By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a Tot Shabbat in the Park on Friday, June 11, at 4 pm. The event will take place at pavilion number two in Arnold Park in Vestal. It will take place outdoors and all COVID protocols will be followed.

On offer will be Shabbat snacks of grape juice and challah. Rabbi Benny Kellman and Josh Hubal will perform children’s Shabbat songs. There will also be readings from books published by Kallaniot Books, a Jewish publishing house located in Susquehanna, PA. (For information on books published by the press, visit KallaniotBooks.com. To read an interview of one of the publishers, visit https://www.thereportergroup.org/archives/feature/introducing-children-to-different-flavors-of-judaism.)

“The Federation has received requests for more programming for families with young children, so I’m pleased to announce that we will be holding our first ever Tot Shabbat in the Park,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. “I’m looking forward to families from across the Jewish community having the opportunity to get to know each other – both parents and children – and to celebrate an outdoor Shabbat-themed event.”

RSVPs are not required, but are appreciated in order to make certain there is enough food for everyone. To make a reservation, e-mail Hubal at director@jfgb.org.
“People who pay for this book have purchased...”

Most bookstore websites offer lists of books similar to the book you just looked at or bought. Those suggestions usually don’t work for me. I prefer to rotate genres. For example, if I’ve just read a serious literary novel, the next book on my pile is often a mystery or a fantasy but a serious literary novel. The one exception to that is when I read books for review. Your reviews are more interesting when I can compare and contrast two similar works. (A writer whose novel I reviewed recently wrote to say that it was “the most forgiving book” of her own. Another, not a more popular one, preferred it to any other book.) I often have thought in those terms, but I like it.)

However, when I saw four novels from completely different genres on my pile, I decided to feature them in this week’s review. While usually I organize a multi-book review in the order I enjoyed the novels, these novels appear in the order in which they were read.

Fantasy: “The Light of the Midsummer Stars”

Sometimes the two genres most often linked—horrible blend fantasy and reality, using elements of both to better explore how we react to our world. “The Light of the Midsummer Stars” by Renée Roseroppa (Redbook Books/Osiris) falls into the latter category: it shows the precariousness of life for Jews in medieval Europe, while at the same time borrowing fantasy elements from Jewish folk tales, and Romanian fairy tales for flavor.

The father of the three narrators—Sarah, Hannah and Lea—was the leader of a complex, complex society of King Solomon. The members of his group, who practice Judaism, live in a small town in Romania and are able to change shape and ages, cause planes to go down and control the wind. But a dark genius begins to cover the earth and those on his own side, neighbors and the Jews as the cause, something terrible happens to those evil characters lives.

The plot surprises were so interesting and unusual that I don’t want to spoil them by even hinting about them. However, I do want to say that there is a love and hate and heartache in unusual and wondrous ways. Each must come to terms with the powers they have as part of their Jewish lives and decide whether they want any connection, or lack of it, to their Jewish inheritance. One thing the novel does make clear is that nowhere in Europe is safe for them unless they legislature practice their Judaism. Any protections they have can be taken away in a moment.

“The Light of the Midsummer Stars” is a wondrous, if dark, fantasy. Rosenner switches narrative between the three sisters and an omnipotent narrator, which heightens the drama and suspense. The imagery is vivid and compelling, and the plot moves quickly, making it impossible for their candidate to lose. There’s the recent recounts that happen next. This work joins my short list of superior Jewish fantasy novels.

Drama: “Throttle: The Others”

It is just me or are the characters in thrillers always so creepy and unpleasant? I think that’s part of the nature of the genre; this case, includes offensive behavior not limited to murder. There also may or may not be an unreliable narrator. That depends upon the “Throttle” by Sarah Shaun (Malholland Books) isn’t gripping and suspenseful. It definitely is, although I wouldn’t want to meet any of the characters. I can’t spoil things to say that Naomi and Ethan are immediately attracted to each other. They, of course, think the other person can’t possibly be interested. Once they overcome that hurdle, they keep sending mixed signals, each trying to protect the other. Readers learn why they chose their careers, which shows the difficulties they’ve had to overcome. The novel also has a serious side: the sex-positive lessons Naomi teaches in her lectures are also offered to readers. But those don’t get in the way of events that make the book impossible to put down. I’d love to see an ending that will warm readers’ hearts. Two warnings, though: Naomi frequently uses a swear word in the original sense of its meaning and the scenes are really hot and explicit.

Science fiction: “How to Mars”

The most cerebral novel in this review is “How to Mars” by David Ebenbach (Tachyon). His work made me pause and think, although that meant I didn’t become immersed in it. The plot is about the odds each of the group, which began to refer to themselves as “The Others,” also declared they would remain childless. But something happens after Namma marries that divides the group, and older ones longer consider them her friends.

It doesn’t help that Dina borrowed one of Sheila’s ideas about the Bible, which made her far more successful in her field of study. Sheila’s professional and personal lives are unsatisfying. So, when a young policeman shows up at her door to pepper her with questions about Dina’s death, Sheila is left to worry about whether she’s a suspect or the next in line to be murdered.

Blau provided enough suspects and slight of hand to keep the reader guessing to the end. The ending was so satisfying, although the action in this twisted tale also left me feeling grimy and uneasy.

Romance: “Intimacy Experiment”

After reading about unpleasant people in “The Others,” it was a pleasure to turn to “The Intimacy Experiment” by Rosie Danan (Jove). I don’t read many romance novels and, when I do, I prefer them to be funny. Well, “The Intimacy Experiment” was hysterical! I had the best time reading it, and not just because it made me laugh out loud.

The premise is wonderful: Naomi Grant, a former porn star who has started a sex-positive web start-up, meets Ethan Grant at an educational seminar. Ethan is currently in his second career as a physics teacher, he went to rabbinical school. Naomi is looking to do in-person teaching, but one is willing to hire her even though she has an advanced degree in psychology and her website is successful. Ethan is looking to revitalize his synagogues and attract new, younger members. How can they solve both their problems? Easy! they’ll offer a educational seminar with Naomi as speaker sponsored by the synagogue in the hopes that those who attend might be tempted to attend religious services. What could possibly go wrong?

Not every candidate vote for wins. That’s the nature of democracy: sometimes your choices wins and sometimes he/she loses. When standing for election, you have to use two options: 1) find a better way to present your candidate so more people will vote for her/him, or 2) find a better candidate. Unfortunately, some folks want to game the system: meaning, making it impossible for their candidate to lose.

However, when someone I admired was found guilty of a crime and not to have had children. The Torah and the ancient groups to vote: closing down polling sites, not allowing advance voting and making it illegal to pass out water to voters who have been standing for two hours, not allowing their civic duty. What’s next: making it illegal to drive your grandparents to the polls? Saying these actions are horrible does little good. You have to do something about it. What can you do? Make it illegal to drive your grandparents to the polls? Saying these actions are horrible does little good. You have to do something about it. What can you do? Make it illegal to drive your grandparents to the polls? Saying these actions are horrible does little good. You have to do something about it.
The Jewish Community Center will hold an adult “Wine and Paint” class on Sunday, June 27, beginning at 1 pm. The cost is $30 for JCC members and $45 for non-members. The entire community is welcome to attend.

The class, run by JCC youth director and licensed art educator Nora Graven, is an opportunity for any adult to complete their own painting, guided by art teachers. Canvas, all paint, brushes, wine and light refreshments will be provided for the event.

Adults of all skill levels are welcome to attend and will receive guidance from Graven. Those who plan to attend must pre-register and prepay with the JCC main office to ensure space. All proceeds from the class will go to benefit Camp JCC programming and scholarships.

Some 1,300 wounded. According to Israel, more than 130 of the casualties are members of terror groups. The latest attacks come after Israel on May 18 hit 40 targets in Gaza with 120 precision-guided munitions. The strikes, which according to the Israeli military focused on Khan Younis and Rafah in southern Gaza, took out some seven miles of Hamas’ “Metro” tunnel system in 25 minutes, said the IDF.

The latest round of Hamas rocket fire and Israeli strikes comes amid talks of an Egyptian-brokered cease-fire. Fellowship adds new mobile bomb shelters in bombing Ashkelon, Israel

In response to the barrage of nearly 2,000 rockets being launched by Hamas in the Gaza Strip into Israel, as of the morning of May 14, the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews has placed 13 mobile bomb shelters in the heavily “Ceddis” on page 9.

Israel-Palestinian conflict worsens

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Preparing financial reports for the board and CPA, maintaining files of current and prospective clients, contact information, academic files, and health records. Ordering office supplies for teachers. Opening and distributing mail. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club. Supervising students during recess and at other times, as needed. Walking students over to the JCC for UPK and Kids Club.

The remains of a car set on fire during riots and clashes between Arab and Jewish residents in the central Israeli town of Lod on May 11. Lod, with a population of about 80,000 Jews and Arabs, was placed under emergency lockdown on that night to clamp down on violence undertaken by Arab residents there. Arab mobs were seen throwing stones, Molotov cocktails and fireworks at police, while also burning trash cans and tires. They also firedbomb the Mauz yeshivah, with a synagogue and dozens of cars belonging to Jewish residents set on fire. In the early morning of May 12, a Palestinian rocket fell in Lod and killed two people – a 52-year-old man and his 16-year-old daughter. (Photo by Yossi Aloni/Flash90)
Novels... Continued from page 2

All are qualified in some field helpful either for themselves, or for their children, but there are two that stand out: "Redemption," which is a one-way trip: the company can get people to Mars, but has no way to return them back to Earth. Oh, and there's one bigger issue that Muzikoglu et all have overlooked, but then, they were all supposed to have various tubes tied before they left Earth.

However, everything is upended when Josh, a Jewish psychologist, learns that his fiancé (with whom he planned to have a family) died in a car crash and Jenny is worried that her late sister's mental illness will manifest in the baby. There are also all the unknowns of giving birth on Mars. Their problems are complicated by different people's reactions to the pregnancy, particularly that of Stefan, who is becoming increasingly antisemitic as the two go on a roadshow together.

The second is the narrative formats used in each section: Josh writes in the first person; Stefan's narrative is in the third person; and Jenny uses scientific tables to discuss her pregnancy and thoughts about her sister.

Other sections are presented as parts of a handbook to be read by those living on Mars. They emphasize in several ways the reasons behind the no sex policy. They also offer psychological and sociological insights into what might happen when forming a new society. There are also “the patterns,” which affect what's happening, but I don't want to spoil the surprise by writing more about them. (I wasn't originally happy with that part of the plot, but it grew on me as the story developed.)

Since I like intellectual novels, I enjoyed “How to Mars.” In fact, after the emotional ups-and-downs of the three prior works, this one maintained a little distance. So, this novel was satisfying in a different way, which helps explain why it's so much fun to vary the types of works I read.
Part II of this series looked at Dolph Schayes, basketball’s pre-eminent Jewish player, during his New York Knicks years. In Parts I and II of this series, we examined Dolph’s pre- and post-playing days and the basketball ascent of his son, Dan. From 1963-66, Dolph Schayes coached the Philadelphia 76ers, first as playing coach and then from the bench. Despite finishing first in the Eastern Division with a 55-25 record for the 1965-66 season and garnering the NBA’s Coach of the Year award, Schayes lost his job due to difficulties maintaining a desired level of discipline from his players. From 1966 to 1980, he served as chief supervisor of NBA referees, but grew restless. Next, Dolph coached an inept NBA expansion club, the 1971-72 Atlanta Hawks.

After he left the NBA, real estate in slow the Sylacauga market remained Schayes “bread and butter.” For many summers, he managed Camp Walden, an overnight venue for youngsters in the Adirondacks. And he had a brief stint doing television commentary for Sylacauga University basketball games.

Schayes’ Jewish consciousness evolved through the years. Although often implicit, Judaism was a powerful presence during his Brooklyn boyhood. Raising his own family in Greater Syracuse, Dolph maintained membership in a Reform congregation. In middle age, he became active in the Maccabiah Games, once travelling to Israel both as coach of the American basketball team for the 1977 games and later as a tourist. Of the 1977 Maccabiah Games, he reflected, “We were the only team that didn’t fold over an Israeli team… I have a great feeling for those games because they expose the younger Jewish generation to a heritage that they perhaps haven’t come in contact with or [have] forgotten completely. And Dolph followed the basketball career of his son, Dan. Dan was born in 1959 and grew up in DeWitt, a comfortable suburb of Syracuse. As the baby of the family, Dan was only 5 when his father retired as an active player. When someone mentioned that his father was the same height as his teammates, Dan thought, “He was just the guy who lived across the hall – Dad.”

A large pole with a basketball hoop attached 10 feet off the ground resided in the Schayes’ paved driveway. Dan played a nearly mistake-free, team rebounding (5.0) pale before those of his Hall of Fame father’s (4.3) and brother’s (6.5) average. Although Dan and his father helped each other in drills or practiced trick shots, Dolph never challenged either of his sons to one-on-one games.

Dan learned some Hebrew at religious school. On the High Holidays, the Schayes children stayed home from school. They celebrated Hanukkah and Passover. Dan was named in honor of his community in Torah and through Aleph Zadik Aleph, a Jewish fraternal group. At Jamesville-DeWitt High School, Dan considered himself “a band kid who played sports.” He was proficient with both the tuba and the trombone.

As a young and reticent Dolph lived with his parents while at attending NYU; Dolph’s outgoing son chose to live on campus in a dormitory. Most of Dan’s friends were dormitory or fraternity mates rather than athletes. Dan was a “Sammy,” pledging Sigma Alpha Mu, a Jewish-oriented fraternity.

During his first three years at Syracuse under Coach Jim Boeheim, Dan generally sat on the bench, averaging only 4.7, 6.2 and 5.9 points per game. The Orangemen already had an outstanding center, Roosevelt Bouie. Senior year, Dan blossomed into a star. Averaging 14.6 points per game, playing excellent defense and rebounding well, Dan was named first team All-Big East Conference. The NBA reassessed the potential of the 7’0”, 258-pound standout.

For a generation, the iconic Dolph Schayes, never traded and never released, personified the Syracuse Nationals. By contrast, the peripatetic Dan was on the roster of seven different teams – UCLA, Denver, Milwaukee, Los Angeles (Lakers), Phoenix, San Antonio and Orlando – during his 18-season (1981-99) year NBA diaspora.

Whereas Dolph was one of the game’s superstars, Dan, throughout most of his career, functioned as a backup center. Dan’s best game statistics for points (13.9) and rebounds (8.2) came as a starter for the 1987-88 Denver Nuggets. Dan’s career rebounding average for points (7.7) and rebounds (5.0) pale before those of his Hall of Fame father, Modest statistics, however, obscured his value. Dan was superb on defense and ratcheted up the performance of teammates. He played a nearly mistake-free, team game. Dan confided to me, “I’m not a statistics-generating player. But when I’m on the court, the team plays better.” Dan was a hard-working and dependable journeyman. Yet very few players, not even the durable Dolph, exceeded the longevity of Dan’s playing career. And, given the altered financial structure of pro basketball, Dan’s compensation greatly exceeded the modest remuneration Dolph received.

Like his late father, Dan Schayes identifies strongly with Judaism despite a lack of participation in many traditional observances. During his professional career, he did not play on Yom Kippur. As an NBA player, Dan related, “I feel Jewish fans tell me it’s good to have a Jew in the NBA... and I speak before Center groups. Judaism is more than a religion; it’s... a way of life, and being Jewish is being an American with the addition of Judaism and Israel.”

An ESPN sportscaster after retiring from active play, Dan returned to Israel in 2013. Following in his father’s footsteps, he coaches the U.S. team to a gold medal in the Maccabiah Games.

Bill Simmons is a professor of history at SUNY Oneonta, whose course offerings include sport and ethnic history. He is also the co-director of The Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture, and served as a speaker for the New York Council on the Humanities.

From JNS.org

IAEA: Iran enriched uranium up to 63 percent purity

A confidential report by the International Atomic Energy Agency said on May 11 that Iran has enriched uranium up to 63 percent purity, more than the previously announced 60 percent. “According to Iran, fluctuations of the enrichment levels… were experienced,” the IAEA stated in the report shown to Reuters. “The agency’s analysis of the ES [environmental samples] taken on April 22, 2021, shows an enrichment level of 63.2 percent U235, which is consistent with the fluctuations of the enrichment levels” described by Iran, it stated without explaining the cause of the fluctuations. This came as Iran held indirect talks with the United States to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, which limited Tehran from enriching higher than 3.67 percent. Ninety percent is needed to reach weapons-grade fissile purity. The IAEA confirmed in April that Iran had begun the process of enriching uranium to a purity of 60 percent.

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Jews in Sports

Son of Dolph: Dan Schayes – finding his own basketball niche, Part III

BILL SIMONS
May 21-June 3, 2021

The Torah recounts the details of each of these offerings, delimiting what the sacrifices consisted of, although each one of these offerings is mentioned by a different name. All of the biblical commentaries are intrigued by the repetition and advance reasons for the anomaly. The cryptic terminology is designed to yield the following explanation: While it is true that each one of the nesi'im offered the same sacrifices, each of the nesi'im effected the offering with very different intentions and meditations. While the outer “gates” of their offering held no perceptible difference, the “soul” of their sacrifice differed radically, thus establishing the individualized mention in the text. This is an important theme, no less so today than in years past, as it underscores the fact that there are many valid traditions which were observed at the same time by different individuals and that fall within the category of God’s word. Jewish unity does not, in fact, mean uniform conformity. There are diverse explanations for a variety of passages as practiced by See “Unity” on page 7

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Weekly Parasha
Naos, Numbers 4:21-7:89
This week’s parasha includes a description of the inauguration of the Mishkan, the Tabernacle, built and purchased by the Jews for the duration of their 40 year sojourn in the desert. The Torah recounts that as part of the initiation rites of the 12 tribes, each tribe brought an offering unto the altar on behalf of his entire tribe. This went on for 12 days as each nasi took his turn. In a digression from its normally cryptic style, the Torah recounts the details of each of these offerings, including what the sacrifices consisted of, although each one of these offerings is mentioned by a different name. All of the biblical commentaries are intrigued by the repetition and advance reasons for the anomaly. The cryptic terminology is designed to yield the following explanation: While it is true that each one of the nesi'im offered the same sacrifices, each of the nesi'im effected the offering with very different intentions and meditations. While the outer “gates” of their offering held no perceptible difference, the “soul” of their sacrifice differed radically, thus establishing the individualized mention in the text. This is an important theme, no less so today than in years past, as it underscores the fact that there are many valid traditions which were observed at the same time by different individuals and that fall within the category of God’s word. Jewish unity does not, in fact, mean uniform conformity. There are diverse explanations for a variety of passages as practiced by See “Unity” on page 7

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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.
brain, in tens of a second, these squiggles are translated, not only into word meanings, but into rich ideas, images, concepts. My work asks how that happens. What are the mental processes that we use to translate the squiggles into sounds and ideas?

A project that received attention recently focused on the ways language use has responded to changing technology, particularly text messaging. “Texting provides an interesting linguistic challenge: the fastback and forth of text-messaging exchanges mimics some of the complex dynamics of a face-to-face conversation,” Kilin noted. “Yet, when we text, we are missing a lot of important cues that are used when we have a face-to-face conversation, such as tone of voice, gestures, and facial expressions. In a series of papers, we’ve asked what texters use in place of these cues to convey the types of nuanced meanings that are essential in a conversation.

Conflict... Continued from page 3

Bombarded city of Ashkelon on the Mediterranean Coast. It also provided security staff in Ashkelon with 25 protective vests. Three more shelters were placed in the nearby Hof Ashkelon Region Council community, and four were installed in Sderot on May 14. With subdued terror activity in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Fellowship actively prepared for future conflicts, placing 59 mobile bomb shelters and distributing nearly 1,000 protective vests in 2020.

Terror-balloon attacks resume against southern Israel

Incendiary devices launched from the Gaza Strip into Israeli communities along the border resumed on May 6 with firefighters battling blazes in fields surrounding Kibbutz Kissufim in southern Israel. Eskol Council Security Officer Ilan Isaacson said, “The incendiary kite and balloon season unfortunately starts again. Our quick-response firefighting teams already battled 10 fires in the fields of local Eskol communities.” He added that most of the terror-lit fires were about to be harvested. “The fields mainly hit were wheat. In addition to limiting the loss of crops, we were also able to save many wild animals trapped by fire,” he said. Two of the fires ignited parts of the Be’eri forest, and another four affected the Kissufim forest, and two nature reserves on the border of Israel and Gaza, according to a spokesperson for the Jewish National Fund. Through JNF-USA’s Fire and Rescue Task Force, the U.S.-based organization helps firefighters respond to their average response time from 15 minutes to seven minutes. In turn, this has helped reduce the number of acres burnt from 10,000 to 1,500 acres. To support Israel’s firefighters, visit jnf.org/firefighting.

In doing so, we have examined how a number of aspects of messages, such as punctuation, are understood. (Hint: ‘Okay,’ with a period can be understood as anger!) What’s fascinating to me about this line of research is that language is always evolving and the explosion of new digital forms of communication have provided language researchers a way to observe language changes in real time.

Kilin’s research has intertwined with her Jewish identity. “I come from a family of immigrants, whose journey to the United States involved stopovers in a number of countries and languages,” she said. “This is no less one of the reasons for my fascination with language. I grew up sitting in my grandparents’ living room in Windsor, Canada, listening to family conversations in Yiddish, and at my family’s dinner table in New Jersey, listening to my parents speak French (but only when they didn’t want my brother and me to understand). I was fascinated, from a young age, at how the mind understood language. And I was deeply struck by the contrast between the obvious complexity of understanding language, which was apparent when it was a language I didn’t speak, with what I experienced as total simplicity of understanding my own language.”

Her commitment to providing students at Harpur College with the skills they need to interpret the world partly also comes from her Jewish background. “The long, cruel history of antisemitism is no doubt one of the reasons that I have a strong commitment to being a part of college that provides students with a rigorous, challenging, liberal arts education where they learn, perhaps above all, to distinguish misinformation from truth,” she noted. “The ability to reject untruths, propaganda and conspiracy theories is central to the functioning of our society and sometimes even to our survival. I hope that the work we do at Harpur College plays a small role in sikhin olam — healing the world.”

Canada, U.S., Australia steering clear of events related to 20 years of Durban

The Canadian government said on May 6 that it will not participate in upcoming events marking the 20th anniversary of a U.N.-sponsored anti-racism conference that singled out Israel for criticism. The announcement was made on the same day that Australia said it would not attend and three days after the United States said it won’t participate in Durban IV, which is set for Sept. 22 in New York. “Canada remains committed, at home and abroad, including at the U.N., to advancing human rights, inclusion and combating antisemitism, Islamophobia and systemic racism in all its forms,” said Global Affairs Canada spokesperson Granely Franklin. “Canada opposes initiatives at the United Nations and in other multilateral forums that unfairly single out and target Israel for criticism.” He added that “Canada is concerned that the Durban process has and continues to be used to push for anti-Israel sentiment and as a forum for antisemitism.”

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Mass grave of Holocaust victims uncovered in Belarus

A mass grave of Holocaust victims has been discovered near the village of Logozar in Belarus, the Daily Mail reported on April 30. Photos from the excavation site show that the grave contained the remains of about 400 people, some of them covered in layers of earth. The grave is believed to be from the 1940s, when the Nazis occupied Belarus during World War II.

German police detain more than 12 men for antisemitic attacks

German police have detained more than 12 men accused of antisemitic attacks in three cities that included throwing rocks at a synagogue and starting a fire at a memorial for a synagogue destroyed in 1938 in the Nazi-occupied Kristallnacht. German politicians condemned the attacks, calling them antisemitic attacks, reported Reuters. Police said three men in their early 20s were detained on the night of May 11 and released after they admitted to throwing rocks at the windows of a synagogue in Bonn and burning an Israeli flag in Munich.

French-Israeli author wins France’s top literary prize

The French-Israeli author was awarded France’s most prestigious literary honor, the Grand Prize of Literature, for his novel “The Great European Express.” The book, which was published in 2018, is a historical novel set in post-war France; the second story, “Kibbutz,” is tied to Israel’s War of Independence; and the third story, “The Great American Disaster,” is set in New York with the protagonist a veteran of the Korean War. Meyer found out about the win shortly after arriving in Israel to visit family, after being away for so long due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Canadian police still searching for man convicted of murdering four

Canadian police are still searching for a man who was convicted of killing four members of a family in a Toronto apartment on May 9. The man is suspected of shooting and killing the family members, including two children, before running away. The investigation is ongoing and police are urging anyone with information to come forward.

Intel plans to build new tech campus in Haifa

Intel Israel announced on April 28 that it is planning to hire 1,000 new workers and invest $200 million in a new technology development center in Haifa. Intel CEO Pat Gelsinger planned to visit Israel the same day, according to the Israel21c news website.

Russian Jewish chess player to challenge world champion

Russian Jewish chess player Ian Nepomniachtchi, 28, is expected to challenge Magnus Carlsen, the current world chess champion, for the title in Dubai later this year. Nepomniachtchi has been a rising star in the world of chess and has already defeated several top players, including Carlsen, who started playing chess much later. Nepomniachtchi was awarded his first Russian title in 2010, and has been playing chess for 17 years. He has been practicing for five hours a day and has had surgery on his shoulder.

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Young U.S. Jews are less emotionally attached to Israel than older ones

Rates of intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews are soaring among American Jews, according to a new Pew Research Center survey. The survey found that 47 percent of Jews say they are very or somewhat emotionally attached to Israel (48 percent), compared with two-thirds of Jewish adults as a whole in 2013. Among young Jews ages 18-29, that figure rises to 52 percent. In 2013, 17 percent of U.S. Jews identified as Reform, Conservative or Reconstructionist, and 18 percent identified as Orthodox or Ultra-Orthodox. In 2020, 20 percent of U.S. adults were Jewish. In the center's most recent survey of U.S. Jews in 2018, 2.2 percent of adults (223,000) identified as Jewish. In 2020, 2.4 percent of adults (2.5 million) identified as Jewish. The 2013 estimate was 6.7 million, including 5.3 million adults and 1.3 million children.

The study finds that about half of all U.S. Jews (54 percent) belong to the two long-dominant branches of American Judaism: 37 percent identify as Reform and 17 percent as Conservative. Those figures are essentially unchanged from 2013, when a total of 54 percent identified as Reform and 15 percent as Conservative. Among both Jews and non-Jews.