

Jewish Observer of Central New York

A publication of the Jewish Federation of Central New York

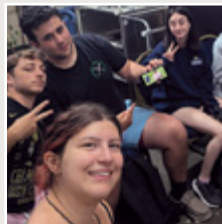
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AUGUST 2025 | AV-ELUL 5785



Tisha b' Av 5785



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August 2025

From the Editor



Barbara Davis

This month's issue of the *Jewish Observer* encompasses two holidays that could not be more different: *Tisha b'Av*, the 9th of Av, the saddest day in the Jewish calendar, and *Tu b'Av*, the 15th of Av, the day of love. The juxtaposition of loss and love seems particularly suited to August 2025.

*"Remember the days of old,
Consider the years of ages past;
Ask your parent, who will inform you,
Your elders, who will tell you."
Deuteronomy 32:7*

The theme of this year's *Yom haShoah* contest was "How does learning about our past help you prepare for the future?" The selection of this theme was intended to encourage students to see that the lessons of the past and the historical antecedents of our present tumultuous and turbulent times are both prophetic and instructive. We ignore them at our peril.

How we approach history in the 21st century is a fraught topic, as artificial intelligence and revisionism alter what we "know" and believe to be true. There are fewer than a quarter of a million Holocaust survivors still alive, and most will pass away in the next two decades. Who will bear witness when they are gone? How will AI impact our understanding and interpretation of what happened in the past? We know that AI-generated texts, images and videos blur the lines between authentic history and fabricated narratives. AI can sideline critical thinking, human interpretation, and ethical inquiry in historical analysis, especially when AI is perceived as "objective." How will we "remember the days of old, consider the years of ages past" in the 21st century? Is the current rise in national and global antisemitism and anti-Zionism a direct result of a failure to learn about and from the lessons of the past?

Anti-Jewish sentiment has existed for centuries, rooted mostly in religious grounds. In Christian Europe, Jews were hated because they were blamed for the crucifixion of Jesus and were persecuted and expelled from England in 1290 and Spain in 1492. The term "antisemitism" was coined in 1879 by the German nationalist Wilhelm Marr who wrote *The Path to the Victory of Germanic Culture over Judaism* and founded the League of Antisemites (*Antisemitenliga*).

It is curious that there is no term analogous to "antisemitism" to refer to hatred of a specific group of people. There are terms which use the suffix -phobia, or fear, to refer to certain groups, such as Islamophobia, Afrophobia, Sinophobia and Hispanophobia, but antisemitism seems to be an ideology based on hatred rather than fear. The vitriol of antisemitism in the United States in recent years is most observable online. According to the latest *State of Antisemitism in America Report* issued by the American Jewish Committee, roughly seven in ten (69%) Jewish adults report experiencing antisemitism online or on social media, including those who say they have been personally targeted and those who say they have seen or heard antisemitic incidents. This increases to eight in ten (83%) among young Jewish adults.

Yet hatred of the Jewish people is not new; it has just found a new forum. When we think of three of our most observed Jewish holidays, it is hard not to notice that they all are connected to acts of hatred or violence against our people. We were threatened with annihilation at Purim, expelled and pursued at Passover and attacked at Chanukah. (Naturally, being Jewish, we turned this into a joke – "They tried to kill us. They failed. Let's eat.") *Tisha b'Av*, observed this month, is another holiday that commemorates Jewish tragedies: the destructions of the two Temples,

the first by the Babylonians and the second by the Romans, and subsequent exile.

For many, *Tisha b'Av*, characterized by intense mourning practices, is not a commemoration to which they can relate. But October 7th is. And the rise of antisemitism is. And the murder of two innocent young diplomats in Washington, DC is. So when we are told to "Remember the days of old, Consider the years of ages past," can this dictum help us come to grips with what is happening today? And does "learning about our past help you prepare for the future?" One would hope so.

Many of us had never heard of *Tu b'Av* until recently, but it is not a new holiday. It was celebrated in the time of the Second Temple (before 70 CE) as a day of matchmaking and joy. Unobserved for centuries, it was revived in modern times, particularly in Israel, and is now a holiday of festivals and celebrations. If there was ever a time when we needed to be reminded of the need for love and joy, it is now.

This August *JO* contains a variety of articles reflecting unique takes on the issues of the day. We are pleased to include remarks by Dr. Miriam Elman, given at the United States Holocaust Museum and a powerful article by Leah Eve Jezer-Nelson about her recent experience with her Birthright group during the bombing in Israel. There is also a review of a book that describes a fascinating experiment: Jews fleeing pogroms in Eastern Europe were routed not to Palestine or New York—but to Texas, in an experiment called The Galveston Plan.

Other somber articles in this issue include a reflection on our inability to communicate well with one another ("Conversational Pouncing") and a description of Mary Jumbelic's new book, *Speak Her Name*, which presents the stories of women lost to the world by violent crimes uncovered through forensics. Turning from darkness to hope, we also include a review of a book describing how Haredi women are using modern technology to enrich their lives while remaining steadfast in their observance and an article about the preservation of the oldest synagogue in the Adirondack Mountains and its connection to a local family.

As August confronts us with war and the great distance between destruction and despair and hope and love, let us find consolation in the words of the song *Od Yavo Shalom Aleinu*, written by Israeli musician Mosh Ben-Ari: "Peace will come to us; peace will yet come to us; peace will come to us, and everyone, peace for us and for all the world." And let us say: *Amen*.

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MESSAGE FROM TODD PINSKY

Federation Board Chair



One word keeps coming to my mind as an enduring lesson of this past year: **PERSEVERANCE**. Through adversity and difficult times, we persevered and we are stronger. Our community is stronger. Federation is stronger. Our unity persevered (even when we disagreed with one another), and our compassion, our enduring strength, and our Jewish identity persevered. **Our institutions, our programming, our collective voice persevered and they all became stronger.**

In every way, objectively and subjectively, we are stronger and more unified than we were a year ago or two years ago. Federation and our community are stronger. Federation's campaign, Federation's Community Relations Committee, Federation's Next Gen Program, Federation's work with law enforcement (whom we thank our federal, state, and local law enforcement for all of their support and protection), Federation's support of our community's safety and security, Federation's partnerships on fighting against anti-Semitism, Federation's support for Israel, Federation's engagement with local school district and Syracuse University, and Federation's support of our local agencies, our day school at SHDS, our JCC, our Hillel, our senior programs at Menorah Park, and our temples...are all stronger than ever and all have persevered.

We have proven to ourselves and to those inside and outside our Jewish community, we will persevere. We should all be very proud of one another for these accomplishments and the support and cooperation that we have shown to one another.

The Jewish Federation of Central New York is more than an organization. It is an idea and it is a movement — a movement rooted in our people, our traditions, our community; an idea driven by purpose, and an idea intent on persevering and preserving our Jewish future. As reflected in all that we showed tonight, our Jewish future here in Syracuse and Central New York is vibrant.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Thank you for your trust in us. Thank you for your partnership. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to the Jewish Federation of Central New York. We do not and never will take it for granted.

Together, we will continue to write the next chapter of our story, the next chapter of our Jewish Syracuse...a story of hope, resilience, and boundless possibility.

MESSAGE FROM MARK SEGEL

Federation President & CEO



Federation has accomplished amazing things this past year! Like most Federations, one of our most significant focuses and accomplishments was our ongoing rapid and robust response to the crisis following the October 7th attacks in Israel. Our community mobilized with urgency and heart, raising more than \$1 million locally which contributed to the national effort that raised nearly \$1 billion in support of Israel. This is a very impressive feat for a small/intermediate Federation!

More importantly, Federation did not miss a beat dealing with antisemitic threats and helping ensure that our community and the Jewish organizations that make it up are prepared to respond to any threats that may present themselves. Special thanks to Susan DeMari, our Director of Community Security, for her 24/7 commitment to our safety and security. Susan was visionary in organizing our security program here in Central New York and she's the go-to person in the region for anything related to the safety and security of the Jewish community. It should also be noted that, through Susan's efforts, we were able to purchase multiple license plate readers, placed strategically throughout our Jewish community, so that law enforcement can use them to identify and track threats.

While we responded to global crises, we never lost sight of our mission at home: to nurture a vibrant, inclusive, and enduring Jewish life in Central New York. This past year, we invested in programs that celebrate our diversity and bring us together. From Shabbat dinners to cultural festivals, from Hebrew school scholarships for trips abroad to connecting children with seniors through outreach, we touched thousands of lives. We supported our local synagogues, the Hebrew Day School, the JCC and other organizations, ensuring they remained strong pillars of Jewish identity and continuity.

We are also committed to our Jewish students on college campuses like Syracuse University, providing funding for Hillel programs to help quell the alarming rise in antisemitic incidents. These young adults are not only our future — they are our present. And we are committed to ensuring they feel safe, supported, and proud of their Jewish identity. We are also exploring ways we can convince these young graduates to stay in the Syracuse area or, at least, stay connected to the Jewish community they're from. A strong Hillel system across the country benefits Jewish Syracuse as well!

We want to talk not only about past accomplishments, but also about the bright future ahead. As we look to the future, we do so with hope, determination, and a clear sense of purpose. The Federation board will be meeting in the months ahead to develop a new strategic plan that will help us best address the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

None of this would be possible without our donors, volunteers, partners, and friends whose support is the lifeblood of our Federation. Belief in our mission fuels everything we do. Together, we have shown that even in the face of adversity, we can build, grow, and thrive. We have proven that when we come together...guided by our values, inspired by our heritage, and united in purpose...there is nothing we cannot achieve.

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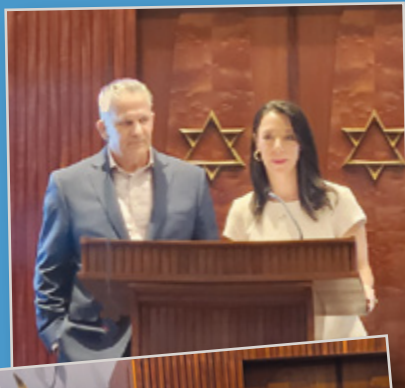
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- **DESSERT RECEPTION**



Is Jewish Unity Possible?

by Rabbi Irvin Beigel

Rabbis of the Talmudic period and rabbis ever since have preached to Jews about the importance of Jews loving each other and keeping our people unified. Jewish sources speak so much about unity and love because so often these values have been more aspiration than reality. The Torah describes the rebellion of Korach against Moses (and God!). Later on, there were divides between Pharisees and Saducees, Hellenists and Maccabees, false messiahs and their opponents, Hasidim and mitnagdim, reformers and neo-orthodox. Today, we are divided by the way in which we understand the role of Jewish law in our daily lives. We disagree on which aspects of secular society can be adopted by Jews and we are divided by our politics. It is likely that we even disagree on what Jewish unity means!

The rabbis were wise in recognizing the dangers of a divided Jewish people. They knew that the Romans were directly responsible for destroying the Second Temple, ending Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel and exiling Jews from their homeland, but it was the causeless hatred (*sin'at chinam*) among Jews that made these calamities possible. The continued existence of Judaism and of the Jewish people as a distinct entity was threatened by our disunity.

Today, divisiveness also puts us in danger. Of course, if everyone agreed with me about everything, we would have unity, but that is a very improbable occurrence. Judaism has a system of values made concrete through laws that govern all human behavior. Those laws are the heart of the covenant between God and the Jewish people made at Sinai. Shared commitment to the covenant unites us but not all Jews share that commitment.

So, how do we promote unity? There is no easy answer, no magic bullet. I do humbly offer two suggestions:

First, we need to acknowledge that which all Jews have in common. An assimilated Jew in Boise, Idaho, and a Jew wearing a *shtrimele* in Jerusalem share a common history. The tree's branches may not all look alike, but they all have the same roots. We are a diverse community that has come together to celebrate Hanukkah and Yom HaAtzmaut and to commemorate October 7.

Secondly, a Hasidic story tells us that two men had drunk a bit too much. One asks his friend, "Do you love me?" The other answers, "Of course." The first man then asks, "Tell me what causes me pain." Not hearing an answer, the first man says, "If you don't know what causes me pain, how can you love me?"

When we speak to someone with whom we strongly disagree, we can simply walk away and not care, or we can walk away in anger and disgust. There is, however, another possibility. We can try to learn why the other person feels the way they do, what is causing their pain. If we had their experiences in life, we might well feel as they do. Understanding will not always lead to agreement, nor to a friendship, but there can be no unity without mutual respect and empathy.

Disagreements between great scholars are found in the Talmud. In most cases, one opinion is accepted and the others are rejected. All opinions are recorded because we can learn from them all. Our sages strongly disagreed but did so respectfully and with a desire to learn from colleagues.

We can never eliminate all our enemies. As we mourn our tragic losses on *Tisha b'Av*, let us work to strengthen the bonds that bring Jews closer to each other. May peace come to Israel.



For Women and Girls Only: Reshaping Jewish Orthodoxy Through the Arts in the Digital Age

by Jessica Roda

Reviewed by Wendy Evers Gordon, Ph.D.

Jessica Roda's *For Women and Girls Only: Reshaping Jewish Orthodoxy Through the Arts in the Digital Age* describes how ultra-Orthodox women are utilizing the technological advances of the internet to develop and express themselves, artistically, individually and collectively, without publicly subverting the restrictions imposed by their faith. Roda argues against the stereotype of Hassidic women as a subjugated insular community by pointing out the ways in which they are able to maneuver around the restrictions imposed upon them by rabbinic restraints.

What ultra-Orthodox women contend with are strict and wide-ranging requirements for modesty (*tznius*), including restrictions on public displays, promoting their work in spaces or mediums to which men have access, and avoiding anything that distracts them from their primary roles as wives and mothers. Clearly, these requirements do not make it easy for ultra-Orthodox women to express themselves artistically or disseminate their work to the world at large.

The author describes the various ways in which Haredi women and girls use technology to create what Roda calls "spaces," allowing for varying levels of observance and even a degree of what she labels "subversive creativities," enabling them to disseminate their work. Think of these as female-only Jewish chat rooms that, to one degree or another, circumvent prohibitions. Some are termed "private spaces," utilizing digital technology and the internet, but available only to women and girls. There are also "modest public spaces" where men are "warned away" from viewing the content. The most liberal and rebellious spaces are "counter-public spaces" where women can contradict and try to replace rules restricting their activities, and "public spaces" where women reach out to women who have left Haredi life (going "off the derekh"), non-Orthodox and even non-Jewish women.

I was struck by the willingness of these women to bypass the rules or reinterpret or reframe their activities to present them as, in fact, abiding by religious strictures (e.g., performing plays, singing and dancing are educational and promote mental and physical health; artistic displays, shown online, are not publicly available because "we do not want to show them in public.") While girls often attend summer camps that specialize in performance arts, and others take private lessons with artistic professionals, these practices are described as "controversial, and girls would not publicly acknowledge taking them." Even using the internet, essential for communicating and collaborating with other women, and downloading audio and video files, involves creative reframing (e.g., one woman set up a separate room, containing only her computer, connected to an outside cable, so that she could insist that she did not have the internet "in [her] home.")

Though largely celebrating the accomplishments of these women, the author briefly acknowledges these obvious paradoxes and also describes the occasional "private negotiations with religious authorities" to gain permission or, in some cases, to have them "turn a blind eye" to the women's activities. In addition, she points out that when "from female artists turn live, unmarketable performances into a new economy.... it reinforces gender segregation in that the broader entertainment opportunities it provides exist in an environment still restricted to women and girls. Yet the availability of female-made products in online and brick and mortar stores also involves a degree of self-promotion and public self-display that conflicts with the requirement of female modesty." One can't help but wonder how the extra income from monetizing their online activities via digital products, ads and subscriptions might also give some of the women, should they desire to acquire it, newfound power that could change the dynamics within their homes and community.

Within the confines of the presumed choice to live as an ultra-Orthodox Jewish woman, this book offers a fascinating look at how digital technology has benefited them both artistically and by increasing the breadth of their online social engagement with others. To a non-Orthodox Jewish woman like myself, however, this book comes across as partly inspirational and partly frustratingly sad. One can respect the rights of others to practice as they see fit and still have questions. Why are these bright and talented women willing to subject themselves to such practices, then work so hard to circumvent them in order to remain within their community? Perhaps therein lies the answer. But I do wonder how much these women and girls, not to mention the world at large, might benefit from enjoying and learning from their creations.



Am Yisrael Chai: Could Israel have been in Siberia? Australia? or Niagara Falls?

Strange as it seems, several alternative sites for a Jewish state outside of the Middle East were proposed in response to antisemitism and persecution. Some were serious political proposals, others were utopian and of a dubious nature. Suriname and Guyana were suggested by Jewish organizations and some colonial officials. Italian Zionists proposed resettlement of Jews in Cyrenaica, a coastal region of Libya, under Italian colonial control. The Freeland League for Jewish Territorial Colonization presented the Kimberly Plan, calling for a large-scale Jewish settlement in the remote Kimberley region of northern Australia. The idea of deporting European Jews to Madagascar was floated by several governments as a “solution” to antisemitism. The Nazis revived the plan briefly before abandoning it in favor of the Final Solution.

The Ararat Plan was one of the earliest proposals for a Jewish homeland in North America. Proposed in 1825 by Mordecai Manuel Noah, a prominent Jewish American diplomat, playwright, and proto-Zionist, it was designed to be a safe haven on Grand Island, in the Niagara River, near Buffalo. Noah purchased land on the island and laid a cornerstone at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, declaring the creation of the “City of Refuge for the Jews.” He issued a proclamation inviting Jews from around the world to settle there, but despite the symbolic gesture and significant media coverage, no Jews came.

In 1903, the British and Theodor Herzl put forth the “Uganda Proposal,” calling for a portion of British East Africa (in modern-day Kenya, not Uganda) for Jewish settlement. Herzl presented it to the Sixth Zionist Congress as a temporary refuge for Jews facing pogroms in Russia. It sparked heated debate and was ultimately rejected in 1905 after a fact-finding commission and opposition from many within the Zionist movement who insisted on Eretz Yisrael (the Land of Israel). South America was proposed by the Jewish Colonization Association and Baron Maurice de Hirsch, a wealthy European Jewish philanthropist, who purchased land in Argentina to resettle Jews fleeing pogroms in Eastern Europe.

Agricultural colonies such as Moisés Ville were established. While not envisioned as a homeland, Argentina was seen by some as a large-scale refuge with potential for Jewish cultural flourishing.

The Soviet Union in 1928 created the Jewish Autonomous Region in Birobidzhan, Siberia, near the Chinese border, to promote a Soviet version of Jewish cultural autonomy. Yiddish, not Hebrew, was to be the official language.

Located in a remote, underdeveloped, and harsh area, the project never gained significant Jewish population. It remains today as the only officially designated Jewish territory outside Israel.

In 1940, U.S. Interior Secretary Harold Ickes proposed settling Jews in Alaska as part of the Slattery Report. It was presented as a humanitarian effort, not a state, but was met with opposition in Congress and by American Jewish

groups worried about isolating Jews or stoking antisemitism. Galveston, Texas was the site proposed by Jewish philanthropists in the early 1900s to allow Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe to settle in the American interior by passing through the Port of Galveston. Over 10,000 Jews passed through this route between 1907 and 1914. A new book, reviewed below, presents this fascinating story.

Melting Point: Family, Memory, and the Search for a Promised Land by Rachel Cockerell

Reviewed by Angela Locke

In her 2024 memoir *Melting Point: Family, Memory, and the Search for a Promised Land*, Rachel Cockerell uses diaries, letters, memoirs, articles and recordings to piece together an historical journey that takes us all over the world as Zionists search for the best place to establish a homeland. The author’s voice is purposely absent, so the story unfolds first-hand, in original words, arranged seamlessly and in perfect order.

Part I concerns Zionism’s “scouring of the globe for a homeland outside Palestine.” Included in this journey are the historical Zionist conferences. We are introduced to Theodore Herzl and his colleagues Chaim Weizmann, David ben Gurion and Winston Churchill. Scholars of Israel’s history will recognize the name Israel Zangwill, one of the leaders of the Galveston Movement. There is more than one chapter devoted to commentary on Zangwill’s looks, personal life, leadership, alongside Herzl, of the Zionist movement — his worldwide importance. After Herzl’s death, we learn that Zangwill split from the Zionists and formed the Jewish Territorial Organization, intent on creating “Zionism without Zion.” Its search for a Jewish homeland considered countries on five different continents. Many in leadership looked to the United States. They wanted Jews to be brought into a southern port and dispersed to less populated areas than the East Side of New York, which was becoming a victim of ghettoization. Galveston, Texas was chosen.

This is where we meet the



author’s personal connection, what makes this book a memoir instead of simply an historical account of the Zionist movement. David Jochelman, who arrived in England from Kyiv at the outbreak of World War I, was the author’s great-grandfather, responsible for settling tens of thousands of Russian Jews in this unlikely Texas port. He worked alongside Israel Zangwill, as well as with the influential Rabbi Henry Cohen. Part I ends with the Galveston Movement’s office’s closure and the death of Jochelman who had been critical to its success.

In Part II, we are plunged into the theatre scene of 1920s New York. The Cockerell connection is a half-brother of the author’s grandmother, a son

of David Jochelman, by way of an earlier marriage. Em Jo Basshe, born in Russia in 1899 and brought to New York by his father at age thirteen, was one of the founding members of the avant-garde New Playwrights. The comments in Part II are from people like Ernest Hemingway, John dos Passos, Sinclair Lewis, Dorothy Day, and Teddy Roosevelt. Told through the memories of Basshe’s daughter Jo, the colorful multicultural world of Bleecker Street seems apolitical. Then Hitler takes Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Part III brings us to the chaotic world of Rachel Cockerell’s father, aunts, uncles, and grandparents. Mimi tells us that her father worked for Jabotinsky, but who was Mimi? Who was her father? And then there’s Hugh and Michal and Lolly and Judy and Sonia and Lev and Annie. These names are meaningful to Cockerell, but not to the reader. Authorial direction would have been helpful at this point, but the accounts of the end of British rule in Palestine and the establishment of the State of Israel are gripping.

Despite my complaint about the jumble of family names, this book is well worth reading. The use and arrangement of original historical sources is an imaginative method of engaging readers, the first of its kind that I have seen.

Conversational Pouncing: How we stopped listening

by Michael Gordon, Ph.D.

When I type the period at the end of this string of words, I will have completed my first sentence of the day. And it's late afternoon.

The prior sentences I attempted to finish, all spoken, were thwarted early in their formation. Most didn't make it past the first five or six words before the listener pounced. My last effort started with, "Maybe then we can..." That was enough to trigger an expansive and detailed response, delivered in a tone usually reserved for communicating with an intellectually limited miscreant. Of course, nothing within that torrent of sentences included a single element of what I had intended to suggest.

I'll usually wait out the other person's soliloquy and give it another go. My effort will start with something like, "That's all good, but what I was trying to explain is that..." Occasionally I'll make it to the end of that sentence and perhaps a few more, if I don't stop to take a breath. The chances are, though, that another interruption will come my way, and I'll let it go.

Occasionally I'll try to barrel my way through like a running back who lowers his head and churns his legs as he hits the line. My persistence is rarely rewarded. I often get so distracted by the other person's unwillingness to listen that I back off. If they don't want to hear what I have to say, I figure it's their business (and to be fair, they may be justified in sacking my verbal output, much of which can be well worth ignoring).

For the most part, I've come to terms with my forced freedom from expression. Sure, I could take it all personally and resent being cut off. But I don't think most of the preemptive verbal strikes are borne of hostile intent. It's just humans being human. Some need to show off their knowledge and erudition, others want to stop you before you say something they might find anxiety-provoking or objectionable, still others are simply better at "send" than "receive." It takes patience to hear someone out, a quality that many (yours truly very much included) can have in short supply. That's why cross talking is more common than rare.

What I see more nowadays than earlier in my life is that most interruptions are motivated by the overpowering human aversion to being wrong. We all despise even the mere suggestion that opinions we've formed, the political stances we've adopted, the theories we've embraced, the predictions we've made, the religious paths we've followed, the stands we've taken, the explanations we've relied upon to make sense of the world, the advice we've offered — all might rest on shaky ground.

Especially in discussions involving politics or ideology, the act of interrupting often serves as a sort of preemptive strike. It's as if, by letting someone else's idea take shape, we risk being confronted with a perspective that might challenge or even destabilize our own. We cut them off because allowing them to complete a thought could expose us to the intolerable possibility of having to rethink our own.

Being wrong feels to many of us less like an opportunity for growth and understanding, and more like being set adrift. It threatens not just our principles but our sense of identity. In today's increasingly polarized climate, being "right" isn't just a matter of pride, it's a form of tribal belonging. We interrupt, not because we're rude or combative (though sometimes we are), but because it feels safer to shut down a counterpoint before it can bloom into something uncomfortably persuasive and intimidating.

So do me and perhaps yourself a favor next time you're in a discussion with someone: try to stop yourself from conversational pouncing by taking a beat and listening until the other person finishes. For the practice, try it again the next time around.

Now ask yourself, "Was that so terrible?" and "Did I better understand what the other person had to say?" and "Might I have learned something that makes sense?" and "Did the other person seem to appreciate being heard rather than dismissed?" and "Have I been meaningfully diminished because I acknowledged the value of another's point of view by hearing them out?" It might be a worthwhile exercise that allows for a more productive outcome.

Given that you made it to the end of this article, thanks for letting me express myself fully. It's a joy being heard (and read).

"I speak for the dead." Mary Jumbelic's New Book



Mary Jumbelic, M.D. is an expert forensic pathologist, author, educator, and former Chief Medical Examiner of Onondaga County, the first woman to hold that position. In her 25-year career as a forensic pathologist, Mary performed thousands of autopsies both in the United States and abroad as part of special assignments to aid in world disaster management.

In the course of her career, she worked with hundreds of victims of violence and abuse. A proponent of women's rights, she also helped create visibility as a woman in government, science, and business. She has received awards for her work from the National Transportation Safety Board and the New York State Senate and was recognized as a Trailblazer in Forensic Medicine by the National Organization of Women.

As an author of memoir and creative nonfiction, Mary shares stories of life both in and out of the morgue. In 2023, she published her first book, *Here, Where Death Delights: A Literary Memoir*, which explored her life and work as a forensic pathologist, demystifying death for herself and others. The memoir gained international readership, receiving a First Place Award from The BookFest, Gold Award from Colorado Independent Book Publishers, and Silver Awards from the Nonfiction Authors Association and Reader's Favorite.

Her latest book, published in June, is titled *Speak Her Name*. Mary explains that "In the course of my work past and present, I aim to uncover the truth beneath the surface, providing answers to family and friends, while giving a voice to those departed. In my 25-year career in pathology, I have seen female bodies sexually violated, battered, stabbed, and shot. Their corpses dismembered. Some buried in shallow graves, others meticulously hidden. A majority of these deaths were caused by someone the women knew. *Speak Her Name* gives these women a voice. I share their stories to bear witness to their pain, and to educate those still with us. I am stronger and wiser because of them, and I hope my growth as a woman will inspire and uplift you, too. Each woman has something to say. Witness her. Hear her. Speak her name."

On September 4th at 7pm at Temple Concord, 450 Kimber Road, join Mary Jumbelic for a book reading and signing of *Speak Her Name*, sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Central New York.







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COMMUNITY

Elman Addresses the Danger of Hate and Unchecked Antisemitism



Photography by Michael Butcher for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Dr. Miriam Elman, chair of the Federation's Community Relations Committee, was invited to speak at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's 2025 National Tribute Dinner at The Anthem in Washington, DC. Elman's remarks to the hundreds of audience members, including the Museum's supporters from across the country, members of Congress, and dignitaries focused on the Museum's efforts to educate and inform university and college administrators and faculty across the country about the dangers of hate and unchecked antisemitism. Elman described the nature and impact of this new work and programming, which is being undertaken through an expanded partnership with the Academic Engagement Network (AEN), a national educational nonprofit. Elman has served as AEN's Executive Director since 2019. Her remarks appear below:

"Engaged, educated faculty. Responsive administrators. Students being seen and heard. THAT is the outcome we are looking for. And THAT is the outcome we are seeing from this powerful partnership between the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and AEN.

The Museum is one of the leading educators in our country about the dangers of hate and unchecked antisemitism. The historical abuse of language, the intimidation, the ways in which information becomes manipulated and is disseminated through the masses. It's so important that faculty and university leaders understand this history, so they can recognize the dynamics on campuses today and know when and how to speak up.

There is no way we could bring AEN's entire network to the Museum. So we decided to bring the Museum to them."

We created our first webinar with Museum historian Daniel Greene teaching about conspiratorial thinking and antisemitism, especially the infamous publication called the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. By pairing Daniel's expertise with a modern scholar of Soviet

history, we delved into how antisemitism has been propped up by conspiracy theories and misinformation. Our faculty members grappled with important questions about what a conspiracy is, how to identify it, and how to stand up against it. These were new conversations they would otherwise never have had, and the webinar received some of our highest ever evaluation scores.

It was so successful that not only are we moving forward with plans for more online programming pairing Museum historians with modern day content experts, we are also piloting new in-person events. This year, content about propaganda, communication tools, misinformation and disinformation, will be brought both virtually and live to campuses across the country.

As AEN's relationship with the Museum has developed, we have seen so many "a ha" moments from our faculty members and university staff cohorts. Jewish and non-Jewish, across disciplines and roles, they feel engaged, educated, and empowered. That's what makes this a really special partnership for our organization, and we're so grateful to the Museum for joining us in this mission."

When The World Is Coming To An End, What Else Is There To Do But Dance?

by Leah Eve Jezer-Nelson

On Thursday night, June 12th, my co-staffer and I were woken up by our phones blaring. At first, the emergency alert said it was for a 5.1 magnitude earthquake. Within ten minutes, we realized what was really going on.

You might imagine the headlines: CHAOS AS ROCKETS POUR INTO ISRAEL. BIRTHRIGHT GROUPS TRAPPED. PANIC ENSUES.

The truth, as it so often is in life, was actually rather anticlimactic. We met at 10 am the next morning with our students and explained the situation to them. They accepted it, some with tears in their eyes, but all with a steely resolve that did us proud.

Missiles were flying over our heads, there was a non-zero chance we would die, and lunch was from 12-2 pm. Make sure you keep your grab bag ready and keep electronics charged. Don't forget to drink water.

Every night was the same. Goodnight around 10 pm, turn into our beds around 12 am, good morning at 1 or 2 or 3 am when the alarms started to blare, see you later when it was all clear. We timed our exits from the stairwells by our Israeli clocks — our medics and tour guides. If they were in the shelter, we were in the shelter. When they left, we left. When in Israel!

There developed a rather odd domesticity to all of it. Staff planned movie nights, group competitions, and even began talking about a makeshift karaoke game. We were aware of the rockets slamming into Tel Aviv, Be'er Sheva, Rehovot, and we were aware of the deaths that followed each successful impact. What else could we do?

So we threw ourselves into our students. One night, I bought \$500+ of pizzas for my small group. When the alarms started blaring, our tour guide, my co-staffer, and I picked up the leftovers and shimmied our way into the shelter. Our tour guide, Hagai, laughed and said we'd become true Israelis. Here is the truth I learned that night: *When the world is coming to an end, what else is there to do but dance?*

We slept in scraps. An hour here, two hours there. After the first strike, we'd figured the stairwells were as safe as the shelter, and closer to our beds. If we were going to die, we were going to do it as well rested as we could. It didn't make us less afraid but gave us courage to face the next strike.



Interceptors, launched from the ground, impacted incoming missile strikes over our heads. The thuds and booms as pieces of metal exploded shook even our concrete hotel to its base. There were

quiet rounds of tears in those stairwells, as we checked the news and saw what-and who-was destroyed. There were moments of immense strength, as well. "From Now On" was played one night and we all sang "And we will come back home, and we will come back home, home again," quietly enough to hear the thuds of rockets impacting overhead.

It was here that I came to recognize what the true power of our story is. It is in the resilience of an eighteen-year-old, stroking the back of her friend as they shudder when the building shakes. It is in the kindness of every Israeli we met: Jew, Bedouin, Druze, and so many more, who thanked us for coming to their home during a time of war. It is in the courage to look to the future and see the possibility of brightness instead of only darkness.



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VEHICLE TYPE
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OPERATIONAL CODE
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STATION LOCATION
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Emergency Call Responses
TOTAL SERVICE CALLS: 4159

2281 • 55% Adult Medical Emergencies	99 • 2% Fire-Related Emergencies
948 • 23% Other Injuries	169 • 4% Victims of Violence
429 • 10% Traffic Accidents	18 • 0% Work Related Accidents
128 • 3% Child Medical Emergencies	22 • 1% Hazardous Material Emergencies
65 • 2% Women in Labor	0 • 0% Terrorist Incidents

*When the total number of calls for a particular category equals zero, 0% will appear as 0%



RIDE TO REMEMBER

On June 6, 151 bikers from the United States and Canada gathered in Charlotte, NC, for the annual Ride 2 Remember to support the Greenspan Holocaust Center. Attending on behalf of Thou Shalt Ride of Central NY were Fred Edelman, Sam Abady, Joel Stein, Peter Caplan, Ken Bell, Dave Feldman and Steve Aroesty.



MAKE-A-WISH TURNS 40
Diane Kupperman, Executive Director of the Make-A-Wish Foundation is featured on the cover of 55Plus as the organization celebrates its 40th anniversary.

SYRACUSE HILLEL GIVES BACK

Syracuse Hillel mobilized to make cards, sandwiches and diaper packs as a part of the National Days of Jewish Service and Good Deeds Day. Silke Pion, Hillel Community Service Chair and Repair the World Service Engagement Intern, shared, "Giving back to the community is always something that I am thinking about. As a college student, I have become aware of the disparities in wealth that exist between students at Syracuse University and within the surrounding community at large. After learning about people facing housing crises or being without food, and I felt compelled to help change this, starting with small acts of service, and good deeds day is a great way to bring people together to benefit some local community organizations that I have volunteered at the last three years, such as the CNY Diaper Bank and the Samaritan Center."



NEXT GEN ISRAELI WINE TASTING

Next Gen and the JCC hosted a wine and cheese tasting at Nobody's Wine Bar. They enjoyed samples from four different Israeli and kosher wines while learning more about the history of the wine industry in Israel.



HAPPY ENDING

Thanks to the kindness of the Pomeranz, Shankman, Martin Trust and several generous community members, our old *Matan b'Seter* community pantry at Menorah Park has been replaced with a new one. All are welcome to contribute canned and packaged goods for those experiencing food insufficiency.



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This column features businesses owned by members of our community, as well as artists and musical programs and is generously sponsored by RAV Properties.

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Tupper Lake Synagogue Celebrates 120 Years

Ad mea ve-esrim – until 120 – is a traditional Jewish blessing wishing someone a long life. Tupper Lake's Beth Joseph Synagogue, the oldest synagogue in the Adirondack Mountain region, is celebrating this milestone in 2025.

Sometimes called “the peddlers’ synagogue,” Beth Joseph was built by Jewish immigrants from Russia, Lithuania and other parts of Europe who came to upstate New York towns as purveyors of provisions for the lumber and railroad communities. They carried 75-pound packs of needles, pins, underwear, fabric and small household goods to homes, farms, and logging camps. Back then Tupper Lake was known as “The Little Wild West Town” of the Adirondacks because of its remote location and 36 bars.

By 1899 the Jewish community, which consisted of about 35 families, acquired land to build a synagogue. In the summer of that year, before construction began, a major fire devastated many of the homes and buildings of Tupper Lake. The community rebuilt and the new synagogue building, completed in 1905, was part of this resurgence. It was designed in an Italianate style, with finely crafted woodwork, stained glass windows, and a hand-embroidered ark covering.

Tupper Lake's Jewish community was never very large. At its peak in the mid-1920s, it numbered around 35 families. Beth Joseph was the focal point of their community. The congregation was strictly orthodox, with women sitting in the upstairs balcony during services. After World War II the Jewish population of Tupper Lake began to decline and when the synagogue celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1955, only a few active congregants remained. Eight years later, it simply closed.



But then, in the mid-1980s Sharon Berzok, a non-Jewish tourist who was simply passing by, was struck by the beauty of the old building. Over the next two years she worked tirelessly to earn the synagogue a place on the National Register of Historic Buildings. Tragically, just two weeks before she was to be honored for her accomplishment, Berzok was killed in an automobile accident. Four local women built upon Berzok's efforts by raising funds to restore the building. Long-time Tupper Lake resident and congregation member, Janet Chapman, spearheaded the restoration work. The restoration work was done entirely by volunteers, including prisoners from Camp Gabriels and other nearby correctional institutions.

Beth Joseph is closed during the winter months when there are few visitors to the area, but in the summer, Shabbat services are held at 7 pm on Fridays. Guided tours are available during July and August. Rosh Hashanah services are held in the fall.



A Family and a Synagogue

“In the late 1800s, Tupper lake, New York was rightly referred to as ‘the little Wild West town of the Adirondacks.’ With 36 bars and countless eager patrons, the turbulent climate seemed right for just about anything to happen – anything but the formation of a new house of worship. Yet it was this atmosphere that gave birth to Beth Joseph Synagogue – the oldest synagogue in the Adirondacks.” Thus begins Benjamin Pomerance's account of how “a small but dedicated congregation carries on against the odds of time.”

The Beth Joseph Synagogue is a special place. “We all treasure places that have personal meaning to us: a childhood home, the spot where someone proposed, a site of a wonderful vacation,” writes Aurora Plaff on the Tupper Lake homepage. “In Tupper Lake, one particular building that represents hope, community, love, history, and so much more, is Beth Joseph synagogue. It is a place of worship, a center of community, an architectural and historic treasure, a reminder of those long gone, and a place of comfort.” For one local Central New York family, the Beth Joseph synagogue is not just a treasured place but a deeply interwoven part of their family history.

When the synagogue was created in 1917, there were 28 families and a few single men in the congregation but as the families grew, so did the congregation. The children of the founding families had children and later generations also found Beth Joseph to be a kind of home. Jackie Futterman Kassel grew up down the street from the synagogue. She recalls that in her childhood, there were many Jewish children's summer camps in the area and on Friday nights campers would join families from Tupper Lake to celebrate Shabbat. Girl Scout meetings were held in the basement social hall along with a variety of dinners. From the beginning, Beth Joseph was a place of gathering and companionship.

Jackie's mother, Esther Futterman, was a central figure in the Tupper Lake Jewish community; her contributions to Tupper Lake extended beyond her family life. When Sharon Berzok asked who could tell her about the Beth Joseph synagogue, she was immediately directed to Esther. This encounter ignited efforts to refurbish the building. Esther, whose father had been a peddler like many early Jewish settlers in the area, collaborated with other community members to restore the synagogue.



Esther's family has continued her dedication to ensuring that Beth Joseph Synagogue remains a place of worship and community gathering. Her son-in-law, attorney Ken Ritzenberg, worked diligently to have the synagogue named a historic building. Every Rosh Hashanah, when the congregation gathers to celebrate the new year, Jackie or her sister Susi Futterman Ritzenberg make their Aunt Rose's famous shortbread cookies. Esther's grandsons Jeremy Kassel and Aaron and Dan Ritzenberg conduct the services and granddaughter Lara Kassel serves as the congregation's president. Her great-grandchildren bring joy and life to the service.

Jackie Kassel explains the unique role Beth Joseph plays in the community's and her family's life: “Everyone who comes there knows that it's special. It's the kind of place where on Friday nights there might be ten people, twenty people, there might be people in their dirty camp clothes, but they're always welcomed. Growing up, Beth Joseph was our synagogue and it still is. We greet every new year at Rosh Hashanah services in Tupper Lake. It's very special: to instill that in your family and have it continue. At Beth Joseph, family isn't just about the people you're related to or share a home with.”

Fall Programming at the JCC of Syracuse

by Raven DiSalvo-Hess

There's always something going on at the JCC – lectures, music, movies, a book club or the chance to learn something new. High-quality lectures on topics such as art, science, technology, religion, fashion, politics and more are streamed straight from New York City to the JCC. Previously, the 92Y has welcomed celebrity speakers such as Michelle Obama, Martha Stewart, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Tom Hanks, Dr. Anthony Fauci and countless musical performances. 92Y events are announced approximately a month in advance. For the most up-to-date schedule of JCC events, go to jccsy.org/cp.

92NY

92ND STREET LIVE



Zentangle: Zentangle is a different way to integrate relaxation and meditation into one's life. Zentangle is a drawing method that creates beautiful designs by using structured patterns. These structured repetitive patterns allow the brain and body to de-stress, while also making a piece of art. There are no mistakes in Zentangle, and it's perfect for all age groups and all stages of life. Zentangle is also a great tool for teachers. Zentangle workshops this fall at the JCC will be taught by a certified Zentangle teacher.

Mystery Book Club: Lovers of a good mystery should be sure to mark their calendars for the first Wednesday of every month, 12:45-1:45 pm. The JCC Mystery Book Club explores classic who-dun-its, new thrillers and everything in between. This fall the JCC will read *A Death of No Importance* by Mariah Fredericks (September), *Mistress of the Art of Death* by Ariana Franklin (October) and *A Study in Scarlet* by Sir Author Conan Doyle (November).



Writer's Workshop Day: The JCC's Writers' Workshop Day is for aspiring writers who can select a genre to explore and learn from local writers like Mary Jumbelic and Georgia Popoff during a 4-hour workshop.

The 2nd Annual Jewish Film Festival hosted in partnership by End Antisemitism Now and the Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center of Syracuse will return to the JCC in October.

Check jccsy.org/cp for the most up-to-date schedule of JCC events.

Pre-K Class of 2025 Takes the Stage

by Shane Tepper

They arrived as curious little explorers and on Monday, June 23rd, they walked across the stage as confident big kids ready for kindergarten. The Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center of Syracuse celebrated another milestone as its Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP) hosted graduation for the Pre-K Class of 2025. The JCC Auditorium was packed as families gathered to watch their children take this important step forward.

The ceremony showcased just how much these young learners have grown during their time at the JCC. Each classroom prepared special songs to perform for the audience, giving the graduates a chance to shine in front of their proud families. One by one, the children stepped up to the microphone to introduce themselves before walking across the stage to receive their diplomas. "Each year we look forward to our Pre-Kindergarten graduation," said Pamela Ranieri, Director of Children's Programming. "We couldn't be prouder. The future is bright."

The Class of 2025 includes children from both Classroom A and Classroom B, all of whom have been nurtured by



teachers who have been with the JCC for many years. This continuity allows the educators to truly get to know the ECDP families, often teaching multiple siblings throughout their time at the program.

A highlight of the ceremony came when ECDP Directors Pamela Ranieri and Amy Bisnett read a special book to the group, taking them on a journey that



highlighted how far they've come and what exciting adventures await them in kindergarten. "Watching our Pre-K children grow and graduate is always a little bittersweet – they've filled our days with laughter, questions, hugs, and endless energy," said Amy Bisnett. "While they're moving on to new adventures, we're so glad this isn't goodbye. We'll still see their smiling

faces around the JCC, and that makes the goodbye a little easier and the pride even greater."

Each graduate received a special graduation teddy bear, tassel, and professional photographs taken in their cap and gown—keepsakes that families, especially those with older children, eagerly anticipate each year. Following the ceremony, families gathered in the gymnasium for a reception with light refreshments.

Classroom B added a particularly touching element to the ceremony by performing "One Small Voice" in both song and sign language. As Bisnett noted, "To quote the song sung and told through sign language by Classroom B: 'One by one they will grow and together sing along and then soon all the world will be singing.' Truly with these children all the world will be singing!"

For many of these graduates, this isn't truly goodbye to the JCC. Many will return for after-school programs and summer camps, continuing their connection to this community that has played such an important role in their early development.

EMERGENCY ALERTS
Emergency Alert
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Mom



What supplies are we missing? 🙄

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LEARNING TOGETHER WITH OUR NEIGHBORS Builds Interfaith Community



Learning Together With Our Neighbors (LTWON) is an interfaith initiative that brings Christians, Jews, and Muslims together to foster mutual understanding, deepen personal faith, and build lasting relationships across religious traditions. The group's mission is to increase appreciation for the beliefs and practices of others, strengthen one's connection to their own tradition, and inspire people of faith to live and work together for the good of all.

LTWON began when Bob Tornberg, a member of Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas (CBS-CS), attended an interfaith event sponsored by another organization. Inspired by the experience, he envisioned a local program that would bring Syracuse's faith



communities into regular dialogue and collaboration. Today, LTWON is guided by a steering committee of representatives from several area congregations: All Saints Church, Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, CBS-CS, CNY RISE Center, Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church, Plymouth Congregational Church, and St. Lucy's Church.

This past spring, LTWON hosted its sixth annual interfaith gathering, "Acting for the Good of All." The workshop was led by staff from the Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies, a Baltimore-based organization that advances interreligious learning. The goal of the gathering was to move from understanding and appreciating one another's religious traditions to thinking and acting together through an interreligious lens. This year's program drew over 100 participants and encouraged attendees to consider how faith communities can collaborate to serve the broader good.

"I am so proud of the interfaith community we have created. I feel a deep connection with members of LTWON from CBS-CS and other congregations," said CBS-CS member Laurie Ovadia. "My world is richer because I am connected to the Learning Together community. I have formed bonds with people I would not have known otherwise."

LTWON's next event, the Third Annual Summer Potluck, will take place on Sunday, August 17, 2025, from 1 - 3 pm at CBS-CS. All are welcome. To sign up to bring a dish, visit <https://tinyurl.com/ltwonpotluck> or contact Laurie Ovadia at lovadia1@gmail.com.

Community Hebrew School Celebrates Tenth Anniversary

The Syracuse Community Hebrew School celebrated its “tin” anniversary. Tin symbolizes strength and resilience and the evening focused on the school’s conception, birth and decade of success. Rabbis of the three partnering schools gave a blessing, Rabbi Daniel Feldman and Dr. Weinstein spoke about the creation of the school, Steve Volinsky and Ora Jezer were honored for their leadership, and camp scholarships were awarded to students. The school’s new logo was also introduced at the festive celebration.



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DEBORAH PELLOW
MAY 29, 2025



Deborah Pellow, accomplished anthropologist, friend, and mentor, died suddenly on Thursday May 29, 2025. She was born in Los Angeles, CA, on March 21, 1945, the only child of Frieda Kaplan and David Pellow. At age five, she and her mother moved to New York City and then Philadelphia, where she grew up in the loving care of her mother's large extended family. Deborah married philosopher Irving Thalberg, Jr. who died in 1987. Her second husband, mystery writer David Cole, died in 2015. She began a deep and loving relationship with Bill Rahling in 2020. Their companionship brought them joy and love especially through the pandemic, until he died in 2021, just as they were to marry.

Deborah was Professor of Anthropology at Syracuse University for over forty years and became a seminal figure in her field. After a BA at the University of Pennsylvania, she received a Ph.D. from Northwestern in 1974. She undertook fieldwork primarily in Ghana and later in Nigeria, Japan, and China. She was intensely curious about how people negotiate relationships and identities in rapidly growing and evolving cities, and how we navigate multiple and overlapping urban, rural, and international realms.

Deborah's vast scholarly output significantly shaped contemporary approaches to space and place, including through the collaborative projects she spearheaded with colleagues across the disciplines. Her fifth and most recent book, *Living Afar, Longing for Home: The Role of Place in the Creation of the Dagomba New Elite*, examines spatialized transitions in status and

wealth. Although she received many prestigious awards for her scholarship, and the William Wasserstrom Prize for the Teaching of Graduate Students, her most cherished honor was a citation from the neighborhood where she did much of her fieldwork in Ghana, naming her an "Ambassador of Greater Accra Zongo Chief to the United States of America."

Deborah grounded her scholarship in perceptive observation and deep concern for human relationships, and this extended to her mentorship of her students. She was fiercely committed to generations of students who carry forward her legacy of spirited inquiry and compassion. Her home became a vibrant gathering place for international students and faculty whose families and loved ones were oceans away.

Deborah helped shape the intellectual life of Syracuse University over several decades. She was a founding director of the Space and Place Initiative at Maxwell's Global Affairs Institute, was active in the University Senate, chaired the Senate Library Committee and a Chancellor Search Committee, and taught for many years in the intensive Interdisciplinary Master of Social Science Professional Program. Deborah's lifelong commitment to women's rights prepared her to become an early director of the Women and Gender Studies Program. She was widely admired in these roles for her clarity and collegiality. Deborah's academic service extended to the American Anthropological Association, especially in the Society for Urban National and Transnational Anthropology.

Beyond academia Deborah lived fully. She reveled in beauty and was a patron of music, art, theater, and dance. She actively supported cultural, arts, social justice, political, and women's rights organizations including serving on

the board of The Friends of Chamber Music, and Francis House, a home for the dying, where she was a pet support volunteer. She enjoyed knitting and book groups and most recently learned to play bridge, "to keep her brain sharp." She participated in all these activities with grace, conviction, and passion. She was an avid traveler, always eager to learn, observe, and connect. She remained the quintessential anthropologist even in her personal travel, helping her more introverted companions have remarkable – and sometimes unusual and amazing – experiences.

Deborah maintained deep and powerful relationships with hundreds of friends, former students, colleagues, and others she encountered throughout her life. She readily shared generous attention, warmth, good humor and an open, tender heart. She could be spirited, irreverent, and boisterous but was always genuine and deeply true to her loving nature. She was a source of steady warmth, good humor and just plain fun. She had a fierce sense of loyalty. Her presence in the lives of those who knew her was profound and lasting.

Deborah loved her animals and plants, recently her cat Mischa and dog Brody. She is now survived by Czerny the cat and Morrie the dog, who have found new, loving homes. She is also survived by too many human friends and family of choice to mention, and her many Kaplan cousins throughout the US and Israel. We remember Deborah with love, and deeply honor her life of kindness, knowledge, generosity, and community.

A service to honor her memory and wonderful life is being planned for the fall. Service information will be posted as it is available.

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SYLVIA RAUCH PRIZANT
MAY 29, 2025

Sylvia Rauch Prizant died peacefully on May 29, 2025, at the age of 102. Born in Poland, she was the daughter of Clara and Judah Schneider. Her early childhood and teen years were spent, along with her brother, sister and parents, hiding from the German army. Her father and brother fell victim to the Germans. After liberation by the Allies, Sylvia and her mother and sister made their way first to a Displaced Persons camp, then to New York City. She was introduced to Samuel Rauch, who moved the family to Gloversville NY, where Sylvia helped run the family business making baked goods for the thriving Jewish population of Gloversville and the surrounding towns in 1950's, 60's and 70's. Several years after Sam's death in 1977, she was introduced to and married Joseph Prizant and lived in New York City, where she was blessed to have a second happy and fulfilling marriage with Joseph.

When she was widowed a second time, she moved to Slingerlands to be closer to her daughters in Syracuse and Delmar. When Sylvia needed more care, she was warmly welcomed at the Massry residence, then at the Daughters of Sarah Nursing Home where she endeared herself to their loving staff. Sylvia was a caring, warm, and loving woman, mother, step-mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and great grandmother. Cooking and sharing food were one of the many vehicles she used for showing her love to family and friends. All who knew her were struck by her kindness, generosity, and easy-going manner. And this, despite her difficult life and losses during the Holocaust.

Sylvia is survived by her daughters Nancy (Russel) Silverman of Syracuse and Judy (Roy) Fruiterman of Albany, stepson Alan Prizant (Sara) of Riverdale, grandchildren Eli, Zach, Noah and Seth, and her four great-grandchildren.

To make a donation in Sylvia's honor, please consider Living Resources at 300 Washington Avenue Extension Albany 12203 or Daughters of Sarah Nursing Home 180 Washington Avenue Extension, Albany, NY 12203.

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GLORIA SERLING
JUNE 1, 2025

Gloria Serling, 91, passed away peacefully on June 1, 2025. Gloria was born in New York City on September 11, 1933, the daughter of Max and Helen Appelbaum. She grew up in the boroughs of New York City and later moved to Canandaigua where her father was a wine maker with the Canandaigua Wine Company. She graduated from Canandaigua High School in 1951. Gloria attended Syracuse University and graduated in 1955 with a Bachelor of Science degree. She became a teacher and taught school for several years in Waterloo at the Skoi-Yase school and in Seneca Falls. She was actively involved in the Women's League charity organization for 30 years and served as President during her time in this organization. She belonged to the hospital auxiliary and ran the gift shop at Taylor Brown.

She married Bert in 1956. She was very active and loved many sports, including golf, water skiing, and snow skiing. Gloria organized and played in many women's golf tournaments while serving on the Board of Directors at the Seneca Falls Country Club and she also planned and organized many parties as social chairman. Gloria most especially loved travelling with Bert and her family to Myrtle Beach and out west for ski trips. Later in life, she loved vacationing in St. Thomas with Bert, playing bridge, and spending time with her close circle of friends. Gloria became an accomplished artist. She belonged to the local Arts Council and was especially talented in painting with watercolors. Gloria created a number of lovely paintings that decorated her home and were loved and admired by her family.

She is predeceased by her husband, Bertram Serling, her parents, her sister Beatrice Block, and her brother Sidney Appelbaum.

Gloria is survived by her loving, wonderful children, Sharon (Paul) Reynolds of Charlotte, NC, Mark (Kathleen) Serling of Pittsford, and Steven (Bonnie) Serling of Auburn; six grandchildren: Andrew, Samantha, Maxwell, Jordan, Emily, and Nathan and several nieces and nephews. She was so proud and thrilled to learn about her soon-to-arrive first great-grandchild.

Contributions to perpetuate her memory may be made to the Seneca Falls Library, The Arthritis Foundation or the Happiness House in Canandaigua
www.sisskindfuneralservice.com

ARNOLD LEVINE
JUNE 4, 2025

Arnold Levine, 93, passed away on June 4, 2025. Arnold was born in Brooklyn, New York on September 16, 1931, the son of George and Rose Levine. He graduated from his beloved Lafayette High School and then went on to Brooklyn College, eventually earning his Juris Doctor from Brooklyn Law School.

He was predeceased by his wife, Vivian; his son, Michael; his daughter-in-law, Romina; his grandson, Ariel (Levine); and his grandson, Adam (Greenky). He is survived by his daughter, Lynn (Brett) Greenky, his grandchildren Zachary (Brooke), Ryan (Elizabet), Samantha (Scott Cara), and five great-grandchildren: Chase, Hallie, Maya, Oliver, and Ammelia.

Arnie was, at his core, a storyteller. His favorite stories involved his boyhood friends and cherished cousins. One of his favorites was a slapstick-funny escapade with his best friend Marvin Gottstein, which included an attempt to break a bowling ball by tossing it out of a two-story window. (The bowling ball survived the fall; the same cannot be said of the Brooklyn sidewalk on which it landed.)

He recounted his time in the army. As a sergeant in the JAG Corps, he protected fellow draftees from exploitation by a corrupt car salesman. He reminded his listeners that he built a legal business from the ground up, achieving success beyond his wildest dreams. In his thirties and early forties, he was a leader in the Canarsie Jewish Community, where he helped build a synagogue and kept it afloat by producing musicals, often featuring his wife. An impressive golfer, he shared how he won four club championships and countless bets, relishing the accolades and respect he earned on the golf course. Some of his funniest stories centered around a cousin's dinner club, where he and his wife were honorary members. Tears of laughter streamed down his face as he remembered the epic cooking failures and the antics of certain members.

His storytelling took a creative turn with the birth of his grandchildren. He would darken the room, climb under the tented covers, and tell them tales about the adventures of Ichabod and Joe. When his only granddaughter, Samantha, was old enough to listen, he added Susie the Slob at her insistence. The theme remained the same: the simple joys of the special love crafted by friends and relatives. The stories at the end of his life included his deep and devoted friendship with Laura Kerzner. Laura presented a new audience and his last companion to take on more adventures.

Donations to perpetuate his memory may be made to the Syracuse Hebrew Day School
www.sisskindfuneralservice.com

ROBERT "BOB" WEILER
JUNE 28, 2025



Robert "Bob" Weiler, 73, of Manlius, died on June 28, 2025, surrounded by his devoted family, after a long and courageous battle with cancer.

Born on January 22, 1952, in Monticello, NY, Bob was the beloved son of Lucille and Sherman Weiler. From an early age, he was recognized for his keen intellect, boundless curiosity, and love of learning. He graduated as valedictorian from Albany Law School in 1977. He went on to build a distinguished legal career at Bousquet Holstein PLLC. He was an industry leader across many specialties, including but not limited to commercial and secured transactions, corporate acquisitions, complex bankruptcy law and workout matters. His expertise, integrity, and dedication earned him the respect and admiration of colleagues, clients, and the community.

Bob's interests were wide-ranging. He was as passionate about history and politics as he was about sports, music, and the arts. He had a gift for conversation, and time

spent with him was always enlightening, often laced with wit, insight, stories, and humor.

Bob's greatest joy was his family. He was the proud and loving father of three daughters: Rebecca (Bret), Sara, and Hannah (Caleb), and a cherished grandfather to Ava and Alexander. He also leaves behind his dear sister, Nan (Paul), his loving partner, Sandye, and many treasured cousins, nephews, and friends. He was predeceased by his beloved wife, Andrea, whose memory he carried with him always.

A lifelong fan of the New York Giants, New York Yankees, and Syracuse University athletics, Bob found joy in every game—analyzing plays, sharing stats, and rooting passionately for his teams. His love of the arts—whether music or theater—was a defining part of who he was, and he nurtured that appreciation in his daughters.

Bob's brilliance, humor, creativity, and love made him a truly remarkable person. Though he will be deeply missed, Bob's legacy will continue to inspire us all.

Contributions in Robert's memory should be directed to the Jewish Federation of Central New York.

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