

Federation to hold “Stop the Bleed” and “Security Update” programs on March 27

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, will hold a “Stop the Bleed” and a “Security Update” program on Wednesday, March 27, at 6:30 pm, at Temple Concord, 5 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. The program will be presented by United Health Services Trauma Services. Mark Henderson, Secure Community Network regional advisor, will begin the evening with an update on security in the post-October 7 era. This will be followed by a “Stop the Bleed” presentation

and “hands on” training. It is limited to 50 participants. Registration is required and can be made on the Federation website, www.jfgb.org, or by calling Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation, at 607-724-2332. Registration must be made by Monday, March 25.

The “Stop the Bleed” program is designed to enable trained bystanders to take lifesaving action if needed until



professional help can arrive following an accident, mass shooting or other acts of violence. Instructors focus on training people in all walks of life to become immediate responders.

Hubal noted, “Sometimes people are not able to escape a dangerous situation and may be injured. It takes time for the police to secure a scene and the medical personnel can’t enter until that happens. If someone is injured, then those

who are with them are the only ones who can offer medical care. This program will give people some basic skills to do that. Even if you have done this training before it is important to keep practicing in order to learn the skills.”

She added, “Knowing how to do first aid in a traumatic situation could very well be the difference between life and death. *Pikuach nefesh* is the Jewish principle that tells us saving a life is of utmost importance. That is why we are doing this training.”

Seeking sponsors for the event

JCC to hold Community Purim Carnival on March 17

The Jewish Community Center will hold its annual Community Purim Carnival on Sunday, March 17, from 1-3:30 pm, at 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal. It will feature activities for children of all ages, including bounce houses, games, face painting, food, hamantashen and prizes.

“We are excited for this annual event which brings together people of all ages and backgrounds from throughout the area,” said organizers of the event. “It always draws a big, diverse crowd and we take pride in the fact that we use the carnival to bring Jewish traditions and values to the community all while having fun! As a nonprofit agency we depend on the generosity of local businesses, foundations and individuals to help us run programs for everyone regardless of age, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or ability to pay. The money raised will go



Shown is the Jewish Community Center's Purim Carnival in a previous year. (Photo courtesy of the JCC)

toward helping fund youth programming at the JCC.”

Different sponsorship categories are available. All donations are tax deductible as allowable by law. Each sponsor will be recognized on a placard at the event with at business logo or family name:

- ◆ Hamantashen Sponsorship \$50
- ◆ Gragger Sponsorship \$100
- ◆ Mishloach Manot Sponsorship \$150
- ◆ Queen Esther Sponsorship \$200

Anyone able to help should contact the Jewish Community Center office at 607-724-2417 or by e-mail at Harryc@binghamtonjcc.org no later than Thursday, March 2, with their name, phone number, sponsorship level, logo (if a business) or family name to be placed on the placard. The JCC mailing address is 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

Federation holds Chai Campaign in March

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a Chai Campaign during the month of March. Adam Weitsman and family will match up to \$7,500 of the funds raised. “This Campaign’s focus is on raising money for security,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. “There is an urgent need to improve the security of our community. The monies raised will help us to provide communitywide trainings and grants for in-person security. We are also looking to establish an endowment that will enable us to partner long-term with Secure Community Network, a national organization that provides crisis management, intelligence sharing and facilities assessments. When you give to the Chai Campaign, you will be making life safer for all of us.”

Hubal added, “We chose *chai* (the Hebrew word for life) because security enhances all of our lives. This is a collective effort. We are asking everyone to just give a little ‘chai.’ Your dollars will be doubled and have an impact for years to come.”

Donations for the Campaign can be made in several ways:

- ◆ Checks can be made payable to Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, with Chai Campaign on the subject line, and mailed to the Federation at 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.
- ◆ Online donations can be made by visiting www.jfgb.org.
- ◆ To make a verbal pledge, contact the Federation at 607-724-2332 or e-mail Hubal at director@jfgb.org.
- ◆ “It’s up to us to help keep our community safe,” Hubal noted. “Your donation will help make that happen. Our thanks to Adam and his family for their generous matching grant.”

Federation safety and security measures

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton has worked to improve the community’s safety and security:

- ◆ In 2023, it held two communitywide, in-person security training courses.
- ◆ It provided grant-writing resources to assist local organizations in obtaining security funding.
- ◆ It purchased and distributed 15 Stop the Bleed kits to seven local Jewish organizations, including synagogues in Norwich and Oneonta.
- ◆ It acted as a clearinghouse for security resources, assisting local leadership in improving their security protocols, accessing virtual training courses and providing real-time access to a security professional to mitigate threats.
- ◆ It procured funding for a critical infrastructure project at a local synagogue.
- ◆ It provided mini-grants to help cover the cost of in-person security for the High Holidays.



TI/TC Joint Adult Education Group to present program on March 10

The Temple Israel/Temple Concord Joint Adult Education Group will present the hybrid program “Great Jewish Short Stories read live” on Sunday, March 10, at Temple Concord, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. The program will feature a brunch and begin at

10 am. Liz Rosenberg, Deb Williams and Steve Gilbert will be the readers. For those unable to attend in person, the program will be streamed over Zoom at <https://bit.ly/4aDvnJp>, meeting ID: 884 9233 9659 and passcode 564599. A voluntary contribution

between \$5-\$20 is welcome for in-person attendees of the brunch, and reservations are appreciated and can be made by calling Temple Concord at 607-723-7355 or to Temple Israel at 607-723-7461.

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Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

The challenges of our world today are numerous and, like many of you, I have been feeling enormous grief over the war in Israel and Gaza. As I reflect on the last few weeks, I thought it might be nice to share some interactions with community members who have brought me some slivers of light in an otherwise dark time:

- ◆ Lani Dunthorne brought me chocolate from her trip abroad. The chocolate was delicious and her kindness warmed my heart.
- ◆ Wendy Wolff stopped by the Federation office recently and stayed for a quick chat. Thank you, Wendy, for sharing

that you, too, are grief stricken. Knowing that I am not alone made me feel better.

- ◆ I recently ran into Phyllis Kellenberger at Aldi as she was shopping for the Temple Concord food pantry. She was incredibly kind and patient with my son. Phyllis’ demeanor made it a little easier to get through an otherwise hectic and stressful day.
- ◆ Holding space for the bereaved at a recent *shiva* call. OK, this one is less about a sliver of light and more about being of service, which always brings you closer to God.

- ◆ Shmoozing with my dear friends, Betty and Howard Warner, at the Black Bears hockey game. It was a great game and they added to the fun.
- ◆ Having a nice dinner with Rabbi Rachel Esserman. There was lots of talk about books and little talk about work – just what we both needed.

You never know when or how you will have an impact on someone else. I am grateful to all the kind people in this community. They add much sweetness to a sometimes-challenging job. Wishing you all lots of love and many moments of light during these dark days.

Robert Kraft and Super Bowl LVIII

By Bill Simons

Linking Robert Kraft to Super Bowl LVIII might prompt expressions of incredulity from many football fans. Once upon a time Kraft’s now hapless New England Patriots dominated the National Football League. In the prime of quarterback Tom Brady and coach Bill Belichick, the Kraft-owned Patriots won six Super Bowls. By Sunday, February 11, 2024, the 82-year-old Kraft appeared irrelevant to many of the record 123 million Super Bowl viewers. However, Kraft, always assertive in matters related to his Jewish identity, managed to insert serious issues of rising antisemitism and generic hate into the football extravaganza.

For \$7 million, Kraft’s Foundation to Combat Antisemitism purchased 30 seconds of Super Bowl commercial time. Given the high production and entertainment values typical of Super Bowl ads, “Silence,” the title of the Foundation’s video, maintained most of the game’s audience. Moreover, YouTube gives “Silence” a second life. (The video can be found on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6HUXANY8z8.)

The ad opens on Clarence B. Jones, identified as a draft speechwriter for civil rights icon Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., draped by a buttoned sweater while sitting at a large desk in a room lined by books. Jones, an African American, remains, at age 93, strong of voice and impressive in demeanor. Dignified and authentic, he is the voice of the ad. Referring to his “dear friend Martin,” he ponders what he would write today for Dr. King. Then, Jones calls out

the central issue of our day, breaking the silence against resurgent hate. A burning cross, evoking the Ku Klux Klan, and a swastika, reminiscent of the Nazis juxtaposed to a snuffed candle, are amongst the symbols of hate sequenced across the screen. Hate is confronted by more hopeful images in the commercial – “Say Their Names” emblazoned across the front of a Black woman’s shirt, signs hoisted at a rally with the legend “stand up to Jewish hate” and, most powerfully, a Jewish man, identified as such by his *kippah*, and a woman, attired in traditional Islamic headwear, partnering to scrub “No Muslims” graffiti from an outdoor wall.

As the montage progresses, Jones stands so he can address viewers more directly to deliver the ad’s climactic message: “I’d remind people that all hate thrives on one thing: silence. The people who will change the nation are those who speak out, who refuse to be bystanders, who raise their voices against injustice. When we stand up to silence, we stand up to all hate.” The video’s penultimate image merges the particular with the universal as the words “Stand up to Jewish hate” morph into “Stand up to all hate.”

Bereft of the humor and celebrity cameos of memorable Super Bowl ads, “Silence” elicited mixed reviews. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency’s Jacob Gurvis questioned, “Was the first antisemitism-themed ad to air at the Super Bowl tactful or tasteless? How much did it have to do with Israel? And what is ‘Jewish hate,’ anyway?” Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, an influential social commentator and

erstwhile Republican congressional candidate, dissed the ad: “Why were they focusing on Islamophobia, racism, bigotry... when the issue of the hour is antisemitism? What a wasted opportunity.” From the Forward, Arno Rosenfeld faulted “Silence” for its lack of clarity: “[T]he ad, which used the slogan ‘stand up to Jewish hate,’ left some viewers confused.” Avi Mayer, ex-managing editor of *The Jerusalem Post*, quipped, “The ad was referring to antisemitism – that is, hatred *of* Jewish people – but some folks seem to think it meant hatred exhibited *by* Jewish people. Yikes.”

Certainly, the Kraft message lacked the simple clarity of the video “Jewish Big Leaguers Support Israel,” produced by Nate Fish, Kevin Youkilis and Josh Lamberg soon after the October 7, 2023, Hamas-inflicted carnage in southern Israel. In “Jewish Big Leaguers Support Israel,” posted on X by the Israel Association of Baseball, 19 Jewish big leaguers state their names, look directly into the camera, and individually and collectively exhort listeners to “Stand against antisemitism. Stand with Israel.”

Within my own circle, responses to the Kraft ad varied considerably. David, a New York City social studies teacher, reported, “We were at a party at my brother-in-law’s house last night for the game and it was a very large, and mostly Jewish, crowd. That was the only ad that got a round of applause from the people in attendance.” An academic and an inventor, Eric observed, “A major issue implicit in the ad

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In My Own Words

Rambling thoughts on self-checkouts, cheating and more

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Am I the only person who hates self-checkout machines? My reasons are personal, at least at the grocery store. 1) The movement from cart to the self-checkout bothers my back. Grocery shopping is difficult enough without having it cause physical pain, in addition to the financial pain. 2) I can *never* get the machines to work properly. A store employee always has to help me at least two to three times. 3) The voice of the machine drives me crazy. I’ve been tempted to yell at it to *shut up*, but if it’s not talking, then I can’t tell if I actually scanned an item because sometimes I can’t hear the beeps. These are just the major reasons I try never to use them. However, according to news reports, more and more stores are getting rid of self-checkouts and – gasp, the novelty of this! – hiring staff to help customers.

Although I’ve only seen this reported as a reason for one business, I wonder if the change is the same one that caused Wegmans to stop letting people checkout using their phones: too many people cheated. In fact, I’ve figured out numerous ways that you could cheat using the self checkout. Let me be clear: I have *not* used those methods, but when working at my dad’s accounting office years ago, I became fascinated by the way businesses

cheated so they could pay less tax. (By the way, this was not something we could definitely prove, or there was no way my father would have done their taxes. However, it was pretty clear something was going on.) Since then, I’ve periodically contemplated how people could cheat when standing in line at the grocery store or waiting at other businesses.

I know some people cheat because they think they are “sticking it to the man.” For those unaware of the meaning of that term, Wikipedia defines it as “to take some action intended to defy a source of oppression such as globalization, commercialization, big business or government (on the large scale) or individual leaders and authorities like teachers, bosses, police, or politicians.” Unfortunately, when it comes to businesses, “the man” is just going to raise prices because the bottom line of any business is to make a profit. While Charles Dickens wrote about this on a personal scale – “Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery” – businesses are looking to do far more than break even because that’s how they manage to pay their employees, to offer health insurance, etc.

Please note, I am not excusing price gouging and CEOs having a ton of benefits while their workers are not given paid sick time, health insurance, etc. But I do know about small businesses that are trying to break even. Employers have to pay their employees first and make sure that their payroll taxes and sales taxes are paid or they get closed down by the government. That means that people who run their own business aren’t guaranteed a paycheck. Think about that for a minute: you’re working a ton of hours and you get paid nothing for it. I saw that at my dad’s office and it’s one of the reasons why I know that it’s not always great to be your own boss. Yes, lots of people want work for themselves – three cheers, no boss! – but then all your customers/clients are your boss. And your paycheck may be far less than minimum wage.

I don’t have any great conclusions to announce here, except it’s better not to cheat or shoplift, but you probably didn’t need to read these ramblings in order to discover that. I am grateful that self-checkouts are slowly disappearing if only because I also like personal interactions with a real-life human being. Yes, it may only be small talk for a couple of minutes, but it’s far more pleasant to talk to a person than a machine.



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BINGHAMTON, NY

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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BD Luncheon on March 9 to feature Lori Tuberman

Beth David Synagogue will feature Lori Tuberman as its Shabbat luncheon speaker on March 9. The subject of Tuberman's talk is "Showing Support: My Mission Trip to Israel," which will be about the trip Tuberman and her husband, Brian, participated in December. She will share their experiences, answer questions and will provide information about the various ways others can get involved, based on their interests. People are encouraged to attend the morning service, which begins at 9:30 am. There is no charge for the luncheon.

After the October 7 Hamas attack, Tuberman heard an Israeli government spokesman indicate that the best way for Diaspora Jews to help Israel now is



Lori Tuberman
(Courtesy of Lori Tuberman)

to come to Israel as a tourist, a volunteer, or as part of a solidarity mission. The trip the Tubermans took was organized by Rabbi Yehuda Azancot of Beth Torah, the synagogue to which her brother belongs. In addition to donations, Tuberman took along letters and cards made by Hillel Academy children.

"This was a whirlwind trip for the Tubermans," said organizers of the luncheon. "In the short time they were in Israel, they were greeted by heads of the World Zionist Organization, visited army bases, cooked and shared meals with soldiers, went to hospitals and met with families of hostages, as well as bereaved parents who had lost their children on October 7. They also visited Kibbutz Beeri, Kibbutz Kfar

Azza and the site of the Nova festival massacres."

Beth David's Luncheon Speaker Series takes place the second Saturday of the month. Since the monthly series' continuation depends on the generosity of contributors, Beth David welcomes and appreciates donations to the Luncheon Fund to keep the program going. Donations as well as sponsorships can be made in honor of, or in memory of, someone, or to mark a special occasion. Those wishing an acknowledgment to be sent to the person being honored, or to the family of someone being remembered, can indicate that along with the necessary information. Donations can be sent to Beth David Synagogue, 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905, Attention: Luncheon Fund.

Film Fest virtual showing of "March '68" in March

By Reporter staff

The Greater Binghamton Jewish Film Fest will hold a virtual showing of "March '68" in March. A virtual discussion of the film will be moderated by Ben Kasper, professor emeritus at SUNY Broome, on Sunday, March 17, at 5 pm. The link to the film will be sent to those who register by 5 pm on Thursday, March 14. People can register for the film and the discussion at www.jfjfb.org/film-fest. Donations are appreciated; the suggested donation is \$10.

The film tells the story of two young students – Hania (Vanessa Aleksander) and Janek (Ignacy Liss) – who meet and fall in love in 1960s Warsaw, which was a time of social turmoil and Jewish discrimination. Although Hania and Janek are not interested in politics, governmental edicts affect them: Hania's father and mother lose their jobs due to the antisemitic purge and are forced to emigrate. Since Hania does not want to leave Janek, the two participate in a protest rally at the university during which they learn freedom can come at a high price.

The film won the Audience Award for Best Narrative at the Washington, DC, JxJ Film Festival in 2023, the Audience Award for Best Feature at the Palm Beach Jewish Film Festival in 2023, the Audience Award for Best Narrative at the Jewish International Film Festival Australia in 2022 and Honorable Mention – International Jury Competition at the Jerusalem Jewish Film Festival in 2022.



Janek (Ignacy Liss) and Hania (Vanessa Aleksander) in "March '68" (Photo courtesy of TVP Theatrical Distribution)

On the website <https://culturalmining.com>, Daniel Garber wrote that the film "is an excellent romantic drama set in Warsaw during that dark, tumultuous and repressive time." Nora Lee Mandel wrote on her website, Mandel Maven's Nest Lilith Watch: Guide to Jewish Women in Film, that "integrating archival footage and recordings into both sides of the involving romantic story, [Director Krzysztof] Lang, with co-writer Andrzej Golda, intensely builds up how anti-Zionism and antisemitism were fomented to make Jews scapegoats for the political

power plays within the Communist government... While Lang lost childhood friends in March 1968, this poignant film is also a sober lesson on what happens again and again, with different victims."

"Join us for this film, which is a wonderful conclusion to this year's excellent Film Fest series," said Shelley Hubal, Federation executive director. "I found this film very engaging. Although it takes place in 1968, its message is still relevant today."

IAUJC dinner and reception on March 25

The Ithaca Area United Jewish Community will hold a community dinner and reception to express its gratitude to its donors for their support for its programs in Ithaca and around the world. Dr. Roald Hoffmann will be honored at the event, which will take place on Monday, March 25, at 6 pm, at the Biotechnology Building on the Cornell University campus. The keynote speaker will be Menachem Rosensaft, is an adjunct professor at Cornell Law School, founding chairman of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, and general counsel emeritus of the World Jewish Congress.

Reservations and ticket purchases are encouraged. The deadline for reservations is Monday, March 11. Tickets to the event and tribute gifts in honor of Hoffman may be made at <https://iaujc.org/tickets> or mailed to IAUJC, PO Box 4214, Ithaca, NY 14852. Questions may be directed to info@iaujc.org. The cost of tickets is \$75 for adults and \$36 for students.

"We will be highlighting some of our regular programs, such as the PJ Library, Global Spotlight grants, Humanitarian Aid to Israel and support for Jewish summer campers," said organizers of the event. "We will also be honoring a beloved member of our community, Roald Hoffmann. We are so grateful for Dr. Hoffmann's contributions and look forward to honoring him."

Hoffmann is a child Holocaust survivor who arrived in the U.S. in 1949 at age 11. He came to Ithaca in 1965 from Harvard University to teach chemistry at Cornell University, primarily to undergraduates and first year chemistry students. He has had a long and distinguished career in research and teaching, and was awarded the Nobel Prize in chemistry (with Kenichi Fukui) in 1981. Hoffmann has participated in many Holocaust education presentations to adults and children. In 2017, he was the presenter at the IAUJC community commemoration, and he is an ongoing member of the IAUJC Speakers Bureau, traveling each spring to middle and high schools in the area.

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of
Myron Ernst

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Eitan and Varda Morell on the death of their son,
Maoz Morell

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of
Rhoda Samuels

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of
Marlene Serkin

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Jeffery, Michael and Robert Schapiro on the death of their mother,
Barbara (Steidlitz) Schapiro

Tea and Talk

Chabad of Binghamton, with co-sponsorship from the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, holds Tea and Talk programs, a bi-weekly hour-long gathering for local Jewish seniors who are looking for "a meaningful conversation," from 11 am-noon, in Chabad's atrium on the second floor. The program is open to all and free of charge.

Upcoming dates are:

- ◆ March 21
- ◆ April 4
- ◆ April 18
- ◆ May 2
- ◆ May 16

To RSVP or for more information, visit www.JewishBU.com/Tea or call 607-797-0015.

DEADLINES

The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming issues of the biweekly REPORTER.

ISSUE	DEADLINE
March 22-April 4	March 13
April 5-18	March 27
April 19-May 2	April 10
May 3-16	April 19 (early)

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

Baruch Da'yan Ha'emet

Hillel Academy shares in the grief of
Eitan (Hillel Academy alumnus) and **Varda Morell**
And their family in Israel and the USA
on the death of their son, IDF soldier
Maoz Morell
in the war in Gaza.
May his memory be blessed.

Binghamton Philharmonic

9th Annual Mac & Cheese Fest
Thursday, March 14, 2024 from 6:00PM – 8:00PM
DoubleTree By Hilton Hotel Binghamton
225 Water Street, Binghamton
\$25 All You Can Eat • Over 20 Restaurants
607-723-3931 • www.bingmacfest.com

SAME SUE, SAME RESULTS...

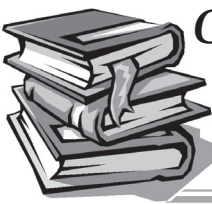
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Off the Shelf

Differing approaches to their memoirs

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

According to the website Grammarly, “a memoir is a nonfiction narrative in which the author shares their memories from a specific time period or reflects upon a string of themed occurrences throughout their life. An autobiography is a factual and historical account of one’s entire life from beginning to end.” While some memoirs offer almost autobiographical descriptions of a particular period, others use different artistic formats to tell their stories. For example, Moshe Kasher wrote six essays about distinct aspects of his life in “Subculture Vulture: A Memoir in Six Scenes” (Random House), while Lonnie Mann focused on one facet of his childhood in the graphic memoir “Gaytheist: Coming Out of My Orthodox Childhood” (Street Noise Books), which contains art by Mann and his husband Ryan Gatts.

I’d never heard of Kasher before his book appeared on several lists of upcoming works with Jewish content. His short author’s note describes him as a stand-up comedian, a writer and an actor. I’ve never seen his Netflix specials or listened to his podcast, but, after reading these essays, I can testify that he is funny. In fact, except for some dramatic moments, he writes about his life through the lens of comedy, making me laugh at things that shouldn’t be funny – for example, his years attending Alcoholics Anonymous. (Kasher became sober at age 15 – that is not a typo.) He also writes about his life as a raver (which, for those like me who never heard of this lifestyle, meant attending all-night dance parties); about growing up with a mother who is deaf; attending Burning Man for years as if it were a religious experience; his connection to Judaism; and how he became a comedian.

For Jewish readers (and reviewers), the most relevant section is about his connection... well, initially his lack of connection to Judaism and how he’s managed to reclaim part of his inheritance. Both of Kasher’s parents were deaf and the marriage was not one made in heaven. For most of the year, he lived with his secular mother in California. He spent his summers with his father in a Chasidic enclave in Brooklyn, where Kasher wore different clothing, ate different foods and lived – well, pretended to live – as a

religious Jew. However, before readers get the story of how he reclaimed part of his Jewish heritage, he writes almost 20 pages featuring a fractured-fairy tale version of Judaism from Abraham through Chasidism. If you are wondering if it’s funny, then wonder no more: it really is. Even when I disagreed with his description, it was hard not to laugh.

Kasher was 20 when his father died and that’s when things began to change. He said *Kaddish* for his father over the course of the next 11 months and suddenly Jewish rituals began to make sense: they sustained him through his period of grief. No, Kasher didn’t become an Orthodox Jew, but he gained a Jewish community in California and found a spiritual home. He also feels his connection to Judaism will help sustain him for the rest of his life.

The other sections of the memoir were interesting, although for different reasons. His stint in AA offers an insider’s view for those of us who have never attended a meeting. Although he extols his time as a raver and his attendance at Burning Man (and hopes his young daughter will someday have similar mind-opening experiences), all he did was make me grateful I’ve never been to either. Reading about them, however, was a worthwhile experience because this is as close as I ever want to get to them. His essay on deafness was both funny and interesting because he offers an excellent history about the changes in the way the deaf have been treated. As for becoming a comedian, let me say that I will no longer joke about wanting to become a comedian in my next life. (The laughs I get during my sermons will just have to be enough.)

You don’t have to be familiar with Kasher’s other work in order to appreciate “Subculture Vulture.” You do have to appreciate an offbeat sense of humor, though, because almost every part of his life is given a comic twist.

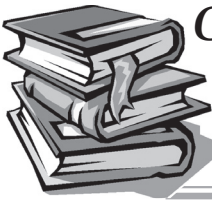
While Kasher uses humor to tell his story, Mann’s approach is more serious. By first grade, Mann had hints he was somehow different from the rest of the boys in his Jewish day school class, even though the possibility of being gay was never mentioned in the Modern Orthodox setting in which he lived. The Internet helped him give his

feelings a name and to show him that there were people living openly gay lives, although he knew that would be impossible in his own community. He does tell his parents, who don’t treat his statement seriously because they believe he is either confused or mistaken. Complicating matters is something he learns in his studies: his desires are not sins in themselves, but acting on them would be. He wonders if he will be condemned to a life without love.

But being unable to talk freely about his life leaves him feeling lonely. Fortunately, he does make a group of friends – non-gay, Orthodox friends – who give him some sense of social life. He only feels comfortable enough with one to talk about his sexuality. Fortunately, that friend is completely accepting of his true identity. His parents’ expectations, though, have not changed: his mother still believes that he will marry and have children, and remain an Orthodox Jew. But as Mann explores Jewish history and law, and as he comes to know others who are gay, he moves away from Orthodox practice. What he wants is to have a boyfriend someday – to experience love just like everyone else.

Most of the drawings in “Gaytheist” are created with pastel colors, which fits the tone of the writing. Mann shows the difficulties he faced in his youth, but doesn’t stridently condemn his former community. In fact, he shows how he originally tried to remain religious, even if he was gay, but how there seemed to be no place in that world for him to live the kind of life he wanted. Even though his parents were not supportive, he was luckier than those who were disowned and forced to leave their homes. He was also fortunate that his parents allowed him to take some classes outside of the Orthodox world – classes that allowed him to meet others who did not fit traditional roles. Plus, he was able to reach out to others via the Internet, something which seems to have made a great difference in his life.

This memoir should be read by the communities to which Mann no longer belongs. But even those community that are open to their LGBTQ members will benefit from reading “Gaytheist.” Mann opens his heart and his readers will root for his younger self.



Off the Shelf

Novels featuring folklore, mysticism and queer culture

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Fictional works featuring Jewish folklore and mysticism are now considered part of mainstream Jewish culture, as are books that acknowledge queer Jewish culture. This combination works because people see many pathways to being Jewish – ones that might not have been contemplated even 10 years ago. That means that the main characters in “City of Laughter” by Temim Fruchter (Grove Press) and “The Secret That Is Not a Secret: Ten Heretical Tales” by Jay Michaelson are able to manifest their Jewish identities in very different ways.

In “City of Laughter,” Shiva Margolin yearns to understand the hidden story of her ancestors, but her mother, Hannah, refuses to talk about her late mother, Syl, or grandmother, Mira. Even being asked about them visibly upsets Hannah, but Shiva feels she needs answers before she can find her true life path, especially now that her father – the person who held her family together – just passed away. In fact, Shiva is mourning two loves: her first girlfriend has suggested they take time apart, but Shiva worries that means the relationship is really over.

To learn more about her family’s past, Shiva leaves her job and starts graduate studies in Jewish folklore. That gives her an opportunity to travel to Poland where she hopes to visit the small town of Ropshitz, the place she feels holds the key to her family’s history.

Although Hannah loves her daughter, she feels bound by the restrictions placed on her by prior generations – strict rules about what can and cannot be said or done. Aimless after her husband’s death, Hannah tries to create meaning and structure in her life, but finds herself haunted by the past. It’s only when she is befriended by a woman who runs a funeral home that Hannah begins to look closer at her own life, leaving her to decide if she will finally reveal the real story of her mother and grandmother to Shiva.

Both Shiva and Hannah are haunted by a green-eyed figure who has played an important role in almost six generations of their family. This mystical stranger also takes a narrative turn, writing about life in Ropshitz and the effects of its appearance on Mira and Syl. Readers are left to wonder what role the stranger will finally play in the lives of both living main characters.

Although “City of Laughter” opened with a brilliant section that places the following action partially in context, the rest of the novel was unable to sustain that momentum. Shiva’s story was far more compelling than that of Hannah, whose life seemed plodding, even with the advent of the supernatural. There was a disconnection between the chapters, whose focus on different characters gave far too few clues for readers trying to piece together the puzzle of Syl and Mira’s history.

Although the novel’s ending tied the stories together in a fairly satisfying way, the novel never soared after its opening section. However, at least according to the reviews on Goodreads, my opinion is in the minority. Fruchter definitely has talent, but I had expected to like this work far more than I did.

While “City of Laughter” centers on the history of one family, the stories in “The Secret That Is Not a Secret” offers glimpses of a wide variety of characters from the Orthodox world. Michaelson’s first book of fiction, though, focuses on the outliers, those searching for something beyond their ordinary lives. For example, in “The Beard,” while Sara Duberman is generally satisfied with her life, she’s come to loathe the long beard her husband wears as part of his religious practice. It not only interferes with her enjoyment of their sex life, but it has a cumulative negative effect on her life as she daydreams of ways to rid her husband of his facial hair. “The Acacia Tree” tells of teenage Yonit’s desire to connect with God, a connection that seems to elude her. An elaborate plan to make this connection through nature goes awry, while offering Yonit some very different experiences. Exactly how the tale ends is cleverly left to the readers’ imagination.

Many of the stories focus on gay characters, or particularly those who see their gay impulses as inconsistent with an Orthodox lifestyles. The unnamed narrator in “The Mikva of Ben Sira’s Transmigration” uses the ritual bath before Shabbat as a way of ridding himself of the sin of being gay. Yet, an unexpected encounter there shows him a different possibility. “The Verse” is a wonderful fantasy, during which the verse in Leviticus against homosexuality disappears from every written scroll of the Torah. Even more amazing is that its removal leaves no space in the written text. The narrator struggles with exactly what this miracle means. In “The Sabbatean of Central Park,” another unnamed narrator is confused about whether his behavior is sinful or if he is actually redeeming sinful impulses by his actions and making them holy.

The lives of all the characters in “The Secret That Is Not a Secret” reverberate with mystical possibilities. I enjoyed the more-down-to-earth aspects of the stories, but the mysticism – the flights of fantasy and the descriptions of the different aspects of Kabbalah – did not resonate with me. However, the stories are beautifully written and offer some wonderful plots. Lovers of mysticism may be better able to appreciate the other aspects of the tales and perhaps discover even deeper meaning in them.

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Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

BD Sisterhood to tour BU Art Museum on March 13

The Beth David Sisterhood will offer a tour of the Binghamton University Art Museum on Wednesday, March 13, at 1:30 pm. The event is open to non-Sisterhood members of the community, both male and female. The tour will feature works of Jewish interest that relate in some way to the Jewish experience or which were created

by Jewish artists. Some of the better-known Jewish artists whose works will be included are Marc Chagall, Moshe Castel and Max Liebermann. The tour will be held in the Lindsay Room (room 179) in the Fine Arts Building on the Binghamton University Campus. The location of the building is listed as FA on

campus maps, which are available online. Seating will be available. There is a paid parking garage for guests that charges \$1 an hour located next to the Fine Arts Building. Visitors are encouraged to park on the upper level of the parking garage to avoid having to climb stairs. Anyone wishing to come early or stay

later to further enjoy the museum may do so. The museum is open from noon-4 pm. Special accommodations, if needed, can be made if the museum is notified in advance by calling 607-777-3968. Although reservations are not required, RSVPs are appreciated and can be made by calling 607-797-7593.

Hamas say they don't know which hostages are alive, or where they are

By JNS staff

(JNS)—A Hamas official explained to the BBC on March 3 why the terror group didn't accede to the Israeli demand to provide the number of hostages still alive: it doesn't know itself. "Practically it is impossible to know who is still alive because of the Israeli bombardment and blockage. They are in different areas with different groups," Basem Naim, a member of Hamas's political bureau, told the BBC's London-based "Newshour" program from Istanbul. "We have asked for a ceasefire to collect that data," he said, adding that "we cannot accept any preconditions." Qatar told Israel on March 3 that ceasefire talks will not be able to advance after Hamas failed to give Jerusalem the number of living captives, which Israel said was a requirement to move forward with a ceasefire agreement. There are believed to be 134 hostages remaining in Gaza, out of 253 kidnapped during the Hamas-led assault on the northwestern Negev on October 7 that killed 1,200 people and wounded thousands



Israelis protested for the release of Israelis held kidnapped by Hamas terrorists in Gaza, at the Knesset, the Israeli parliament in Jerusalem, on March 4. (Photo by Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

more. Israel has confirmed that 32 are dead. Jerusalem is also demanding that the terror group specify the ratio of security prisoners it wants released per Israeli hostage. Without those two demands met, Israel decided not to send a delegation to Cairo for talks on a ceasefire deal on March 3 that involved Hamas as well as American, Egyptian and Qatari mediators. Israel on March 4 denied a Saudi report that Hamas did supply the terrorist-to-hostage ratio. According to Israeli media reports, the American plan put forward at the second Paris summit in late February proposed a six-week ceasefire that would include the release of 400 Palestinian security prisoners in exchange for 40 Israeli hostages. A senior Hamas terror official reportedly described the Cairo talks as "positive" and said that "the ball is in Israel's court." However, in the BBC interview, Naim repeated Hamas' demands that the war end and Israel withdraw its forces from Gaza, both nonstarters for Jerusalem.

New ADL research reveals 24 percent of Americans embrace antisemitism

By David Swindle

(JNS) – When the Anti-Defamation League released its previous research into the depth of Jew-hatred in the

United States in January 2023, the group revealed that one in five Americans embraced antisemitism. That number has since risen to nearly one in four.

The ADL announced the results of a new poll with a 1.5 percent margin of error for 4,000 adults in the United States conducted from Jan. 5-18. Researchers found that 24 percent, up from 20 percent in 2022, answered agreement with at least six out of 11 antisemitic tropes the organization has polled on for decades. Data shows millennials to be the most antisemitic generation in the United States, embracing 5.37 tropes on average. In contrast, TikTok-enthusiast Gen Z believes 5.01 bigotries, Gen X a total of 4.19 and baby boomers 3.06. The survey found a correlation between antisemitism and the belief in an "oppressor vs. oppressed" ideology, asking for levels of agreement in the statement, "When we think about the problems of the world, it comes down to the oppressor vs. the oppressed." Those who strongly agreed endorsed six antisemitic tropes on average, whereas those

who disagreed believed in 2.4. "The 'oppressed vs. oppressor' correlation with increased antisemitic beliefs is most interesting to me. Having been brought up in the Soviet Union where that same Marxist-Leninist ideology and ideologues were very much responsible for Soviet antisemitism and anti-Zionism," Misha Galperin, president and CEO of the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia, told JNS. "I've been to that movie and did not like the plot." Researchers also found a correlation between beliefs in conspiracy theories and antisemitic tropes. Those in the top 25 percent for conspiracist ideology believed an average of 6.2 tropes. Galperin said that "the overall increase is not terribly surprising given the enormous increase in antisemitic and anti-Israel incidents, especially on college campuses."

Program. Continued from page 1

Gilbert is a professor emeritus of psychology at SUNY-Oneonta, a past president of Temple Israel, a frequent *davener* at TI and an amateur performer known as Ukulele Steve by residents of several local senior living facilities. Rosenberg is the author of numerous award-winning books for both adults and children, including poetry, novels, non-fiction and biography. She is a professor of literature and creative writing at Binghamton University, where she has won the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate



Steve Gilbert (Photo courtesy of Steve Gilbert)



Liz Rosenberg (Photo courtesy of Liz Rosenberg)



Deb Williams (Photo courtesy of Deb Williams)

Teaching. Williams and her husband, Gil, have been selling used books online for over 25 years. She is an amateur actor and directs Temple Concord's Purim spiel each year, as well as organizing the synagogue's annual November Artisan Marketplace. She is a member of Binghamton's Shakespeare Dramatic Club.

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Chabad’s Women’s League offers *shalach manot* service

The final deadline for submitting orders through the Women’s League for Chabad *shalach manot* service is Sunday, March 10. Anyone who has not received a complete information packet and order form, or who is seeking additional details, should call Chabad Center at 607-797-0015.

“The service allows members of the

Broome County Jewish community to send beautiful food packages to individuals on Purim day (celebrated this year on Sunday, March 24) with a minimum of hassle and for a very reasonable price,” said organizers. “The Women’s League also offers Purim greeting cards that can be sent to friends and relatives beyond Broome County in lieu of *shalach manot* packages anywhere

in the United States.”

“The mitzvah of *shalach manot* is very important and is fulfilled by sending a package with at least to different types of food to at least one friend on Purim day,” explained Rivkah Slonim. “Often people want to send *mishloach manot* to many, many people or at least wish them a happy holiday and make sure they

know they are thought of. These cards work perfectly for that purpose and they support a great cause at the same time!”

The Women’s League is also seeking volunteers to help with the assembly of the packages and individuals who can help with the local delivery on Purim day. Anyone who would like to volunteer should call the Chabad office.

For Purim, what goes hand in hand with cherries? Chocolate!

By Naomi Ross

(JNS) – As a kid in my mother’s house, I’d use a drinking glass to cut out my rounds of dough for hamantashen, those triangular Jewish cookies made for the holiday of Purim. Dipping the rim in flour, it was a careful practice of cutting as close together as possible, leaving the least amount of scraps behind (the fewer scraps to re-roll, the better; the dough tends to get tougher with each redo).

The tradition to give *mishloach manot* (festive food gifts to neighbors and friends) on Purim spurred my desire for fun after-school projects in the days leading up to the holiday. For a young person, taking ownership of preparing a package to give to others was a momentous experience. It

required me to think about someone else and how to make it special for them.

We kept it simple—traditional apricot- or prune-filled. No frills but delicious all the same. Now, as an adult with my own family, I have fun playing with different versions and more sophisticated flavors. One year, I used guava paste and lime. Each year, my family prepares and gives several packages to friends and neighbors, but lately, I also try to think of someone who in particular needs a lift or smile and make sure they get one, too. That extra attention and loving touch make a difference, especially when cooking for others. Those pesky, sealed edges of the hamantashen can reopen when baking, so always pinch twice!

As per the recipe below: No, it’s not al-

coholic. Yes, the alcohol cooks out, leaving a lusciously decadent filling. Yes, cherries and chocolate need to be together. And yes, give some to your friends – if there are any left.

The dough can be prepared up to three days in advance. The filling can be made up to a week in advance.

Drunken Cherry-Chocolate Hamantashen (Pareve)
(From “The Giving Table” by Naomi Ross, November 2022)

Makes about 5 dozen hamantashen

For the dough:

- ¾ cup oil
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- ¼ cup milk or soy or oat milk
- 1½ tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 3½ cups flour, plus more for flouring
- ⅔ cup Dutch-process cocoa (pareve)
- 4 tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. salt

For the filling:

- 1 (12-oz.) bag frozen dark pitted cherries, thawed
- ⅓ cup dry red kosher wine
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
- ¼ tsp. cinnamon

Prepare the dough: Cream the oil and sugar together in an electric mixer until a grainy paste forms. Beat in eggs, milk and vanilla until well-blended.

Mix: In a separate large bowl, sift together the flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt. Slowly add the flour mixture to the batter, a little at a time, mixing at low speed until



Drunken Cherry-Chocolate Hamantashen. (Photo from “The Giving Table” by Naomi Ross, November 2022)

the dough comes away from the sides of the bowl and forms into a ball. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least two hours or overnight. While the dough chills, prepare the filling:

Filling: Combine all filling ingredients in a medium saucepan and stir to blend until all cornstarch is dissolved and no lumps are visible.

Place saucepan over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring often until the mixture is thickened and bubbly. Remove from heat to cool; chill to thicken.

Roll and fill: Preheat oven to 350°F. Line three baking sheets with parchment paper. Divide dough into four parts. Roll out the dough on a lightly floured board (it helps to flour the rolling pin as well) into a very thin round, about ⅛-¼-inch thick. Using a 3-3½-inch diameter cookie cutter or glass, cut circles in the dough. Place one cherry with a little of the sauce in the center of each circle. Shape into a triangle by folding the three sides inwards toward the center (leaving space for the filling to be open and visible); pinch the sides together tightly.

Bake: Place hamantashen 1 inch apart on prepared baking sheets (pinch again to secure folds). Bake for 12 to 14 minutes. Be careful not to overbake. Repeat with the remaining dough, using up dough scraps as well. Transfer baked hamantashen to racks to cool.

Chef’s touch: For a pretty look, drizzle with a little melted white chocolate (or dip one-half of the hamantash into white chocolate).

Federation Alert

Mishloach manot for IDF lone soldiers

The Jewish Federation of Central New York is adopting a unit of lone soldiers (soldiers who do not have family in Israel) in conjunction with Connections Israel – an organization dedicated to fostering meaningful connections to Israel through personal connections with soldiers in the Israel Defense Forces – to deliver *mishloach manot* (gifts of food) to be delivered to these soldiers for Purim. Individuals can support the project in two ways: by contributing \$18 for each Purim package and/or by sending an e-mail from adults, children or families that will be included in the package. E-mails should be sent to bdavis@jewishfederationcn.org; donations can be made at <https://jewishfederationcn.org/donate/>, then select “Shalach Manot for IDF” from the “designate your gift” drop down menu.

“We thought this was a wonderful way to support Israeli soldiers during this difficult time,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton. “Help us help the Syracuse Federation with this great project.”



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Purim Carnival

March 17th 1:00-3:30pm

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Contact the JCC main office for more information
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TC students made Israeli cuisine



Temple Concord Religious School students learned about modern Israel. Among the things they did was make hummus so they could enjoy Israeli cuisine.

Purim online resources

- ◆ Melton will offer the class “Topsy Turvy: The Obligation to Get Drunk on Purim” on Wednesday, March 20, from 1-2 pm. Rabbi Ben Kramer will look at a variety of rabbinic texts to better understand the nature of reason behind the obligation to get drunk on Purim. For more information or to register, visit <https://events.org/events/calendarcourse?tid=16f6ba56-7e30-4c17-9004-d74e6068297b>.
- ◆ The Blue Dove Foundation has mental health resources available for Purim at https://thebluedovefoundation.org/resource_category/purim/.
- ◆ Aleph Alliance for Jewish Renewal will hold the virtual program “Reimagining Purim: Journey into Megillat Mordekhai with Beith Toratah” on Tuesday, March 19, at 1 pm. The cost is “pay what you can.” It will “engage in the reading of the scroll of Mordekhai and explore the alternative world it presents.” To register for the event, visit <https://aleph.org/civicrm/event/register/?reset=1&id=545>.



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By Reporter staff

◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold the hybrid program “Stuck: Immigration, Naturalization and Repatriation in the WWI Era” on Sunday, March 17, at 1:30 pm. The lecture looks at the documents that “tell harrowing tales of families separated by World War I, and the incredible lengths people

◆ Ritualwell will hold “Dreaming Our Ancestors Home: Connecting With and Healing Our Past” on Tuesdays, March 19 and 26, and April 2 and 9, from noon-1:30 pm. The cost for the four sessions is \$180. The course will use the PARDES Kabbalistic style of reading Torah to unlock and heal inherited intergenerational trauma. For more information or to register, visit <https://ritualwell.org/event/dreaming-our-ancestors-home-connecting-with-and-healing-our-past/2024-03-19/>.

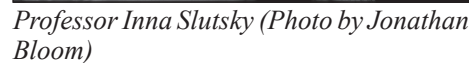
◆ Uri L'Tzedek will hold a panel “Celebrating 15 years of uplifting Kashrut and Worker rights with the Tav Hayosher” on

For additional resources, see previous issues of The Reporter on its website, www.thereportergroup.org/jewish-online-resources.

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Tel Aviv University researchers have found a method of preventing memory deterioration in the animal model of Alzheimer's disease, the university announced recently. The study, conducted in collaboration with the Hebrew University

Believing that there are mechanisms compensating for this pathology during wakefulness, thus prolonging the pre-symp-



The nucleus reuniens is located in the thalamus, which is responsible for sleep regulation, and is a key component of a network of structures in the hippocampus and cortex, playing a vital role in cognition.

Watching the Super Bowl with his two sons, Joe, founder of a law firm and a synagogue president, confided, “I don’t even remember the ad, although I’ve seen some of the ads from Robert Kraft with the blue square. It’s good that the ads exist, though, in light of prevalent antisemitism across the world.” A journalist, Mark, provided an affirmative appraisal of “Silence”: “[I]t had a very broad view of the need to stop hate of all kinds. I liked the way it mixed the visuals... It was very well done. But it was only 30 seconds ... But it was a powerful effort that could be applicable to many affected groups.” A physician, Rich expressed caveats: “I don’t think it was very helpful. In the context of the Super Bowl, ads go by fast and this did not have time to sink in... I think it helped Kraft’s conscience more than anything. If it had

Clearly, dispute over the Kraft ad will continue, a discussion that reflects the larger debate over antisemitism and Israel.

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*Mazel Tov to Amy and Ben Cohen on their
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Wedding Planning Guide

Weddings



Daniella Sutnick and Mitchell Rozen
May 28, 2023
(Photo by Delimiro)



Robin Hall and Adam Philips
September 3, 2023
(Photo by Jacqueline Connor)



Jenna Dorfman-Tandlich and Max Goldbas
September 9, 2023
(Photo by Ned Weisman)



Emily Wolff and Matt Bachman
October 22, 2023
(Photo by Scarinzi Media)



Lisa Pfau and Jason Dunthorn
October 25, 2023
(Photo courtesy of the Dunthorn family)

*Mazel Tou to
our Married
Couples!*

Engagements



Stephanie Kerner and Jared Andrew Schapiro
(Photo by Tanya Honkanen)



Sarah VonEsch and Jonathan Bertman
(Photograph by John Wisdom)

Mazel Tou to our Engaged Couples!

Your wedding checklist

- 6-12 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING

 - ☐ Determine budget
 - ☐ Visit rabbi (ceremony variations)
 - ☐ Set day, time and location of ceremony, rehearsal and reception
 - ☐ Select a caterer
 - ☐ Choose wedding photographer and/or videographer
 - ☐ Draw up guest list
 - ☐ Obtain floral/rental/music estimates
 - ☐ Invite attendants
 - ☐ Discuss honeymoon and new home
 - ☐ Select gown and headpiece
 - ☐ Select music for ceremony and reception
 - ☐ Register with bridal gift registry

4 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING

 - ☐ Order invitations and personal stationery
 - ☐ Plan reception
 - ☐ Plan ceremony and reception music
 - ☐ Choose florist
 - ☐ Mothers choose gowns
 - ☐ Men choose attire
 - ☐ Make honeymoon reservations
 - ☐ Begin trousseau shopping
 - ☐ Arrange motel accommodations for out-of-town guests

3 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING

 - ☐ Make an appointment with gynecologist to discuss birth control, etc.
- 2 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING

 - ☐ Order wedding cake
 - ☐ Select attendants' gifts
 - ☐ Plan to keep gift record
 - ☐ Acknowledge gifts as they arrive
 - ☐ Finish invitations – mail them 6 weeks before wedding
 - ☐ Plan rehearsal dinner
 - ☐ Check on marriage license
 - ☐ Get rings engraved
 - ☐ Plan luncheon for bridesmaids
 - ☐ elect gift for groom
 - ☐ Go over wedding ceremony details
 - ☐ Gown fitting
 - ☐ Bridal portrait sitting
 - ☐ Arrange for limousine service
 - ☐ Make hairdresser appointment

1 MONTH BEFORE WEDDING

 - ☐ Make up reception seating charts
 - ☐ Check wedding party apparel
 - ☐ Final gown fitting
 - ☐ Get blood tests for marriage license

2 WEEKS BEFORE WEDDING

 - ☐ Make final check on bridal-party clothes and catering
 - ☐ Arrange name changes/get marriage license
 - ☐ Arrange transportation from reception to airport or wherever you are leaving from for the honeymoon

1 WEEK BEFORE WEDDING

 - ☐ Wrap attendants' gifts
 - ☐ Give final count to caterer
 - ☐ Confirm music arrangements and check selections
 - ☐ Arrange to move belongings to new home
 - ☐ Check that your hairstyle complements your headpiece
 - ☐ Final instructions to photographer and videographer
 - ☐ Final instructions to ushers for special seating
 - ☐ Give clergy fee to best man in sealed envelope (he will deliver it)
 - ☐ Begin packing for honeymoon

1 DAY BEFORE WEDDING

 - ☐ Give ushers guest list
 - ☐ Do something relaxing and pamper yourself!

Ten IDF couples wed in mass Tel Aviv wedding

By JNS staff
(JNS) – Ten couples with a member serving in the Israel Defense Forces were to be married during a simultaneous ceremony in Tel Aviv in what has been described as one of the Jewish state's largest weddings ever. The mass wedding, part of Chabad of Savyon's "Marrying the Warriors" initiative, was to kick off at the Hangar 11 event hall in the Tel Aviv Port on the night of March 5. The ceremony included 10 wedding canopies, and each couple was asked to invite 100 guests. Following the ceremony, a party was planned for the couples

and their guests, with performances scheduled that included Harel Skaat, Benaia Barabi, the Hatikva 6 band, Subliminal and the Shadow. "The war taught us that the people of Israel are all brothers and partners in one fate, so sharing our most special and intimate night with other couples who took part in the war is a decision we are proud of," Raziel, a reservist in the Egoz guerrilla warfare unit, told Channel 12 News. "Although we didn't plan to have a big wedding, this project is exactly what we needed," added Or, the commando's future wife. "We are

establishing not one Jewish home, but 10 in one evening." Under the auspices of "Marrying the Warriors," Chabad of Savyon Rabbi Shmuel Bistritzky has so far married 12 IDF couples. Hundreds more have signed up for the initiative, as many soldier couples had to postpone their special day due to the war against Hamas in Gaza. "I am very excited to put 10 fighters under the chuppah with their spouses today," Bistritzky said. "I want to thank the volunteers and donors who came together to make this exciting wedding come true and wish the dear couples happiness."

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Shabbat and the *Mishkan*

RABBI BEN MENORA, OU-JLIC AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY, CO-DIRECTOR

The beginning of *parashat* Vayakel seems to be a concise revisit of what was mentioned at length earlier in the book of Shemot (Exodus), reiterating the central theme of the sanctity of Shabbat and the consequences of violating it, while also introducing a somewhat tangential note regarding the prohibition of kindling a fire. Examining the positioning of these two Shabbat-related portions in the narrative, and their connection to the construction of the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle), sheds light on their significance.

The return to the topic of Shabbat in chapter 35 follows the completion of instructions for constructing the *Mishkan* and its vessels. The Ramban (Nachmanides) explains this repetition marvelously, suggesting that after the incident of the Golden Calf, when God forgave the people and established a new covenant, the people returned to their original love and commitment. The renewed covenant involved

God dwelling among them, as indicated by the command to build the *Mishkan*. Therefore, Moses reiterates the laws of Shabbat to emphasize that the divine presence dwells among the people when the covenant is intact. The Shabbat laws serve as a sign of the covenant, connecting the *Mishkan* to the ongoing relationship between God and the people.

The second mention of Shabbat, which follows the sin of the Golden Calf, creates a chiasmatic structure with the first commandment of Shabbat at Mount Sinai. The intricate structure indicates that the ideal state before the sin of the Golden Calf is restored after repentance and atonement. Shabbat, being a sign of the covenant, becomes an essential part of this restoration.

The prohibition against kindling a fire on Shabbat, introduced in chapter 35, serves as a practical injunction added to the more principled nature of Shabbat observance. While

kindling a fire does not involve the creation of something new, it is restricted on Shabbat. The Gemara (Shabbat 70a) suggests that the prohibition against kindling fire teaches of activities not explicitly linked to the violation of the covenant that are still forbidden on Shabbat. Though fire is not a traditional form of creation, its prohibition reinforces the sanctity of Shabbat and its association with the ongoing covenant between God and the people.

The connection between Shabbat and the construction of the *Mishkan* is also linked to the broader theme of creation. The *Mishkan* is depicted as a microcosm of the universe and rabbinic sources have noted parallels between the narrative of creation in Genesis and the construction of the *Mishkan*. This connection is expressed in the shared language and motifs used to describe both narratives.

See “*Mishkan*” on page 11

Congregational Notes

Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative
Rabbi: Micah Friedman
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 607-723-7461 and 607-231-3746
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-3:30 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm
E-mail: office@templeisraelvestal.org
Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org
Service schedule: Tues., 5:30 pm; Fri., 5:30 pm; Sat., 9:30 am
On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Micah Friedman via Zoom and in-person (masks are required for unvaccinated participants).

On Saturday, March 9, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required for unvaccinated participants). The Torah portion is Exodus 35:1-38:20 and the haftarah is II Kings 12:1-17. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 7 pm.

On Sunday, March 10, at 10 am, the Temple Israel/ Temple Concord Adult Ed. program at Temple Concord will feature “Great Jewish Short Stories.” For more information, see the article on page 1.

On Saturday, March 16, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required for unvaccinated participants). The Torah portion is Exodus 38:21-40:38 and the haftarah is I Kings 7:51-8:21. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 8 pm.

A “Pizza Meet and Greet Fund-raiser” will take place on Sunday, March 17, at 4 pm.

A Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 19, at 7 pm.

A Ritual Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 20, at 10 am.

Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815
Phone: 334-2691
E-mail: fertigj@roadrunner.com
Contact: Guilina Greenberg, 373-5087
Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.
Adult Ed.: Shabbat study sessions are held on designated Saturday mornings at 10 am. Call ahead, text or e-mail to confirm dates.

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: Nick Martelli
Cemetery Committee: 315-696-5744
Website: templebrithsholomcortland.org
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.

Services and programs are held by Zoom on the first and second Fridays of the month.

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.

Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union
Rabbi: Zev Silber
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Phone: 607-722-1793, Rabbi’s Office: 607-722-7514
Fax: 607-722-7121
Office hours: Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Thurs. 9 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
Classes: Rabbi Zev Silber will hold his weekly Talmud class every Tuesday evening after services.

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: 607-797-0015, Fax: 607-797-0095
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.

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi: TBA
Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292
Phone: 607-273-5775
E-mail: president@tbeithaca.org, secretary@tbeithaca.org
Website: www.tbeithaca.org
Presidents: Melanie Kalman and Alexis Siemon
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman
Director of Education: TBA
Services: Friday 8 pm; Saturday 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sundays and legal holidays).
Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday afternoons, 3:45-5:45 pm. The teen No’ar program meets twice per month (every other Sunday from 5-7 pm) and is designed with the flexibility to accommodate busy student schedules.
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.

Friday, March 8, light candles before..... 5:44 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, March 9 6:46 pm
Friday, March 15, light candles before..... 6:52 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, March 16 7:54 pm
Friday, March 22, light candles before..... 7 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, March 23 8:02 pm

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Rabbi: TBA
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm
Phone: 607-723-7355
Fax: 607-723-0785
Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com
Website: www.templeconcord.com
Regular service times: Fri., 7:30 pm; Sat., 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.
Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm on Tues. and Thurs. during the school year unless otherwise noted.

Some services and programs are online only.

Friday, March 8: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service with Rob Neuberger. Join via Zoom at https://bit.ly/3hRm-W2Y, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, March 9: At 9 am, Shabbat school; at 9:15 am, Torah study in person and on Zoom (http://bit.ly/3XDnvRE, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892); and at 10:35 am, Shabbat family class service.

Sunday, March 10: At 10 am, Adult Ed. Brunch and Talk at Temple Concord: “Great Jewish Short Stories.” For more information, see the article on page 1.

Tuesday, March 12: At 8 pm, General Board of Trustees meeting. Meetings are open to members of Temple Concord. For meeting link, contact the office at 607-723-7355 or templeconcordaa@gmail.com.

Friday, March 15: Vegetarian/dairy Shabbat potluck dinner at 6 pm with candle lighting, Kiddush and the Mourner’s Kaddish. There will not be a full service following the dinner.

Saturday, March 16: At 9 am, Shabbat school; at 9:15 am, Torah study in person and on Zoom (http://bit.ly/3XDnvRE, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892); and at 10:35 am, Shabbat family class service.

Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Cantor: David Green
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820
Phone: 607-432-5522
E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com
Regular service times: Contact the temple 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, contact the temple.

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
Rabbi: Shifrah Tobacman, rabbishifrah@tikkunvor.org
Presidents: Sue Merkel and Laurie Willick, presidents_22@tikkunvor.org
Education Director/Administrative Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky
Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin
Services: All services currently on Zoom. E-mail info@tikkunvor.org for the times and links. Contemplative morning services every Tuesday from 8:30-9:30 am. Saturday mornings, Gan Shabbat and other special services at least once a month. Call for the weekly schedule. Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE) for second through seventh grade classes meet on Sunday mornings. Sixth and seventh grades also meet on Wednesday afternoons. Family programs for kindergarten and first grade held monthly. Adult Education: Offered regularly throughout the year. Check the website for details.

Israeli algorithm offers effective antibody humanization

By Pesach Benson
(JNS) – Israeli researchers have developed a revolutionary algorithm that promises to speed up the process of adapting animal antibodies for human use. Developed by a team of researchers from the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, the study introduces CUMAb, an algorithm designed to streamline the humanization of antibodies, potentially revolutionizing the development of antibody-based drugs. The Weizmann findings were recently published in the peer-reviewed journal Nature Biomedical Engineering.



The Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot on September 9, 2023. (Photo by Yossi Zeliger/TPS)

Historically, the use of animal antibodies for human disease treatment has been marred by disastrous immunological responses. Attempts to “humanize” animal antibodies – by modifying or engineering them – were time-consuming and costly, often yielding less effective or entirely useless results.

Professor Sarel Fleishman, who led the research team, explained that the standard approach was to select a human antibody that most closely resembles the animal version and then replace the animal segments with human ones, while retaining the animal aspects that acted against disease. But the interconnectedness of the different parts of the antibody made the replacement unstable and ineffective, he said.

The breakthrough came when graduate student and lead author Ariel Tennenhouse hypothesized that prioritizing stability over structural similarity might offer a more reliable criterion for humanization. To test the hypoth-

esis, the team developed CUMAb, an algorithm for computational humanization of antibodies.

CUMAb proved to be a game-changer, generating 20,000 humanized variants of a single mouse antibody. The algorithm predicted the structural stability of each variant, selecting the most promising ones for experimental testing. Five different antibodies, including one targeting the growth and spread of cancer cells, were synthesized and tested, demonstrating outstanding results.

“The results were extraordinary,” said Fleishman. “Without any additional adjustments to the proposed designs, the humanized antibodies functioned just as effectively as the mouse’s original.”

Tests of four other antibodies, all designed with CUMAb, were just as impressive, and sometimes even surpassed the original animal antibody’s activity or stability.

The CUMAb breakthrough has the potential to significantly accelerate the design of antibody-based drugs while reducing development costs. The algorithm can also facilitate the selection of antibodies with properties that enhance patient outcomes, such as reducing the need for dilution or improving ease of administration.

The researchers have since transformed CUMAb into a web server, making it accessible to any academic researcher.

“We hope that CUMAb, now accessible online, will empower researchers and professionals to develop antibodies more swiftly and accurately,” said Tennenhouse.

Jerusalem’s Old City gets architectural makeover

By JNS staff

(JNS) – A walk around the Tower of David is a one-stop shop for architecture in Jerusalem from the times of the kings of Judea in the First Temple period 2,800 years ago until today. There are walls from the Hasmoneans, towers from King Herod, a banquet room from the Crusaders and arched walls from the Ottomans to name just a few. Now the Tower of David Jerusalem Museum welcomes the latest layer in the Old City’s architecture with the addition of the Angelina Drahi Entrance Pavilion, which is set to open its doors in March.

After more than a decade of planning and three years of construction, the final part of the \$50 million renewal of the Tower of David Jerusalem Museum is complete with the opening of the new multi-level sunken entrance pavilion. The 1,000 square meter (10,763 square feet) building nestled between the walls of Jerusalem’s Old City and the ancient citadel walls is barely noticeable from the Jaffa Gate Plaza.

Building regulations forbid building above the height of the Old City walls, so the architects and engineers needed to plan for excavating the site 17 meters/18.6 yards down

to build the pavilion that now houses the ticket office of the museum, a changing exhibition gallery, and a labyrinth of offices for the Education Department underground and a shaded seating area outside. In May, the coffee shop will open.

The ancient citadel was transformed into a welcoming and accessible environment under the direction of Kimmel Eshkolot Architects, Professor Etan Kimmel and lead architect Yotam Cohen-Sagi. “The opportunity to bring the 21st century to this ancient iconic site is both a duty and an honor,” says Kimmel. “We were set the task of renovating one of the earliest and most important architectural treasures of Jerusalem. Our challenge boiled down to our ability to find solutions to preserve the ancient stones that represent See “City” on page 12

Model. . . . Continued from page 8

“When we tried to stimulate the nucleus reuniens at high frequencies, as is done in the treatment of Parkinson’s, for example, we found that it worsened the damage to the hippocampus and the silent epileptic seizures,” said Shoob. “Only after changing the stimulation pattern to a lower frequency were we able to suppress the seizures and prevent cognitive impairment. We showed that the nucleus reuniens had the ability to completely control these seizures. We could increase or decrease the seizures by stimulating it.”

According to Slutsky, epidemiological studies have provided evidence for a link between aging and a phenomenon called postoperative cognitive dysfunction, in which cognitive problems arise following surgery under general anesthesia.

“In young people, the symptoms usually pass very quickly, but in older people, the chance of cognitive impairment increases, and it may last a long time. Our research indicates a potential mechanism underlying the phenomenon,” she said.

“We found that suppressing the thalamic nucleus reuniens – by pharmacological or electrical means – successfully prevented both pathological activity in the hippocampus during anesthesia and cognitive impairment following anesthesia,” she added. “In addition, we identified a relationship between certain pathological activity in the hippocampus during anesthesia in the presymptomatic phase of Alzheimer’s to memory problems in a more advanced stage of the disease. This indicates a potential [method] for predicting the disease in the dormant state, before the onset of cognitive decline.”

The researchers hope that their findings will speed the start of clinical trials in humans, potentially leading to advancements in early detection of Alzheimer’s, prevention of dementia symptoms associated with the disease, and progress in treating POCD.

Jewish Community Center

JCC Friendship Club

The Jewish Community Center Friendship Club met on February 21. We recited the “Pledge of Allegiance” and sang “Hatikvah.” Bernice Zelman introduced Danielle Clemans from the Office of the Aging (or OFA). She gave some statistics about older people. Broome County has a population of about 250,000 and about 53,000 are older. There are about 6,287 over the age of 87.

Danielle gave out some pamphlets and talked about the magazine NY Connects. She said this is a referral program, not an emergency program. She said that programs change, and she tries to keep up with the changes such as housing, finances and more. We talked about home repairs and volunteering for Meals on Wheels. OFA provides services for weathering home siding, HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) and home repairs. Some programs have an income requirement.

Danielle talked about Action for Older Persons, which helps you decide which Medicare health program to apply for. She talked about the local senior centers and some of their programs. For those that qualify, there are free legal services and transportation by OFA mini bus, BC lift and BC country. She also spoke about the foster grandparents program. This program provides a stipend and free lunch in the school. We ended by talking about our pets and volunteer activities.

With Purim coming on March 24, some of us will deliver *shalach manot* to Jewish residents in nursing homes and shut-ins.

The next meeting will be a Purim party on Wednesday, March 20, at 2:30 pm, at Hilltop, Deyo Hill Rd., Johnson City. On Thursday, March 21, a Purim party will be held at Castle Gardens.

1715 Castle Gardens Rd., Vestal, at 2 pm. The program on Wednesday, April 17, at 1:30 pm, at the JCC, will feature guest speaker Hadassah Mativetsky who will tell us about growing up Jewish in Binghamton. She was just elected to the Binghamton city council. Come join us.

*Sylvia Diamond
President*

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Mishkan. . . Continued from page 10

The intricate relationship between Shabbat, the *Mishkan* and the act of creation becomes evident. The *Mishkan* is a microcosmic recreation of the world, mirroring the creative acts of God. Shabbat, as a sign of the covenant, serves as a bridge between the original creation and the ongoing creative acts manifested in the construction of the *Mishkan*. In essence, both Shabbat and the *Mishkan* are intertwined symbols of God’s creative power and the continuous covenantal relationship with the people.

Moreover, the prohibition of kindling a fire on Shabbat resonates with the concept of creation. While kindling may not involve the physical creation of something new, it signifies control over a fundamental element – fire. The act of kindling, restricted on Shabbat, reinforces the idea that even activities related to the manipulation of elements are curtailed on this sacred day, underscoring its connection to the divine act of creation.

Parashat Vayakel beautifully weaves together the themes of Shabbat, the *Mishkan* and the covenant between God and the people. Shabbat serves as a sign of the renewed covenant, connecting the people with God’s divine presence. The construction of the *Mishkan*, echoing the act of creation, becomes a tangible expression of the ongoing covenant and the intimate relationship between God and the Israelites. The prohibition of kindling a fire on Shabbat further emphasizes the sanctity of this day, reinforcing its connection to the divine creative acts. Together, these elements create a rich tapestry of meaning, highlighting the interplay of Shabbat, the *Mishkan* and the eternal covenant.

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Israeli hiker finds 2,800-year-old scarab amulet

By Pesach Benson

(JNS) – An Israeli army reservist stumbled upon an ancient Assyrian scarab amulet while hiking in northern Israel’s Nahal Tabor Nature Reserve during a day off, the Israel Antiquities Authority announced on February 7.

“I received a two-day leave from the reserves and decided to take advantage of the two sunny days for a trip,” said Erez Abrahamov, 45, a resident of Paduel. “During the trip, I saw something shimmering in the ground. At first, I



A 2,800-year-old carnelian scarab featuring a griffon – a mythical winged horse – was discovered by a hiker in Israel’s Nahal Tabor Nature Reserve. (Photo by Anastasia Shapiro, Israel Antiquities Authority)

thought it was a bead or an orange stone. After I picked it up, I noticed that it had engravings that resembled a beetle. I called and reported the amazing find to the [Israel] Antiquities Authority.”

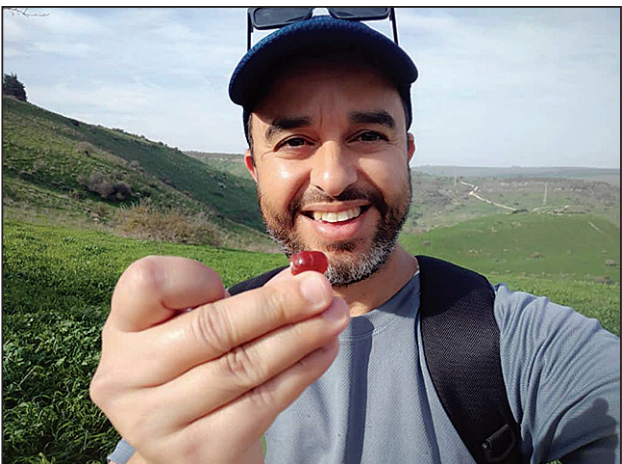
The area of the nature reserve has been inhabited for thousands of years and there are numerous archaeological sites scattered around the park, including ancient ruins and burial caves.

Analysis by Professor Emeritus Othmer Kiel from the University of Friborg revealed that the scarab – 2,800 years old and crafted from carnelian – depicted a griffon or winged horse at a gallop, consistent with similar artifacts dating back to the eighth century B.C.E.

According to the IAA, the scarab was found at the foot of Tel Rekhes, one of the most important mounds in northern Israel. Researchers have identified the site as Anaharath, a city referred to in the book of Joshua as lying within the territory of the tribe of Issachar.

According to Itzik Paz, an IAA archaeologist who excavated at Tel Rekhes, the amulet “may belong to the period of Assyrian rule and may indicate the presence of Assyrian, or perhaps Babylonian, officials at Tel Rekhes during this period.”

Paz explained that “the griffon is a well-known artistic motif in the art of the Ancient Near East, and it is common on seals from the Iron Age. In light of the paucity of findings that have been discovered, so far, within the citadel, and if the seal can indeed be dated – based on artistic aspects, to



Erez Abrahamov holds an ancient Assyrian amulet he found in the Nahal Tabor Nature Reserve. (Photo by Erez Abrahamov)

the Late Iron Age, it may be possible to link the seal and an Assyrian presence in the citadel of Tel Rekhes, which would be a discovery of great significance.”

Scarab seals, widely utilized across ancient civilizations, featured symbols of various cultural and religious beliefs. Fashioned from materials like carnelian, these artifacts served as both decorative ornaments and functional seals.

Rare limestone box from Second Temple era uncovered in Jerusalem

By JNS staff

(JNS) – A rare multi-compartment stone container dating back around 2,000 years has been revealed to the public for the first time at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. The box, carved from soft limestone, measures 30 x 30 cm (about 12 x 12 inches) and is divided into nine equal-sized interior compartments. The box was discovered in a destruction layer inside an ancient store dated to the end of the Second Temple period that once stood alongside the Pilgrimage Road in the City of David. The sides of the box are blackened, indicating that it was burned, perhaps during events of the Great Jewish Revolt, which ultimately led to the destruction of Jerusalem.

Researchers assume that the box was used for commercial purposes such as displaying premeasured goods. “During the excavations of the Pilgrimage Road, where the box was discovered, many objects have been found [giving] testament to the flourishing commercial activity that took place alongside the road during the Second Temple period,” explained Yuval Baruch and Ari Levy, excavation directors on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

“During the excavations we have uncovered ceramic and



The box on display at the Israel Museum archaeology gallery (Photo by Zohar Shemesh/Israel Museum)

glass vessels, production and cooking facilities, various measuring tools, stone weights and coins. Together, these objects suggest that the road was connected to commercial activities such as a lively urban market. The Pilgrimage Road connecting the Pool of Siloam to the Temple Mount was the main thoroughfare of the city 2,000 years ago. It seems that the newly discovered box was related to this commercial activity,” they added.

The economic and commercial systems of Second

Temple Jerusalem were similar to those in other large cities in the Roman world and boasted large markets featuring local and imported goods, some even exotic. As a temple city and pilgrimage center, ancient Jerusalem’s markets likely had specialized items, uncommon in other areas.

Daily life and trade in Second Temple Jerusalem must have been conducted with strict adherence to Jewish purity laws. Evidence of this can be seen by a number of distinct archaeological finds such as thousands of limestone vessel fragments discovered in excavations throughout the ancient city and its surroundings. The widespread use of stone vessels can be explained by Jewish law, which designates that stone, unlike made clay or metal, cannot become impure. Therefore, it is possible that stone vessels were re-used for long periods.

“It seems that the multi-compartment stone box from the City of David was related to the unique Jerusalem economy conducted in the shadow of the Temple, maintaining strict observance and in accordance with purity laws. Therefore, we can consider this box a distinctly Jerusalem find,” said Levy and Baruch.

Pieces of a similar box were discovered about 50 years ago by the archaeologist Nachman Avigad during excavations in the Jewish Quarter. Avigad humorously called the object a “nuts and seeds bowl,” a name which has stuck. All similar boxes have been discovered in Jerusalem, mostly in the City of David; the newly discovered box is the only complete example.

City.....Continued from page 11

Jerusalem’s past without compromising their historic value or their beauty while planning new architectural structures and introducing modern infrastructure using modern materials to create a fruitful, interesting meeting between the new and the old.

The first people to go on site were the archaeologists from the Israel Antiquities Authority. “You only need to use a teaspoon to dig up antiquities in the Old City of Jerusalem, and this is even more true when you are building a structure underground next to a citadel thousands of years old,” says Cohen-Sagi.

No great treasures from Jerusalem’s past were found during construction and the building of the pavilion could go ahead as planned. The renewal and conservation of the museum was led by the Clore Israel Foundation.

“No other museum can tell Jerusalem’s story in such a distinctive setting, within this citadel that has witnessed so many eventful periods in the city’s past,” says Eilat Lieber, director and chief curator of the museum. “Alongside the physical conservation of the walls and towers of this ancient site, we have developed a completely new permanent exhibition and creative programming that tells Jerusalem’s long, complex and colorful history in respectful, innovative and engaging ways.”

The museum now boasts 10 galleries spread throughout the ancient citadel that bring the story of Jerusalem to life through ancient artifacts mixed with the latest in immersive and interactive technology.

The new pavilion allows for a change in the flow of visitors. Jerusalem Mayor Moshe Lion says, “The new Tower of David Jerusalem Museum at the Jaffa Gate will serve as the new gateway to Jerusalem for the millions of visitors, tourists and pilgrims who want to explore the city’s rich and complex history before visiting the religious sites



The Angelina Drahi Entrance Pavilion at the Tower of David Museum in Jerusalem’s Old City (Photo by Dor Pazuelo)

and ancient alleyways of the Old City.”

The entrance should have been opened on November 3, but the Hamas war changed these plans. The museum opened on October 9, the third day of the war, and has been running activities and guided tours for evacuated families, arts and crafts fairs for artists from the north and south as well as education programming for school children, all free of charge.

“When we opened the museum, we didn’t know who would come,” admits Lieber.

It quickly became clear that for the thousands of visitors who arrived, the museum offered a reprieve from the shadows of the war, she says. One visitor, who had been evacuated from Moshav Kfar Maimon, near the northern Gaza Strip, says that standing surrounded by the ancient Jerusalem stones gave a historical perspective and some hope.

Eye-Catching

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