to meet people from the community and the staff was very nice. The activities were very nice too.”

Camp Zeke is an all-inclusive camp family weekend sponsored by the Foundation for Jewish Camp and the Jewish Federation of Central New York. Families relax and recharge in a beautiful outdoor setting during a fun-filled immersive Jewish family camp weekend.

Participants in Zeke 2024 were very enthusiastic about the experience. One reported, “Our family had an amazing time at Camp Zeke! The kids loved the time with friends from school and the community and all the activities. They especially enjoyed learning pickleball and circus arts. My husband and I enjoyed all the activities and community, and we really loved the opening night activity with Rabbi Sarah where parents were divided into groups and discussed the relative importance of various values as we raise our children. We found the conversations during that session engaging and thought-provoking. We had many follow-up conversations with other attendees, with each other and with friends upon returning to Syracuse related to ideas brought up during that session.”

“Our son had a great time in the teaching kitchen,” reported another mother. “He braided challah on Friday night, and then made sun butter oat balls on Saturday. He also had a great

time at the Saturday morning prayers.” Another recounted: “We were excited to celebrate the end of the school year with a nice family weekend. We arrived on Friday afternoon to friendly staff who showed us to our cabin. Our family of four stayed in two adjoining rooms. One side was for the kids, and one side slept the adults. The amount of space was more than comfortable—we even had two bathrooms since our rooms were joined. Our beds were neatly made, and the kids' beds had a teddy bear waiting for a snuggle. A detailed schedule of events was left in our room. The cabin was just a short walk to the dining hall and recreation areas. We had lots of time to get settled in and go to the kitchen for challah braiding. Rabbi Sarah is a warm and friendly presence. She met us in the kitchen for a brief conversation about braiding challah. We braided our challot and were able to eat them at dinner later that night. Before dinner was a family service by the lake. This was led by Rabbi Sarah and her guitar. She made it fun and interactive with lots of laughs all around.”

All in all, the weekend was a big hit for a variety of reasons. “Mealtime was my favorite,” said one mother. “Of course because of FOOD, but also because the parents were able to sit and relax. We talked to each other while the children did their own socializing. The children very much looked after each other, and there was a sense of safety and belonging. We were able to let our guard down and let them roam (within reason). The kids ran around; they played in the grass; they played in the woods. They made their own games! It was wonderful.”

“The joy of our weekend came from the feeling of camaraderie and connection with the other families. We even met two families outside of CNY, and they were welcomed with open arms,” noted another participant. A first-timer commented, “I attended with my two kids (ages 6 and 3), and we all had a great time. I definitely think it's worth doing again and would attend again if the timing works for us. I heard about it



last year but didn't attend; what really swayed me was that two families I know asked if I was going and said what a great time they had last year. I think the weekend that you chose makes it work for a lot of families since school is out but camp hasn't started yet. It was a nice kickoff to the summer for us. I will also say that, as a single parent, there were so many thoughtful aspects of the weekend that made it much more inclusive and doable for me (not having to bring linens,

private bathroom, availability of snacks, babysitters and kid-only activities so I could get a breather).” Another parent noted, “What was probably most valuable to me was finally actually meeting some families who I have seen around a bunch but never really had the occasion to introduce myself since it was always at school drop-off or they have kids of different ages than mine. From my viewpoint, it was a very successful weekend and well worth it.”

Leading Ladies

The North American Association of Synagogue Executives, an arm of United Synagogue, offers member synagogues guidance in creating job descriptions for executive directors. They begin with the following statement: "The Executive Director serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Congregation, representing the officers and directors in administering the affairs of the Congregation. He works in partnership with the clergy and lay leaders in recommending synagogue policies. The Executive Director assumes responsibility for loyalty to the purpose of his Congregation and promotes its services in carrying out the administrative policies established by the Congregation. Areas of responsibility and duties are many, broad and varied, but include..." followed by 22(!) pages of tasks for which the E.D. is responsible.

WRONG! Not all synagogue executive directors are "he." Maybe that was true in the 20th century, but it is not true in the 21st. The prime example? The three women who head Central New York's Temple Adath Yeshurun, Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevre Shas and Temple Concord.

MELISSA HARKAVY

Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevre Shas

Melissa Harkavy is the first Executive Director of Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevre Shas, a position to which she was promoted after 22 months as CBS-CS' program director.

When Melissa was a child, she wanted to grow up to be a meteorologist. "I wanted to learn about how people affect weather and how weather affects people," she says, "but what I soon learned was that my interest was actually human geography. I wanted to learn about how different people from different cultures and environments interacted with each other and the world." This desire to learn and to connect with people gave Melissa the motivation to travel. Through her studies, Melissa worked in Lake Tahoe, Brooklyn, Northern Tanzania, Zanzibar and the Eastern Cape of South Africa.

She realized in graduate school that she wanted to apply the geographic toolkit to Jewish education. "I was originally looking for jobs in New Jersey, but my mother-in-law suddenly fell ill, and I needed to find a position closer to Syracuse. Sitting in her hospital room at Crouse, I saw this posting for a synagogue program director in Dewitt and 12 hours after I applied, I was scheduled for an interview. It was absolutely *besht*."

As executive director, Melissa is responsible for leading the CBS-CS workforce, coordinating the staff, volunteers and vendors to ensure that all synagogue operations run as smoothly as possible and fostering an inclusive Jewish environment consistent with the mission and vision of the congregation. "Melissa has an intelligence and nuance to her work that are a direct reflection of her experiences in research and communication," her administrative assistant Alethea Shirilan says. "I have never met anyone who is more competent and capable – and it all comes from a place of genuine connection with others in the community and an ability to put herself in other people's shoes. She's a doer."

Harkavy's creativity is palpable: with every upcoming celebration or obstacle, she translates empathy into action swiftly. She says, "I love helping folks problem-solve. Much of what I do at CBS-CS is actively listening to members and translating their needs and desires into concrete and achievable actions. This is immensely important in relationship building and leadership development." Though Melissa's not a meteorologist today, in many ways, she's achieved what she hoped to do even as a child. When asked about her legacy, she says, "I would like to be remembered as an innovator and connector."



ALICIA GROSS

Temple Adath Yeshurun

When Alicia moved back to Syracuse in 2010, she had plans to open a preschool. She attended Passover services at Temple Adath Yeshurun and met many warm and welcoming people including the rabbi. When he learned about her plans, the rabbi invited her to interview at the Rothschild Early Childhood Center insisting that they hire her. "It was *bashert*," she recalls. "In a short period of time, I became the director of education, then assistant director and finally director of RECC. Simultaneously, I led the youth and young family programs for TAY, becoming involved in the workings of the temple and forming many friendships. I was honored when the board asked me to transition into the role of executive director in the spring of 2022 and have thoroughly enjoyed this new adventure."

"The most fulfilling part of my job is bringing people together," says Alicia. "Seeing an idea for a program come to fruition and watching people connect and build relationships brings me immense joy, solidifying for me that I am right where I am meant to be. In the same breath, there are many challenges to running a non-profit, religious organization. There are many obvious ones, but personally, I find it hard to keep the work/life balance. I want to be a part of all of the amazing programs in our community and nurture my own spirituality, but it's difficult to find the time."

DIANE SACKS

Temple Concord

Diane Sacks was born and educated in Johannesburg, South Africa. She gained over 20 years of professional experience in organizational fields, including executive administration, human resources, quality assurance, organizational management and administrative roles within the Jewish education system. She, her husband, and two daughters relocated to the United States in 2011. Diane started her career at Community Synagogue of Rye, NY as clergy assistant, providing her with valuable insights into Judaic and business ethics, which differed from those in South Africa. After moving to Syracuse in 2016, she joined Temple Concord as clergy assistant to the rabbi and then added communications coordinator to her role. Six years later, Diane was promoted to executive director. She has used this opportunity to develop strong leadership skills and sharpen her communication potential, enabling her to establish strong professional and personal relationships with the rabbi, cantor, board of trustees, administrative team and members of the congregation. "I believe that these relationships are crucial in shaping how the congregation perceives us as a warm, caring, and unified entity," Diane says. "Collaborating closely with other agencies in Syracuse has allowed us the opportunity to build mutually respected and beneficial relationships. Five years ago, Temple Concord embarked on a significant project: the sale of the Madison Street building, leading to a move to Kimber Road, where we now, temporarily, share space with our friends at Temple Adath Yeshurun. This project was made successful, largely by



the coordination of outstanding and dedicated committee members."

What keeps Diane motivated in her role? "This is an easy question," she says. "The answer is: working on ways that I can benefit our Temple Concord family and building relationships necessary to achieve this. My personal and life motivators are my partner in life, Dave, our precious children, Ariella and Hank, Mandi and Reid and, of course, our baby grandson, Dorian."



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JFNA issues Guidelines for Universities for the New Academic Year

The Jewish Federations of North America, the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Congress, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and Hillel International have developed guidelines for campus administrators to ensure the safety and full inclusion of Jewish students, faculty and staff on higher education campuses across the United States. The Jewish Federation of Central New York will be sharing this information with local university leadership with whom we have strong relationships. The guidelines, edited for space reasons, are listed below:

I. Clearly Communicate the Standards and Rules Governing the Campus Community

The ability to articulate and disseminate a wide range of ideas, perspectives, and approaches is central to the American academy's distinguished history. Those objectives cannot be achieved, however, when certain members of the academic community are silenced, harassed, intimidated, or threatened; or when the university's normal teaching, learning, and research activities are disrupted. University leaders must make clear to incoming and returning students what it means to be a member of a campus community, including the behavioral norms that are expected of students and the impact on the whole community when those norms are not met. University leaders must ensure that students and faculty are aware of their campuses' codes of conduct, including policies and procedures for managing protests, demonstrations, postings, and other speech activity, including time, place, and manner regulations. These policies must be enforced in an even-handed, content-neutral, and consistent manner to prevent activities that impede the university's academic mission or interfere with the rights of any members of the campus community to speak, listen, teach, research, or learn. It is incumbent on university leaders to promptly and directly respond to violations of these policies, as well as to other antisemitic incidents when they occur. University leaders should publish strong, timely statements that (1) explicitly condemn the incident and explain what steps will be taken by the university to address the situation and prevent its recurrence, (2) describe specific support available for the Jewish community, and (3) establish clear expectations for respectful campus discourse tied directly to the mission of the institution. The fact that the incident may involve protected free speech in no way reduces the university's obligation to step up and speak out.

II. Support Jewish Students

Prevent discrimination against Jewish students in campus organizations, clubs, and institutions. In many cases this past year, Jewish students have been marginalized and even expressly excluded from student organizations or activities because "Zionists are not welcome." This form of exclusion becomes even more insidious when the word "Zios" is invoked as an antisemitic slur applying this type of litmus test. Universities must take proactive steps to ensure that all Jewish students, including the majority of Jewish students for whom Israel is an important component of their Jewish identity, have full and equal access to all the school's registered student organizations and student government activities, without exception.

Ensure that Israeli students and faculty are welcome and reject BDS. Colleges and universities must reaffirm their opposition to the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement and explain to the campus community why that movement is harmful to students and faculty and antithetical to campus values. They should publicly affirm their commitment to the free exchange of ideas and access to academic opportunities by elevating their partnerships with Israeli institutions, encouraging students to consider study abroad opportunities in Israel, featuring the work of Israeli scholars and researchers on their faculty or those who collaborate with their faculty, and highlighting the benefits these associations offer to students, faculty, and the institution.

Show up for Jewish students and express support for the Jewish community by personally attending Jewish community events on campus. Provide antisemitism education and training for all students and administration on a regular basis. The training should include the different ways in which students may experience conduct as antisemitism, including anti-Zionism, and should include notice that harassment or discrimination based on national origin, which includes a student's



actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, is prohibited by university policy.

III. Ensure Campus Safety

Colleges and universities have the moral and legal obligation to create and maintain a physically safe and secure campus for their students, faculty, and staff. Campus law enforcement must be properly trained to recognize and address conduct that violates campus rules and policies and/or that constitutes harassment; that time, place, and manner policies are in effect to govern all campus protest activity; that there is regular and consistent communication with Jewish communal institutions on campus about security needs; and that there is regular communication with and plans in place to liaise with local law enforcement when necessary. Administrators must respond immediately to conduct that

deprives students of equal access to educational opportunities in violation of Title VI. Universities must ensure free and full access to all campus buildings, spaces, events, and activities, both in policy and in effect.

IV. Reaffirm Faculty Professional Responsibilities

Faculty members have a duty to protect students' academic freedom and encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students. They have no authority to subject students to their particular views and opinions concerning matters extraneous to the course of instruction itself, or to significantly insert material unrelated to the course. Faculty may not discriminate against any student on political grounds or based on that student's legally protected status. Nor should faculty members be allowed to cancel a class session for the purpose of encouraging students to participate in a political protest or rally preferred by faculty or threaten to withhold students' grades if faculty demands are not met. These norms of faculty conduct should be made explicitly clear at the beginning of the school year. Universities and colleges must make clear to all campus community members – faculty, staff, and students – the rules that govern the academic sphere, how those rules will be enforced, and the consequences for violation.

Dealing with Campus Antisemitism



"Combating Antisemitism in our Education System," a program presented by End Antisemitism Now and the Jewish Community Center, featured Academic Engagement Network Executive Director Miriam Elman and Congressman Brandon Williams and was developed as a result of last spring's disturbing antisemitism on campuses nationwide. Elman highlighted strategies for improving the climate for Jewish and other students. Williams, a member of the House Education and Workforce Committee, focused on what the federal government is doing to combat hate at all levels from K-12 through college.

View from the Hill(el): Looking Back and Looking Ahead

by Jillian Juni, Executive Director, Syracuse Hillel

This past academic year was difficult for the Jewish community at Syracuse University and around the world. Just weeks into the school year, Hamas' attack on Israel on October 7th sparked unprecedented levels of antisemitism on college campuses across the country.

At Syracuse Hillel, the priority is and has always been to support the safety and wellbeing of Jewish students. Over the course of the school year, we initiated and engaged in conversations with the University administration to ensure that Jewish students received the support they needed to feel safe and included in campus life. With Hillel's help, our students utilized mechanisms at Syracuse University, like Stop Bias, to receive resources when incidents occurred. We're proud to say that these efforts resulted in some meaningful progress, including opportunities for University consultation with Jewish students, new partnerships and collaboration on programs and



speakers, and assessments of relevant University policies. Syracuse's Campus Rabbi and Imam served as role models by bringing together 20 students who developed friendships across differences through listening, empathy and nuanced conversation. All of this important work will continue in the year to come.

Not only were we inspired by the

courage and resilience of our students in standing up to antisemitism and hate, but in the midst of this there was also plenty of celebration of Jewish joy. Specifically, over 70 students gathered weekly for dinner and learning around a variety of topics through a Jewish lens, close to 700 attendees celebrated Passover in the JMA Dome, and over 50 students received mentorship and leadership training in generating programs and engaging their peers. Hillel connected students to community service projects, which led to hundreds of hours of service, meaningful connections to the greater Syracuse community and inspiring opportunities for students to make a positive impact on the world. In May, a group of Syracuse students traveled to Israel on Birthright, and this summer, students experienced on-the-job learning with Onward Israel internships.

Looking ahead to the fall, Syracuse Hillel will continue to provide safe and welcoming spaces for Jewish students

to come together as a community and express their Jewish identities and authentic relationships with Israel. Over 300 students are already signed up to join Hillel for our annual pre-orientation program, FreshFest. Plans are underway to celebrate the High Holidays and Sukkot, as well as to mark the anniversary of October 7th. Staff and student leaders are exploring programs and opportunities for the fall that will enrich the lives of Jewish students so that they may enrich the Jewish people and the world.

Syracuse is a great place for Jewish students. This important and impactful work cannot be done alone, and we are grateful for the support and partnership from the Jewish community of Central New York. Syracuse Hillel remains passionate about our vision to inspire every student to make an enduring commitment to Jewish life, learning and Israel. We look forward to being there for Jewish students now and into the future.

Epstein School Confronts Antisemitism on Campus

by Aaron Spitzer

Since 2016, antisemitism has risen sharply in the U.S., reaching new, disturbing heights after the October 7th attack by Hamas terrorists on Israel. As a community, we need to better prepare our students for the climate they now face on college and university campuses. Partially in response to the crisis on university campuses and the explosion of antisemitism globally after October 7th, the leadership of the Epstein School realized that students needed a more complex and comprehensive engagement with Israel and antisemitism than the school had previously been delivering.

In the 2023-24 school year, the school piloted a new class for juniors and seniors taught by Diana Koester: Advanced Topics in Antisemitism. In that course, Koester covered the long history of antisemitism, how antisemitic tropes appear in contemporary media and mainstream Western culture, as well as contemporary issues including how anti-Zionism and antisemitism are connected, and whether criticism of Israeli governmental policies is antisemitic. Students worked together to problem solve how to deal with the antisemitism they currently face in high school and the workplace, as well as strategized how to approach their next step on the road to independent Jewish adulthood.

Discussions around concretizing Jewish identity on college campuses in the face of anti-Israeli encampments became the focus of the traditional upper-class semester-

long course, Jewish Adulthood: Jewish Life After High School. With course instructor Ora Jezer, students explored a variety of paths that on-campus Jewish life may take, including exploring student organizations like Jewish Student clubs, Hillel, Chabad and Jewish Greek organizations. They engaged in discussions with Epstein alumni who shared their experiences as first-year students grappling with anti-Zionist activity on a variety of campuses, including large state universities and small private liberal arts colleges. Each week, students discussed the impact of antisemitism on their personal lives, as well as shared their thoughts about what they saw happening on social media. Students explored multiple entry points into Jewish community they may contribute to as they move toward independent adulthood. Students repeatedly emphasized that being part of a Jewish community in the future,



while it may look different than the Jewish communities their parents are involved in, was very important to their sense of identity.

For the 2024-25 school year, the Epstein School is rolling out a new two-year Israel/antisemitism-focused curricular cycle for upper grade students. In year one, eligible students will undertake a yearlong intensive study of Israeli history, culture, diversity and contemporary geopolitical engagement; participate in the Teen Taste of Israel trip to Israel in February; and spend the rest of the year focused on the role of Israel in the development of Jewish identity and Jewish peoplehood. Students will also grapple with questions about the challenges of shaping a modern, Jewish democracy. Additionally, students in the tenth through twelfth grades will

be eligible for the Hillel Campus College Visit program, which introduces students to Hillel life at regional colleges through structured campus tours through explicitly Jewish lenses, as well as engagement with involved Hillel members.

During the second year, students will choose between Syracuse University Project Advance: Hebrew 101, earning 4 college credits in Modern Hebrew, thereby strengthening their connection to Jewish identity and culture through the language and culture of modern Israel. Or they may take a semester-long course on Advanced Topics in Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism, followed by a semester-long course on Jewish adulthood: Jewish Life After High School. Both of these courses for upper-level students will examine the role of Israel in constructions of Jewish identity and peoplehood. The hope is that Epstein students will feel prepared to meet the challenges on campus with a strong sense of their individual Jewish identity. The Epstein School believes that learning about and experiencing Israel firsthand, as well as by studying the history and contemporary deployment of antisemitism and anti-Zionism, students will be able to interact with their campus peers from a place of strength and confidence, rooted in Jewish values.

JCC Monday Night Dinners Attract Record Numbers

by Erin Hart

The Dr. Morton and Mrs. Libby Maloff Summer Dinner Lecture Series continues to be a huge success for the Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center of Syracuse. The Monday night program averaged over 55 people each week with some weeks hitting over 60 in attendance. With weekly entertainment sponsored by Sisskind Funeral Services, the program did not disappoint.

Each week JCC Chef Donna Carullo served up a mouthwatering array of dishes that can be found nowhere else in Central New York. From honey mustard salmon to Moroccan chicken, there was something for everyone at the JCC. Each weekly meal was paired with outstanding entertainment for everyone in attendance.

Thanks to the Maloff Family, who named this program in memory of their late parents; Morton and Libby



Maloff, the program will continue to offer seniors in the community a place to come together. “Both my parents were proud supporters of the Jewish Community Center of Syracuse, and they would be very honored to know that their legacy is associated with the JCC summer dinner lecture series,” says Dr. Jeffrey Maloff.

The Summer Dinner Lecture Series has concluded for the 2024 season. **For more information on upcoming events within the Senior Lunch Program or to access current lunch program menus, please visit jccsyr.org.**

ILAD to Honor Barbara Davis and Others

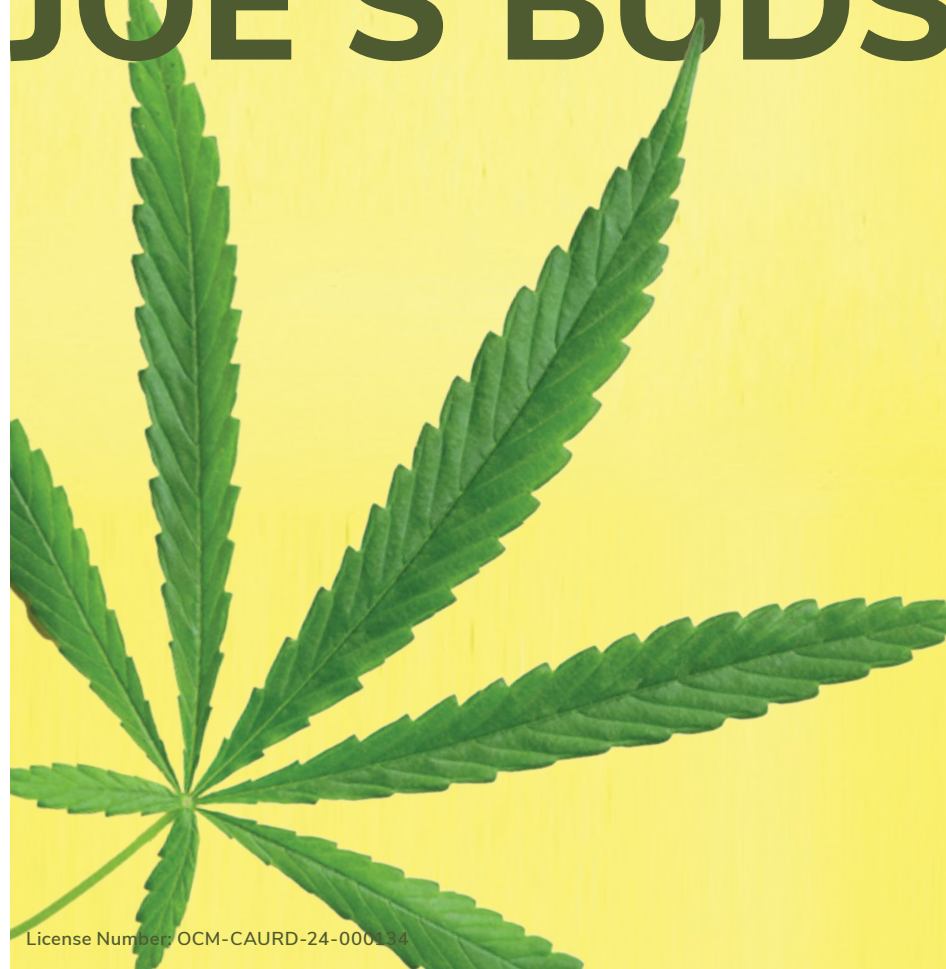
ILAD, the Interfaith Leadership Award Dinner, is an annual event hosted by InterFaith Works that celebrates individuals who affirm dignity by building bridges between communities and promoting compassion. This year’s theme, “Building Greatness,” honors trailblazers who are forging a new path for the next generation to follow. The individuals chosen by InterFaith Works “uphold our intrinsic values and create opportunities for higher education, economic growth and prosperity, diversity, community outreach, art appreciation and cultural and religious education.” **Barbara Davis is being honored for excellence in education.**

The dinner, to be held on September 24 at 5:30 pm at the SRC Arena & Events Center at Onondaga Community College will also honor Mark Cass, Executive Director of the Northside Learning Center; Tadodaho Sidney Hill, Spiritual Leader of the Haudenosaunee; Maarten Jacobs, Director of Community Prosperity



at the Allyn Foundation; Cydney Johnson, Vice President of Community Engagement and Government Relations at Syracuse University; Reggie Kelly, Executive Director of Rise Above Poverty; Linda Le Mura, President of Le Moyne College and Pamela Murchison, Executive Director of the Syracuse Orchestra. **For more information contact Director of Philanthropy The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Mapstone at 315-449-3552, ext. 220, or email cmapstonecmapstone@ifwcnny.org.**

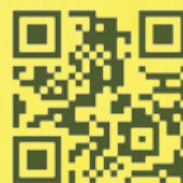
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NCJW Hannah Solomon Award Dinner to Benefit Many Causes

by Marlene Holstein and Vicki Feldman



2023 Hannah G. Solomon Award recipient, Abby Kasowitz Scheer, and past honorees are shown in the photo above. This year, the Greater Syracuse section of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) will present the 49th annual Hannah G. Solomon Award to Anick Sinclair on Sunday, September 22. The brunch will take place at 10 am at the Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center.

The Hannah G. Solomon Award is a national award presented by individual sections of NCJW. The award is named for the founder of NCJW and is given to women who have demonstrated exceptional service to both the Jewish community and the community at large.

The Greater Syracuse Section is, once again, the recipient of a \$3000 challenge grant from the Pomeranz Shankman Martin Trust. The purpose of the grant is to purchase children's winter clothing for the Onondaga County Child Protection Services' Foster Care Program. Jackie Miron, trustee of the Pomeranz Shankman Martin Trust, has committed an additional \$1000 to purchase diapers for the CNY Diaper Bank. To receive the grant, the Greater Syracuse Section has been challenged to raise \$1500, which to be met by tribute

donations in honor of Anick. The funds raised will be used in addition to the grant funding toward the section's Mitzvah Projects. The Children's Division has been the Greater Syracuse Section's Mitzvah Project for over 10 years. The McCarthy@Beard School program, which is run by the Syracuse City School District, is another funding recipient. Last year, the section purchased winter jackets for needy students in this specialized school. In addition, the Syracuse Section also purchased diapers for the CNY Diaper Bank.

For more information or to make a reservation and/or send a tribute card honoring Anick, contact Marlene Holstein at 315-446-7648.

SJFS Arts and Minds Showcase

Organized by Syracuse Jewish Family Service (SJFS), *Arts and Minds: A Showcase for Creative Aging* features works by elder artists in SJFS's Arts & Minds programs. The showcase will be at The Oaks at Menorah Park of CNY from September 3-25. A free artists' reception will be held on Sunday September 8 from 1-3pm at The Oaks. *Arts & Minds: A Showcase for Creative Aging* is traveling for at least the next year throughout Central New York to demonstrate the limitless power of creativity and to disrupt ageism. It is made possible through the CNY Arts Grants for Regional Arts and Cultural Engagement regrant program and administered by the New York State Council on the Arts, as well as the Leonard and Irwin Kamp Family Foundation and many individual donors and corporate sponsors.

This column features businesses owned by members of our community and is generously sponsored by RAV Properties.

School of Rock Coming Soon to Fayetteville

School of Rock is the largest music education company in the world. They teach tens of thousands of students each year around the globe. Their mission is to transform kids' lives through the music they love to play in a supportive and interactive environment. They inspire and challenge their students to work hard and provide the classic rock framework that makes it fun. The school uses performance-based programs to help students master skills, develop creativity and learn life lessons - like collaboration and courage.

Founded in Philadelphia in 1998, School of Rock now has over 400 locations in the United States, Canada, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, South Africa, Mexico, Australia, Paraguay, Taiwan, Ireland, Spain, Portugal and the Philippines. But until this year, it had no presence in Central New York. That will all change late this fall when Stephen Port opens School of Rock, Fayetteville, NY. "I'm committed to making this a family and community endeavor," explained Port, who brings over a decade of experience in music education, professional band experience and a business management degree. His journey includes roles as a manager at Guitar Center, administrator at a music school in Denver and music program coordinator at Access CNY, focusing on individuals recovering from brain injuries. Additionally, Port toured globally for 11 years with punk rock bands like *Polar Bear Club*, *Off With Their Heads* and *Bad Religion*. "The reason I opened the school here is to enrich our community with performance-based music education programs that inspire creativity and confidence in musicians," he added. "Having seen firsthand the transformative power of music, I'm committed to providing a nurturing environment where students can thrive both musically and personally."

School of Rock offers classes in a variety of instruments, including guitar, drums, keyboard, vocals and bass. Students work with bandmates to prepare for live performances, which are a core part of the curriculum. The school also aims to create a community where students can learn to play together and gain a rock star experience by performing in real venues in front of family and friends. The school offers 4 levels of instruction: Little Wing is where rock's youngest fans come together to experience musical learning in an immersive and innovative setting. Classic rock songs are used to teach preschoolers about rhythm, song structure, melody, dynamics and foundational music skills through play. This class is for students ages 3 to 5. Rookies classes explore playing different instruments and musical games in a group setting. Classes are held weekly for 60 minutes for students ages 6 to 7.



Rock 101 is the first step on the road to the stage. Students receive a private lesson on the instrument of their choice and participate in a group rehearsal where inexperienced students can hone their skills and learn to work as a band in a relaxed encouraging environment. Rock 101 is for students ages 8 to 13. The Performance program for ages 8-18, is the flagship program of School of Rock. Students prepare and rehearse in weekly lessons and group rehearsals for months getting ready for their big end-of-season show. School of Rock also offers an adult program, for those ages 18 and up, where students get individual lessons along with weekly band rehearsals. The program is for musicians of all levels looking for customized private instruction and group sessions.

Port explained how it works: "Our music programs are designed to get students on stage performing, with the goal of building strong musical proficiency. Younger students at School of Rock, Fayetteville, NY who have participated in the Rookies. Rock 101 program can move to our Rock 101 Performance music program once they're ready. Additionally, students (typically ages 8 to 13-years-old) can begin Rock 101 without any prior experience. The goal of this rock program is to quickly develop basic competence on students' chosen instruments before moving on to our famous Performance Program."

School of Rock is located at 311B Towne Drive in Fayetteville. Their website is <http://www.schoolofrock.com/locations/fayettevillenyl>. For more information, call 315-554-9103.

CBS-CS Back to Shul BBQ Promises Tasty Fun

by Yolanda Febles

Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas is hosting its annual Back to Shul BBQ on Labor Day, September 2 and it promises to be tastier and better than ever. This year, the event focuses on quality, featuring a variety of kosher meats, including lamb and beef sausages, beef hot dogs, and hamburgers. To satisfy the taste buds of the vegetarian crowd, more meatless options will be added to the menu, ensuring there's something for everyone. Emphasizing fresher ingredients, much of the produce will be sourced from local farmers markets to keep the dishes as fresh as possible. Chef Nate will craft special drinks, side dishes and desserts, bringing culinary creativity to the event. In pursuit of a new and improved menu, parve desserts will be baked from scratch.



One of the unique aspects of this event is that it is primarily volunteer driven. It takes an incredible number of volunteers to put on an event of this size, and members of all ages step up and help out. From shopping and making side dishes to grilling, setting up, welcoming guests, organizing, and cleaning up, the community involvement is what makes this event special.

The Back to Shul BBQ is more than just great food. With over 200 attendees last year, it stands as one of the biggest events hosted by CBS-CS. This gathering is a perfect way to kick off the fall season, reconnect with old friends and make new ones. The event is intergenerational, welcoming young children, teens and adults with a variety of games and activities to keep everyone entertained.

The event also has a charitable aspect. Attendees are encouraged to bring donations for We Rise Above The Streets, a local charity. This annual tradition not only brings the community together but also supports a good cause.

This BBQ is open to the community on September 2nd from 3:30 to 5:30 pm. For more information and to RSVP, visit <https://tinyurl.com/b2shul>.

Brunch & Learn with Rabbi Moshe Saks

by Alicia Gross

Some may recall that once upon a time (pre-COVID), Conservative daily services were held in person, and on weekday mornings, they were followed by a communal breakfast at Temple Adath Yeshurun. The breakfast was prepared and enjoyed by a group of dedicated folks who called themselves “The Minyanaires.” After davening the morning *Shacharit* service together, all were welcome to partake in a smorgasbord of dishes including bagels and schmear, egg and tuna salad, fruit, pastries, oatmeal and more. While they noshed, they schmoozed and caught up on life, and there was always a learning moment for the day. Rabbi Saks aims to bring this concept back a little at a time. Starting Sunday, September 8, Rabbi Saks will lead Brunch & Learn at Temple Adath Yeshurun every first and third Sunday of the month. The morning will start with the daily *Shacharit*



Lisa Levens to Release New Album “HODAYA”

On September 10, Lisa Levens will hold a CD release party at Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas for her new album, “HODAYA – New Jewish Melodies,” which includes 16 original melodies written and sung by Levens in Hebrew and English. She is joined on the album by five musicians, who will perform selections from the HODAYA album with Levens at the event. Admission is free, but RSVPs are requested. The event will begin at 6:30 pm with light refreshments and desserts followed by the performance at 7:30 pm. The HODAYA album CDs will be available for sale.



Lyrics for eight of the tracks on the album are from Friday night *Kabbalat* and *Ma'ariv* services, for which Levens started writing her own melodies in 2013. Levens debuts several new songs on HODAYA, including settings of other prayers, two melodic chants, a *niggun* and a new song that utilizes text from the Song of Songs to romantic effect.

Levens recorded the album at Hobin Studios in Baldwinsville, a labor of love that took two years. Sound engineer Brett Hobin first recorded Levens' lead vocals and guitar. Then each musician recorded their instrumental track. Todd Hobin added flourishes on acoustic electric guitar. Judy Stanton recorded counter melodies for several songs. Cellist Matt Ulrich added deep strings, and Gary D. Lucas added percussion sounds including congas, shakers, chimes and a guiro. Brett Hobin added bass guitar and recorded Levens adding harmony tracks. Levens and Hobin then worked to combine and balance the sounds. Levens designed

graphics for the CD album package, a poster and an ad that appears in this *JO*.

Levens has performed publicly since the 1970s, first as a member and soloist with the Zamir Chorale of Boston and then as the lead vocalist for the Boston-based Kadima Band. She began to compose music in 2005, when she moved to Upstate New York and joined CBS-CS. In 2006, Levens learned to lead Friday night services so that

she could do so for her daughter's bat mitzvah. Rabbi Rachel Ain asked Levens to lead Friday night services at CBS-CS once a month, calling it “Shirat Shabbat with Lisa Levens.” Levens taught herself to read Torah and Haftarah as part of her adult bat mitzvah program and also to lead High Holy Days services after Rabbi Andrew Pepperstone asked her to serve as *cantor sheini*. She participated in a Singing Communities Intensive Workshop with Jewish musician and prayer leader Joey Weisenberg and started a local Jewish chant circle with Cantor Paula Pepperstone and Maggid Jim Brulé. Following the release of HODAYA, Levens hopes to restart the chant circle.

service at 9:30 am in the Miron Family Chapel. After the service, there will be a light brunch while Rabbi Saks leads a short study session in the Nancy R. Weiss Boardroom. “*Minyan* is an important part of any synagogue, and the in-person *minyan* is a way of re-establishing connection and camaraderie, breaking bread and learning together,” says Rabbi Saks. Volunteers are needed to coordinate and prepare the brunch. **Please contact Alicia Gross, Executive Director, at alicia@adath.org or 315-445-0002 x125 for more information or to volunteer.**

Temple Concord Brotherhood Renewed

by Mark Frank

It was a long time coming.

But after more than four years, coinciding with the beginning of the COVID pandemic, Temple Concord Brotherhood met in person on June 30 for the first time since early 2020.

The group gathered in Temple Concord's temporary home at 450 Kimber Road, beginning with a delightful nosh of bagels, lox, a shmear and all the trimmings. Brotherhood members then took turns introducing themselves and answering the question: What one thing about you would surprise people the most? Yes, a few of the responses were quite surprising.

Then the main attraction: an informal up-close-and-personal, getting-to-know-you session with Temple Concord Rabbi Ilan Emanuel, just the seventh settled rabbi in Temple Concord's 185-year history.

Approaching his one-year anniversary in Syracuse, Rabbi Emanuel offered his perspectives on the Syracuse Jewish community and community at large, his reflections as spiritual leader of Temple Concord during a time of transition and what he sees in the Temple's next chapter. He also offered his thoughts on the role of Brotherhood moving forward. A spirited Q&A followed.

"It has been wonderful seeing our Temple community come together during this time," Rabbi Emanuel said. "I feel an excitement of people coming together, a surge of energy, that has me looking forward to a bright future."

Temple Concord Brotherhood is poised for an exciting future as well with programming and community service projects under development. **For information on becoming a Brotherhood member, call Temple Concord at 315-475-9952.**

Head Back to School at the JCC

by Carlett Spike

At the JCC, September is a special time of year as children throughout the community are welcomed back to participate in fall programs and activities. With options available for children as young as six-weeks-old to 6th grade, there's something for everyone. "We love the start of a new school year because it's a time for children to start new adventures in their classrooms and an opportunity to make new friends," said Pam Ranieri, director of children's programming at the JCC.

For the youngest learners who are adjusting to a school environment, the Jerome & Phyllis Charney Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP) offers children the chance to connect with other students, learn new skills and explore their interests. Through various subjects and activities including art, language, literacy and math, this program allows for children ages six-weeks to 5-years-old to



develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually as they ultimately prepare for kindergarten.

For school-age learners entering grades K-6, Before Care and After Care are available for families in the Syracuse Hebrew Day School, Jamesville-DeWitt, and Fayetteville-Manlius school districts. Each weekday, Before Care begins at 7 am and After Care is available from 3 to 6 pm. Transportation is available for all Fayetteville-Manlius students and buses for those in the Jamesville-DeWitt elementary schools go directly to the JCC. Students can choose how to spend their time in both programs, whether they decide to complete homework, participate

in gym activities, work on crafts and more. ECDP and the School-Age Before and After School Programs are open to families that are members of the JCC.

Another option for children to get active this fall is by taking Enrichment classes. These classes are available to children in grades 3 to 6 and include gymnastics, dance, rookie sports and school-age karate. Classes are open to the entire community, with discounts available for families that are members of the JCC. "Our program really grows with the family," said Amy Bisnett, associate director of children's programming. "We have children here who start as infants and grow with the program through pre-K graduation, the Before and After School program and summer camp. Some even become camp counselors as teens, so their first job is with the JCC. We take pride in being a home for these children. We allow them to develop and grow in a supportive community with peers."

For more information and to register, visit jccsy.org or reach out to Pam Ranieri at 315-443-2360 or pranieri@jccsy.org.

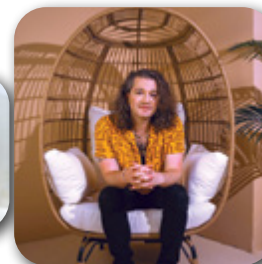
Celebrate Jewish Culture at KlezFest

by Carlett Spike

KlezFest is almost here and is set to be the biggest and best one yet. "This will not be your typical KlezFest," said Event Coordinator Alec Erlebacher, "but a transformed music and food festival, as a number of exciting additions are planned for this event that the community has come to love."

As the only kosher Jewish festival in upstate New York, the entire community is invited to the celebration on September 15 from noon to 4 pm at the JCC. Delicious food, fun games and activities and lively music will be the highlights of this event designed to uplift the community and introduce newcomers to Jewish culture.

"I want KlezFest to give people a taste of Jewish culture and allow them to explore any questions or curiosities in a safe environment," said Erlebacher. "I hope this event appeals to both Jewish people and those in the broader community, and that we can all feel welcomed to attend and embrace the fantastic food and music we have to offer." He added that some of the desire to revamp this event was due to the rise in antisemitic incidents across the country. "I want KlezFest to counteract



the hate so many have experienced and be a space for peace, unity and celebration."

Attendees can enjoy the weather as the talented Emmy award-winning songwriter and music producer Hughie Stone Fish emcee's the festivities. The electrifying musical lineup will feature a variety of artists headlined by Daniella Rabbani and Dan Nadel of The Klezmers. Challah, latkes, matza ball soup, rugelach and other classic kosher Jewish foods will be on the new expansive menu.

Those up for some friendly competitions can sign up for the kugel bake-off and participate in a blind taste test between half-moon and black & white cookies. "I really hope this brings the community together, so please spread the word to encourage others to attend,"



Erlebacher added. "If you or someone you know is curious about Jewish cuisine and culture, this will be upstate New York's 'Jewish event of the year' where everyone is welcomed."

Anyone interested in participating in the kugel bake-off is encouraged to arrive no later than 12:30 pm. All entries must be received by 12:45 pm and the bake-off will begin at 1 pm. **For more information visit jccsy.org/klezfest or reach out to Alec Erlebacher at info@smartalecsupport.com.**

ELIHU COHEN
July 6, 2024

Elihu Cohen, 98, of North Syracuse, passed away on July 6 at Crouse Hospital in Syracuse. Elihu was a graduate of Union University in Albany as an engineer. He worked at General Electric for over 30 years. He was a founding member of the Suburban Jewish Center, later renamed Congregation Ner Tamid. He was a current member of Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas.

He will be remembered for his compassion toward his family, as well as charitable causes. He was also an avid stamp collector. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him, including members of the Jewish Community Center in Dewitt.

Elihu was pre-deceased by his companion in life, Iris G (Kritzik) Cohen in 2019, after 69 years of marriage, as well as a sister Tana (Cohen) Hemingway in 2022. He is survived by his son Harold (Tammy), grandchildren Brian, David (Melissa Loeb) and Nicole Bell as well as several nieces and nephews and five great-grandchildren.

Contributions may be made to Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas, PO Box 271, Dewitt, NY 13214.

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JORDAN A. TANNENBAUM
July 14, 2024

Jordan A. Tannenbaum, 90, of Syracuse passed away peacefully at University Hospital on July 14, surrounded by family. He was born January 4, 1934 in Brooklyn, NY, the son of David and Belle Tannenbaum.

Jordan was a life-long Brooklyn Dodgers fan. He never forgave them for leaving Brooklyn. He loved classical music and knew all composers from baroque to modern.

During his professional career, Jordan was a systems analyst for the Syracuse City School District. He was a true pioneer from the early days of the computer age and was always proud of his work with Betty Caldwell on the Children Centre, an early model of the Head Start program.

He and his beloved wife Sheva moved to Syracuse in 1960. Together they enjoyed travelling to visit family in New Hampshire, Philadelphia, Australia and China. He was very loving and attentive to all of his seven grandchildren. A constant in the Jewish community, he was a member

of Temple Beth El and later Temple Adath Yeshurun. He had a large circle of friends and in later years thoroughly enjoyed luncheons and activities at the JCC.

His beloved wife Sheva passed away in February of 2016. He is survived by his son Marc (Jennifer Finn-Tannenbaum) and their children Rachel and Evan, son Daniel (Annie Mundie) and their children Isabel, Jacob (Eleora Tai) and great-granddaughter Naomi and daughter Esther Bostic, and her children Jesse, Erin and Alex as well as his brother-in-law Paul (Dawn) Horowitz.

Contributions in his memory may be made to the Senior Meal Program at the Jewish Community Center, The Foundation of Menorah Park or The Yiddish Book Center of Amherst (yiddishbookcenter.org).

www.sisskindfuneralservice.com

FRAN GREENMAN
July 17, 2024

Fran Greenman, 73, died on July 17 after a brief illness, with her family by her side. Born on May 6, 1951 to Jesse and Edith Levy in New York City, she had been a resident of Syracuse since 1974 when she and Joe were married.

She earned her nursing degree at SU and upon graduation she returned to NYC where she was a pediatric nurse at NYU Medical Center. Once Joe completed law school in Syracuse and they were married, they made their home in Syracuse.

During her professional career, she was a nurse at Upstate University Hospital, Menorah Park and Loretto. She finished her career as a school nurse for 22 years in the Fayetteville-Manlius School District at Enders Road.

She was an active member of Temple Concord and was an integral part of the planning and moving from Madison Street to the shared space on Kimber Road. Fran spent thousands of hours as a volunteer at many organizations, including Starfish International, an organization that helps empower young women realize their full potential in Gambia, West Africa, The Food Pantry and the Auxiliary of the Jewish Home of CNY.

Fran's family includes her beloved husband Joe of 50 years, their children David and Julianna, Jennifer and Otto, grandchildren Finley and Lola and a large and loving extended family. Fran would absolutely want to include her grandpups Maui, Mary Kate and Ashley.

The family asks that you share a memory of Fran to be compiled in a memory book for her grandchildren at favoritefranmemories@gmail.com. Contributions in Fran's memory may be made to Temple Concord or Starfish International; www.starfishinternational.org

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DOLORES "DEE" BLUMAN
July 17, 2024



Dolores "Dee" Bluman passed away on July 17, 2024 at Crouse Irving Memorial Hospital after a brief illness. She was born in North Syracuse on April 6, 1929, the youngest child of Edson and Winifred (Serwatke) Webb. She was a graduate of North Syracuse High School. Dee married Sidney Bluman in 1966, and they settled in Dewitt, which remained her home for the remainder of her life.

After raising her children, she took on a new career in special education within the Syracuse City School District. Along the way, she obtained her bachelor's degree in education. Because Dee loved working with the students and staff, she continued teaching into her mid-80s. She always went above and beyond in her job and clearly made a difference in the lives of her students.

Dolores took great joy in traveling and visiting many countries. These excursions brought her countless memories and fulfilled her adventurous spirit. When she wasn't traveling, she was an avid reader and a lifelong learner.

Her positive attitude, sense of humor and quick wit always brightened the lives of those around her. She is survived by her son, Eric M. Bluman, daughter-in-law, Trimble Augur and grandchildren Adair, Tenney and Everett of Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. She was predeceased by her brother Edson Jr., daughter Leslie and husband Sidney.

Donations in her memory may be made to Best Friends Animal Society, 5001 Angel Canyon Rd., PO Box 567, Kanab, UT 84741-0567.

PAUL ANDREW SILVERMAN

Paul Andrew Silverman passed away from natural causes at home, just shy of his 60th birthday. Born on July 27 in Brooklyn to Robert and Harriet Silverman, he had been a resident of Syracuse since 1965.

He attended J-D schools and was a BOCES student as well. Paul worked in many places and enjoyed his participation wherever he worked. Most recently, he was working at the Syracuse Marriott. Though Paul had many health challenges, partially due to his Legg Perthes disease, they never defined or limited his life. Paul was a member of and celebrated his bar

mitzvah at Congregation Beth Sholom-Chebra Shas. He loved to fish, music and attending concerts in the local music scene. He never met a stranger; his warm and outgoing personality drew people in no matter where he went.

His family, whom he adored, includes his parents Robert and Harriet Silverman, his brother David and his wife Jessica; his sister Stephanie, his niece Raia and his nephew Samuel.

Contributions may be made to Access CNY or Congregation Beth Sholom-Chebra Shas.

www.sisskindfuneralservice.com

BEVERLY COOPER SILVERS
June 27, 2024

Beverly Cooper Silvers, beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, passed away on June 27 at the age of 94. She was born on June 2, 1930 in Syracuse to Gertrude and Simon Albert. Beverly was known for her love of family and her great sense of humor; she always loved a great laugh. She also enjoyed playing golf and bridge and had a passion for baking.

Beverly began her career at A.H. Pond, a wholesale diamond company. She later owned and operated her own business in Rochester. After selling her business, she joined the University of Rochester's human resources department, where she worked until her retirement.

Beverly was predeceased by her parents and her siblings, Shirley Luxenberg and Dr. Sidney Albert. She was married from 1951 to 1974 to the love of her life, Marshall Cooper, with whom she had three daughters: Terry (Howard) Stern, Debbie Cooper (Gary of blessed memory) Passer and Lisa (Joseph) Fiorie. She is survived by her grandchildren: Michael (Melissa) Stern, Jeffrey (Tiffany) Stern, Justin (Bridget) Stern, Greg (Jocie) Stern, Marni (Steven) Vassallo, Jaclyn (Christopher) Mellone and Joey Fiorie, and her great-grandchildren Landon Stern, Lena Stern, Wesley Stern, Teddy Stern, Sidney Stern, Harrison Stern, Charlotte Stern, Cooper Vassallo, Eleanor Mellone and Marshall Mellone.

In 1980, Beverly married Herbert Silvers, a kind and wonderful man. They lived

in Rochester until his passing in 1985. Beverly then spent 17 joyful years with Jim Rakov, enjoying their retirement in Lake Worth, Florida, until his passing in 2001. She later shared seven cherished years with her loving friend Harvey Tucker until his passing in 2006.

Donations in Beverly's memory may be made to Menorah Park of CNY, 4101 E Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13214 or Francis House, 108 Michaels Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13208. Beverly's family would like to publicly acknowledge the loving care given to her during her stay at Menorah Park under the guidance of Chief Operating Officer Russ D'Amico. Beverly will be dearly missed by her family and friends, who will always remember her love for life and the joy she brought to those around her.

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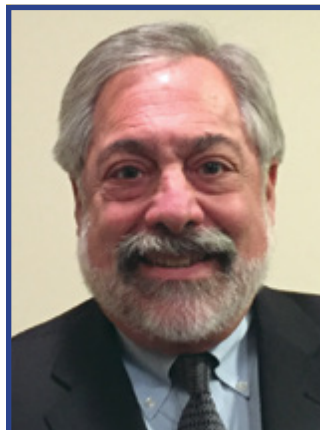
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