

Berkshire JEWISH VOICE

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

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Pittsfield, MA
Permit No. 19

Volume 32, No. 6

Tamuz / Av / Elul 5784

July 27 to September 20, 2024

jewishberkshires.org

Notes From The Brink

First Amendment attorney and columnist Jeff Robbins speaks about domestic and international affairs at Knosh & Knowledge

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Friday, September 20 at 10:45 a.m., Knosh & Knowledge hosts columnist and attorney Jeff Robbins, who will speak about his recently-published anthology, *Notes From The Brink: A Collection of Columns on Policy at Home and Abroad*.

Robbins will focus his remarks on the state of American politics and journalism, the profound threats faced by Israel, and the scourge of antisemitism on the far Right and the far Left.

This free Federation program will take place at Hevreh of Southern Berkshires, 270 State Road in Great Barrington.

Jeff Robbins is a nationally recognized First Amendment attorney, former U.S. Delegate to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, and a nationally syndicated columnist. It is a collection of columns written from 2019 through mid-2024, focusing on an America not merely fractured but altogether splintered by extremism, hyper-partisanship, unprecedented vitriol, and widespread disdain for democracy, plus a Mideast taken hostage by genocidal terrorist enterprises funded by Iran, the world's foremost state sponsor of terror.



A Question for Jeff Robbins

One thing I liked most about reading Notes From The Brink is the absence of hindsight – the columns appear as they were originally published and in the same order, which allowed me as a reader to follow your journey responding to current events and compare it to my own. In the five-year period the book covers, can you explain what, as an observer and commentator, you feel you were (overarchingly or specifically) most correct about and what did you get most wrong?

I do feel sure about the threat to democracy, and to whatever can be said to be left of traditional American values, posed by Donald Trump and the movement (of sorts) that he represents. I don't think enough can be said about that threat, which is why so many of the columns in the book return to that theme again and again. And I likewise have no qualms about the writing about the

NOTES FROM THE BRINK,
continued on page 5

Making Jewish Theater in the 21st Century



Jewish Plays Project artistic director David Winitsky in conversation with local, national, and international Jewish theater-makers at Knosh & Knowledge

PITTSFIELD – On Friday, August 16 at 10:45 a.m., Knosh & Knowledge hosts a panel discussion led by David Winitsky, founder and artistic director of the Jewish Plays Project, which will be presenting a weekend of new Jewish plays and voices at the Colonial Theatre on August 16-18. This conversation with local, national, and international Jewish theater-makers is on the theme of "Making Jewish Theater in the 21st Century."

The Jewish Plays Project identifies, develops, and presents new works of theater through one-of-a-kind explorations of contemporary Jewish identity between audiences, artists, and patrons. Explore the state of contemporary Jewish drama and the unique challenges and needs of new, culturally-specific creative works.

Hear how today's artists are celebrating Jewish traditions, breaking new ground, and forging partnerships across communities to provide audiences with the possibility of hope and healing through a Jewish lens.

Also appearing on the panel will be **Annette Miller**, who last summer starred in the Shakespeare & Company revival of *Golda's Balcony* (which enjoyed a successful transfer to Boston). She has performed on Broadway, Off-Broadway, in regional

JEWISH THEATER,
continued on page 6

Inside

How Will We Respond?	2
Stop the Presses!!!	3
Focus on the Good	4
Your Federation Presents	6-14
Thank You, Major Donors!	16-17
Local News	20-25
Jewish Education in the Berkshires ...	22-23
Culture & Arts	26-31

Summer Concert 2024

Honor Executive Director Dara Kaufman and support the LiveSecure Initiative



LIVE IN CONCERT

NOAH ARONSON
& HIS POWERHOUSE BAND

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4
7:30 p.m. at Lenox Memorial High School



Jewish Federation
OF THE BERKSHIRES

Come celebrate our strength and resilience with an evening of *ruach* and community spirit! The community will honor Dara Kaufman for her 10 years of dedicated service and proceeds will help launch the Jewish Berkshires LiveSecure Initiative. The Duffin Theater at Lenox Memorial High School is located at 197 East Street in Lenox. Get tickets at jewishberkshires.org or by calling Federation at (413) 442-4360, ext. 10.



Jewish Federation
OF THE BERKSHIRES

\$25,000
TZEDAKAH
CHALLENGE!

DONATE TODAY AND DOUBLE THE GOOD YOU DO!

From now through October 31st, a generous donor will match every dollar donated up to a maximum of \$25,000!

Donate today to double your impact and double the GOOD we can do in the New Year!

DONATE TODAY AT
JEWISHBERKSHIRES.ORG



OP-ED

How Will We Respond?

In this new environment of heightened threats, our answer must be clear and resolute

By Michael Masters / CEO, Secure Community Network



Michael Masters

The Jewish community in America faces an alarming reality: a surge in hate and violence that threatens our safety, security, and sense of belonging. Over the past several years, we have seen a steady increase in hate crimes, vandalism, and harassment targeting Jewish communities and institutions across the country and around the world. From deadly synagogue shootings to a rise in online hate speech, these incidents have eroded the sense of security many American Jews once took for granted.

The horrific Hamas attacks on Israel on 07 October 2023 marked a devastating escalation in this trend. This event didn't create antisemitism, but it emboldened those who harbor it, unleashing a flood of hatred, including here in the United States. In the months since, we've seen an unprecedented spike in threats, incidents, and suspicious activity, pushing years of rising incidents toward a rolling boil of hate unlike anything we have seen since World War II.

In this new environment of heightened threats, we must ask ourselves: How will we respond as a community?

Our answer must be clear and resolute. We will not retreat into fear or silence. Instead, we will stand strong, united in our commitment to protect our community and preserve our way of life. For many Jewish communities, years of threats and incidents have pushed them to reimagine what security must mean. For others, 07 October was a wake-up call that demanded a refreshed approach to Jewish security.

This isn't just about better locks or more security guards. True security demands a holistic strategy. We need robust intelligence gathering and information-sharing with law enforcement, community-wide emergency preparedness, and a culture that prioritizes safety without sacrificing our values of openness, welcoming, and pride. Just as Israel's Iron Dome shields its citizens, we must build a proactive, protective shield around Jewish life in America, which is precisely what the Secure Community Network is doing across the country, and now in full-time partnership with Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and its Jewish Berkshires LiveSecure Initiative.

The threats we face are real and complex. In the months following 07 October,

we've seen a staggering increase in reported threats, incidents, and suspicious activity – from intimidation and vandalism to direct threats of violence. Our security professionals are working tirelessly, but they need the community's support and engagement, because when reporting increases, so too can our referrals of suspicious individuals to law enforcement.

Some may worry that enhanced security measures will isolate us or change who we are. But the events of 07 October and their aftermath have shown the dangers of complacency. We cannot afford to wait for tragedy to strike before taking action. We may not be able to predict or control when or where the next attack will occur, but what we can control is our vigilance to prevent it and our preparation to respond to it.

This isn't just about better locks or more security guards. True security demands a holistic strategy.

Building this security framework will require resources, commitment, and cooperation. It will mean partnering with law enforcement, security experts, and other faith communities. Most importantly, it will require each of us to be engaged, prepared, and empowered.

In taking action, we are choosing not to let fear – or its merchants – win. We are choosing to live fully, proudly, and securely. We are refusing to let hate dictate our future. The Jewish people have faced existential threats throughout history, not just surviving them but persevering and emerging stronger by coming together. Now, we face a new challenge on American soil, and our response must be guided by the wisdom of our traditions and the strength of our community.

This is our moment to stand up, step forward, and take responsibility for our collective security. In doing so, we send a powerful message: We will not be intimidated. We will continue to build, to pray, to learn, and to celebrate – openly and without fear. By doing so, we can make Jewish life possible not just for us, but for our children, grandchildren, and the future generations that follow.

Michael Masters serves as the National Director and CEO of the Secure Community Network (SCN), a role in which he is responsible for the overall leadership, operation, and growth of the official safety and security organization for the Jewish community in North America. Michael spoke at Federation's annual meeting in June. This article is adapted from his remarks.

For more on the Jewish Berkshires LiveSecure initiative, visit jewishberkshires.org/livesecure

JEWISH BERKSHIRES LIVESECURE

Federation's new Jewish Berkshires LiveSecure Initiative will help enhance the safety and security of our Jewish Institutions.

Learn more at jewishberkshires.org/livesecure

HIGH HOLIDAY SAFETY & SECURITY RESOURCES

To help our community feel safe while observing the High Holy Days, Federation and its partner, Secure Community Network (SCN), are hosting online training to support congregations and their members hosting High Holy Days events.

To register: Securecommunitynetwork.org/high-holidays



HIGH HOLIDAYS SAFETY & SECURITY WEBINAR SERIES

Please join the Secure Community Network (SCN), security executives, law enforcement, and professional as well as volunteer leadership to prepare for the safety and security challenges facing the Jewish community this High Holiday season.

All webinars will be held from 2:00 - 3:30 pm ET.

Training series webinars will also feature encore presentations at 8:30 pm ET.

Training Series #1

The Power of Hello
Tuesday, 06 August

Stop The Bleed®
Wednesday, 07 August

Situational Awareness & Countering Active Threat Training (CATT)
Thursday, 08 August

Informational Webinar Series

Securing the Synagogue
Thursday, 15 August

Firearms and the Faithful
Thursday, 22 August

Welcoming and Safety: The Role of Greeters, Ushers, and Volunteers
Thursday, 29 August

Accessibility and Emergency Preparedness
Thursday, 05 September

Personal Safety for Lay & Professional Leadership During the High Holidays
Thursday, 12 September

Combating Emerging Threats
Thursday, 26 September

Training Series #2

The Power of Hello
Tuesday, 17 September

Stop The Bleed®
Wednesday, 18 September

Situational Awareness & Countering Active Threat Training (CATT)
Thursday, 19 September

OP-ED

Help Us Keep the Presses Rolling!

Become a Voluntary Subscriber to the Berkshire Jewish Voice

By Albert Stern / BJV Editor

“STOP THE PRESSES!!!”

Those of you who enjoy vintage Hollywood movies will no doubt recognize that line from innumerable hoary newsroom dramas – a plot twist has occurred that is so shocking and unforeseen that someone bursts into the newspaper office crying for the printing presses to stop rolling. The big story has suddenly changed.

At the Berkshire Jewish Voice – a Jewish community paper put out nine-times a year by this Federation – we don’t have stop-the-presses moments. Or at least we didn’t until October 8, 2023, when I came into the office after the end of a melancholy yet uplifting Simchat Torah service in order to figure out how we could change the cover of the newspaper set to go to the printer the next day. The cover we’d designed featured a colorful image that went along with the cheerful article I’d written about the reimagining of the Yiddish Book Center, which was accompanied by another fun story I’d written about the lost synagogue mural in North Adams that might someday be moved to Amherst as a centerpiece of the reinstalled galleries. That image had to go.

I spent a few hours combing through the pro-Israel images that Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) had just started to disseminate and swapped out the Yiddish image with the one you see here. When the paper was published later in the week, it was a little disconcerting to leaf through its pages and see only the everyday goings-on of a small Jewish community in the hinterlands represented. The cover image was all that offered even the merest suggestion that the big story for Jews everywhere had suddenly changed.

Nevertheless, I was pleased that in every home the paper was mailed to, that every rack upon which it was displayed across Berkshire County, the first thing people saw would be the Israeli flag and the message of unequivocal support for the Jewish State. Given our publishing schedule, we would never be able to keep pace with the news cycle and so, going forward, we had to figure out how to keep the paper relevant to our community during this difficult time. As this is our yearly appeal for your support as voluntary subscribers, let’s get this bit of business out of the way:

This publication’s revenues do not cover all its costs. Your financial help as voluntary subscribers is essential in our efforts to bring you meaningful, positive, and entertaining stories both by and about your neighbors, as well as about Jews around the world. Your generosity as voluntary subscribers last year was phenomenal, and your support remains vital to sustaining this publication. Please see the insert in this paper for more on how you can support the Berkshire Jewish Voice.

Those words are BJV boilerplate by now, but the work evolves. As I began hearing the stories of community members who had traveled to Israel after Oct. 7, I expanded our Berkshire Jewish Voices section to feature stories written by those intrepid and vital volunteers. In our first essays, **Roy Kozupsky** shared



his experiences in the southern desert packing rations for the troops and then working the laundry detail at Tel HaShomer army base; **Rabbi David Weiner** recounted his three-day Rabbinical Assembly mission that brought he and his colleagues to Jerusalem and also to the hellscape of Kfar Aza. **Dr. Fred Landes** was able to offer his skills to alleviate the workload of medical staff in Israel, and gave us an incisive portrait into how civilians were coping just a month after the attacks – his vignettes were some of the best written and most revelatory that I’d read

at the time. Our former Federation colleague **Rabbi Mark Cohn** recounted how his one-time fantasy of a farming career came to an end on an Israeli farm, and about his experiences working with Sar-El, as well. And to see how my dear friend **Dr. Joshua Yurfest** fared with Sar-El, see the article on page 32.

Ruth Kaplan shared her interview with released hostage **Adi Sagi**, and we also heard from Israeli artist **Shulli Goitein**, who made a stop in Great Barrington in July as part of her pivot to sell her creations outside of Israel, where the market has been decimated post-Oct. 7. In an email thanking us for the story, Shulli said lots of you turned out to support her, which was gratifying to find out.

Covering how we, as American Jews, are coping with the antisemitism on the home front has also been essential. Community members **Zach Fluht**, **Rabbi Jodie Gordon**, **Jilly Lederman**, **Marc Rudolz**, and **Elisa Snowise** captured the energy and Jewish unity they experienced at November’s March on Washington. Closer to home, **Steven Miller** and **Ralph Hamman** wrote about their efforts to combat an antisemitic ceasefire resolution brought up before the select board in Williamstown. It was the first such effort made by anti-Israel Jew-haters in Berkshire County, one that was defeated owing to the principles and persistence of citizens like Steve and Ralph and the community mobilization efforts of Federation. And in this issue on page 2, Secure Community Network CEO **Michael Masters** shares Federation’s efforts to ensure the safety of Jewish institutions through national programs and the local Berkshire LiveSecure Initiative.

It has also been important to share information about how our partners are using the more than \$800 million raised by JFNA’s Israel Crisis Fund – each month, we try to show you how your dollars are making an impact through the Federation system and our partners JDC, Jewish Agency for Israel, and World ORT.

Overall, however, the focus of the BJV this year has been what it has always been. In the past, I might have termed it “ordinary Jewish life in the Berkshires,” but now I think of it more as “resilient Jewish life in the Berkshires.” While the twin specters of war abroad and antisemitism at home preoccupy us, the everyday business of the community also continues.

The makeup of the local clergy changed in 2024, and the BJV has provided the community with personal reflections from the departing rabbis. In our last issue, **Rabbi Neil P.G. Hirsch** contributed his final Rabbi Reflection column before leaving to take the senior rabbi role at Wise Temple in Cincinnati, a fond farewell to the community that provided a springboard for he and his wife **Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch** (formerly of Temple Anshe Amunim and now executive director of Women of Reform Judaism) to assume important roles in the national Reform movement. And for this issue (see page 24), the Berkshires’ longest-serving spiritual leader **Rabbi Barbara Cohen** talked to us about stepping down from the pulpit at Congregation Ahavath Sholom to focus on her spiritual listening practice with individual clients – her insights into how Jewish life in the Berkshires has evolved constitute a valuable contribution to our communal history. And

STOP THE PRESSES!!!
continued on page 5

Berkshire JEWISH VOICE

A publication of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, serving the Berkshires and surrounding NY, CT and VT. Published 9 times a year.

The color photography in this issue is made possible through the generosity of Goldy Fried and Av Kadish, honorary publishers.

Dara Kaufman: Publisher and Managing Editor

Albert Stern: Editor

Jenny Greenfeld: Advertising Sales Representative and Copy Editor

RB Design Co: Graphic Design and Layout

Editorial opinions expressed in the *Berkshire Jewish Voice* are those of the newspaper and not those of any individual. Signed editorials do not represent the view of the newspaper, but rather express the writer’s view.

The *Berkshire Jewish Voice* is under no obligation to accept any advertisement. It does not guarantee the kashrut of any merchandise or service advertised.

To have the *BJV* mailed to your home, please send a minimum donation of \$18.

Next issue publication date: **September 21, 2024 – November 1, 2024**

Press deadline: **August 5, 2024** • Advertising deadline: **September 4, 2024**

Berkshire Jewish Voice e-mail: astern@jewishberkshires.org
Phone: (413) 442-4360, ext. 11 Fax (413) 443-6070

OP-ED

RABBI REFLECTION

With the High Holy Days on the Horizon, Let's Focus on the Good



Rabbi Levi Volovik

By Rabbi Levi Volovik / Chabad of the Berkshires

Very soon, we will stand on the brink of a new year (5785) and what we hope will be a *shana tova* for all. As we once again seek to renew our contract with our Father in Heaven, it is a time for retrospection and introspection on how we measure up to living life to the fullest. It is a time to refocus, and recommit.

The 25th day of Elul marks the birthday of the world. Rosh Hashanah celebrates the birthday of man. Rosh Hashanah opens hearts and minds to understand the why of creation and the purpose in our being placed in this vast universe – human beings in the Kingdom of G-d. As such, our upcoming Days of Awe are not simply known as holidays, but Holy Days. Taking a “holiday,” as a vacation

is called in many countries, suggests respite from the daily grind, recreation, and relaxation. And while this is all good at the proper time, Holy Days inspire us to recommit to our true purpose and reconnect with our true inner essence, our G-dly soul. Whereas taking a holiday offers a change of scenery, a Holy Day is a return to our familiar Jewish roots. A holiday may empty our purse; the Holy Days fill our spiritual baggage with invaluable reserve for a productive, good year ahead. The months ahead are not simply filled with holidays, but filled with Holy Days meant to stir our souls and impact our lives with a change of heart and direction.

Rosh Hashanah is called the Day of Remembrance. G-d remembers our every deed. And while we human beings tend to forget and need reminders, I doubt anyone needs a reminder of the harrowing, horrific October 7 massacre, almost one year ago, that brought ruin and destruction in Israel and shrouded our world with deeper darkness. As the generation that has lived through the events of October 7, we have witnessed the depths to which unbridled man can sink, as well as the heights to which one can ascend. We have seen the ravages of terror and hate, as well as the power and impact of energy that is constructively harnessed to fulfilling G-d's will. We have seen what every individual man or woman can accomplish when called to the task. This innate spirit and strength came to the fore as our courageous IDF soldiers, concerned civilians, and caring neighbors rallied like angels in disguise, risking their own lives to save the lives of others. And we have also seen what one additional mitzvah can accomplish in actualizing victory and bringing the hostages home. Though the task is not yet complete, we experienced a surge of uplifted faith and reinforced trust in G-d's guiding, protective Hand.

With Rosh Hashana on the horizon, let's reflect on the good. More than just a happy new year; we wish for ourselves and others to have a “*shana tova*,” a good year. And what would you say is the good that we need for the coming year? It may be a year of good health, joy, *nachas* from our children, economic and spiritual prosperity and, utmost, lasting, genuine peace in our Holy Land. Yes, we will pray for all of this and more, according to each one's individual needs. But to paraphrase the well-known saying: “Let's not only ask what we need of G-d, but let's ask what G-d needs of us.” Rosh Hashanah is the time for all our supplications and sincere prayers. Every request is heard on High, and every one of our needs is desirable if it is a means to pursue a life of goodness and serving Him with heart and soul. G-d responds to those who call upon Him. But G-d needs us as well to be partners in realizing His desire for a world that is yet to be filled with truth, justice, righteousness, and kindness.

Although, thank G-d, *Eretz Yisrael* is the homeland of our people, waiting

It's up to us to saturate the world with the glow of Torah and Mitzvot, transforming the world into a comfortable dwelling place for G-d – a world that is ready for Mashiach and ultimate redemption!

to welcome all with the coming of *Mashiach*, we are still fighting for our security. Though miracles abound, we still await the miracle of total victory. Though we still linger in the darkness of exile, our faith is unwavering. No matter the circumstances, doom, gloom, and despair have never been part of our lexicon.

We learned that when the *Mishkan*, the Sanctuary in the desert, was set up, a cloud covered the Dwelling by day, and in the evening a fiery image appeared. Noted scholar and author Rabbi Shlomo Zevin says that this description foreshadows life. There are times when clouds hover, and we are overwhelmed by difficulties and challenges. But we never despair. At the darkest times, a bright fiery image is visible. The cloud and the fire, Rabbi Zevin says, is a lesson in faith that keeps us optimistically forging ahead regardless of trials and tribulations. We are assured that G-d is in control, He leads us forward and protects us. But G-d needs our input. As real as dawn follows darkness, we know there is a light at the end of the tunnel. However, in the chaotic times in which we still live, we are enjoined to be that light in the tunnel, to be an “influencer,” and awaken the G-dly spark inherent within others. It's up to us to saturate the world with the glow of Torah and Mitzvot, transforming the world into a comfortable dwelling place for G-d – a world that is ready for *Mashiach* and ultimate redemption!

We invite you to join together in this grand venture. In the merit of our solidarity as a community, may we all be inscribed in the Book of Life for a sweet, peaceful and prosperous year, renewed with all that is good, physically, materially, and spiritually!

Rabbi Levi Volovik is co-director (with his wife, Sara Volovik) of Chabad of the Berkshires in Pittsfield. For an article on the Chabad center now under construction in Lenox, please see page 23.

MPZ Productions presents

A Jewish Journey through Broadway: Part 1

1920-1980

Featuring songs from the Gershwins, Jerome Kern, Bock and Harnick, Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim and many more!

Created and Directed by Michael Pizzi

FRIDAY
August 23
7:30 pm

SATURDAY
August 24
3pm & 7pm

St. James Place,
352 Main Street,
Great Barrington,
MA 01230

All tickets \$45
(open seating)

Scan QR Code to
Purchase Tickets
or visit link below:



<https://www.simplertix.com/e/a-jewish-journey-through-broadway-part-1-tickets-171116>

10% of all ticket sales goes to the People's Pantry

Contact info:
mpzproducer58@gmail.com

OP-ED

STOP THE PRESSES!!!,

continued from page 3

all of our rabbis are fine writers and thinkers – in every BJV, readers also learn a serious bit of Torah.

And speaking of communal history, our Super Tzedakah Week chair **Josh Cutler** told us the story of his family’s century-plus involvement in the Jewish Berkshires, along with his intentions of staying right here to shape its future. (His son **James** was this year’s winner of our ‘Best Cover Model’ award, as well.) Major Donor Celebration chairs **Penny and Claudio Pincus** have held leadership roles in major national and international Jewish organizations and in sharing their story, stood up as exemplars of the importance of showing up to support the necessary work in one’s local community, as well. Finally, it was my pleasure to share the stories of those who signed on this year as Legacy Circle members – native Pittsfielder **Laurie Sukel** (who has long lived in Florida, but who wanted her legacy to be felt at home), **Robert and Harriet Miller** (who realized their gift will do more to sustain Jewish life here than in a larger community), and **Larry Frankel and Elisa Schindler Frankel** (who in a short time have become among the most dynamic leaders of our Jewish community).

Again this year, our director of community engagement and programming **Rabbi Daveen Litwin** booked a lineup of speakers to keep us connected and intellectually stimulated throughout the year. For the BJV, it means we got to bring you original interviews with scholars like **Joseph Sassoon** (*The Sassoons*) and **Ari Joscowicz** (*Rain of Ash*). **Avi Dresner** conducted an enjoyable interview with **Natasha Lance Rogoff** about how she brought the Muppets to Russia. And I got a chance to test my mettle as an interviewer with subjects as diverse as **Mark Ludwig** of the Terezin Foundation, **Ambassador Stuart E. Eizenstadt**, cellist **Maya Beiser** (our Major Donor Celebration performer), and **Cindy Bell-Deane**, who in retirement leaves our kosher meals program in the capable hands of **Susan Levine**.

I was thrilled to be able to interview **Carol Goodman Kaufman** about her newly-published mystery novel, *The First Murder*. As her editor and friend, I knew about the long process of getting her work out there, and am so happy to see her success with the book. She is the BJV stalwart, whose food history writing remains fresh after years of her penning our “Traveling With Jewish Taste” column. And I also have been so happy to be able to share the work of writers new to our stable of contributors, **Linda H. Davis** (who covered the MAD exhibit at the NRM) and **Howie Steir**, the former NYT journalist who reflected on Rambam’s menorah and interviewed newsmaker **Shai Davidai** of Columbia University.

We also had the chance to share excerpts of two acclaimed books with Berkshire connections, **Ellen Kanner** and **Annie Zeybekoglu’s** *I, Teresa de Lucena* and **Judith Monachina’s** *Days of Memory* (see page 28). And how about **Harold Grinspoon** – a poet in addition to everything else he accomplishes, who allowed us to reprint poems that included my favorite line of verse encountered all year: “Perhaps you have a chance to look back over your shoulder / And see how you spent your life. / Does that bring tears to your eyes? / Hold on. Not so quick.”

Thanks, too, to the artists who let us use their work: Jewish comic art illustrator **Steve Marcus**, painter **Pattie Lipman**, the multi-talented super couple **Karen Chase and Paul Graubard**, and **Siona Benjamin**, who presented for

us around last Purim and whose drawings from the Book of Esther graced our Purim issue.

And thanks, too, to **our advertisers** – in addition to this being a record-breaking year for voluntary subscribers, we also had a very good year of support from businesses that recognize the impact Berkshire Jewish Voice readers can have on their bottom line. Our loyal audience looks forward to reading the Berkshire Jewish Voice, even if sometimes we have to publish boilerplate like this:

Please see the insert in this newspaper for the different funding levels available. An honorary publisher gift of \$360 allows us to provide four pages of color. Due to popular demand, we are printing more copies of each issue and printing costs have escalated in recent years. Your support will allow us to reach more people wishing to connect with all our Jewish community offers to full-time residents, part-time residents, and the estimated 150,000 Jewish vacationers who visit the Berkshires each year.

Nearly ten years ago, I took over as editor of the BJV – I wanted to live in the Berkshires and work in a Jewish space, and this job enabled me to do just that. This has been the hardest year for me professionally, but also the most gratifying. The Federation system’s response to this crisis has been unequivocal, mobilizing effectively to provide resources and support for Israel and acting with moral clarity in combatting antisemitism in the United States. So many of my friends’ views of the world and their place in it as Jews have been upended by the behavior of cherished institutions, leaders, and even family and friends in the post-Oct. 7 reality. I’ve seen their confusion and distress, and feel all the more grateful to be working for an organization that is able to mobilize to protect the civil rights of the Jewish people at a perilous time.

At FedPro, a November confab in Chicago for hundreds of Federation professionals, I watched this Federation’s executive director, **Dara Kaufman**, receive the honor of delivering the opening address to the gathered – recognition of all our small Federation, punching above our weight, is able to accomplish. Hearing the applause from the audience in that packed ballroom– from a group of committed people with shared values and who together had, at that early stage of the conflict, already raised \$500 million in emergency funds – was a highlight of my time working for Federation. That the excellence of our work here in the Berkshires is being recognized at the highest strata of the Jewish philanthropic world is something this community should feel proud of.

And our work should be supported as generously as possible. The Berkshire Jewish Voice is an essential way of communicating what our Federation does in this community and how it connects to the important work being done across the Jewish world. I hope you will consider giving what you can as a voluntary subscriber to support your local Jewish community newspaper.

Letters to the Editor

Your Campaign Dollars Support Complex Trauma Relief Programs in Israel

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

On behalf of the Board and Staff of ELI, thank you for the Federation’s generous grant, via the Jewish Agency for Israel, to American Friends of ELI.

Your donation will be put to use immediately for ELI’s work in complex trauma relief. Following the trauma treatment centers that we operated in the first few weeks of the war, we identified 200 children and their families, of the most severe cases with whom we had met, for long-term therapeutic intervention.

In this next stage of therapy, we are meeting with them regularly to continue to work on reducing their level of anxiety in addition to enhancing their impaired functional capacity until we can restore it to a reasonable norm.

ELI’s work with complex trauma relief for the survivors of the October 7 massacre is critical, and the needs continue to increase. Your donation will have great impact and we are pleased to partner with you.

With warmest regards,
Eran Zimrin
President
ELI - Israel Association for Child Protection

NOTES FROM THE BRINK,

continued from cover



Jeff Robbins

profoundly unjust political assault on Israel even before October 7, let alone afterward.

What I would say I have “gotten wrong,” in a sense, is that I did not write enough about the legitimate issues that the American Right has with the American Left. This is not to take away one iota from the deplorable (yes, that word) extremism on the Right, and the threat that it poses. But people who have written about the danger of the Right, like me, haven’t written nearly enough about the legitimate concerns that tens of millions of Americans have about the Democrats: the perception, not without basis, that the constituencies that comprise the Democratic Party suffer from holier-than-thou-ism, that they regard those who are worried about unregulated immigration, or crime, or the drug epidemic and other issues as Neanderthals. I tend to think that the resentment of elites, more than regard for Donald Trump, is what fuels the half of the country that seems ready to vote for him. There are real reasons for that resentment, and I regret not having written enough about them.

JEWISH LITERARY VOICES



A Federation series in collaboration with the Jewish Book Council

Monday, September 9 at 10:45 a.m. (virtual)

The Eucalyptus Cookbook with master chef, food historian and founder of The Eucalyptus restaurant in Jerusalem, Moshe Basson.

Thursday, October 31 at 7 p.m. (virtual)

10/7: One Hundred Human Stories with investigative journalist Lee Yaron.

Thursday, November 21 at 7 p.m. (virtual)

Not From Here: The Song of America with author and librettist Leah Lax.

Thursday, December 5 at 7 p.m. (virtual)

Humans of Judaism: Everyone Has A Story: What’s Yours? with author and founder of @humansofjudaism, Nikki Schreiber.

Thursday, January 16 at 10:45 a.m. (virtual)

The Jazzmen: How Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and Count Basie Transformed America with journalist and author, Larry Tye.

Thursday, January 30 at 7 p.m. (virtual)

Bernardine’s Shanghai Salon: The Story of the Doyenne of Old China with memoirist and biographer Susan Blumberg-Kason.

Thursday, February 13 at 7:00 p.m. (virtual)

Nosh: Plant-Forward Recipes Celebrating Modern Jewish Cuisine with chef and registered dietitian Micah Siva.

REGISTER AT JEWISHBERKSHIRES.ORG



Jewish Federation OF THE BERKSHIRES



JEWISH BOOK COUNCIL



Create a Jewish Legacy Campaign
Please remember the Jewish Community in your will.



Your Federation Presents

JEWISH THEATER,

continued from cover

theaters, on film and TV and was acclaimed by The Wall Street Journal as Best Actor of the Season in regional theater for her performance as Gladys Green in *Waverly Gallery*. **Alexa Derman** writes adventurous plays about gender, genre, systems, and speculation. Her plays include *The Creature* (Runner-up, Princess Grace/New Dramatists; Finalist, O'Neill National Playwrights Conference), *Psychopsychotic* (Honorable Mention, Relentless Award), *Girlish* (Fresh Ink), *Restoration Master Reset* (Cutting Ball Theater's *Ways To Leave A Body*), *Zionista Rising* (Winner, Jewish Plays Project National Competition) and *I'll Be In My Hanukkah Palace* (sold-out at Ars Nova ANT Fest). She earned a BA from Yale in Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies and an MFA from Brown.

Co-sponsored by Jewish Federation Berkshires, Berkshire Theatre Group (BTG), Jewish Plays Project, and Plays2Gather in conjunction with the BTG's Festival of New Jewish Plays. The Colonial Theatre is at 111 South Street in Pittsfield.

For more info about the Jewish Plays Project visit jewishplaysproject.org.

You'll be discussing the state of Jewish theater in the 21st century. Have specifically Jewish stories ceased to be part of mainstream theater productions? Is it something that requires an intervention by a group like yourself to get the ethnic story out?

DW: think what we've seen is that the story that we tell on stage has gotten very stuck in a mid-20th century moment. We tell a lot of Holocaust stories, a lot of World War II stories, a lot of immigration stories. Even just in the last couple of years, think about the prominent Jewish plays on Broadway. For example, *Leopoldstadt* – entirely a World War II, mid-20th century story. When you look around the country at the things that get produced in regional theaters, when people want to produce a Jewish play, they are going to typically default to something that is older, either from the 20th century or even before that. The stories we're telling on stage need to catch up with where we are as a community. The Jewish story that's happening right now is much more focused on contemporary issues of social justice, like economic justice and racial justice, and the Middle East. Those are the things that we're living in our day-to-day lives.

WF: The other thing that's been stuck in the 20th century is the form. That's one of the reasons we've partnered and given a venue or a platform for younger and intergenerational types of audiences with a short form, a 10-minute play, the OOF Contest "On One Foot." Younger generations may not sit for a three-hour play – they're not as interested in that form. We think as part of a festival, people of different ages, different backgrounds, Jewish and non-Jewish, will choose different formats and types of settings in which they can be exposed to Jewish ideas and Jewish culture that may not necessarily be offered on Broadway or even Off-Broadway these days.

Given your global perspective on what's going on in the Jewish theater world, what would you say are Jewish themes that are either shared or not shared among Jews in different parts of the Diaspora and in Israel? What are the different preoccupations of the playwrights?

DW: The question that I get asked the most is 'Well, what really is a Jewish play?' At some level, it's like asking, 'What is a Jew?' We all have a lot of different interpretations of what this whole Jewish thing means. In a moment of great change in the world, people are being called back to these questions of moral and ethical and communal values to say, Hey, what is really important right now? How do we find our way through right now? That feels like something that people are really thinking about. I will say theater is not necessarily a rapid response art form. It takes time for creators to process and figure out stories and the plays that they want to make. What I've been seeing over the last five years or so is really a deeper questioning going past an Ashkenazi, Northeast American POV. Ours is a much more diverse tapestry. How do we understand that – and how does it ultimately help us?

WF: There's no question that Jewish memory, as opposed to history, let's say, is actively bubbling in a lot of the plays. Wherever the playwrights are from, they're imagining a Jewish world that includes both the past, the present, and the future, and sometimes mixing that all together, which I find exciting. If you've seen one Jewish play, you've seen one Jewish play. Each one is like a fingerprint. They're very different. They reflect the identity of the playwright. They reflect the circumstance in which the playwright is writing in. The one thing they all have in common is conflict.

David and I were amazed that literally from the first conversation that we had with Kate Maguire and the team at BTG, there was interest, synergy, and a desire to do something that was beyond what they were already doing with *Young Frankenstein*. We were very clear, certainly since October 7, that our desire was not merely to entertain, but to elevate. That now is not the time to retreat, but to actually lift up the present and take the opportunity to do something that could help people heal, help people reflect, help people process what's happening in the world, not by having a seminar, but by doing the things that theater does well: comedy, tragedy, music. And you're going to see all of those elements.

About the Jewish Theater Festival

The Jewish Theater Festival will showcase new Jewish plays and voices in development and will engage the Berkshires audience in some fascinating dialogue about the current state of Jewish narrative art.

Friday evening, 8/16: Festival welcome; Performance of *OOF: One Foot, or Another*, a series of 4 short plays by new Jewish voices. Late night musical performance follows.

Saturday, 8/17: Plays2Gather discussion group. Headline Theatermakers Panel. Performance of *OOF*. Featured presentation of Tony-winner Ariel Stachel's "Out of Character." Late night music jam.

Sunday, 8/18: Plays2Gather discussion group with playwright Wayne Firestone. Afternoon musical set. Featured reading of the winner of the National Jewish Playwriting Contest (TBD). Festival Wrap up party with Israeli food trucks!

Plays2Gather is dedicated to performing diverse stories in homes and non-traditional venues. For more information: waynefirestone.com/plays2gather.

BJV Interview: Wayne Firestone and David Winitsky

In June, the BJV had a chance to catch up with Wayne and David. Our conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

First question for you, Wayne – what is Plays2Gather all about?

Wayne Firestone: We're an informal network of playmakers who have operated out of homes, stages, and unusual places because we think that playmaking can involve everybody, not just the actors and directors and playwright. We try to promote intergenerational experiences that celebrate diversity and educate about the other, particularly now during a period of modern day plagues, polarization, and anxiety. And we partnered [for the first time] with the Jewish Plays Project, which has been bringing together communities, around traditional full-length plays, to bring short form theater together with long form theater into one big festival. That is the intersection and the vision of coming together this summer with the Berkshire Theater Group.

So, David – tell me about Jewish Plays Project.

David Winitsky: Jewish Plays Project is a new play development company working to develop the pipeline of contemporary 21st century Jewish plays, working with writers to develop them, and advocating to get them onto the best stages. We've collected about 2600 plays from writers in 34 states and 10 countries so far. Each year, we whittle that down to a group of six finalist plays that we're working on with communities around the country. I'm very proud to say that of the 59 plays that we have actively developed, 39 of have gone on to production in New York, LA, and London, and around the country.

UNICORN · COLONIAL · PLAYHOUSE

BERKSHIRE THEATRE GROUP

August 15-17
at The Colonial Theatre

Berkshire Theatre Group in Collaboration with the Jewish Plays Project and plays2gather Present

Festival of NEW JEWISH PLAYS

Thursday, 8/15 • 7PM

A reading of **The Last Yiddish Speaker**
by Deborah Zoe Laufer

Friday, 8/16 • 10:45AM
Knosh & Knowledge
with the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires: Making Jewish Theatre in the 21st Century

Friday, 8/16 • 7PM
OOF!: On One Foot
10-Minute Play Festival

Saturday, 8/17 • Noon
Boston's Adam Theater Presents
Library Lion

Saturday, 8/17 • 7PM
Out of Character
by Ariel Stachel

The Colonial Theatre
111 South Street • Pittsfield, MA
(413) 997-4444
BerkshireTheatreGroup.org

Supporting the Arts, Culture, Environment, and Social Needs in the Berkshires Since 1984

CELEBRATING

STONE 40 HOUSE

YEARS

WWW.STONEHOUSEPROPERTIES.COM

WEST STOCKBRIDGE, MA • CHATHAM, NY • GT. BARRINGTON, MA

BERKSHIRE LAW GROUP
Estate Planning, Elder Law & Life Care

Paula Kahn Almgren, Esq.
One West Street, Lenox, MA 01240
413.637.5075 — www.berkshirelawgroup.com

ALL-WAYS
Moving • Storage
Warehousing

241 W. Housatonic Street
Pittsfield, Massachusetts 01201
www.allwaysmovingstorage.com
Allwaysmoving1977@gmail.com

Since 1977

PHONE: (413) 499-1577
FAX: (413) 443-7256

William Pitt Sotheby's INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Let me be your guide to The Berkshires

CARRIE LOBOVITS WRIGHT
413.212.1865 | cwright@wpsir.com
carriewright.williamspitt.com

Great Barrington Brokerage | 306 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA
Each office is independently owned and operated

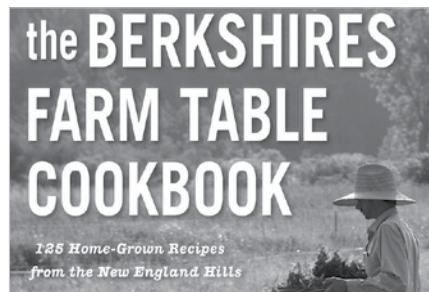
Your Federation Presents

Calling All Foodies – Join Us for Meals and Conversation Around Our Community Table

Special September Jewish Food Series at Our Kosher Lunch Program

PITTSFIELD – This September – in preparation for the High Holy Days – Jewish Federation of the Berkshires brings acclaimed local chefs, cookbook authors, and food writers to our Thursday kosher lunches at Kneset Israel. Susan Levine, our food service director, will feature special holiday themed menu items that are favorites of these local foodies.

Joining us at lunch around our community table at noon are the experts who shared their recipes. They'll talk about why they chose these recipes and will answer your questions about ingredients, technique, culinary history, sourcing at local farms and markets, and much more. If you've ever opened a cookbook and wondered if the food tastes as good as it looks in the pictures, in September you'll have four chances to find out that it does.



On Thursday, September 5 at noon, we welcome **Elisa Spungen Bildner and Rob Bildner**, authors of *The Berkshires Farm Table Cookbook*, for conversation over a home-cooked kosher lunch featuring some of their favorite recipes to break the fast on Yom Kippur. The menu will feature *Spinach and Squash Quiche, Rutabaga Latkes with Applesauce, and a Blueberry Crisp*. The Bildners' cookbook – co-written by local chef Michael Alberg and featuring Rob's evocative photographs of the Berkshires – tells the story of family-run agriculture through the language of food, offering 125 recipes to recall the magic of the Berkshires

region. Elisa and Rob will share the story of this celebration of the local farmers, cheesemakers, chefs, and restaurant-owners behind the recipes.



On Monday, September 9 at 10:45 a.m., the series food series continues – and our Jewish Literary Voices series kicks off – with a virtual

program featuring chef and food historian **Moshe Basson**, author of *The Eucalyptus Cookbook*. For details, see the story below.

On Thursday, September 12 at noon, join **Elizabeth Baer** for conversation about how she combines passions for cooking and writing (and her secret life as a recipe tester) and enjoy one of Liz's favorite recipes for the pre-fast Yom Kippur meal (*Lemon Za'atar*



Chicken). A Latin teacher by day, Liz spends most of her free time either cooking or reading about food, or planning her next meal! In addition to

serving as food columnist for The Berkshire Eagle, Liz also teaches cooking classes and posts recipes and musings on her food blog, culinursa.com/blog.

On Thursday, September 19 at noon, we welcome the Berkshire Jewish Voice's longtime Traveling With Jewish Taste columnist **Carol Goodman**



Kaufman, who will talk about food history and culinary writing at a meal featuring one of her favorite recipes for Sukkot or Simchat Torah (*Persian Jeweled Rice with Pomegranate Seeds*). Carol has been writing about food, its history, and its travels since 2009. Her regular features appear in the Jewish press and in the Worcester Telegram & Gazette. Other pieces have appeared in the Boston Globe, The Forward, and Berkshire Magazine. When not cooking (and sampling), she pens children's books and mysteries. Her first

novel, *The First Murder*, was released in April 2024.

We wrap up the series on Thursday, September 26 at noon with **Julie Kalt Gale**, author of *The View From My Kitchen Window*, her memoir with



recipes. Julie owns At the Kitchen Table Cooking School in Hillsdale, NY and has been teaching cooking for almost 20 years. The book tells the story of the people in her life through

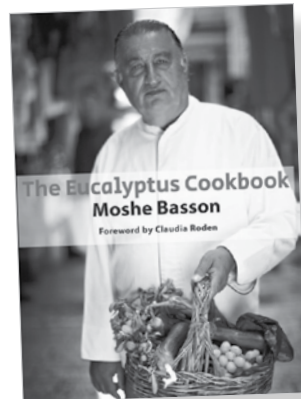
the food they prepared and the stories they told around the kitchen table. There are 110 recipes that reflect her American Jewish upbringing as well as her travels throughout the world. Enjoy one of her favorite recipes for the Days of Awe – *Rosh HaShanah Apple Cake*

These Jewish Federation of the Berkshires programs will take place at Kneset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield.

All are welcome! Advance lunch reservations are required and can be made by calling (413) 442-2200 before 9 a.m. on the day of the program. Suggested donation of \$3 for adults over age 60. \$7 for all others.

Federation makes these programs possible through the generous support of our community.

The Eucalyptus Cookbook, with Chef and Historian Moshe Basson



On Monday, September 9 at 10:45 a.m., in preparation for the High Holy Days, we welcome Chef Moshe Basson, founder of the landmark Eucalyptus restaurant in Jerusalem and Israeli food historian, for a discussion of *The Eucalyptus Cookbook* and his Levant-cultivated culinary innovations.

This virtual program is part of our "Special Jewish Food Series Lunch Program with Chefs, Authors, Food Writers" – see story above for a full lineup of in-person events. It also kicks off this season of "Jewish Literary Voices: A Federation Series in collaboration with The Jewish Book Council," which continues through the fall and winter months. Register on the calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

The magnificent photographs and exotic stories that accompany the recipes in *The Eucalyptus Cookbook* take you into forest forages for wild greens and mallows and to the days of the Bible where birthrights were traded for sustenance. The book also tells the universal story of migration and how a business can support and be supported by its workers.

At Eucalyptus, family members work alongside the long-tenured staff and add dishes from their own homes and their travels. The brings you into the kitchen of Chef Moshe's mother, where Iraqi scents and senses, old world wisdom, and the trials and struggles of building a home in a new land are palpable to the touch and to the taste.

Moshe Basson is an internationally-renowned master chef specializing in Modern Israeli-Biblical cuisine. Basson is the founder of *The Eucalyptus* restaurant in Jerusalem and an Israeli food historian. Utilizing his schooling in agriculture and passion for studying ancient script, Basson has incorporated into the restaurant's kosher menu many dishes that are based on foods eaten for many centuries in this region.



Tzedakah Challenge 2024

Donate Today and Double the Good You Do!

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires is grateful for the many community members who have already stepped up and made their gifts to our 2024 Annual Campaign. You have helped us to a great start, but we still have a way to go to reach our \$1,200,000 goal!

To help keep the momentum going, Federation is excited to launch its Tzedakah Challenge 2024. Thanks to a generous donor, Federation will receive a \$25,000 Challenge Grant if we secure \$25,000 or more in gifts through October 31!

You get the idea: Donate \$50 and Federation will receive \$100. Donate \$180 and Federation will receive \$360. Whatever your gift, your donation will be matched until we reach \$25,000.

Make a first-time gift, renew your gift or make an extra gift through the holidays and you will help Federation do even more to support our community in the New Year. Our community is stronger and more determined than ever to continue Federation's vital work to support the vulnerable, empower young people, combat antisemitism, and create vibrant and meaningful Jewish life across the Berkshires, in Israel, and around the world.

If you receive a letter or email asking for your support, please accept the challenge to double the impact of your gift! You can also donate online at jewishberkshires.org or call us at (413) 442-4360, ext. 16.

New Home? Second Home? Retirement Home? Let me show you...
The Berkshires
Barbara K. Greenfeld
 ABR, C-CREC, CRS, GREEN, RSPS, SRES
 Broker Associate • Lic. in MA
 413-441-5986
 BarbeG333@aol.com
Roberts & Associates
 Realty, inc.

PAMELA SANDLER
 ARCHITECT
 31 Main Street | Stockbridge, MA 01262
 413.298.4227 | sandleraia.com

Berkshire ROOFING
 413-298-1029
bgrco.net
 Mike Linde
RESIDENTIAL ROOFING SPECIALIST
 Written Estimates • Fully Insured

"We like your smile when we're done."

AAA ACCREDITED BUSINESS
 BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS

Your Federation Presents

Thank You to All Who Made Our Pasta and Rice Donation Drive a Success!

By Molly Meador / Coordinator of Volunteers & PJ Library

Our generous community stepped up again, donating over 400 pounds of rice and pasta for our Donation Drive over the month of May.

This year, we were proud to partner with Berkshire Bounty, a nonprofit food recovery organization with the mission to provide local emergency food distribution organizations with nutritious food to mitigate food insecurity throughout Berkshire County. They build capacity by increasing the quantity of food, close gaps by providing “last mile” logistics, and improve quality by focusing their efforts on nutritious food collection.

Using over 100 registered and active volunteers, donated food is collected through a network of 25 retailers and delivered to 29 distribution organizations that directly serve the community including food pantries, public

schools and senior centers across Berkshire County. Your donations were delivered to:

- Christian Center
- Berkshire Dream Center
- Berkshire Hills Regional School District Food Box Program
- Southern Berkshire Regional School District Food Box Program
- Otis Food Pantry
- Monterey Food Pantry
- CHP Berkshires

Thank you again to our food collection sites: Congregation Beth Israel, Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, and the Berkshire Food Co-Op.



SWEETWOOD

OF WILLIAMSTOWN

INDEPENDENT LIVING COMMUNITY

Our community is a destination for those seeking a fulfilling and worry-free lifestyle. At Sweetwood, seniors living independently discover a range of amenities designed to enrich their everyday experiences. Our commitment extends beyond just offering a place to live—we provide an unwavering dedication to well-being. Our top priority is to cultivate a sense of belonging and ensure that each day is sweeter than the last.

Multigenerational Living & Learning



Sweetwood takes pride in its collaborations with community, educational, and cultural institutions to foster a culture of learning and individual development. Through partnerships with esteemed institutions such as Williams College, Berkshire Community College, and other local organizations, our residents have the opportunity to flourish and prosper.



Independent Living

Our all-inclusive living experience means that you can focus on enjoying life to the fullest, without the stress of homeownership. With a variety of apartment sizes to choose from, with rental and buy-in options, each resident enjoys a comfortable and personalized living arrangement



Medical Care

We understand that your healthcare needs may evolve over time, and we're here to provide the support you require. We offer concierge healthcare services for an additional fee, tailored to your specific needs.

Interested in learning more about Sweetwood?
Reach out to learn how to enjoy a complementary two night stay!

413-458-8371

1611 Cold Spring Road
 Williamstown, MA 01267

www.sweetwoodliving.com

Your Federation Presents

Federation's 84th Annual Meeting

Schmoozing, Star Students, and Sobering Security Stats at Shakespeare & Co.

Thank you so much to all who attended Federation's 84th annual meeting and to our hosts, Shakespeare & Company. Attendees heard president Arlene D. Schiff recap the highlights of her productive first year leading this organization, while Dara Kaufman shared our accomplishments over the last challenging 12 months. Judy Usow, our treasurer, thanked outgoing board members and led the vote that installed a new slate of directors and board members. After that, Rabbi Daveen Litwin shared a blessing for the community and its holy work.

And many thanks to Rabbi David Weiner of Knesset Israel, who shared important thoughts on the nature of leadership in a *dv'ar Torah* drawn from the

weekly Torah portion, *Parshat Shelach*. Our guest speaker Michael Masters, CEO of Secure Community Network (SCN), shared uncomfortable realities about Jews in America in the post-Oct. 7 landscape, but also shared how the Federation system has worked to ensure that Jewish life can continue in safety through initiatives like the Berkshire LiveSecure program. Please see page 2 for more on his message to the Berkshire Jewish community.



Time Horizon

What are your investment goals? How long are you planning for? One year? Five years? A lifetime? Are your financial plan and portfolios tailored to your needs?

Have a conversation with us. Together we'll design a plan and investment strategy aligned with your time horizon.

It's why we're here. We're here for you.



Portfolio Management • Financial Planning • Trust & Banking Services*

103 West Park Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-4331

octobermountainfa.com

Advisory services offered through St. Germain Investment Management. October Mountain is a name under which St. Germain Investment Management operates. *Banking and trust administration services provided by Lee Bank.

Addressing Antisemitism on Campus

Understanding Hostility to Jews and Israel Among Non-Jewish Students

A timely discussion with

Professor Leonard Saxe

Director of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University

framed by a new Brandeis study of nearly 4,000 non-Jewish students at 60 colleges and universities.

Sunday, August 18 at 7:00 pm, Location TBD

(Location will be posted on jewishberkshires.org when determined)

In the wake of the Hamas attack against Israel on October 7, a wave of anti-Jewish and anti-Israel hostility erupted on college campuses across the US. Multiple research studies, buttressed by analyses conducted by task forces at a host of universities, have documented the impact on Jewish students. Some fear for their safety, many feel silenced, and others are distraught at their school's unwillingness to enforce their code of conduct. We know the problem is serious, but what can and should be done about it?

Professor Saxe will lead a discussion and offer thoughts on how universities, along with students, faculty, and parents, should respond.



THE STRENGTH OF A PEOPLE
THE POWER OF COMMUNITY.

Your Federation Presents

Star Students

Elisa Snowise introduced the recipients of the Henry Simkin and Frances Simkin Schiller and Dr. Stanley and Faye Simkin Scholarship, given to Jewish high school seniors who have demonstrated high academic achievement and leadership in the Jewish and broader communities. This year's recipients are:



Benjamin Gross

High honors student, athlete, talented drummer, youth leader and music teacher at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, volunteer in combatting local food insecurity, and recipient of the 2024 Daniel Pearl Berkshire Scholarship – Benjamin Gross's overstuffed resume includes all these estimable achievements and more. As he puts it: "Given my experiences as a Jewish-Nepalese-American adoptee, I see Judaism as transcending the borders of genetic family or birthplace – it's about ideals, goals, and how we treat others in a world of constant injustice. With the support of my religious community, I have a strong moral foundation and vision for living my Jewish values and have pursued leadership through service and justice through education."

At Monument Mountain Regional High School, Ben developed the Students of Color Association to help foster a sense of belonging among BIPOC students at the school. He captained the varsity soccer and ultimate Frisbee teams, and was a standout basketball player. On top of that busy schedule, he studied abroad in Ecuador, undertook a service mission to the Dominican Republic, and regularly gigs around the Berkshires with different musical ensembles. Above all, as he told the Berkshire Eagle in a story about his being awarded the Pearl Scholarship, the two things that bring him joy and purpose were "playing the drums and helping kids find their rhythm... I want to be able to be there for them in the same way that my teachers have been for me."

In the fall, Ben will attend Syracuse University to study music and music education.



Aliza Munch

Aliza Munch is a graduate of Lenox Memorial High School, where she was elected to the Student Council, was the Environmental Club president, a peer mentor, and was selected to be part of the 1Berkshire Youth Leadership Project. Aliza has also been on the Quiz Team, in the History Club, Investment Club and part of Active Minds, which works to promote mental health awareness and provide mental health resources to teens. In addition, Aliza was captain of three varsity sports – soccer, softball, and alpine skiing – and has been a *madricha*, or Young Teacher, at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire.

In her essay, Aliza wrote about her journey at Hevreh beginning as a young child passing out prayer books to congregants and eventually becoming a *madricha*, and how that shaped her Jewish identity. She wrote: "The most important lesson Hevreh has taught me, is to ask questions and think critically in order to partake in *tikkun olam*, repairing the world." Aliza also described her pride in having a positive impact on the children she taught and that the confidence she gained from teaching will guide her as she moves on to college. She concluded with this thought: "If I display and teach those younger than me to be kind, curious, and welcoming, then I will pass on some of the most valued lessons that I have learned from Judaism."

This fall, Aliza will enroll at George Washington University in Washington, DC.



You Can Assure Jewish Tomorrows with a Promise Today

Your legacy commitment will sustain valued Jewish organizations for generations to come.



Be remembered forever with a gift to Jewish Federation of the Berkshires in your will, trust, retirement account, or life insurance policy.

To learn more about leaving a legacy, contact Dara Kaufman at dkaufman@jewishberkshires.org, (413) 442-4360 ext. 12

Graphics provided by HGF's Life & Legacy Program

Newish & Jewish in the Berkshires

Are you a newcomer to the Berkshires?

Welcome! Join us at one of these casual gatherings to meet others who are also "Newish and Jewish" in the region, enjoy a glass of wine, and learn more about the Berkshire Jewish community. We look forward to connecting.

Thursday, August 8, 5:00-6:30 pm

Hosted by Cindy Chazan and Jay Leipzig, Pittsfield

Sunday, September 15, 5:00-6:30 pm

Hosted by Lisa Wendell and Kenneth Fishman, Lenox

Space is limited. Registration is limited to two events. Host address will be shared with registered guests the week before the event.

There will be no solicitation of any kind.

Advanced registration required:

www.tinyurl.com/NewishJewish2024 or

ktodd@jewishberkshires.org, (413) 442-4360, ext. 16.



THE STRENGTH OF A PEOPLE.
THE POWER OF COMMUNITY.

OBITUARIES

Leonard A. Greenwald, husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather

LENOX – Leonard A. Greenwald passed away. He was a lover of jazz, the great American songbook, old movies, crossword puzzles, travel by car with friends and family, and us. How lucky can you be? Thank you, Dad.

Leonard was the beloved soulmate since they were 14 years old and for 71 years until her death in 2016, of Helen T. Greenwald; loving father of Peter N., Jane, and Nancy R. Greenwald; father-in-law of Nancy Hoffman, Lawrence A. Wein, and Gary C. Freifeld; cherished grandfather of

Rebecca Hoffman Greenwald, Anna T., Mollie G., Joseph H. Wein and Charlotte L. and Ruth S. Freifeld; grand-father-in-law of Brandon Cohen and Marcus Howard; proud great-grandfather of two-month-old Hazel D. Cohen; and uncle of Victor and Julia Tolkan and their children.

Nathan Doctrow, engineer, tutor, artist, volunteer, ballroom dancer

ARLINGTON, MA – Long-time Berkshire County resident Nathan Doctrow passed away at home in Arlington on Thursday, June 27. Born in Cleveland, OH in 1929, he was raised, with his three older

siblings, in Cleveland and Cincinnati.

Known to many as Nate, he earned his BS in Electrical Engineering, with honors, from University of Cincinnati and began his 40-year career with General Electric by completing the Advanced Engineering Program. His career took him to several plants in the midwestern and eastern US and, along the way, he received graduate credits from UPenn, MIT, Brooklyn Polytech, and Union College. Joining GE in Pittsfield, he spent his first year as a GE resident at the MIT Instrumentation (now Draper) Laboratory, then moved his family to Pittsfield in 1957. He led the evaluation of

the first fire control system, later installed on the first Polaris missile submarine. For decades, Nate managed Systems Engineering groups in Guidance, Fire Control, and Advanced Engineering. He led a project called Missile Defense, representing Pittsfield GE, and worked with many other GE departments.

After retiring, living in Lenox, Nathan became known as a kind, patient, and skilled tutor to middle and high school students, primarily in math but also in chemistry and physics. He always enjoyed joining his many dear friends for skiing, hiking, golf, and bike trips around the Northeast, as well as music, theatre, and various celebrations. Left-handed Nathan expressed his artistic side through drawing, painting, and photography, with one dramatic photo, of an Alaskan glacier, featured in his photography club's exhibit at the Berkshire Museum and another, of Pontoosuc Lake in the fall, gracing the cover of an adult education catalog.

Nathan volunteered in his community, visiting people in nursing homes and hospice and, with his friends Rich and Reed, delivering food for Berkshire Bounty. He also served on committees at Temple Anshe Amunim, and his former Lenox condo complex. Nate was an avid ballroom dancer, from high school up until the age of 94.

Nathan, who moved to Arlington in 2020 to be closer to his daughter and son-in-law, was much loved for his integrity, kindness, calm, optimistic attitude, and consideration for others.

He is survived by his daughter Susan Doctrow (John Peterson); son Steven Doctrow; daughter Caroline Ollivier (Christian Montalbano) and their son Matthew Montalbano; brother David Doctrow (Janis); eight nieces and nephews and their spouses, children, and grandchildren. Former spouses are Lorraine Doctrow, mother of Susan and Steven, and Barbara Rubin, mother of Caroline. Nathan was predeceased by his brother Ken, sister-in-law, Hannah, sister Jean, and parents Hannah and Phillip.

As Nathan requested, his private burial ceremony included the song "Moonlight Serenade" by Glenn Miller and time for family and friends to share thoughts about him. Donations may be made to Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, 196 South Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201 (jewishberkshires.org) or Berkshire Bounty (berkshirebounty.org).

Michael Roy Filmus, well-known artist, fine woodworker, and skilled archer

GREAT BARRINGTON – Michael Roy Filmus, born in New York City in 1943, died on Wednesday, July 3 at his home.

Michael was a graduate of Boston University, where he studied philosophy and fine art. He then did further studies at the Art Students League in NYC and with his father, Tully Filmus, a realist painter of considerable renown. His mother, Gladys, was a dancer

and accomplished pianist. The fields, lakes, and streams of the Berkshires inspired Michael's landscapes. Some of his paintings are in notable collections including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Butler Museum of Art, and the Minneapolis Institute of Art. He was represented in NY by Hirschi and Adler Galleries, David Findlay Jr. Fine Arts, and the Arden Gallery in Boston.

Michael was an artist, fine woodworker, and skilled archer.

In the early 1990s, he moved to Great Barrington, where he designed and helped build a spacious home and gardens which he embellished with his own artful stonework and fanciful wood creations.

Great Barrington was where he met Barbara Mabel, who was to remain his loving and devoted mate for the rest of his life.

Those who knew Michael knew a person who was kind, humble, and extraordinarily talented. He had many loyal friends and they will miss him greatly.

Michael is survived by Barbara Mabel and his devoted brother, Stephen Filmus, also of Great Barrington.

Services took place at the Elmwood Cemetery in Great Barrington.

Donations may be made to HospiceCare in the Berkshires or the People's Pantry GB c/o Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home, 426 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

Martin Silver, 96, athletic, deeply connected to the State of Israel

GREAT BARRINGTON – Martin Silver, 96, passed away on Tuesday, June 4.

Born in the Bronx, on December 2, 1927, the younger son of Jean Novick and Joe Silver, Martin grew up with his elder brother, Edward, in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. The brothers attended Brooklyn Tech High School and Martin became a cadet at The New York State Maritime Academy.

In 1958, he married Denise Shalom. They divorced in 1986. He is survived by their son, Daniel; daughter, Yvette; son-in-law, Marc; and grandsons, Lance and David.

Martin later married Sheila Donath and they divorced in 2012.

He was an avid skier, cyclist, and tennis player into his late 80s. He performed volunteer work at local schools and a homeless shelter. All his life, Martin was deeply connected to the State of Israel, having served in Aliyah Bet on the ship Mala as an engineer, ferrying thousands of WW2 refugees to the newly independent state.

Martin developed lucrative markets for Israeli technical products in the US. Over the years, The Berkshire Eagle published his letters to the editor that made the case for Israel's right to exist. As a last act of giving, Martin donated his anatomical remains to The Chan School of Medicine of the University of Massachusetts. One of a kind, he will be remembered with great fondness.

FOOD AND DRINK IN THE BERKSHIRES

Noble's Farm Stand and Flower Shop

For ALL Your Floral Needs
Kathy Noble, Certified Florist

390 East New Lenox Rd
Pittsfield, MA 01201

413-443-2210

tweenbrook@verizon.net
noblesfarmstandandflowershop.com

Everyone can shop

Shop the Co-op
Eat in the Café
Join to Save

Williamstown, MA

Anyone can join

Specialty Beer & Wine

6 Consecutive Years

Low Cost Co-op Basics

Local Meat, Fish, Cheese

Allergy Friendly Items

Cafe & Grab-n-Go

Shop the Co-op | Eat in the Café | Join to Save

You're Invited

To our cooperatively owned, local, organic, sustainable, specialty & bulk item grocery store with healthy low cost choices & fresh goodness from prepared food departments that's serviced our community for 40+ years.

\$5 OFF \$50

Orders of \$50 or more

JV0724 Coupon

Expires 08/31/2024

Can not be combined with any other offer

Wild Oats Market
320 Main St, Williamstown, MA 01267

(413) 458-8060

wildoats.coop

Your Federation Presents

We Joined Together in Song at Shabbat Across the Berkshires

Our congregations came together on June 7 for Shabbat Across the Berkshires. This special Kabbalat Shabbat service brought together celebrants from all corners of the Berkshires for a special musical welcoming of the Sabbath! Thanks so much to Kneset Israel for hosting the service and the festive dinner that followed.



PINE COBBLE SCHOOL

est. 1937

A good beginning never ends.

facebook.com/pinecobble/

instagram.com/pine_cobble_school

pinecobble.org

413-458-4680

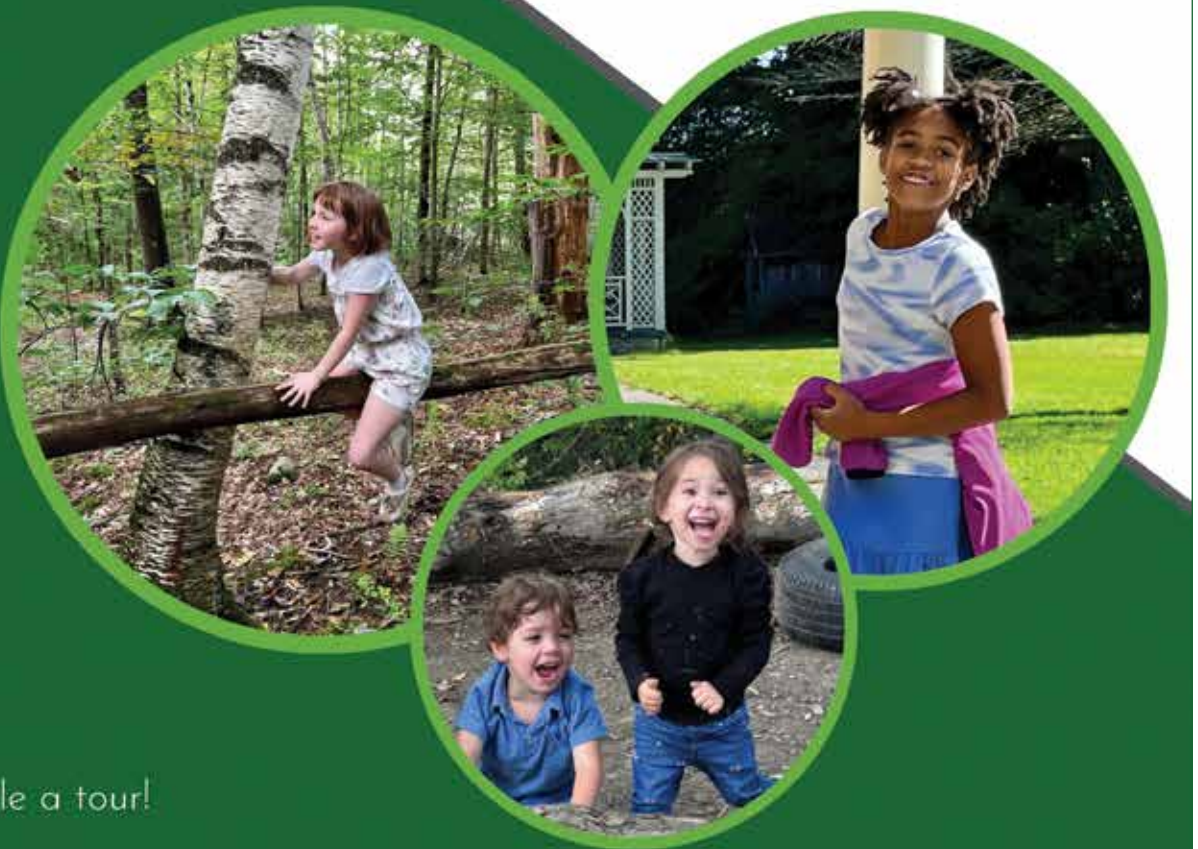
163 Gale Road, Williamstown, MA 01267



Scan here to schedule a tour!

ENROLLMENT NOW OPEN

Pre-school through 8th Grade



Our Mission: To cultivate in each student a lifelong passion for learning, a strong sense of self-worth, and respect for others throughout the community.



Your Federation Presents

'Tisha B'Av, Kabbalah and Tai Chi: An Interactive Experience,' led by Dr. Joel Friedman



PITTSFIELD – On Thursday, August 8 at 10:45 a.m., Dr. Joel Friedman will explore the concepts of the *Sh'ma* or Jewish Listening (JL) briefly in a discussion on how Tisha B'Av illustrates the consequences of not doing JL and how analysis of the *Sh'ma* in a profound way is the key to understanding JL and accessing God Moments.

The emerging concepts will be illustrated through a movement workshop focusing on listening to and balancing through the breath (*ruach*) the two primal energies: maleness (yang, *Shhh*) and femaleness (yin, *Mmm*).

Dr Friedman is a research scientist at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine who has also been studying the theological and mystical underpinnings of

Judaism. His lens is uniquely influenced by the synergy of his science/medical background, his 40 years of training and teaching Taoist-based Chinese internal martial/healing arts, and a passion for Jewish learning.

This free program will be presented as part of the Federation's Connecting With Community Series at Knesset Israel (16 Colt Road in Pittsfield). Following the program, we will continue the conversation with a home-cooked lunch around our community table. All are welcome! Advance lunch reservations are required and can be made by calling (413) 442-2200 before 9 a.m. on the day of the program. Suggested donation of \$3 for adults over age 60. \$7 for all others.

Federation makes these programs possible through the generous support of our community.



As my parents planted for me before I was born, so do I plant for those who come after me. – Talmud

Thank you to these individuals who through their gift to the Legacy Circle will ensure that the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires thrives long into the future. May your name be a Blessing, and may the example you set inspire others to create their own Jewish Legacy.

Anonymous (10)
Ed Abrahams
Norman Avnet*
Barbara Bashevkin*
Robert Bashevkin*
Linda J. L. Becker
Robert Berend*
Shelley Berend
Helene Berke
Lawrence Berke*
Lee & Sydelle Blatt
Betty Braun*
Cipora Brown
Barbara Cohen
Mark Cohen*
Mimi Cohen
C. Jeffrey & Judith Cook
Gerry & Lynn Denmark

Jonathan & Lara Denmark
Sheila K. Donath
Melva Eidelberg
Monroe England,* in
memory of Monroe B.
& Isabel England
Dr. Armand V.
Feigenbaum*
Dr. Donald S. Feigenbaum*
Steven Feiner
Diana & Stanley* Feld
Lynn & William* Fogle
Larry Frankel & Elisa
Schindler Frankel
Elaine Friedman
Eiran Gazit
Jeffrey Goldwasser &
Jonquil Wolfson

Jordan & Laura Green
Harold Grinspoon
Ellen Heffan
Ed Jaffe*
Phil* and Rhoda*
Kaminstein
Elihu Katzman
Marilyn Katzman
Dara Kaufman
Howard* & Nancy*
Kaufman
Lawrence Klein
Sarah Klein
Arthur Kriger*
Fred & Brenda Landes
Beth Laster-Nathan
Andrew S. Levine*
Toby H. Levine

Erna Lindner-Gilbert*
Amy Lindner-Lesser
Allan and Nan Lipton
Helen Maislen*
Ellen Masters
Stuart Masters
Jeffrey May* & Kara
Thornton
Bob & Harriett Miller
Estelle Miller
Robert Newman*
Wendy Robbins
Ken* & Fran* Rubenstein
Stella Schechter*
Arlene D. Schiff
Gary Schiff
Stephen & Deborah
Schreier

Ellen Schwaitzberg*
Martin Silver*
Sylvia Silverberg, in
memory of Jerome
Silverberg
Richard A. Simons &
Marcie Greenfield
Simons
Mark & Elisa Snowise
Harold Sparr*
Laurie Sukel
Rita and Sol Toscher
Memorial Fund
Lisa Fletcher-Udel
Edward Udel
Michael & Joan Ury
Mark & Judy Usow

Henry* & Beate*
Voremborg
Alexandra Warshaw
Florence Wineberg*
Rabbi Deborah Zecher &
Rabbi Dennis Ross

*Of blessed memory



WINGATE RESIDENCES
AT MELBOURNE PLACE
INDEPENDENT LIVING • ASSISTED LIVING
MEMORY CARE

A LIFESTYLE AS ACTIVE AS YOU WANT.

At Wingate Living, our world-class residences are built to elevate everyday life and make you feel right at home – without any of the stress of maintaining a home. And if your needs change, we're here for you every step of the way. See what the good life looks like. Schedule a visit and you'll discover all we have to offer.



wingateliving.com | 413.499.1992

Coming soon!

A LIVING LANDMARK
COMING TO THE BERKSHIRES!



Jewish Community Center
Chabad of the Berkshires

Grand Opening

SUMMER 2025



A Glimpse into a Bright Future



First ever
MIKVAH - SPA
in the Berkshires



First ever
**KOSHER
CAFE** in town



SYNAGOGUE
Shabbat & Holiday
Services



**CHILDREN
CENTER**
Fun & educational
activities



Kabbalah & Jewish
**MEDITATION
TERRACE**

One-Stop Simcha Venue • Renee Rotta Pollack Social Hall of Music • Lectures • Concerts • Children and Teenage Lounge •
Preschool of the Arts • Kosher take out • Judaic library • Family Support Groups • Pickleball court • Basketball court



PLEASE DONATE TODAY
to be a part of this exciting new chapter in
Jewish life. Visit Chabadberkshires.org or
call **413-499-9899** to contribute and learn
more about how you can get involved.



THE MAGNIFICENT new home of the Jewish
Center will stand as a bright beacon of Jewish
life for the region. It will serve as the primary
Jewish address for every stage of life and a venue
for Jewish people of every background and
affiliation, to celebrate life's milestones.

Your Federation Presents

Thank You, Major Donors!

You help us bring comfort, care, and connection to the Jewish community

On July 21, over 300 of our major donors gathered at Berkshire Hills Country Club in Pittsfield to celebrate another year of Federation's work and their vital support of all we accomplish.

Many thanks to event co-chairs Penny and Claudio Pincus, who spoke about the necessity of supporting Federation and acting locally in this time of challenges for Jews around the globe.

We also thank Alex Lederman for sharing his experiences growing up Jewish in the Berkshires, and how Federation's investment in his education and growth enabled him to make an impact working in the Jewish world as an Op-ed columnist and analyst for the Israel Policy Forum.

Cellist Maya Beiser uplifted us all with her passionate musicianship. She spoke movingly about her connection to her homeland in Israel, and shared how she has made a home in Berkshires, where

she continues her exploration of modern and classical music masterpieces in the recording studio in her barn. Maya will be performing Terry Riley's *In C* on Saturday, August 3 at MassMOCA's Loud Weekend festival. For more info, visit bangonacan.org.

Yasher koach to all the members of our Host Committee, whose support for Federation is unwavering. Their collective enthusiasm for our work, and their willingness to share their commitment to Federation, made all in attendance feel that they were among friends, as well as supporting an important cause.

Federation has launched Tzedakah Challenge 2024, a \$25,000 matching grant that will double the impact of all gifts received through the High Holy Days. For more on this opportunity, please see the story on page 8.



Penny & Claudio Pincus, event co-chairs



Dara Kaufman



Alex Lederman



Maya Beiser



President Arlene Schiff



Your Federation Presents



Thank you Host Committee!



OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE
OLLI
AT BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Join over 1,500 of the most creative, engaged, and active adults in the Berkshires (and beyond) for non-credit courses, events, and community. Online and in-person!

Learn more at berkshireolli.org or call 413-236-2190
Fall classes begin in September!

Talks
Classes
Trips
Special Events



Join us at the Community Table

ALL ARE WELCOME: Enjoy a delicious kosher lunch while making meaningful connections! Meals are available Monday and Thursday for pick up, in addition to **Thursday in-person lunches around our Community Table.** Thursday in-person lunches are often preceded by a free program or include a special theme and light program at the table. Check the schedule below.

Suggested donation of \$3 for adults over age 60; \$7 for all others.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED: Call the Federation's kitchen at (413) 442-2200 before 9 a.m. on day of lunch to reserve your spot at the table or to reserve a meal for pickup.

What's for Lunch?

(GF) Gluten-Free entree • (DF) Dairy-Free entree

MONDAY, JULY 29

Noon, Lunch...Potato pierogies with mushroom and onions, California blend vegetables, salad, multi-grain bread, and tapioca pudding.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1

10:45 a.m. program: Current Events Seminar with Professor Steve Rubin.

Noon in-person lunch...Chicken Caesar salad (GF) (DF), sweet corn gazpacho soup, whole wheat bread, and pineapple.

MONDAY, AUGUST 5

Noon, Lunch...Meatloaf (GF) (DF), peas and carrots, French fries, salad, roll, and tropical fruit salad.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 8

10:45 a.m. program: Tisha B'Av, Kabbalah and Tai Chi: An Interactive Experience with Joel Friedman.

Noon in-person lunch...Vegetable frittata (GF), roasted Brussels sprouts, vichyssoise (cold potato soup), pumpernickel bread, and rice pudding.

MONDAY, AUGUST 12

Noon, Lunch...Ratatouille (GF) (DF), rice pilaf, salad, hearty white bread, and strawberry shortcake.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 15

10:30 a.m. program: Broadway Hollywood Hitmakers: Schwartz, Menkin, & Shaiman with Laura Wetzler.

Noon in-person lunch...Sesame ginger chicken (GF) (DF), Oriental blend vegetables, brown rice noodles, miso soup, Chinese noodles, and almond cookie.

MONDAY, AUGUST 19

Noon, Lunch...Gnocchi with mushrooms & tuna, Italian green beans, salad, multi-grain bread, and grapes.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22

10:45 a.m. program: Jews in the Wilderness with Michael Hoberman.

Noon in-person lunch...Salmon loaf with cucumber sauce, California blend vegetables, summer vegetable soup, rye bread, and snickerdoodle cookie.

MONDAY, AUGUST 26

Noon, Lunch...Sunny orange chicken (GF) (DF), broccoli, white rice, salad, whole wheat bread, and fresh melon.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 29

10:45 a.m. program: Seniors Acting Up directed by Milton Lestz.

Noon in-person lunch...Pasta primavera, herb roasted chickpeas, salad, garlic bread, and vanilla pudding.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

Closed for Memorial Day.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

Noon in-person lunch...Yellow squash and spinach quiche (GF), rutabaga latkes with applesauce, salad, multi-grain bread, and blueberry crisp.

Special theme: Jewish Food Series, *The Berkshires Farm Table Cookbook* with Rob and Elisa Spungen Bildner. Breaking-of-the-Fast for Yom Kippur, Rutabaga Latkes with Applesauce.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

Noon, Lunch...Meatloaf (GF) (DF), Brussels sprouts, hash browns, salad, whole wheat bread, and apple.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Noon in-person lunch...Lemon Za'atar chicken (GF) (DF), honey roasted carrots, couscous, salad, pita bread, and poached apricots.

Special theme: Jewish Food Series with Elizabeth Baer. Pre-Fast Meal before Yom Kippur, Lemon Za'atar Chicken.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Noon, Lunch...Baked macaroni and cheese, meadow blend vegetables, mixed bean soup, roll, and brownie.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Noon in-person lunch...Roasted cod (GF) (DF), Persian jeweled rice, Brussels sprouts, salad, hearty white bread, and pear compote.

Special theme: Jewish Food Series with Carol Goodman Kaufman. Sukkot or Simchat Torah, Persian Jeweled Rice with Pomegranate Seeds.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Noon, Lunch...Veggie burger, tater tots, lettuce and tomato, Tuscan tomato soup, hamburger bun, and cherry pie.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Noon in-person lunch...Sweet and sour brisket (GF) (DF), potato kugel, tzimmes, matza ball soup, challah, and apple cake.

Special theme: Jewish Food Series, *The View From My Kitchen Window* with Julie Gale. Rosh HaShanah, Apple Cake.

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 30

Noon, Lunch...Butternut squash risotto, roasted cauliflower, salad, pumpernickel bread, and chocolate chip cookie.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3

Closed for Rosh Hashanah.

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, August 2 7:52 p.m.
Friday, August 9 7:43 p.m.
Friday, August 16 7:33 p.m.
Friday, August 23 7:22 p.m.
Friday, August 30 7:11 p.m.
Friday, September 6 6:59 p.m.
Friday, September 13 6:46 p.m.
Friday, September 20 6:34 p.m.

MAZEL TOV!

Ariel "Ari" Caine, named valedictorian of Monument Mountain Regional High School's Class of 2024. Caine is the child of **Dr. Hanan** and **Dr. Rebecca Caine** of Richmond. They will be attending the University of Rochester to study biology and theater.

Zach Cutler on his graduation from Utica College.

Rabbi Scott Saulson and Di Wulfsohn on their daughter's wedding.

Shiva Tantri who celebrated his bar mitzvah in June at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire. Shiva lives in Lakeville, CT with his mom, dad, older brother and dog.

The graduating seniors who celebrated their confirmation at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire in June. Graduates are **Aliza Munch, Benjamin Gross, Ella Cohen, Mia Cohen, Makayla Wax, Megan Linick, Levi Citrin,** and **Shira Sawyer.**

Hannah Wohl and Jesse Gelburd on the birth of **Leah Gelburd-Wohl**. Proud grandparents are **Alba Passerini and Charles Wohl, Gail Gelburd and Joel Meyers.**

Ilse Browner on her 99th birthday.

Ellen and Stuart Masters on receiving Knesset Israel's 2024 Award of Merit.

Jayson Tanzman being selected as Rotary Club's Donald Butler Award recipient.

Josh Cutler named Member of the Year at Temple Anshe Amunim.

Mike Duffy and Briana Pudlo on their marriage.

Mali Janowitz on her 100th birthday.

Martin Lecker and Terri Needle on the bat mitzvah of their granddaughter **Charlotte Mabel Cates.**

Sherri James Buxton, who was honored in July for teaching at Berkshire Music School for 35 years.

Recovering from an illness or injury? Cooking becoming difficult?



KOSHER MEALS ON WHEELS:

Meals are available for delivery to qualified individuals to help extend their home independence and health. There is no income requirement, just a simple assessment through Elder Services will get your meal deliveries started, if you qualify.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Jill Goldstein at (413) 442-4360, Ext 17, j.goldstein@jfswm.org.

WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

Meals-on-wheels drivers are always appreciated. Contact Molly Meador at (413) 442-4360, Ext. 14, mmeador@jewishberkshires.org to inquire.

Meals and programs are made possible by the generous support of our community. The kosher lunch and meals on wheels program is in collaboration with Elder Services of Berkshire county.



THE **STRENGTH** OF A PEOPLE.
THE **POWER** OF COMMUNITY.

ENSURE A VIBRANT, CARING & SECURE JEWISH COMMUNITY MAKE YOUR GIFT TO FEDERATION'S 2024 CAMPAIGN TODAY!

Your gift will help bring dignity and care to the vulnerable, build and strengthen the Jewish identity of our youth and young adults, support vital community programs, confront rising antisemitism, and create meaningful and secure Jewish life across the Berkshires, in Israel, and around the world.



JEWISH LIFE FOR YOUNG FAMILIES

You help young families embrace Jewish values and traditions while building a supportive community with Jewish peers through family programming, PJ Library, and volunteer opportunities.



RESOURCES TO FIGHT ANTISEMITISM

You help young people stand up against hate through anti-bias education in our public schools. You also combat antisemitism and the BDS movement through community programming, local advocacy, and security resources.

DIGNITY & COMPASSION

You provide older adults and homebound individuals with nutritious meals and stimulating programming served up with a side of companionship and compassion through our *Connecting With Community* program and Kosher Meals on Wheels.



JEWISH EDUCATION & VALUES

You nurture a strong Jewish future by providing a high-quality, meaningful, and affordable Jewish education for hundreds of children through critical grants to all of our local Jewish religious schools.



A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

You strengthen, sustain, and connect our community through hundreds of educational programs, holiday celebrations, and the *Berkshire Jewish Voice*, which bring people together and engage them in meaningful Jewish life.



A STRONG JEWISH IDENTITY

You help young people build strong Jewish identities and become future leaders through scholarships for Jewish camp and Israel experiences, as well as leadership development and holiday meals on campus.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT & EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

You help individuals facing unexpected challenges and life transitions receive the support and resources they need. You also provide a safety net of emergency assistance in our local community.



COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND ADVOCACY

You help provide a proactive voice in our community, schools, government, and media, as well as advocacy to address and respond to antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiment in our community.



A SECURE JEWISH COMMUNITY

You help keep our community and our institutions safe through ongoing security trainings, building assessments, security grants, a community alert system, and the sharing of best practices to ensure we can freely and securely celebrate our heritage, faith, and culture.



ISRAEL IN TIMES OF CRISIS

When crisis hits in Israel or around the world, you help mobilize local resources to respond with immediate relief, advocacy, and longer-term recovery. From the Israel Crisis to the war in Ukraine, you help deliver an SOS response.

A CLOSE & CARING RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL

You help connect the Berkshire Jewish Community with Israel through our Afula-Gilboa partnership. You also provide programs for at-risk students, shelter for abused women, and support services for disabled youth in Israel.



FOOD SECURITY, HEALTHCARE, & WINTER RELIEF

The war in Ukraine and safe resettlement of Jews fleeing the region has been difficult, but you help provide shelter, transportation, blankets, and heaters. You also bring food, home health aides, and medicine to those who need it most.



DONATE ONLINE AT JEWISHBERKSHIRES.ORG. THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

LOCAL NEWS

“Israel-Palestine Summer Film Series” at CBI

NORTH ADAMS – On Sunday, August 11 at 2 p.m., join Congregation Beth Israel of the Berkshires for a free screening of the last film in its “Israel-Palestine Summer Film Series,” *5 Broken Cameras*. The film will be followed by discussion and dialogue.

CBI invites the Berkshire Jewish community to learn more about history and current affairs through films that confront difficult and controversial topics. The audience will be invited to engage in facilitated discussion that will follow the Public Conversations Project’s model for “a conversation in which our primary goal is to pursue mutual understanding rather than agreement,” as well as communication guidelines from Encounter, a program that introduces rabbis and rabbinical students to Palestinians and teaches participants to hear one another in meaningful ways.

RSVP for the film at cbiberkshires.com/series/film-series/

CBI This Summer

Kabbalat Shabbat Services – Friday, August 16, August 23, September 6, and September 20 at 7 p.m. All are welcome to celebrate Shabbat with prayer, song, poetry, and heart. The CBI band and choir bring beautiful harmonies to Kabbalat Shabbat.

Shabbat Morning Services on Saturday, July 27, August 10, August 31, and September 14 at 9:30 a.m. Spiritual tools include traditional liturgy, contemporary poetry, chant, and song... as well as spectacular views from the sanctuary, which connect all with the natural world and with our Source.

Tisha B’Av, Monday August 12 at 8 p.m. Join CBI in Jewish tradition’s deep dive into communal mourning as we remember the destruction of both Temples and many other tragedies and traumas throughout history and persisting into the present. Tisha B’Av is the spiritual “low point” of the year; from here begins the seven-week ascent toward the Days of Awe.

RSVP for all services at cbiberkshires.com/calendar-of-events.

Join CBI at Tanglewood this Summer!

LENOX – On Sunday, August 18 at 12:30 p.m., join Congregation Beth Israel of the Berkshires at Tanglewood for a potluck picnic on the lawn (concert begins at 2:30 p.m.).

Enjoy a glorious concert featuring Yo Yo Ma on cello, with Earl Lee conducting Beethoven’s Symphony No. 7. Purchase lawn tickets from Tanglewood and meet on the lawn – RSVP to president@cbiberkshires.com so CBI will know you are coming and direct you to their location.



Hadassah on Call

By Joanna Fribush / Berkshire Hills Hadassah

The Berkshire Hills Chapter of Hadassah supports National Hadassah’s response to the Israel-Hamas war by raising funds and keeping our membership informed on Hadassah’s work in healing and curing wounded soldiers and citizens. On July 11 at Knesset Israel’s garden, our chapter, the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation co-sponsored “Working Toward a Peaceful Future,” a program in which National Hadassah leaders addressed advocacy, antisemitism, and Hadassah’s healing role in the war.

In response to the October 7 savage attack and Israel’s urgent need for expanded rehabilitation facilities, Hadassah opened its new Gandel Rehabilitation Center at Hadassah Hospital Mount Scopus six months earlier than planned. Within 14 days after the attack, workers and volunteers opened the War-Wounded Department to treat complex

and severe injuries for immediate and long-term physical and emotional care. Posttraumatic stress disorder – PTSD – is an increasing problem.

Constructing the eight-storied Gandel Center continues while immediate injuries are being treated. This new building will triple the Mount Scopus campus in

size and increase Hadassah Medical Organization’s rehab facilities by 280 percent. It will provide multiple facilities for all types of treatment including high-technology walking labs, robotics and computers to analyze problems and two hydrotherapy pools with floors that can drop down to allow wheelchair access.

Our Chapter appreciates and supports all the effort Israel is putting forth to endure these most difficult times. May the words of director of Hadassah Mount Scopus, Dr. Tamar Elram, come true: “We’ve planned this center for years and have opened it when Israel needs it most. I pray it will help our patients redefine hope, health and life, and rehabilitate the bodies, minds and spirits not only of those whom we treat, but of our entire nation.”

Contact Berkshirehillshadassah@gmail.com for information on our local chapter.

JTS in the Berkshires Continues Its Summer 2024 Lecture Series

LENOX – The Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) in the Berkshires series continues its thought-provoking events for the summer of 2024.

These 90-minute lectures promise to engage audiences with insightful presentations on various aspects of Jewish history, literature, and tradition. Both will take place at the Elayne P. Bernstein Theater at Shakespeare & Company at 70 Kemble Street in Lenox starting at 11 a.m.

These events in this series are presented by JTS in partnership with Knesset Israel and in cooperation with Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, with support from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

On Friday, August 9, **Dr. Sarah Wolf**, Assistant Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics at JTS, leads a captivating discussion on “Living with Uncertainty: Truth and Doubt in Rabbinic Literature.” Discover how ancient rabbinic texts grappled with timeless questions of truth and uncertainty, and explore their relevance in today’s world.



Yitz Landes

On Friday, August 23, join **Dr. Yitz Landes**, Assistant Professor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures at JTS, for an insightful exploration of the concept of Torah throughout Jewish history. Delve into the ways ancient rabbis defined and preserved Torah, and reflect on its significance for contemporary Jewish life.

Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased online at inspired.jtsa.edu/Berkshires2024.

Tickets may also be purchased day of, but advance registration is highly recommended. For questions, please contact Alisa Braun at (212) 678-8819 or sabraun@jtsa.edu. For more information about the speakers and sessions, visit jtsa.edu/event/jts-berkshires-summer-2024/.

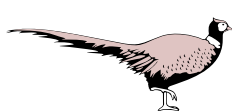


LIFE CARE & YOU
AT KIMBALL FARMS

You deserve a Life Care community with a reputation for stimulating social experiences, exceptional service, dedicated staff and a welcoming, comfortable environment. No matter what your care needs are, the best will be available. Kimball Farms offers all this and more:

- Financial security and long-term predictability
- Estate preservation
- Quality care no matter what your health care needs are
- Guaranteed access to health care accommodations
- Great personal peace of mind
- The gift of a lifetime for your loved ones

To learn more, see more and meet people who do more, please call 413-613-0070 or visit www.Retire-to-KimballFarms.com



Kimball Farms
Life Care
AN AFFILIATE OF
INTEGRITUS HEALTHCARE



235 Walker Street, Lenox, MA • 413-613-0070

PJ LIBRARY FAMILY FUN
SAVE THE DATES -SUMMER & FALL 2024

Sunday, August 4, 2024
Noah Aronson, Live in Concert!
7:30-9 pm at Lenox Memorial High School, Lenox

Friday, August 9, 2024
Splash into Shabbat
5-6:30 pm at Margaret Lindley Park, Williamstown

Sunday, September 15, 2024
PJ Celebrates Rosh Hashanah
10:30 am-12 pm at a Location to be Announced

Sunday, October 20, 2024
PJ Library Fall Sukkot Festival
2-4 pm at Whitney’s Farm in Cheshire

Receive FREE Jewish books and meet local families by becoming a part of our Berkshire PJ Library Program. Visit jewishberkshires.org/pj-library to enroll your child today!

LOCAL NEWS

John Heilemann to Speak at 57th Annual Feigenbaum Lecture at Temple Anshe Amunim

PITTSFIELD – The 57th Annual Hilda Vallin Feigenbaum Memorial Foundation Lecture will be held on Sunday, August 25, at 7:30 p.m. at Temple Anshe Amunim in Pittsfield. This year's speaker is John Heilemann, National Affairs Analyst for NBC News and MSNBC and creator of Showtime's *The Circus*, who will be speaking on "Election 2024: The Future of Our Democracy."

The lecture, organized by Temple Anshe Amunim's Hilda Vallin Feigenbaum Memorial Lecture Committee, is free and open to the public. The lecture will also be livestreamed for those unable to attend in person. Registration and streaming details are now available on the Temple website at ansheamunim.org.

As part of his on-air duties with NBC News and MSNBC, Heilemann appears regularly on *Morning Joe*, *The Last Word*, *Deadline: White House*, *The 11th Hour*, and other programs. During the 2016 election season, Heilemann served as a managing editor of Bloomberg Politics and host of MSNBC and Bloomberg TV's daily political news and analysis program *With All Due Respect*.

Heilemann has co-authored two New York Times number 1 best-selling books, *Game Change* and *Double Down*, widely seen as the definitive accounts of the 2008 and 2012 elections, respectively. *Game Change* was adapted by HBO Films into a movie of the same name, which debuted in 2012 and went on to win five Emmy Awards, three Golden Globes, and a Peabody Award. Mr. Heilemann's first book, *Pride Before The Fall: The Trials of Bill Gates and the End of the Microsoft Era*, was named one of the best books of 2001 by *Businessweek*.

"Mr. Heilemann is one of the nation's leading experts on government and the presidency," said Josh Cutler, chair of the Feigenbaum Lecture Series, "and his visit to our Temple and our community could not be timelier to provide our audience with valuable insight on the election in November and the future of our country. Mr. Heilemann's visit allows us to celebrate the civic and spiritual legacy of Hilda Vallin Feigenbaum, and honor the love and dedication of her sons, Dr. Armand Feigenbaum and Dr. Donald Feigenbaum (both of blessed memory), who established this lecture series in perpetuity as a living tribute to their mother's spirit."

About the Hilda Vallin Feigenbaum Lecture Series

The Hilda Vallin Feigenbaum Memorial Foundation continues to enhance the spiritual and intellectual life of Temple Anshe Amunim and the larger community. The Foundation has sponsored lectures by leaders in American government, literature, theology, and journalism including such personalities as Julian Bond, Representative Barney Frank, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Bernard Kalb, Ambassadors Daniel Kurtzer and Martin Indyk, Steven Emerson, Howard Dean, Bret Stephens, and David Gergen.

For more information, please call the Temple office at: (413) 442-5910 or visit the Temple's website at ansheamunim.org. Temple Anshe Amunim at 26 Broad Street in Pittsfield is an accessible building.

Chabad to host Jodi Rudoren of The Forward



Jodi Rudoren

LENOX – On Saturday, August 24 at noon, Chabad of the Berkshires welcomes Jodi Rudoren, editor-in-chief of *The Forward*. Following Shabbat services at the Lenox Community Center, Rudoren will speak to the theme "Jewish Challenges, Jewish Solutions in the Wake of the Unthinkable."

Jodi Rudoren became editor-in-chief of *The Forward* in 2019, after more than two decades at *The New York Times*, including a stint as Jerusalem bureau chief. Under her leadership, journalists at *The Forward* have won record numbers of Rockower Awards from the American Jewish Press Association, as well as prizes from New York's Deadline Club, L.A.'s Press Club, the Religion News Association and the Society for Features Journalism. Jodi herself won the RNA's top commentary award in 2022 and was a Deadline Club finalist for her weekly column, "Looking Forward."

Rudoren is a contributor to the anthology, *Jewish Priorities: Sixty-five proposals for the future of our people*. She grew up in Newton, Massachusetts.

The Lenox Community Center is at 45 Walker Street.

"Israeli and Jewish Leadership in a Changing World, From Economics to Security," with Efraim Chalamish



Efraim Chalamish

LENOX – On Saturday, August 31 at noon, Chabad of the Berkshires welcomes Efraim Chalamish, professor of international economic law and founder of the Global Center for Economic Development and Security.

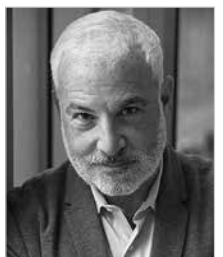
Dr. Chalamish is a thought leader on corporate strategy and international disputes in various sectors, including

energy, technology and financial services. With more than two decades of professional experience, he has practiced international law in Israel, Paris, and New York, and has served as a media contributor and columnist. Additionally, he has acted as an independent expert and advisor to multinational companies and governments on corporate strategy and international disputes in various sectors, including energy, technology and financial services.

His writing has appeared in the *Jerusalem Post*, *Huffington Post*, *The Jewish Week*, *Haaretz*, and many other publications.

The Lenox Community Center is at 45 Walker Street.

Compelling Speakers at Kneset Israel after Shabbat Services



Justin Cammy

PITTSFIELD – This summer, Kneset Israel hosts two speakers after its Shabbat services.

The Worlds of Yiddish

On Saturday, August 3 at 12:30 p.m. at Kneset Israel after Shabbat services, there will be an intriguing discussion titled "The Worlds of Yiddish"

led by Dr. Justin Cammy.

Is Yiddish experiencing a renaissance or is it in decline? What is gained and lost by associating Yiddish with a Diasporic sensibility? Discover how virtual "Yiddishlands" are emerging in unexpected places and what they reveal about contemporary Jewish culture.

Justin Cammy is a professor of Jewish Studies and World Literatures at Smith College. This event promises to delve into profound questions about the past, present, and future of Yiddish. Don't miss it!

Friendship and the Interpersonal in Jewish Mystical Tradition

On Saturday, August 17 at 12:30 p.m., discover the profound insights of Jewish mystical tradition on friendship. Join **Lawrence Fine**, Irene Kaplan Leiwant Chair and professor emeritus of Religion at Mount Holyoke College, for a compelling talk titled "Friendship and the Interpersonal in Jewish Mystical Tradition." He will explore the significance and practice of friendship in Judaism. Drawing from Kabbalistic and Hasidic traditions, Fine will delve into notions of friendship between individuals and within collective communities.

Visit KnesetIsrael.org/RSVP for details and to register. Kneset Israel is at 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield.

Late Summer Fun: Join Kneset Israel for an Informal Family Event!

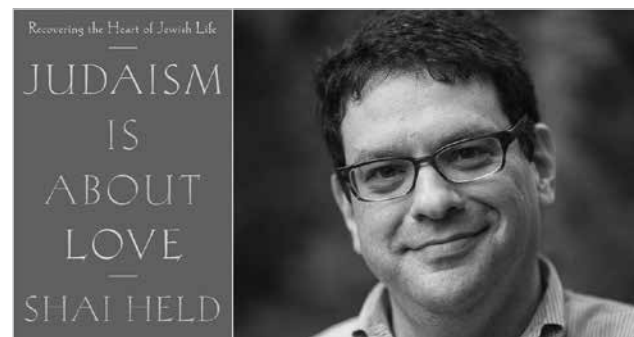
PITTSFIELD – The Families Together committee at Kneset Israel announces the return of a beloved late summer institution!

On Monday, September 2 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., join a friendly afternoon of fun, lawn games, and a kosher cookout on the KI lawn. Make connections with other families while enjoying kosher BBQ and vegetarian options.

This Families Together event welcomes all, with pre-registration required at knesetisrael.org/event/RSVP. Supported by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Come celebrate the end of summer with and embrace the joy of community and togetherness! Rain or shine.

Book Talk Event with Rabbi Shai Held at Kneset Israel



PITTSFIELD – On Sunday, September 15 (time TBD), Berkshire congregations Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, Kneset Israel, and The Berkshire Minyan will together present a special book talk event featuring Rabbi Shai Held, president and dean at the Hadar Institute.

Rabbi Held will discuss his latest book, *Judaism Is About Love: Recovering the Heart of Jewish Life*, which explores the profound role of love in Jewish theology, spirituality, and ethics.

This event will be an engaging exploration of Judaism's core principles by one of America's foremost Jewish thinkers. For updates and more information, visit knesetisrael.org/event/ShaiHeld

Rabbi Shai Held is renowned as a philosopher, theologian, and Bible scholar who has been recognized by *Newsweek* as one of America's 50 most influential rabbis.

Concepts of Art
65 Church Street
Lenox, MA 01240
(413) 637-4845
www.conceptsofart.com

Free Pack Of Shabbat Candles
With every purchase of \$100 or more

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home, Inc.

426 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230
(413) 528-1900 / Fax: (413) 528-5301
Toll Free 1-877-823-1901
Web site: www.finnertyandstevens.com

Director
Meghan L. Finnerty

Schilling TV

Custom Home Theater
Audio / Video
Specialists

Since 1948 **413-443-9235** Sales & Service
WE SERVE ALL BERKSHIRE COUNTY

JEWISH EDUCATION IN THE BERKSHIRES

Four Local Religious Schools Now Enrolling Students

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires has a strong commitment to Jewish youth, helping to provide a high-quality Jewish education for more than 121 children and young adults through \$70,000 in grants to congregational religious schools across the Berkshires.

Berkshire County is fortunate to have a diverse Jewish community that offers educational opportunities encompassing a wide range of approaches and family preferences. This section offers an overview of local Jewish schools.

Please note that owing to the BJV's publishing schedule, some key dates and events for local religious schools may not have been finalized at press time. *Please contact the congregations for complete details.*

Congregation Beth Israel

North Adams

Congregation Beth Israel of the Berkshires is a welcoming, inclusive, and innovative congregation with a long history and deep roots, now a part of the Reform movement.

Jewish Journeys After-School Program

Jewish Journeys is an after-school educational program for ages 5-13 in which children explore Jewish culture, religion, and identity through exuberant, creative learning. The purpose is to inspire joy in being Jewish so that children experience Jewish life, learning and, community as vibrant and meaningful parts of who they are. Classes take place on Monday afternoons, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., beginning Monday, September 9.

At Jewish Journeys, students learn about Jewish culture, holidays, rituals, values, prayers, texts and Hebrew language in a fun and inclusive environment through art, drama, music, cooking and other hands-on activities. CBI offers two semesters and students may enroll for one or both semesters.

A Jewish Journeys afternoon begins with free time and snacks, then continues with two class periods divided by "Tefilah Time," during which all ages enjoy spirited singing and prayer together. Younger students (grades K-2) explore Judaism by acting out stories, making art projects, singing, movement, and tactile learning to gain familiarity with Hebrew letters, vowels, words and concepts. Class time ends at 5:15 p.m. for grades K-2.

For grades 3 through 7, students choose from Hebrew classes suited to their level as well as Jewish Studies elective classes geared to their interests. Previous elective offerings have included Jewish Food & Cooking, Jewish Ceramic Art, and Jewish World Music. Each elective runs for 12 weeks and culminates with a special Shabbat service in which students of all ages (K-7) share their learning with parents, friends, and community.

Jewish Journeys families also gather on holidays

and Shabbat in various locations throughout the region, in both private homes and community venues, for activities such as a Shabbat by a lake, a backyard music jam, a Hanukkah bonfire, or cooking a meal for the hungry in a community kitchen.



Fun in the CBI garden

A partnership between Congregation Beth Israel of the Berkshires and Nefesh, Jewish Journeys welcomes children and families from all backgrounds – Jewish, interfaith and secular families as well as those who are simply curious and want to learn more about Judaism. For more information and to register, visit cbiberkshires.com/education or contact Rabbi Jarah Greenfield at learning@cbiberkshires.com. Registration is open until August 20.

The Jewish Journeys program is funded in part by Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Temple Anshe Amunim

Pittsfield

Temple Anshe Amunim's religious school offers a dynamic and engaging educational experience for students of all ages. This Reform congregation's program includes, but is not limited to the following:

- **Music and Torah Discussions:** Led by teacher and coordinator Mike Duffy, incorporating music and interactive discussions on Torah portions, making learning both fun and meaningful. Mike also offers a high energy Tot Shabbat experience every month.
- **Bar/Bat Mitzvah Preparation:** Personalized Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation is provided by Mike Duffy and Rabbi Scott Saulson, ensuring each student is ready for this important milestone.
- **Online Hebrew Tutoring:** TAA offers online Hebrew tutoring with experienced tutors, covering everything from basic letters to foundational prayers.
- **Family Sessions:** Regular family sessions and lessons with Rabbi Scott Saulson foster a deeper connection to Jewish traditions and values.

- **Collaborative Community:** TAA collaborates closely with Knesset Israel, building a strong, united Jewish community in Pittsfield.

To learn more or register, visit ansheamunim.org, email TAA at templeoffice@ansheamunim.org, or call (413) 442-5910.

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire

Great Barrington

Religious School at Hevreh

When you arrive at Hevreh on a Sunday morning, you will be welcomed by music and laughter, and an enthusiastic greeting of "Boker Tov, Hevreh!" The Religious School day begins in community, singing and praying together accompanied by the Boker Tov Hevreh Band.

Director of Education Beth Robbins works closely with Rabbi Jodie Gordon and experienced faculty to offer a religious education program built on the value of Jewish joy, moving through the Jewish calendar as part of an engaged and inclusive community at this Reform congregation. Teachers are creative and dedicated to sparking a love of Jewish learning in each student. The curriculum highlights Jewish holidays, ethics and values, text, lifecycle and ritual, and includes developmentally appropriate methods of learning for each class.

This year, Hevreh looks forward to welcoming all returning students on Sunday, September 15.

Programs

Kindergarten – 7th grade: Religious School meets weekly on Sunday mornings from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Hebrew Skills meets weekly on Wednesdays from 4 to 5:30 p.m. for grades 3 through 7. There are limited options available for 1:1 remote Hebrew instruction. Hevreh welcomes interfaith families, LGBTQ+ families, new members, first timers, neighbors, and friends to explore all the education programs have to offer.

Preschool Age Children: Tiny Talmidim is Hevreh's signature monthly program for caregivers and children. Together, caregivers and their pre-school aged children explore the Jewish calendar through movement, music, cooking, and crafts related to Jewish holidays and Jewish values.

Teen Programs: Hevreh offers multiple points of entry for post-B'nai Mitzvah students. Students in 8th-12th grade will have the chance to study with the rabbi, travel together, and take on new leadership roles in the community as part of the Madrikh program where teens assist in religious school classrooms. In addition to the Pre-Confirmation (8th grade) and Confirmation Class (9th-12th grade) programs taught by the rabbi, students will also have opportunities to relax, explore the Berkshires, and socialize together in activities led by the teen program leader.



Advisory services offered through Renaissance Investment Group, LLC, an investment advisor registered with the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission.



Renaissance Investment Group, LLC
A Stratos Private Wealth Partner

MANAGING YOUR ASSETS AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Every step of the way

The skilled professionals at Renaissance Investment Group, LLC can help you balance your investment management needs with important financial counseling, something not all firms can do. We help you navigate all of life's transitions so you can enjoy the best things in life, knowing we are with you **and your family** every step of the way.

- Expert counseling on funding your retirement
- Withdrawal strategies and benefits timing for your non-working years
- Considering long-term care
- Planning for the next generation

SCHEDULE A MEETING WITH ONE OF OUR ADVISORS | 413-445-2481 | 45 WALKER ST, LENOX | RIGLLC.COM

Superior Memorials, dba/

Ancestry Memorials, Inc.

234 Wahconah Street
P.O. Box 1362 • Pittsfield, MA 01202

(413) 499-1750

Monuments, Markers, Plaques, Lettering, Etc

Flynn & Dagnoli Funeral Homes

Flynn & Dagnoli-Bencioenga 5 Elm St. Pittsfield, MA 01201 (413) 442-1733	Flynn & Dagnoli-Montagna Central Chapel West Chapel 74 Marshall St. 521 West Main St. North Adams, MA 01247 (413) 663-6523
---	--

Rinaldo Dagnoli Nicholas Flynn Donato Dagnoli

Serving Berkshire County for three generations.



Heirlooms Jewelry

Wearable history in Roman glass & silver.

Exquisite, affordable jewelry from Israel.

heirloomsjewelry.com

The Mews, 36 Main St., Stockbridge, MA ■ 413.298.4436

JEWISH EDUCATION IN THE BERKSHIRES

To learn more or to schedule a one-on-one appointment and tour, please contact: Beth Robbins at info@hevreh.org. To register, visit hevreh.org/religiousschool.

Knesset Israel Pittsfield

The Knesset Israel Hebrew School, a part of this Conservative congregation's Families Together program, welcomes students from preschool through twelfth grade to dynamic classes where they learn Hebrew, Torah, Jewish studies, history, and culture. The school prides itself on its intimate classes and extraordinary faculty. In addition to teaching skills for meaningful Jewish living, the school also incorporates a 'hidden curriculum' helping students learn to value and prioritize their own involvement in Jewish community life.

Knesset Israel is committed to ensuring the accessibility of its programming to families of diverse backgrounds seeking Jewish education – including single parent and blended families, LGBTQ parents and students, people with special needs, Jews of Color, and interfaith families. Because the synagogue is passionately egalitarian and committed to the future of the Jewish people, no student or family is ever turned away for financial reasons. Currently Knesset Israel Hebrew School is a benefit of membership, and there are no school fees.

Family Programming

Exciting programs for the whole family linking themes of the Jewish holidays and year with contemporary social issues take place on select Sundays and Wednesday afternoons throughout the year. Open to non-members as well as members, these programs are a great way for families to experience the Knesset Israel community. Some sessions incorporate activities for everyone together; others separate the groups by age to enable targeted classes for adults and children. A Back-to-School barbecue takes place on Labor Day weekend, this year on September 2 – you may register at knessetisrael.org/rsvp. This aspect of KI's program

is funded by a generous gift from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.



KI students show their support for Israel

Primary School

Children age 5 and below are invited to attend the Tot Shabbat program, offered monthly. This exciting opportunity will incorporate music, games, stories, and an introduction to the Jewish worship experience.

Preschool and kindergarten students enjoy programming on Shabbat mornings. A highly qualified teacher facilitates a class that features song, movement, and Shabbat-friendly crafts. Students in first and second grade also meet on Shabbat mornings to begin their studies of Hebrew, prayer, mitzvot and Jewish holidays. Purposeful Play gives our youngest pupils a chance to learn creatively and experientially. A team of experienced primary school educators infuses this program with joy.

Elementary School

Grades 3 through 6 meet twice a week, on Shabbat mornings and on Wednesday afternoons. Over the course of their elementary school years, students study stories from the Torah, lifecycle,

holidays and Jewish values. Grades 6 and 7 explore facets of ancient and modern Jewish history. All students at this age level also participate in Junior Congregation on a weekly basis. Wednesday afternoon classes use formal and informal techniques to help students learn to read Hebrew fluently and accurately; by the end of 5th grade students are chanting from the Torah scroll.

B'nai Mitzvah

The crown jewel of KI's education programs, the intensive b'nai mitzvah program engages students deeply in developing the skills and enthusiasm they will need for lifelong leadership of Jewish religious life. Instruction includes chanting Torah and Haftarah and leading all Shabbat services. Students also complete a mitzvah project and prepare a short sermon for the morning of the celebration. Graduates of this program report feeling comfortable in all sorts of synagogue services. Many have emerged as leaders in their campus communities and in congregations across the globe.

High School

Students convene weekly to study with expert educators. High school students also have the opportunity to serve as teaching assistants in our Hebrew School, especially in Junior Congregation, the bar/bat mitzvah program, and Purposeful Play programs.

Registration for Knesset Israel's Hebrew School takes place during the summer months. Hebrew School education is a benefit of membership at Knesset Israel, and new members are always welcome. Non-members are also welcome to enroll their children in exchange for a tuition payment. Either way, Hebrew School can be an excellent gateway to becoming more involved in the community. Interested families are invited to contact Rabbi David Weiner at (413) 445-4872 or rabbidweiner@outlook.com.

Knesset Israel's Hebrew School is supported by the Berkshire Jewish Film Festival, Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, and contributions by KI families and other members.

LOCAL NEWS

A Chabad Center is Rising in Lenox

One year from its opening, Sara and Rabbi Levi Volovik share their plans for the future

This summer, visitors to Tanglewood passing through downtown Lenox will scarcely have failed to notice the rather large building that is now rapidly rising on West Street. When it opens next July, the new Chabad of the Berkshires campus will encompass more than 22,000 square feet of indoor space on three levels, and will also feature a meditation garden and recreation area outdoors and women's and men's mikveh facilities.

In addition to being the first new Jewish edifice to be constructed in the Berkshires in more than 20 years, it is the first synagogue ever to be established in the town of Lenox. Chabad of the Berkshires' co-directors Sara and Rabbi Levi Volovik admit that building a Jewish center on this scale was not something they envisioned when they arrived in the Berkshires as *shluchim* (emissaries) of the Brooklyn-based movement nearly 20 years ago. In fact, two of people who would eventually become their earliest substantial backers initially discouraged them – *strongly* – from trying to make any kind of a go of it here in the Berkshires.

For two decades, the Berkshire Chabad House has been housed in Pittsfield, with Shabbat services shifting in summer to the Lenox Community Center to accommodate greater seasonal attendance. In considering where and how to expand, Rabbi Volovik says he did what all *shluchim* must do on their own, with limited guidance from Chabad Lubavitch headquarters – “whenever we go to any community around



Sara and Rabbi Levi Volovik in front of the Chabad center under construction in Lenox

the world, we're taking its pulse.” The Voloviks chose Lenox for its situation in central Berkshire County, as well as the abundant lodging within walking distance and the nearby cultural attractions. They also found out about how other Chabad centers that have built Jewish centers in seasonal destinations across the United States have made things work.

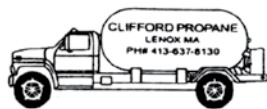
In deciding how to grow, the Voloviks drew on their experiences working with the diverse Jewish communities who come to the Berkshires looking for engagement. They report being encouraged by the way their summer minyans have grown in size in recent years, particularly on Shabbats when high-profile speakers were invited to speak. Sara says that over the years, they also consulted with the operators of Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort in Hancock to explain how to better accommodate the needs of the thousands of visitors from Chassidic Jewish communities who visit for extended family vacations in late summer and during Sukkot. Furthermore, the international profile of the Chabad movement has grown by leaps and bounds

in the 30 years since the passing of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, expanding from approximately 1,500 to more than 6,000 Chabad outposts worldwide during that time. Chabad has become one of the most recognizable “brands” within the Jewish world.

All of these factors suggested to the Voloviks that the Berkshires was already a destination on the radar of a diverse cohort of Jews and that full-service center operating on the Chabad model of Jewish engagement was an institution that could flourish. “The vision is not the building,” asserts Rabbi Volovik, “the vision is the people. The building is a reason for people to come, but the vision is for people to come to a place that is like a home away from home.” Their goal is to build a campus where “everything Jewish takes place in one building,” says Sara. They plan to host Jewish concerts, lectures, informal social gatherings, and eventually have weekend-long retreats where participants can stay in onsite guest rooms. The kosher commercial kitchen being built will be able to cater off- and on-site events and also allow the expansion of Chabad's Project Dignity program that provides meals to the community.

All this will take funding, and the Voloviks have been working tirelessly for years to raise the \$6.5 million it will take for the new campus to be fully realized. The center's grand opening is scheduled for Sunday, July 6, 2025, and will be highlighted by a *siyum Sefer Torah*, the dedication of a scroll that is now in the midst of being written.

“We are going to be here for everybody,” Rabbi Volovik asserts. “Some people will be looking to connect to their Judaism through a service. Some people will be looking to connect through a corned beef sandwich. That's what we're here for. If a corned beef sandwich is your Judaism, this is the place to be. If religious is your Judaism, you'll find it at the same address.”



Clifford Propane LLC
40 Willow Creek Road
Lenox, Massachusetts 01240

Tel. (413) 637-8130
Cell (413) 822-2634
Fax (413) 637-4557

Jeff Clifford

(413) 528-9700

Berkshire Radon LLC

www.berkshireradon.com

**Radon Testing
and Mitigation**

COMPETITIVE PRICING
PROMPT SERVICE
FIVE-YEAR WARRANTY

NEHA & NRSB CERTIFIED



**Experience Matters.
Trusted Brands.**

Local Business, Local Focus since 1928.

carrhardware.com

Lee 221 Main Street 413.243.0786	Pittsfield 547 North Street 413.443.5611	Lenox 489 Pittsfield Road 413.442.0983	North Adams 179 State Road 413.663.6600	Great Barrington 256 Main Street 413.528.4520
---	---	---	--	--

LOCAL NEWS

Rabbi Barbara Cohen to Step Down from Congregation Ahavath Sholom's Pulpit in November

The Berkshire clergy's longest-serving leader will focus on her spiritual listening practice

By Albert Stern / BJV Editor



Rabbi Barbara Cohen's involvement in Jewish life in the Berkshires stretches back more than 40 years to a time when General Electric was central to the local economy, providing jobs and, indirectly, congregants families who joined local synagogues and sent their children to their respective religious schools.

Raised in the Conservative movement, Rabbi Cohen was involved first as a member of Knesset Israel in Pittsfield and became president of the local Hadassah chapter. She became interested in Jewish modalities that she felt she could not fully explore at KI as it was then constituted and moved to Temple Anshe Amunim, the Reform congregation just a few blocks away. There she served in numerous capacities such as cantor during the High Holidays, head of the religious school, and ultimately the spiritual leader of the congregation. For the last 20 years, she has served in that capacity for Congregation Ahavath Sholom in Great Barrington, a once-Orthodox synagogue started by cattle merchants nearly a century ago and that is now affiliated with Jewish Reconstructionist Communities.

Rabbi Cohen had to overcome numerous obstacles on her road to *smicha* in the Reconstructionist movement, including the prolonged illness of her late husband, Mark, and her own battle with breast cancer. She received her ordination in 2018, and the indirect path she had to take provided her with an unplanned for opportunity – she came across a learning cohort called *Bekhol Levavkha: A Training*

Program for Jewish Spiritual Directors, a two-year course of study presented under the auspices of Hebrew Union College in New York City.

As Rabbi Cohen explained to the BJV in a 2018 profile: "It's a modality of one-on-one engagement with a spiritual director to deeply explore one's spirituality. [Spiritual direction] is sacred listening, not problem solving. It offers the opportunity for people to be safely held by a director and explore their spirituality or lack of it, and their feelings about God."

Now, Rabbi Cohen is stepping down from the pulpit to focus on spiritual direction. She spoke with the BJV in June – our conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

Where are you at in life that is prompting you to make this big decision?

Well, it really is clear to me that I have at least one or hopefully several more chapters in my life to go forward. I'm 72 and do not feel in any way that I am tired of this spiritual work or want to be moving away from being a spiritual leader and a rabbi. Being a pulpit rabbi, as many people would know or understand from being parts of communities, is a very complex and very engaging job. I've been doing clergy work since 1994. What I'm looking for is some space to explore more deeply one-on-one individual spiritual accompaniment. Nobody likes to call it spiritual direction anymore, because it sounds a little too pointing the way when, in fact, it's really more of an engaged spiritual listening and discernment together with a spiritual accompanier and a spiritual client. I also want some more space to be with my family, and it just felt like a time to step away from the pulpit. The congregation is in a great place, and looking forward to entering its second hundred years.

What have you learned so far from working with more one-on-one focus through spiritual direction?

People, in telling their stories, are already revealing the places that are helping them and places that are catching them up spiritually – that is, how they view the world. We're not talking

about religious behavior, although that can certainly feed into a spiritual perspective, a spiritual journey analysis, if you want to put it that way. It's really in the listening and the reflecting back. As one does something for longer and longer period of time, you get better at it, hopefully. And patterns emerge and beliefs emerge and resistances emerge and the way in which we are educated, the way in which our families looked at the world. And again, not necessarily in religious observance, but was the world you lived in a five senses world? Was it a more complicated picture than that? And how is it that people are connected to their story and how does their story keep replicating itself in different circumstances? What can a spiritual journey be? Anything from a reincarnational experience, if that's a subject that people are interested in exploring. How is it that previous life experiences have created places where similar things come up?

There is a way of looking at the wonder and marvel of things that have been right under our noses that can be very revelatory and certainly spark other inquiries. I've always known it for myself, but the training makes you a better listener. It makes you more sensitive to how people embody their stories – watching their gestures and really listening without having answers ready, just receiving. People want to tell their stories, and their stories hold the key. We are creating our own Torah every day and that Torah is as capable of being interpreted on multiple levels as is the actual Torah. My hope as a spiritual companion is to be walking alongside and listening to a person's story, realizing that words hold important clues, gestures hold important clues, and past behaviors and responses hold certain clues.

Given the demographics of the Berkshires, I imagine you'll be working with a lot of retirees, people who are coming to this beautiful place at a certain point in their lives where they're perhaps summing up, perhaps leaving behind a career that may have given them a lot of fulfillment or perhaps a lot of aggravation. What experience are people like that having as they come to a place like this?

Everything has a trajectory, and certain periods of life are more or less sensitive to one's search for meaning. In the middle of our lives, we're busy, we're working. If we choose to have partners or raise families, sometimes spiritual goals or spiritual wondering are not necessarily uppermost in the mind. I find that the people who are coming to the Berkshires and people who are coming to see me are looking for



Excellence in Healthcare at Locations Throughout the Berkshires

Adult & Pediatric Primary Care | Dental
OB/GYN | Nutrition | Family Services & Playgroups

...and CHP Mobile Health for Same-Day Urgent Care,
Minor Injuries and Sick Visits, Wellness Checks,
Health Screenings, PCP Referrals & More!



Great Barrington, Pittsfield, Lee, Adams, and North Adams

For more information, scan the code above or visit us online at:

chpberkshires.org



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Volunteer to Pack or Deliver Rosh Hashanah Care Packages

Share New Year's sweetness! We need volunteers to help pack and deliver holiday care packages to older adults in senior residences, hospitals, and at home.

Pack Packages: September 24 - 26
Deliver Packages: September 27- October 2



Volunteer to Deliver Kosher Meals on Wheels

We need a few drivers who can commit to one day a week over the fall and winter to deliver warm meals to home-bound individuals in the Pittsfield area from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. (Mon, Tues, or Thurs)



SIGN UP TODAY!

Contact Molly Meador at (413) 442-4360, ext. 14 or mmeador@jewishberkshires.org



The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires' Tikkun Olam Volunteer (TOV) Network connects community members of all ages with Mitzvah opportunities to make a difference in our community.

LOCAL NEWS

meaning at a point in their lives that would naturally give way to it. First of all, there's more time, usually, in their lives to be thinking about big issues – existential questions are uppermost. People are facing illness, people are facing loss, people are facing personal challenges in their lives and trying to find some understanding or fabric that they are able to feel in their lives, not just random events, just flying at them. I think the demographic of the Berkshires is an excellent demographic for this exploration because it really does meet up with a time of life. The beauty of the Berkshire opens people to looking at nature and having their souls opened, even if they're not religious people or using traditional language. I think it's an excellent time of life to try to puzzle through some of what may have been questions that one didn't have anybody to ask before or didn't have time to ask or didn't have interest to ask.

Certainly, I'm not going to poke people and make them feel uncomfortable to have to answer questions that I want the answers to. One of the things we're told to watch out for in spiritual direction is not to be curious for the sake of our own curiosity, but rather to see what people are laying out about themselves and then go with that, to perhaps take things a little differently, and maybe then ask a question.

So – a historical perspective of Jewish life in the Berkshires in the time that you've been here. How have you seen it evolve? Where might be heading?

Over these 44 years, I have witnessed a dissolving of boundaries, mostly in the last 15 to 20 years. For a good 25 years, at least, the Berkshires had a very insular concept of "congregations." Early on, Hevreh didn't exist, but certainly in the Pittsfield community, there was such a distinction between the two congregations (KI and TAA), both in their practices and in the way in which they held each other in different regard in terms of the intensity or in terms of the way in which the religion of Judaism was practiced. It was something that was very overt. Over the years, it has really come to be much more cohesive.

There's more osmosis between, first of all, religious practices and ways of expressing Judaism. Plus, there is the willingness of the congregations to merge together, such as is represented in our Shabbats Across the Berkshires. I will say that I think Federation has had a lot to do with that, providing a nonspecific focus where that agenda could be

generated. I think the world of Judaism has changed. I think Conservative Judaism has become less conservative, small "c," and I think Reform Judaism has become less classical Reform. I think that that's a major factor in the way in which the Berkshires have started to become one Jewish community in sharing worship, in sharing pulpits, and in being part of community in a way that just didn't happen in the same way back in the '80s and '90s and even the early 2000s. Younger rabbis came in – and this is not in any way a judgment on the august and respected rabbis in the pulpits back then. But I think the younger rabbis had different kinds of training. Back in the early 2000s, it was almost the beginning of a golden age of community mutual cooperation, and the walls really started to come down.

Is that something that's continuing? Well, I think things are changing a lot. Certainly, the entrance of Chabad to the Berkshires has changed the personality of religious and communal involvement. There are a lot of choices. During the GE boom of the '60s and '70s, [congregations] left smaller buildings and built new synagogues. Let's just say the demographics have changed. When I ran the religious school at Anshe Amunim in 1994, I might have had 130 kids, plus 20 people on staff. That was a very, very different period in Jewish life in the Berkshires. Those younger people, many of them have drifted away, although some of them have stayed, and some of them are very prominent in our community.

But from the boom years of the people who were active and gave money and time and administrative support through their professions as doctors and lawyers and dentists and GE people and tradespeople in the Jewish community – those people are, for the most part, not here anymore. I think we can redefine ourselves, as Judaism has been so good at for thousands of years. The big edifices of 1960s Judaism are not what are necessary at this point. We have the possibility of great creative improvement and development, but that can be scary. I think that's where our community is now. We have a wonderful Federation that is a real foundation for the Jewish community. There are all sorts of changes. Who would have thought 50 years ago that there would be a Chabad Center in the middle of Lenox? It's a different Jewish world. What remains to be seen is how it evolves and how creative people can be.

Rabbi Jodie Gordon Assumes Senior Rabbi Position at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire




GREAT BARRINGTON – As Hevreh of Southern Berkshire celebrates its 50th year anniversary as a community, its long-time rabbi and director of education Rabbi Jodie Gordon became Senior Rabbi on July 1. Hevreh Board President Lisa Sloane said the Board is "proud and excited! Rabbi Gordon is the definition of 'Jewish Joy.' How lucky for our

congregation to simultaneously welcome change and achieve stability."

Rabbi Gordon has served as Hevreh's rabbi and director of education since her ordination from HUC-JIR in 2014, where she remains a part of the Tisch Rabbinical Fellowship Alumni program. She earned her BA from Brandeis University, majoring both in Sociology and Near Eastern and Judaic Studies. Rabbi Gordon grew up with strong connections in the Reform movement, especially through her time at URJ Eisner Camp, which instilled in her a lifelong love for Jewish learning and the Berkshires. Locally, Rabbi Gordon serves on the board of Construct Inc., the leading non-profit provider of affordable housing in South County. She is also the co-host of the "OMfG Podcast: Jewish Wisdom for Unprecedented Times."




Hevreh invites all to join the Board and congregation in Rabbi Gordon's Installation on Friday, September 6, and a Celebration on Saturday, September 7. For more information visit hevreh.org or call the office at (413) 528-6378.



The **Power** of the
Credit Union
Difference

0% APR* Introductory Rate
for 12 months
for new VISA® cardholders

NO FEE Balance
transfer!

www.Greylock.org/cards

*APR=Annual Percentage Rate. Subject to credit approval. 0.00% Promotional APR for 12 billing cycles. After your 12th monthly billing cycle, you will be charged the standard variable APR. This rate varies with the market based on the Prime Rate. Current rates vary between 12.50% - 18.00%. May not be used to pay off or pay down amounts you owe to Greylock Federal Credit Union. Insured by NCUA

CULTURE & ARTS

TRAVELING WITH JEWISH TASTE

Strawberry Fields Forever

By Carol Goodman Kaufman / Special to the BJV

The next full moon is out in June.
Look at the sky – Strawberry Moon!
We'll pick some fruit piled oh so high,
And with it we will bake a pie.

From *Once in a Full Moon*, a children's picture book

Summertime and the livin' is easy. The late-setting sun allows us to extend hot, bright days into balmy evenings in the backyard, where the clacks of croquet mallets striking wooden balls and the whoosh of badminton rackets compete with the chirps of crickets.



Sampling strawberries along the "Salad Trail" at Moshav Talmei Yosef in Israel.

Aside from the opportunity to spend time out of doors, jacket- and mittens-free, perhaps the best part of summer is the abundance of locally grown fruits to be had. And the strawberry, among the first fruit to ripen in the Northeast, is king among them.

And we grow lots of them. Good thing, because strawberries rank at number five on our fruit consumption hit parade. According to the University of Vermont, the United States alone harvests nearly three billion pounds of strawberries each year, third among fruits in their contribution to U.S. agriculture. While we in the Northeast can't claim a large chunk of the market (over half of them come from California), strawberries are an important part of our agricultural economy. Massachusetts alone has

195 farms covering almost 350 acres stretching from the Berkshires to Cape Cod.

It's also a good thing we like the red berry so much, because among its benefits include antioxidants, folate, potassium, vitamin C, and fiber.

A distinctive fact about strawberries is that their origins are global. Unlike potatoes that come from the Andes, or tomatoes from Mesoamerica, wild strawberries have been picked by people around the world for millennia. But in ancient times, they were not the big and sweet fruit we know today. No, they were small, hard, and probably flavorless.

But they were pretty. Pretty enough to be exalted in poetry. In fact, way back in the first century BCE, the Roman poet Virgil mentioned strawberries three times in his *Eclogues*, and Ovid wrote of them twice in his *Metamorphoses*.

The strawberry as we know it today is the result of hundreds of years of hybridizing work by plant scientists. In the 14th century the French began cultivating strawberries after plucking one wild variety, *fragaria vesca*, and transplanting it to the garden. Two centuries later, Europeans were growing another variety at home, the *fragaria moschata*. In the 1600's an American variety, the *fragaria virginiana*, or Virginia strawberry, arrived in Europe. Although it didn't immediately become popular (it took another two centuries for that to happen), that berry became the foundation of what we enjoy today. (Stay tuned.)

The strawberry's story wouldn't be complete without an element of intrigue, and this tale certainly has one. It began in 1712 when King Louis XIV sent French Army Intelligence Corps engineer Amédée-François Frézier to Chile. His mission: To reconnoiter that country's military defenses. While there, Frézier also spent time surveying the local plant life. While out on one of his forays, he discovered fields of *fragaria chiloensis*, a variety of strawberry that indigenous peoples had been cultivating for a millennium. Scholars believe its seeds arrived in Chile with birds flying from the coast of California.

Now, this Chilean berry had what the European botanists had been seeking for centuries: size. As Frézier reported to his superiors, "The fruit is generally as big as a walnut, and sometimes as a hen's egg." But he added, "...and somewhat less delicious of taste than our wood strawberries."

"Less delicious of taste" didn't stop Frézier. He packed up samples of his discovery and brought them home. Unfortunately, *fragaria chiloensis* was not hardy. Worse, it was difficult to grow away from the Pacific coast, where it had enjoyed an even, temperate climate.

French botanists took up the challenge to make a hardy, tasty berry by crossing the Chilean variety with the North American Virginia berry. They achieved success, and that hybrid, the *fragaria ananass*, is the source of the berries we use today in our shortcake and ice cream. But the English take credit for much of the hybridizing work done to make our modern berry the delicious fruit it is. According to the French botanist Antoine Nicolas Duchesne, strawberries in the late 18th, early 19th centuries tasted like pineapple. So, he anointed them *fragaria ananass*, "ananass" being the Latin word for pineapple. ("Ananass" is also the word used in Hebrew for the fruit.)

Around the same time, the English got into the act. Their botanists, in the quest to produce bigger, sweeter, and hardier varieties of the berry, successfully cultivated almost thirty different varieties of berry – all from seed.

As a fun historical sidenote, Frézier's surname is derived from the French word for strawberry, fraise. It turns out that in the year 916 CE, his ancestor presented King Robert I with a gift of strawberries. As a reward, the king dubbed him a knight and gave him the name Frézier. Now that is a berry different family legacy!

Around the same time Duchesne was tasting pineapple in his French berries, nurseryman Charles Hovey was tinkering with strawberries in Cambridge – our Cambridge, not England's – and in 1834, he developed his Hovey berry, the progenitor of most modern berries. Then a few years later, one James Wilson went further in developing his Wilson strawberry, a firmer and hardier one capable of growing in many types of soil. Wilson's innovations helped the berry become a major crop, now growing on 100,000 acres across North America.

Sweet strawberries picked fresh and eaten out of hand are divine. But there's so much more you can do with them, and for centuries cooks have been flexing their creative muscles. In fact, strawberries-and-cream has been a summertime dessert since the first Tudor king, Henry VII, enjoyed it back in the 16th century. But we Americans always go further. According to the International Dairy Foods Association, it was First Lady Dolley Madison who invented strawberry ice cream in 1812. She had it served at the White House in honor of her husband James's second inauguration. The flavor endures as a favorite, and takes eighth place on our top-ten list of ice cream flavors in the U.S.

Dolley wasn't the only First Lady who liked her berries. Historian Barbara Brackman writes that Mary Todd Lincoln loved the berry so much that she hosted strawberry parties, both before and during her residency in the White House. In fact, in the early days of the war in 1861, she even went so far to wear a dress made of strawberry-adorned fabric. That dress now resides in the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, presumably without any ice cream stains.

But this is the Berkshire Jewish Voice. Is there a Jewish angle to the bright red berry? Of course there is, and it's on two fronts.



First is the amazing horticultural work done in Israel to cultivate the biggest, sweetest strawberries on the planet. And when I say "biggest," I mean Guinness World Record biggest. In 2021, one Ariel Chahi, at his family's Strawberries in the Field farm, grew a super-sized strawberry that weighed over ten ounces and was over seven inches long and almost thirteen-and-a-half inches in circumference.

And sweetest? On our most recent visit to Israel, we drove down to the "Salad Trail" at Moshav Talmei Yosef, the only farm that runs a professional tour. We were encouraged to pick, touch, taste while learning about how they grow their crops using spectacular Israeli agricultural innovations. The strawberries were fabulous.

However (and there's always a however), Haredi rabbis in Israel have prohibited partaking of strawberries unless they are peeled. Why? Because they believe that strawberries harbor insects. It's not even enough to wash the berries. You must peel them to make sure you've rid the berries of any treif.

So, whether you pick them at a farm or buy them at a store or farmers market, don't let the summer go by without partaking of the strawberry – whether washed or peeled. Fresh or baked into a pastry, it is truly this season's gift.



Strawberry Rhubarb Crisp

Serves 6 to 8.

If you're looking for a delicious summer dessert that incorporates strawberries while also using up some of the rhubarb growing in the backyard, this recipe is for you.

INGREDIENTS:

For the fruit layer:

1/3 cup granulated sugar
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

3/4 pound rhubarb
2 cups strawberries, sliced

For the topping:

1/3 cup shelled natural pistachios,
chopped
3/4 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
1/2 cup granulated sugar

1/4 cup packed brown sugar
6 tablespoons coconut oil (or butter,
if you prefer)

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 375°F. and grease a 2-quart shallow baking dish.

In a bowl stir together sugar and flour.

Trim rhubarb and cut into enough 1/2-inch pieces to measure 2 cups

Add rhubarb and strawberries to sugar mixture, tossing well, and spread mixture in baking dish. Set aside.

Finely chop pistachios.

In a bowl whisk together flour and sugars.

Mix oil into the flour mixture with a fork or pastry blender until it resembles coarse meal.

Add pistachios and mix well.

Squeeze handfuls of topping together and coarsely crumble in chunks over filling.

Bake until crisp and bubbling, about 50 minutes.

Serve warm.



Under the name Carolinda Goodman, **Carol Goodman Kaufman** has just published her third picture book for young children. Detective Bears and Friends introduces readers to the whimsical names that various animal groups are called. In addition to her work for children, Kaufman also writes under her "real" name about food history (including for the Berkshire Jewish Voice). Her first novel, *The First Murder*, is set in the Berkshires.

CULTURE & ARTS

Berkshire Jewish Film Festival

LENOX – The Berkshire Jewish Film Festival (BJFF) continues at the Duffin Theater at Lenox Memorial Middle and High School, 197 East Street in Lenox. Films will be screened on Mondays at 4 p.m. and 8 p.m.

All presentations are open to the public. Tickets are \$15 per person. All seating is general admission. Single tickets are only available on the day of the show. Proceeds benefit the Hebrew School at Knesset Israel.

Season passes are available at knessetisrael.org/filmfestival. For information on filmmaker talkbacks and other related events, please visit the BJFF web page at berkshirejewishfilmfestival.org.

Information at berkshirejewishfilmfestival.org or (413) 445-4872, ext. 10.



July 29

4 p.m. – *Unbroken*: Against all odds, the seven Weber siblings manage to stay together through the Holocaust hiding on the farm of a Christian couple outside the city, where they fend for themselves for two years before ending up in a displaced person's camp. A Zoom talkback with director **Beth Lane** follows.

8 p.m. – *Catskills*: A loving and nostalgic tribute to the family-run Jewish resort and bungalow culture that became known as the Borscht Belt. A talkback follows with **Jeffrey Cook, Esq.**, a local resident who grew up in the Borscht Belt.

August 5

4 p.m. – *Shadow of the Day*: A dramatic story of love and redemption set in a turbulent Italy amid the antisemitic racial laws promulgated by Mussolini's fascist government

8 p.m. – *How Saba Kept Singing*: David Wisnia had never told his family the whole story of how he survived Auschwitz – while his parents and younger brother were murdered – and this film by Sarah Taksler fills in the gaps. After the film, grandchild **Avi Wisnia** will perform the legacy of his grandfather.

August 12

4 p.m. – *Jack & Sam* (short): Jack Waksal and Sam Ron met in 1943 as teenagers when they were sent to a Polish labor camp. Unbeknownst to them, they both landed in Ohio after the war, and they did not see each other until a chance encounter at a Florida Holocaust event 80 years after their last meeting.



Less than Kosher: This is a look at contemporary Jewish life at its most irreverent – hence its “less-than-kosher” title and a comic film in which Jewish norms are turned on their head in a lighthearted, very modern and sometimes absurd take on the spiritual journey and self-discovery of a secular Jew.

“A Jewish Journey through Broadway: Part 1 1920-1980” – Jewish Composers Who Created the American Musical

Plus the Special Performing Arts Camp for special needs children

GREAT BARRINGTON – In the musical *Spamalot*, one character says to another: “In any great adventure, if you don't want to lose..you won't succeed on Broadway if you don't have any Jews.” When producer Michael Pizzi was doing research into the history of the American musical, he noticed that from the years 1949 to 1980, there was only one year in which none of the winners of the Tony Awards for Best Musical, Best Book of a Musical, or Best Original Score, had Jewish heritage. That was in 1958, when Meredith Wilson and Franklin Lacey took home Best Musical for *The Music Man*. The next time it happened was 1980 when Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice arrived with *Evita*. Most every year thereafter had at least one, usually with several Jewish writers being honored.

This August, “A Jewish Journey through Broadway: Part 1 1920-1980” explores the unique role of Jewish composers and lyricists in the creation of the modern American musical and celebrates their iconic contributions. NYC and CT based singers Brett Boles (also music director), Jennifer Mintzer, and Michael Pizzi will take you on a journey from the Gershwins (1920s and beyond) through to Stephen Sondheim (1950s and beyond) for Part 1. Says Pizzi, founder of MPZ Productions: “There are so many amazing shows and songs that it made sense to create a Part 1 and Part 2.”

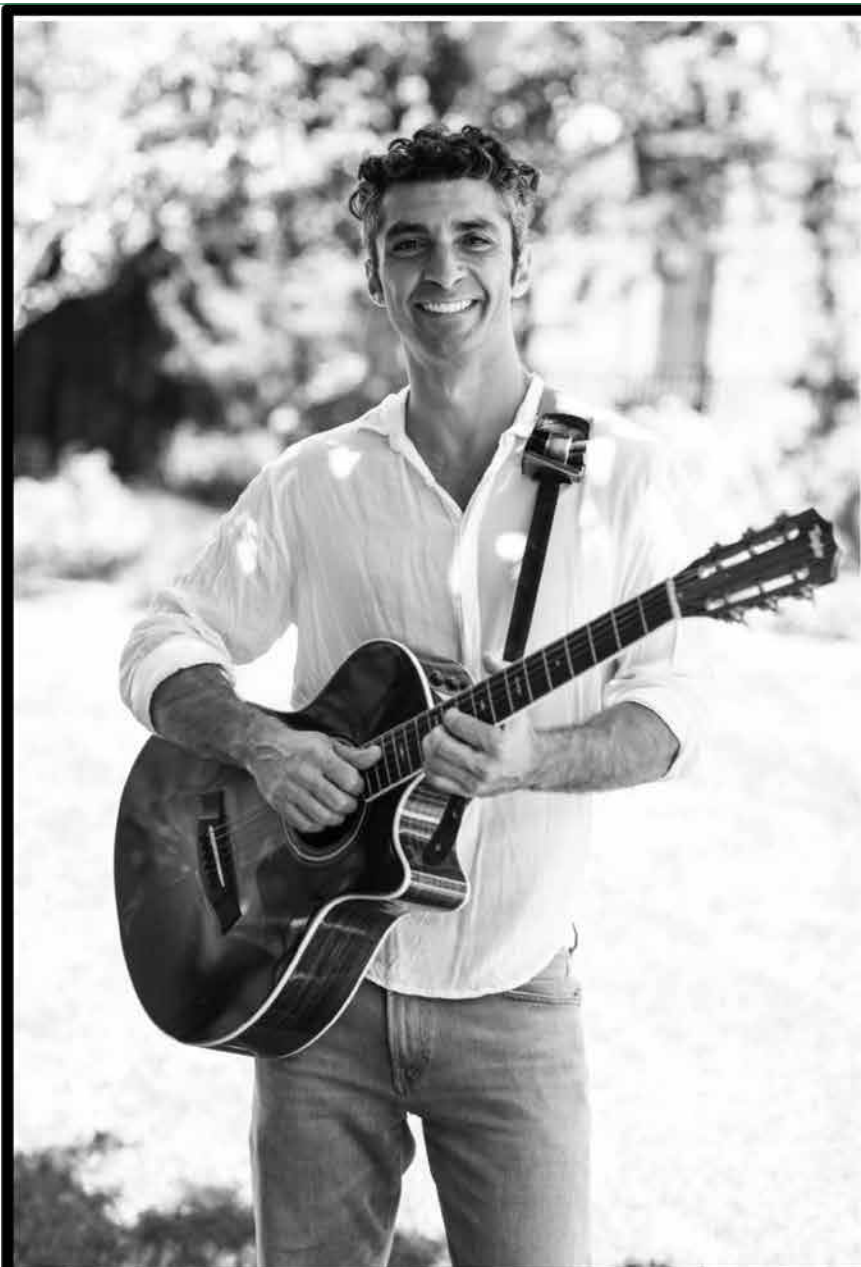
But first things first – on Friday, August 23 at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, August 24 at 3 p.m. and again at 7 p.m., “A Jewish Journey through Broadway: Part 1 1920-1980” will be staged at St. James Place, 352 Main Street in Great Barrington. The shows represented include *Porgy and Bess*, *Showboat*, *Babes in Arms*, *Oklahoma*, *South Pacific*, *Camelot*, *My Fair Lady*, and many more. There promises to be several Gershwin tunes along with a special tribute to *Fiddler on the Roof*. Expect to be delighted, surprised, and excited by this show MPZ Productions is proud to bring to the Berkshires.

Tickets can be ordered at the website: mpz-productions.com – or scan the QR code in the ad on page 4.

Special Performing Arts Camp

This summer, Michael Pizzi, PhD, is partnering with Barrington Stage's Education Department to implement the Special Performing Arts Camp (SPaRC). It is designed for children with special needs, with an emphasis on neurodivergent children. This summer, the camp is looking for children ages 12-18 who can

JEWISH BROADWAY,
continued on page 29



NOAH ARONSON & BAND

Celebrate our Jewish strength and resilience with an evening of *ruach* and community spirit! Join Noah and his full powerhouse band for an interactive community concert of harmony, rhythm, friendship, and soulful connection.

SUNDAY, AUG 4 | 7:30 PM

Duffin Theater, Lenox Memorial High School

GENERAL ADMISSION: \$25

Young adults under 30, \$20. Kids 13 and under free.

Join us in honoring Federation Executive Director Dara Kaufman for 10 years of dedicated service and leadership.

All proceeds to benefit the Jewish Berkshires LiveSecure Initiative. Visit jewishberkshires.org/LiveSecure for more information.



TICKETS: JEWISHBERKSHIRES.ORG OR (413) 442-4360, ext. 10

Funded in part by generous underwriters and a grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

CULTURE & ARTS

Documenting the Holocaust in Italy and Its Resonance Today

An excerpt from Judith Monachina's Days of Memory

By Albert Stern / BJV Editor

Judith Monachina of Stockbridge was a community journalist in the Berkshires when she began to interview people about the Italian Holocaust in 2000. In covering community news for the now-defunct publication *The Advocate*, she would occasionally write about Holocaust memoirs published during those years – many, she remembers, were being written as survivors aged and wanted to ensure that their stories were not lost.

She recalls attending a lecture in Pittsfield by Daniel Goldhagen, author of the landmark expose *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, who talked about the Holocaust history of Italy. Monachina, whose father's family is of Italian descent, knew nothing about those events and was spurred to find out more. In order to understand the primary documents, she studied Italian and met a woman in her class who conducted an exchange program between high schoolers in Lenox and Rome.

Her earliest interview with a survivor, Maria Perla Ajo, took place in Gubbio, Italy, on one of the students' trips to Italy. This led to more interviews in the US and Italy, where she conducted research on a Fulbright Fellowship in 2007 and researched the lives and memories of individuals from the Jewish community in fascist Milan. She studied at the primary Holocaust archive in Italy: The Center for the Documentation of Contemporary Jewish History (CDEC).

Monachina collected her experiences in the just-published *Days of Memory: Listening to Jewish Italians Who Lived Through Fascism and the Holocaust*. The book took close to two decades to come together, and was nurtured by the late Marc Jaffe, the accomplished editor who retired to Williamstown and supported many Berkshire writers. *Days of Memory* was one of the last projects he worked on before he passed in 2024 at age 102.



Liliana Picciotto prepares to give a presentation.

In Italy, Monachina worked with Liliana Picciotto, the foremost historian of Italian Holocaust history who co-wrote the essential volume on that period, *The Book of Memory*. In this excerpt from Monachina's *Days of Memory*, she describes Picciotto's method of interviewing survivors and how these necessary stories have come to be told, recorded, and archived for the historical record. Picciotto understands she is in a race against time as the events of World War II are soon to fade from living memory, and so is aggressive in her efforts to record the truth.

It was difficult, in the post-Oct. 7 reality, reading about Picciotto's life's work chronicling the experiences of survivors – one once had the sense that, with the success and security the State of Israel had experienced in recent decades, the Jewish people would no longer need this kind of forensic historian. One of the most disheartening realizations for me post-Oct. 7 was that, 20 or 30 or 40 years

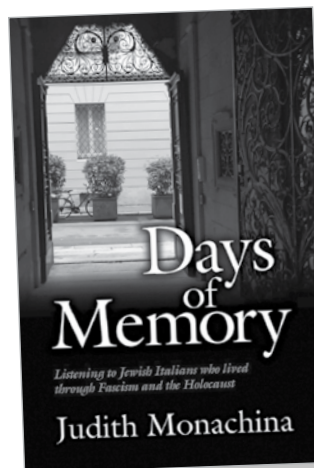
hence, there will be historians like Liliana Picciotto working with survivors to document the stories and legacy of the Hamas pogrom and the war in Gaza. In her book, Monachina provides a sharp portrait of Picciotto and, in telling her story, also suggests how future historians are likely to draw on techniques developed by Holocaust researchers when talking about trauma.

And that adds an additional layer of heartbreak to the story Judith Monachina tells so well.

From *Days of Memory*, by Judith Monachina

In the early 1990s, Liliana finished *Il Libro della Memoria* (The Book of Memory). She had found and processed thousands of hand-written correspondence and government records, come up with a list, names of Jews who were deported from Italy, the circumstances of their deportation, and their fates. A list of people, most of them killed.

"In the early 1990s most of the people did not want to speak at all. In the '70s and '80s nobody spoke, nobody," Liliana said. "They came little by little to speak. Now they speak and write books and go into schools. It was their age that compelled



them." They realized they might die without having told their story. When they came around, they did it all at once. Liliana also began to videotape interviews with a hundred people who had been deported, the project that resulted in the film *Memoria*.

"At the same time, a cultural shift occurred in Italy. The story of the individual became interesting to people. Perhaps it was television," she said, that made the individual story as interesting as the epochal story of a group, a political party, or a big idea. "The story of an individual – his suffering and his experience – this era of testimony coincided with the aging of the survivors and their need to get the story told." She interviewed people at their homes; then at their childhood homes in Florence, Rome, and Milan; and then she went to Auschwitz with them. All of this took time, and it was emotionally draining for both parties.

Liliana remembered deciding that the interviews would be regimented, not meandering conversations but specific data gathering experiences, each three or four hours long. When she spoke about it, her voice went staccato.

"If you know the history exactly, you can make the questions that specific, and he cannot avoid, he cannot choose. He must respond to that which you have asked him. Then if you ask him, 'Which morning? How many of you were in the house? At what hour? Who came? What was the weather? What things did they put into the suitcase?'... such precise questions, he cannot glide over.

"Therefore, each and every question is so made: 'How did you get off the train? To the left or to the right? What did you see? What was the weather doing? What did they yell at you when you arrived?' All questions are very, very, very precise, and at the end of the interview, very, very long, the person is drained."

"How does the person function after that kind of interview?" I asked.

"They are very disturbed," she answered. "It is very, very disturbing; it takes some days to recuperate. But it is the only way. We do not want to know only their impressions of today, we do this for the time they are no longer here. Do you understand? Because of the distance in time between when it happened and now, the interviewee tends to introduce things that are not part of their own story: films they have seen, books they have read."

"*Si, è vero*," I said – yes, it's true. Sometimes I leave an interview having learned more about the interviewee's thoughts than about their personal history. Because of Liliana's work and that of other historians, the testimonies are for the most part recorded. I can do similar interviews, perhaps, but I am free to ask people about the things that might be considered avoidance or skirting by Liliana. She says at times it was necessary to practically put the person under pressure to make the interviews productive. For Liliana, it was the only way to be sure to get the basic factual information. "It was a very difficult choice," she told me, "but in the end, a correct one."

If, when these people are gone, we do not have their exact memories, we have nothing. Their memories may have been precise when they were buried inside them, and when they are forced to go find them, they experience their pain again. Someone like Liliana, with her dedication, could do it.

The interviewee must trust Liliana and trust that his memories will be well kept with her. It must be worth reliving the pain, the agony, of seeing a family member murdered, or even just uncovering the first sensation of shame, anger, or sadness the teenagers felt when they were kicked out of school. Talking about the interviews, Liliana seemed suddenly tired, as if remembering them revived the original exhaustion.

"When you interview people in this way," I asked, "do you explain to people that is what you are doing?"

"No no no no," she said.

"You just do it?" I asked.

"Yes, just do it."

"And they just follow?"

"*Si si si si, si si si.*"

Then, she said more quietly: "They were very strong testifiers." She did not know if they could do it any longer, because they had become older, weaker. They had wanted to be available and have the strength to do it in this way.

After finishing the film *Memoria*, she wrote a book for children, one that was used in schools. "A very light, very simple book." She looked for it on a shelf for a moment, then sat.

"I told you that I had four children? This is the baby," she smiled, picking up a picture of Jonathan.

Days of Memory: Listening to Jewish Italians Who Lived Through Fascism and the Holocaust by Judith Monachina is available at The Bookstore in Lenox and through Amazon. Monachina is the director of The Housatonic Heritage Oral History Center at Berkshire Community College in Pittsfield. For more, visit judith-monachina.com.



BERKSHIRE JEWISH CONGREGATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

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.

Learn more about our Jewish community and find great events on the community calendar at:

JEWISHBERKSHIRES.ORG

Berkshire Minyan
Lay-led, Traditional,
Egalitarian Minyan
South County
berkshirereminyan.org

Berkshire Hills Hadassah
P.O. Box 187, Pittsfield, MA
(413) 443-4386,
Berkshirehillshadassah@gmail.com

B'nai B'rith Lodge, No. 326

Chabad of the Berkshires
450 South St., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 499-9899,
jewishberkshires.com

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

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

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire
Reform
270 State Rd., Great Barrington, MA (413) 528-6378, hevreh.org

Israel Philatelist Society
c/o Dr. Ed Helitzer,
(413) 447-7622

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
196 South St., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 442-4360, jewishberkshires.org

Jewish War Veterans
Commander Robert Waldheim
(413) 822-4546, sellit4@aol.com

Knesset Israel
Conservative
16 Colt Rd., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 445-4872, knessetisrael.org

Temple Anshe Amunim
Reform
26 Broad St., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 442-5910, ansheamunim.org

CULTURE & ARTS

“Trauma, Memory, & Transcendence in Music”

Two multimedia programs by Mark Ludwig of the Terezín Music Foundation

By Albert Stern / BJV Editor



Mark Ludwig, Terezín Music Foundation director

LENOX – Last summer, Mark Ludwig – long-time violist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, director of the Terezín Music Foundation, and author of *Our Will to Live: The Terezín Music Critiques of Viktor Ullmann*, the invaluable document of the Theresienstadt ghetto in Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia – sold out two illuminating programs at the Tanglewood Learning Institute. The multimedia presentations, titled “Immersion: Defiant Music,” combined lecture, art, and

live performance to explore how the Nazi Party’s cultural policies were connected to its racial policies, and how both shared roots in earlier German history.

This summer, Ludwig returns to the TLI on Friday, August 16 and Saturday, August 17, with a new two-part series titled “Trauma, Memory, & Transcendence in Music.” Ludwig will draw on his Terezín research and also use the work of contemporary composers to explore the nature of trauma and how it is transmitted through musical expression. This program will also feature performances by Boston Symphony Orchestra musicians, as well as a conversation with noted Jewish composer, Osvaldo Golijov, who was raised in Argentina and studied in Israel.

“On its surface, the theme...is a pretty heavy topic,” he explains. “Yet I hope it won’t scare people away, because what we’re looking at is what music can do as a language that’s so unique to the experience” of trauma, memory, and transcendence. He says that the “cross-platforming” techniques he will employ will provide something of a “more multidimensional experience of a program notes” that he hopes will not only enrich the audience’s experience of the works he will sample, but also shift the way they experience other creative works.

Ludwig says his overarching subject will be: “How do you deal with trauma, and the memory of it? And how does that get channeled through the creative process? We’ll be looking at it through the lens of music. Is [the trauma] repurposed? Does it change? How does it morph? And then in some cases – not all, of course – but in some cases, the rare ones, it gets us to transcendence.” By drawing on different works and composers from the past and present, Ludwig will explore the type of character transcendence of this sort might assume.

In Friday’s program, “Do Not Forget Me,” Ludwig will focus on the all-too-short life and career of Gideon Klein (1919-1945), a Czechoslovakian Jew who was interned at Terezín, became one of the leading composers at the camp, and was later murdered at a subcamp of Auschwitz not long before the end of the war. His best-known work is a string trio that music blogger Michael Haas (Forbidden Music) writes is “now standard repertoire and performed in concerts that do not take the Holocaust or Terezín as its subject. There is painfully little that remains, but what remains is more than just the promise of a young talent cut short.” Haas even speculates that the experience being a prisoner might have elevated Klein’s talent, in the way that fellow composer Viktor Ullman posited in writing: “I would like to point out that Theresienstadt was not an obstacle to my work, it actually inspired me. That by no means did we sit weeping on the banks of the rivers of Babylon, and that our zest for culture fully matched our zest for life.” (Ullman was murdered at Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1944.)

In this program, Ludwig says he will explore the different paths that trauma might find its expression in a creative artist’s work. “Some composers who write about trauma may be writing about events that they may not themselves have been involved or experienced firsthand, but that they’re responding to through their music. Then you get to another layer of composers where perhaps a specific trauma was part of their lives, and they deal with it as occurring during that specific time [in the past]. Then you get to composers like Gideon Klein – when you look at his life, his creative period as a composer, in totality, spanned occupation by the Nazis and then being in a concentration camp. He

never had a period of being a free person composing. Trauma envelops his music throughout.”

On Saturday, Ludwig will be joined by contemporary composer Osvaldo Golijov, who will discuss his 2020 work “Falling Out of Time,” which was inspired by Israeli author David Grossman’s novel of the same name about the parental grief of losing a son in combat. In an interview with the Classical Post website, the composer explained, “We still don’t know what ‘Falling Out of Time’ is. We know it is not an opera, and it is not a song cycle either. We concluded that the most apt description is “a Tone Poem in Voices,” following [Grossman’s] own description of his novel as “a Novel in Voices.” The piece – an intense expression of almost unbearable anguish sung in English and Hebrew – was recorded by the Silkroad Ensemble in 2020.

Says Ludwig: “In *The Inferno*, Dante wrote: ‘At grief so deep, the tongue must wag in vain.’ The language of our senses and memory lacks the vocabulary of such pain. Music can be that vocabulary.”

Although the themes of Ludwig’s programs were worked out before the Oct. 7 attack and the Gaza war, the themes of trauma, memory, and transcendence will no doubt have a profound contemporary resonance. Memory is itself a creative process and we are seeing in real time how trauma is starting to turn into memory.

Says Ludwig: “About what has been happening in the Middle East – 40, 50, 60 years from now, we have no idea how events will be processed. But there will obviously be works of art. That’s part of the process of not only wrestling with what happened, but digesting it and [figuring out] where do we go from here? And that is key to what I want to show in these two talks. Where were these composers thinking of going from where they found themselves? It wasn’t just, ‘Here’s my trauma, and I’m going to remember it and sit with it.’ We are going to experience music that gets to transcendence. That music doesn’t just stay with you for the moment – you take it with you. And what happens with that? Memory is part of the creative process that we are involved in, too, because we, in turn, after we have absorbed a work of art, interpret it in our own way.”

“Trauma, Memory, & Transcendence in Music” is a two-part event collaboration between the Tanglewood Learning Institute and the Terezín Music Foundation. The program will be facilitated by Mark Ludwig, Terezín Music Foundation director and Boston Symphony Orchestra member emeritus. Both presentations will be presented at the Linde Center, Studio E.

“Trauma, Memory, & Transcendence in Music.” Part 1: “Do Not Forget Me” on Friday, August 16 at 2:30 p.m.

“Trauma, Memory, & Transcendence in Music Part 2 – on Saturday, August 17 at 2:30 p.m., with Osvaldo Golijov.

Tickets for each day are available for \$35 per seat and may be purchased at the Tanglewood box office or online at bso.org.

JEWISH BROADWAY,

continued from page 27

read and tell a story, move about the stage independently, and are amenable to working with other children in a loving, kind, and compassionate performing arts environment.

The camp was created through Dr. Pizzi’s not for profit organization Touching Humanity, Inc., whose mission is to promote disability awareness and social and occupational justice through the arts and education. With the help of some amazing therapy student and adult volunteers, kids with special needs will learn new skills and perform their own show. The camp is designed to be fun and performance based and is not ‘therapy’.

SPaRC is free this year for all children who can meet the requirements.

The dates for the camp are Monday, August 5 through Friday, August 9, with a performance open to the public at noon on August 9 at Berkshire Community College. Applications will be considered through the start of camp. If you are interested in volunteering, need an application for the camp, or want more information, contact Michael Pizzi at mpizzi58@gmail.com.

DONATE. ✨ VOLUNTEER.
 ✨ MAKE A DIFFERENCE. ✨

Embrace stress-free living with Geer’s Short Stay program!

Say goodbye to home maintenance headaches and hello to the peace of mind that comes with the reliable service, support and vibrant social scene at Geer Senior Living!

Our Short Stay package includes:

- 30 to 90 day stays • A cozy furnished apartment
- Delicious meals • All utilities, cable & phone
- Engaging activities

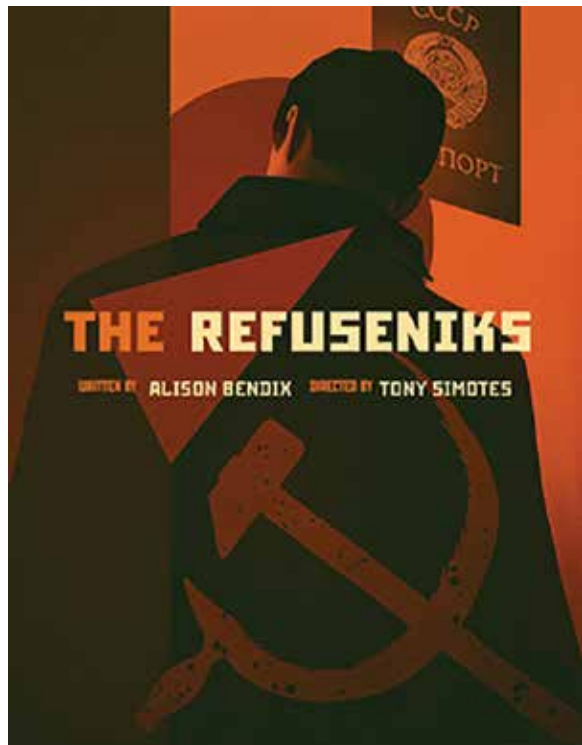
Short Stays start at just \$3,500, offering unbeatable value filled with comfort and community.



It’s your stay, your way — call 860.824.2625 or visit www.geercares.org to schedule your tour.



CULTURE & ARTS

The Refuseniks Explores Soviet Dissident Life Behind the Iron Curtain

ADAMS – The term “refusenik” is thankfully out of date – it was coined to refer to the Jewish dissidents in the former Soviet Union who sacrificed what rights and privileges they had in an effort to emigrate from behind the Iron Curtain.

The term will be revived by playwright Alison Bendix this summer in a staged reading of her 11-character play *The Refuseniks* at the Adams Theater. The drama sheds light on the personal and political challenges a group of dissidents faces at a crisis moment in their lives – they have committed to challenging the Soviet regime and, while they have already felt the backlash for doing so, how the Communist government might ultimately deal with them is still very much uncertain. The once-privi-

leged characters reduced to living communally in a single apartment, and, as director Tony Simotes puts it: “There is still a belief that there is hope, that some things can be solved. Yet underlying all of it is that there is also, as with any group of people that has found oppression in life, always the fear of something yet to come.”

While *The Refuseniks* is set in the late 1970s/early 1980s, it’s not precisely a product of historical imagination. Bendix penned the first version of play in 1979, not long after she visited the Soviet Union to meet some of the refuseniks whose cause was being championed by the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry (SSSJ), a group founded in the United States in 1964. Connecting with refuseniks in Moscow was a dodgy and dangerous undertaking – they were spied on by the state and Bendix, if caught, could have been arrested.

She remembers that before she left, the SSSJ suggested she fill a suitcase with American goods such as denim jeans that she could give to the refuseniks she met so they could resell them on the black market to make money that might help them obtain exit visas. The SSSJ suggested she visit the main synagogue in Moscow. “They didn’t necessarily go in for services,” she says, “because they knew nothing about being Jewish – only that ‘Jewish’ was a bad thing stamped on their passports. But they did congregate there and slipped notes to each other, because they were under surveillance.” One person she met trusted her

enough to invite her to “an English-speaking club” in a communal apartment, and there she met refuseniks who were “learning English, because they all wanted to go to America. They had an armoire and on the top was their baggage. They said, ‘See – our bags are packed. We are ready to go.’ One of them told me, ‘Every Jew should have a chicken in the pot and his bag packed.’ And that turned into a line in the play.”

That initial contact afforded Bendix the opportunity to meet other refuseniks and she transmitted their stories in the early drafts of the play. Part of the dramatic tension of *The Refuseniks* is that these characters, whose Jewishness is at the root of their travails, “have no knowledge of anything Jewish,” says Bendix. One character determines that everyone in the apartment will celebrate Purim, but that nobody knows exactly what Purim is – and what’s more, neither does the American Jewish representative of a group trying to raise money for them. These Russian Jews are then shown “trying to learn what is [this Jewishness] that is causing them all this grief and then finding joy in discovering what it is and that it’s worth fighting for.”

Reflecting on why the play has a universal message, Simotes says, “As a non-Jew, one of the things I loved about the play is that there are a lot of people everywhere who sit within their own ethnicity or religion and yet, how much do they really know? People come to a point in time that they know something’s wrong and their lives are not stable, and they’re looking for how to make things better. The play brings us to a place of large struggles that a society is going through, and yet there’s this deep-seated effort trying to understand exactly who we are as people.”

Simotes, a founding member and formerly the artistic director of Shakespeare & Company, says he’s looking forward to working with a large cast of actors, among them Berkshire favorite Annette Miller. “Alison stuck to her guns about not wanting double-casting,” he says. “Today, because of the politics and pricing of theater, you have three people playing 30 roles all the time. I think there’s a real strong value in today’s theater being able to not see four people represent fifteen characters. Then, each actor out there represents their own energy and storyline.”

Bendix, who had a long career as a journalist and author, characterizes herself as an “accidental playwright.” She rewrote *The Refuseniks* over the decades before returning to it in recent years. She entered it in a competition of the Road Theatre, North Hollywood’s prestigious festival of staged readings, where it was chosen from among 600 submissions to be one of 25 plays presented in 2023.

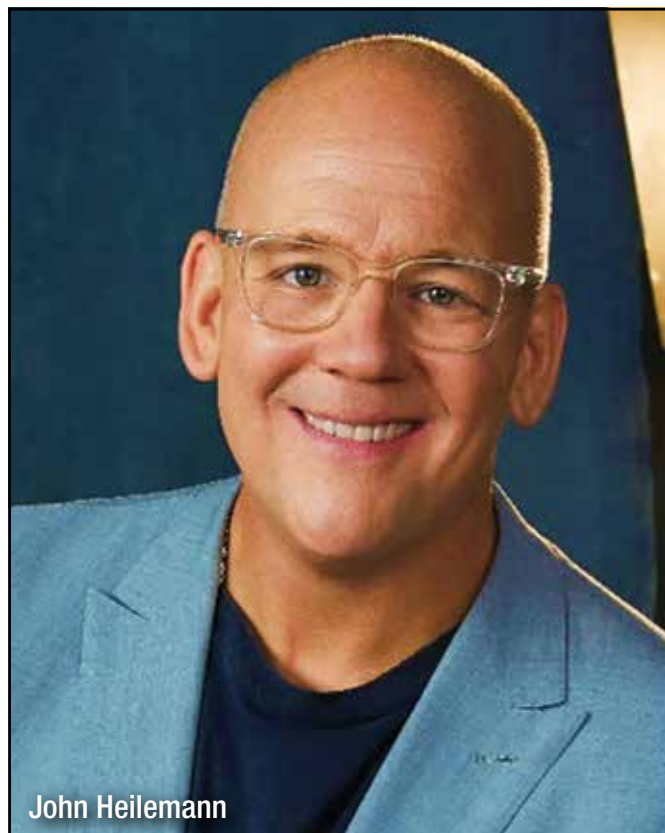
Adds Simotes: “I’m also excited that we’re forging this relationship with a new theater. [Founding Executive and Artistic Director] Yina Moore of The Adams Theater has taken on the mantle of continuing to explore new work. It’s nice to feel that we’re out there in the very beginnings, again, of what’s possible – especially in North County.”

The Adams Theater will present a staged reading of The Refuseniks at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, August 9 and Saturday, August 10, and at noon on Sunday, August 11. Tickets can be reserved at adamstheater.org/present or by calling (888) 401.5022. The Adams Theater is located at 27 Park Street in Adams.

57TH ANNUAL HILDA VALLIN FEIGENBAUM MEMORIAL FOUNDATION LECTURE

Sunday, August 25

7:30 PM



John Heilemann

2024 ELECTION:

THE FUTURE OF OUR DEMOCRACY

With Guest Speaker

JOHN HEILEMANN

*National Affairs Analyst for NBC News and MSNBC
Creator and Executive Producer of Showtime's THE CIRCUS*

Funded by The Hilda Vallin Feigenbaum Lecture Endowment

The lecture is free and open to the public. Seating is limited.

Pre-registration is required.

For more information, visit ansheamunim.org.

There will be a reception immediately following the lecture.

Temple Anshe Amunim is an accessible building.



(413) 442-5910
ANSHEAMUNIM.ORG

26 Broad Street
Pittsfield, Mass.

CULTURE & ARTS

Inna Zhukovsky-Zilber's "Lost and Found" at TurnPark Art Space

WEST STOCKBRIDGE – Through August 18, The Garage Gallery at TurnPark Art Space will feature "Lost and Found," a quirky installation by the prolific artist and fashion designer Inna Zhukovsky-Zilber.

The artist was born in Lithuania in 1971 and immigrated to Israel with her parents in 1990. Tragically, both her parents died soon after, while she was enrolled at the Department of Fine Arts at Haifa University. Along with her husband and twins, she relocated to the Boston area in 2021, where she works not only as a visual artist, but as an event planner and designer at the Kaziuki Wearable Art Company, which she founded.

"Lost and Found" is an "exploration of my personal journey," explains Zhukovsky-Zilber. "I hope to evoke a sense of empathy and connection in others, reminding us all of the shared human experience that binds us together." She employs ceramics, textile, paintings, and found objects to capture "the inevitable ebb and flow of life, understanding that some things are forever lost while others are serendipitously found."



PHOTO: DAVID EDGECOMB

"Lost and Found" is another good reason to visit TurnPark, now in its seventh year. Spread over 16 acres of a former quarry, the grounds feature a natural park, an outdoor sculpture collection, two galleries, an outdoor amphitheater, and a gift shop, as well as ongoing exhibitions, a live performance program, and site-specific children's areas. The 2024 season of TurnPark Art Space continues through October 31.

TurnPark Art Space is located at 2 Moscow Road in West Stockbridge. Learn more at turnpark.com.

the COMEDY ERRORS of

OUTDOOR THEATER

by William Shakespeare
Directed by Kate Kohler Amory

WITH

Javier David	Emma Geer	David Gow	Rory Hammond	L. James	Madeline Rose Maggio
Ashley McCauley Moore	Naire Poole	Evan Stevens	Dennis Trainor, Jr.	Kristofer Wilson	Sharmerke Yusuf

JULY 13 – AUGUST 18
Outdoors at the Arthur S. Waldstein Amphitheatre

THE MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF THE BERKSHIRES

Ignite the Spark!

Toddler through 8th grade

www.BerkshireMontessori.org
Lenox Dale, MA

WORLD PREMIERE

The Islanders
by Carey Crim
Directed by Regge Life

WITH

Michelle Mountain	Tranney
-------------------	---------

JULY 25 – AUGUST 25
Tina Packer Playhouse

SHAKESPEARE & COMPANY Tickets Available at 413.637.3353
SHAKESPEARE.ORG

BERKSHIRE JEWISH VOICES FROM ISRAEL

Mission to Base 559

By Howie Stier / Special to the BJV

"There's this amazing culture that exists at the Kotel, people who go there everyday," says **Dr. Joshua Yurfest**, a compact and soft-spoken man recounting a break during his two-week mission to Israel. "All of a sudden these Ethiopian Jews appeared" he continues, now more animated "all dressed in white and they were carrying ornate white umbrellas- and you know, they daven in a circle? How wonderful, I thought – how much depth we have in Judaism."



He punctuates this memory with a broad, avuncular smile. We're in a café in downtown Pittsfield near his office and Dr. Yurfest is flaunting phone pics of his recent experience supporting Operation *Haravot Barzel* in Israel's ongoing war to exist. Here he is in an unairconditioned warehouse a few miles from the Gaza combat zone, and he's sporting that same smile. In the middle of the desert, beside Home Depot-scale shelving disappearing into the distance laden with army duffle bags he's packed and racked, he is smiling. And he's sporting that same smile in a ceremony, accepting a certificate attesting to his "contributing to Israel's strength and security."

"Black Shabbat – that's what they call October 7 in Israel- was a hard blow to me," said Dr. Yurfest. "I was so emotionally distraught – these are my Jewish brothers and sisters."

His initial response, dropping *tzadakah* to the Magen David Adom, felt inadequate. "I was just sitting on the couch, writing checks," he remembers. "The rapes, murders, castrations, mutilations – I couldn't shake it. It's my land and I couldn't just sit here. I had to go!"

An initial inquiry into offering his skills as a physician was quickly shot down. "I spoke with the Israeli consul – he said 'We have 20,000 doctors; we don't need any more.'" What Israel needs is people to perform staff-support tasks to free up war fighters, and this is a need filled by the non-profit Sar-El – The National Project for Volunteers for Israel – which places volunteers to work alongside soldiers on Israeli Defense Force bases. Dr. Yurfest learned of the program from a veteran Sar-El participant and a longtime member of his shul, Chabad of the Berkshires.

"I'm a Zionist" he told the interviewer when asked why he wanted to join Sar-El. "She asked me one other question: 'Doctor Yurfest, can you run a 100-yard dash?' I said I can make 100 yards, but I don't know about the dash part." These answers satisfied all requirements for acceptance to the program.

But where Dr. Yurfest's saw an opportunity to perform the mitzvah *v'ohavto l'raiacho komocho*, his family saw an unappealing and dangerous venture. His wife balked at joining the trip, telling him: "I'm not ready to make the kids orphans." But as Moshe Rabbeinu continuously pulls us to Israel, Dr. Yurfest nullified her fears and followed through with his plan.

At Ben Gurion Airport, Dr. Yurfest joined other volunteers in a spontaneous hora before being shuttled onto a bus, its destination undisclosed. "I had no idea where I was going," he recalls. "You couldn't ask. The base we were going to could be anywhere in Israel."

Dr. Yurfest, now 68 years old, has made regular trips to Israel since his teens and so is familiar with the geography. "I realized we passed Be'er Sheva. Then, when we passed Mishmar Hanegev, I realized we really were going f***king south. Next thing I know, we roll into this huge, incredible base – there was all this stuff, trucks and the flatbeds that move the tanks. My first thought was: 'I hope they have many more of these!'"

Signage identified the place only as Base 559. There the unit maintained transport trucks and picked up support gear for troops deployed in Gaza. While the precise location of the base was secret, the general geographical local became apparent. "The first boom I heard, I really thought it was thunder. Then I realized: *we're in the middle of the desert*. 'Yes, those are explosions,' the people there told me. 'The border with Gaza is five miles away.'"

This didn't rattle Dr. Yurfest at all. "Once in a while the earth would really tremble," he says. "But it wasn't that disturbing. I mean, it was during the day only!"

The first morning on duty began with Dr. Yurfest in olive drab uniform, the volunteers falling into formation, and their commander announcing: "I know I'm here because I'm beautiful." The blonde soldier (seen in the image above), who had ended up with the volunteers rather than a combat assignment due to a medical exemption, continued: "Now – who wants to raise the flag?"

"I jumped up first!" said Dr. Yurfest, who cited singing "*Hatikvah*" at each day's formation among the multinational array of volunteers as a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The volunteers had come from Australia, Canada, Italy, and Finland, and not all were Jewish. Among them were Christians from Manitoba and one was a professional Elvis impersonator. A recurring participant with whom Dr. Yurfest shared dormitory housing, the Rev. Larry Green, is an Evangelical. These are believers in Christ who were originally courted by

former prime minister Ariel Sharon to invest in and support the Jewish State, but whose obsession with Israel is regarded by some with ambivalence, and notably with antagonism from Orthodox Judaism.

One might expect grunt work to be unnerving for an accomplished physician – Dr. Yurfest was director of Physical Therapy at Berkshire Medical Center for 30 years and, on a normal day, treats acute, chronic injuries. However, drudgery like wrestling foam sleep pads into canvas covers for an entire warehouse shift enriched Dr. Yurfest. "While we were working, the soldiers could relax," he said. "They lied on the ground, looked at their phones. That satisfied me, actually made me feel great." Neither did the shared spartan barracks discomfort him (aside from the issue of the volunteer he diagnosed with sleep apnea). The son of Holocaust survivors from Chelm, Poland, Dr. Yurfest would not describe himself as choosy. As he put it: "We weren't coddled when we were growing up."

He hit the *Mincha minyan* on base each day after work (the distance to shul on the sprawling base kept him from attending *Shacharit*). "It was Mizrahic style. I loved the *nigunim*." And recounting a scene not supported in mainstream American media, Dr. Yurfest reported the afternoon worship among Israel's military was ethnically diverse "There were Yemeni and Egyptian Jews, black Africans, and Indian Jews who had immigrated to Israel. I was the only white Polish colonizer!"

Interacting with soldiers coming out of the combat zone was discouraged, not out of intelligence concerns but rather as a way of following Judaism's considerate guidance of *'shomer lashon'* so as to avoid conversation may aggravate those exposed to psychological trauma. "But our presence alone comforted them" he said. When given the opportunity, "I explained why I was there and what I was doing. They all loved the fact that we were here, and were so very appreciative."

Nightly team-building talks were emotional and uplifting, Dr. Yurfest said. "We sat in a circle, beginning always with disbelief at Black Shabbat. They asked about antisemitism in America, on the college campuses. I

told them about the ceasefire resolution conflict in Williamstown" he said, referencing the anti-Israel movement driven by Williams College student radicals condemning Israel and calling for a (one sided) cease fire. "I told them how we in the Berkshires were able to get that voted down."

Talk never turned to Netanyahu and the ongoing demonstrations that divided Israel politically prior to the war.

"They all know we have to destroy Hamas," he said. "Everybody is united. I think these (anti-Netanyahu) demonstrations are putting soldiers and hostages at risk." He added that he really enjoyed living in a milieu free of agitators "who hate America."

For those considering volunteer trips but are apprehensive about time off from their vocation, Dr. Yurfest avowed that the digital nomad stuff works. Technology ensured that, from barracks a few miles from the Gaza border, Dr. Yurfest's patients in Pittsfield were taken care of. "Before heading to the warehouse, I reviewed x-rays, MRI scans, read reports. There's a program, E-Clinic, I used to make my recommendations and send notes to my staff."

Dr. Yurfest disagrees with the widespread perception that Israel is unsafe to visit, or is in any way not tourist-friendly as the Gaza War is being waged. "There was a massive barrage of (incoming) missiles while I was in Tel Aviv and not one struck the ground!" He was also in the country when the unprecedented multi-platform Iranian attack was launched – all 350 of their missiles failed utterly to hit their targets.

"This was miraculous," Dr. Yurfest exulted. "*Ha'Kadosh Baruch Hu* is protecting us. In Tel Aviv, the beaches are packed, the clubs are full. Haifa is lit up at night – the place is alive. And there are plenty of tourists – Nigerians, for example, people who are used to conflict." And volunteers continue to arrive in droves – since October 7, over 40,000 volunteers have cycled through the Sar-El program, according the website Sar-El.Org.

Dr. Yurfest shared the memory of having Shabbos dinner in the Moslem quarter of Jerusalem's Old City not long after his arrival in Israel. His host Rabbi Joseph Zilberman taught the gathered at his table that when one walks in Israel, every step is a mitzvah.

"I put in 20,000 steps one day, and that's a big basketful of *mitzvot!*," said Dr. Yurfest. "I can't wait to do it again."

The son of a survivor of the Lvov Ghetto and Janowska concentration camp. Howie Stier is a longtime journalist who reported on crime and mayhem in the five boroughs for the New York Times, covered celebrity news from the red carpet and back alleys of Hollywood Boulevard for Entertainment Tonight, and has relocated to the Berkshires to focus on two considerations: literature and learning Torah – as havel havalim hakol havel (breath, breath, all is breath).

