

THE REPORTER

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Save the date

Campaign 2023 Kick-off on September 18

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton announced its Campaign 2023 Kick-off event will be held on Sunday, September 18. The event will feature a brunch and a talk by Rivkah Slonim, education director at the Rohr Chabad Center for Jewish Student Life at Binghamton

University. Those attending will also have the opportunity to make their pledge to Campaign 2023.

"It may be the middle of summer, but we're already planning for the fall," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "The theme for this year's Campaign is 'We Create Community.'

This continues our Campaign 2022 theme 'Stronger Together' by taking the next step to help our wonderful community."

Hubal added, "Even with the pandemic, we've run a large number of successful programs that brought together old and young members, which created new interactions within our community. Organizing

community events and helping our local organizations to create a community is what we plan to accomplish this year. Join us at the September 18 event for a delicious brunch and a chance to schmooze with old friends and make new ones."

Most information about the event will appear in future issues of *The Reporter*.

Esserman wins Rockower Award

By Reporter staff

Rabbi Rachel Esserman, executive editor of *The Reporter*, won second place in the American Jewish Press Association's Simon Rockower Awards for Excellence in Jewish Journalism for her column "Being a

chaplain, not a theologian" in the Award for Excellence in Personal Essay: Division A. Weekly and Biweekly Newspapers category. (To read the column, visit www.thereportergroup.org/past-articles/opinion-articles/opinion-stream/old-opinion-stream-manu-

[al-update/in-my-own-words-being-a-chaplain-not-a-theologian.](http://www.thereportergroup.org/past-articles/opinion-articles/opinion-stream/old-opinion-stream-manu-)) The judge commented on the column, saying, "Found belief of chaplain role, so right and so respectful. This piece really moved me." The column also won first place for Best Column in the

Syracuse Press Club Awards.

"This is the first time I've won a Rockower in this category," said Esserman. "Winning for such a personal piece is especially rewarding. I was hesitant to write and publish it because my reaction – mentioning Jesus – not only surprised me, but was not one that some would expect from a rabbi."

Esserman's column opens with her writing, "I never expected the words to come out of my mouth. But as the only chaplain available, I said the one thing I knew would bring comfort to the person who had told me proudly that he was a regular churchgoer: 'Your friend is safe because he is resting in the arms of Jesus.'"

She noted that "I really did take the time to analyze what I did and why. I also realized that my personal beliefs should not get in the way of offering comfort to those who have different beliefs. As a chaplain for everyone, my job is not to offer theology, but rather to find ways to console those who are bereaved or suffering."

Morning Book Club at TC announces book list

The Morning Book Club at Temple Concord announced the book list for its 19th reading season for 2022-23.

- ◆ No meeting in July
- ◆ August 3: "Last Summer at the Golden Hotel: A Novel" by Elissa Friedman
- ◆ September 7: "Madam: The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age" by Debby Applegate
- ◆ October 12: "Squirrel Hill: The Tree of Life Synagogue and the Soul of a Neigh-

borhood" by Mark Oppenheimer

- ◆ November 2: "From Where I Stand: A Novel" by Carolyn Goldberg Igra
- ◆ December 7: "The Matzah Ball: A Novel" by Jean Meltzer
- ◆ January 4: "This is Not a Love Story: A Memoir" by Judy Brown
- ◆ February 1: "How to Find Your Way in the Dark: A Novel" by Derek B. Miller
- ◆ March 1: "The City Beautiful: A Novel" by Aden Polydoros

- ◆ March 29: "Concealed: Memoir of a Jewish Iranian Daughter Caught Between the Chador and America" by Esther Amini
- ◆ April: No meeting in April due to the Passover holiday
- ◆ May 3: "People Love Dead Jews: Reports from a Haunted Present" by Dara Horn
- ◆ June 7: "The Jew Store: A Family Memoir" by Stella Suberman and Annual Book Selection Meeting followed by a restaurant luncheon.

Spotlight

Jewish American heritage and baseball, part II: chasing dreams

By Bill Simons

In Part I of the *Jewish American Heritage Month series*, this column examined the baseball perspectives and experiences of panelists – former major leaguer Shawn Green; Justine Siegal, baseball pitcher and women's rights advocate; and John Thorn, official historian of Major League Baseball – in a White House-sponsored webinar, "A Conversation: Jews and Baseball." Part II concludes this series by engaging the baseball exploration of the concluding panelist, Dr. Misha Galperin, president and CEO of Philadelphia's Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History. In 2014, NMAJH mounted a groundbreaking exhibit, "Chasing Dreams: Baseball and Becoming American." Through its companion book of the same name and an ongoing travelling exhibit, "Chasing Dreams" continues, as Galperin states, to employ baseball as a revealing platform for understanding Jewish American history.

The "Chasing Dreams" exhibit depicts Jewish immigrants and their descendants employing baseball to reconcile dual ethnic and American identities. NMAJH Chief Curator Josh Perelman and Asso-

ciate Curator Ivy Weingram partnered to create the "Chasing Dreams" exhibit. John Thorn, the chief consultant, and an advisory committee developed the exhibit's interpretive narrative.

Jewish Americanization through baseball constitutes the organizing vision of "Chasing Dreams," as depicted by more than 130 material artifacts, including photographs, bats, balls, gloves, caps, jerseys, player cards, board games, newspaper articles, advertisements, letters, managers' handwritten lineups, box scores, radio broadcasts, recorded interviews and film clips. Technology nicely juxtaposes traditional displays.

Halls of fame recognize and celebrate excellence, typically focusing on individual achievement. Several Jewish sports halls of fame already exist, including the National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in Commack, NY; the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in Netanya, Israel; and the Greater Washington Jewish Sports Hall of Fame. "Chasing Dreams," by intent, is not one of them.

Nonetheless, the exhibit gives special prominence to the two Jewish players who

rank amongst baseball's all-time greats, Detroit Tigers slugger Hank Greenberg and Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Sandy Koufax. Artifacts and texts record their notable athletic accomplishments, choice of synagogue over stadium on the High Holidays and symbolic importance as role models to their Jewish contemporaries. Outside of the main exhibit area, a venue invites visitors to don a replica of Koufax's number 32 jersey and throw soft faux baseballs from a "mound." "Chasing Dreams" also includes lesser major and minor leaguers, as well as those who played in diverse settings outside of organized baseball, ranging from the sandlot to the Olympics. Owners, managers, coaches, umpires, scouts, executives, agents, broadcasters, writers, statisticians and fans also receive their due.

"Chasing Dreams" contextualizes the relationship between Jews and other minorities, noting phenomena that range from fractious to cooperative. The exhibit documents the complex, multifaceted interaction between Jews and Blacks concerning the Negro Leagues and the integration of organized baseball. A mounted baseball diamond facsimile assigns on-field positions

to Jewish entrepreneurs, promoters and sportswriters involved with Black baseball. Text emphasizes that with the coming of Jackie Robinson, the normative Jewish response, even by those who had profited from the Negro Leagues, was to support the integration of baseball. A vintage poster of the Jewish-sponsored Anti-Defamation League champions diversity by highlighting Robinson, Greenberg and Joe DiMaggio.

Jewish women intermittently punctuate the exhibit. A photograph captures the verve and chutzpah of Helen Dauvray, a prominent actress and the wife of baseball star/union activist John Montgomery Ward. With a "genius of self-promotion," Dauvray, explains the text, donated a trophy cup, "named after herself," to the winners of the 1887 baseball championship. Another photo captures All-American Girls Professional Baseball League centerfielder Thelma "Tiby" Eisen swinging the bat with authority; the caption reveals that this daughter of Russian immigrants stole 674 bases in nine seasons. Visitors can listen to noted baseball author Jane Leavy discuss her grandmother and her love of baseball. See "Dreams" on page 4

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Opinion

A “death gratuity” for shooting victims

By Prof. Jonathan Karp

Among the victims of the July 4 Hyde Park mass shooting were Irina McCarthy, 35, and Kevin McCarthy, 37, the parents of a 2-year-old, Aiden. Although with them at that fatal July 4 parade, miraculously, Aiden was not struck by the gunfire that slaughtered his mother and father. In fact, he was pulled from underneath his father's bloodied, lifeless body by a survivor, and is now in the care of his grandparents. As of this writing, a GoFundMe page has raised over \$1 million on Aiden's behalf.

This spirit of compassion and generosity is admirable. But why should the families of shooting victims have to rely on charitable contributions? This presumes that those murdered by guns are innocents whose lives have been terminated for senseless, mysterious reasons and that society has no obligation to them. While surely innocent, their deaths are not at all senseless – at least, not in the minds of those who believe the Second Amendment is to be understood as making gun ownership a veritable birthright for Americans.

The recent Supreme Court decision written by Justice Clarence Thomas determined that states like New York cannot prohibit the sale of guns to individuals who meet certain very basic criteria, which may (or may not) include background checks, allowing them to carry a weapon outside of their homes. This expansive ruling

effectively legalizes “concealed,” or even “open carry,” practices, which means that individuals can bring guns into most public places (a supermarket, a movie theater, an Independence Day parade). While no one on the Court believes that gun rights are limitless, the clear inference is that many gun tragedies could not have been prevented by what the court deems to be legitimate restrictions on gun sales and ownership. In other words, some of these killings are the unfortunate, but also inevitable, consequence of our Second Amendment rights.

Put bluntly, shootings are the price we pay for the Second Amendment, as interpreted by today's Supreme Court. But who exactly is paying the price? Last year the number of those killed by guns, not including cases of self-defense or suicide, was just under 20,000. This means that the overwhelming majority of Americans are free to enjoy the benefits of the Second Amendment, while only a tiny minority pay the ultimate price. But this hardly seems just. That is why it is time to legislate federal and state compensation to the families of shooting victims.

There is ample model and precedent for this in our own military. The U.S. government has something called the Death Gratuity, an immediate payment of \$100,000 to the families of members of the military personnel killed while on active duty (though not necessarily in

combat). The Death Gratuity does not imply their deaths are gratuitous; on the contrary, it acknowledges their sacrifice. Members of the armed forces take an oath to defend the Constitution. They understand that there is a chance they may lose their lives in service to their country. One could likewise say that death at the hands of crazed and criminal shooters is the price the few must pay for our common enjoyment of what are deemed to be our constitutional gun rights.

It seems only right, then, for our government to pay the families of these victims of Second Amendment violence. The victims should be entitled to a Death Gratuity. And perhaps the money should come not only from the federal government, but also from individual states, in proportion, that is, to the degree that their laws permit more citizens to enjoy this privilege more abundantly — to own an AR-15 or AK-47, for instance.

If we truly value the Second Amendment, and refuse to reinterpret it in a sane manner, then it's high time we all paid for it. Instead of a GoFundMe page for poor Aiden and his grandparents, let the taxpayers feel the price of gun freedom in the pocketbooks.

Jonathan Karp is a professor in the History and Judaic Studies Departments at Binghamton University. He is also the undergraduate director of Judaic studies at the university.

In My Own Words

Contradictions

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Contradiction #1

“No one can tell me what to do with my body. It's mine and I demand complete autonomy over it.” Two different groups have made this claim, but each focuses on a different issue. I'm betting most readers will guess one or the other, but can you see both?

Claim #1: It's my body and no one can tell me what to put in it so I don't have to get a COVID vaccine.

Claim #2: It's my body and you can't tell me that I have to carry a pregnancy to term if I decide not to.

Before you write to tell me the difference between claim 1 and claim 2 is that claim 2 affects not only the woman, but the fetus she is carrying, please note that I agree, although you can argue that the fetus is a parasite until it can exist on its own. But you're wrong if you say that claim 1 only affects the person not getting the vaccine because that is a public health issue, meaning their choice affects more themselves. If someone spreads an illness because they refuse to be vaccinated, then they are not only endangering their own lives, but the lives of others. In the case of COVID, those with suppressed immune systems or who have other illnesses that reduce their resistance to the virus have died because people have refused to be vaccinated.

The issue of bodily integrity is far more complex than I can explain in a short column, but we do need a serious discussion about what it means in terms of both personal and public health. But if you say that the person in claim 1 has complete control over their body no matter who else is harmed, then the same should be offered to the person in claim 2.

Contradiction #2

“Each state should be able to make decisions for its citizens.” Interesting idea, but it can also lead to some conflicting claims.

Claim #1: Each state should be able to decide whether women can have an abortion.

Claim #2: Each state should be able to create laws about whether its citizens can buy and carry guns in public, including which types of guns they can buy.

Recently the Supreme Court has made some contradictory decisions affecting states' rights. Their decision on Roe vs. Wade did not automatically make abortion

illegal. What it does is leave the decision to individual states about whether the women in their states can have legal abortions. But that same court overturned one of New York state's laws about gun control. You can argue that if a state can outlaw abortions, then New York state should be able to enforce laws restricting gun ownership. Before anyone starts claiming gun ownership is a constitutional right, please note this is not exactly true: it allows for a state to form a “well regulated militia,” which is like the National Guard or police forces, whose members carry guns. However, the New York law did not outlaw guns: the state simply put restrictions on them, much like many states are putting restrictions on abortions.

States' rights is an interesting issue. Many states outlawed interracial marriages not that long ago; it wasn't until 1967 that those laws were overturned by the Supreme Court. (Yes, that means the Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas' marriage would have been illegal in those states.) When our country began, slavery was legal in many states. In the past, some states restricted who could hold public office based on religion, and that includes a few Christian denominations. According to a 2014 article in *The Washington Post*, at that time, eight states still had laws on their books saying that atheists couldn't hold public office. I haven't been able to track down whether there were states that didn't allow Jews to vote, but you could make the case for states' rights to allow that. So, we might want to be very careful of this slippery slope because the states' rights argument makes it far too easy to restrict the rights of minorities, including Jews.

Contradiction #3

“As a parent, I should be the only person making important decisions about my child's life.” Once again, this has been used to make conflicting claims.

Claim #1: As a parent, I should be able to say what books a school may assign my children and how subjects are taught in their school. I should also have the final word about whether they should be vaccinated.

Claim #2: As a parent, I should be the one who decides if my trans child is given medicine or has surgery so they can live an authentic life. The government has no right to interfere in those decisions.

In many states, parents are petitioning school boards to remove books not only from the classroom, but the school library. They also want to say in how their studies should be presented, particularly when speaking about American history. This has led to book censorship and limits on discussions about the evils of slavery or civil rights issues. Other parents are claiming they have a right to decide if their children should receive vaccinations, saying that this is a private decision. There are officials in some states who have been extremely supportive of parental rights in these cases. However, some of these same officials are trying to make illegal the right of other parents to make decisions about their children. Which children are these? They are children who wish to transition from their birth sex to a different sex. These laws would also make it illegal for doctors to prescribe drugs or perform surgery on these children, even if the child and parent are in complete agreement about what needs to be done.

I understand the need to protect children, sometimes even from their own decisions. But how is it OK for parents to not allow children to be vaccinated (and I'm not just speaking about COVID – a general anti-all-vaccines movement has been growing) and have them risk permanent physical damage or death if they get ill, but helping trans children is wrong? If a parent has a right to make decisions in the former case, then they should have the right in the latter one.

Concluding thoughts

I know that these issues are far more complex than I can discuss in a column of this size. But I want to open a conversation on both sides. Why? Because our country is so split it's dangerous. Last year, I reviewed a young adult dystopian novel that talks about a future United States that is now split into two countries and the problems that resulted. That does *not* have to be our future. But first, we must stop demonizing those who disagree with us and try to find points of agreement. As I've tried to show, we have many of those, but unfortunately disagree about how to interpret and implement them. Maybe we can learn to agree to disagree. Maybe we can allow others permission to follow some of their beliefs if they allow us to do the same. Unfortunately, I'm more pessimistic than optimistic about this; I can only hope I'm wrong.



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

LETTERS

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

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Congregation Tikkun v'Or to hold "Shabbat in the Park" on Aug. 18

Congregation Tikkun v'Or (Ithaca Reform Temple) will hold its annual summertime "Shabbat in the Park" on Friday, August 19, at 5:30 pm, at the Large Pavilion in Stewart Park, Gibbs Dr., Ithaca. Playtime for children

will start at 5:30 pm, followed by a short service led by Rabbi Shifrah Tobacman, dinner and music provided by the synagogue's TvO musicians. Everyone is invited to attend. Contact info@tikkunvor.org with any questions.

"Greet old friends, meet new friends, learn more about the community," said organizers of the event. "Due to COVID, we will not be sharing food, so please bring your own dinner, drinks, plates and cutlery."

Jewish online resources

By Reporter staff

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

- ◆ The European Academy for Jewish Liturgy will hold the "Online Learning Day 3: Embracing Vulnerability – Finding Comfort within the Jewish Tradition" on Sunday, July 24, from 7:30 am-2 pm. The program offers attendees the opportunity "to learn how to overcome challenging situations via the unique lens of Jewish music across diverse traditions with teachers from all over the world." For information about the different sessions or to register, visit www.eajl.org/online-learning-day/.
- ◆ Jewish Women's Archives will hold virtual Quarantine(ish) Book Talks on Thursdays 8 on from July 21-August 11. Events include July 21, Rachel Barenbaum, author of "Atomic Anna"; July 28, Siona Benjamin, author of "Growing Up Jewish in India: From the Bene Israel to the Art of Siona Benjamin" and the children's book "I Am Hava"; August 4, Courtney Zoffness, author of "Spilt Milk: Memoirs"; and August 11, Sam Cohen, author of "Sarahland." For more information about the programs, visit <https://jwa.org/events>. To register, visit https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/GgCuHQi/QBTSummer2022?source_id=

- ◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold "Tears Over Russia: A Search for Family and the Legacy of Ukraine's Pogroms," featuring author Lisa Brahin, on Monday, July 25, at 4 pm. Brahin tells her grandmother's three-year journey through Russia and Romania, which was led by an American who went to Ukraine to save his immediate family and ended up leading nearly 80 people to safety. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/event/tears-over-russia-2022-07-25>.
- ◆ Ritual Well will hold the virtual program "Song-filled Poetry Reading with Rabbi Mónica Gomery," hosted by Hila Ratzabi and Adva Chatter, on Thursday, July 21, from 7-8 pm. After music and poetry from Rabbi Mónica Gomery, there will be an open mic by members of ADVOT @ Ritualwell, a new cohort of liturgists, poets and ritual creators. The program will be recorded and made available to registrants later. For more information or to register, visit www.ritualwell.org/song-filled-poetry-reading-rabbi-monica-gomery.
- ◆ CLAL will hold the virtual program "We Are Stardust: A Workshop Celebrating The Wisdom And Magic Of Our Bodies Through Creative Practice," which "the wisdom and magic of our bodies through creative practice." The work-

- shops are aimed at the LGBTQ+ population. There will be two workshops. The teen workshop (ages 13-18) will be held on Sunday, August 7, 14, and 21, from 6-7:30 pm. The adult workshop (ages 19-plus) will run on Wednesdays, August 3, 10, and 17 from 9-10:30 pm. For more information or to register, visit www.tickettailor.com/events/stardust/.
- ◆ The Jewish Federations of North America and Hazon/Pearlstone will hold an interactive, three-part masterclass on Wednesdays, July 20 and 27, and August 3, from 1-2 pm "to explore what sustainability and climate action looks like through a Jewish lens, and the opportunity it presents for expanding and reshaping your local Jewish engagement strategy." For more information or to register, visit <https://form.jotform.com/jfna/jewishsustainabilityclimate>.
- ◆ "Stories from Writers in a Country at War" will be held on Wednesday, July 20, from 7:30-8:30 pm, with proceeds from the event being donated to HIAS' Ukraine crisis response efforts. The evening will feature 10 Ukrainian playwrights offer who will offer "first draft histories of See "Resources" on page 5

OF NOTE

Wright (Bank)

Tanya S. Wright (Bank), associate professor of language and literacy at Michigan State University, received the 2022 Jerry Jones Outstanding Teacher Educator in Reading Award from the International Literacy Association. The award recognizes a teacher in higher education who exemplifies outstanding teaching of reading and reading methods, and who is an innovative leader, mentor and scholar within the field of literacy education.



On the Jewish food scene

Foods that feel wrong

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Some foods are simply unacceptable. Well, at least their names create a problem for me because they don't fit. I was reminded of this when the rabbi leading the services I attended recently mentioned the type of challah over which she was making the blessing: chocolate chip. My reaction was disappointment. It's not that I don't like chocolate chips, but they don't belong in challah.

Challah should be either plain or raisin. I know there are at least 50 different challah recipes out now, but some of them should have a different name. By the way, raisin challah is my favorite and it's not just my preference. When I led floor services at a geriatric center years ago, the residents were very disappointed when the challah wasn't raisin. I have no idea what they would have thought of chocolate chip: No one had invented it yet.

(As a side note to put this into perspective, when someone says, "Don't you hate it when you bite into a chocolate chip cookie and it turns out to be oatmeal raisin?," my reaction is, "No, I'm disappointed when I bit into an oatmeal raisin cookie and discover it's chocolate chip.")

While I'm writing (OK, while I'm whining) about my food preferences, I, at least, am willing to admit that chocolate chip challah exists as a category of challah. However, as far as I'm concerned, there is no such thing as a blueberry bagel. Don't buy one and give it to

me to prove I'm wrong: I'll be happy to take it and eat that blueberry bread since I love blueberries. But it's bread with blueberries, not a bagel. Bagels are savory: plain, onion, garlic, etc. Now my friends know I have a sweet tooth, but I also love foods that contain garlic and onion. (In fact, if you don't like food spiced with onion powder or garlic powder, you won't be able to eat at least 80 percent of my cooking.) So, I also really love fruit (just check out my refrigerator), but it just doesn't belong in bagels.

Speaking of challah again, another thing about the bread: I was reading a book at my chaplaincy work recently in which the main character baked a challah. Most of the people (staff and individuals) I work with are not Jewish, so I explained to them that it's incorrect to say challah bread. It's like saying bagel bread or bread bread. How do I know people call it that? Because the folks on the Food Network Channel keep saying challah bread. Duh! It's just wrong. You'd think someone would tell them the correct way to say it.

Do I think this column will stop people from making chocolate chip challah or blueberries bagels because in my expert opinion (OK, my whining opinion) they are inappropriate? Of course, not! But someone needs to take a stand: those foods are just wrong!



DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
January 28-February 10	January 19
July 29-August 11	July 20
August 12-25	August 3
August 26-September 8	August 17

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



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Off the Shelf

Love and Talmud

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

It can be dismaying to reread a favorite novel decades after its publication. Feminists, in particular, now realize many works they loved ignored women's experiences. That's what happened to Maggie Anton. When rereading Chaim Potok's "The Chosen" and "The Promise" 55 years after they were published, she noticed something about the beloved novels that escaped her on first reading: there is little mention of the women – mothers and wives – in the main characters and their fathers' lives. Anton decided to correct that in her latest work "The Choice: A Novel of Love, Faith, and the Talmud" (Banot Press), which continues the story of Potok's protagonists during the 1950s, but which also features a woman as a main character.

Hannah Eisen, a journalist for the Yiddish newspaper the *Freiheit* whose byline is a gender-neutral pseudonym, wants to expand the types of stories she writes for the paper. Hannah convinces her editor to allow her to interview Rabbi Nathan Mandel, a Talmud professor whose teaching methods are controversial because he discusses different variants of the text. During the interview, she suggests Nathan teach her Talmud, something he finds shocking because women are traditionally not allowed to study

Talmud. But Nathan is intrigued by the idea and agrees to do so, although his main requirement is that they hide what they are doing because if it became public, he could lose his job. Hannah, who knows Hebrew, does an excellent job following the text and Nathan is very impressed with her learning. However, when their time together is discovered, the question becomes whether they can possibly continue their studies.

By this point, though, it's clear that the two are attracted to each other, although neither wishes to admit it. Hannah's previous dating experiences were unpleasant and, although she wants to marry, she also wants to continue writing. Nathan, who has been dating, has never before found a woman who is his intellectual equal. Yet, the course of love doesn't not run completely smoothly because, while Nathan and Hannah are both practicing Orthodox, their ideas about the place of women in Judaism are different.

Their story is intertwined with that of Nathan's friend, Benny, who grew up in a Chasidic community, and Benny's non-Chasidic wife, Sharon, who is having difficulty assimilating into that community. The subplot is used to highlight the different roles of women in Judaism and the

assumptions people inside and outside the community make about Chasidic life. An additional subplot focuses on sexual abuse in the Jewish community, where children are accused of lying about the abuse and their abusers are considered incapable of such actions.

This means "The Choice" is perfect for book clubs because it offers numerous topics for discussion, only a few of which have been noted here. Although the prose is plain, and Nathan and Hannah's love story is predictable, the sections that include actual Talmud study are wonderfully done. They show how rabbinic discussions developed and offer a short introduction as to why people find talmudic study so fascinating. While Hannah wants to work, she is not a feminist in contemporary terms, hoping to change the basic roles of men and women. Hannah looks forward to marriage and children, and her disagreements have nothing to do with a woman's role in the household, but rather with her ability to practice Judaism, particularly being able to study text. Some readers will find Nathan less attractive than others, but that may be more that his ideas are grounded in the 1950s, rather than contemporary times. However, book clubs will find that readers' different reactions will add spice to their discussions.



Off the Shelf

Son and father, father and son

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

The first, and sometimes most important, relationship in our lives is with our parents. However, rarely do we read works that show that relationship from both points of view: that of a child about a parent and then a parent about a child. That's what made reading "What's So Funny? A Cartoonist's Memoir" by David Sipress (Mariner Press) and "Raising Raffi: The First Five Years" by Keith Gessen (Viking) for this review so much fun. While the two memoirs don't completely mirror each other, Sipress' difficulties with his parents were in some ways answered by Gessen's issues when dealing with his young son. I could imagine Sipress' father talking about his son in the same way Gessen speaks about Raffi, and wondered how Gessen's son will view his father's essays when he is as old as Sipress.

Both authors are Jewish, although religion plays a minor role in their lives. Sipress notes that "my families' relaxed, primarily secular Jewishness was a complicated and sometimes confusing affair. As a kid, I understood that Jewish was just one thing we were – more fundamental perhaps but not all that different from our being New Yorkers, or Democrats, or Brooklyn Dodgers fans. On the other hand, we were always quick to root for and celebrate members of the tribe who broke barriers and made it big – athletes, scientists, writers, artists, actors, diplomats, and smart, talented beauty queens like Bess Meyerson." Gessen, who arrived in the U.S. at age 6 from the U.S.S.R., writes very little about Judaism, most likely because he has less experience with Judaism than Sipress. What he

seeks to pass down to his son is the Russian language and some essence of what it means to be Russian, even though he's not exactly sure what that means. He notes his ambivalence comes from his parents': "My parents [gave] me mixed signals: Russia was great, and Russia was terrible. After all, though we spoke Russian, read Russian, listened to Russian music, we had left Russia and weren't going back. Of the two messages they sent – Russia great; Russia terrible – I decided to heed the second." However, that doesn't stop him from wanting to share the Russian language and culture with his son.

Sipress, who was born in 1947, belongs to an earlier generation than Gessen. Sipress' father, Nathan, owned a jewelry store; his mother, Estelle, was a stay-at-home mom (not uncommon for that time); and his only sibling, a sister, Linda, about whom he doesn't write much until the end of the memoir, suffered from depression. Nathan had distanced himself from his strict Orthodox family: not only does Sipress not wonder why the family had no connection to anyone from his father's side, he expresses no interest in learning more. That may be because he separated himself from his parents and sister for many years: After dropping out of graduate school in Boston to become a cartoonist, Sipress lived a very different type of life than his parents. They didn't approve his path, but Sipress ignored their questions and ideas, and pursued what made him happy. When he finally felt settled enough in his career, he moved back to New York City, although he still tried to keep a certain amount of distance from them.

While this might make the memoir sound depressing, it's not, in good part because Sipress doesn't seem particularly interested in plumbing the psychological depths of these relationships, even with his psychiatrist. Or he at least doesn't want to write about them. But that means that readers can concentrate on the most fun part of the book: the cartoons that reflect on the stories he tells and often act like a punch line to a joke. Sipress began cartooning for an alternative paper in Boston and it took 20 years before his first cartoon appeared in *The New Yorker*, which now regularly publishes his cartoons. Even after writing about serious moments, he usually includes a cartoon that both lessens the blow and sums up his feelings. Most of the cartoons made me laugh out loud, and added a different and welcome dimension to his story.

Sipress doesn't have children (or, at least, there is no mention of them in his memoir), but reading his thoughts about his parents made me wonder if Gessen's son, Raffi, will have similar feelings about his father someday. "Raising Raffi" is not a traditional memoir, but rather essays Gessen wrote about his struggles with his young son. Struggles is the correct word since Gessen, at first, seems unaware that children are not miniature adults, but rather unformed creatures who think differently from their parents and have their own opinions and ways of doing things. That's not to say the problem is all on Gessen's side: Raffi is not an easy child, although in many ways a typical one. He's loud, rambunctious, violent at times and has no idea of societal norms. He also knows when he is unhappy with the father who yells at him and whom he considers mean at times. Gessen reads and reads and reads books and articles about child raising, looking for the perfect answer that doesn't exist, although he does find some of the books helpful. At one point, Gessen realizes the type of father he is: a Russian one who could also be known as a Bear Father, although not the soft cuddly teddy bear kind.

He's partly successful in teaching his son Russian, although he writes pages about his studies to discover whether it's good for a child's development to be bilingual. Deciding his son should learn to ice skate because Gessen plays hockey shows the balance parents need to take when deciding on activities for their children: pushing Raffi enough so he doesn't give up before learning to skate and maybe coming to enjoy sports like his father, yet not alienating him by forcing to him to do an activity he hates or that doesn't speak to his interests.

My favorite chapter discusses the books Gessen read to Raffi when he was young. His analysis of American picture books (which were not part of Gessen's upbringing) and Russian ones (that were part of his childhood) notes differences between the two cultures. When looking at these books, Gessen once again shows his tendency to obsess about details. He doesn't just read these works to his son; he also has to learn more about the authors and the history of their books. That does make for an interesting exploration of children's literature.

Sons and fathers, fathers and sons: Sipress' father has passed away so we'll never what he thought about his son's version of this life, but Raffi might someday offer commentary about Gessen's. Here's hoping that Raffi sees that his imperfect father was trying to do his best. I hope Sipress might say the same about his father, even though they never agreed on many issues. "What's So Funny?" and "Raising Raffi" make interesting bookends when looking at parent-child relationships.

Dreams Continued from page 1

by activating a recording. Another audio features Justine Siegel, who broke a gender barrier by throwing batting practice for Cleveland in 2011.

Eclectic and populist, "Chasing Dreams" casts a broad net, but it is not comprehensive, nor could it be. Bud Selig's controversial tenure as commissioner and Ryan Braun's tarnished achievements receive only limited attention. On an interpretive level, the question of "who is a Jew?" merits more overt consideration as it would clarify whether religious belief, parentage, ethnic consciousness, culture and/or other criteria provide the parameters for inclusion in the exhibit. Furthermore, given the rise of assimilation, intermarriage and acceptance, identity retention would appear to have replaced Americanization as the primary challenge of American Jewry, and thus necessitates deeper

reflection. Nonetheless, the great strengths of the exhibit trump these caveats.

Regardless of one's knowledge of baseball and American Jewry, it is impossible to engage "Chasing Dreams" without discovering new phenomenon as well as encountering cherished memories. A potpourri of recollections summons the sheer diversity of the Jewish baseball experience. Composer Albert Von Tilzer's original sheet music for "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" documents that some of the most distinctively American traditions of baseball ironically derive from ethnic sources. A photo of boys playing stickball in a compact backyard framed by apartment buildings shares the irresistible lure of the game to the children of immigrants. A newspaper account of a game between the Ku Klux Klan and "Hebrew" all-stars suggests that baseball competition had the capacity to both reflect and transcend group conflict.

NCAA playoff-type brackets – matching Jewish ballplayers until Koufax bests Greenberg in a final pairing – evoke the distinctive argumentative style of Jewish discourse. The loud, but engaging, interactive station that entices "rookie" visitors to shag virtual fly balls epitomizes the brashness of Jewish humor and the chutzpah it took to chase the American Dream.

"Chasing Dreams" and the webinar, "A Conversation: Jews and Baseball," that brought it renewed attention invest Jewish baseball history with significance and interest. For fans and players, baseball is a pastime, entertainment and game, but for historians, archivists and curators, it also grants a valuable lens for capturing the dynamic between America and its ethnic mosaic. Jewish American Heritage Month 2022 merits kudos for recognizing baseball as an important component of the ethnic experience.

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Israel's burgeoning relationship with Egypt suggests brighter future for both countries

By Israel Kasnett

(JNS)—Israel and Egypt have agreed on a new plan to advance ties and now appear to be engaged in the process of migrating from a cold peace to lukewarm. Serious discussions are currently underway between Israel, Egypt and the European Commission over how to export Eastern Mediterranean gas to Europe. At the same time, Israel and Egypt are also working to improve economic ties, with plans to increase bilateral annual trade to \$700 million within three years. In addition, efforts are being made to expand the Nitzana Border Crossing where commercial trade between the two countries is handled.

According to Eran Lerman, vice president of the Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security, Israel is indeed heading towards better relations with Egypt. Lerman pointed to Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's gesture when he went out of his way to personally greet Israeli Energy Minister Karine Elharrar at a conference in Cairo in February.

Two other solid reasons that Israel seems to be on the path to a warmer peace with Egypt, according to Lerman, is that Israel is working to export gas via Egypt in the midst of the Ukraine energy crunch, and Israel continues to assist Egypt in fighting ISIS.

In addition to these signals, for the first time in 40 years and as a further sign of warming relations between the countries, the Jewish-Arab Firqat Alnoor orchestra traveled in early May to Egypt to perform on Israel's Independence Day.

It is clear though that the trajectory of warming relations between Israel and Egypt is occurring mostly in the economic realm. Egypt's economy has been affected by repercussions of the Russia-Ukraine war, poverty stands at about 30 percent, and according to the Heritage Foundation, the country remains dependent on aid from Saudi Arabia and international financial institutions.

While Egypt was the first Arab country to sign a peace deal with the Jewish state back in 1979, it was little more than a cold peace. But the Abraham Accords signed in 2020 with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco, coupled with

talks taking place today between Israel and Saudi Arabia, have awakened Egypt's leaders to the possibility that they are being left behind in a dynamic and progressing Middle East.

Ofir Winter, a research fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University, told JNS "the Israeli government plan to advance economic relations with Egypt, which was approved on May 29, could become an important milestone." Winter explained that there has been momentum over the last two years in a variety of areas.

The plan is reflected, among other developments, in the current negotiations on an agreement with the European Union to export Israeli gas to Europe via Egypt; recent discussions on the expansion of the Qualifying Industrial Zone; the opening of direct flights between Tel Aviv and Sharm el-Sheikh in April; and reciprocal visits by ministers and delegations of businessmen from both countries.

Winter said he believes that the rationale behind the plan "is to diversify relations between the countries by integrating relevant government ministries, which did not play a significant role in the past (economy and transportation, for example)."

"There is also a new focus on bilateral relations and on the potential of complementary benefits for both economies," he explained. "Egypt could export to Israel raw materials for industry and construction, vegetables and food products, while Israel could export to Egypt needed technologies in the fields of water security, irrigation, desert agriculture, renewable energies and more."

According to Winter, "evolving international and regional circumstances" as well as Egypt's "prioritization of economic considerations" have led to the economic rapprochement between both countries. "The trust between political and security levels also helps to identify new possible areas of cooperation," he added.

A major aspect of the ability of Arab nations to seek closer ties with Israel depends largely on public sentiment, though not always. In Egypt's case, Winter pointed out that according to opinion polls, the

Egyptian public is not very supportive of normalization with Israel. "At the same time," he noted, "there is no significant protest against it."

According to Winter, although much is changing on the ground between Israel and Egypt, the full potential of economic relations between the two countries "is far from being exhausted." He suggested that this potential would require "greater freedom for private initiatives, the removal of bureaucratic barriers and the facilitation of movement between both countries."

Naturally, tourism between the two countries would be among the most obvious first elements to change. While many Israelis visit Sinai and some visit other

areas in Egypt, there is potential for a vastly greater number of tourists visiting Cairo or the Valley of the Kings for example. And of course, with Egypt's population of more than 100 million, the potential for Egyptian tourism to Israel is huge.

For this to happen, Egypt's leaders will need to demonstrate the benefits of moving closer to Israel and begin changing public discourse about the Jewish state. Winter said Egypt must allow for greater "visibility" of its support for expanded ties with Israel in order to "give more legitimacy to new Egyptian businessmen to explore opportunities with their Israeli counterparts and enhance the appreciation for the fruits of peace within the Egyptian public opinion."

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Gantz, Sa'ar announce merger of Blue and White and New Hope parties

Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz (Blue and White) and Justice Minister Gideon Sa'ar (New Hope) announced on July 10 the formation of a new joint political list. Sa'ar's party will receive three out of the first seven places on the new faction's list, and five out of the first 13 places on the list, according to Channel 12 News. Should former IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. (res.) Gadi Eisenkot join the new faction as head of his own party, he will receive three of the first 20 places in the list to distribute as he wishes, the report said. "This evening, we are laying down the foundation stone for establishing the next government. Masses of Israelis will have an address," stated Gantz. "On too many occasions, the edges and margins have dominated the tone, and the Israeli center has been left without a voice. For too many years, Benjamin Netanyahu has dragged the Likud and the state into eroding the state's interest, and harming democratic principles," he added. Sa'ar stated, "This is the responsible and right thing to do. Israeli citizens expect their political officials to create major political power and not to sanctify nuances." He added that Israel's security and the rule of law would be two of the main focal points of the new faction.

Resources Continued from page 3

their lives as the war in Ukraine unfolds." The plays will be read in translation. For more information or to register, visit <https://mjhnyc.org/events/i-want-to-go-home-stories-from-writers-in-a-country-at-war/>.

◆ JFest StoryMachine, which is a part of Jfest (a program of JCC Association of North America), is encouraging people to post their stories on its site. For more information, visit <https://www.jfeststory-machine.org/>.

◆ Jewish Federations will hold the virtual program "Dobbs v Jackson: The Jewish Perspective" on Monday, July 18, at 1 pm. The program will include "speakers on Jewish law perspectives, as well as featured speakers from the National Women's Law Center and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists on state law developments and their potential impacts for women's health and health providers, and from Jewish organizations on its impact." For more information or to register, visit <https://form.jotform.com/221814571446961>.

◆ UJA and The New York Jewish Week will hold a virtual program with authors Gal Beckerman and Irina Reyn, who will discuss the legacy of Jewish life and identity in Ukraine and how antisemitism is ingrained in its national history on Tuesday, July 19, at 6 pm. The conversation will be moderated by Andrew Silow-Carroll, editor in chief of The New York Jewish Week and senior editor at the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. For more information or to register, visit www.ujafedny.org/event/view/past-imperfect-reading-ukraine.

◆ UJA and The New York Jewish Week will hold a virtual program with Menachem Kaiser, winner of the 2022 Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature for "Plunder: A Memoir of Family Property and Nazi Treasure." Kaiser will discuss his explorations of family and Polish history with journalist Sandee Brawarsky. For more information, visit <https://www.ujafedny.org/event/view/award-winning-write-untangles-a-legacy>.

◆ The Forward will hold the in-person and virtual event "Hineni: Now Where Do I Go?" on Thursday, July 28, at 7-10 pm. The evening will be a conversation about how millennial American Jews are building community in, and outside of, traditional spaces. For more information or to register, visit <https://forward.com/events/hineni-now-where-do-i-go/>.

◆ The Center for Jewish History announced a new online exhibit "Treasures from the David Berg Rare Book Room," which features book highlights from each of the four partner collections with a presence in the David Berg Rare Book Room – the American Jewish Historical Society, American Sephardi Federation, Leo Baeck Institute, and the Yeshiva University Museum – as well as books donated to the Center by Board member Sid Lapidus. For more information or to view the exhibit, visit www.cjh-exhibits.com/blank.

For additional resources, see previous issues of The Reporter on its website, www.thereporter.org/streams/miscellaneous-features/miscellaneous-features/tag/80309?

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Weekly Parasha

Balak, Numbers 2:2-25:9

Transforming the world

RIVKAH SLONIM, EDUCATION DIRECTOR, THE ROHR CHABAD CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDENT LIFE AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

It's easy to be distracted by the zaniness of the narrative and miss the profundity in this week's *parasha*. The Jewish people are just about to enter the Promised Land. Balak, king of the Moabites who inhabited the land, is fearful and hires Balaam, a powerful, Gentile prophet and sorcerer to curse the Jews and diminish their power.

And, while God appears to Balaam and warns him against taking this contract, he cannot overcome his desire to harm the Jews. Even after his donkey speaks to him and makes clear that he has seen God's angel with a sword in his hand to stop them, Balaam persists in proceeding into a quagmire.

Ironically, Balaam ends up being used as an instrument for blessing. Three times he attempts to curse the Jews; each time he ends up heaping praise and

blessing upon them. Used as God's oracle, his words contain the most explicit reference to the Messianic era in the Torah.

Chassidic teachings explain that before entering the land of Israel, the Jews needed to learn of the end of days, the messianic era, that would come as a result of their service in exile. *Am Yisrael* is not a pedestrian people entering an ordinary parcel of land. This was the Holy Land, bequeathed to Jews for the purpose of irradiating light and sanctity unto the world entire. Entering the land was just the first step in a millennia long project; that of transforming the world into a place that reflects its Creator in manifest fashion.

The *parasha*, named curiously for Balak, teaches us that this sweeping transformation must include every aspect of

the universe, and all of its inhabitants. Even the ones most resistant to hearing God's message.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Ukraine embassy: no visiting Uman

The Ukrainian embassy in Israel said in a released statement that due to Russia's ongoing war, those who are hoping to make the annual pilgrimage to the gravesite of Rabbi Nachman in the city of Uman during Rosh Hashanah will be banned from the country.

Congregational Notes

Temple Israel

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

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom and in-person (masks are required).

On Saturday, July 16, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Numbers 22:2-25:9 and the haftarah is Isaiah 55:6-56:8. At 9:30 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

The Caring for Caregivers Group will meet on Mondays, July 18 and 25, at 3 pm.

On Wednesday, July 20, there will be Torah study from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

On Saturday, July 23, at 9:30 am, Shacharit services will be held via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Numbers 13:1-15:41 and the haftarah is Joshua 2:1-24. At 9:15 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Wednesday, July 27, there will be Torah study from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

Penn-York Jewish Community

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

Temple Beth El of Oneonta

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

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: 607-756-7181
President: Carol Levine, 315-696-5744
Cemetery Committee: 315-696-5744
Website: templebrithsholomcortland.org
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/>
Service leaders: Lay leadership
Shabbat services: Either Friday evening at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 10 am from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot. Holiday services are also held. Check the Facebook page or weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.

Religious School: Students are educated on an individual basis. Temple Brith Sholom is a small equalitarian congregation serving the greater Cortland community. Congregants span the gamut of observance and services are largely dependent on the service leader. The Friday night siddur is "Likrat Shabbat," while the Saturday morning siddur is "Gates of Prayer." The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences.

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

Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

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

Rohr Chabad Center

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

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

Norwich Jewish Center

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

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi: Rachel Safman
Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292
Phone: 273-5775
E-mail: rabbi-safman@tbeithaca.org and secretary@tbeithaca.org
Website: www.tbeithaca.org

Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody
Services: Fri. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced.
Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sun. and legal holidays).
Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday, 3:45-5:45 pm. The Midrashah (eighth grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers.
Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.

For upcoming services and events on Zoom, visit www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE.



Friday, July 15, light candles before 8:20 pm
Saturday, July 16, light candles after..... 9:19 pm
Friday, July 22, light candles before 8:14 pm
Saturday, July 23, light candles after..... 9:14 pm
Friday, July 29, light candles before 8:08 pm
Saturday, July 30, light candles after..... 9:07 pm

Beth David Synagogue

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

Temple Concord

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

Some services and programs are online only.

Friday, July 15: at 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell. To attend in person, all must show proof of COVID-19 vaccinations. Masks are optional, but recommended. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330; or on the Temple Concord Facebook page.

Saturday, July 16: Torah study at the new summer hours 9:45-11 am with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3CVxM14>, meeting ID 882 9808 7579 and passcode 676707.

Friday, July 22: at 7:30 pm, Shabbat services. Proof of vaccination is required to attend Shabbat services. Masks are optional, but recommended. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330; or on the Temple Concord Facebook page.

Saturday, July 23: Torah study from 9:45-11 am. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3CVxM14>, meeting ID 882 9808 7579 and passcode 676707.

Friday, July 29: at 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell. Proof of vaccination is required to attend Shabbat services. Masks are optional, but recommended. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330; or on the Temple Concord Facebook page.

Saturday, July 30: Torah study from 9:45-11 am. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3CVxM14>, meeting ID 882 9808 7579 and passcode 676707.

Congregation Tikkun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY
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Presidents: Nomi Talmi and Shawn Murphy
Rabbi: Shifrah Tobacman, rabbishifrah@tikkunvor.org
Education Director/Administrative Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky
Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin
Services: All services currently on Zoom. E-mail info@tikkunvor.org for the times and links. Contemplative morning services every Tuesday from 8:30-9:30 am. Saturday mornings, Gan Shabbat and other special services at least once a month. Call for the weekly schedule.
Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE) for second through seventh grade classes meet on Sunday mornings. Sixth and seventh grades also meet on Wednesday afternoons. Family programs for kindergarten and first grade held monthly.
Adult Education: Offered regularly throughout the year. Check the website for details.

Jewish Community Center

JCC held 95th Annual Dessert Meeting on June 30



JCC Assistant Director Marcia Monforte with Lou Stilloe, President's Award honoree

- ◆ President's Awards
Lou Stilloe
Bonnie Brown
- ◆ Tikkun Olam Awards:
Lori Welsh, director of the Broome County United Way
Suzanne Holwitt, president, and Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton
- ◆ Harvey R. Singer Scholar Memorial Award
Isaac Green
Hayden Livsky
- ◆ Lamed Award (for 30 years of service to the JCC)
Marcia Monforte
- ◆ Meeting Room Dedication (unveiling)
Sue and Mark Walker
- ◆ In Honor of Buddy Koffman (unveiling)
Ruthanne, Betsy, David, Evan, Matthew and Alexander Koffman



L-r: Executive Director Sheryl Brumer, Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton and Suzanne Holwitt, president of the Federation.



Executive Director Sheryl Brumer and Lori Welsh, director of the Broome County United Way



Bonnie Brown, President's Award honoree



The Koffman family honored the late Buddy Koffman at the event.



L-r: JCC Assistant Director Marcia Monforte and Sue Walker



Sue and Mark Walker with the sign for the Walker Meeting Room.



JCC Youth Director Nora Graven with Isaac Green



JCC Youth Director Nora Graven with Hayden Livsky



Younger members of the JCC attended the event.

JCC Friendship Club

The JCC Friendship Club met on July 6. Sylvia Diamond called the meeting to order. We discussed opening the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and the blessing over the refreshments.

We could not meet in the library where we usually meet because the day camp was there. It was very noisy, but Bruce Orden was able to complete the showing of the movie "Yentl" with Barbra Streisand till the end. Bruce brought cookies and candy, and Sylvia brought in fresh cut-up pineapple.

After the movie, we decided to go out to lunch at a local restaurant. We changed the date to eat out to Wednesday, July 27, at 1 pm. If you would like to join the group, call Sylvia at 607-772-0726.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, August 17, at 1:30 pm, when the day camp will not be at the JCC. A musical program is planned.

Sylvia Diamond
President

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Ancient Jerusalem wine found to be seasoned with vanilla

By Diana Bletter

(Israel21c via JNS) – Researchers from the Israel Antiquities Authority and Tel Aviv University were surprised to discover remnants of vanilla in 2,600-year-old wine jars unearthed in the City of David National Park in Jerusalem.

The researchers were investigating two buildings destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E. when they unearthed the eight jars. They date back to the reign of the biblical King Zedekiah, who ruled the kingdom of Judah when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and exiled the Jews.

Using chemical tests, the researchers identified remnants of vanilla molecules preserved in the tiny spaces on the side of the pottery vessels. In a recent study published in PLOS ONE, the scientists write

that vanilla was not known to be available in the Middle East before Columbus sailed to the Americas in 1492.

Tel Aviv University doctoral student Ayla Amir, who conducted the research in the laboratories at the Weizmann Institute and Bar-Ilan University, said that the “vanilla markers were an unusual find.”

Scientists believe that the vanilla, considered a luxury, might have come from India via an international trade route that crossed the Negev during the seventh century B.C.E. On the handles of some of the jars was a seal impression in the shape of a rosette, indicating that the jar and its contents were part of the royal administration of the kingdom of Judah. The number of jars indicates the economic importance of wine, noted the scientists.



A collection of wine jars after the restoration process. (Photo by Dafna Gazit/Israel Antiquities Authority)



A jar handle with a rosette impression associated with the royal economy in the Kingdom of Judah. (Photo by Eliyahu Yanai/City of David)

Ortal Chalaf and Joe Uziel, directors of the excavation on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority, said that the jars will help reveal what people ate and

drank prior to Jerusalem's destruction by Babylonia.

Said the scientists: “The jars opened a window for us.”

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Israeli court sets precedent by recognizing online civil marriages

In a landmark ruling, The Lod District Court has found that the state must recognize online civil marriages, according to Israeli media reports. In her ruling on July 8, Judge Efrat Fink wrote that a public marriage certificate issued by the U.S. state of Utah, which conducts online marriage ceremonies, is valid, and is a sufficient basis to register the couple as married in Israel, according to Kan news. Israeli law allows only religious marriages, though civil marriages conducted outside the country are recognized. Until now, Israeli citizens wishing to marry in a civil procedure have had to leave the country to do so. In her ruling, Judge Fink criticized Israel's Population and Immigration Authority for its refusal to recognize such ceremonies, adding that the decision on where a marriage ceremony must be held does not lie within the Authority's jurisdiction. The state can now appeal to the Supreme Court.

Senior U.S. police and public safety delegation completes two-week training course in Israel

A 16-member U.S. delegation has returned home from Israel after completing an intensive two weeks of public safety leadership training as part of the Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange's (GILEE) 29th annual peer-to-peer executive program. While in Israel in early July, members of the delegation, including Georgia police chiefs and command staff, sheriffs, and other top security officials, were shown best practices and the latest technologies in policing and public safety, according to a statement released by the organizers of GILEE. The statement said that the officials learned more about strategies to successfully lead ongoing, non-stop law enforcement services while building stronger, safer and better community policing through relationship-building. Three months prior to the training program, Georgia's legislature passed a bipartisan resolution that emphasized the strong cultural, economic and academic bond between the U.S. state and Israel as exemplified by “the robust exchanges of Georgia's law enforcement professionals with Israel through GILEE.” GILEE is a research center within Georgia State University's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies. The organization's associate director, Col.

(ret.) Brent Cummings, who led the delegation to Israel, noted that the program allows senior officers to invest in and improve their personal leadership skills. “They get to see firsthand in a different culture the value of diversity and inclusion, while at the same time our hosts see the diversity of the United States represented through the delegates. By investing in leadership development, these officers will become stronger leaders who can better adapt to complex issues and challenges at home,” said Cummings. More than 1,200 public safety officials from the U.S. – most from Georgia – and around the world have participated in the program in Israel.

Israeli teen dance team wins gold medal at international competition in Spain

An Israeli teen senior dance team took home the gold medal in the hip-hop commercial mega crew category of the 2022 Dance World Cupfinals in San Sebastian, Spain, reported *The Jerusalem Post*. The Chopskicks from the Nirit Dance Studio in Modi'in won for their hip-hop performance called “Zombieland.” The Dance World Cup – also referred to as the “Olympics of dance” – took place from June 24-July 2. Its competitions are held in the genres of ballet, modern, contemporary, lyrical, jazz, tap, song and dance, street/hip-hop and national. The Chopskicks traveled to San Sebastian with three choreographers, as well as staff from the dance studio and parent chaperones, according to *The Jerusalem Post*. The 23-member team trained for five hours a week to prepare for the DWC, said one of the dancers, 15-year-old Modi'in high school student Tzofi Rubenstein. Rubenstein's mother, Ziva, told the Post: “Dance is very connected to Israeli culture. Innovation and creativity in Israeli modern dance have made it a respected leader worldwide and now, with Chopskick's win, Israeli hip-hop is on the global map.” Israel's senior and junior teams together won 18 medals at the DWC.

Idaho to get first mikvah as part of \$3.5 million Chabad construction project

A new \$3.5 million construction project at Chabad Lubavitch of Idaho in Boise will include the state's first Jewish ritual bath, also known as a *mikvah*, reported the local KTVB 7 news. “This is a tremendous milestone that we are here today to celebrate the groundbreaking of the new Chabad Jewish Center,” said Rabbi Mendel Lifshitz at a ceremony on July 6. The center opened in 2004. The Jewish population in Idaho is about 0.1 percent of the state's total population, according to the U.S. Census. “When we [first] moved to Boise, it had a small Jewish community. It still is a very small community, but it did not have any traditional representation within the Jewish community,” said Lifshitz, who co-directs the center with his wife, Esther. “During the pandemic, our community has grown tremendously, and we are now looking at being able to provide more services.” Boise Mayor Lauren McLean spoke at the groundbreaking ceremony and said the announcement of the new Chabad center “more than symbolizes the importance of community, the importance of coming together around the importance of shared values, the importance of having a place.” The new Chabad Jewish Center will also have a children's library to honor a community member who passed away six years ago, according to KTVB 7.

Police investigate giant swastika on field in Germany

German police are investigating a giant swastika that was recently mowed into the grass on a field near Berlin and discovered by a journalist. Julian Röpcke, the politics editor for the German publication *Bild*, spotted the Nazi symbol in Brandenburg and posted images of the field on Twitter on July 5. He said he told local police about the sighting, and they are investigating for breaking German law on banned political symbols. Röpcke added that when officers went to the area on the night of July 5, they found the field, although the swastika was gone. The owner of the field said it was recently mowed over. The Nazi symbol is banned under German law, and anyone who publicly displays it outside of art, science, research or teaching faces up to three years in prison, according to *Bild*. “Apparently, because of these tweets, there is now one less 20-meter [60-foot] swastika less in the world,” tweeted Röpcke. “The fact that it had already disappeared when the police arrived last night probably speaks against the thesis that someone just mowed badly. In the meantime, criminal proceedings have been initiated under Section 86 A of the Criminal Code.”

Israel requests Saudi Arabia allow direct flights for Muslim pilgrims

Israel's Regional Cooperation Minister, Esawi Frej, said on July 7 he asked Saudi Arabia to allow direct flights from Israel for Muslim pilgrims. It comes as U.S. President Joe Biden's visit to the Middle East is scheduled for the week of July 11. Israeli officials are also requesting expanded over-fly permission for their airlines on routes to Asia, wrote Reuters. “We are in talks on getting general [Saudi] over-flight rights for destinations other than Dubai, Abu Dhabi or Manama. This will save significant time for reaching Asian destinations, for example,” an Israeli official told Reuters. Frej, an Israeli Arab, said to Army Radio: “I want to see the day when I can depart from Ben-Gurion [airport near Tel Aviv] to Jeddah to fulfill my religious obligation” of pilgrimage to Mecca. Until now, Muslim pilgrims from Israel have to travel through third countries, such as Jordan.

Israel and Turkey sign civil-aviation agreement

Israel and Turkey signed a civil aviation agreement on July 7 as part of a deal to broaden bilateral ties. The agreement is part of a decision to expand and develop bilateral relations made by Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid and Turkish Foreign Minister Cavusoglu at their recent meetings in Jerusalem and Ankara. It is the first of its kind to be signed since 1951 and will allow Israeli airlines to resume flights to Turkey.

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