

Berkshire JEWISH VOICE

A publication of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, serving the Berkshires and surrounding NY, CT and VT

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Teachers: The Ones I Can't Forget, with Martin Fletcher

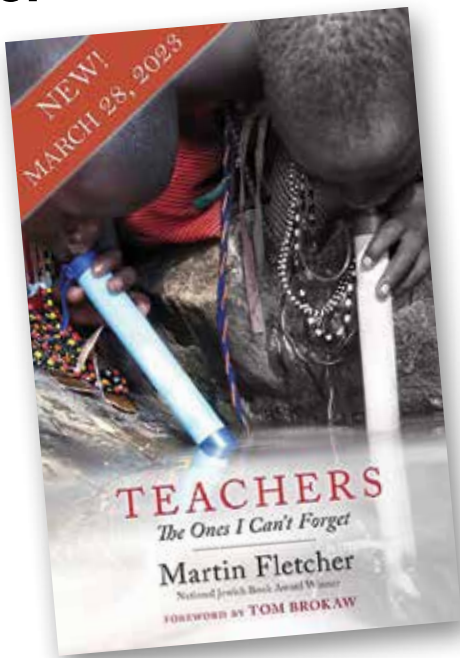
On Thursday, February 8 at 7 p.m., Federation is pleased to welcome noted television correspondent Martin Fletcher, who will talk about his new book, *Teachers: The Ones I Can't Forget*.

This Zoom presentation is part of "Jewish Literary Voices: A Federation Series in Collaboration with The Jewish Book Council." Register via the calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

Teachers are the people Martin Fletcher met throughout his work as a news correspondent, often on the worst day of their lives. He watched as they picked up the pieces following personal tragedy and discovered the invaluable lesson of carrying on, no matter the circumstances.

Through intimate profiles, *Teachers* details the struggles of everyday people in extraordinary circumstances – war, revolution, natural disasters and yes, life. Fletcher's writing is uplifting as he examines the truth of resilience despite hardship. These are the people he sought out in his international reporting, detailing their woes while celebrating their will to survive and recover.

Teachers offers a unique take on reporting, as it features a traveling photo exhibit that Fletcher created to accompany the book. Each chapter is paired with an extraordinary digital montage to illustrate the stories taken directly from his reporting from NBC news programs. At a time when news coverage is often dismissed as fake or biased, *Teachers* is a welcome reminder of the integrity,



TEACHERS,
continued on page 8

March for Israel 2023

32 attendees from the Jewish Berkshires joined historic rally



On November 14, 2023, close to 300,000 Jews and allies came together on the National Mall in Washington, DC for the largest pro-Israel gathering in the history of the North American Jewish community. An additional 250,000 people tuned into the livestream of the event. We sounded our unified voice in support of Israel, made a plea to free the hostages, and denounced antisemitism! Our community members share their experiences starting on page 4.

Maya Beiser's Infinite Bach – Music of the Spheres Recorded in a Barn in the Berkshires

By Albert Stern / BJV Editor

Maybe a surfing analogy comes to mind because I'm writing about Bach's Six Cello Suites while in the middle of a two-week working vacation along California's central coast – what the history of this musical masterpiece makes me think of is the story of Jeff Clark, who as a teenager in 1975 noticed giant waves in the distance near his family home in Half Moon Bay and decided to paddle out to them alone to see what was going on. The spot was Mavericks, which boasts immense Hawaii-sized waves of the kind that were not supposed to exist in California. His friends were nervous about surfing there and the established big wave riders were skeptical, and so for the next 15 years, Jeff Clark went out just about every day and surfed the massive, perilous waves of Mavericks all by himself, obsessed and addicted. Mavericks was discovered by other surfers in 1990 and today attracts the best big wave riders from all over the world. But for a decade-and-a-half, the ferocious waves were Jeff Clark's and Jeff Clark's alone.



Infinite Bach album cover

In 1889, 13-year-old cellist Pablo Casals discovered sheet music for Bach's six suites for unaccompanied cello in a thrift shop in Barcelona. It is thought that Bach composed the suites between 1717 and 1723, but they were little known and infrequently performed. For the next 47 years, Casals explored these works and, for the most part, played them only for

MAYA BEISER,
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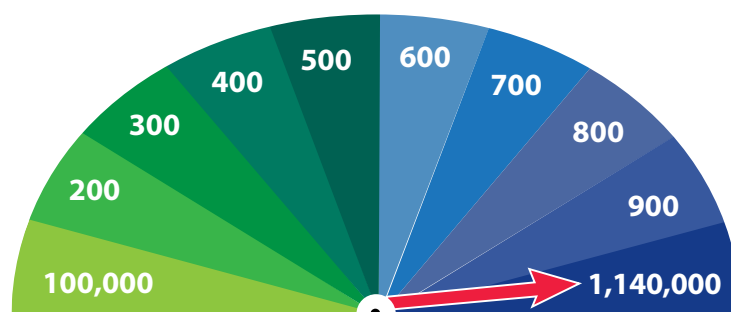
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OF THE BERKSHIRES

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THE POWER OF COMMUNITY.

As this paper went to press we were coming closer to our 2023 campaign goal of \$1,200,000!

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to all who contributed!

Check out the next edition of the *Berkshire Jewish Voice* for a full report and our honor roll of donors.



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OP-ED

RABBI REFLECTION

We Are Meant to Pause

By Rabbi Barbara Cohen / Congregation Ahavath Sholom



There was a great deal of Yiddish and Yiddishkeit in my childhood home. Both of my parents grew up in Yiddish-speaking homes where their fathers spoke more English than their mothers, having learned the language out of necessity to conduct business in the broader world. My two grandmothers hardly spoke English. My father's mother, my revered Bubbie, died when I was ten and I hardly remember her speaking anything but Yiddish. My memories of her are more about her quiet dignity; her beautiful sweaters, coats, and "Bubbie blankets" that all of us cousins received and cherished; and her delicious potato latkes, filled with homemade savory chopped liver, that we all lined up for at the door to her microscopic kitchen in the small

apartment around the corner from us that she and my "Zayzay" lived in.

Three families – my father and his family, his brother Abe and his family, and their sister Hennie and her family – all lived on the same street on post-war Long Island following a mass family migration from Brooklyn just before I was born. There were nine of us first cousins, three kids in each family. I never met my mother's parents. My maternal grandmother, Rebecca, died when my mother was just 10 years old and her father, Frank, died the year I was born.

One of the myriad Yiddish wise sayings that were a regular part of many conversations in our family was to always try to remember to do something "un a mus," with moderation. Spending, eating, or anything where excess was either unwarranted or unseemly was discouraged and usually went along with a hand motion that could also be read as 'slow down'. And, because we all lived in such close proximity and had a family business in which all were involved, it was applied across the board to everyone. We all lived modestly, never wanting for anything, and everybody had the same level of income and lifestyle.

It wasn't until I studied our Jewish tradition more deeply that I realized how pervasive this message of moderation is embedded in our Torah and beyond.

The idea of restraint, of doing things "un a mus", is a reason that 365 of the 613 mitzvot instruct us to NOT do something, far fewer than the 248 positive commandments.

Tu B'Shevat, the fifteenth of Shevat, the new year of the trees, is not a Torah holiday. Its basis is, however, outlined in the Torah, in Kedoshim, Leviticus 19:23, regarding the fruit of trees planted in Israel: "When you enter the land and plant any tree for food, you shall regard its fruit as forbidden for you, not to be eaten." Such a tree is called "orlah," from the meaning of 'uncircumcised'. In the fourth year you are commanded to bring the fruit to the Temple for offering and then, in the fifth year, you may eat the fruit of these trees. Imagine waiting all that time to bite into that juicy fruit and then still having to give it away...

It is increasingly clear to me that the idea of restraint, of doing things "un a mus", is a reason that 365 of the 613 mitzvot instruct us to NOT do something, far

fewer than the 248 positive commandments. It is a reason to say 100 blessings each day: as we get out of bed, when we are about to eat or drink or be grateful, for any bodily function, we are meant to pause, to lift our consciousness to engage in what is happening in the moment, to be reminded by the mezuzot on our doorposts and the tzitzit that many wear inside of their clothing or on a tallit. To remind us not to be impulsive, to control our baser instincts, to appreciate the gift of awareness that makes us little less than divine and to humble us by also pointing out that we are but dust and ashes. And yet, we are told not to be overly controlled so that we enjoy nothing. Evolving our inner guidance by continually exploring where our boundaries are should be a lifelong journey. To walk the middle way, to appreciate that self-control is something that even the God of Israel, Moses, David, Solomon and so many others struggle with in our texts...to try to exercise appropriate restraint at all times, to not eat of forbidden fruits. We surely remember where that mistake leads...

So...Enjoy Tu B'Shevat, eat of delicious biblical fruits, have a truly joyful time, live each day of your life to the fullest... "un a mus". See you on the way...

Rabbi Barbara Kipnis Cohen is the spiritual leader of Congregation Ahavath Sholom in Great Barrington



"Planting Trees," Vintage Israeli JNF Children Poster circa 1960s

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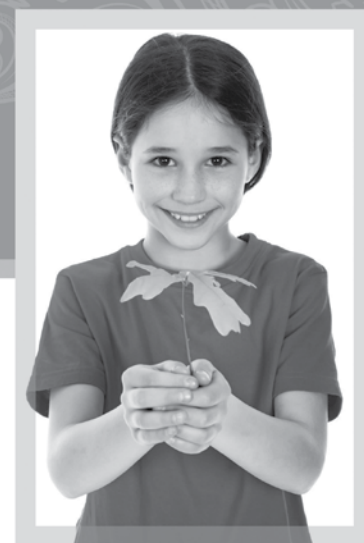
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OP-ED

IN MY VIEW

In a Dark Time, the Light and Strength of Our Jewish Community on Full Display

By Dara Kaufman / Executive Director, Jewish Federation of the Berkshires



I have been experiencing a plethora of emotions over the last few months since the terrorist attack on October 7. At times like these, when the push and pull of what is happening in our world can seem overwhelming, I return to something I once read about focusing on your most authentic truth. These days when reading the news, looking at social media, or speaking with friends and neighbors, one can feel the despair, the anger, the fear, and occasionally a little hopelessness. However, I have also seen first-hand the amazing strength and resilience of Jews locally and in Israel that is reflected in the dedicated work that Federation, our partners in Israel, and our local congregations and organizations are doing every day.

Federation has taken many impactful actions on a local and national level, including our local Israel Solidarity Rally, the launch of a highly successful Israel Emergency Campaign, the mobilization of Federal support for Israel, and the organization and participation in the National March for Israel.

Dozens of Berkshire community members traveled to Washington, DC. The majority of them, myself included, traveled with our neighbors from the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York. Standing amid approximately 290,000 Jews and non-Jews from across the US was an experience I will never forget. The full diversity of the Jewish people showed the US Congress and the world that, despite our many differences, we are united in our love for Israel and its right to exist, united in our demand of the release of hostages, and united in our right to worship and celebrate our culture without fear of persecution and hate. *That* was powerful.

Even the four- and five-deep crowds of people waiting for the train in the Metro (DC's subway) was a surreal experience. The dense crowds erupted in songs and chants of 'Oseh Shalom' and 'Am Yisrael Chai' as hundreds of voices came together to recognize that even there, in the subway car and in the station, we were part of something much bigger than ourselves – something raw and real and deeply meaningful. It was exactly what I, and I suspect Jews everywhere, needed in that moment.

I know many people are very concerned with the security of our Jewish community amid rising antisemitism, including the flagrant hate and incitement of violence by the head of a small fringe group spewing hate in the Southern Berkshires.

Sadly, this leader and his group have been on our radar for a number of years, but his hateful rhetoric has clearly escalated in the past few months and he has garnered local and national press. As I shared with the Berkshire Eagle reporter, this person spews his hate to try and instill fear and intimidation but the Berkshire Jewish community will not hide.

Federation has been working closely with Jewish community leaders, local police, the FBI, the District Attorney, the ADL, and the Secure Community Network (SCN) to monitor this person and respond to concerns and incidents in the community.

The light and strength of our Jewish community was on full display with hundreds of community members joining with state legislators and our district attorney in public menorah lightings in North Adams, Williamstown, Lenox and at Federation's Chanukah celebration at the Mount, which included a proclamation

from Governor Healey that "the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will always stand firmly opposed to antisemitism and hate."

Last month, Federation arranged for former Pittsfield police chief Mike Wynn to visit each of the congregations to review their security plans, walk through their buildings, and offer additional recommendations. We are deeply grateful to Mike Wynn for donating his time and expertise to support our community in this way.

Those security plans were put in action just a few weeks later as Congregation Beth Israel (North Adams), Hevreh of Southern Berkshire (Great Barrington), and Temple Anshe Amunim (Pittsfield) all received bomb threats. Thankfully these threats were deemed to not be credible but the disruption and anxiety they provoked in our community and for others across the country was real and unsettling.

We are grateful for the support of the local police departments who all responded swiftly and we appreciate the many calls of support received from civic and faith leaders, the District Attorney's office, and the community.

We all have a role to play in confronting antisemitism. Federation's antisemitism taskforce, co-chaired by Amy Blumkin and Beryl Jolly, recently updated our website, jewishberkshires.org, to provide community members direct access to report antisemitism, including reporting for students on campus, as well as culling a host of other resources. We are also in conversation with the ADL on upcoming programming for parents and teens as well as the broader community.

During this time of rising antisemitism throughout the country and our world, we encourage our community to be vigilant and aware. At the same time, we will not succumb to fear and intimidation. We will continue to practice our faith and celebrate our culture with joy and pride.

If we have learned anything in this moment, it is that American Jews must live in a secure, engaged, educated, compassionate, and supported Jewish community. We must be able to support the most fragile. We must have strong relationships with our elected officials and community partners. We must educate and support our young people. We must stand up for our right to be free from persecution. We must be visible and proud.

Your support of Federation supports all of this and so much more! As I write, our 2023 Annual Campaign will soon be closing. Our community has responded so generously to ensure Federation's continued work in creating and sustaining a vibrant and secure Jewish community with the infrastructure in place to provide leadership and support when it is needed most. Thank you all!

I am reminded of the wisdom of Rabbi Tarfon, from the *Pirkei Avot* who said "...the day is short and the work is plentiful...it is not your duty to finish the work, but neither are you at liberty to neglect it..."

There is certainly more work to be done and with your support, Federation will continue to mobilize our community in the work needed to help repair our world and ensure the future of the Jewish people.

Dara Kaufman is executive director of Jewish Federation of the Berkshires.

If we have learned anything in this moment, it is that American Jews must live in a secure, engaged, educated, compassionate, and supported Jewish community.

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MARCH FOR ISRAEL 2023

The Jewish Berkshire Community Showed Up to Support Israel

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires is so grateful to have been part of this powerful and historic moment, with 32 community members showing up for the #MarchforIsrael! Thanks to the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York for their partnership.

We are most grateful to the Harold Grinspoon foundation for their generous grant support for Berkshire participants.

A step of strength and comfort for our people

By Rabbi Jodie Gordon

The march was held on Rosh Chodesh Kislev, the start of the Hebrew month in which we celebrate Chanukah and strive to add light to our world. There is a custom of reciting Hallel (psalms of praise and gratitude) on Rosh Chodesh, and as I remarked to my traveling companions on Tuesday morning, our footsteps at this march would be our Hallel. Each step we took was an offering of gratitude for our First Amendment rights to gather and proudly affirm our love and care for Israel, demand the release of hostages, and denounce the rising tide of antisemitism at home and abroad.

I want to share a few moments that stood out for me from the March for Israel:



On the bus with friends from Albany

- Hearing teenagers and college students speak about this moment as part of a special “pre-show” gathering which featured speakers from Young Judeaea, USY, Tzofim of North America, Students Supporting Israel, North American Day Schools and Jewish Summer Camps, NFTY, NCSY, MaccabiUSA, JNF-USA’s Alexander Muss High School in Israel, Hillel, Hashomer Hatzair, Habonim Dror, Club Z, Bnei Akiva, BBYO, AMHSI and more.
- Hearing Natan Sharansky begin his remarks to the crowd by saying “dear, dear family”. As a former chair of the Jewish Agency for Israel and Soviet dissident, Sharansky shared remarks that were poignantly grounded in his personal experiences helping to free Soviet Jewry over 30 years ago.
- Hearing a large group of Yeshiva and Kollel students loudly applaud Arielle Mokjtazideh, an Iranian Jewish woman who works for the Milken institute, as she paid tribute to the American Jewish dream afforded to her and her family after their escape from Iran.
- Hearing Isaac Herzog, president of Israel, describe a beautiful vision of Israel for the future, in which he said “Children will one day play again in the streets of Beer and Sderot.” *Halevai*.
- Learning from Ambassador Deborah Lipstadt – who reminded us of the promise of America, as described 230 years ago by President Washington, who promised the Jews of Newport that here, bigotry would have no sanction. Lipstadt affirmed that today, on behalf of the US president and the entire US government, that the current US leadership stands shoulder to shoulder with us against Jew hatred. Her powerful remarks ended with the words: “Do not cower. Do not allow them to make you afraid.”

It came as no surprise for me that the most powerful moments of the day were when the families of hostages spoke. The opportunity to bear witness to the pain and call to action offered by the families of hostages was remarkable. I remain haunted by the leonine power of Hersh Goldberg-Polin’s mother, Rachel Goldberg. Her voice rang out in pain and power when she said, “We have lived the last 39 days in an endless torment. We have third degree burns on our souls. Our hearts are bruised and seeping with misery”. The crowd’s chant of “Bring them home now” was meditative, inspiring, and heartbreaking. The strength of these families to hold their pain and hold space for the pain of others is humbling.

My deepest hope and prayer is that the story that will be told of November 14, 2023 is that it was a day of unity and bravery; a day when American Jews were able to gather peacefully to sound a clarion call for the return of



the hostages, affirming our love and support for Israel, and denouncing the scourge of antisemitism. I hope that it will be remembered as a day when our family in Israel felt strengthened and held by the North American Jewish community and allies, during a time when they have been isolated by the global community writ large. This gathering was but one important step: a step of strength and comfort for our people, a sign to the world that the Jewish people will not be silenced.



Zach Fluhr, Kathryn Potts, and Michael Ury

Even taking one small step...

By Jilly Lederman

As I exited my subway car onto the platform at Smithsonian station, the sound of hundreds of people inside singing in Hebrew reverberated through the crowd. Turning back over my shoulder as I rode the escalator up,



Rabbi Jodie Gordon, Dara Kaufman, and Bob and Barbara Kalish

I saw a sea of blue. People from all over the country, individuals of many different political persuasions, genders, ages, and beliefs comprised the swell of faces behind me. I emerged from the station, blinking in the sunlight, to face the Mall. As I stood there, I imagined the hundreds of thousands of people as concentric circles around me: my friends, my Berkshire Jewish community, my new regional friends from the Albany Federation, the United States, the world – all united in support of Israel, and against the rising threat of antisemitism.

I teach my students that you have to stand up for what

you believe in. Even taking one small step makes a difference. Thank you to the Jewish Federation for helping me take that step.

This was one of those times

By Zach Fluhr

Only 3 times in the past 60 years have I felt compelled to be present at a political rally. This was one of those times. It was important for me to stand with Israel in this time of her need. The experience of being among roughly 300,000 other supporters listening to elected officials and celebrities oppose Hamas’s brutality and global Jew hatred was emotional. Thanks to Federation for handling all the details.

Trying to Hang on to How She Felt

By Elisa Snowise

Standing on the National Mall in DC listening to more than 290,000 people chant “Bring Them Home” is something I won’t forget. It was powerful. It was comforting. It was inspiring. It was reinvigorating. It was confidence-building. It was hopeful. It is a feeling I find myself continuously trying to bring forth again.

We got off the bus at FedEx Field, rode a shuttle and the Metro to the Mall, and then walked through the growing crowd to find our spot for the program – throughout, I felt comfortable and safe and part of something substantial and remarkable. It was a beautiful blue-sky day; everyone around me was going to the same place and seemed to feel as I do about Israel. Sure, we might disagree on some of the nuances of the situation, but clearly, everyone around me believed in Israel’s right to exist and that October 7 was a terrorist massacre.



Elisa with daughter Yael

MARCH FOR ISRAEL 2023

Everyone seemed excited to gather and soak up the strength and sense of unity from working towards a common goal. Throughout my travels that day, I did not witness any counterprotests. Every police officer I encountered was friendly and helpful, and some even shared that they supported our cause. When we were packed in like sardines on the Mall or the Metro, strangers held each other up and helped one another get to where they needed to go. Even when separated from the group I traveled with, I never felt alone or nervous. I believed I could hold my head high as a Jew and was surrounded by people who supported and cared about the people of Israel as I do.

The words spoken and sung from the stage were reassuring, determined, empowering, and, most of all, hopeful. I felt that there were many people there who could affect change and would work towards getting the hostages home. I believed them when they expressed their unwavering support for Israel, its right to defend itself, and their dedication to stand with Israel and all of us through this war. I sang and chanted and felt hopeful.

Despite the spotty cell phone coverage on the Mall, I found my college-age daughter among the enormous crowd. We shared a moment of exciting optimism before we separated again to find our way back to the groups we had each traveled with.

It felt great, safe, and hopeful to be a Jew in DC on November 14th. Since coming home, hanging on to the positivity I felt in Washington

has been challenging. The news is full of stories about antisemitism, hate, and violence being demonstrated all over the world. The war between Israel and Hamas continues and hostages remain in Gaza. I worry that I need to remain on alert all the time because it seems likely that even my small, sheltered world could change and become hostile towards Jewish life. The safe, supported, and hopeful way I felt



Cindy Mann (right) with a compadre

in DC is also how I existed throughout my college career at Brandeis University. This week, my daughter at Brandeis experienced horrible antisemitic hate speech explicitly directed at her – at Brandeis! Places created for Jewish people to live and prosper safely are under attack.

I am trying to remember and hang on to how I felt at the March for Israel so that I can have faith that the ideas and commitments expressed will ensure a safe Jewish future for Israel and all of us.

It was clear we are not alone

By Marc Rudoltz

I had been to previous marches in Washington in support of Israel and the Jewish people, but never one for which I felt an existential threat to the Jewish state and the United States continuing to be a relative safe haven for Jews.

Though hoping for more attendees (no matter how many showed up), there was a tremendous feeling of solidarity among the Jews who attended from all over the country – from our largest cities to rural communities.

Most heartening was the support from our non-Jewish brethren; I was fortunate enough to interact with many pro-Israel pro-Jewish Christians for whom attendance was a priority. When I saw a group of "Blacks for Trump" wearing pro-Israel hats and shirts, it was clear we are not alone.



Rabbi David Weiner, Shira Weiner, Avi Weiner, Joe Weiner, Asher Cook-Dubin, Jesse Cook-Dubin (back), and Reese Cook-Dubin



Karen Lexy Lutner



Marc Rudoltz (right) at the march with friend Paul Aronoff, whose son is an IDF reservist now on active duty

Marching for Israel: A prayer by Rabbi Evan Schultz (Congregation B'nai Israel, Bridgeport, CT)

I arise today
in the name of hope and peace.
I am blessed and I am ready,
I am here and I am present.

I carry today
those who sat along the
rivers of Babylon,
who prayed to return home,
who longed to dance
in the streets of Jerusalem.

I stand today
for the pioneers
and for the soldiers,
for the hostages young and old,
for all those who mourn and grieve.

I march today
for my people Israel,
for my children and
for my grandparents,
for our safety and for our future.

I pray today
for more compassion,
for a world yet to be,
for generations yet to be,
for a world redeemed.

I place myself today
on the arc of history,
in our nation's capitol.
I stand as an American,
as Israel, as a Jew.

May I have the courage
to march peacefully,
stand proudly,
pray softly,
and sing with fullness of heart.

May we swiftly bring them home,
and may all God's sacred beings,
one day know wholeness and peace.

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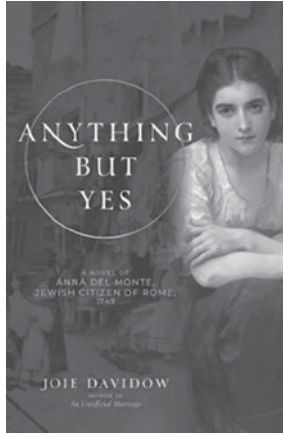
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Your Federation Presents

Behind Ghetto Gates: Jews in 18th-Century Rome



On Thursday, Jan. 4, at 7 p.m., join us for virtual illustrated talk about the lives of Jews in the Roman ghetto and the Church's relentless effort to convert them to Catholicism. It will be presented by Joie Davidow, author of *ANYTHING BUT YES, A Novel of Anna Del Monte, Jewish Citizen of Rome, 1749*.

This free program will be presented via Zoom. Please visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org to register.

In the course of Joie Davidow's research for her novel, she learned a great deal about the life of Jews under papal rule, their food, customs, music, daily life, and dialect. The book is based on the diary of an 18-year-old girl who was taken from her home at gunpoint and locked in a convent cell while the Church used every means to convert her. Anna del Monte kept a diary, which was found by a Jewish scholar in a library in Israel in 1985, more than two centuries after she was abducted. The book is her story.

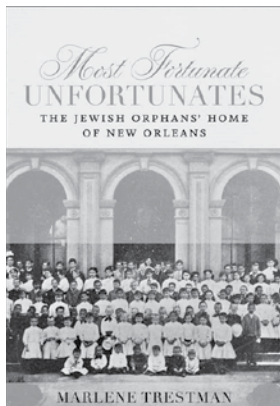
Joie Davidow is the author of several books, including a memoir. In her career as a journalist, Davidow was the founder and editor of two award-winning magazines – *L.A. Style and Si* – and a cofounder and editor of *L.A. Weekly* newspaper. She lives in Umbria, Italy.

Most Fortunate Unfortunates: The Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans, with Marlene Trestman

On Thursday, January 11 at 7 p.m., we host author Marlene Trestman, whose book *Most Fortunate Unfortunates* is the first comprehensive history of the Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans. Founded in 1855 in the aftermath of a yellow fever epidemic, the Home was the first purpose-built Jewish orphanage in the nation.

This Zoom presentation is part of "Jewish Literary Voices: A Federation Series in Collaboration with The Jewish Book Council." Register on the calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

By the time the Jewish Orphans' Home closed in 1946, it had sheltered more than sixteen hundred parentless children and two dozen widows from New Orleans and other areas of Louisiana and the mid-South. Based on deep archival research and numerous interviews of alumni and their descendants, *Most Fortunate Unfortunates* provides a view of life in the Jewish Orphans' Home for the children and women who lived there. The study also traces the forces that impelled the Home's founders and leaders — both the heralded men and otherwise overlooked women — to create and maintain the institution that Jews considered the "pride of every Southern Israelite."



While Trestman celebrates the Home's many triumphs, she also delves deeply into its failures. **Marlene Trestman** grew up in New Orleans as a client of the Jewish Children's Regional Service, the successor to the Jewish Orphans' Home. A former special assistant to Maryland's attorney general, Trestman is the author of *Fair Labor Lawyer: The Remarkable Life of New Deal Attorney and Supreme Court Advocate Bessie Margolin*.

The Rabbi and The Reverend



A story of the most arrested rabbi and a Civil Rights era icon

On Thursday, January 18 at 7 p.m., the Jewish Berkshires' own Avi Dresner shares scenes from his docu-

mentary-in-progress, *The Rabbi and The Reverend*, about his father's relationship with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

This presentation, in honor of Dr. King and African-American History Month, will be presented via Zoom. Register for this free program at the calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org

Watch the sizzle reel (preview) of the documentary in progress, *The Rabbi and The Reverend*, about Rabbi Israel Dresner, the most arrested and jailed rabbi during the Civil Rights era and an ally and friend of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The brief screening will be followed by a presentation and Q&A with Avi Dresner, a Berkshire-based filmmaker and Rabbi Dresner's son.

Avi Dresner is a writer and documentary filmmaker. He is a two-time winner of the Rockower Award (aka "the Jewlitzer") from the American Jewish Press Association. He graduated with a B.A. in Government from Cornell University and holds an M.A. in creative writing from the City College of New York. He is executive producer of *The Rabbi & The Reverend* and co-screenwriter of the feature film script *King's Rabbi*, both of which tell the story of his father. Avi lives in the Berkshires with his wife, Natasha; the couple served as Super Tzedakah Week chairs for Federation. They have two sons.

Worlds Apart: The Journeys Of My Jewish Family in Twentieth-Century Europe, with Nadia Ragozhina

On Thursday, January 25 at 7 p.m., we host BBC journalist and author Nadia Ragozhina, who will discuss the remarkable memoir of two brothers separated by fate, history, and the Iron Curtain, *Worlds Apart: The Journeys Of My Jewish Family in Twentieth-Century Europe*.

This free Jewish Federation of the Berkshires program will be presented via Zoom. Register via the calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

Worlds Apart tells the story of two brothers, Adolphe and Marcus. Separated at the turn of the twentieth century, Adolphe settles in Switzerland, whereas Marcus ends up in Moscow, inspired by his Communist beliefs. They would never meet again.



In her first book, Nadia Ragozhina rediscovers the missing part of the family and pieces together the stories hidden for generations.

The lives of Adolphe's and Marcus' daughters and granddaughters are set against the Russian Revolution, Stalin's repressions, the persecution of Jews across Europe, and the Second World War. These are stories of ordinary people, trying to survive against the backdrop of some of the most tumultuous events of the twentieth century.

Worlds Apart offers a range of fascinating topics to explore, including Jewish memory and identity, Jewish lives of ordinary people in different parts of Europe in the 20th century, as well as themes of exile, genealogy, and reunification.

Nadia Ragozhina was born in Moscow and moved to London in 2000. She is a senior journalist at BBC World News and has also worked for BBC World Service Radio and France 24 in Paris. Nadia writes and blogs about sustainability and zero waste living, which, other than books and her family, is her passion in life. She lives in London with her husband and three daughters.

I Loved Jew, I Loved Jew Not

Live theater from The Braid straight to your home

On Thursday, February 1 at 7 p.m., The Braid – the "Go-To Jewish Story Company" – returns with another live performance presented via Zoom, this time depicting a powerful transformation from hate to love – *I Loved Jew, I Loved Jew Not*.

Register for this free virtual performance via the calendar of events page at jewishberkshires.org.

The Braid is know for its gripping personal stories of antisemitism, as well as uplifting tales of allies of the Jewish people. Experience this 65-minute live theater production presented by actors from The Braid, which will be followed by a moderated Q&A session led by the company's Jodi Marcus and Ronda Spinak.



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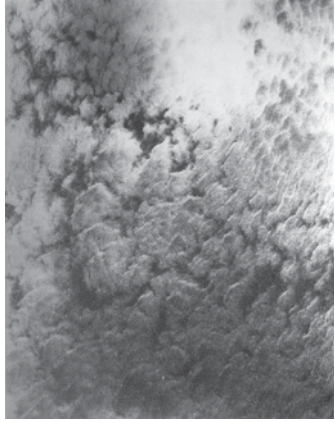
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Your Federation Presents

Jewish American Photographers, with Nancy Kotz



Equivalent (Clouds), by Alfred Stieglitz, 1926

On Thursday, February 15 at 7 p.m., art historian Nancy Kotz returns for another illuminating talk about the visual arts, this time "Jewish American Photographers."

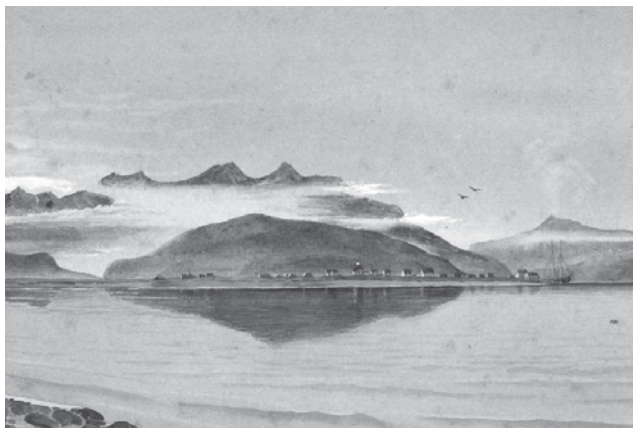
This free Federation program will be presented via Zoom. Register via the calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

Jewish-American photographers are unique in their

response to the mainstream culture, and Nancy Kotz of Jewish Art Education will focus on the origins and development of photography by Jewish men and women practitioners from the 19th century forward.

As she puts it, "Their photographs reflect the conditions of their lives and that of the worldwide Jewish community."

Alaska Jewish History Museum: A Home for Jewish History, Art and Culture in Alaska



On Thursday, February 22 at 7 p.m., take a virtual trip to the Great White North with Leslie Fried, curator at the Alaska Jewish Museum in Anchorage. Visitors to the Alaska Jewish Museum are often surprised to find out there is a Jewish community in Alaska, and that its story goes back to the 1800's. Fried will examine connections between history, art and culture that enabled the original Jewish settlers to travel to the Far North. Coming from towns with old, established cultures to flourish in a new land was an integral part of the Jewish identity and pioneer spirit.

This free Federation program will be presented via Zoom. Register via the calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

Join curator Leslie Fried on a tour of the museum's primary exhibits. She also introduces the museum's new virtual exhibit, "From Purchase to Prosperity: The Jewish Founders of the Alaska Commercial Company and Their Contribution to the Acquisition of America's Last Frontier."

The history of the Alaska Commercial Company, or ACC, is the history of America's Last Frontier: the state of Alaska. The company arrived as more than a fur trading enterprise following the departure of the Russians. In the absence of any US civil government, it built schools, wharves, warehouses, and roads. It

administered justice, allocated dock space, tracked sea ice and daily weather conditions, and kept the peace. All the above was in addition to working with the Unangan and Yu'pik hunters; running nearly 40 steamers, barges, and paddle-wheel river vessels around Alaska and to San Francisco; and operating 86 company stores and trading posts.

The longevity of the ACC can be attributed partially to how the company's Jewish founders - steeped in the tenets of Judaism: charity, education, and justice - embedded those values in the operations of the corporation. Early company correspondence from headquarters in San Francisco consistently directed local managers to provide for widows and children of their Alaska Native hunters and to extend charity to the elderly in the villages. Even when it was not profitable, they kept some outlying trading posts open to prevent famine in those Aleutian villages. The San Francisco founders were noted for their philanthropy; they ran ACC as a family business that included their customers as such.

Artist **Leslie Fried** has been the curator at the Alaska Jewish Museum (AJM) in Anchorage since 2011. She earned a Master of Library and Information Science, and a Graduate Certificate in Museum Studies from the University of Washington. She also holds a B.A. in Fine and Applied Art from the University of Oregon.

As curator, Fried has been instrumental in developing a mission and vision for AJM that emphasizes a multicultural approach. The day-to-day operations require her to wear many hats. She develops and designs exhibits; collects artifacts; and catalogs the collection, the archives, and the library materials. In addition, she writes narratives and labels, records oral histories, develops community programs, collaborates with other community organizations, and conducts museum tours.

Luminous: An Artist's Story as a Guide to Radical Creativity with Linda Frimer



On Thursday, February 29 at 7 p.m., Canadian artist Linda Frimer will take us on a journey through the heart and soul of an artist. Frimer's life story, recounted in her book, *Luminous: An Artist's Story as a Guide to Radical Creativity*, is enriched with insights into the cultures and colors that her amazing abilities enabled her to perceive even as a young child.

This Zoom presentation is part of "Jewish Literary Voices: A Federation Series in Collaboration with The Jewish Book Council." Register via the calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

In her memoir, artist Linda Frimer traces the layered histories of art and the artists of each era alongside her family's journey from Eastern Europe to the wilderness of western Canada. Born in Wells, and later spending her childhood in nearby Prince George, Frimer's development as an artist was intimately impacted by her upbringing in the Cariboo region of British Columbia. It was there that Frimer developed a deep empathy and reverence for the First Nations of Canada,

who were on this land thousands of years before European colonization.

It was also there that Frimer first realized that nature and culture rose inseparable in creation, and that she had a responsibility to both. Throughout her book, Frimer strives to break down barriers between varying perspectives, while guiding the reader through a series of artistic exercises designed to cultivate imagination and to foster cultural and environmental healing through creativity.

Accompanied by her acclaimed artwork, close examination of art history and theory, and exploration of Jewish spirituality, Frimer explores the power of color, the symbols that help to give life meaning, and the importance of creativity in not only protecting, but ennobling existence. *Luminous* aims to inspire each of us to become the artist of our own story.

Linda Dayan Frimer was born in the wilderness town of Wells, BC. She has always been drawn to the light-filled grandeur of the forest and has spent her life working to express the innate unity in all of life's forms, to become, in the process, a champion of environmental and health issues, a cultural and community facilitator and teacher. Frimer was a co-founder of the Gesher Holocaust Project, helping survivors and their children release trauma through art, and her works of art have raised funds for various foundations. Frimer graduated from Emily Carr School of Art and Design and received an honorary doctorate from the University of the Fraser Valley in 2016.

Shine little glow-sticks, glimmer, glimmer Hey, there don't get dimmer, dimmer

By Molly Meador / Coordinator of Volunteers and PJ Library



Our Hannukah Glow Fun Party on Sunday, November 5 brought together eleven families (20 kids, 13 adults). Children ranging from 18 months to 13 years old joined us at the Lenox Community Center, where we made menorahs and dreidels out of clay, read the PJ Library story *The Hannukah Bear* by Eric A. Kimmel, and had a dance party with glow sticks and Hannukah music.

We talked about the miracle of *Hannukah*, how hard it is sometimes to wait for something you really want, the importance of hope, and shining a light in the darkness.

Together, we munched on jelly donuts and talked about our favorite Hannukah treats and preferred latke toppings, and then we danced some more!

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LOCAL NEWS

Tour New York's Jewish Museum Virtually, with Congregation Ahavath Sholom



Argentine conceptual artist Marta Minujin. According to her Wikipedia bio, "She is well known for her belief that "everything is art."

career in Buenos Aires, as well as time spent in Paris, New York, and Washington, DC, through a range of pioneering, mattress-based soft sculptures; fluorescent large-scale paintings; psychedelic drawings and performances; and vintage film footage.

On March 24, explore a pivotal three-year period in the history of art and culture in New York City. "New York: 1962-1964" examines how artists living in the city responded to their rapidly changing world. Selections will be discussed from the exhibition, which includes works by Diane Arbus, Merce Cunningham, Jim Dine, Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein, Marisol, Louise Nevelson, Isamu Noguchi, Claes Oldenburg, Robert Rauschenberg, Faith Ringgold, and Andy Warhol, among many others.

Admission: CAS members: \$25 for an individual tour, \$65 for all three tours. Non-members: \$30 for an individual tour, \$80 for all three tours

Reservations and payment can be made on the CAS website: ahavathsholom.com.

This winter, Congregation Ahavath Sholom offers three guided virtual tours of The Jewish Museum in New York City. Led by distinguished art historian and educator Rena Tobey, each tour will be held on a Sunday afternoon at 4 p.m.

On January 28, selections will be presented from the Jewish Museum's rotating collection of works from antiquity to contemporary art and address cultural identity, memory, immigration, and language.

On February 25, view the Jewish Museum's current exhibit on Marta Minujin, which considers her bold experimentation over six decades. The exhibition charts Minujin's influential



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Havdalah with Families Together at Knesset Israel

PITTSFIELD – On Saturday January 20, at 5:30 p.m., join other families for what Knesset Israel promises will be a heartwarming evening to mark the end of Shabbat and welcome the new week. This event is free and open to KI members and non-members alike.

The celebration includes hot chocolate, a musical Havdalah service, and an invitation to don your coziest PJs. Around Havdalah there will be stories and activities for kids and adults. It will be an evening of warmth and togetherness despite the cold.

For more information and to register, go to KnessetIsrael.org/RSVP. Families Together is made possible through the generous support of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. Knesset Israel is at 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield.

About Families Together

Families Together is a community initiative at Knesset Israel for adults and their school-aged and younger kids. Families Together events are a mix of social, educational, and experiential. All Families Together events are free and open to members and non-members alike!

Shabbat Sha-Basics: Building a Shabbat Experience

PITTSFIELD – Delve into the essence of Shabbat with Rabbi Becca Walker in the "Shabbat Sha-Basics" class at Knesset Israel.

This three-session series, held on the Wednesdays of February 14 & 28 and March 6 from 7:30 p.m. to 8:45 p.m., provides an opportunity to learn and explore Shabbat practices and acquire tools to enrich your Shabbat experience.

Delve into the How(s) and Why(s) of Shabbat.

Learn the art of Shabbat table blessings.

Unravel the origins of Shabbat customs.

This class is great for beginners or those seeking a Shabbat refresher. This is a judgment-free class, so come with your questions. For more information and to register go to knessetisrael.org/RSVP. Knesset Israel is at 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield.

Death Penalty in the Talmud

KI's Thursday morning adult education class tackles a new topic

PITTSFIELD – Starting on January 4 and continuing through March 21, Knesset Israel's Thursday Morning Adult Education class continues with its new topic for 2024: "The Death Penalty in the Talmud." Classes will be held in person, with a Zoom option, at 10:45 a.m.

This class, developed by Rabbi Miriam-Simma Walfish for Project Zug (projectzug.org), will be facilitated by Rabbi David Weiner. Sessions will incorporate small group discussions and text study, and course participants will be able to watch Rabbi Walfish's lectures online.

Rabbi Walfish describes the course as follows:

At times, modern death penalty discourse can seem black and white and simplistic. Those who support it cite deterrence and retribution as the primary reasons for this punishment, while those against often cite the possibility of wrongful conviction and the sanctity of human life as reasons against.

What often gets neglected, however, is any discussion of the intricacies of the death penalty process itself. As Beth Berkowitz states in her book, *Execution and Invention: Death Penalty Discourse in Early Rabbinic and Christian Cultures* (which inspired this course), we will examine rabbinic discussions of the death penalty, "...in order to better understand the nexus between violence and authority in the cultures of ancient Judaism and, ultimately, in our own."

Together, we will explore questions such as "is a 'good death' ever possible?" What is the role of retribution in the criminal justice system then and now? How do the rituals of death empower or remove agency from the various actors involved? We will pair rabbinic texts with more modern takes on the death penalty and allow both types of sources to draw out aspects in the other we may not have seen otherwise.

New participants are welcome, and advance registration is required. Please email office@knessetisrael.org to sign up. Current participants in Rabbi Weiner's Psalms class will have their registration rolled over automatically. There is no charge. Donations to support adult education at Knesset Israel are always welcome.

TEACHERS,
continued from cover

devotion and empathy that goes into true reporting of the world. As Tom Brokaw wrote, "Fletcher has a calling."

Martin Fletcher has been covering world events for forty years, mostly for NBC News. He has won almost every award in TV journalism, including five Emmys – one for his coverage of Kosovo, another for Rwanda, and three for his reporting from Israel.

He walked for three weeks across the Hindu Kush mountains from Pakistan into Afghanistan with the Mujahideen, today's Taliban, to report on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. He was the only television reporter to join the Khmer rouge in Cambodia. He was the only reporter to enter the American embassy in Tehran when Iranian students held American diplomats hostage for 444 days.

Anderson Cooper called him "for several decades the gold standard of war correspondents." Martin retired from NBC in January 2010 but still works for them on contract as a Special Correspondent.

LOCAL NEWS

Book Group Discussion with Author Elizabeth Graver (Rescheduled)

On Thursday, February 8 at 7 p.m., Congregation Beth Israel of the Berkshires welcomes author Elizabeth Graver, whose novel *Kantika* ("song" in Ladino) was inspired by the life story of her maternal grandmother, Rebecca Cohen, daughter of the Sephardic elite of early 20th-century Istanbul.

This rescheduled program, postponed from last October, will be held via Zoom.

This shapeshifting journey took her to Cuba, Spain, and New York. New York Times reviewer Ayten Tartici writes, "In Graver's vision, migration is never simply a one-way street. *Kantika* is a meticulous endeavor to preserve the memories of a family, an elegy and a celebration both."

Come talk about *Kantika* with Elizabeth and her mother, Suzanne Graver, who leads CBI's book club and whose childhood is part of this story. This event is free and open to the public. All are welcome to participate online via Zoom. RSVP at cbiberkshires.com/event/elizabeth-graver-kantika to receive Zoom link.

Nefesh and Jewish Journeys Family Programs at CBI

NORTH ADAMS - Join Congregation Beth Israel of the Berkshires in gathering as a community for various Shabbat and holiday celebrations that bring together affiliated and independent families for connection and learning.

These gatherings take place at CBI or at private homes in the northern Berkshires and southern Vermont. When you RSVP, you will receive location details (if a private home). Contact Rabbi Jarah Greenfield, Director of Youth & Family Learning, at learning@cbiberkshires.com for more information and to RSVP for programs.

CBI is at 53 Lois Street in North Adams. RSVP for all services at cbiberkshires.com/calendar-of-events.

Jewish Journeys

Jewish Journeys is a program for children in Kindergarten through 7th grade where joyful, creative, experiential Jewish learning is open to everyone. CBI will provide a rich and stimulating Jewish education that gives kids the freedom to discover Jewish learning based on their own passions and interests under the guidance of experienced Jewish educators.

Havdalah at Home – Saturday, January 6 at 2 p.m. (private home)

Enjoy a relaxed winter hang out, learn about the ritual of Havdalah, and make your own candle and spice set to use together and at home.

Tu BiShvat: Celebrate the Trees – Monday, January 22 at 5:30 p.m. at CBI

Give thanks for all that trees give us, taste the fruits of our land, and make art from nature to celebrate Tu BiShvat, the New Year of the trees. Those planning to join in the fun at CBI should RSVP at cbiberkshires.com/event/tu-bishvat-2024.

Shabbat Service (with a Surprise!) – Saturday, February 10 at 9:30 a.m. at CBI

Join CBI for a special Shabbat service with a secret twist, courtesy of our talented kids, that will have you tapping your toes and smiling! Those planning to come should RSVP at: cbiberkshires.com/event/shabbat-morning-service-2024-02-10.

Tu BiShvat Concert with Congregation Beth Israel

NORTH ADAMS – On Sunday, January 21 at 7 p.m., join Congregation Beth Israel of the Berkshires to celebrate the New Year of the Trees with a musical program honoring trees, the festival, nature writ large, and our precious and fragile planet.

Featuring the CBI Community Choir and community musicians performing the works of historical and contemporary composers including Louis Lewandowski, Flory Jagoda, Batya Levine, and Naomi Shemer.

After the music, celebrate with tree fruits, nuts, and other festival-appropriate snacks. RSVP at cbiberkshires.com/event/tu-bishvat-concert-2024.

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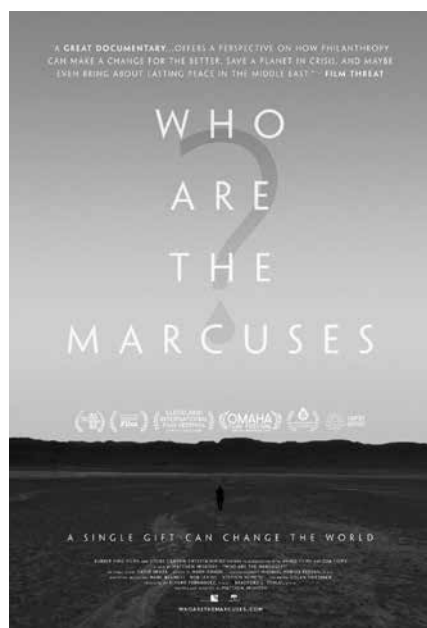
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LOCAL NEWS

Temple Anshe Amunim 2024 Winter Film Series



PITTSFIELD – The TAA Winter Film Series presents films for all movie lovers. Spend an afternoon experiencing a captivating film.

Temple Anshe Amunim launches a new winter film series beginning Sunday, January 21. The new series will present a selection of powerful films from around the world that explore the Jewish experience including the latest works by dynamic voices in international cinema.

From TAA: "It's our mission to bring communities together via the medium of film and to keep our events accessible and affordable."

The Winter 2024 Winter Film Series will feature in-person screenings at Temple Anshe Amunim, 26 Broad Street. Refreshments will be available.

Post-screening discussions will follow each film, led by filmmakers and/or experts in the subjects addressed by the film.

Tickets: \$10 for members of TAA, \$12 for non-members. Full series pricing: \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members.

For ticket information please visit ansheamunim.org. Registration and payment are required to attend. It is also possible to register and pay by mailing a check specifying the film(s) selected and names of attendees to:

Temple Anshe Amunim, 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201

For more info, email templeoffice@ansheamunim.org or call (413) 442-5910.

GOLDA (2023)

Drama by Guy Nattiv

Sunday, January 21 at 2 p.m.

GOLDA is a ticking-clock thriller set during the tense 19 days of the Yom Kippur War in 1973. Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir (Helen Mirren) faced with the possibility of Israel's complete destruction, must navigate overwhelming odds, a skeptical cabinet, and a complex relationship with US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger (Liev Schreiber) – all while secretly enduring cancer treatment.

Who Are the Marcuses? (2023)

Documentary by Matthew Mishory

Discussion to follow with Eve Rubinstein, Director,

Americans for Ben Gurion University

Sunday, February 11 at 2 p.m.

Who Are the Marcuses? not only tells the story of the mysterious Marcuses and their secret philanthropic gift but also takes on crucial universal topics of climate change and water conservation. This new documentary reconstructs the lives of Holocaust refugees Lottie and Howard Marcus, an unassuming couple from Great Neck, NY, who retired to a modest two-bedroom apartment in San Diego. Howard, who was a dentist, passed away in 2014 at age 104. Lottie passed less than two years later. In 2016, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev announced that the Marcuses had given them over half a billion dollars: the largest single charitable donation to the State of Israel in its history. The film simultaneously traces the development of Israel's vital water technology from pre-state to the present; how the Marcuses' endowment to BGU has ensured its continued leading-edge development in this science for not only the Israeli people, but the world as a whole; sets the family's gift in geopolitical context; and explores both its impact and implications for regional peace through technology exchange.

The film features Warren Buffett, Ellen Marcus, Pres. Isaac Herzog, Seth M. Siegel, E. Randol Schoenberg, Daniel Gordis, and Micah Goodman.

The Devil's Confession: The Lost Eichmann Tapes (2023)

Documentary by Yariv Mozer

Sunday, March 4 at 2 p.m.

"Exposing Eichmann's visceral, ideological antisemitism, his zeal for hunting down Jews and his role in the mechanics of mass murder, the series brings the missing evidence from the trial to a mass audience for the first time." - Isabel Kirshner, *The New York Times*

Six decades after he was brought to Israel from Argentina by the Mossad and tried in a Jerusalem court, the war criminal Adolf Eichmann, in his own voice, finally exposes the truth about his role in the Holocaust. At his trial, Eichmann denied responsibility for killing millions of Jews, insisting he was a mere bureaucrat, a cog in the vast Nazi machinery. On tapes discovered long after they were recorded, Eichmann stunningly contradicts these claims, boasting that he was indeed the architect of the 'Final Solution', his only regret being that he had not killed all 10.3 million Jews of Europe.

The Devil's Confession: The Lost Eichmann Tapes exposes Eichmann, in his own voice, stunningly contradicting his claims made during trial. These tapes, recorded in Buenos Aires in 1957 by Dutch journalist and Holocaust denier Willem Sassen, form the basis of a new feature documentary from Israel. The result is a film which not only sheds light on the hidden forces that concealed the recordings, altering the arc of history as we have understood it for more than 70 years, but also provides irrefutable proof against Holocaust denial and the pernicious antisemitic hatred from which it springs.

Lots to Do this Winter at Hevreh

GREAT BARRINGTON – Hevreh of Southern Berkshires offers a diverse array of classes and opportunities for engagement this winter. Here are a few highlights – a full calendar of services and programs is available at hevreh.org.

Community Shabbat at Hevreh – Friday, January 19, at 6 p.m. and Saturday, February 3 at 10 a.m.

Community Shabbat is an initiative to bring an intergenerational community together around the Shabbat dinner (or brunch) table. Community Shabbat is hosted by our rabbis and a group of Religious School students, teachers and families. Following the service the entire community will share a festive Shabbat meal. Community Shabbat is partially funded by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation ReKindle Shabbat Grant.

Lifequakes - Exploring Our Plot Twists Together – Wednesdays, January 10, 17, & 24 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Join this Evening Learning program with Rabbi Neil P.G. Hirsch offered in person and via Zoom. Building off of the insights from Bruce Feiler's book *Life is in the Transitions*, and Rabbi Hirsch's Rosh Hashanah sermon on the topic of Lifequakes, join with others from Hevreh for an exploration of how our lives twist and turn. This is a space for study and for sharing. Each session participants will have the chance to study some texts around Jewish storytelling, and also tell our own life stories. These sessions are open to everyone at all stages of life.

Demystifying Death – Tuesday, January 9 at 6:30 p.m.

It's never too early to begin the conversation about end-of-life issues. The greatest gift you can give to your family could be the freedom from worrying about the myriad decision-making and bureaucratic hurdles that could far more easily be dealt with long before your funeral. Join Heidi Katz and Dave Halley for an open, frank, and enlivening evening discussing end-of-life preplanning and death. We will view the film "Speaking of Dying," then have a facilitated conversation where we hope to address many of your questions, hopes, concerns, and fears.

Tot Shabbat – Saturdays, January 13 and February 10 at 9 a.m.

Rabbi Joie Gordon and musician Jeff Howard bring songs, stories and fun to very young children (ages 0-5) for Shabbat. All families are welcome – this service is open to the public.

Havdalah Beit Café at Hevreh

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Saturday, February 17 at 7 p.m., Hevreh of Southern Berkshire will welcome the week ahead with a lively evening of music and community at its Havdalah Beit Café.

What could possibly be better than a mid-winter gathering of local performers sharing great music, stories, poetry all while enjoying delicious desserts and drinks? The Hevreh community invites all in the community to gather to celebrate a musical Havdalah before settling into an evening of local entertainment.

If you are a performer and would like to appear on stage that evening, please send your name, email address and a brief description of your act to psmilow@hevreh.org. Solo performers as well as groups and bands are welcome.

SUMMER CAMP 2024 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE



You Can Afford Jewish Summer Camp! Federation can Help!

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APPLICATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 16

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Additional assistance is available through the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. Visit hgf.org for more information.



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Camp scholarships are made possible by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires with support from the Jewish Women's Foundation and the Arthur and Helen Maislen Camp Fund.

Your Federation Presents

The 10/7 Project

A Centralized Communications Operation Led by Major Jewish Advocacy Orgs

Following November's historic March for Israel that brought nearly 300,000 people to the National Mall, the nation's most prominent American Jewish organizations joined forces to launch The 10/7 Project — a new centralized communications operation. The 10/7 Project promotes continued U.S. bipartisan support for Israel by working to ensure more complete and accurate information about the Israel-Hamas war in real time for policymakers and the American public.

The 10/7 Project is led by the American Jewish Committee (AJC), the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), ADL (the Anti-Defamation League), the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

Subscribe for the invaluable daily newsletter, *The 10/7 Project Daybook*, at the10-7project.com.

A bipartisan effort, The 10/7 Project focuses on fact-based coverage of the Israel-Hamas war, aggressive rapid response, and a media campaign dedicated to reminding policymakers and the broader American public about the more than 100 hostages still held by Hamas terrorists; uplifting the stories of the innocent victims of October 7; setting the record straight about the conflict in Israel and Gaza; and combating misinformation spouted by Hamas terrorists and their anti-Israel allies.

"Since October 7, there has been a concerted and consistent effort from Israel's enemies to draw a false and dangerous equivalence between Hamas' deadly rampage to destroy the Jewish state and Israel's right to defend itself against terrorists," said Ted Deutch, CEO, American Jewish Committee (AJC). "The 10/7 Project will be a trusted and timely source of accurate information to set the record straight and combat false narratives perpetuated by Hamas terrorists and their anti-Israel allies"

Said Eric Fingerhut, President & CEO, the Jewish Federations of North America. "Through aggressive rapid response and a comprehensive media campaign, The 10/7 Project will work tirelessly to combat misinformation and inaccurate reporting about the Israel-Hamas conflict and continue shining a light on the victims and hostages of October 7. We must ensure that murderous Hamas terrorists are not covered in a way that morally equates them with the sovereign, democratic state of Israel and its people, and that the loudest, most uninformed voices are not permitted to drown out the facts."

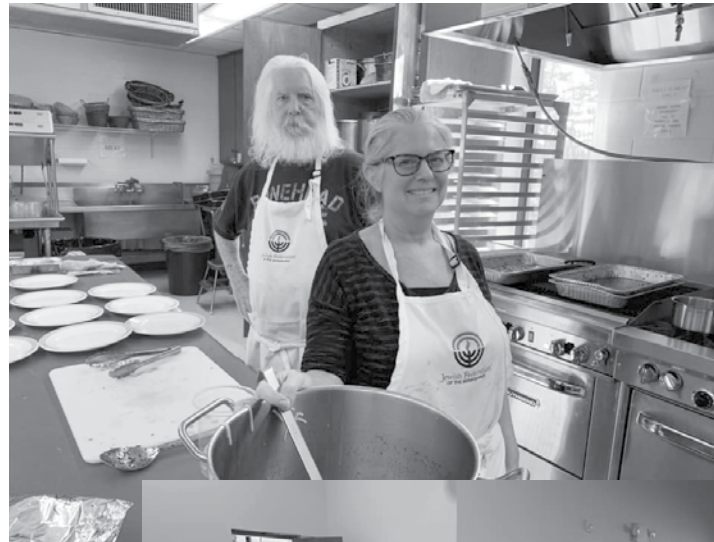
"The 10/7 Project will help ensure that America's leaders are educated and informed about Hamas's despicable assault on the people of Israel and the Western values that America and Israel champion together," said Howard Kohr, CEO, AIPAC. "The United States must continue to stand with our democratic ally as it works to protect its families and secure its future."

Said William Daroff, CEO, Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. "We must work together, as one Jewish community, to successfully communicate to the American people the critical need to stand with Israel, as well as the importance of the US-Israel relationship to America and to Israel."

The 10/7 Project will not endorse or oppose any candidates for public office.

Connecting Our Community to Chanukah Brisket and Latkes

On the 7th day of Chanukah, our Connecting With Community program hosted a traditional Chanukah meal, prepared in the kitchen at Kneset Israel by our director of food services, Susan Levine, and Ken Conlow. This winter, Grab & Go Kosher Hot Meals are available every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday with advance reservations. Check out the menu on page 16!



MAZEL TOV!

David Wise and Debra Chudnow on the birth of their grandson.

Great-grandmother **Ilse Browner** and grandparents **Jackie Browner and Randy Johnson** on the birth of their grandson, **Lucas West Kenward. Evan and Kerry Kenward** are the proud parents.

Jonah Sanabria on his November 4 bar mitzvah at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire.

Ruben Fried on his November 11 bar mitzvah at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire. Proud family are parents **Jessie Fried and Ben Strauss**, and brother, **Morrie**.

Jacob Alan Herzberg on his October 14 bar mitzvah at Kneset Israel. Proud family are parents **Lesley and Matthew Herzberg** and brother, **Henry**.

Stuart Masters on his 80th birthday.

Ev Bastow on her 90th birthday.

Ed and Lisa Udel on the September 3 marriage of their daughter, **Ariel**, to **Austen Hartke**. The wedding took place in Maple Grove, MN.

Ed and Cindy Helitzer on the September 9 marriage of their daughter, **Lindsey**, to **Zakary Standel**, held at Tanglewood. Lindsey and Zakary reside in Australia with their son, **Hudson**.

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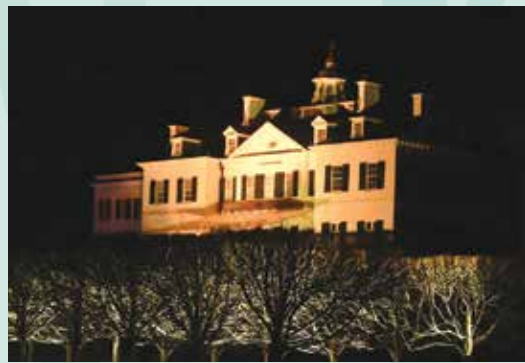
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Your Federation Presents

Our Jewish Community Lit Up the Night at Our NightWood Chanukah Celebration

More than 200 community members gathered on the chilly evening of December 14 for a warm, wonderful, and meaningful Chanukah celebration at The Mount in Lenox!! Thank you to Massachusetts political leaders Senator Paul Mark and Representative Tricia Farley-Bouvier for standing in solidarity with our Jewish community. And special thanks to The Berkshire Jewish Musicians Collective and the wonderful Wanda Houston for the stirring songs!



PHOTOS BY JULIA KAPLAN

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ISRAEL/PARTNERS

One Story

Surviving Against All Odds

Oshri was shot by terrorists, with the bullet piercing his eye and throat, but miraculously survived. With a long road to recovery ahead of him, he's receiving support from the Fund for Victims of Terror.

On the morning of October 7, Oshri Tuito, 27, woke up early at his home in Sderot. He and his father, Eliyahu, enjoy fishing and would often go to Zikim beach together, but that day, Eliyahu felt too tired to join Oshri, so Oshri took his fishing gear and drove to Zikim beach by himself. Oshri had barely managed to get his equipment out of the car when all hell broke loose. Sirens started blaring, rockets flew overhead, and terrorists came by boats from the sea, armed with machine guns and antitank missiles.

Oshri ran to a mobile shelter where others were also taking refuge, but safety was nowhere to be found. The terrorists threw grenades into the shelter, immediately murdering a father and son, and then began shooting with machine guns, taking aim at all who were alive. Oshri raised his hands to shield himself and was hit by a bullet that went through his arm, into his eye socket, down his esophagus and into his stomach. Miraculously, he survived.

Oshri lay virtually comatose in the shelter under dead bodies, rousing enough to call for help. He quickly realized no one would come so he made himself stand up and head to his parked car, deciding to drive to the Barzilai Medical Center in Ashkelon. Unbelievably, he managed to start driving when he was stopped by a police car. The policemen couldn't understand how Oshri was alive and able to drive due to the bullet that pierced his throat, Oshri could barely speak.

Understanding the gravity of his situation, the police took Oshri in their car and drove frantically to the hospital. Upon arriving, Oshri lost consciousness and was taken into emergency surgery without any record of his identity. In the meantime, his family in Sderot were crazy with worry for him and fear for themselves. They knew nothing of what had happened and feared the worst. For over 30 hours, the Tuitos were sure Oshri was dead.

The following day, on October 8, while terrorists were still in Sderot and after a rocket directly hit the home of Oshri's sister, Oshri's father managed to get out of the city and came to Barzilai to search for Oshri. Based on the



Oshri in the hospital

information Eliyahu shared, the hospital was able to identify Oshri, who was still unconscious, as his son. When Eliyahu was told that Oshri was gravely injured but still alive, he was filled with joy.

Today, the medical staff cannot believe how quickly Oshri has been recovering after multiple surgeries and seven blood transfusions but he has a long road ahead of him. The Tuito family and Oshri are grateful to those who helped Oshri survive and for the assistance from The Jewish Agency's Fund for Victims of Terror (FVOT) and for the support from the global Jewish people.

The FVOT, often the first responder for families and individuals impacted by terror, distributes immediate grants within 24-48 hours of a direct attack, offering support for short-term needs and helping with long-term rehabilitation and post-trauma care. The Fund is made possible by the generosity of Jewish Federations of North America / United Israel Appeal, Keren Hayesod, foundations and donors worldwide and people like you. Our aid is critical for victims' immediate well-being and long-term recovery and we are currently operating and supporting more victims on a wider scale than ever before. To support the Fund, visit the link on our homepage, jewishberkshires.org.

Update: The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)

As one of the Federation system's key partners, JDC (the overseas rescue, relief, and rehabilitation arm of the American Jewish community) uses your donations to do vital work during this time of crisis for Jews in Israel and around the world.

20 Bedouins with disabilities are benefitting from an online support group opened by JDC and partners. Through weekly meetings, participants gather in a safe space for socialization and support, where they can share their unique challenges and receive professional guidance. Also, 500 kits with toys and craft materials are being distributed to Bedouin families with small children and toddlers. These families live in unrecognized villages with no sheltered spaces, face the ongoing threat of rocket fire, and need help keeping their young children who are still not in school engaged.

The Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute is developing a comprehensive dashboard to monitor the status of Arab society in Israel during the war. The dashboard was commissioned by the Israeli Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry for Social Equality and will measure progress in key areas including employment, education, welfare, and social resilience. Dashboard indications will help decision-makers address the needs of Arab Society and mitigate disparities during this time of crisis.

JDC procured first aid supplies including 6,288 burn treatment kits, 3,000 IV kits, 300 first aid kits, and 200 basic life support kits for Jewish and Israeli-Arab local municipalities in areas under threat, and which lack basic medical equipment. JDC continues to source critically needed supplies for local emergency response units in towns close to Israel's borders.

400 youth counselors doing National Service are receiving JDC training to provide educational activities for evacuated children residing in hotels. Some 20 training courses are currently taking place across Israel, empowering the trainees with tools for informed trauma intervention and to help build resilience.



In a Time of Crisis, Federations and Our Partner JAFI Support Partnership2Gether Frontline Local Communities

As of the end of November, Jewish Federations raised a total of \$678,596,213.

Allocations were at \$211,283,485.

Many Jewish Federations maintain time-honored partnerships with sister cities or regions in Israel, mostly through The Jewish Agency's Partnership2Gether program. These partnerships encourage people-to-people connections and shared endeavors that have resulted in deep relationships, such as those Jewish Federation of the Berkshires sustains with the Afula/Gilboa region of northern Israel.

Those relationships have proven essential following October 7. Jewish Federations draw on the local expertise of Israel-based Federation representatives and Jewish Agency Partnership staff to address the most pressing needs of the residents in the affected regions through existing relationships with key NGO partners and local government decision-makers.

Total Allocation to Local Communities: \$27,361,809
Communities Receiving Grants: 65
Federations Directly Allocating: 35

Largest Total Allocations

The Jewish Agency: \$46,907,488
Partnership Communities & NGOs in Frontline Local Municipalities/Regional Councils: \$27,361,809
JDC: 13,085,344
Brothers and Sisters for Israel: \$5,747,500
Israel Trauma Coalition: \$5,465,100
Magen David Adom: \$5,653,318

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ISRAEL/PARTNERS

One Story

World ORT

Restoring Safety and Trust: How Educational Specialists are Supporting Traumatized Students in Israel

By Joanne Newman / JNS

In normal times, Royi Yablochnik runs One Team Camp, a summer event bringing together Jewish and Bedouin Israeli teenage girls for cross-cultural sports activities organized by World ORT Kadima Mada. The camps foster a sense of belonging and promote values, including equality, inclusion and mutual respect.

But these are not normal times. Since Hamas's devastating attacks on Oct. 7, the educational psychologist and sports consultant has been providing therapeutic support to World ORT Kadima Mada students aged between 12 and 16, as well as to staff, instructors, and educators.

Over the past month, Kadima Mada — World ORT's operational arm in Israel — has delivered hundreds of activities to more than 3,500 students, mainly covering psychological needs. From World ORT's Kfar Silver Youth Village near Ashkelon alone, more than 100 children are receiving urgent mental health support.

Yablochnik has been displaced from southern Israel and is now based in Tel Aviv. His role is threefold: the first is to reduce the anxiety of his colleagues and students; the second is to equip teachers and parents with tools to support the children; and the third is to provide one-to-one or group therapy, either face-to-face or via Zoom.

"In Israel now, there is a lot of anxiety," he says. "And in times of stress, we can lose the ability to control our thinking, so we need to find a way to calm the mind. I give the students and staff exercises on how to do this. If they need follow-up sessions, I can do that myself or refer them to psychologists near where they are."

Students, teachers, and other staff were evacuated from their base in Kfar Silver, which is only eight miles from Gaza. Many of them have friends or family members who lost their lives in the Hamas attacks and the proximity to Gaza means residents have very little time to find shelter in the event of rocket fire.

Yablochnik, who is also serving in the army reserves, describes how in stressful situations there are three responses: fight, flight or freeze. But now there is another response, he notes, and that is fear. "The sense of security in one's home is damaged," he says.

The psychological impact of Hamas's barbaric attacks cannot be overestimated.

"As children, you are led to believe that there will always be an adult to take care of you," he says. "In the beginning, it's your mother and father, and when you grow up, it's the commander or the army, police, and government. But that idea was quashed on Oct. 7 because people's first questions were 'Where's the army? Where is the government?' because many were waiting almost eight hours in the shelter."

He explains that "the first thing I'm dealing with is to restore the feeling of safety and trust. From a psychological point of view, if you don't build your 'story,' your mind will keep questioning things and will suggest its own answer, which is not good because it will continue in survival mode and not let us move on."



A student in Dimona, Israel, takes part in a puppet-making class.

PHOTO: CREDIT: WORLD ORT

'Bring back a sense of control'

Part of his efforts are aimed at reconciling civilians with the fact their lives are not continuing as usual.

"They need to deal with a new situation; they must stop trying to go back to the routine they had on Oct. 6. What we tend to tell them is that we will try to keep as much of a schedule as we can, to keep things as similar as possible to what life was like before. For example, sleep, exercise—things we know will help to bring back a sense of control.

"I bring tools from the world of sports psychology because we know athletes deal with stress all the time. Obviously, the stress is different now and people are in survival mode, but there are things we can do that are very similar to what we can do in times of normal stress—for example, focus on how to breathe and take part in physical activity."

Some Israeli schools are operational, but teachers understand that students will be distracted and unfocused. Additionally, parents fear their children may develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from their experiences, but he is reassuring. "Most of the people, almost 80%, will heal by themselves," but he emphasizes that the way parents handle the situation will influence the way their children do.

"If you are very anxious and afraid, or you're very mad all the time because you're not sleeping, it will affect the children. Conversely, if you see your children laugh and be happy, it will make you stronger and reduce your anxiety."

He emphasizes talking with them, and being open and honest in an age-appropriate way. "Children notice things. It's hard to tell children about the situation, and many parents think it might be best to hide it from them, but children don't live in isolation; they talk with friends."

He praises World ORT, the Jewish education network working across more than 40 countries, and Kadima Mada for the support provided straight after the attacks. "It is very important to

provide therapy straight away, as well as in the months afterwards, particularly to prevent PTSD. They encouraged us to contact people immediately to see whether they needed our help, rather than waiting for them to contact us."

He hopes to be able to provide more face-to-face therapy and physical activity sessions, especially as he foresees a rise in PTSD cases in the country given the unprecedented numbers of people who were involved in the terror attacks.

But, he adds, offering a note of optimism: "The solidarity in the country now means I don't think it will be as bad as it could have been. As human beings, we love to be in groups, and groups make us strong. The [political] situation we had in Israel in the past year was very bad. People are now more united."

ORT's emergency global campaign is working to provide urgent educational and psychological support for students, teachers and their families across Israel. To offer help, visit: <https://ort.org/en/israel-emergency-campaign/>.

Create a Jewish Legacy Campaign

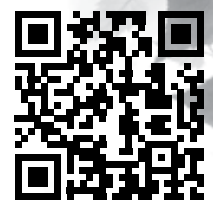
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Connecting with Community

Nourish Your Body, Mind, and Soul!

Meals-on-Wheels & Meals to Go – Advance Reservation Required

Kosher lunch will be prepared on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. *Meals to go will be ready by noon for pickup at the Knesset Israel kitchen door, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield.* All meals-on-wheels will be delivered by Federation volunteers in the early afternoon.

Please call (413) 442-2200 no later than 9 a.m. to reserve your meal for pickup and to arrange delivery if standing instructions are not in place. All are welcome to reserve meals for pick-up, although delivery may be limited in certain circumstances.

The menus listed below are planned, but may be modified depending on availability of ingredients. When making a reservation, please inform us if a person in your party has a food allergy. Adults 60 and over: \$3 suggested donation. Adults under 60: \$7 per person.

Volunteers are Vital! Volunteer drivers who can deliver meals-on-wheels are always appreciated. Please call Molly Meador at (413) 442-4360, ext. 14. The Federation's kosher hot lunch program is offered in collaboration with Elder Services of Berkshire County.



Jewish Federation
OF THE BERKSHIRES

What's for Lunch?

Gluten Free Main Entrée ** and Dairy Free Main Entrée #

Kosher lunch will be prepared on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

JANUARY

MONDAY, 1 Closed for New Year's Day.

TUESDAY, 2 Vegetable curry**#, brown rice, spinach salad, naan bread, and Mandarin oranges.

THURSDAY, 4 Turkey chili#, egg noodles, Italian green beans, salad, Farmer's loaf, and parve cookies.

MONDAY, 8 Meatloaf**#, garlic mashed potatoes, peas and carrots, salad, white bread, and pineapple.

TUESDAY, 9 Eggplant parmesan, spaghetti with sauce, broccoli, salad, multi-grain bread, and tapioca pudding.

THURSDAY, 11 Poultry piccata**#, rice, Brussels sprouts, salad, roll, and pears.

MONDAY, 15 Closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

TUESDAY, 16 Fish and chips, peas and carrots, corn chowder, oat bread, and rice pudding.

THURSDAY, 18 Veal "sausage" and peppers**#, Italian green beans, salad, sub roll, and apricots.

MONDAY, 22 Spinach pie, roasted potatoes, lentil soup, Farmer's loaf, and cranberry oatmeal cookies.

TUESDAY, 23 Beef chili**#, egg noodles, salad, corn bread, and pineapple.

THURSDAY, 25 Arroz con pollo (rice with chicken)**#, carrots, salad, roll, and lemon cookies.

MONDAY, 29 Tuna noodle casserole, California blend vegetables, butternut squash soup, pumpernickel bread, and chocolate pudding.

TUESDAY, 30 Salmon croquettes**#, spaghetti with sauce, salad, whole wheat bread, and tapioca pudding.

FEBRUARY

THURSDAY, 1 Thanksgiving loaf (turkey meatloaf)**#, French green beans, turkey celery rice soup, multi-grain bread, and peaches.

MONDAY, 5 Meatloaf**#, sweet potato fries, peas and carrots, salad, hearty white bread, and tropical fruit salad.

TUESDAY, 6 Mushroom and spinach frittata**, potatoes au gratin, black bean soup, rye bread, and lemon pudding.

THURSDAY, 8 Chicken cacciatore**#, rice, vegetable soup, Farmer's loaf, and pears.

MONDAY, 12 Cheese lasagna, mixed vegetables, mushroom soup, whole wheat bread, and brownies.

TUESDAY, 13 Beef stew**#, egg noodles, salad, pumpernickel bread, and Mandarin oranges.

THURSDAY, 15 Fish Provençal**#, couscous, salad, sour dough bread, and vanilla pudding.

MONDAY, 19 Closed for Presidents' Day.

TUESDAY, 20 Baked ziti, broccoli, minestrone soup, roll, and cookies,

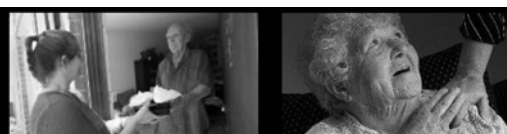
THURSDAY, 22 Turkey white bean chili**#, rice, salad, whole wheat bread, and applesauce.

MONDAY, 26 Roasted vegetable pizza, salad, split pea soup, and chocolate pudding.

PLEASE NOTE: The suggested donation is completely voluntary. Seniors who cannot pay a voluntary donation will continue to receive a meal, no questions asked. We appreciate your understanding.

Homebound or recovering from an illness or injury?

Let us help you arrange for a kosher lunch to be delivered through our Kosher Meals on Wheels Program. Call (413) 442-2200.



Knesset Israel –
16 Colt Road, Pittsfield



ONGOING MINYANS

Saturday, 9:30 a.m.
Sunday, 8:45 a.m.
Tuesday, 7 p.m. Zoom only
Thursday, 7 p.m., Zoom only
Friday, 5:45 p.m.

CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES

Friday, January 5 4:16 p.m.
Friday, January 12 4:23 p.m.
Friday, January 19 4:32 p.m.
Friday, January 26 4:40 p.m.
Friday, February 2 4:50 p.m.
Friday, February 9 4:59 p.m.
Friday, February 16 5:08 p.m.

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Visit jewishberkshires.org and select **Community & Events>Berkshire Jewish Voice** for links to highlights of current and past issues.

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How did the acceptable response to the heinous and brutal murder of almost 1,200 civilians of 33 nationalities and the kidnapping of an additional 240 babies, children, women, and men become anything other than unequivocal condemnation? The Brandeis University Board of Trustees asserts that the virulent antisemitism that has overtaken too many universities over the past several weeks – and, in turn, led to Jewish students feeling unsafe – will not be tolerated at our institution.

The Hamas invasion of Israel on October 7 represented a watershed. It was the worst single atrocity against the Jewish people since the Holocaust. And while antisemitism had been a serious threat on some American campuses before that fateful day, it has exploded since, with countless examples of Jewish students being bullied, intimidated, and physically attacked while Israel is demonized and vilified.

Throughout, Brandeis President Ron Liebowitz has been an exceptional voice of moral courage and clarity. He immediately and unequivocally condemned the horrific terrorist attacks perpetrated by Hamas. He stressed the university's commitment to deepening its ties with Israel. He has insisted on peaceful and civil discussion and debate. He has reached out to Jewish students to ensure they feel supported. He has assured *all* students that attacks against any background or belief system are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. He has reminded the campus of the right to protest in support of Palestinians within the guidelines of the university's code of conduct and principles for free expression. And he has stated, in no uncertain terms, that any incitement to violence or glorification of terror will not be countenanced at Brandeis.

In 1948, Brandeis University was founded by the American Jewish community in response to the widespread use of restrictive quotas for Jews at top-tier universities. From its establishment, it has been a welcoming institution for students and faculty of all backgrounds, as it has been a champion of the highest standards of academic excellence and foundational democratic values. Any form of hate or bigotry has absolutely no place at Brandeis. It never has. It never will.

An unambiguous message has been sent by Brandeis to the world of higher education and the nation: Today, antisemitism poses a clear and present danger to Jews on many campuses, and the answer is to acknowledge and confront it head-on, not to deny, minimize, and rationalize it under the quaint higher-ed term of "institutional neutrality".

Universities are in the business of educating the next generation of leaders. This means creating an environment that encourages discussion, debate, and critical thinking. It does not, however, mean subsidizing the propagation of hate speech and the promotion of terrorist activity that leads to unsafe conditions for anyone on campus.

At this moment in history, we remain fiercely proud that Brandeis University has held fast to its founding mission of fighting discrimination in all its forms. We invite our peers in higher education to join us in this fight.

Signed,
Brandeis University Board of Trustees
Lisa Kranc, Chair

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OBITUARIES

Mark Eisen, 65, boundless love and optimism, generous, humble, kind, brave

GREAT BARRINGTON - Mark Eisen, 65, passed away on Friday, November 17, 2023.

Born in Cape Town, South Africa on September 27, 1958, he moved to the United States at the age of 19, attending USC in Los Angeles. Mark followed a creative path, becoming a fashion designer in Los Angeles, then moving to New York City where he built an eponymous luxury fashion brand that regularly premiered on the foremost runways. With studios around the globe, Eisen's clothing collections were sold internationally for over 20 years. Throughout his career, working in the diverse creative worlds of America, Italy, France, Japan, and China, he cultivated a cross-cultural, global perspective by creating objects that enhance life through beauty.

In 2007, Mark returned to South Africa where he rehabilitated a 17th Century French Huguenot wine farm. During this time on the farm, he shifted to industrial design and began a tenure designing fragrance vessels exclusively for the Maisons of the luxury group Richemont. Starting in the mid-2010s, Mark began mining his personal archive with the intention of creating sculpture. Mark returned to the United States in 2019 where he continued his fine art practice. Working relentlessly to push sculptural craftsmanship to new heights, his final work incorporates key concepts and forms built over nearly three decades as a designer, fusing pattern-making, tooling, material, architecture and technology. These sculptures were his final creations of pure passion, created to evoke hope and happiness in everyone who experienced them.

Mark met Karen, the love of his life in 2002, and they married in 2006. He loved her deeply, wholly, and well. They

were partners and best friends. They lived their lives together lovingly, passionately, and bravely, moving and travelling across the globe, embarking on incredible adventures and loving no one else's company like they did each other's.

Mark and Karen raised two beautiful children, Abigail Eloise a sophomore at Berkshire School and Cameron Harry, a seventh grader at Indian Mountain School. Of all that he accomplished in his amazing life, there was nothing that matched the pride he had as Abby and Cam's father. Mark lived with unmatched passion for everything he did. He fervently devoted himself to each moment in life, from his art, to his love, to his extensive sushi orders. Mark did nothing small or half way. It is impossible to accurately convey the light Mark had. He was radiant and magical and full of boundless love and optimism. To know Mark was to have a friend, a confidant, a mentor, a defender, an inspiration. He was generous beyond measure. He was exceedingly humble. He was kind, and he was brave.

Mark is also survived by his two sisters Merle and Linda; sister-in-law Kristen; brothers-in-law Avi, Hershel, and Sean; nephews Ilan Mitrani, Gil Mitrani, Yoni Mitrani, Ohad Mitrani, Russell Berg, and David Flynn; nieces Sara Bergman, Hannah Flynn, Molly Flynn, and Claire Flynn. Mark was an eternal optimist, loved objects of beauty, and treasured scuba diving with Abby and Cam. Mark, may you find your peace among your manta rays and rainbows forever.

A funeral service was held on Monday, November 20 at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire. Burial followed at Ahavath Shalom Cemetery, Great Barrington. Donations may be made to Hadassah Hospital at hadassah.org/donate, Samaritans at support.samaritanshope.org/give/274441/#!/donation/checkout, or Manta

Trust Conservation at manta-trust.org/donate.

Dorothy Faye Margolin, 81, longtime history teacher, dedicated to her students

PITTSFIELD - Dorothy Faye Margolin, 81, died Tuesday, November 7, 2023, at Baystate Medical Center.

Born in Bronx, NY, on May 9, 1942, a daughter of the late Clara (Mindlin) Margolin and Benjamin Margolin, Dorothy attended local schools and went on to attend UMASS and received her teaching degree. She was a history teacher for Pittsfield Public Schools for over 30 years.

Dorothy was dedicated to her students and was a longtime member of Knesset Israel. She leaves her cousins, Barbara Mandell, Daniel Mandell, and Celia Einhorn. She was predeceased by her brother, David Margolin.

Graveside services were held on Thursday, November 9, at Knesset Israel Cemetery, Pittsfield. Donations may be made to Knesset Israel, in care of Flynn & Dagnoli Bencivenga Funeral Homes, 5 Elm Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Nancy Lynne Shulman, 72, passionate member of the Jewish community, close-knit family

PORTLAND, ME - Nancy Lynne Shulman, 72, passed away on Sunday, November 26, 2023 at her home in following a courageous battle with cancer. She spent the last months of her life in the close comfort of her family and friends.

Born to the late Irving Shulman and Helen (Lenhoff) Shulman in Pittsfield on October 3, 1951, Nancy grew up on Holmes Road in a loving household with her brother Jim and her late sister Margie. Her grandparents lived next door. Her aunt Cecily Levine and late uncle Murray Levine, who lived across the street, were like a second set of parents. Their children, Amy

Levine and the late Joyce Abecassis, were more like sisters to Nancy than cousins.

So began three (going on four) generations of family who chose to remain as close as they could be.

Nancy attended Miss Halls (1969), Brandeis University (1973), and earned master's degrees from the University of Massachusetts and Marlboro College. She had a long and successful career that took her to many places, eventually leading her back to Pittsfield, where she enjoyed being a realtor and helping entrepreneurs at the Massachusetts Small Business Center. Her career and life journey produced too many friendships to list, but we would be remiss not to mention her life-long friends Judy Wildman and Joan Kagan and her dear friend Monte Wasch.

Nancy was a passionate member of the Jewish community. She lived and worked on Kibbutz Harel in Israel and studied at Hebrew University in her youth. She loved dogs, often stopping to pet any she saw. Her dogs Queenie, Bogie, Teddy, and Taza were her most cherished companions.

In addition to her late parents and late uncle, she is predeceased by her sister Margie and cousin Joyce, both of whom were lost too soon. She is survived by her aunt Cecily Levine; brother Jim Shulman and his wife Jackie; brother-in-law Frank Bonnevie; cousin Amy Levine; Joyce's husband Marc Abecassis; son Scott Bloomberg, daughter-in-law Amber, and granddaughters Lyla and Margo; son Michael Bloomberg and daughter-in-law Tamar Katz; and generations of her nieces, nephews, grand-nieces, grand-nephews, and cousins whom she loved so dearly. This close-knit family is the strongest testament to Nancy's legacy and the legacies of those who predeceased her.

A celebration of Nancy's life was held on Sunday, December 3, officiated by Rabbi Amy Wallk at Temple Beth El, Springfield, MA.

Nancy would have encouraged everyone to open their hearts to animals in need. Please consider volunteering at a local shelter or making a contribution to your local animal rescue organization.

Joel Lionel Margolis, 91, many interests, history buff, generous donor

GREAT BARRINGTON - Joel Lionel Margolis, 91, died peacefully on Sunday, November 26, 2023 at Fairview Commons Nursing Center.

Born in Brooklyn, NY, on May 28, 1932, to Alex and Esme (Woolf) Margolis, Joel received his undergraduate degree from Baruch College. After serving in the US Army during the Korean War era, Joel pursued a career in advertising in Manhattan, working in the marketing departments at Young & Rubicam and Grey Advertising, among other prominent firms. He was among the first Jewish executives hired to work at these high-profile firms.

While working at Young & Rubicam, Joel met his dear wife, Arlene Gaye Swersky, who predeceased him in 1991. They married in 1964 and had two daughters, Denise Margolis (who passed in 2022) and Rachel Margolis of Pittsfield.

In 1991, Joel recognized an entrepreneurial opportunity within the commercial student lending business and founded Student Marketmeasure. Working as his own boss, he ran the firm successfully for 19 years.

Joel loved to spend his summer vacations in both Cape Cod and the Berkshires. In 2003, he decided to make the Berkshires his home. Shortly after, he met his adored companion, Diane Spinrad, and they enjoyed many wonderful years together until separated by illness. They especially enjoyed spending time with their combined families and going on many travel adventures together.

Joel had many interests, including stamp and coin



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OBITUARIES

collecting, as well as attending live performances of plays and music. He was a history buff and loved old movies, always surprising his family with his extensive knowledge of cinema. Later in life, he developed a passion for collecting Japanese woodblock prints.

Joel was a proud member of the Rotary Club when living in Westchester and The Friends of the Berkshire Athenaeum in Pittsfield. He was a generous donor to many charities, among them groups that supported the resettlement of Ethiopian Jews to the State of Israel, a cause dear to his heart.

In addition to his daughter Rachel, Joel is survived by his grandson, Eliot Stern, whose education at Avon Old Farms School he made possible. He is also survived by his dear brother-in-law, Gaylord Swersky, whose support he greatly appreciated.

A graveside service, officiated by Rabbi Barbara Cohen, was held on Wednesday, November 29, 2023 at the Ahavath Sholom section of Elmwood Cemetery in Great Barrington.

Bruce Alan Kobritz, 76, humanitarian, positive and optimistic outlook on life, good-natured personality

SANTA MONICA, CA - Bruce Alan Kobritz, 76, passed away peacefully from a short illness on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 surrounded by his loving family.

Born December 19, 1946, in Pittsfield, he was the son of the late Nathan Kobritz and the late Beatrice Cohen Kobritz. Graduating from

Pittsfield High School in 1965, Bruce attended UMASS Amherst, where he earned his bachelor's degree in Business Administration. He received his master's degree, also in Business Administration, from UCLA.

Throughout his career, Bruce made significant contributions in the healthcare and business fields and was president of his own healthcare company, Strategic Healthcare Planning Associates, which specialized in biotechnology, life sciences, pharmaceutical, and medical device companies.

Bruce was a founding director of Diamond Capital Advisors, an investment banking firm specializing in transactional, operational, and consulting experience, with Bruce running the healthcare division. In addition, he played an integral role in the planning process for the expansion of a new hospital and medical services at Kaiser Permanente Hospitals and was executive administrative director of the emergency room at UCLA. Perhaps of greater significance is the fundamental role that Bruce played in the creation of the first paramedic program in the United States, also at UCLA, an accomplishment of which he was particularly proud.

Judaism was deeply important to Bruce. He was a past president of Mishkon Tephilo Synagogue in Venice, CA, and also served as president of Hillel while attending his senior year at UMASS.

Bruce and Jill opened their home and volunteered as surrogate parents for a number of Jewish-Iranian immigrants. They traveled

to Cuba with a group from Congregation Knesset Israel and brought medication to Jewish Cubans.

Bruce will be remembered for his humanitarianism, his positive and optimistic outlook on life, his good-natured and easygoing personality, and especially for his sharp, cutting sense of humor, as well as his quick, dry wit. He was known for his generosity and his need to take care of family and friends. Most importantly, Bruce was a loving and devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, brother-in-law, and uncle. He will be dearly missed and remain forever in our hearts.

Bruce is survived by his loving wife of nearly 50 years, Jill Lewis Kobritz, of Santa Monica, CA; devoted children, Moshe Kobritz, of Las Vegas, NV, and Naomi Kobritz Romo (Drew), of Santa Monica; grandchildren Shayna Romo and Jonathan Romo; sister, Celia Kobritz Alpern (Ken); nephew Nate Alpern; and niece Becca Alpern.

A chapel and graveside service was held on Sunday, November 19, at Groman Eden Memorial Park, Mission Hills, CA.

Donations may be made to Miskon Tephilo Synagogue (office@mishkon.org) or the National Leiomyosarcoma Foundation (nlmsf.org).

Geraldine Hantman, 96, prolific artist, woman of many accomplishments

NEWTON, MA - Geraldine (Gerry) Ruda Hantman, 96, died at home on Thursday, November 9, 2023.

Born and raised in London, England where her parents,

Clara and Aaron (Harry) Ruda ran a menswear business, Gerry was twelve years old during World War II and due to the London Blitz, she and her younger brother, Laurie Ruda, were evacuated to Brooklyn, NY, where they were each placed with Jewish families. Her younger sister Shirley Ruda (Kutz), who was only 18 months old at the time, was sent out to the UK countryside.

After the war, they reunited in London, and Gerry attended the Paris School of Design in London, where she became a proficient milliner and dress designer, designing and sewing many of her own clothes and later those of her children. She married her husband, Lionel Louis Hantman, a chemist with the Gillette company, on April 5, 1951. They emigrated to St. Paul, MN with their newborn daughter Elaine in 1955 and soon moved to Chicago, expanding their family with two sons, Paul and Michael.

There, Gerry completed her bachelor's degree in computer sciences at Roosevelt University, becoming the first in her family to attend college. While in Chicago, she was involved with workshops at the Lincoln Park Art Center and the Art Institute of Chicago, working with acrylic paints and ceramics. Lou's promotion in 1969 prompted the family's move to Waban, MA, where Gerry completed her master's degree in counseling at Boston College. She also pursued her studio art training in the studios of several local artists and at the Boston Museum of Art and the de Cordova Museum. She was prolific in

producing serene paintings of nature, including those of sea and sand, mountains and fields, and lively scenes of people.

Many of her paintings featured the Berkshires, where she visited her daughter and family. She had several exhibits, and her paintings adorn the walls of all her children and many of her grandchildren. Lou and Gerry were married 72 years, and received a special Platinum 70th Wedding Anniversary acknowledgement from Queen Elizabeth in April, 2021.

Gerry was a woman ahead of her time when it came to wellness. She kept her husband and herself healthy and fit, always exercising, doing yoga, meditation, and walking throughout their adult years.

She is survived by her loving husband, Louis; their children, Elaine, Paul, and Michael Hantman; grandchildren, Jennifer, David, and Laura Rosenthal, Rachel, Harry and Tyler Hantman; step-grandchildren, Sarah Psillas, Ben Waters, and Noah Ongart; step great-grandchildren, Oliver, Theodore, Niko, Leila; and many nieces and nephews in England and Israel and relatives around the world. Gerry's family expresses their deep appreciation and gratitude to all her caregivers who loved her and ensured her happiness and comfort over the last many years of her life.

Funeral services and burial were held on Sunday, November 12 at Temple Beth El Cemetery, Chelmsford, MA. Memorial donations may be made to Hebrew Senior Life, hebrewseniorlife.org/giving.



Welcome to the Jewish Berkshires

Everyone is welcome to attend services and events at any of the organizations listed here.

Please call the organizations directly to confirm service times or to inquire about membership.

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450 South St., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 499-9899,
jewishberkshires.com

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Reconstructionist
North St., Great Barrington, MA
(413) 528-4197, ahavathsholom.com

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Reform
53 Lois St., North Adams, MA
(413) 663-5830, cbiberkshires.com

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire

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270 State Rd., Great Barrington, MA
(413) 528-6378, hevreh.org

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(413) 447-7622

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

196 South St., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 442-4360, jewishberkshires.org

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(413) 822-4546, sellit4@aol.com

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16 Colt Rd., Pittsfield, MA
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CULTURE & ARTS

How a Religious Revival Fed the Demise of the Midtown Kosher Deli

By Ted Merwin

(New York Jewish Week / JTA) — It happened toward the end of the last theater season, and it didn't occasion much comment in the media. But the merging of Ben's Kosher Delicatessen on West 38th Street with the glatt kosher Mr. Broadway around the corner marked the end of an era.

Ben's, the last kosher deli in the Theater District that was open on Shabbat, made it possible for generations of Jewish New Yorkers — and a good many Jewish tourists as well — to enjoy a bowl of matzah ball soup and a kosher pastrami or corned beef sandwich before heading to a Saturday matinee.

In recent years, as the Orthodox world has become increasingly stringent, fewer and fewer agencies have offered kosher supervision to an eatery that remains open on the Jewish Sabbath. But all sorts of Jews eat in kosher restaurants for all kinds of reasons: nostalgia, a continuing attachment to Jewish culture, a sense of fealty to the Jewish people, a desire to be among other Jews, or even simply force of habit.

The merger of Ben's and Mr. Broadway may represent a triumph of religiosity, but it also marks the demise of a Midtown kosher culture that was more flexible and more inclusive of the diverse ways people experience their Jewishness.

Kosher delis were, for decades, fixtures of the Garment Center and the Theater District — the twin neighborhoods, both heavily trafficked by Jews, that stand cheek by jowl in Midtown. Hirsch's Kosher Deli on West 35th Street was immortalized in the early 1940s in a photo by Roman Vishniac of a group of clothing company executives in three-piece suits and fedoras reading Yiddish newspapers and chatting — a far cry from the photographer's iconic shots from less than a decade earlier of impoverished Eastern European Jews, most of whom were fated to perish in the Holocaust.

Most of the kosher delis in New York were historically open on Shabbat from the heyday of the kosher deli in the 1930s, when there were a staggering 1,550 such delis in the five boroughs

In the 1960s, kosher delis in the area included the Melody on Seventh Avenue at 37th Street and Golding's on Broadway and 48th Street (before it decamped to the Upper West Side, reopening at Broadway and 86th Street). In the 1970s, the Smokehouse on 47th Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues featured smoked and spiced beef by Zion Kosher, the main rival in New York to Hebrew National.

Celebrated Theater District delis like Lindy's and Reuben's, and later The Stage and The Carnegie, weren't kosher, and they sold the lion's share of corned beef and pastrami sandwiches.



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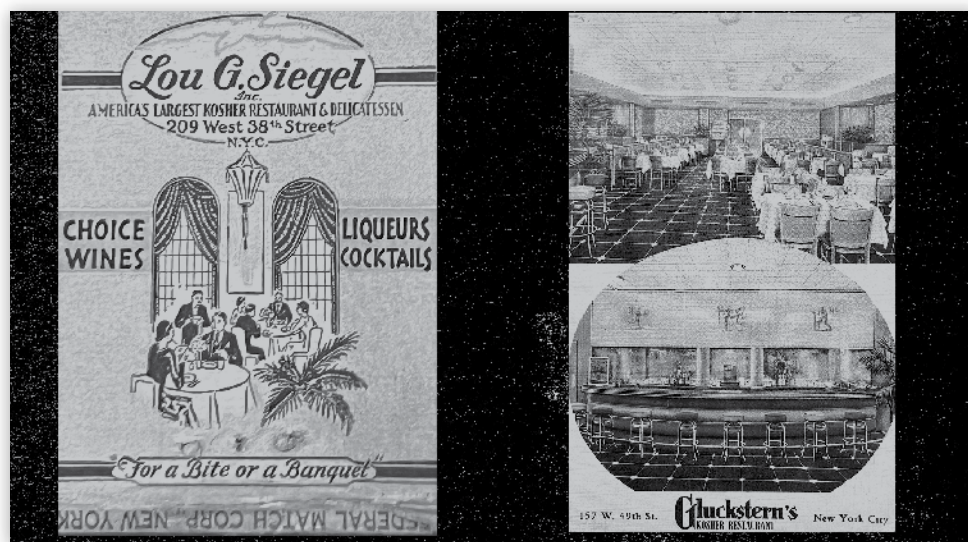
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Lou G. Siegel's billed itself as "America's Foremost Kosher Restaurant," while Gluckstern's claimed, in the late 1940s, to serve a staggering 15,000 customers a week. (Courtesy Ted Merwin)

But there was no dearth of kosher food in the neighborhood. In addition to the kosher delis, there were popular upscale kosher eateries like Gluckstern's — which claimed, in the late 1940s, to serve a staggering 15,000 customers a week — Poliacoff's, Trotsky's, the Paramount and Lou G. Siegel's, which billed itself as "America's Foremost Kosher Restaurant." Lou G. Siegel's occupied the same space that Ben's took over and that Mr. Broadway is in now at 209 West 38th Street. (Mr. Broadway originated as a dairy restaurant in 1922; in 1985, it transitioned to a gourmet glatt kosher restaurant, and over time added sandwiches, sushi, Israeli food and the like.)

In addition to serving steaks and chops, these establishments sold large quantities of deli sandwiches. While these restaurants advertised themselves as "strictly kosher," they were open on Shabbat, although notices in their menus, printed daily, beseeched patrons not to smoke on the premises on Friday nights and on Saturdays until sundown, since that, of course, would be a flagrant violation of Jewish law.

When a 2018 review in the New York Times referred to the 2nd Avenue Deli as kosher, even though it was open on Shabbat, it prompted a complaint from a reader named Fred Bernstein. Bernstein explained to restaurant critic Frank Bruni that "almost no observant Jew would consider it kosher" and cited two authorities on the subject: actor Sacha Baron Cohen and Leah Adler, Steven Spielberg's mother and then owner of a kosher dairy restaurant in Los Angeles.

Bruni responded, quite reasonably, that he has "several friends who adapt and interpret kosher dietary rules in unusual and permissive ways." He added: "For them 'kosher' — and they do use the word itself when explaining their menu choices — isn't an exact and exacting prescription so much as it is an ideal toward which they take small steps."

Indeed Ronnie Dragoon, who owns the restaurants in the Ben's Kosher Deli chain — all of which are open on Shabbat — and is now a part-owner in Mr. Broadway, estimated that only about 20 percent of his clientele, across all his restaurants, keep the Jewish dietary laws.

Most of the kosher delis in New York were historically open on Shabbat, from the heyday of the kosher deli in the 1930s, when there were a staggering 1,550 such delis in the five boroughs, to today, when less than one percent of that number remains. Deli owners needed their establishments to be open on the weekends to make a profit — in Manhattan, they did the bulk of their business on Friday and Saturday nights, as opposed to kosher delis in the outer boroughs, which were typically busiest on Sunday nights for both eat-in and takeout.

Some kosher delis, especially in the outer boroughs, did close for the entirety of the Sabbath. As Alfred Kazin writes in his lyrical memoir, "A Walker in the City," "At Saturday twilight, as soon as the delicatessen store reopened after the Sabbath rest, we raced into it panting for the hot dogs sizzling on the gas plate just inside the window. The look of that blackened empty gas plate had driven us wild all through the wearisome Sabbath day. And now, as the electric sign blazed up again, lighting up the words JEWISH NATIONAL DELICATESSEN, it was as if we had entered into our rightful heritage."

In Manhattan, many owners of kosher delis got around the strict rules of kashrut by "selling" their restaurants to non-Jews, usually employees, before sundown on Friday and buying them back on Saturday night, so they technically didn't own them and so weren't doing business during the Sabbath. (This echoes the practice that many Jews engage in by selling forbidden food items to a non-Jew before Passover.) Many justified staying open on Shabbat because it enabled Jews to remain faithful to Jewish tradition in their food consumption, without regard to other ways in which they were transgressing Jewish law.

Kosher delis nowadays adopt different strategies to deal with this issue. Some, like the 2nd Avenue Deli, do still sell their businesses to a non-Jew. Yuval Dekel, the owner of Liebman's, the last kosher deli in the Bronx (which is about to debut



The faux Art Deco interior of the former Ben's Kosher Deli in Manhattan. (Courtesy Ben's; JTA illustration by Grace Yagel)

CULTURE & ARTS

MAYA BEISER,
continued from cover

himself. In 1936, he finally recorded Suites Nos. 2 and 3 – he was 60 years old. Over the next three years, he recorded the remaining suites, introducing to the world compositions that are among the supreme expressions of Bach's musical imagination. In the decades since, Bach's suites became part of the core cello repertoire, a demanding solo undertaking that seemingly every great cellist has to record to validate their status within the pantheon of great performers. But for nearly half-a-century the sublime music was, by-and-large, Pablo Casals's and Pablo Casals's alone.

Casals's recordings of the suites are Maya Beiser's favorite of the multitude of great interpretation's she has enjoyed. Beiser is an Israeli-American cellist best known for her work in new and avant garde music, a founding member of the Bang on a Can All Stars whose solo albums include acclaimed interpretations of the music of Philip Glass and a reimagining of David Bowie's final album, *Blackstar*. In May 2023, Beiser released her 14th solo album, *Infinite Bach*, which she recorded in the studio she and her sound engineer, Dave Cook, created in her barn right here in the Berkshires.

She says that while her career has focused on new musical expressions and multidisciplinary explorations, Bach's cello suites have been a part of her meditative practice and warm-up routine throughout her life. Tackling the six cello suites as a recording artist has been something, she explains, she put off over the years, until the serendipitous convergence of moving close to nature, having time off from her busy touring schedule during the pandemic, and, yes, turning 60 years old.

Infinite Bach is a unique recording of Bach's work – Beiser and Dave Cook set up a studio space in which multiple stereo microphones were situated in the barn to capture the sound of Beiser's cello from different points in the room. The varying sound profiles of her performance captured by these mics were then multitracked into a finished recording.

Infinite Bach is a rich, nearly 3-hour-long musical journey that Beiser undertook during a time of discord, anxiety, and social fraying: the pandemic year. It might also be a journey that listeners might want to take during the current time of pain, brutality, and anxiety, in order to find solace in the beauty and truth of Bach's music and Beiser's masterful interpretation of it.

In November, Beiser spoke to the BJV about *Infinite Bach* and what it was like growing up as a musical prodigy in Israel. Our conversation was edited for length and clarity.

The BJV Interview: Maya Beiser

How did Israel nurture you as a talented young musician during the time [the 1970s] when you grew up?

I grew up in a small Argentinian kibbutz in the Lower Galilee in Israel, a beautiful spot. It's very liberal and artsy community. My father was from Argentina, and my mom was French. But, as most Jews, they were both originally from Eastern Europe. My father was one of what they called the Jewish Gauchos. His family immigrated from Russia at the turn of the century after the pogrom, and there was a Jewish guy by the name of Baron de Hirsch who bought land in the middle of the pampas and planted these poor intellectual Jews there. My father was a devout Zionist and socialist, and so he moved to Israel.

And my mom's family was actually all from Poland, but her parents ended up in France, being partisans and part of the resistance, and she was put in a monastery. She was two years old when the Nazis occupied France and her entire family in Poland was killed. So, there was all that baggage behind us. But the kibbutz was this beautiful community and everybody started to play an instrument when we were six years old, in the first grade. It was just kind of part of the education. I was already very much exposed to music because my father, even though he wasn't a professional musician, was a great lover of music. From the day I was born, he would play music and he had a secret agenda – he wanted me to play the cello because he loved the cello. I was his eldest daughter; we were four girls. He had perfect pitch, and we all got his musical inclinations. They did a test when we were six, and they realized that I had perfect pitch. So, the people in the kibbutz suggested that I play the violin, but I said, no, I really want to play the cello, because nobody else played the cello at that point.

It took a little bit of convincing, but eventually they found some pretty crappy instruments for me. My father convinced the family in Argentina to send a cello. Within a year, it became my refuge. I took to music and to the cello in a very powerful way from day one. I didn't think I wanted to live in the kibbutz, even though there were a lot of really great things about it. Pretty much from day one, I was very much an individual and a rebel and wanted to express my own point of view. So, the cello was just a way for me to express my individuality and to have something that was mine. Because growing up in this environment in the kibbutz in the 70s, you didn't own anything. I didn't even have a doll that was mine. For me [the cello] was just this way of just expressing my being in that moment. Even as a child, they never had to tell me, go practice.

I was lucky enough to have some amazing teachers early on. And Israel at that time was an incredible place in the sense that Isaac Stern would come to Israel. He 'discovered' me, quote unquote, when I was twelve. He was single-handedly responsible for my early career. He had this wonderful gathering of young Israeli teenage musicians at the music center in Jerusalem in Mishkenot Sha'ananim. It became this amazing supportive community that I was exposed to at the age of twelve. I started to perform and I guess the rest is history.

Did you go to conservatory in Tel Aviv?

When I was 17, Stern wanted to bring me to the United States and my mother said no and the kibbutz refused to let me go to study. I was very much bound by what they decided was okay and not okay. I was allowed to go and study in Tel Aviv at the Rubin Academy of Music. I would go once a week to Tel Aviv on the bus and do the trek of two-and-a-half hours. When I was 17, I found out that there was an opening at the Israeli Army String Quartet that Isaac Stern had founded. He convinced the Israeli president that it was important to create some sort of forum for Israelis who had to go to the army so that they don't have to stop playing, because that age is a very crucial age for your career.

It was a really amazing opportunity for the top musicians, and it was a very hard. You had to audition, and the best people would get in. The issue was that there were no women at that point in the quartet. It was only for men. But I found out that the cellist was leaving and I started this whole campaign asking them to allow me to audition, even though I was a woman. It took some convincing. I wrote some letters. I was a girl with a lot of chutzpah. I wrote to the newspapers,

and I said, at that point, mind you, women in the army weren't doing much more than being secretaries or making coffee for the generals. I managed to get invited to the audition and I got the job. I ended up leaving the kibbutz in the 11th grade. I was with the Israeli Army String Quartet, going around the country, playing for soldiers and whenever dignitaries would come to the president's house, that kind of stuff. Then after graduating, on the invitation of Stern, I came here. I met my teacher at Yale University and ended up moving to the States.

So, about the Berkshires, I know it was the pandemic that brought you here, but where were you at personally and professionally? I imagine you were touring a lot, traveling a lot. You were living an urban life. How did you connect with the country?

As a student at Yale University, I was a Tanglewood Fellow for two summers, and absolutely loved it here. I was there in the very last year that Leonard Bernstein was there, so I got to meet him, which was a pretty amazing thing in and of itself. I met so many of my musician colleagues here at Tanglewood. But my artistic journey took me towards the avant garde, even at the time when I was here. I started to do a lot of other kinds of things and produce and create my own work and do a lot of multidisciplinary work. I really didn't come here to Tanglewood after those two years and hadn't been to the Berkshires since that time, which was in the late 1980s.

When the pandemic started, I was in the midst of this big international tour with a production for piece that I created with two amazing artists, Wendy Whalen, the famed ballerina from New York City Ballet, and Lucinda Childs, who's a phenomenal choreographer. We actually premiered the piece here at Jacob's Pillow in the summer of 2019. While we were in Paris in February 2020, things already started to look pretty grim. Everything, of course, came to a halt in

MAYA BEISER,
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Maya Beiser

CREDIT BOYANG HU

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH MUSIC

The Art of the String Quartet—
The Avalon

Mendelssohn | Puccini | Garrop

Sunday, February 11 | 4:00pm

Julia Bentley

Stacy Garrop

Avalon String Quartet

St. James Place | Great Barrington, MA

Tickets: \$52
cewm.org

CULTURE & ARTS

TRAVELING WITH JEWISH TASTE

Feed a Crowd Around
The Giving Table

By Carol Goodman Kaufman / Special to the BJV



A couple of months ago, I got an email from our intrepid editor, Albert Stern. He asked if I would be interested in reviewing a new cookbook. As an enthusiastic cook and, more so, a voracious eater, of course I agreed. I completely put it out of my mind until, just days before leaving the country, the book arrived in the mail (more on our trip to Spain and Portugal in the next issue). We returned home just in time to celebrate Thanksgiving and, fortuitously, the holiday weekend turned out to be the perfect time to try out recipes on a (mostly) willing crowd.

Naomi Ross has produced a beautifully illustrated and designed collection in *The Giving Table*. Dedicated primarily to entertaining, cooking for a large crowd, and what she calls "culinary chesed," Ross has developed unique twists on some classic dishes, as well as some new and creative ones.

My original intent was to try one dish from every section of the book, but alas, the press deadline loomed. I did manage to sample six chapters. And I was not disappointed.

First up was Tropical Quinoa Mango Salad. Served warm, the bland canvas that is quinoa was sweetened by the mango, given some punch by lime juice, jalapeno pepper, and scallions, crunch by Persian cucumbers, and some depth with cumin.

Next on the agenda was Roasted Kabocha Squash Soup. This recipe made enough for twelve servings, reflecting the book's goal of feeding a crowd. On first taste, the soup was okay, nothing to write home about. But we all agreed that on subsequent days, the flavors melded, and it improved at every tasting.

When Sunday came around, it was time to check out the cookbook's brunch section. I gritted my teeth and made Ross's frittata. Let me be blunt: I have never liked frittatas. I find them dry and tasteless. Same for omelets. But this frittata was different. It was a work of art. Layers of vegetables not only allowed the eggs to stay soft, but they added a variety of colors, textures, and flavors. Sautéed onion, sweet potato, peas, spinach, balsamic roasted grape tomatoes, and goat cheese all combined to make a delicious dish. And it tasted even better the next couple of days (I obviously made too much even for our big group).

One of her instructions was a puzzling, but an experienced cook can simply work around them. For example, in this recipe, Ross tells the cook to pour in the beaten eggs, followed by the chopped spinach. She then says to poke the spinach under the eggs. If layers are wanted, why not just add the spinach and pour the eggs over it? The resulting layers worked out beautifully.

The family departed after leaving a pile of sheets, towels, and the occasional Lego, so it was time to get back to cooking for two. For a dish that can serve as either an entree or a hefty side, I chose Pomegranate Glazed Eggplant. True to its description, it was a simple dish to prepare, and it provided many different flavors

The Giving Table is dedicated primarily to entertaining, cooking for a large crowd, and what Naomi Ross calls "culinary chesed"

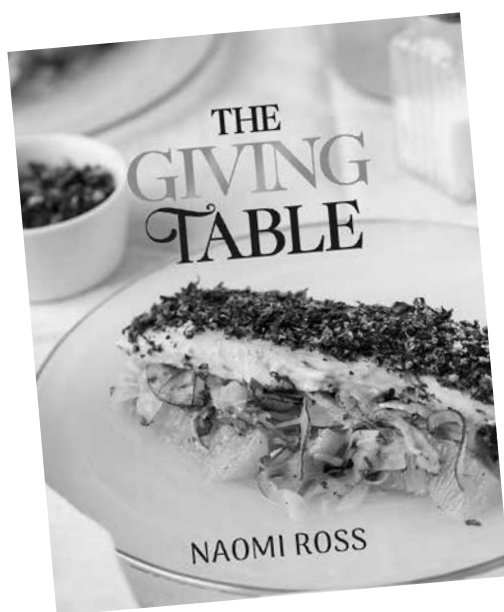
and textures. Then, in atonement for all the holiday desserts, it was time for fish. I chose Pan-Seared Tilapia with Chili Lime Butter for an easy mid-week dinner. Not only was it a snap to prepare, but delicious to boot. Like quinoa, tilapia is a fairly bland fish, dependent on seasoning. The chili lime butter, augmented by shallot and salt, was enough to give it a kick without overwhelming the palate. And of course, that tiny pat of butter made everything better.

Served over rice (or couscous) and topped with a drizzle of tehina, chopped peanuts, and parsley, it made for a satisfying meal. Or two.

Since we don't really eat red meat, I skipped over a few sections to get to the dessert chapter. (So much for the sugar detox.) I chose Bourbon Almond Dippers, mainly because I happened to have maple syrup, pecans, and bourbon in the house, which meant I didn't have to brave the cold and wind to get to the store. This recipe makes for a very sticky dough that was a bit hard to handle. And because it was so loose, it didn't produce an even log. Although the dough contains cinnamon, the cookies were a bit bland by themselves, so needed a glaze — but not the one provided in the recipe. The bourbon in it almost knocked our socks off while it overwhelmed the maple syrup in the mix.

In addition to her recipes, Ross provides useful background information, some biblical, about the dishes. She also rates each one as to its difficulty, ranging from "easy-peasy" to "worth the wait."

All in all, this cookbook provided some great dishes big enough to serve a sizeable gathering of family or friends.



Layered Vegetable Frittata

Serves 6

From *The Giving Table*, reprinted with permission of the author. "A frittata is a one-pan Italian egg dish (similar to an omelet) that incorporates lots of vegetables into the mixture. Sauté vegetables, add beaten eggs on top to cover, and then transfer to the oven to finish cooking and to brown cheese on top. "Frittata Frittata" is how my father-in-law's extra-chunky layered version has affectionately come to be known in our family. This version has a few extra simple steps that set it apart: pre-roasting some of the tomatoes separately intensifies their sweetness, and par-cooking the hard sweet potato beforehand ensures it will be tender and ready in time."

Prep Time: 20–25 minutes

Cook Time: 35–40 minutes

Difficulty: Worth the wait

Gluten-Free/Pesach friendly

Do Ahead: Can be made a day ahead. Refresh in a 350°F oven uncovered until warmed through.

INGREDIENTS:

12 eggs	1 medium sweet potato, par-cooked (pierced and microwaved for 5 minutes), peeled, and sliced into ¼-inch thick rounds
1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided	
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, divided	
10–12 grape tomatoes	1 cup (6 ounces) frozen peas
¼ cup balsamic vinegar	1 packed cup chopped fresh baby spinach or kale leaves
2 teaspoons sugar	1 (4-ounce) log goat cheese, crumbled
2–3 Tablespoons olive oil	
1 large onion, thinly sliced	

DIRECTIONS:

Prep eggs: Preheat oven to 400°F. In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs together with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper; set aside.

Pre-roast tomatoes: Toss tomatoes with balsamic vinegar and sugar, and place in a small baking dish. Place in oven and roast until tomatoes are almost ready to burst and liquid has reduced to syrup, about 12–15 minutes; set aside.

Sauté: Meanwhile, heat oil in a large oven-safe skillet (12-inch) over medium-high heat (this pan will be used to cook the whole dish). Add onions and season with remaining ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Sauté onions until translucent and soft, about 5–6 minutes.

Layer: Reduce heat to medium. Layer slices of sweet potato over onions. Add beaten eggs. Add peas, sprinkling evenly; then add chopped spinach. Using a spatula, gently bury the spinach leaves evenly beneath the eggs. Scatter roasted tomatoes over the top and drizzle with the reduced balsamic liquid. Sprinkle crumbled goat cheese evenly over the top.

Bake: Remove from heat and transfer pan to the oven on the middle rack. Bake for 20 minutes or until all liquid is set and cheese is slightly browned on top. Remove from oven. Cut frittata into wedges and serve..

Carol Goodman Kaufman has just published the second picture book in what is planned as a series about nature for young children. Written under the name Carolinda Goodman, *Pirate Ships and Shooting Stars* is written in rhyme, and its lively stanzas encourage young children to use their imaginations when looking up at the sky. From rainbows to constellations to pictures in the clouds, Kaufman believes there is much to see if only they lift their eyes.

In addition to her work for children, Kaufman also writes under her "real" name about food history (including for the *Berkshire Jewish Voice*), and her first novel, a murder mystery, will drop soon.

CULTURE & ARTS

DELI,

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a second store in Westchester) told me that he just ensures that all his ingredients are kosher and leaves it at that.

Some kosher delis, especially outside the New York area, like Abe's Kosher Deli in Scranton, Pennsylvania, are owned by non-Jews. While relatively unusual, there is nothing new about this: The Kosher Irishman, a deli in East Orange, New Jersey, was open for more than a half a century.

Staying open on Shabbat in the city, however one did it, could be a problem if a neighborhood became heavily populated by Hasidic Jews. My mother worked in the 1950s in her uncle's kosher deli in Williamsburg, Brooklyn until the restaurant was forced to close because of opposition from the growing haredi population in the neighborhood, who insisted that keeping an otherwise kosher restaurant open on Shabbat was a *chillul HaShem* (desecration of God's name).

In today's world, in which most Orthodox Jews will eat only in glatt kosher delis like Mr. Broadway, Jewish food doesn't play the kind of unifying role it once did, according to Jeffrey Gurock, a professor at Yeshiva University and a historian of Modern Orthodoxy. In the past, Gurock has explained, seeing a neon Hebrew National sign in the window made even Modern Orthodox Jews comfortable eating in a deli, whether it was open on Shabbat or not.

Early one Wednesday afternoon in July, I stopped at Mr. Broadway for a bite. I had a ticket to "Funny Girl," so I didn't have too much time to eat. I sat and chatted with Dragoon while I chowed down on a brisket sandwich and a potato knish. Two kippah-wearing businessmen were sitting at a nearby table and we took bets on what they would order, since it was during the Nine Days before Tisha B'Av and observant Jews refrain from eating meat during that time of year.

I glanced at a huge, framed oil painting that was sitting on the floor, leaning up against one of the walls that, when it was still Ben's, was decorated with the famous deli joke about an immigrant Chinese waiter who speaks Yiddish (and thinks he's speaking English). In its place, the oil painting showed a tall Orthodox rabbi standing on a plush red carpet before the ark in a synagogue; he was clad in sumptuous blue and white robes and sported a long, flowing white beard. The painting seemed like the perfect symbol of what had happened to the deli as it had acquired a depth of religiosity that neither Lou G. Siegel's nor Ben's had ever aspired to.

Ronnie saw me looking at it. "Do you want it?" he asked.

"No," I said. "No, I really don't."

Ted Merwin is the author of the National Jewish Book Award-winning *Pastrami on Rye: An Overstuffed History of the Jewish Deli*. He is the senior writer for *Jewish Federations of North America*, and has presented for this Federation about the history of delicatessens. He blogs at delihistory.com.

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March of 2020. And so, I found myself at home.

I have a home in Riverdale, in New York City, where I built my studio overlooking the Hudson River. I've been there since 2000. My husband and I raised our two kids there, and to tell you the truth, I never really thought that I would want to be anywhere else. When I was not on the road, I really wanted to be there with my family. My husband is a doctor, a psychiatrist. We never really thought about anything else but New York. But all of a sudden, being in Riverdale during that time and not traveling for the first time in 20 years, I started thinking, well, maybe I do want to be in another place. We were looking in Hudson, and then this place in Lenox just came on the market right around the corner from Tanglewood.

The moment I stepped into this property, I just knew that it had to be. It has two different buildings, and one of the buildings is a converted barn that has the most incredible acoustics. I brought my cello in, and I started to play. It's surrounded by glass all over, so you're kind of in the woods. I felt like I could breathe. It was just this incredible thing. Infinite Bach. This was literally a Berkshire experience for me because I was here, I was in this space, and I thought I needed to record the Bach cello suites here. I immediately started to think about how I wanted to do it.

Had the suites been on your radar before you moved here? For an accomplished cellist like yourself, I don't know if it's something you do early in your career or as a mid-career kind of statement or a mature artist kind of statement. I know that Pablo Casals was 60 before he made his first recording.

Well, first of all, I always admired the fact that Casals took a lot of time before he felt that he could make a statement about a masterpiece. My point of view was somewhat different in the sense that the suites were part of my daily meditation practice. Early on, in my mid-20s, when I started my career as a grown-up artist, I decided to explore a different way of being a classical artist. I wanted to explore the connections between music and other kinds of arts. I wanted to explore a different way of getting to my audience, relating to the listener, creating a different environment. I took myself out of the traditional concert experience. Also, all my recordings were very much of new music. I felt that my interest was about creating, being a creative performer, and creating something new.

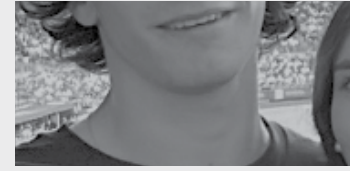
There are so many fantastic cellists out there who all want to record the Bach cello suites. It is the core repertoire to every classical cellist. All my life, I thought if and when I record this work, there needs to be something that takes people on a different kind of journey with this music. And so, yes, it was on my backburner. And it's funny because when I was 40, I said, okay, when I'm 50, I'll do it. And then when I was 50, I was like, oh, maybe I missed it. And then I turned 60 in that year that I came here to the Berkshires. So, as you're saying, because Casals recorded it when he was sixty, there was that on my mind. The way I operate as an artist is that I respond to something visceral and often to something that is in the environment that takes me into a space that allows me to kind of create something that is meaningful. I always hope that whatever is meaningful to me could be meaningful to other people, as well. I had this feeling that I wanted to create the piece, the suites, here in that barn. The whole idea of it was to take it out of the sterile environment of the studio. All the recordings that everyone is familiar with have been recorded in beautiful studios in a very pristine kind of way. And I wanted to do something that was not pristine. I wanted to do something that would really bring the environment into it.

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"ABOUT YOU AND YOUR GIRLFRIEND..."

A Father/Son Story from the Teenage Years

By Albert Stern



The Scene: My 17-year-old son Eliot (who this summer started seeing his first serious girlfriend) and I are in the car, not long after being told by my bitter half that he won't talk to her about the things that happen and that doing so was incumbent upon me. Although I've published stories about sex that run the gamut from "naughty" to "gleeful filth," having a conversation of this sort with my own son fills me with a great deal of anxiety.

ME: I really liked your girlfriend and I'm glad I had the chance to meet her and get to know her a little.

[SILENCE]

ME: She's bright, she's confident, and she knows how to handle herself in a conversation. I was very impressed.

[SILENCE]

ME: And I can see why she likes you.

[SILENCE]

ME: Did, um, she say anything about meeting...me?

[SILENCE]

ME: Eliot?

[SILENCE]

ME: ELIOT!!!

Eliot: She said she liked you! Okay? She said she liked you.

ME: Good. Was that so hard? You should tell a person something like that. That's the kind of thing a person likes to hear, that makes a person happy.

[PROLONGED SILENCE]

ME: Um, Eliot...I want you to know that I'm a little uncomfortable talking about this, and understand I don't mean to pry or embarrass you...but I have to ask: Do you have protection do you know how to use protection are you using protection?

ELIOT: DAD! I'm not STUPID!

ME: Eliot...Eliot. Things happen and stupidity has nothing to do with what happens. A person's level of intelligence isn't a key factor. What can happen is more a consequence of...urgency and opportunity.

[SILENCE]

ME: I mean, did you know that Albert Einstein, when he was a teenager, knocked up his girlfriend?

ELIOT: He did?

ME: No. I don't know. I just made that up. Because there's a larger point I'm trying to convey.

ELIOT: Dad, I don't want to talk to you about this anymore.

[SILENCE]

ME: Fair enough.

THE END



CULTURE & ARTS

MAYA BEISER,

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I made the decision to spend a year here because I also wanted to go through the entire cycle of the seasons, and record things in different times of the year. So, my sound engineer Dave Cook and I outlined different times during the year where we could both be here to experiment. It was an open experiment, and it was such an incredible experience for me to try to find the sound of the reverberation of the room and how that kind of alters what Bach wrote. I didn't change the notes at all. It was still the Bach cello suites, but it was just surrounded by this soundscape of all the stuff that came into the room as we were recording it.

Through this process, did you discover something new in these pieces you've been playing all your life, or is the process, the technology, the sound, the approach, enabling you to convey something different about Bach? And if so, what do you want a listener's ears to be open to when they start listening to Infinite Bach?

First of all, I wanted to come into it from a very personal point of view. I think that the most personal is the most universal. The thing about Bach's music is that it can be experienced in so many different ways. The thing that I thought about a lot was, 'Do we all hear music in the same way, the way that I hear that music?' Is it the same way that you would hear the music? Even if we sit in the same room and listen to it, we don't really know if your brain processes things differently than my brain. What I do know is that we each bring our own life experience, from the most beautiful experience to the most traumatic experience to everything in between, to who we are and to how we process things.

I wanted to come to a point of view where I disengaged from the dogma to unlearn all the things that I was taught about this music. And there is a lot of dogma in classical music – 'this is how you have to do it,' or 'this is how Bach thought about it.' There are infinite possibilities of how to play this music. There are infinite possibilities of how to hear this music. It's not about, oh, look how brilliant, mathematically, Bach created this phrase. I'm not trying to teach the genius of Bach in any way, but rather to allow it to exist according to how I hear it. And then I hope it becomes a very personal experience for anyone who comes into this.

It's interesting. In preparing for the interview, I listened to more than ten different versions of the Suite No. 3, and just to see how different people did it. One of the notes I had about yours is just less mathematical, more romantic and expressive. You slowed some of the sections down.

I felt like I wanted to slow everything down and I've taken some criticism for that, but that's okay. The criticism is part of the dialogue. I wanted to convey that there is no one way of playing this, and there's no one way of listening to this or of experiencing it. So that's the idea of the infinite part of it – you need to unleash this music and let it be.

I disengaged from the dogma to unlearn all the things that I was taught about this music...There are infinite possibilities of how to play this music. There are infinite possibilities of how to hear this music.

We recorded many different versions of the same thing, but then I decided that what I wanted to do is record it and then analyze the reverberation of the room and analyze just the different harmonic structures that came out of the recordings. Natural. Everything was a natural thing in that space, and then we started to find all these points we could accentuate.

I kept thinking that I was doing some female or a feminine version of Bach. I was thinking about the fact that all the recordings that I know, all the recordings that I was taught, and all the teachers that I had were always men, and they had a particular point of view. It wasn't that there was no gentleness, because I think men have a wonderful gentle side to them, as well. But there was something a little macho sometimes about the way that I was taught to play Bach. Just to imagine this idea of the experience through a lens of a woman as opposed to a man.

I was also thinking about the idea of recording in this environment where you're not in a professional studio. I often think about how we're kind of erecting all these perfect environments for classical music and creating these perfect acoustic spaces and bringing people together to fit in a hole. And for me, I want to take the music much more into our personal space.

We recorded in multi tracks. I played one solo part, but we had eight different sets of stereo mics around the space. Some were way up far, somewhere behind me, somewhere below, and, of course, some close to me. Every time that I would play a note, it was captured by 16 tracks of the same note, but each one had a different sound. Not only that, because the distance [of each

microphone] was different, it created natural delays. Some of the very far mics would accentuate the overtones in the room.

I remember the quote by Glenn Gould: "First and last, Bach was an architect, a constructor of sound. And what makes him so inestimably valuable to us was that he was beyond a doubt the greatest architect of sound that ever lived." If Infinite Bach could be a building, what building would it be.

Maybe the Parthenon. I don't know if I think about it so much as a building, as much as I think about it as a universe, because I really think about it more in the sense of nature and how it exists in nature and how we tap into this infinite power that is out there. But of course, architecture is very much related to nature. The first thing that came to mind is the Parthenon because I think of something that was somehow erected to convey the power of the Greek goddesses. I love the Greek goddesses because they were related to the idea of nature and the power of nature.

Maya Beiser's Infinite Bach is available on all streaming services.

JEWISH LITERARY VOICES



A Federation series in collaboration with the Jewish Book Council

Thursday, January 11, at 7:00 p.m. (virtual)

Most Fortunate Unfortunates: The Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans with author and attorney Marlene Trestman.

Thursday, February 8 at 7:00 p.m. (virtual)

Teachers: The Ones I Can't Forget with TV news correspondent, bureau chief, journalist and author Martin Fletcher.

Thursday, February 29 at 7:00 p.m. (virtual)

Luminous: An Artist's Story as a Guide to Radical Creativity with artist and author Linda Frimer.

Thursday, March 21 at 7:00 p.m. (virtual)

Betty Friedan: Magnificent Disrupter with author, scholar and dramaturg Rachel Shteir.

Thursday, April 11, at 7:00 p.m. (virtual)

Rain of Ash: Roma, Jews, and the Holocaust with Vanderbilt University Associate Professor Ari Joskowicz.

Thursday, May 9 at 7:00 p.m. (virtual)

Under Jerusalem: The Buried History of the World's Most Contested City with author and journalist Andrew Lawler.

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CONFRONTING ANTI-SEMITISM

EDUCATE YOURSELF & OTHERS

Explore and share the resources with your family, friends, and colleagues.

- **Shine a Light on Antisemitism:** shinealighton.com
- **The Foundation to Combat Antisemitism:** fcas.org
- **Anti-Defamation League (ADL):** adl.org/what-we-do/fight-antisemitism
- **Combat Antisemitism Movement:** combatantisemitism.org

CALL IT OUT

Call it out when you witness in person, at work, on social media, or at school

- **How to Address Antisemitic Rhetoric:** npr.org/2022/12/01/1139929829/how-to-address-antisemitic-rhetoric-when-you-encounter-it

ADVOCATE

Shape the work of your legislators. Express your opinions with elected officials.

- **ADL Action Center:** adl.org/take-action/advocate-with-adl
- **Contact your state legislators:** malegislature.gov/search/findmylegislator
- **Contact your federal legislators:** ec.state.ma.us/cis/cisdist/distidx.htm
- **MA Religious Action Center:** rac.org/issues/antisemitism-and-hate-crimes

REPORT IT

Report all incidents of antisemitism to the ADL and notify the Federation. If you suspect the incident might include a crime, also report it to your local police.

- **ADL:** adl.org/report-incident
- **US Department of Justice:** justice.gov/hatecrimes
- **What is Hate Crime:** justice.gov/hatecrimes/learn-about-hate-crimes

VISIT JEWISHBERKSHIRES.ORG FOR MORE RESOURCES



THE STRENGTH OF A PEOPLE
THE POWER OF COMMUNITY.