

THE REPORTER

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The Morning Book Club announces its *chai* reading season

The 18th “chai” reading season of the Morning Book Club will begin on Wednesday, July 7, at 10:30 am, on Zoom. The club has been meeting on Zoom since the spring of 2020. All meetings take place on Wednesday mornings.

“We look forward to returning to Temple Concord when the temple decides it is safe to hold our meetings in person,” said organizers. “At that time, we will become a ‘hybrid book club,’ which will allow us to participate from temple, home, the library or wherever we happen to be on the first Wednesday of the month! No more cancellations due to wintry weather!”

The books for the July 2021-June 2022 season are:

- ◆ July 7 – “Count to a Thousand” by Caroline Goldberg Igra
- ◆ August 4 – “Evening: A Novel” by Nessa Rapoport
- ◆ September 1 – “Mother Land: A Novel” by Leah Franqui
- ◆ October 6 – “The Lost Shtetl: A Novel” by Max Gross
- ◆ November 3 – “The Other Einstein: A Novel” by Marie Benedict
- ◆ December 1 – “The Paris Library: A Novel” by Janet Skeslien Charles
- ◆ January 5 – “Exile Music: A Novel”

by Jennifer Steil

- ◆ February 2 – “The Nazis Next Door: How America Became a Safe Haven for Hitler’s Men” by Eric Lichtblau
- ◆ March 2 – “The Book of Lost Names: A Novel” by Kristin Harmel
- ◆ April 6 – “Hannah’s War” by Jan Eliasberg

- ◆ May 4 – “Eli’s Promise: A Novel” by Ronald H. Balson
- ◆ June 1 – “A Place at the Table” by Saadia Faruqui and Laura Shovan

All books were published between 2014 and 2021, and are available on e-readers or in print editions.

Naftali Bennett sworn in as head of 36th Israeli gov’t

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Israel’s 36th government passed a vote of confidence at a special Knesset session on the night of June 13 with Yamina Party leader Naftali Bennett sworn in as the country’s 13th prime minister.

Bennett has replaced now-former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who held the position for the past 12 years and who served another three years prior to that, from 1996-99, making him the longest-serving premier in Israel’s history. With the transfer of power, Netanyahu became the head of the opposition, replacing Yesh Atid Chairman Yair Lapid, who, according to a rotation agreement with Bennett, will serve as foreign minister for two years and then assume the role of prime minister.

The special Knesset session on June 13 began with a speech by Bennett, in which he presented the composition of his Cabinet.

His address was interrupted several times by shouts of “liar” and “vote thief” on the part of right-wing and *haredi* rivals in the plenum. Religious Zionist Party head Bezael Smotrich, fellow party members Itamar Ben-Gvir and Orit Struck, Likud Knesset member May Golan, Shas Knesset member Moshe Abutbul and United Torah Judaism Knesset member Yitzhak Pindrus all were removed from the hall by Knesset Speaker Yariv Levin. Levin was replaced at the start of the vote by Yesh Atid Knesset member Mickey Levy.

Bennett made a point to thank Netanyahu and his wife, Sara, saying: “You both sacrificed a great deal for the state of Israel. ... We are facing an internal challenge, a schism among the people that is on display at this very moment,” he said, referring to the shouts emanating from the plenum. See “Bennett” on page 8

Federation held Tot Shabbat



Almost 30 people attended the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton’s Tot Shabbat program on June 11, which was held at Arnold Park. (See page 5 for more photos.)

The Reporter wants the community to kvell with you

If your baby was born between July 2020 and July 2021, submit your baby’s picture to *The Reporter* for the annual Family Focus issue, which will be published on July 2. Pictures must be delivered by Tuesday, June 22. Parents and grandparents are welcome to put a photo into an envelope and stop by or mail it to *The Reporter*’s office at the JCC (500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850), or



e-mail as a JPG or TIF to TReporter@aol.com with “baby photo” in the subject line. Please include the baby’s name, sex, date of birth, parents’ names, and living grandparents’ names and great-grandparents’ names.

Photos may be picked up at *The Reporter* after July 5 or include a self-addressed stamped envelope and it will be mailed back to you.

Spotlight

Medical alert bracelets funded by bat mitzvah project

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

This bat mitzvah project was personal. Shayna Foreman, the daughter of Abbi and Brett Foreman of Vestal, used the money she raised from her bat mitzvah project to buy medical alert bracelets because she knew their importance: two years ago, two friends of hers were diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. “The medical alert bracelets are to let others know they have diabetes in case of emergency,” Foreman said in an e-mail interview. “For



An example of the medical alert bracelets Shayna Foreman purchased with funds raised by her bat mitzvah project.

example, if [their blood sugar gets] too high, they could pass out, and others could see the bracelet and know how to handle the situation.”

Foreman, who will celebrate her bat mitzvah in August at Temple Concord, learned from her religious school studies about the importance of helping others. “My Torah portion is all about helping people in need or just helping people,” she said. “I think it is important because it has to do with what I am reading in the Torah. I learned that helping people is not only fun, but it feels really good knowing that you are doing something for the community.”

Originally, Foreman planned to hold a spaghetti dinner at the synagogue to raise money for the bracelets, but the COVID pandemic forced her to think creatively since a dinner was no longer possible. She decided to hold a raffle instead – collecting donated items for raffle baskets, complete baskets and monetary donations. The final results was 15 baskets, which were then raffled off. “I chose the fund-raiser because

At right: Shayna Foreman (center) posed with her friend, Sarah Finch (far right), and three staff members of Joslin’s Diabetes Center after delivering the medical alert bracelets she bought with funds from her bat mitzvah project.



I knew that raffle baskets are fun, and they are safe to do with COVID,” she said.

The basket raffle raised \$1,325 in donations. RoadID, which sells medical ID bracelets, gave Foreman a discount on the items so she was able to purchase 100 medical alert bracelets in different sizes for use by both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetics.

Foreman noted that she is going into ninth

grade next year and is involved in several school activities, including synchronized swimming. Her favorite subject in school is English and she also plays the trumpet. “When I am free, I like to tumble,” she said. “I am working on getting my back handspring.” In addition to this, she is a good friend, willing to help both of her friends and others with diabetes stay safe.

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Opinion

Father's Day

By Bill Simons

On a Father's Day several years ago, my father, my son and I stood before a large wall mirror adjusting our ties as we prepared to join the rest of the family. In the mirror image, the three generations were looking good – and upbeat. Then, my father turned to the empty space to his left and said, "I wish my father were here." I am now that grandfather at the end of the queue looking to the empty space and saying, "I wish my father were here."

My father, Shep Simons, celebrated his 94th birthday on April 30, 2017. We rented a sparsely furnished, childproof room for a four-generation family gathering. Unassisted, my father walked at a good clip from the independent-living Brooksby Village apartment in Peabody, MA, that he shared with my mother to the party room. Laughter and good cheer pervaded the celebration. My father pronounced the 2017 family gathering the happiest day of his life.

In the weeks after my father's 94th birthday, he experienced significant declension. For the first time, my father needed a walker. And there were episodes of dizziness and fatigue.

On Saturday, June 17, my wife, Nancy, and I arrived at Brooksby, and my father was in bed. His breathing was heavy, sometimes strained, but his discomfort modest. From about 4-8 pm, Dad and I shared memories about family; our multigenerational trip to Israel; AZA (Aleph Zadik Aleph), the Jewish youth group he advised, coached and inspired for a generation; ballgames played and watched; the 132-year-old Lynn (MA) family business which he and his brothers Shel and Alan transformed from shoe store to uniform retail company; and the role of the Simons family in the capture of the Boston Strangler. When I recalled the many rowboat outings from Salem Willows with Uncle Ben and cousins Lloyd and Bobby to catch flounder, Dad perfectly pantomimed, with surprising vigor, bringing in the drop line. And there was talk of the 2015 Honor Flight we took to DC with his World War II military compatriots. On that trip, an active-duty soldier grasped my father's forearm, looked him in the eye and said, "Thank you for my freedom."

I reminded my father that tomorrow was Father's Day and the entire extended family would share it with him, and that my sister Jo Ann had arranged for an ice cream truck to come by; my father suddenly started to look for his credit card so that he could pay, which he always did. On the phone, Jo Ann told me that, according to the doctor, time was growing finite, but we were not at the end. Nancy and I walked over to our rented room.

A few hours later, at 3:31 am on Father's Day, we awoke to a ringing phone. Nancy picked it up. My father had died in bed a few moments before in his own apartment with my mother beside him. When Veronica, the homecare professional and dear friend, had looked in at 3 am, my father was OK.

Within 12 minutes of the phone call, Nancy and I, dressing quickly and walking double pace, were in the bedroom my parents had shared. My father was in bed. He appeared to be sleeping. There was neither fear nor pain on his face, for which we thank God. My Dad's aura remained. I kissed my father on the forehead and told him that I loved him. Jo Ann soon arrived. Jo Ann and Nancy focused on my mother, comforting her in the living room, and intermittently coming into the bedroom.

In the Jewish tradition, the body is not left alone before burial. I remained in the bedroom with my father for the next four-plus hours. Memories and reflections punctuated that time.

When I was 10 years old, my father bought me a set of weights. Dad would instruct me in technique and monitor my progress. And, between sets, we talked. As my father came of age, antisemitism plagued the world. In his youth, my father sought a Jewish history that leavened defeat and discrimination with victories and heroes. At the library, he read of Judah Maccabee and Bar Kokhba, but no Jewish hero loomed larger in his imagination than Hank Greenberg, the Detroit Tigers slugger of the Depression years, because of his home runs and refusal to play baseball on Yom Kippur 1934.

My father attended Hebrew school several afternoons

a week until his bar mitzvah. Hebrew was taught by rote, providing little sense of the meaning behind the words. By early adolescence, Dad found Jewish theology largely irrelevant. He believed in a supreme being, but found it difficult to accept that any mortal could tell him more about God than he felt. Yet, from an early age, my father felt a strong identification with the ethnic component of Judaism. That sense of peoplehood was manifested by his leadership role in Jewish organizations, family life, strong support of Israel and World War II military service.

The funeral home driver, Kevin, arrived at about 8 am. I helped transfer my Dad's body from the bed to the gurney, and then from the gurney to the hearse.

I cried when I telephoned my son Joe, as did he.

Discussions with our rabbi (David Meyer), finalizing arrangements with the Stanetsky-Hymanson funeral home, a traditional Jewish funeral with military honors, and sitting *shiva* would follow. However, there was Father's Day to consider. The death had occurred in the wee hours of the morning on Father's Day.

The Sunday, June 18, Father's Day family gathering to honor my Dad went on as planned. The ice cream truck, with its customary sound silenced, arrived on schedule. Our cousins and Uncle Alan joined the gathering, ranging from my 1-year-old grandson Danny to my mother, Elaine, just short of 91, to support one another, grieve, share fond recollections and to affirm that as long as we have memory, Dad remains with us.

Father's Day remains special to my family and I hope to yours. *L'chaim!*

How struggle enables Israelis to achieve difficult things

By Jonathan Frenkel

Reprinted from *Israel 21C*

People often ask me how do you build a technology ecosystem? They want to know how you build the next Silicon Valley, and what are the ingredients a region needs to do so. They are particularly interested in how they can emulate what Israel, the startup nation, has developed.

But just as I don't believe that other regions should copy the Bay Area, I don't wish for other regions and people to go through the struggle we endure in Israel.

Would Israel have been able to build so many growth-

stage companies and unicorns if not for the fact that everything is a fight and a struggle? I don't think so. What may seem to be an obstacle can actually help us grow and prosper against all odds.

When coal goes through intense pressure to come out the other side as a diamond, there is always the fear that the coal will break along the way. But without pressure, nothing of substance can be built.

It's worth exploring not just the traits and ideas behind successful entrepreneurs, but how struggle enables us to **See "Achieve" on page 9**

In My Own Words

Antisemitism

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

"Thinking I really have to write about antisemitism, although I'm not sure how much more anyone can say. Maybe I will say just that." The impetus for my statement was reading commentators asking where was the outrage about the antisemitism that has flared up in the U.S. since the recent fighting in Israel. It was also part of the e-mail I wrote to Diana Sochor, *The Reporter's* layout editor. I often bounce ideas off her and always get excellent advice. She wrote back, "And yeah, what else can be said? Like racism, bigotry and homophobia, it's never going to be fully and permanently eradicated. Humanity isn't mature enough or selfless enough for that, and there are always those who want to blame anyone but themselves for real and imaginary ills of the world."

Harsh words for humanity, but unfortunately all too true. Most of the antisemitism I've experienced has been benign. My mother once reminded me that when I was in grade school, I came home furious one day because a friend told me that I killed Christ. My mom said my reply was, "I did *not* kill Christ!" But that's what the Catholic Church taught my friend in her catechism class, so how was she to know otherwise?

In the Honor Society room in high school, a few students

made antisemitic comments. I can't remember what they were. What I do remember is that it was one of the few times I had a good comeback, something along the lines of "if I wanted to criticize you, I don't have to talk about your religion." One of them apologized to me later, something for which I always respected him. Then, years later, I learned that my best friend in high school – who was not Jewish – suffered from antisemitic comments because people couldn't understand how she could be friends with a Jew.

Years ago – I can't remember if I was in grade school or high school – my mom and I were talking about the Holocaust. She asked if I thought it could happen here. I said yes. Now that I know more about Jewish history and world history, I believe a genocide can happen anywhere. As Diana so wisely put it: "There are always those who want to blame anyone but themselves for real and imaginary ills of the world."

I've always been very open about being Jewish, but I have to admit being more cautious about it in recent circumstances. My chaplaincy work takes me on back roads through New York state. Although I wear a *kippah* while doing that work, I have taken it off when going into a convenience store if I stop to get something to drink on

the way there or back. Do I really think something could happen? The real question is, do I want to take that chance?

I grew up listening to my mom talk about the Nazi rally that was held in Madison Square Garden before World War II and the fear that the U.S. would enter the war on the side of Germany. I watched with horror several years ago during the alt-right march in Charlottesville, VA, when marchers were chanting, "Jews will not replace us." I laugh at the idea that Jews control the world – please let me know where I can sign up for a job – but cringe that people actually believe it.

Antisemitism will always exist and it may not make any difference to say the following, but it needs to be repeated: No matter what you think of Israeli politics, that is not a good reason to violently attack Jews. No matter what you think of Jewish political power, that is not a good reason to attack Jews. No matter how you feel about the Jewish religion, that is not a good reason to physically attack Jews. Actually, there is *no* good reason to physically attack anyone: white, black, brown or Asian; Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jain, etc.; straight or LGBTQ+. But, unfortunately, people are always looking for a scapegoat so we are obligated to condemn each and every act of violence and hate.



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OF GREATER BINGHAMTON

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OPINIONS

The views expressed in editorials and opinion pieces are those of each author and not necessarily the views of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton.

LETTERS

The Reporter welcomes letters on subjects of interest to the Jewish community. All letters must be signed and include a phone number; names may be withheld upon request.

ADS

The Reporter does not necessarily endorse any advertised products and services. In addition, the paper is not responsible for the *kashruth* of any advertiser's product or establishment.

DEADLINE

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www.thereporter.org

Jewish online resources

By Reporter staff

A variety of Jewish groups are offering educational and recreational online resources. Below is a sampling of those. *The Reporter* will publish additional listings as they become available.

◆ The Temple Emanu-El Streicker Center will hold several virtual events: "Like No Other Country: The Remarkable Rescue of Denmark's Jews" on Tuesday, June 29, at 11:30 am; "Gazoz: Sparkling Inspirations" with Adeena Sussman and Benny Briga on Tuesday, July 6, at 11:30 am, about Israel beverages; "Gabriel Allon is Back! Daniel Silva's 'The Cellist'" on Tuesday, July 13, 11:30 am; and "From Nazi Prisoner to Wall Street King: The Indefatigable Siggie Wilzig" on Tuesday, July 20, at 11:30 am. Some events are free; there is a charge for others. For more information or to register, visit <https://streicker.nyc/category/events>.

◆ The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra will assemble in ADI Negev-Nahalat Eran's accessible amphitheater for classical music concert to highlight the importance of disability inclusion, equity and access through music. Following the live performance earlier in June, an enhanced program – including a behind-the-scenes look at the new hospital – will be broadcast to ADI's friends and supporters around the globe on Sunday, June 20, at 1 pm. Although the broadcast is free, there is a request of a donation to support ADI's Neuro-Orthopedic Rehabilitative Hospital in the Negev. For more information or to register, visit <https://adi-il.org/campaign/israel-philharmonic-adi-negev/>.

◆ The Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy will hold the virtual talk "How the Other Half Lives: A talk about the Jews of the 'Gold Coast' of NYC" on Wednesday, June 23, from 7-8:30 pm. The talk will discuss the Jewish movers and shakers of finance, commerce, and retail who lived on the Upper East Side – The "Gold Coast." For more information or to register, visit www.nycjewishtours.org/event-log/how-the-other-half-lives-zoom.

◆ "Raising Ruach: ALEPH Virtual Cabaret" will be held on Thursday, June 24, from 8-10 pm. Welcome and centering will take place from 7:45-8 pm. The cost is pay-what-you-can (suggested donation of \$36). The second annual Virtual ALEPH Cabaret will be emceed by Rabbi Lex Rofeberg and Dr. Brielle Paige Rassler, and produced by Rabbinic Pastor/Cantor Lisa Levine. The performers will share their songs and stories. For more information or to register, visit www.aleph.org/virtualcabaret.

◆ Congregation Rodeph Sholom will hold the virtual program "Tradition: A History of Jewish Influence on Broadway" on Wednesday, June 23, from 7-9 pm. Broadway historian Tim Dolan will explore the Jewish figures who helped shape the billion dollar Broadway industry. The cost to attend is \$18. For more information or to register, visit https://rodephsholom.org/event/jewish-broadway/?instance_id=21985.

◆ The Orange County Community Scholarship Program will present the virtual talk "The Catskills; Its History and How It Changed America" on Tuesday, June 29, from 3:30-4:30 pm. Stephen M. Silverman will be the speaker. For more information or to register, visit <https://mailchi.mp/b2b7872e36b5/csp-zoom-programs-week-of-april-5-5922834>.

See "Resources" on page 9

Cornell Jewish Studies Program held events



A screenshot of a Cornell Jewish Studies Program digital event called "Jewish Trans Brazil: Identity, Activism, Music." Clockwise from top right: Jonathan Branfman; Simone de Lemos; Lilyth Esther Grove; and Assucena Assucena. The event discussed how Jewish transgender Brazilians are building visibility within São Paulo's straight Jewish spaces and Christian LGBTQ spaces. Latin Grammy-winning musician Assucena Assucena and her fellow artist and activist, Lilyth Ester Grove, shared their first-hand insights on trans Jewish Brazilian struggles and successes today. The event was moderated by Jonathan Branfman, of Cornell's Jewish Studies and English Studies departments. Portuguese-English translation was provided by Simone de Lemos, of Cornell's Romance Studies Department. Those interested can view the video at <https://www.cornell.edu/video/jewish-trans-brazil-identity-activism-music>.



At left: Film-maker Aviva Kempner (top) participated in a Q&A on her documentary "The Spy Behind Home Plate," moderated by Elliot Shapiro (bottom, of Cornell's Jewish Studies Program), on April 29. The documentary highlighted Moe Berg, a major league Jewish baseball catcher who joined the OSS during World War II and spied on the Nazis' atomic bomb program.

Community Calendar

The Community Calendar can be found on the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's website, www.jfgb.org, by clicking on "calendar." Updates or additions of events for the calendar can be made by contacting the Federation through its website (click on "calendar" and then "click here to request a change to the calendar") or by calling 724-2332.

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Leonard Feld** on the death of his brother, **Allen Feld**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Rebecca Goldstein Kahn** on the death of her husband and **Gabriel (Gabe) Kahn** on the death of his father, **Jeff Kahn**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Dr. Elissa Brown** on the death of her mother, **Barbara Audrey Portnoy Weisner**

We would like to thank everyone who made donations in memory of our beloved son, **Alan**. **Howard and Ruth Buschman**

DEADLINES

The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming *REPORTER* issues.

ISSUE	DEADLINE
July 2-15.....	June 23
July 16-29.....	July 7
July 30-August 12.....	July 21
August 13-26.....	August 4

All deadlines for the year can be found at www.thereportergroup.org/contact-us/faqs under "Q: What Are the Deadlines for the Paper?"

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Hillel Academy seeks new administrative assistant

Hillel is looking for a new administrative assistant beginning full time in the Fall. We will train the individual in May & June. Candidates should email Joy Yarkoni at joyyarkoni@gmail.com

Job Description: Corresponding and interfacing with state and district offices, on behalf of the school. Knowledge of Covid PPP funding, private school grants, scholarships, and the ability to research & apply for relevant applications for private school funding, and endowments in a creative and professional timely manner. Ensuring that school is in compliance with state and federal regulations. Proper Book-keeping and payroll- including taxes, accounts receivable, accounts payable, etc.

Preparing financial reports for the board and CPA. Maintaining files of current and prospective students -- contact information, academic files, and health records. Ordering office supplies for teachers. Opening and distributing mail. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Connection. Taking and distributing email and phone messages to teachers, parents, and students. Assisting Journal committee with all aspects of the Annual Journal Fundraiser. Drafting and sending correspondence about school events, schedule, and other matters to parents. Troubleshooting office equipment. Answering and directing phone calls.

Skills: Written and verbal communication. Bookkeeping (Quickbooks Desktop and/or Online). Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite and Google Suite, including Onedrive and Google Drive.

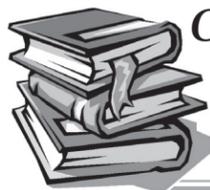
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Off the Shelf

Soviet Jews in Russia and the U.S.

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Post-Soviet Union Jewish identity: is there such a thing? It's difficult to come up with a specific name for those who once lived in what is now the former U.S.S.R.: Soviet Jews, Russian Jews or Jews-whose-identity-card-may-have-said-they-were-Jewish-but-who-don't-accept-that-designation. Different people fit each possibility, and sometimes a person's identity fits into more than one category. Two new works of fiction don't answer this question, but rather give readers even more ways to think about the problem. Mikhail Iossel's "Love Like Water, Love Like Fire" (Bellevue Literary Press) offers short stories, many of which take place in the former Soviet Union, while the characters in Zhanna Slor's novel "At the End of the World" (Agora Books/Polis Books) live in the United States and Israel.

In his short stories, Iossel plays with form: while some stories are straight narrative, others use different means to portray the characters/events. For example, the six pages of "Some of the World Transactions My Father Has Missed Due to His Death on September 14, 1999" combine simple sentences noting political and cultural events and family milestones. Interspersed with these sentences are quotes about death, including different writers' final words or their thoughts about death. While each individual element doesn't have much impact on its own, together they make a powerful statement about the author's sense of loss.

In "Necessary Evil," the author makes clear the problem of being Jewish in the former Soviet Union. The narrator of the story is not yet 10 years old, but his family has decided it's time to reveal a bitter truth: he is Jewish. The narrator is shocked because Soviet culture has taught him that Jews are evil, greedy traitors who harm their fellow Russians. How can he be Jewish and, if he is, does that mean he's evil? The debate between him and his parents about his

identity only seems to complicate matters. Although the end of the story felt a bit odd on first read, it made more sense in retrospect.

Casual antisemitism appears in "Flying Crane." The narrator and his family have moved into a new apartment. Most of the story tells of life in their previous cramped housing and the narrator's introduction to those who live in the new building. However, the first words he hears from two old women sitting in the courtyard concern whether he is Jewish, along with the suggestion that if Hitler and Stalin were alive, they would have gotten rid of any troublesome Jews.

The author also writes about family: In "April 1st, Sunset Hour," the narrator talks about walking through Leningrad with his grandmother, a story which takes a surprisingly moving turn at its end. During "Moscow Windows," the narrator talks about the difference between his hometown Leningrad and the Moscow in which his grandparents live. Underlying this story and others is the precarious balance of personal life and politics that any Soviet Jew must walk to stay alive.

All 20 stories in "Love Like Water, Love Like Fire" were well written, although readers might sometimes lose patience with the author's run-on sentences. The temptation to tell the narrator "to stop and take a breath" is offset by the fact that these sentences fit the nature of the story. Even when readers will be tempted to roll their eyes at the characters' beliefs (particularly that of the grandfather who never loses his fervent faith in communism), the author's sense of humor – and his knowledge of the absurdities found in Soviet life – make these stories worth reading.

While the majority of Iossel's stories take place in the former Soviet Union, Slor's novel is located in the United States during the first decade of the 21st century. Masha,

who is in her mid-20s, emigrated with her family to Milwaukee from the former Soviet Union when she was 9. Feeling uncomfortable in a city with so few Jews, Masha hid her religious identity – that is until she took a Birthright trip to Israel. There she finally felt at home – part of a real community – and has since become more observant since making *aliyah*. However, her balance is threatened when her father calls her home, saying that her younger sister Anna has gone missing. When Masha returns to Milwaukee, she learns there is far more to the story than she originally suspected.

The narration rotates between the two sisters, but Anna's story begins a year earlier when she is contacted online by a woman from Russia who claims to be her half-sister. Anna is in college – she's the good daughter who does what her parents want – but she is unhappy because she gave up painting in order to take classes her parents feel will lead to a real job. Anna, who doesn't remember as much of their life in Russia, also wants to know more about the past and the Russian heritage that her parents have turned their backs on.

When searching for Anna, Masha has to revisit her own past, her life in Milwaukee that she hoped to leave permanently behind. She also learns of the mysterious possible half-sister, a person her father refuses to discuss. In addition, Masha discovers that Anna may have been involved with someone whose actions could get her in serious trouble.

The author of "At the End of the World" does an excellent job portraying the difference between Masha and Anna's experiences in the U.S. and those of their parents. Masha's love of language added depth to her character and will please those with a love of language. The plot is absorbing and intriguing, leaving readers curious to discover how the sisters' dilemmas will be resolved.



Off the Shelf

They fought back: little known stories of World War II

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Readers might think there are no more World War II stories to tell. Yet, new nonfiction works appear on a regular basis. Sometimes, it's because a researcher takes an interest in a different aspect of the war or because top-secret files have finally been declassified. Both these actions inform two recent books about the war. Judy Batalion's "The Light of Days: The Untold Story of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghettos" (William Morrow) brings to light the tales of women whose resistance to the Nazis has been ignored, while "X Troop: The Secret Jewish Commandos of World War II" by Leah Garrett (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) records the war efforts of a group of Jewish immigrants who fought for England.

It was Batalion's personal search for strong Jewish women that led her to stories of women who resisted the Nazis, even as they were being transported to ghettos and concentration camps. Batalion found memoirs and testimonies about them, but somehow their actions have never become as well known as those of men who resisted. Most histories treat the women's roles as secondary and supportive. Yet, according to Batalion, these women's activities were vital: they "were combatants, editors of underground bulletins, and social activists. In particular, women made up the vast majority of 'couriers,' a specific role at the heart of the operations. They disguised themselves as non-Jews and traveled between locked ghettos and towns, smuggling people, cash, documents, information, and weapons, many of which they had obtained themselves." Women also fled

the ghettos to work with partisan groups, helping with intelligence missions and in sabotaging German troops' efforts.

What is amazing is that these women knew they were facing death and torture by the Nazis if they were caught, but they never gave up. Their acts of resistance began to define their lives. According to Batalion, "[the women] resisted morally, spiritually, and culturally by concealing their identities, distributing Jewish books, telling jokes during transports to relieve the fear, hugging barrack-mates to keep them warm, and setting up soup kitchens for orphans." Most of them never expected to survive, especially those who took part in military actions in the ghettos since they were outnumbered by the Germans and had a limited number of weapons and supplies. What they wanted to do was inflict as much harm as possible before they died. However, a surprising number managed to survive and continue their resistance efforts once they escaped. Unfortunately, others were killed or captured.

Batalion focuses on a limited number of these women (about 20 of them), although she acknowledges there were many more who fought. With more than 450 pages of text, it's impossible to give many details of what they accomplished. In fact, the sheer amount of detail was overwhelming, especially when Batalion writes of the atrocities that occurred. It's an understatement to say the book contains graphic violence. At times, it was difficult to read – not because of the prose, but because of the inhumanity of the Nazis' actions. At the same time, Batalion celebrates

these women, noting that they not only did not give up, they helped and encouraged others to fight and survive.

While the stories Batalion tells were available if people had done the research, the story of X Troop was long a British secret. These immigrants, who mostly came from Germany and Austria, were considered enemy aliens once World War II started and were interned in camps in the U.K and Australia. Some of those who were entrusted with their care were antisemitic and the story of those sent to Australia was particularly difficult to read. Yet, all these men volunteered to be part of this special commando force because they desperately wanted to fight the Germans who'd caused them to lose their homes and families. At least half of these 80-plus men were wounded, killed or disappeared without a trace during the war. Garrett focuses on the stories of about 15 of them.

The recruits were put through extensive training that turned poets and philosophers into hardened members of the armed service. They all had to take British sounding names and were registered as belonging to the Church of England, which meant that they would be buried under a cross, rather than a Jewish star, if they died during the war. Told to leave behind anything that was connected to their former identities, they rid themselves of letters and mementoes of their past. The troop proved successful and its members were spread through different units once the Allies invaded Europe. In addition to serving as translators who provided information that saved lives, some managed to talk large number of German troops to surrender without further violence. After the war, many of them stayed in Europe to help with denazification efforts.

The majority of the men retained their English names after their demobilization and became more British than the British. However, England was slow to recognize their efforts and resisted giving them British citizenship. It was only after the matter was brought up at Parliament that the War Office took more serious notice. According to Garrett, a memorandum on the matter noted that "the X Troopers' risks had been much greater than others,' and their bravery and exemplary service in the war had been unimpeachable. Almost a quarter of the original eighty-seven commandoes had become officers, an extremely high rate, which surely showed their worth. The statement concluded that rejecting the X Troopers for accelerated naturalization would be 'extremely unfair on the men who by their standards of intelligence and education and their proved eagerness to serve in an exacting role are qualified to do valuable national work.'"

Garrett writes about meeting the few surviving members of the troop and the families of others in a very moving afterword. She also includes an appendix that tells of the men's lives after the war. World War II history buffs will definitely be interested in this book. Those looking to learn about Jewish heroes will rejoice to discover the outstanding and heroic efforts of these men.

Quick Reference Guide to Planned Giving

Use this planned giving quick reference guide to help determine the best strategy for achieving your philanthropic and financial goals.

For further information or assistance, please contact Shelley Hubal at 724-2332 or director@jfgb.org

If Your Goal is to:

Make a quick and easy gift

Avoid tax on capital gains

Defer a gift until after your death

Receive guaranteed fixed income that is partially tax-free

Avoid the two-fold taxation on IRA or other employee benefit plans

Make a large gift with little cost to you

Reduce taxable income from IRA Required Minimum Distributions

Then You Can:

Simply write a check now or use a credit card

Contribute long-term appreciated stock or other securities

Put a bequest in your will (gifts of cash or a share or the residue of your estate)

Create a charitable gift annuity

Name a charity as the beneficiary of the remainder of the retirement assets after your lifetime

Contribute a life insurance policy you no longer need or purchase a new one and designate a charity as the owner

Make a qualified charitable donation directly from your IRA (after age 70½)

Your Benefits May Include:

An income tax deduction and immediate charitable impact

A charitable deduction plus no capital gains tax

Exemption from federal estate tax on donations

Current and future savings on income taxes plus fixed stable payments

Tax relief to your family on inherited assets

Current and possible future income tax deductions

Reducing taxable income



Jewish Federation
OF GREATER BINGHAMTON

Federation held Tot Shabbat at Arnold Park



Lilian Rosenstreich, one of the owners of Kalanoit Books, read the book "Soosie the Horse that Saved Shabbat" by Tami Lehman-Wilzig with illustrations by Menahem Halberstadt to the 15 children who attended the Federation Tot Shabbat on June 11.



Above: Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu (at right) made the blessings over the grape juice and challah roles.

At right: The children danced and clapped their hands during the performance by Josh Hubal and Rabbi Benny Kellman.



L-r: Josh Hubal and Rabbi Benny Kellman performed songs for the children at the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's Tot Shabbat program at Arnold Park on June 11.



Parents and children gathered to chat before the beginning of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's Tot Shabbat program at Arnold Park on June 11.



Families chatted during the Federation Tot Shabbat program.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Ra'am Party leader vows to "reclaim" lands "expropriated from our people"

Mansour Abbas, head of Israel's Ra'am Party, said on June 13 that he would "reclaim the lands that were expropriated from our people." In a mostly Arabic speech before the Knesset plenum ahead of the swearing-in of Israel's 36 government, Abbas called the reclamation of those lands a "national cause of the first order." Abbas switched to Hebrew toward the end of the speech to criticize remarks made earlier before the plenum by outgoing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who had accused Prime Minister-designate Naftali Bennett of "selling the Negev to Ra'am." Netanyahu was referring to the government's coalition agreement with Ra'am, which offers several concessions concerning illegal construction in the Israeli-Arab sector, including by Bedouin in the southern Negev. "No one sold the Negev to Ra'am. The Negev still remains within the state of Israel. The residents of the Negev are citizens of the state of Israel. There is a conflict about ownership of the land. Every modern country deals with these questions, of tribal claims," said Abbas. The Ra'am leader added that if citizens' problems were raised into national issues, "then apparently we have to solve all the crises - to provide a solution for a disagreement drenched in blood for over 100 years - in order to find a solution for the [everyday] challenges facing the state's citizens: education, welfare, employment [and] regularizing settlements so that they receive municipal status. ...I hope that the partnership that we want to push forward will also bridge the gaps on the national and the religious levels," he added. Ra'am, an Arab Islamist party with ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, is the first Arab party in history to join an Israeli government. Arab-Israeli parties, which are anti-Zionist, have traditionally refused to join Israeli governments for fear of lending legitimacy to the Jewish state. In February, Abbas broke with the Joint List, an Arab faction made up of four parties. The dispute centered on whether to continue along the path of rejectionism or to engage with the Israeli government in order to solve the problems facing their constituency. The Ra'am Party's support was essential to the formation of the new coalition government.

Graphic Artist

Part-time, in-house Graphic Artist for The Reporter Group, flexible hours (10 hours minimum), responsible for:

- Newspaper ad make-up
- Photo scanning
- InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop

Web experience preferred.

Please e-mail resume and cover letter to:
rachel@thereportergroup.org
 with "graphic artist" in the subject line.



Annual Campaign 2021

It's never too late to support your Jewish Federation!

To make a pledge/payment:

- 1) Visit the Federation website at www.jfgeb.org/2021-campaign and click on either "Make 2021 Pledge Now!" or "Pay 2021 Pledge Now!"
- 2) Pledges and payments (checks should be made payable to "Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton") can be mailed to The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Road, Vestal, NY 13850
- 3) Fill out the form in this ad and mail it to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850

Mail this form to:

Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850

- Name: _____
- Street Address: _____
- City: _____
- State: _____
- Zip Code: _____
- Phone number : _____
- Amount of pledge: _____



Support community programming like the Hanukkah Drive up event!

Even during this difficult time, the Federation strives to keep us all connected!





Annual Report June 2020 through May 2021

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

Federation Support

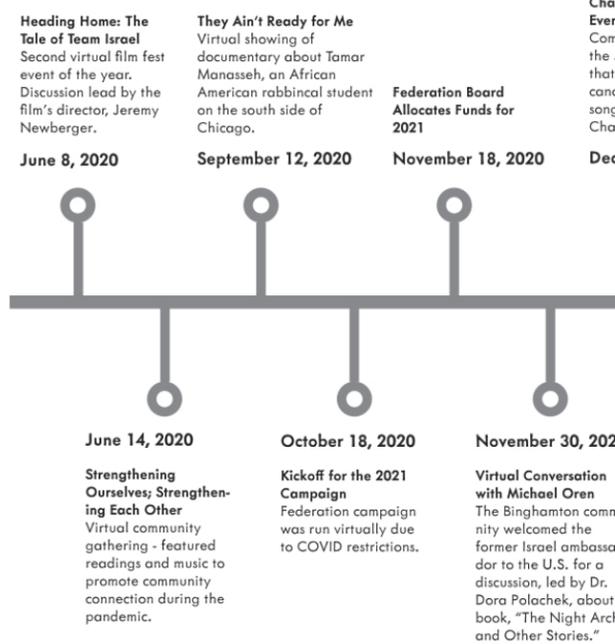
2020 Beneficiary Agencies



Mission Statement

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton strives to create a caring, vibrant, enduring community locally, in Israel and worldwide. The Federation uses its assets and contributions to strengthen local Jewish institutions and organizations, to support Jewish people in need, and to educate the people in the Southern Tier about Jewish values and identity.

Timeline of Events 2020



Message from Leadership

Dear Community Members,

This annual report highlights Federation-sponsored events and the impact of your monetary contributions from June 2020 through May 2021.

This year we confronted a pandemic that created unprecedented challenges and brought out the best in our community. We discovered new ways to come together and respond to the crises we faced.

The fund-raising Campaign for 2021 began virtually in October 2020. COVID-19 had some negative impacts on the Campaign, but our steadfast goal was to help our local institutions weather the many challenges of the pandemic. We are grateful to our donors who have helped the Binghamton Jewish community to remain whole during this difficult time.

We worked hard this year to provide stimulating virtual programming that would keep us all connected. Virtual programming enabled us to reach out to Binghamton Jewish community members both near and far.

We know that, despite whatever happens, we will remain a unified Jewish community. We, once again, want to express our gratitude to all our donors. Thank you for trusting in the work we do. We will continue to be guided by the sacred principle that "all Jews are responsible for one another." Wishing you all good health in the year to come. We look forward to being together soon.

L'shalom,

Shelley Hubal, Executive Director
Suzanne Holwitt, Board President

Annual Campaign

The annual Campaign is the core of the Jewish Federation. Our staff and volunteers work hard every year to raise the funds that sustain our community. The 2020 Campaign raised \$292,019 from 345 donors. The Campaign for 2021 kicked off in October. Due to social distancing restrictions, volunteers made calls and wrote thank you notes from their homes. To date, the Campaign for 2021 has \$274,821 in pledges from 323 donors. In the last year, the Binghamton community experienced many financial and social challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Campaign for 2021 is not as robust as years past; however, we remain grateful for all who have stepped up to support the local Jewish community.

Jewish Family Service

Jewish Family Service provides essential human services for individuals and families facing challenges. Financial assistance is provided through thoughtful and compassionate care to help people move toward a more secure and stable future. With the COVID-19 pandemic, we assumed a large role in providing emotional as well as financial assistance amid very difficult times.

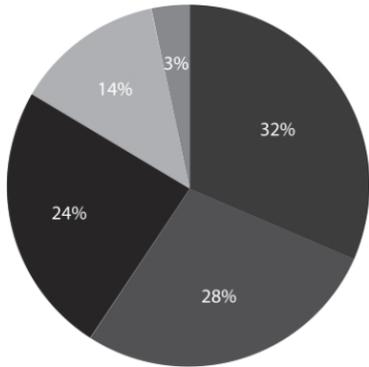
Summary of JFS support for May 2021:

- 76 monetary gifts totaling \$1,100.00
- 32 families given emotional support
- \$2,150.00 distributed for food
- 71 individual emotional support calls
- 47 well check calls
- 50 referrals to food bank
- 26 referrals to NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
- 47 housing financial assistance
- 6 home care referrals
- 46 mental health referrals
- 19 legal assistance referrals
- 3 employment assistance referrals

Allocation Distribution

Allocation Distribution

The Federation raises money and uses its endowment to meet the needs of our local Jewish organizations and, through JFNA, to contribute to social service programs in Israel. Funds are distributed through an allocation process overseen by the Board of Directors. In November of 2019 the Federation board voted to allocate a total of \$307,429 to be distributed to the following organizations in 2020: The Jewish Federation's operating budget, Jewish Family Service's operating budget, Hillel Academy, The Binghamton Jewish Community Center, The Reporter Group, PJ Library, Hillel at Binghamton University and The Jewish Federations of North America. During the 2019-2020 fiscal year, small grants were given to the Beth David Mikvah, Rohr Chabad Center for Jewish Student Life at Binghamton University and College of Jewish Studies.



Federation by the Numbers

71 Emotional support calls



345 Donors contributed to the 2020 Campaign



76 total monetary gifts distributed by JFS to Jewish families in the Binghamton area during Jewish holidays



\$292,019 raised in 2020 Campaign

37 Dedicated Federation board members

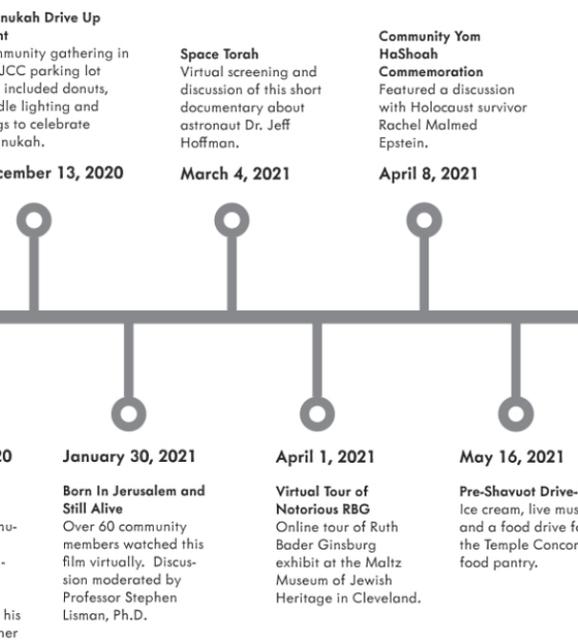


1,085 copies of The Reporter delivered to homes each week

\$2,150 DISTRIBUTED IN RELIEF FUNDS FOR FOOD



2020-2021



Leadership June 2020 - May 2021

Executive Committee

- Suzanne Holwitt, President
- Howard Warner, Immediate Past President
- Mark Walker, Vice-President
- Jeffrey Shapiro, Treasurer
- Lee Schechter, Assistant Treasurer
- Eileen Miller, Secretary
- Marilyn Bell, Campaign Chair
- Michael Wright, Endowment Chair
- Richard Lewis, Community Relations Chair

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- Allan Berk
- Rita Bleier
- Rabbi Geoffrey Brown
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- Sondra Foreman
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- Barbara Gilbert
- Steve Gilbert
- Charles Gilinsky
- Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell
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- Jeff Platsky
- Rose Shapiro
- Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu
- Arthur Siegel
- Rabbi Zev Silber
- Rabbi Aaron Slonim
- Arie A. Ullmann
- Cathy Velenchik
- Susan Walker

Family Service

Family Service delivers services to individuals facing challenges to financial assistance within specific areas. It is listening and helping that JFS can move from instability to a positive place. In 2019 crisis, JFS has been able in providing financial assistance during difficult times. Support June 2020 - to Jewish families emergency financial aid in relief funds financial support calls and pantries SEG referrals referrals referrals referrals

The Reporter Group

During the pandemic, The Reporter has continued to produce papers for its Binghamton and Scranton communities, offering local, national and international news. Our services have been even more important since people are unable to gather in person. The Reporter has offered information about virtual programs offered by community organizations, which keeps the community connected. It also provides listings to virtual events occurring in different parts of the United States for those seeking educational opportunities or virtual performances. The paper is grateful to its dedicated readers and contributors for their support.

Federation Staff

- Shelley Hubal, Executive Director
- Jennifer Kakusian, Office Manager
- Rose Shea, Jewish Family Service Director

Reporter Staff

- Rabbi Rachel Esserman, Executive Editor
- Diana Sochor, Layout Editor
- Charlie Pritchett, Advertising
- Kathy Brown, Bookkeeping
- Christi Sturdevant, Production Associate

Thank you to all of our dedicated board members and volunteers. Together you make the Binghamton Jewish Community vibrant and strong.



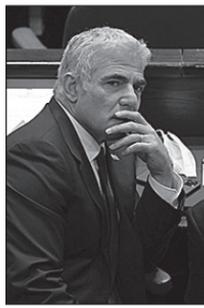
Bennett Continued from page 1

This division, he continued, “has led us to a storm of hatred and a clash of brothers, paralyzing the country.”

In an apparent jab, he said that “credit must be given to Netanyahu” for “paving the way” to cooperation with the Islamist Ra’am Party and its leader, Mansour Abbas. It referred to Netanyahu’s initial attempt at courting the latter to back the coalition he tried to build.

Lapid forfeited his prepared speech, the full text of which he gave to the media, opting instead to “ask for forgiveness” from his 86-year-old mother in attendance. “I wanted her to be proud of Israel’s democratic process,” he said. “Instead, she and every other Israeli citizen is ashamed of you [opposition MKs] and has again remembered why it’s time to replace you.”

Netanyahu’s speech, which went on for more than half an hour (exceeding its 15-minute limit), listed the accomplishments of the governments he has led and attacked incoming coalition members Yamina and Gideon Sa’ar’s New Hope Party as “fake right.” Expressing “concern” about Bennett’s ability to confront Tehran and deal with the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden, he said that the incoming prime minister “does the opposite of what he promises” and “will fight Iran the same



At left: Yesh Atid head Yair Lapid, now alternate prime minister and foreign minister, at the swearing-in of the new Israeli government at the Knesset in Jerusalem on June 13. (Photo by Olivier Fitoussi/Flash90)



Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett at the swearing-in ceremony of the new government at the Knesset on June 13. (Photo by Olivier Fitoussi/Flash90)

way that he wouldn’t sit [in a coalition] with Lapid, Labor and Ra’am.”

Bennett, Netanyahu insisted, “doesn’t have the international standing; he doesn’t have the credibility; he doesn’t have the capabilities; he doesn’t have the knowledge; and he doesn’t have the governmental support to allow him a real defense [against Iran]. Among all the differences between us and the incoming government, this is the most important and most fateful difference to the future of Israel.”

Winding down his address, Netanyahu stated, “I will fight daily against this terrible, dangerous left-wing government in order to topple it. With God’s help, it will happen a lot earlier than you think.” In conclusion, he issued a warning to Iran, Hamas and Hezbollah that he’s “not going anywhere,”

ending in English: “We’ll be back soon.”

Following the vote of confidence, Netanyahu shook Bennett’s hand before moving to his literal new seat in the Knesset.

The new government is comprised of eight (left, right, center and Islamist) of the 13 parties that won seats in the elections. It will be the first government in Israel’s history to have an Orthodox Jew as prime minister and to include an Arab party.

The following is the composition of the incoming Cabinet: Naftali Bennett (Yamina) – prime minister; Yair Lapid (Yesh Atid) – alternate prime minister and foreign minister; Benny Gantz (Blue and White) – defense minister; Gideon Sa’ar (New Hope) – jus-

tice minister; Avigdor Lieberman (Yisrael Beiteinu) – finance minister; Ayelet Shaked (Yamina) – interior minister; Yifat Shasha Biton (New Hope) – education minister; Nitzan Horowitz (Meretz) – health minister; Orna Barbivai (Yesh Atid) – economy minister; Merav Michaeli (Labor) – transportation minister; Karin Elharar (Yesh Atid) – energy minister; Elazar Stern (Yesh Atid) – intelligence minister; Omer Bar-Lev (Labor) – public security minister; Ze’ev Elkin (New Hope) – housing and Jerusalem affairs minister; Yoaz Hendel (New Hope) – communications minister; Tamar Zandberg (Meretz) – environment minister; Hili Tropper (Blue and White) – culture and sport minister; Prina Tamano-Shata (Blue and White) – immigration and absorption minister; Meir Cohen (Yesh Atid) – welfare minister; Merav Cohen (Yesh Atid) – social equality minister; Matan Kahana (Yamina) – religious affairs minister; Hamad Amar (Yisrael Beiteinu) – minister in the Finance Ministry; Oded Forer (Yisrael Beiteinu) – agriculture and Negev minister; Esawi Frej (Meretz) – regional cooperation minister; Orit Farkash-Hacohen (Blue and White) – science and technology minister; Yoel Razvozov (Yesh Atid) – tourism minister; and Nachman Shai (Labor) – Diaspora affairs minister.

SAFE DRIVING

Five basic things everyone should know about their car

(StatePoint) – Driving can be expensive if you lack basic car-care knowledge or proper insurance. Regular maintenance can prevent costly breakdowns and extend your car’s life, and the right coverage can protect your wallet in the event of an accident.

Here are five need-to-know basics from Erie Insurance:

1. Know car insurance basics. Before getting behind the wheel, know these terms:
 - ◆ Liability. Every state requires you to carry liability insurance, which covers injuries to others or damage to others’ property. You may hear it referred to as Property Damage (PD for short) or Bodily Injury (BI for short).

- ◆ Collision vs. comprehensive. Collision pays for repairs to your car if you hit another vehicle or crash into an object. Comprehensive covers other incidents. For example, hitting a deer, hailstorm damage, vandalism or theft.
- ◆ Deductible. This is the amount you’ll pay out-of-pocket for repairs before insurance kicks in.
- ◆ Endorsement. Sometimes referred to as a “rider,” an endorsement refers to a change or addition to existing coverage. For example, some insurance companies have an endorsement that customers can add to policies so their rates will increase only if they change their policy, drivers, vehicles or their address, even if they file a claim.

“Car insurance can be complicated, so we don’t expect drivers to know everything, but we do recommend understanding a few basics,” says Jon Bloom, vice president of personal auto at Erie Insurance. “Working with an insurance agent can help you get the right coverage for you, based on your car and budget.”

2. Read the owner’s manual. Learn the car’s bells and whistles and how often to rotate tires, check belts and hoses and change the oil. Check dashboard warning lights. Red typically indicates your car may be unsafe to drive. Yellow or orange usually means you should get it checked but it’s
- See “Car” on page 9

DON'T LET ALCOHOL GET BEHIND THE WHEEL

When alcohol is the driver, nobody's safe! It doesn't take a large amount to do a lot of damage. Even one drink can cloud judgment and slow reflexes enough to hamper fast thinking and total control at the wheel. At holidays when many people celebrate "to the limit", steer clear of disaster. If you take a drink, don't take the driver's seat...and make it a safe and happy holiday weekend!

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Discover the Matthews Difference

Achieve. Continued from page 2

build ourselves, self-actualize and achieve difficult things.

Below are some thoughts on how the present conflict, and the ones which preceded it, are shaping this country's entrepreneurs.

Dream big

It's no secret that working with Israelis can be challenging, but that pushiness and drive makes Israelis who we are. That tenacity, that we-can-do-it-despite-the-odds mindset has shaped Israel.

Israelis understand that they need to dream big and that Israel is always the test market. We see that especially today in how founders are raising record-breaking sums of VC money and in the many multinationals with offices in the "Startup Nation."

Dreaming of what is possible to dispute "obvious" logic or "common sense" has been at times the only way through. If the creators of the Iron Dome had believed and internalized the idea that you could not stop rockets in mid-air, we would all have been worse off during these recent trying days.

The big-picture thinking that often happens in Israel runs in parallel to the global thinking typical of Silicon Valley.

We are constantly dissatisfied and challenging the status quo. Contrarian thinking was ingrained in the founders of the country, such as David Ben-Gurion, and in modern leaders such as Shimon Peres. They had the audacity to dream big.

The country's leaders understood that there was no other choice, they could not fail. *Ain brera* (there is no choice) was not just a rallying cry, but a reminder of the pressing existential threats they faced and we still face.

When there was so much at stake, the country's leaders had to summon their inner strength and resourcefulness to meet the challenges, and we see that ethos in today's high-flying entrepreneurs.

The gift of struggle

When I was a young soldier in the Golani Brigade of the IDF years ago, going through this grueling mental and physical challenge, I realized it was a gift. I realized that going through my service would prepare me mentally for what challenges lay ahead.

Oftentimes we must go through hell in order to get to

heaven, but what is needed is perspective. You cannot have it both ways; you need to go through the struggle to grow and develop and become the best version of yourself. The same applies to a business and to a country.

If not for the security challenges, and the threats on the lives of its citizens, Israel would not have been able to become the tech superpower it has become by countering these threats. It's not in spite of these challenges that Israel is the "Startup Nation," it is because of them.

While I don't wish this on any person or state, we can interpret the challenges the world throws at us in a way that helps us become better versions of ourselves or we can be worse off by casting blame and being perpetual victims.

That includes asking the right questions and thinking how we can grow and learn from a challenging security situation.

The mythical inner resourcefulness

The story of Israel is the story of a startup. One that is scrappy, almost meeting its demise only to come out and win in the end.

The country quickly came back from near defeats, and

learned from its mistakes, but many lives were lost as a result, similar to a startup where early mistakes can kill you.

The idea of the underdog (the David) is still part of the country's DNA. Despite how the country is portrayed, we are still in an underdog position, though you may not believe it by seeing the overwhelming hatred on social media directed toward Israel.

Watching the current crisis unfold on social media has been particularly challenging for those in the tech community, many of whom don't always agree with the government's policies. But seeing the world of social media turn against Israel in a heartbeat has been difficult.

This is where resilience plays a role. It's knowing that you can overcome this challenge and be in a better place because of it.

Jonathan "Yoni" Frenkel heads Partnerships at Tulsa-based Atento Capital. He leads the effort to assist U.S. and Israeli companies with hiring highly skilled remote workers in Tulsa. He can be reached on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/in/jonathan-yoni-frenkel-7a189562/.

Resources. Continued from page 3

◆ My Jewish Learning will host the virtual program "Synagogues Around the World: Tour of Libertad Synagogue in Buenos Aires, Argentina" on Wednesday, June 30, from noon-1 pm. For more information or to register, visit www.myjewishlearning.com/the-hub/synagogues-around-the-world-tour-of-libertad-synagogue-in-buenos-aires-argentina/.

◆ Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies has a list of its summer courses at www.pardes.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Summer-online-program-2021-26-05.pdf. The first summer session will be held from July 12-22.

◆ Respectability will hold the virtual "Leaders of the Future" Leadership Series for Jews with Disabilities." The lectures in the series can be taken separately: "Effective Social Media Posts - A Primer" on Tuesday, June 22; "How Nonprofits Work" on Thursday, June 24; "Development: Individual Prospects" on Tuesday, June 29; "Development: Foundations" on Thursday, July 8; "Leading at the Next Level: Working in the Jewish World" on Tuesday, July 13; "Effective Disability Advocacy from the Inside" on Thursday, July 15; and "Accessible Events - Both In-Person and Online" on Tuesday, July 20. All lectures will begin at 1:30 pm. For more information or to register, visit www.respectability.org/jewish-events/.

◆ The Women's Initiative of the Orthodox Union will hold the ALIT-Virtual Summer Beit Midrash for Women

on Monday-Thursday, July 6-15. There will be morning and evening classes on each day. Subjects to be discussed include Tanach, *halachah*, *tikkun hamiddot* and Jewish history. For more information or to register, visit www.ou.org/women/alit2021/.

◆ Keshet offers resources for "Building an Inclusive Camp" to make Jewish camps a more inclusive, welcoming and safe environment for LGBTQ+ campers, staff and families. Resources can be found at www.keshetonline.org/resources/special-collections/building-an-inclusive-camp. A facilitators manual can be found at www.keshetonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/CAMPING-OUT-FACILITATOR-MANUAL.pdf.

◆ The Museum of the Jewish People has posted photos from its 2021 Jewish Lens Photo Contest at www.anumuseum.org.il/jewish-lens-2021-photos/.

◆ The Milken Archive offers "REDISCOVER Ralph Shapey: Radical Traditionalist," with an article about the composer and a short video of an interview in which he discusses his personal and evocative meditation on the Holocaust, "The Covenant." There are also links to listen to his music. The material can be found at www.milkenarchive.org/news/news-items/view/rediscover-ralph-shapey-radical-traditionalist/.

For additional resources, see previous issues of The Reporter on its website, www.thereporter.org.

Moving any time soon?

Whether you're moving across town or across the country, please let *The Reporter* know so you can stay up to date on community news! E-mail treporter@aol.com with "Reporter Address change" in the subject line, or call 607-724-2360, ext. 254, to let *The Reporter* know about your new address.




Car. Continued from page 8

not urgent. Green generally indicates a feature is working.

3. Check tires monthly. Proper tire pressure promotes good gas mileage and can extend tire life. Reference the sticker found inside the driver's door for the recommended pressure. Don't overinflate. Consider learning how to change a tire, a handy skill when assistance isn't available.

4. Get regular oil changes. Some companies equip vehicles with oil monitors so owners know when to change oil. If you don't have this feature, reference your owner's manual. Most manufacturers recommend changing oil between 5,000 and 7,500 miles, while synthetic oils are likely good for 10,000 to 15,000 miles.

5. Master the jump-start. Usually a car battery needs to

be replaced every five years. While a dead battery is never convenient, it's easy to jump start a car. Attach one red clamp to the positive terminal of the dead battery. The other red clamp goes on the positive terminal of the live battery. The black clamp attaches to the negative terminal of the live battery. The final clamp goes onto an unpainted metal surface on the dead car's engine block to prevent hazardous sparking. Turn on the live car. Allow the dead car to run for at least a half hour to charge. Always double-check your owner's manual to be sure your vehicle doesn't require special jump-starting procedures.

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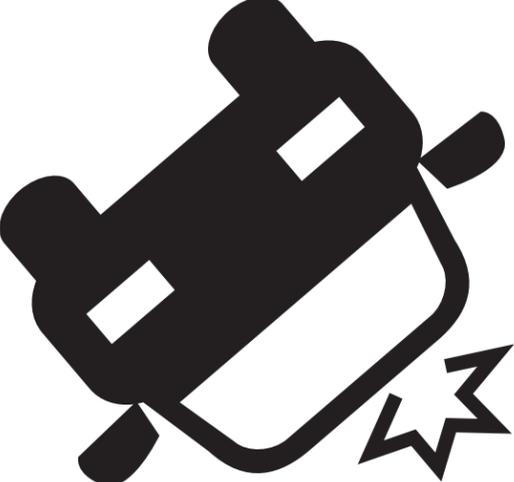
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Chukkat, Numbers 19:1-22:1

The red heifer ritual

RABBI GEOFFREY BROWN, TEMPLE ISRAEL

Chukkat, decree, is a *parasha* in the Torah that has confounded commentators for generations. The decree that God delivers to Moses and Aaron describes the ritual surrounding the *parah adumah*, the red heifer. This cow is not just any heifer. It is to be a heifer without blemish and one on whom no yoke has ever been placed. So rare is the occurrence of such a perfect cow specimen that the rabbis count no more than nine red heifers appropriated for this sacred ritual from the time of Moses until the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E.

And what, might you ask, is the purpose of a perfect heifer and how are we to understand God's decree related

to its use in ritual? A *chukkah* (decree) is by definition its own kind of God mitzvah-commandment. A *chukkah* doesn't conform to usual *mitzvot* in that it appears to be beyond human understanding. Examples of other *chukkot* include the prohibition of wearing clothing made of wool and linen (*shaatnez*), or the proscriptions to free the childless sister-in-law, cleanse the leper and send forth the scapegoat. (BT Yoma 67b) We follow these *mitzvot* because God has told us to do so. Human reason is insufficient to explain or justify every instance of God's will. The Talmud, in the passage just cited, warns that we dare not deem unfathomable laws as an act of madness, which

is why the verse ends resoundingly: "I the Lord am your God." I the Lord have decreed them and you have no right to question them. We can delve even deeper into making sense of *chukkat* by regarding the root *hey-koof-koof*. It means engrave or inscribe, as if to confirm that this is a God thing, no question needs to be asked. God said to do this. Just do it!

Although unsatisfying explanations abound about the red heifer ritual, we do know that its function is clarified within the first words of the Chukkat Torah text. Once the cow is slaughtered by the Kohen (priest) outside the *Mishkan* See "Heifer" on page 12

Congregational Notes

Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union
Rabbi: Zev Silber
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Phone: 722-1793, Rabbi's Office: 722-7514, Fax: 722-7121
Office hours: Mon. closed; Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Wed. closed; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm; Fri. 10 am-1 pm
Beth David e-mail address: bethdavid@stny.rr.com
Rabbi's e-mail: rabbisilber@stny.rr.com
Website: www.bethdavid.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi: Rachel Safman
Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292
Phone: 273-5775
E-mail: rabbi@tbeithaca.org and secretary@tbeithaca.org
Website: www.tbeithaca.org
Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen
Sisterhood President: Julie Paige
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody
Administrative Assistant: Jane Griffith
Services: Fri. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sun. and legal holidays). Religious School/Education: September-May. Classes meet on Sun., 9 am-12:30 pm and Wed. afternoons, 3:45-5:45 pm. The Midrashah (eighth grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers.
Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.
For upcoming services and events on Zoom, visit www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE.

Kol Haverim

Affiliation: Society for Humanistic Judaism
Address: P.O. Box 4972, Ithaca, NY 14852-4972
Phone: 607-277-3345, E-mail: info@kolhaverim.net
Website: www.kolhaverim.net
Chairwoman: Abby Cohn
Kol Haverim: The Finger Lakes Community for Humanistic Judaism, is an Ithaca-based organization that brings people together to explore and celebrate Jewish identity, history, culture and ethics within a secular, humanistic framework. KH is part of an international movement for Secular Humanistic Judaism and is affiliated with the Society for Humanistic Judaism, a national association with over 30 member communities and congregations around the country. Established in the spring of 1999, it offers celebrations of Jewish holidays, monthly Shabbat pot-lucks, adult education, a twice-monthly Cultural School for children, and a bar and bat mitzvah program. KH welcomes all individuals and families, including those from mixed religious backgrounds, who wish to strengthen the Jewish experience in their lives and provide their children with a Jewish identity and experience.

Congregation Tikkun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY
Phone: 607-256-1471
Website: www.tikkunvor.org; E-mail: info@tikkunvor.org
Presidents: Denice Cassaro and Nomi Talmi
Rabbi: Shifrah Tobacman
Education Director/Admin. Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky
Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin
Services: Fridays at 7:30 pm unless otherwise notes. Contemplative morning services every Tuesday, Saturday mornings, Gan Shabbat, and other special services at least once a month Call for the weekly schedule.
Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE) for kindergarten through seventh grade meets on Sunday mornings. Sixth and Seventh grade also meets on Wednesday afternoons.
Adult Education: Available throughout the year. Check the website or call the office for details.

Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive
Rabbi: David Regenspan
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815
Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 336-1523
Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.
Adult Ed.: Saturday morning study is held at 10 am. Call for more information and to confirm.

Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

For specific information regarding services (including online services), meetings and classes at any of the area synagogues, contact them by phone or e-mail.

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Rabbi: Barbara Goldman-Wartell
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm
Phone: 723-7355
Fax: 723-0785
Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com
Website: www.templeconcord.com
Regular service times: Friday, 8 pm; Saturday, 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.
Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the school year unless otherwise noted.

All services and programs are online only.

Friday, June 18: 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell and Jason Flatt on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82733826834?pwd=bIRDaD-V6dHR1MjVaY0JoRmMzVU05QT09>, meeting ID 827 3382 6834 and passcode 880491.

Saturday, June 19: 9:15 am, Torah study at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88298087579?pwd=eTVkMDRVVlpwTmZvMkdYTm1OK0w1Zz09>, meeting ID 8829808 7579 and passcode 676707; and 7 pm, "Havdalah with a Bonus" featuring Sisterhood Board Installation in the Dorothy Schagrin Garden and online on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89741791260?pwd=MzZlN0trQWhycGFZdzloczExUkhXdz09>, meeting ID 8974179 1260 and passcode 408279.

Saturday, June 19: from 12:30-4 pm, Kilmer Mansion tours enjoy guided in-person 30-minute tours through the historic Kilmer Mansion at 1 pm, 2 pm and 3 pm. "Old Bones: The Story of Exterminator," a documentary about Willis Sharpe Kilmer's Kentucky Derby-winning racehorse, will play throughout the afternoon. John Darrow, a local Kilmer impersonator, will greet visitors and provide insight into early 1900s life in the mansion. COVID-19 guidelines will be in effect. To pre-register, call Temple Concord at 723-7355 or e-mail kilmermansionevents@gmail.com.

Friday, June 25: 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell and Jason Flatt on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82733826834?pwd=bIRDaD-V6dHR1MjVaY0JoRmMzVU05QT09>, meeting ID 827 3382 6834 and passcode 880491.

Saturday, June 26: 9:15 am, Torah study with Rabbi Batsheva Appell on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88298087579?pwd=eTVkMDRVVlpwTmZvMkdYTm1OK0w1Zz09>, meeting ID 882 9808 7579 and passcode 676707; and 7 pm, "Havdalah with a Bonus" at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89741791260?pwd=MzZlN0trQWhycGFZdzloczExUkhXdz09>, meeting ID 8974179 1260 and passcode 408279.

Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi-Cantor: George Hirschfeld
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820
Phone: 607-432-5522
Website: www.templebetheloneonta.org
E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com
Regular service times: visit the temple website for days of services and times
Religious School/Education: Religious School, for grades kindergarten through bar/bat mitzvah, meets Sunday mornings. For the schedule of services, classes and events, see the website.

Friday, June 18, light candles before..... 8:24 pm
Saturday, June 19, Shabbat ends 9:25 pm
Friday, June 25, light candles before..... 8:25 pm
Saturday, June 26, Shabbat ends 9:26 pm
Friday, July 2, light candles before 8:25 pm
Saturday, July 3, Shabbat ends 9:25 pm

Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative
Rabbi: Geoffrey Brown
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 723-7461 and 231-3746
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-3:30 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm
E-mail: titammy@stny.twcbc.com
Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org
Service Schedule: Tuesday, 5:30 pm; Friday, 5:30 pm; Saturday, 9:30 am

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom.

The temple office will be closed from Friday, June 18-Friday, June 25.

On Saturday, June 19, Shacharit services will be held at 10 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Numbers 19:1-22:1 and the haftarah is Judges 11:1-33. At 9:45 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

Sunday Torah study will resume in July.

The Annual Congregational meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 22, at 7 pm, on Zoom.

On Saturday, June 26, Shacharit services will be held at 10 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Numbers 22:2-12 and the haftarah is Micah 5:6-6:8. At 9:45 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch
Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors
E-mail: aslonim@binghamton.edu
rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com
Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 797-0015, Fax: 797-0095
Website: www.Chabadofbinghamton.com
Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education
E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com
Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development
Chabad Downtown Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton
E-mail: lslonim@Jewishbu.com, hslonim@Jewishbu.com
Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming
E-mail: yohana@Jewishbu.com, gohana@Jewishbu.com
Regular service times: Daily 7:30 am, Friday evening 6 pm, Shabbat morning 9:30 am, Maariv and Havdalah one hour after candle-lighting time, Sundays 9:30 am.
To join the mailing list, for up-to-date information on adult education offerings or to arrange for a private tutorial, for details concerning the Judaica shop and resource center, or for assistance through the Piaker Free Loan Society or Raff Maasim Tovim Foundation, call Chabad's office at 797-0015.

Chabad will be holding pre-Shabbat virtual programs. For more information, visit www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership.

Penn-York Jewish Community

President-Treasurer-Secretary: Harvey Chernosky, 570-265-3869
B'nai B'rith: William H. Seigel Lodge
Purpose: To promote Jewish identity through religious, cultural, educational and social activities in the Southern Tier of New York and the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania, including Waverly, NY; Sayre, Athens and Towanda, PA, and surrounding communities.

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: 607-756-7181
President: Carol Levine, 315-696-5744
Cemetery Committee, 315-696-5744
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/>
Service leaders: Lay leadership
Shabbat services: Either Friday evening at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 10 am from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot. Holiday services are also held. Check the Facebook page or weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.
Religious School: Students are educated on an individual basis. Temple Brith Sholom is a small equalitarian congregation serving the greater Cortland community. Congregants span the gamut of observance and services are largely dependent on the service leader. The Friday night siddur is "Likrat Shabbat," while the Saturday morning siddur is "Gates of Prayer." The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences.

Deciphering the past

Ancient burial stone bearing Greek inscription found in Negev

By JNS staff

(JNS) – A stone bearing a Greek inscription from the end of the Byzantine period was discovered the weekend of Jan. 3 in the Nitzana National Park in the Negev, the Israel Antiquities Authority announced on January 6.

The flat, round stone was used as a tombstone in one of the cemeteries surrounding the ancient settlement, the IAA said. It was found by Nitzana Educational Village Director David Palmach, who came upon it while clearing hiking paths in the park. According to the IAA, Palmach noticed an inscription on the stone, which was later deciphered by Leah Di Segni of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem as referring to “Blessed Maria, who lived an immaculate life.”

The stone, which is being transferred to the National Treasures Department, dates from the late sixth-early seventh centuries C.E.

“Nitzana is renowned as a key site in research into the

transition between the Byzantine and the Early Islamic periods. During the fifth and sixth centuries C.E., Nitzana acted as a center for the villages and settlements in the vicinity,” said the IAA’s Tali Erickson-Gini. “Among other things, it had a military fortress as well as churches, a monastery and a road station that served Christian pilgrims traveling to Santa Katarina, which believers regarded as the site of Mount Sinai.”

According to Erickson-Gini, “Nitzana was founded in as early as the third century B.C.E. as a Nabatean road station on a major trade route, and the place was inhabited intermittently for about 1,300 years, until it



The ancient stone found in the Nitzana National Park in the Negev. (Photo by Israel Antiquities Authority)

was abandoned in the 10th century C.E. and its name was forgotten.”

The burial stone, naming the deceased as Maria, is among other unearthed stones commemorating Christians buried in the churches and cemeteries around Nitzana.

“Unlike other ancient towns in the Negev, very little is known about the burial grounds around Nitzana. The discovery of ... [inscriptions] such as this may improve our definition of the cemeteries’ boundaries, thus helping to reconstruct the boundaries of the settlement itself, which have not yet been ascertained,” said IAA

Southern District archaeologist Pablo Betzer.

Archaeologists find evidence medieval Jews in Britain kept kosher

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Archaeologists have discovered the first evidence that Jews living in England in the 12th and 13th centuries observed Jewish dietary laws, reported *The Jewish Chronicle* on March 25.

The findings revealed that week are from a 2016 project on the site of demolished shops that overlapped Oxford’s old Jewish quarter. A team of archeologists was digging at a centuries-old outhouse and an area where waste materials were dumped when they



A view of Oxford, England. (Photo by Skowronek/Shutterstock)

made the discovery.

Julie Dunne, a biomolecular archaeologist at Bristol University who worked on the project, said that 171 animal bones were found at the site – 136 were from poultry, and there were no bones from non-kosher food, such as pigs or shellfish.

More than 2,000 fragments of ceramic cooking vessels were also discovered. Using organic residue analysis, archeologists identified the kinds of fats that were absorbed into the pottery and

sealed in it through constant use. There were no traces of non-kosher fats in the pottery, and no evidence of meat and milk being used in the same vessels, wrote the *Chronicle*.

According to Dunne, this is also “the first time a religious dietary signature has been identified using pottery fragments.”

The opportunity to search the excavation site almost did not happen because commercial developers were nearly complete in gaining planning permission to build over the area, said the newspaper. Only after intervention by historians Pam Manix and Evie Kemp, members of the Oxford Jewish Heritage Committee, was development of the site put on pause for four months so that archaeologists could excavate the area.

Jerusalem’s archeological tunneling efforts win top award

By Naama Barak

(Israel21C via JNS) – Jerusalem’s Old City can now add another global feather to its cap: The archeological tunneling to explore and excavate its history has just won worldwide recognition by the International Tunneling and Underground Space Association (or ITA).

Coming in at first place in the “Oddities of the Underground” category in the ITA’s sixth annual contest, the Old City digs were noted as “Tunneling in the service of archaeology,” and beat Norway’s Spiral Tunnel (Drammen) to the top spot.

“The sensitive environment demands great dexterity and flexibility. Unexpected finds can lead to sudden changes in the direction of excavation, often accompanied by low overburden heights and difficult ground conditions,” the ITA says of the Jerusalem digs.

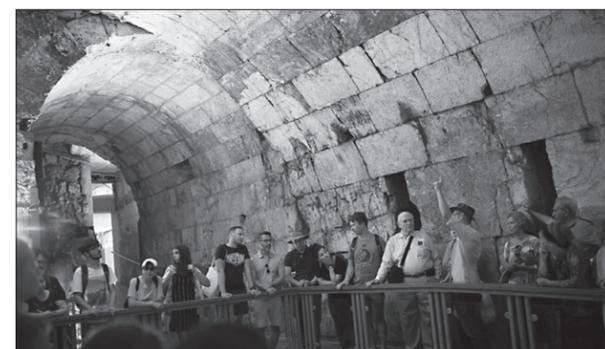
“Due to site complexity derived from small excavation

area and risks of shallow tunneling in urban area, special excavation technologies are executed, such as custom-made drill machines adapted to small spaces,” it added. “In addition to that, special measures are to be taken in order to consider the archaeological findings and to protect them during excavation. Unlike conventional excavation in which the muck is being moved away, the nature of this project is to keep the muck for further research by scientists.”

Winners in other categories focused on construction and railroads, such as the Sydney Metro City and Southwest Project in Australia, and the Chengdu-Guiyang High-Speed Railway in China. The Young Tunneller of the Year was Josh Barry from Australia.

Overall, the online competition received 52 entries from 23 countries.

This article was first published by Israel21c.



Visitors toured the underground Western Wall tunnels in Jerusalem’s Old City. (Photo by Hadas Parush/Flash90)

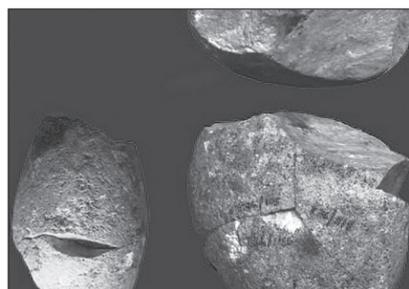
Tool pre-dating modern humans identified in northern Israel

By Daniel Siryoti

(Israel Hayom via JNS) – The oldest tool identified to date, found in northern Israel, was revealed by a group of academics at the University of Haifa to have been used by hominids before the advent of modern humans.

In an article in the *Journal of Human Evolution*, Dr. Ron Shimelmitz, Dr. Iris Groman Yroslavski, Professor Mina Weinstein-Evron and Professor Danny Rosenberg – all from the university’s Zinman Institute of Archaeology – described the artifact as a round dolomite stone that bears microscopic signs of grinding.

According to the authors, the rock – discovered at the Tabun Cave on Mount Carmel – was used some 350,000



At left: The oldest-known grinding tool, found in the Tabun Cave on Mount Carmel. (Photo courtesy/ Iris Groman Yroslavski)

years ago, before the advent of modern humans. They claimed that it dates back to some 150,000 years earlier

than any other tool used for grinding found to date. They also stated that the rare find indicates that hominids used grinding as a way of processing various materials to improve the use of environmental resources.

“At such an early stage a very significant technology was added to [the hominids’] ‘toolbox,’” the researchers said. “The small cobble is of immense importance because it allows us to trace the earliest origins of the abrasion action and how cognitive and motor abilities that developed during human evolution eventually evolved into important phenomena in human culture to this day.”

The Tabun Cave is part of a complex of sites that make See “Tool” on page 12

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Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Linoy Ashram wins gold, silver in European Gymnastics

(Israel Hayom via JNS) – Israeli gymnast Linoy Ashram was crowned European champion in the clubs exercise in the European Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships in Varna, Bulgaria. The gold medal joined the two silvers she scored in the competition over the June 13 weekend in the ball and hoop categories. She placed fourth in the ribbon exercise. Ashram, who is one of Israel’s hopes for an Olympic medal in the Tokyo Games, scored 27.85 in the hoop exercise and went on to achieve a score of 28.6 for her ball routine. Ashram’s clubs’ routine earned her a score of 28.5 from the judges, representing the first gold medal in a single exercise for an Israeli athlete at the European Championships. Her ribbon exercise was the only one for which she did not win a medal: Ashram came in fourth with a score of 22.575 points.

Biden congratulates Bennett, agrees to work closely on regional security, Iran

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett spoke with U.S. President Joe Biden on June 13 just hours after the Israeli leader was sworn into office. Biden offered his “warm congratulations” to Bennett and “highlighted his decades of steadfast support for the U.S.-Israel relationship and his unwavering commitment to Israel’s security,” according to a White House readout. The president also expressed a desire to deepen the cooperation between the two countries, agreeing “that they and their teams would consult closely on all matters related to regional security, including Iran.” The readout noted that Biden also “conveyed that his administration intends to work closely with the Israeli government on efforts to advance peace, security and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians.” According to a readout from the Prime Minister’s Office, Bennett thanked Biden for his support for Israel during the recent conflict with Hamas in Gaza. The leaders further “emphasized the importance of the alliance between Israel and the United States, as well as their commitment to strengthening ties between the two countries and maintaining the security of the state of Israel.”

Man arrested, charged with assault after attacking kosher pizzeria in Brooklyn

A man was taken into custody and charged with assault and criminal mischief after flipping over tables and attacking customers at a kosher pizzeria in Brooklyn, NY, on June 9, reported CBS 2 New York. Surveillance footage from inside the Bash Pizza place in the Flatbush neighborhood showed an African-American man turning over tables and throwing salt shakers, as well as other items, at patrons and staff members inside the restaurant. He also hurled profanities, according to *The Jerusalem Post*, which cited multiple media sources. The publication said that some patrons took cover by running out of the premises, while others barricaded themselves in the store bathroom, including 10 women, a pregnant woman and an infant. Seconds after the violence started, a Jewish man wearing a black shirt entered the eatery and threw a high chair at the attacker to distract him from continuing to vandalize the pizzeria. The suspect then quickly ran out of the restaurant, threw an object at the Jewish man and walked across the crosswalk before shoving a female pedestrian. Only moments after the woman was assaulted, a man wearing a *kippah* exited and tackled the attacker to the ground in the middle of the sidewalk. Others joined in to keep the man subdued until police arrived at the scene. When asked by a bystander “Why are you doing this?” the attacker replied, “Because I can,” and then admitted that he dislikes Jews. The man was taken to a hospital for psychological evaluation, according to CBS 2 New York.

Quebec gov’t adopts IHRA antisemitism definition

The Quebec government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s working definition of antisemitism. The announcement was made in the National Assembly on June 9 by Environment Minister Benoit Charette and follows the National Assembly’s unanimous motion on May 26 condemning antisemitic incidents that have taken place in recent weeks. The IHRA definition has already been adopted by the provincial governments of Ontario and New Brunswick, and in 24 cities across Ontario and Quebec. “More than 75 years after the end of the Shoah, antisemitism remains present in our societies,” Charette said in the National Assembly. “Violence, threats and aggression experienced by our Quebec Jewish community have, deplorably, gained momentum these past weeks, in our cities as well as on social media. It is our duty to take all the means possible in order to combat antisemitism. That is why the government of Quebec joins the renewed international effort in adopting, as many countries, parliaments and international organizations have done, the non-binding IHRA definition of antisemitism as a certain perception of Jews that may manifest itself as hatred toward them.” The Canadian Jewish group Federation CJA and its advocacy agency, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, applauded the decision.

Jordanian table-tennis player pulls out of match to avoid facing Israeli opponent

A Jordanian national table-tennis player recently withdrew from the World Para Table

Tool. Continued from page 11

up the UNESCO World Heritage Site on Mount Carmel. Evidence of human and pre-human activity during the last 500,000 years has been uncovered in the cave, which has contributed to the understanding of human evolution.

The rock, originally excavated in the 1960s, was identified as part of a new project that

Shimelmitz and Weinstein-Evron are leading to re-examine past findings from the site.

“We concluded that the ancient stone was used for the grinding of soft materials, although we do not yet know which ones exactly,” said Groman Yroslavski.

This article first appeared in Israel Hayom.

Tennis Championships in Slovenia to avoid playing against an Israeli athlete, confirmed the Jordanian Paralympic Committee. Player Osama Abu Jame pulled out of the championships after reaching the quarter-finals, where he was scheduled to compete against an Israeli, according to the publication *The New Arab*. The international competition, held June 3-5, saw a total of 153 men and 75 women representing 52 national Olympic committees. It serves to qualify players for the Paralympic Games in Tokyo beginning in August. Jordan and Israel signed a peace deal in 1994, 15 years after Egypt did so; nevertheless, Israeli relations with both countries have wavered between warm and cold over the years.

Israel’s tech sector rose record \$10.5 billion this year

Israel’s technology sector broke a new funding record the week of June 11, reaching a total of \$10.5 billion raised since January. According to the website Start-Up Nation Central, an NGO that tracks Israel’s innovation, this sum equals the amount raised during all of 2020, which was also a record year. The increase was mostly due to foreign investors and was more than the rest of the world. Investment in Israel jumped 137 percent in the first five months of 2021 compared to the same period in 2020, higher than the global increase of 89 percent, according to data on the tech website. Investment in Europe increased 123 percent, while in the United States, it rose by 91 percent in 2021. “The record funding in 2021 indicates that the growth in 2020 was not a short-term COVID-related boost, but reflects top investors’ increasing trust in the Israeli innovation ecosystem,” said Uri Gabai, the incoming CEO of Start-Up Nation Central’s new Research and Policy Institute. Most of the funding has gone to cybersecurity, FinTech and Enterprise Solutions companies, making up 60 percent of all investment.

Arson suspected in forest fires around Jerusalem, Samaria

Israeli fire authorities suspect that arson is behind the massive forest fires that erupted near Jerusalem and in Samaria on June 9. “The motive could be nationalistic,” Jerusalem Fire and Rescue Services District Commander Nissim Twito told Channel 13, pointing to previous fires and the many cases of Molotov cocktails having been thrown in the area. National Fire and Rescue Authority commissioner Dedi Simchi told the news outlet that the fires were likely ignited, as there had been no lightning showers that day, and that the hot and dry June weather, combined with strong winds, contributed to their spread. More than 70 firefighting squads and 12 firefighting aircraft took part in the effort to contain the fires throughout the night on June 9 and the morning of June 10. Residents of Kibbutz Ma’ale HaHamisha, who were evacuated from their homes while the blazes were raging, were allowed to return home in the evening. Israel Railways service between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem was briefly halted. According to Ynet news, some 2,650 dunams (650 acres) of forest land at the Har Haruach national park, where the fires first broke out, were burned down, though there were no initial reports of injuries or property damage. The fires were said to be under control on June 14.

Jewish group denounces Arizona plan to use “Zyklon B” for prisoner executions

The American Jewish Committee condemned Arizona’s plan to reportedly execute death-row inmates using a poisonous gas made infamous by the Nazis during the Holocaust. The state has purchased chemicals necessary to make hydrogen cyanide. It is for a gas chamber, disused for 22 years, which has been tested and “refurbished,” according to documents obtained by *The Guardian* through public records requests. Zyklon B, a toxic gas from hydrogen cyanide, was used as a means of mass murder in gas chambers at Nazi concentration camps. According to *The New York Times*, Arizona last executed someone with cyanide gas in 1999: death-row inmate Walter LaGrand, who took 18 minutes to die. Arizona currently has 115 inmates on death row but has not carried out an execution since 2014. “Arizona’s decision to employ Zyklon B gas as a means of execution defies belief,” the AJC said in a statement on June 7. “While there can be no doubt about its effectiveness – the Nazis used it to kill millions of innocent Jews – it is that very effectiveness as an instrument of genocide that makes it utterly inappropriate for use by a civilized state in a proceeding sanctioned by the state and its judiciary.” The AJC added that while the death penalty remains legally acceptable and “one must be prepared to accept some level of cruelty in the process,” there is still something “profoundly wrong” with a state being prepared to execute a prisoner using “a method of execution that inevitably, inextricably and forever linked to the worst outrages of human history.” The Jewish group also said that “whether or not one supports the death penalty as a general matter, there is general agreement in American society that a gas devised as a pesticide, and used to eliminate Jews, has no place in the administration of criminal justice.”

Heifer. Continued from page 10

(sanctuary), the Kohen sprinkles some of its blood seven times in the direction of the *Mishkan* and then builds a fire. He places the remainder of the animal in the fire along with cedar wood and hyssop bound together with a red string. Following the burning process, the ashes are subdivided into three equal parts: one-third for future use to be mixed with the next red heifer; one-third is placed safely outside of the *Mishkan*; and one-third for a ritual purification ceremony specifically to be used to purify one who can touch a corpse.

A ritually pure individual was consigned to mix a small quantity of red heifer ash with fresh spring water. This designated pure person would then sprinkle water on the impure corpse touching person both on the third and seventh days of impurity. One becomes pure again at the time of the setting sun on the seventh day, but only if said person followed the stricture of this *chukkat*-decree. There we have it. Red heifer ash plus fresh spring water is the key to ancient members of the Israelites’ path to purity – once one has been in touch with a corpse.

When studying Torah, many opinions are expressed throughout the ages that make an effort to explain *why* this ritual for the purpose of ritual purification. Rabbi Joseph Becor Shor, a 12th-century northern French *tosafist* (medieval commentator of the Talmud) adopts a completely rational observation: “The rites pertaining to the

Red Heifer were designed to discourage association with the dead, prompted by the bereaved’s love for the departed, and excessive grief... on account of human respect, people should not come to using human skin for coverings and human bones for articles of use just as we use the skin of animals, it is disrespectful of humanity... the text went to the strictest lengths in its requirements, demanding the ashes of a red heifer which are an expensive item.”

Sforno, an Italian rabbi, biblical commentator, philosopher and physician from the 15th century, expressed an altogether different observation that adopts an allegorical approach: “The crux of the mystery is its property of contaminating the pure and purifying the contaminated... one of the fundamental requirements is that the heifer had to be completely red. [Isaiah] the prophet has explained that sin is described as red... The cedar symbolizes pride, the hyssop, the opposite. The scarlet thread between symbolizes that both are sinful.”

Whether you align with Rabbi Shor or Sforno, we can probably all agree on one concept: that not every ritual announced by God’s decree – *chukkat* – may be fully understood! The red heifer and its use are undeniably a fascinating glimpse into the Torah’s contextual ritual to make pure those whose become impure due to their touching proximity to death.

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