

# THE REPORTER

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## TC to hold adult ed. virtual program on “Jewish Bioethics During a Pandemic” on May 17

Temple Concord will hold a virtual adult education program called “Jewish Bioethics During a Pandemic with Dr. Carol and Rabbi Gary Gerson” on Sunday, May 17, at 10:30 am, on Zoom. To register for the program send an e-mail to [Templeconcordbinghamton@gmail.com](mailto:Templeconcordbinghamton@gmail.com); a link will be sent prior the program.

“We are reading daily about the shortage of personal protective equipment, ventilators and hospital beds,” said organizers

of the event. “When we run out of these vital supplies and equipment, what ethical criteria do we use to decide who gets treated and who does not? Who decides? Do we assign higher value to some lives, do we use an algorithm based on medical criteria alone, or a simple lottery? We will review some of the algorithms offered for guidance to medical staff faced with crisis decisions.”

Organizers added, “We will debate

which of these criteria we think are ethical, and review some of our Jewish sources which address ethically difficult decisions. What do our texts tell us about such decisions? There will be time for discussion.”

Dr. Carol Gerson is a retired pediatric otolaryngologist and an active *mohelet* with a doctorate in bioethics. She is a faculty member of the medical schools of Northwestern and Tulane universities.

Rabbi Gary Gerson served as senior rabbi of Oak Park Temple B’nai Abraham Zion in the Chicago suburbs from 1979-2009. Now rabbi emeritus, he teaches courses in Jewish text, Kabbalah, Jewish thought and comparative religion. Gerson holds master’s degrees in religion and psychology, along with rabbinic ordination, a doctorate in ministry with an emphasis in psychology and religion, and certification as a family therapist.

## TC and URJ Congregations to hold virtual “Fireside Chat” with Sarah Hurwitz on May 14

Temple Concord, as part of the CCAR Rabbis of Smaller URJ Congregations, will hold a virtual “Fireside Chat” with Sarah Hurwitz, former speech writer for the Obama administration and author of “Here All Along: Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life – in Judaism (After Finally Choosing to Look There)” on Thursday, May 14, at 8 pm. The event will be hosted by Rabbi Leah R. Berkowitz of Congregation Kol Ami, in Elkins Park, PA. People are asked to register in advance at [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_21xdJLD-kRUaXKNxbEqpFaA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_21xdJLD-kRUaXKNxbEqpFaA). The event will also be streaming on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/events/872676536583238/](http://www.facebook.com/events/872676536583238/).

From 2009-17, Hurwitz served as a White House speech writer, first as a senior speech writer for President Barack Obama and then as head speech writer for First Lady Michelle Obama. Prior to serving in the Obama ad-

ministration, she was chief speech writer for Hillary Clinton on her 2008 presidential campaign. Hurwitz is a graduate of Harvard

College and Harvard Law school.

There is no charge for the program and Hurwitz, who is not receiving a fee, has

asked attendees to make contributions to Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger, or their local food bank.

## Film Fest Committee calls first virtual showing “a success”

By Reporter staff

The Jewish International Film Fest of Greater Binghamton held its first ever virtual event. The film screened was “Crescendo,” which told the story of world-famous conductor Eduard Spörck, who accepted a job to create an Israeli-Palestinian youth orchestra. Almost 50 households signed up to view the film, which was available free for a 48-period. Twenty-six people attended the Zoom

film discussion on April 27, which was led by social psychologist Steve Gilbert, professor emeritus at SUNY Oneonta.

“This was not how we originally planned to hold the Film Fest,” said Susan Hubal, chairwoman of the Film Fest Committee. “However, the number of virtual events have been increasing during this crisis and people are hungering for connection. We thought this would be a good way to do something for our community.”

Hubal continued, “Now that we’ve shown one film, the Committee will consider whether a second film should be shown. I want to thank the community for making this a success and for showing that we are all in this together – holding out a hand to help each other in so many ways.”

For information about the Film Fest or the showing of other films, see future issues of *The Reporter*.

### Spotlight

## Jewish resources to occupy your family during social distancing – part 7

By Reporter staff

A variety of Jewish groups are offering online resources – educational and recreational – for those who are not allowed out of the house. Below is a sampling of those. The Reporter will publish additional listings as they become available.

◆ Tablet Magazine is now offering the podcast “Hebrew School.” According to Tablet, “hosted by Unorthodox’s Stephanie Butnick and Liel Leibovitz, Hebrew School is a new weekly game show, featuring real kids answering questions about all things Jewish! There are songs, quizzes and so much more. The show is designed for kids 7-12, but fun for all ages. It doesn’t matter if you’re a yeshiva student or someone with no formal Jewish education; all are welcome at Hebrew School.” For more information or to hear the episodes, visit <https://www.tabletmag.com/podcasts/hebrew-school/episode-1-class-is-in-session>.

◆ YIVO’s 2020 Summer Program will take place online this year. The six-week summer intensive offers Yiddish language classes from beginner to advanced levels and a wide variety of cultural enrichment activities. Conducted via Zoom from June 29-August 7, YIVO’s 2020 Summer Program will run in full, with a number of innovations and additions to meet the needs of the virtual classroom. The application deadline has been moved to Monday, May 29. To learn more or to apply, visit <https://summerprogram.yivo.org>.

◆ Chabad offers a variety of videos and classes online at [www.chabad.org/multimedia/video\\_cdo/aid/2530155/jewish/Courses.htm](http://www.chabad.org/multimedia/video_cdo/aid/2530155/jewish/Courses.htm). Topics include Talmud, prayer, prayer book, Tanya, Jewish history and more.

◆ Hashivenu is a podcast about Jewish teachings and practice around resilience. It believes that “cultivating resilience in

challenging times, both individually and collectively, is an essential path to personal renewal.” Visit <https://hashivenu.fireside.fm/> for more information and to sign up for e-mails from the site.

◆ The Middle East Forum calls itself “an activist think tank, deals with the Middle East, Islamism, U.S. foreign policy and related topics, urging bold measures to protect Americans and their allies.” It holds webinars on these topics. Information about upcoming webinars and tapes of past webinars can be found at [www.meforum.org/webinars](http://www.meforum.org/webinars).

◆ *The Forward* offers virtual conversations about a variety of subjects, including arts, politics and health. To listen or view the programs, visit <https://forward.com/tag/events/>.

◆ The National Museum of American Jewish History is looking for children to be clothing curators of their “stay at

home” fashion. The museum offers information at [www.nmajh.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Kid-Curator-Exhibition-Clothing-lesson-042920.pdf](http://www.nmajh.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Kid-Curator-Exhibition-Clothing-lesson-042920.pdf) about how to help students understand “what clothes can tell us about history.” Children are asked to take pictures or videos of their “exhibition” and share them using the hashtags #NMAJHOR or #HistoryAtHome!

◆ The Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU, <https://jmof.fiu.edu/>, is offering a variety of online programming, including virtual tours led by museum curators and the new program “Thursdays at Three with Jacqueline Goldstein,” which will feature conversations with artists. Visit the website for more information.

◆ Jewish Insider is now offering Zoom programs with politicians, actors and more. For more information or to sign up for the site’s daily update, visit <https://jewishinsider.com/>. See “Resources” on page 4

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## Opinion

## My guardian angels

By Eli Beer

Reprinted from Israel Hayom (JNS) – I caught coronavirus in the United States, of all places. Far from Israel and my family. A few days after Purim, I was feeling unwell. My temperature rose, so I entered self-quarantine. Two days later, I was hospitalized at University of Miami Hospital with a serious case of pneumonia, barely able to breathe. When the test results came back, it was official: I had COVID-19.

A few days later, my doctors told me they would need to induce a coma and put me on a ventilator.

For 30 years, I've been working in emergency medicine as a paramedic. I founded United Hatzalah, whose volunteers have saved many lives. The terms "coma" and "ventilator" are familiar to me, and I was very scared.

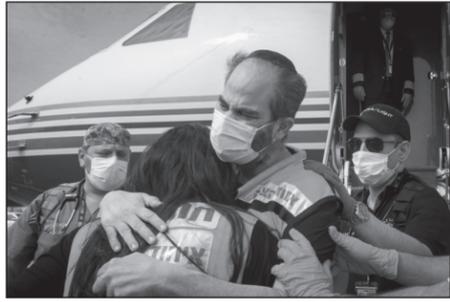
When I woke up, a month had passed.

At first, I didn't know where I was. The doctors explained my situation and what had happened. They said I was at the start of a long road to recovery. I was sad to find that I'd missed Passover, my favorite holiday, but I was very happy to talk to my family, my wife and children.

"Dad, what did you dream about while you were asleep?" my youngest daughter asked me in our first conversation.

"I think I dreamed about angels," I answered. But it was no dream – there were angels, angels from all over the world, who took care of me. I discovered that when I was told what had been happening around me all that time.

They told me about Yosef Chaim Kadosh, who celebrated his bar mitzvah recently. A cancer patient fighting for his life, twice a day he read psalms for my recovery. They told me how 6,000 Hatzalah volunteers – Jews, Muslims,



United Hatzalah CEO Eli Beer arrived at Ben-Gurion International Airport near Tel Aviv by private jet after recovering from COVID-19 at a hospital in Miami on April 21. (Photo by Yehuda Haim/Flash90)

Christians and Druze – had, each in their own way, prayed for me. I heard about the prayers of members of the Jewish community in Miami and across the United States, of a group of American Christians I'd spoken to, of an Indian group and many others.

There were also angels close around me. Dr. Joel Sandberg and his wife, Adele, who made sure I was getting the best treatment and kept my family updated. Dr. Miriam Adelson, whom I know personally, a doctor who saved many people over the course of her life and the publisher of *Israel Hayom*, extended her kindness to me, prayed for me and

ensured that I got the treatment and medicine that quite simply saved my life.

When I had recovered sufficiently, she brought me back to Israel on a private plane belonging to her and her husband, Sheldon. When I got off the plane, I met my wife and children with great excitement. The first step was hard. I realized it was the first step of my long road to independence.

This Independence Day, my wish was that the state of Israel and all its citizens can continue standing on our own, both as individuals and as a nation. That we continue to close ranks, take it upon ourselves to help each other and worry about people other than ourselves. That is how we will grow stronger, and that's how we'll beat the coronavirus.

I thank God for healing me, the doctors who treated me and my angels, who enveloped me in prayers, love and mercy, up close and from afar.

*Eli Beer is the founder of United Hatzalah of Israel, a volunteer-based emergency medical services organization, and president of U.S.-based organization Friends of United Hatzalah.*

## Day 31: Like clockwork

By Carin M. Smilk

(JNS) – As the skies move into that dusk-like hue on Fridays, it almost feels like time slows down.

I start to relax after another crazy-busy week. I realize that for some, these corona times have been dull, lonely or frustrating being all cooped up, but not for me. Not for us. In an odd way, it has become more hectic as we bump into each other on the steps, turn the volume up or down on our devices and answer our respective phones.

Soon, though, I'll be sitting at the dinner table with all of my favorite people, sharing bread and wine, and conversation from the week. We sit longer, talk more and think less.

I'm always reminded of something a former work colleague (and good friend) said one Friday while we were still in our newspaper office finishing up. We both had rare window seats and looked directly into an apartment building in Midtown Manhattan. She would take the bus back to the Oranges in New Jersey, while I walked the 15 blocks home to my place.

She stopped by my office to drop off some copy and turned her head to look outside. She commented on how nice it was every week that the couple across the street would light candles and set the table for a fancy dinner. I must have looked at her too long because she asked, "What?"

"It's Shabbat. That's what they're getting ready for. It starts after sundown, like clockwork," I replied.

Ah. She nodded and got it. She isn't Jewish and grew up in Washington state (and now lives in bucolic Oregon), but she'd been in New York City long enough to observe all the Jewish life. She smiled, liking it for what it was and what she thought it to be.

That memory brings extra light to my Fridays.

It's funny – and always revealing – when we have moments to peek back into our lives. When we're reminded **See "Day" on page 3**

## In My Own Words

## Various personal, societal and political thoughts

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

## Alone time

I've been rediscovering my inner introvert. I'm not exactly a hermit since most weekdays I communicate with *Reporter* staff via numerous e-mails over the course of the day. I've also had Skype/Zoom conversations with friends. (One of those is not new: the friend lives out of state and, since I received the cochlear implant, we've been talking almost weekly.) There are other aspects of my social life missing, though, particularly attendance at synagogue services. I still am not getting on the computer during Shabbat, although I have been on Zoom for *Havdalah* services on Saturday nights. (That includes Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell telling a story, something I love.)

I do worry about returning to *The Reporter* office. Since I've been listening to more music, I've found myself singing when I'm working. I don't mean in a quiet way, but, rather, my belting the song out at the top of my lungs. That really lifts my mood, but it's probably just as well that no one can hear me. I have tried to keep staff morale up: I recently declared a Friday Bring-Your-Favorite-Doll/Stuffed-Animal to work day. One person admitted that request made her shake her head, but her philosophy when dealing with me is "if it keeps Rachel sane, then just roll with it." For those

interested, I brought my Abby Cadabby Muppet doll into my home office for the day. That was actually a lot of fun.

## The social divide

My recent reading has led me to discover yet another social divide in our country based on whether to open our economy quickly or slowly. I'm not talking about the "who-cares-if-the-old-folks-die" or the "you-can't-tell-us-what-to-do" folks, but rather those facing fears it's difficult for many of us to grasp. Those of us with safety nets (savings to sustain us during hard times or those of us able to work from home) can more easily side with a slow opening since, even if we've lost some funds, we're still doing OK. Others – those who fear permanent loss of their jobs or never being able to get out of debt – have more difficulty envisioning the need to open slowly. Some people don't understand – or perhaps care – that they are risking their lives and the lives of everyone around them. But others have a different fear: that of being out on the streets – having no money for food or rent – and never being able to get back on their feet.

This virus also impacts those who have had no choice about working: they continue at their minimum-wage jobs (which are considered essential) because they can't afford to stop. This includes such businesses as grocery stores, drugstores and restaurants. The staff often don't have a choice. Even if they wanted to stay home, they know if they don't go in now, their job won't be waiting for them when this is over. Some are working in unsafe conditions; others have caught the virus. They make it possible for the rest of us to have our needs met while we stay safe at home.

## Watching what they say

During times of crisis, it is especially important for

political figures to think before they speak. As I write this, 58,356 Americans have died of the virus (at least, that we know of). That is more American deaths than occurred during the 10-year Vietnam War. While researchers should look at all options in order to treat or cure COVID-19, politicians should not be suggesting possible treatments, nor making jokes about them. I am partly referring to President Donald Trump's suggestion about injecting a disinfectant into our body, but there are other politicians who are worse: those who have talked about people sacrificing themselves for the economy.

Many of these people call themselves pro-life in other circumstances, but how can you be pro-life when you are willing to risk people dying? Does that make you pro-life unless it affects the economy? Are you willing to gamble with the lives of another 100-200,000 people? Then there's Las Vegas Mayor Carolyn Goodman, who is wants to let her city be used as a "control group" for reopening: basically, just open up the city and casinos, and see how many people die. Fortunately, the governor of the state doesn't agree with her, nor are workers willing to be guinea pigs for her experiment.

By the way, I don't actually think President Trump meant for people to take him literally about injecting disinfectants, but, unfortunately, there are people who take him at his word. Some actually called the CDC, medical hotlines or their doctors asking if this was safe. Even worse, President Trump later tried to claim he was joking. Is that really any better: how can you joke about treatments about this disease when so many people are burying and grieving for their dead? People's lives are nothing to joke about, and our political leaders ought to know that.

## Correction

The byline for the "On the Jewish food scene – The joy of pickles" column in the May 1 issue of *The Reporter* was missing. The article was written by Rabbi Rachel Esserman, who welcomes people's thoughts about their favorite pickles.



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## OPINIONS

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

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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.

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www.thereporter.org

# With synagogues shuttered, "porch minyans" grow in Brooklyn

By Dovid Zaklikowski

(JNS) – The streets of Crown Heights in Brooklyn, NY, were eerily empty at 7 pm on a recent Thursday. Normally, children are out playing and parents rushing home from work or errands, with crowds of people out now that the days are getting longer. But since mid-March, when local doctors advised the community to shut down because of the spread of the deadly coronavirus, this is the way it has been in the neighborhood, which has been inundated with cases of COVID-19.

With few cars on the road, other sounds can be heard during the day, such the murmur of prayer services. For the Orthodox, communal prayer services are like praying in synagogue. Theoretically, they can be held anywhere (think El Al flights to Israel), as long as it has a minyan – a quorum of 10 Jewish males over the age of 13.

With synagogues shuttered in communities worldwide, praying on the porch – or "porch minyan," as it's been dubbed – has become the new norm in many Orthodox communities across the globe. The one leading the prayers, known as the *chazzan*, says them in a booming voice so the words can be heard in other places farther away.

For the most part, such services have been received by non-Jewish neighbors with appreciation. "Our neighbours just delivered this lovely gift to all homes on our street," Jennifer Dorner posted on Facebook, about those who were

praying on the porches on her Montreal, Quebec, block, "as a token of appreciation since they've been coming out onto their porches to pray. But the singing and prayers have already been such a gift!"

Using only his first name so as not to draw attention, Michel [last name held on request], 71, an administrator at a local boys' day school in Crown Heights, prays all three daily prayer services with a minyan. "This is *davening* for me," he said, using the Yiddish word for praying, saying that without a minyan, his prayers don't feel real. "That is the way I was trained from childhood, and that is the way I feel most comfortable doing it."

From his porch, there is no minyan that he could pray with, so he goes to nearby ones mostly on other blocks. Michel rattles off the times and locations of several places where an afternoon prayer service can be found these days. He notes that for his own safety, some locations will not let him join since he is over the age of 65, and others say that only those who are on their own porch can join.

Rabbis across the globe have banned the porch minyan on various grounds. In March, the *Beit Din*, or rabbinical court, of Crown Heights made it clear that even an outdoor minyan is prohibited, saying "it is our opinion that individuals should *daven* alone in their houses at this time." (One of the three rabbis who signed the letter succumbed to COVID-19.)

Despite this, as week upon week of staying home has started to wear people down, the "porch minyan" phenomenon has increased in the neighborhood.

"I can't wrap my head around it," says Eli Uminer, who himself has been sick with the coronavirus. "If it is a question of life or death, one is allowed to even desecrate Shabbos [the Sabbath]. In Jewish law, it states that you do this even if there is less than a one out of a thousand percent chance of dying."

He says that while many remain on porches, some come from other streets and stand close to the home of the prayer leader. "I think that in terms of the virus, if done right it could be OK. But in reality, it never ends up that way; therefore, they should be banned."

Uminer says that even without those conditions, for many, especially those in homes that are small and crowded with family members, "it's more about cabin fever."

The issue of crowding came to the forefront this week after a funeral for a rabbi in the nearby neighborhood of Williamsburg drew hundreds of Orthodox Jews from the Satmar community, leading to a stern rebuke from Mayor Bill de Blasio on Twitter. De Blasio later apologized for his remarks, which were widely condemned as antisemitic for singling out the Jewish community.

Under orders signed by New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo in March, public gatherings of any size or any reason are strictly forbidden.

Rabbi Yosef Braun, one of the three rabbis in Crown Heights who signed the original letter prohibiting the minyans, spoke about the topic in a Zoom class in April, saying that nothing changed from the ruling in March. He notes that it is too complicated and too difficult to keep social distancing, even on the porch. This is especially true during morning prayers, and on the Sabbath and holidays, when prayers are longer. During those times, he explains,



Jewish residents in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, NY, participated in a "porch minyan" on April 30. (Photo by Dovid Zaklikowski)

it's hard to keep a face mask on, people naturally begin to gather around each other, and he has even seen worshippers bring children – meaning a father could have to chase after them and mistakenly come dangerously close to others.

Braun says his home has a porch, and he could easily join a minyan. Nevertheless, he won't do it because "besides the health concerns, there's a host of *halachic* [Jewish law] concerns."

Other rabbis have permitted these prayer sessions, including one of the local rabbis on the Crown Heights rabbinical board (who did not sign the original letter). Rabbi Berel Bell, a member of the rabbinical court in Montreal, initially wrote to his community in March, advising that they not to hold outdoor minyans. More recently, however, he has joined one himself, and under certain conditions has permitted others to do the same.

In Crown Heights, which runs along Eastern Parkway – where on a spring day thousands might be walking – Michel says about health concerns, "I am not near people, there is social distancing, you are standing six feet away from people, and you cannot even have a conversation."

Just before the afternoon prayer services on one street, Dr. Reuben Ingber notes that it was wonderful to have the possibility to pray from his porch with a minyan. "I don't see anything wrong with it," he says. "Do you want to join?"

Detective Vincent Martinos of the Crown Heights Police Department, agrees. He says the porch minyans have been fine according to the city's ordinances. From what See "Porch" on page 7



An Orthodox Jewish man in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, NY, joined a "porch minyan" on April 30. (Photo by Dovid Zaklikowski)

## Day. . . . . Continued from page 3

of a saying or joke, an old song that dredges up bits of the past and those people associated with it. This stay-at-home period has come with that as I've picked through old clothes and photos, kid drawings and all the other thousand things you don't usually have time for.

Still, I'm ready to get back to normal, whatever that may be. I could really use a movie, a trip to the library, a bagel with a friend.

There's a new awareness, but also an old longing.

I said this as I approached my birthday on May 4. You know, that day – "May the Fourth Be With You." (And yes, I once met "Chewbacca" at an elementary-school function on my big day.)

Last year, my husband and I had dinner out, just the two of us, and a late-night coffee and long walk. The weather, near-perfect at the start of spring, was, well, near-perfect.

This year, I'm thinking of pizza. Baking some cupcakes and letting the boys decorate them with sprinkles. And sitting round the table with my all of my favorite people, talking about the year to come.

Carin M. Smilk is the managing editor of JNS.

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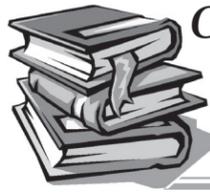
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# Hollywood and Jewish refugees

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Before I read the press release for “The Sun and Her Stars: Salka Viertel and Hitler’s Exiles in the Golden Age of Hollywood” by Donna Rifkind (Other Press), I’d never heard of Salka Viertel. While I knew that many Jewish and non-Jewish refugees who were actors, writers and directors worked in Hollywood or New York, her name was completely unfamiliar. Yet, Viertel not only wrote successful treatments and screenplays, but turned her California home into a European-style salon – creating a safe and comfortable place for those who felt rootless in a country far different from their own.

Rifkind feels that women’s accomplishments during the Golden Age of Hollywood have either been lost or ignored. She notes that, while women worked in every studio department, histories of those times rarely mention them. She also found something similar occurs in the books about European refugees: they so focus on men that one might believe no women suffered the pain of exile. As for Viertel, Rifkind not only wants her accomplishments acknowledged but to restore her reputation. She writes that Viertel has been called a number of unpleasant names, including gossipmonger, fraud, moneygrubber and witch, to name just a few. Part of Rifkind’s task is to show the true Viertel: the one who worked hard to create a home for her family and tried to help other refugees in need of work or solace.

In order to understand Viertel, Rifkind places her life in context. Viertel was born to an affluent Jewish family on the outskirts of the Austro-Hungarian empire. After deciding to become an actress, she lived in a variety of cities in Europe, including Weimar-era Berlin. She married Berthold Viertel, a writer and director for stage and film, and gave birth to three children. The decision to move to the United States in 1928 – when Viertel was 39 and her

husband 43 – was based on financial rather than political reasons. Unsure of whether or not they would be staying in the U.S., they left their three sons in Europe. However, the boys soon joined them and they made a permanent home in California.

Unfortunately, Viertel could not find work as an actress and began writing treatments and screenplays. Among her best-known films were “Anna Karenina” (1935), “The Painted Veil” (1934) and “Queen Christina” (1933). At one point she was so successful, she was one of the highest paid screenwriters in Hollywood. She often worked with Greta Garbo and, for a long time, the two were so close that Garbo spent a great deal of time in Viertel’s home, especially when she wanted to escape the press. It was in that home that Viertel held her Sunday open houses to which came not only European refugees, but many successful Hollywood writers, directors and actors. As more refugees tried to escape from Europe, Viertel worked with different groups to raise money for them, in addition to helping them find work in Hollywood. She did this while being the major source of income in the household. Her husband, who was often away working on projects, usually didn’t make enough money to support himself so Viertel had to send him funds while he lived in another city or country.

The Viertel marriage had its ups and downs. Both spouses had affairs, including some that lasted years. They still remained close to each other for decades even with these affairs, although Berthold finally asked for a divorce in order to marry someone else. Viertel’s longest romance did not end in marriage: her lover wanted children and finally broke it off to marry someone younger.

Viertel never planned to leave the U.S., but after World War II, she had difficulty finding work and moved to Switzerland in the 1960s. That’s because her name became

connected to people of interest to the House Un-American Activities Committee. Viertel, who was not a communist, had not been concerned with the politics of her friends during the war because she had more important worries. Her fears were personal: she didn’t know the status of her family in Europe – those who lived in territories conquered by the Nazis. Were they alive or dead? But any connection to communism in the post-war years could destroy a career.

In addition to writing about Viertel’s life, Rifkind talks about those who frequented her open houses. The most famous were the Mann brothers, Heinrich and Thomas. Although both were well known in Europe, Thomas was more successful in the U.S. Many of the other writers are less familiar. For example, writer Bruno Frank, who left Europe in 1937, worked on such films as “A Royal Scandal” (1945), “Northwest Passage” (1940) and “The Hunchback of Notre Dame” (1939), sometimes as a named writer and other times without credit. Viertel was also friends with Christopher Isherwood, the British writer of the short stories “Goodbye to Berlin” (which were later adapted into the play “I Am a Camera,” and then the Broadway musical and film “Cabaret”). He lived in her garage apartment and often entertained Garbo when Viertel was busy working.

“The Sun and Her Stars” contains a great deal of detail in its more than 400 pages. Not all the details were of equal interest, particularly some of the very personal facts about Viertel’s marriage. At times, the book’s focus was uneven: the story of sun (Viertel) was eclipsed by that of her stars (those who visited her salon). However, Rifkind does an excellent job not only bringing Viertel’s accomplishments to light and proving she was a remarkable woman, but portraying the lives of those refugees who felt lost in the New World and those who found success.

## Resources

Continued from page 1

- ◆ Lilith Magazine’s blog writers continue to add new material, some about dealing with COVID-19. The blogs can be found at [www.lilith.org/blog/](http://www.lilith.org/blog/).
- ◆ The Hadassah-Brandeis Institute is offering images from its current exhibition at [www.brandeis.edu/hbi/artist-program/exhibition.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/hbi/artist-program/exhibition.html).
- ◆ Jewish community organizations are bringing the power of “Collective Compassion” to National Mental Health Awareness Month. Created by Jewish Teens

Thrive, a project of the Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Funder Collaborative, Collective Compassion is a national response to the growing wellness needs of teens. “Dozens of events and experiences, many in partnership with artists and organizations, draw on the power of Jewish creativity, culture, learning and values to support teens – and the adults that care about them,” according to the Collective Compassion website. For more information, visit [www.collectivecompassion2020.com](http://www.collectivecompassion2020.com).

more.” For more information, visit [www.facebook.com/events/663576081059631/](https://www.facebook.com/events/663576081059631/).

◆ The Yiddish Book Center now has a web page dedicated to its almost weekly virtual events. Most events will be available to a little number of people on Zoom, but open to all on the center’s Facebook page. For more information, visit [www.yiddishbookcenter.org/visit/calendar-events](http://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/visit/calendar-events).

◆ Limmud, <https://limmud.org/>, is holding a variety of virtual event. The site says its mission is to “make accessible some of the world’s most dynamic Jewish educators, performers and teachers, working in a variety of educational styles – lectures, workshops, text-study sessions, film, meditation, discussions, exhibits and performance.” Events take place across the world. To learn more, click on events and pick events by region.

For more resources, see the last six issues of *The Reporter* or visit [www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5484](http://www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5484), [www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5499](http://www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5499), [www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5502](http://www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5502), [www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5512](http://www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5512), [www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5519](http://www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5519) and [www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5527](http://www.thereporter.org/Article.aspx?aID=5527).

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**NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY:** The name of the limited liability company is: Beston Home Inspection Services, LLC (the “Company”). The date of filing of the Articles of Organization of the Company with the Secretary of State was April 8, 2020. The county in which the principal place of business of the Company shall be located is Broome County. The Secretary of State has been designated as agent of the Company upon whom process against it may be served. The Secretary of State shall mail a copy of any process against the Company, to Hinman Howard & Kattell, LLP, Attn: Robert W. Carey, 80 Exchange Street, Suite 700, Binghamton, NY 13901. The purpose of the business of the Company is any lawful business purpose.

607 Construction LLC NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (“LLC”)

Articles of Organization of 607 Construction LLC filed with the NYS Secretary of State (NYSS) on 4/8/2020. Office of LLC is in Broome County. The Secretary of State designated as agent for service of process against it. NYSS shall mail process to 434 Cloverdale Road, Chenango Forks, NY 13746. Business purpose: any lawful activity.

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Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 07/17/2006. Office location: Broome Co. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: The LLC, 1137 Simon Road, Endicott, New York 13760. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Notice of Formation of BRAVE2BU, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 04/16/20. Office location: Broome County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: 4132 Gregory Rd., Binghamton, NY

13903. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Notice of Formation of EPL Rentals, LLC

Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 04/27/2020. Office location: Broome Co. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: The LLC, P.O. Box 783, Johnson City, NY 13790. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Two Plus Four Construction Co. is the General Contractor for the construction of 17 duplex buildings (34 family units) in the Fairmont Park development in the town of Union, NY. The project known as Fairmont Park Apartments is a scattered site; duplexes will be constructed on Woodland Avenue, Oak Street, Poplar Street, and Birch Street. We plan to start construction in May of 2020.

This project IS TAXABLE Davis Bacon Wage Rates DO NOT APPLY to this project.

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material suppliers. Our goals for this project are: MBE: 20% WBE: 10% SDBOB: 6% as well as a preference to Section 3 subcontractors and suppliers.

Plans will be available in a designated area for viewing at the following locations (by appointment):

- Two Plus Four Construction Co – 6737 Myers Road, E. Syracuse, NY 13057 – contact Brenda Wilson [bwilson@twoplusfour.com](mailto:bwilson@twoplusfour.com) (315) 437-1808
- The SEPP, Inc. Office – 53 Front Street, Binghamton, NY 13905 – contact John Bernardo (607) 723-8989

Plans will be available for online viewing at the following locations:

- The Builders Exchange of the Southern Tier – [www.bxstier.com](http://www.bxstier.com) – contact Cheryl Plahanski [cheryl@bxstier.com](mailto:cheryl@bxstier.com) (607) 771-7000
- Syracuse Builders Exchange – [www.syrbex.com](http://www.syrbex.com) – contact Monica Noble (315) 437-9936

Plans will be available for online viewing on-line and/or purchase at: [www.planandprint.com](http://www.planandprint.com) or at Plan & Print Systems at 6160 Eastern Ave., Syracuse, NY 13211, (315) 437-5111. Contact Two Plus Four Construction for access code to view plans.

Any questions regarding the plans

and specifications should be directed to Brenda Wilson at Two Plus Four Construction Co. [bwilson@twoplusfour.com](mailto:bwilson@twoplusfour.com) (315) 437-1808.

Work areas include: landscaping, framing and trim carpentry, insulation, siding, roofing, doors, windows, drywall, flooring, painting, bath accessories, appliances, cabinets, countertops, blinds, plumbing, HVAC, electric and all associated building materials.

Please notify me immediately if you are interested in submitting a proposal by completing the box at the bottom of this letter and then faxing or emailing it to our office. All proposals should be mailed or faxed to Two Plus Four Construction Co. at the address or fax number above. All proposals are due by Friday May 22nd by 2:00 p.m. attention Brenda Wilson.

Notice of Formation of KGBC, LLC

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# Rise of coronavirus correlates to rise in antisemitism, especially in Jewish areas of New York and New Jersey

By Faygie Holt

(JNS) – As 2019 came to close, the New York metropolitan region recorded “extremely high” numbers of antisemitic incidents. Lawmakers, community leaders, law enforcement and ordinary citizens expressed the importance of tolerance and respect for all people.

It seemed to work for a short time, anyhow. Then the COVID-19 outbreak began, and as fears of the novel coronavirus ramped up, so, too, did antisemitism. This time, though, with people locked in their homes, people took to the Internet to spread their hate.

“Since the beginning of March 2020, we have been receiving disturbing information on accusations on Jews, Zionists and Israelis, as individuals and as a collective, for causing and spreading the coronavirus,” noted a report on global antisemitism issued on April 27 by the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at Tel Aviv University and the European Jewish Congress.

Among those charges, many of which are surfacing online, are allegations that Jews have poisoned water wells – an accusation, the report notes, that has been around since medieval times—that Jews or Israel is using the virus to destabilize the world economy and gain control; Jews or Israelis have already produced a vaccine to the virus and will sell it to the rest of the world for a large profit; the virus is punishment because Jews have not accepted Christ; and that Jews created the virus as a weapon against Muslims and Iran.

“During times of crisis, people too often turn to scapegoats, and such a troubling trend is beginning to emerge with COVID-19,” says Jennifer Rich, executive director of the Rowan Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Rowan University in New Jersey. “Antisemitism is up, and we can expect that battles over reopening the country and how the virus spread will conjure up old tropes. As people note that this is the worst international crisis since the Second World War and as we just marked Yom Hashoah, it is a reminder that we need to be especially vigilant in combating antisemitism wherever it arises.”

Rich adds that the rise in antisemitism related to the virus “seems to be part of a broader trend in this instance. The ‘anti-other’ – antisemitic, anti-Chinese, racist, xenophobic – rhetoric is everywhere.”

A survey by the Anti-Defamation League, which was taken in January and released recently, had identified online antisemitism as an already troubling trend even before the coronavirus outbreak. It found one in seven Jews have experienced harassment online, and more than one in 10 has experienced a “severe form of harassment such as being physically threatened as a result of the religion.”

Online antisemitism has only increased in recent weeks and taken various forms, including “Zoombombing,” where an online programs being conducted by Jewish groups are interrupted by neo-Nazis or white supremacists who managed to log into the virtual program.

In the heavily Jewish towns of Monsey, NY, and Lakewood, NJ, people have taken to Facebook and Twitter almost daily to



Image of an antisemitic Twitter user advocating for the heavily Jewish town of Lakewood, NJ, to be “nuked.” (Photo courtesy of Screenshot)

protest what they believe are mass violations by members of the Jewish community of local stay-at-home orders. Regardless of the original poster’s intentions in these claims, those who comment on these posts often ratchet up the tension.

In some cases, posters have threatened to take matters into their own hands. Just what that means, however, is left up to the imagination and leads to fear and concern among residents.

“We’ve seen this type of veiled threat that walks right up to the line and stops just short, and leaves it up to the interpreter to determine what they mean by that,” says Alexander Rosenberg, deputy regional director New York/ New Jersey region for the Anti-Defamation League. “But many in the community, when they see that, will be afraid and will see it as a direct threat much more than a veiled threat.”

Roseberg says that while it is up law enforcement and prosecutors to determine the nature of a criminal offense, the concern centers on “the connection between the things that happen online and eventuality of things we may see expressing themselves in the real world because you may have individuals taking these statements and acting on them.”

In at least two incidents, law enforcement believed the online threats crossed the line of what is acceptable. A 43-year-old man from Howell, NJ, was arrested for making terroristic threats after he sent direct messages threatening

to go into Lakewood and assault members of the Jewish community with a baseball bat. A 56-year old-female from Suffern, NY, in Rockland County, was arrested and charged with making a terrorist threat. “In this particular case, the arrest was based on a bomb threat,” the Ramapo Police Department said in an online posting.

“No one should use COVID-19 as an excuse to promote antisemitic conspiracy theories or stereotypes,” New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal told JNS. “The virus does not discriminate in who it affects, and people must not use the virus as an excuse to discriminate or to foster hate.”

While there have certainly been Jews in Monsey and Lakewood who have violated stay-at-home orders – some have even been arrested or issued summons by local authorities – the vast majority of residents have been following mandates and staying home, and have become increasingly concerned about the hate they are seeing being spewed online.

Joel Petlin, a resident of Monsey who also serves as the superintendent of the Kiryas Joel School District, a Chasidic town some 25 miles away, says it’s as if someone “set up to play this gotcha game because they think if one Chasidic Jew is doing something, it’s the end of the world. I think it’s latent antisemitism that comes out at this time, and it doesn’t reflect that we are all in this together as one county... and we should be helping people rather than using this as an opportunity to attack.

“There will always be a few outliers who don’t represent the group,” continued Petlin, “and because of those few bad actors, we are attacked online unfairly for those few random acts that don’t represent us.”

Rabbi Avi Schnall, the New Jersey director of Agudath Israel of America, agrees. “To say we are not listening to the rules because 10 people or 20 people got together, what about everyone else? There are 150,000 people [in Lakewood] and everything’s empty. The shopping plazas are shut down, the schools are shut down, the synagogues are shut down. It shows a certain amount of irresponsibility” to just report on Lakewood and suggests an “underlying bias for people to buy into it.

“If you’re going to report on Lakewood when 10 people are gathering,” he continued, “then you need to balance it by all the wonderful things are doing.”

Among those initiatives are food drives to minority communities, including Hispanic families, who have been out of work since the outbreak began with no paychecks and no way to feed their families.

“This pandemic has the capacity to bring out the best and the worst in people, and it has done so already,” says Grewal, “but we will get through this if we join together.”



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## Weekly Parasha

Emor, Leviticus 21:1-24:23

# Our sages' words of wisdom

RABBI ZALMAN CHEIN, EDUCATION COORDINATOR, CHABAD OF BINGHAMTON

This week's Torah portion, Emor, begins: "And the Lord said to Moses: 'Speak to the *kohanim*, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: 'Let none [of you] defile himself for a dead person among his people.'" (Leviticus 21:1) Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki, known as Rashi, in his classic commentary on the Torah, points out that the verse seems to repeat itself, using both of the terms "speak" and "say." Rashi explains that the two expressions of speech refer to two messages that Moses was to convey to the priests: First, the prohibition against *kohanim* (priests) coming in contact with the dead. Secondly, the adult *kohanim* were instructed to "speak" to the minors and teach them these laws.

We find ourselves in unprecedented times. Social distancing prevents normal gatherings and in-person conversations

with those outside of our households. Communication and teaching are taking new forms, as we rethink how we maintain connections with our friends, family and students.

At this time of year, between the holidays of Passover and Shavuot, "Ethics of the Fathers" is traditionally studied. Our sages' words of wisdom offer insight and guidance to us as we teach, learn, communicate and connect.

Here is a sampling of their teachings: "Who is wise? One who learns from every man." "The dignity of your student should be as precious to you as your own." "A bashful one cannot learn, a short-tempered person cannot teach." "Let your home be a meeting place for the wise... drink thirstily of their words." "Scholars, be careful with your words." "A safety fence for wisdom is silence."

My greatest teacher and role model was my father, Rabbi Mordechai Leib ben Chaim Dovber of blessed memory, who recently passed away on the seventh of Nissan, March 31. He lived by these teachings of the sages. He taught us by example, and we strive to follow in his footsteps. On the (surely rare) occasions that he had to discipline us, his children, he did so with the utmost respect for us, turning it into a teaching moment. He would ask the guilty party to bring a *sefer*, a Jewish text, that discussed the area of offense, and we would study it together until we understood on our own how to rectify our behavior.

Let us try to take advantage of this time to strengthen relationships and be there for others. May we soon be able to meet in person again, in good health.

## Congregational Notes

### Norwich Jewish Center

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

### Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated  
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045  
Phone: 607-756-7181  
President: Bruce Fein, 607-423-3346  
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 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.

### Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch  
Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors  
E-mail: [aslonim@binghamton.edu](mailto:aslonim@binghamton.edu), [rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com](mailto:rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com)  
Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 797-0015, Fax: 797-0095  
Website: [www.Chabadofbinghamton.com](http://www.Chabadofbinghamton.com)  
Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education  
E-mail: [zchein@Jewishbu.com](mailto:zchein@Jewishbu.com), [rchein@Jewishbu.com](mailto:rchein@Jewishbu.com)  
Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development  
Chabad Downtown Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton  
E-mail: [lslonim@Jewishbu.com](mailto:lslonim@Jewishbu.com), [hslonim@Jewishbu.com](mailto:hslonim@Jewishbu.com)  
Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming  
E-mail: [yohana@Jewishbu.com](mailto:yohana@Jewishbu.com), [gohana@Jewishbu.com](mailto: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](http://www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership).

### Penn-York Jewish Community

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

### Congregation Tikun 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.tikunvor.org](http://www.tikunvor.org)  
E-mail: [info@tikunvor.org](mailto:info@tikunvor.org)  
Presidents: Lauren Korfine and Shira Reisman  
Rabbi: Brian Walt  
Religious School Director/Admin. Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky  
Services: Fridays at 7:30 pm unless otherwise noted. Intergenerational Shabbat, music services, and other special services. Call for the weekly schedule.  
Religious School: Preschool through seventh-grade classes meet on Sunday mornings.  
Sixth-grade Hebrew and seventh-grade b'nai mitzvah classes meet on Wednesday afternoons.  
Adult Ed: Mini courses throughout the year. Adult Hebrew offered regularly. Call the office for details.

### Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

Area synagogues have announced that they are limiting face-to-face gatherings. That means there will be no services or programming held until further notice. Some meetings, services and classes will be available online or by phone. 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: 722-1793, Rabbi's Office: 722-7514  
Fax: 722-7121  
Office hours: Mon. closed; Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Wed. closed; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm; Fri. 10 am-1 pm  
Beth David e-mail address: [bethdavid@stny.rr.com](mailto:bethdavid@stny.rr.com)  
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Website: [www.bethdavid.org](http://www.bethdavid.org)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton](https://www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton)

### Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Rabbi: Miriam T. Spitzer  
Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass  
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292  
Phone: 273-5775  
E-mail: [rabbi@tbeithaca.org](mailto:rabbi@tbeithaca.org) and [secretary@tbeithaca.org](mailto:secretary@tbeithaca.org)  
Website: [www.tbeithaca.org](http://www.tbeithaca.org)  
President: Randy Ehrenberg  
Sisterhood President: Julie Paige  
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody  
Administrative Assistant: Jane Griffith  
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 Midrashah (eighth grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers.  
Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.

### Kol Haverim

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

Friday, May 8, light candles before..... 7:52 pm  
Saturday, May 9, Shabbat ends ..... 8:54 pm  
Friday, May 15, light candles before..... 8 pm  
Saturday, May 16, Shabbat ends ..... 9:01 pm

### Temple Israel

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

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom. The Torah portion is Leviticus 21:1-24:23 and the haftarah is Ezekiel 44:15-31.

On Saturday, May 9, Havdalah services will be held 9 pm and led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom.

On Sunday, May 10, Torah study will be held at 12:30 pm and led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom.

Temple Israel is collecting for CHOW during regular business hours. The bin is between the two sets of glass doors at the entrance. Buzz to come in the first set of doors to access the bin.

### Temple Concord

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

All services and programs are online only. Friday night Shabbat services will start at 7 pm for the month of May.

Friday, May 8: Shabbat services at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/350204323>, by calling 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 350 204 323, or by visiting [www.facebook.com/templeconcord](https://www.facebook.com/templeconcord).

Saturday, May 9: Torah study at 9:15 am at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/342411102> or by calling 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 342 411 102.

Saturday, May 9: "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/526246866>, by calling 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID 526 246 866, or by visiting [www.facebook.com/templeconcord](https://www.facebook.com/templeconcord).

Friday, May 15: Shabbat services at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/350204323>, by calling 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 350 204 323, or by visiting [www.facebook.com/templeconcord](https://www.facebook.com/templeconcord).

Saturday, May 16: Torah study at 9:15 am at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/342411102> or by calling 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 342 411 102.

Saturday, May 16: "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/526246866>, by calling 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID 526 246 866 or by visiting [www.facebook.com/templeconcord](https://www.facebook.com/templeconcord).

Sunday, May 17: "Jewish Bioethics During a Pandemic" adult education learning program with Dr. Carol and Rabbi Gary Gerson on Zoom at 10:30 am. Send an e-mail to [Templeconcordbinghamton@gmail.com](mailto:Templeconcordbinghamton@gmail.com) to register for the program.

### Temple Beth El of Oneonta

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

# Jewish initiative crowdfunds gear for health-care workers to protect against coronavirus

By Josh Hasten

(JNS) – With more than one million confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United States to date, many of the hardest-hit states include those with large Jewish populations – New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Illinois and California. As a result, Jewish nonprofit organizations in the health-care arena, including nursing homes and assisted-living centers, hospice facilities and those who provide home care for Holocaust survivors and other vulnerable populations, have witnessed overwhelming fatality rates as a result of the pandemic.

Unwillingly to sit idly by, a group of “next generation” young communal Jewish leaders and heads of nonprofit Jewish organizations have mobilized, along with the mainstream Jewish community, to launch a world-wide emergency campaign – called “Pledge to Protect” – to purchase and deliver life-saving personal protective equipment to the above-mentioned front-line protectors.

Alex Jakubowski, executive director at KAHAL, an organization that connects Jewish students studying abroad with experiences in their host communities, told JNS that in February that “KAHAL saw the writing on the wall.”

“Since we have students in China and around the world, we decided to change our whole organization and become a COVID-19 support organization,” he said.

Jakubowski says he realized that he was hearing pleas for help over and over again from the same segments of the health-care community. “There is a global shortage of PPE equipment in nursing homes and hospice care. These frontline workers, especially those outside of a hospital setting, are not given equipment by state governments. They are not the first priority. We also learned that this equipment needs to be imported at outrageous prices.”

Utilizing KAHAL’s global network and partnering with other Jewish organizations, a well-oiled procurement, shipment and distribution chain for PPE equipment was set up quickly to assist caregivers at more than 200 Jewish institutions throughout the country that support not only Jewish workers, but people of all faiths.

Thanks to the initiative, as of April 28, nearly two million pieces of PPE had been delivered to local agencies and communities – surgical mask, gloves, gowns and other equipment – with the goal of reducing the risk of transmission of the novel coronavirus. All of this came even before the “hard launch” of the campaign, as much more is needed.

Jay Feldman, managing director at the Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity Foundation,



The arrival of supplies to Cedar Sinai Park Assisted Living in Portland, OR, in April. (Photo courtesy of JNS)

told JNS that Jakubowski reached out and got his organization on board to work together on the critical project. “We have a wide network, including 90,000 alumni. I was able to put KAHAL in touch with some of our people to start setting up a data network, and to manage and plot the distribution operation.”

At the same time, he added, “we realized, we needed someone for that last mile – the actual delivery. So we tapped into our student network and alumni, and they stepped up as volunteers to actually pick up and deliver the equipment to the institutions.”

AEPi CEO James Fleischer noted that “the mission of Alpha Epsilon Pi International Fraternity – to develop the future leaders of the world’s Jewish communities – is in clear evidence in this program. We are proud that our undergraduate and alumni brothers are playing a vital role in this amazing project... The fact that so many of these undergraduates recognize the needs of their global community and the importance of *tikkun olam* at a time like this, means that we are doing our job for the future of Jewish communities.”

Jakubowski said the PPE has been ordered from places all over the world, including China, Hong Kong, Mexico and other countries. One of the obstacles, he says, is “fierce competition,” as well as delays in shipping and receiving the equipment.

“When shipments are delayed, we must create opportunities to get these agencies what they need,” he said.

Jakubowski is quick to praise AEPi for stepping up to the plate. In one instance, he says that thousands of disposable gowns worn to treat those in isolation needed to be dropped off. He adds that “alum Jordan Elcott created the initiative with AEPi chapters, and got the gowns and more items delivered. Without that gear, it could have cost lives.”

Jordan’s father, Shalom Elcott, works as the philanthropic curator at Samueli Foundation, a family foundation focused on health, education, the Jewish community and Israel. He has been part of the managing team on the campaign, working with Jakubowski, Feldman and representatives from other organizations.

As someone who has had many more years of experience in the nonprofit sector, he

has much praise for such quick mobilization during an intense time of crisis. He says Jakubowski was able to get mainstream

and well-established large umbrella Jewish organizations on board, such as the Jewish Federations of North America and the Jewish Funders Network, to be active partners in the campaign. “In just five weeks, he brought longtime established organizations together in a powerful partnership with Jewish leaders from around the world,” he said.

Jakubowski says that \$408,000 has been raised so far for the campaign during this “soft launch” stage, with the official crowdfunding aspect of the campaign having commenced on April 29, Israel’s Independence Day. The campaign goal is currently \$3 million.

Elcott says that of the total amount raised so far, it is remarkable that more than \$100,000 was donated by people living in Israel. “The Jewish Funders Network in Israel has been extremely generous even as demands in Israel [as a result of the virus] are herculean.”

See “Initiative” on page 8

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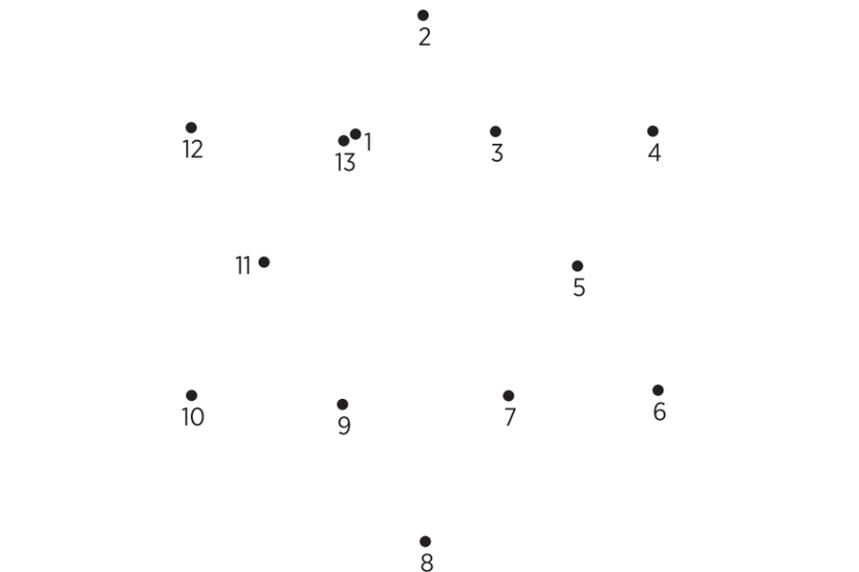
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**Porch.....Continued from page 3**  
he has seen, people have been staying on their private property, wearing masks and keeping to social-distancing rules. While he acknowledges some issues have occurred in the past six weeks at Chabad World Headquarters on Eastern Parkway, they were taken care of quickly. “Our community has done exceptionally well with social distancing,” he reports. Michel says that even with the porch minyans, he is craving for more normal times, when everyone can go back to normal prayer services. He is especially looking forward to being called to the Torah, to look inside and kiss it, as is customary. “It is weird,” he offers. “A lot of things are weird today. But you have to live with the current situation.”

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

**Netanyahu: High Court disruption of unity deal could lead to "catastrophe"**

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on May 4 that he hopes Israel's High Court of Justice does not interfere in the formation of a new government, saying that it could lead to the "catastrophe" of Israel going back to elections for a fourth time in just over a year. Netanyahu's remarks came as the High Court heard petitions against the national-unity agreement reached between his Likud Party with Benny Gantz's Blue and White in March. The court was expected to deliver its ruling that week. "We hope the court doesn't interfere. It doesn't need to interfere. There is the will of the people, the clear expression of the will of the people," said Netanyahu, according to Reuters. If the court disrupts the coalition agreement, he said, it "increases the chances that we will be dragged to fourth elections, something that will be a catastrophe." After drawn-out negotiations, Netanyahu and Gantz reached an agreement in March whereby the two will share the premiership, with Netanyahu serving as prime minister for the first 18 months, after which Gantz would serve as premier for the next 18 months.

**Intel buys Israel's Moovit app for \$900 million**

Intel, the world's largest chip maker, is buying Israeli app Moovit for \$900 million, in a move meant to advance its plan to develop self-driving cars. The purchase of the eight-year-old Israeli company, that collects information on transportation services, was announced on May 4, according to the AP. Moovit helps users plan their trips by using the data it gathers from public transportation, ride-hailing services and other services. Intel plans to combine Moovit with Mobileye, another Israeli firm, which specializes in self-driving technology and which Intel bought for \$15 billion in 2017. Mobileye revenue jumped from \$210 million in 2017 to \$879 million last year, according to the report. Mobileye CEO Amnon Shashua is going to manage Moovit, which will come under Mobileye's aegis. Moovit co-founder and CEO Nir Erez will become an executive

vice president of the Mobileye group. Intel had previously invested in Moovit in 2018.

**Spate of antisemitic incidents in Europe draws warning from WZO**

(Israel Hayom via JNS)—Following a series of antisemitic incidents across Europe in recent days, World Zionist Organization Vice Chairman Yaakov Hagoel on May 4 called for urgent action. "Antisemitic events have become commonplace for the Jews around the world. Unfortunately, for worldwide governments, the window of time to build a plan to eradicate antisemitism is running out," said Hagoel. Among the antisemitic incidents were inscriptions such as "Juden Raus" (Jews out) appearing on the walls of a cemetery in Soveria Mannelli in southern Italy and swastikas and antisemitic slogans being painted in the stairwell, on the sidewalk and in front of the house of Sherlock Baines (65), a Jew living in Dusseldorf whose parents were concentration camp inmates. In Berlin, a woman was speaking Hebrew with her children while shopping when a foreign man turned to them and said, "These Jews are everywhere, get away from here, Zidovsky scum" (in Polish, "Zidovsky" can be translated to "Jew"; in Russian it is an antisemitic word). "Bystanders noticed the antisemitic insult without responding to it," said the WZO in a statement. In Weimar, Germany, portraits of survivors of the Buchenwald concentration camp on display as part of an open-air exhibition were vandalized. Hagoel warned that such incidents will only increase as the coronavirus crisis continues. "Coronavirus-related antisemitic events will escalate and become even more violent and physical," said Hagoel.

**American-Israeli linguistics professor inducted into arts and sciences academy**

An American-Israeli professor of linguistics at the University of Haifa and founding director of the northern Israeli institution's Sign Language Research Lab was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Wendy Sandler is the fifth Israeli woman to be a member of the academy, joining past notable members such as Charles Darwin, Albert Einstein and Nelson Mandela. Sanders, who earned her

Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of Texas-Austin in 1987, has most recently focused her work on the emergence of new sign languages, developing models of sign-language phonology and prosody, according to *The Jerusalem Post*. She has also authored or co-authored three books, such as *The Story of Israeli Sign Language*. "The study of sign languages illuminates the universal human genius for language, and it is only through language that we can formulate and share ideas, science and art," said Sandler. "Through this work, contact with the deaf world has taught me that in diversity there is unity, if we can open our minds to both. Our sign-language theater of the body reaches across the barrier between deaf and hearing audiences, leading to profound shared experience." She added that "the mission and values of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences bring together seemingly disparate approaches to understanding and improving the human condition, and I am proud and deeply honored to become a member."

**Ramadan TV series about Gulf Jews draws controversy**

A Ramadan TV series aired by the private Saudi-owned satellite channel MBC that shows Jews in a positive light has drawn the ire of some in the Arab world, who say it promotes the normalization with Israel at a time when the Jewish state is planning to annex parts of the West Bank. The show, "Umm Haroun" ("The Mother of Aaron"), portrays a Jewish community in the Gulf at the time Israel was founded, according to an AP report published on May 3. "I wanted to write this drama to deliver the message that our societies were much more tolerant than they are today, and people should go back to the same values," Ali Shams, the show's head writer, told the AP. However, he added that "we differentiate between Jews and Israel. Israel occupied Palestine and committed atrocities against the Palestinian people." Producer Emad al-Enazy said the show was developed by MBC, Kuwaiti and UAE production companies, with no government involvement. The show, he said, had nothing to do with normalization.

**Sea of Galilee is almost full, but its beaches remain empty**

The Sea of Galilee was less than 5 inches from its maximum capacity on May 3—its highest level in two decades—but due to restrictions on travel due to the coronavirus pandemic, its beaches remain empty. Spring is typically a busy time at Israel's largest freshwater source, with travelers coming from across the country and beyond to enjoy the large lake, rejuvenated by winter rains, and visit the many tourist sites in the area. The Kinneret today provides some 25 percent of Israel's drinking water and was once considered endangered due to Israel's growing water needs, the dryness of the region and concern that the delicate ecological balance of the freshwater sea would be thrown out of balance, leading it to become impotable. Concerns reached a fever pitch just three years ago when the Kinneret reached its lowest level in a century—212.95 meters (698 feet) below sea level. That led Israel to create desalination plants along the Mediterranean coast, beginning in 1997. Today, some 585 million cubic meters of seawater per year are desalinated in Israel: the Soreq plant provides 150 million cubic meters per year, the Hadera plant 127 million, the Ashkelon plant 118 million, the Palmachim plant 90 million and the Ashdod plant 100 million, according to Israel's Ministry of Finance. The Kinneret now stands at 208.92 meters below sea level, a rise of 13.22 feet in just three years.

**Reform movement cancels summer camps, Israel trips out of virus worries**

As some states begin to reopen for business, a number of Jewish summer camps have announced that they will be closed for the season because of the COVID-19 outbreak. The Union for Reform Judaism released a statement on April 30 announcing that all of its movement's camps and planned Israel trips are officially canceled for summer 2020. The decision affects thousands of families across North America. In a statement, URJ's leadership said "although we have continued to plan, prepare, pray and hope for another transformative summer, the risks posed by COVID-19 threaten our most sacred values: the health and well-being of our children, staff and faculty that attend camp, along with their communities back home. These risks also compromise our ability to provide the excellence in programming and participant care that are hallmarks of URJ camps." Also making the decision to close is Camp Ramah Darom in Georgia. At least one other related camp, Ramah in the Rockies in Colorado, has canceled its first session, though will monitor conditions to see if its second session can take place. Other camps are expected to make their decisions in the next few weeks.

**Initiative. . . Continued from page 7**

Perhaps most importantly are the results of the campaign on the ground, as reported by the agencies themselves that are being assisted during these difficult and frightening times.

According to a representative of the Kline Galland Home for the aged in Seattle, "We just tested all our residents this weekend and came back with zero positive cases. We all know this is 100 percent because we have the PPE to treat our patients safely and responsibly. You all are saving lives."

For more information about the campaign, visit [www.jewishtgether.org/pledgetoprotect](http://www.jewishtgether.org/pledgetoprotect).



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