

Federation to hold Super Sunday on August 29

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold Super Sunday on Sunday, August 29, at 10 am, at the Jewish Community Center, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal. It will feature a brunch, comedy by comedian Josh Wallenstein and a showing of the film “Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracles” about the Broadway musical “Fiddler on the Roof.” Larry Kassan, who has directed productions of the musical, will facilitate the film discussion. The cost of the brunch and film is \$15 and reservations are requested by Sunday, August 22. To make reservations, visit the Federation website, www.jfgeb.org/, or contact the Federation at director@jfgeb.org or 724-2332.

“We are hoping to get community members to pledge early again this year,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. “We started the 2021 Campaign with almost 25 percent of the pledges already made. That helped to cut back on the manpower we needed to get through the Campaign. When the community pledges early the allocation process is much easier. We also want the snow birds to have an opportunity to gather before they leave for sunnier climates this fall.”

Wallenstein, son of Larry Wallenstein, will share a comedy routine. During the pandemic, he returned to this area from California where he had been performing stand-up comedy. Since last November, he has been working as a fifth-grade teaching assistant and was recently featured in a Newsweek article titled “5 TikTok Teachers Share Behind the Scenes of Virtual Teach-

At right: Zero Mostel (center) with Maria Karnilova, Tanya Everett, Julia Migenes and Joanna Merlin backstage, opening night of “Fiddler on the Roof” on September 22, 1964. (Photo by AP Photo, courtesy of Roadside Attractions and Samuel Goldwyn Films)



ing.” His comedy videos can be seen at www.tiktok.com/@thatjoshuakid93. (For an interview of Wallenstein, see the next issue of *The Reporter*.)

“Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracles,” a documentary by Max Lewkowicz, tells the origin story of the Broadway musical “Fiddler on the Roof,” and its creative roots in early 1960s New York City. The film includes interviews with the show’s creators, which reveal how the success and worldwide impact of “Fiddler” and its subsequent film adaptation is most appropriately viewed through the lens of the social upheaval and change in mid-20th century America. The documentary also explores a variety of international productions of the show, detailing how individuals of many cultures see themselves in the residents of Anatevka. The film features scenes from productions from Canada, the United Kingdom and the

Netherlands, as well as the last Broadway production revival with Danny Burstein and Jessica Hecht. Kassan, who is the coordinator of special events and theatre at the Rod Serling School of Fine Arts at Binghamton City School District, will lead the discussion of the film. (For an interview of Kassan, see this page.)

“After not being able to gather during the pandemic and share a meal, it will be wonderful for us to be together again,” said Hubal. “Campaign Chairwoman Marilyn Bell and I really want this event to be a joyful experience for all, filled with laughter – a celebration of our heritage and coming together after the pandemic. I look forward to seeing and talking to everyone.”

Federation plans post-pandemic Campaign

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Running a Campaign during a pandemic was very difficult. Just ask Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton. “Last year’s Campaign was different from any other,” she said. “There was no Super Sunday event and it wasn’t even safe for those making phone calls to gather at the Jewish Community Center. They made phone calls from home. But our community showed its spirit by answering those calls and pledging early.”

Hubal is hoping that same spirit will continue this year. In order to include more of the community in the event and help speed the allocation process, she’s moved Super Sunday to August 29. (For more information about Super Sunday, see the article on this page.) “We changed the date of Super Sunday for several reasons,” she said. “We want to reach snow birds before they leave. The JCC and Hillel Academy do large fund-raisers in the fall, and we do not want to interfere with them. Plus the holidays are early this year so we wanted to get the process moving before people’s lives get even busier.”

According to Hubal, the past year has been a difficult one for many local Jewish organizations due to the pandemic, which

means the Federation allocations are an important part of their budget. “We are hoping to raise \$290,000,” she noted. “This would cover most of our allocations. COVID has reduced advertising for *The Reporter*, reduced the JCC’s income and has increased the needs for Jewish Family Service. So, our organizations are all in great need.”

One way to help the Federation plan for the future is by pledging early. “If we know how much money we’ll be raising before the allocation process, that is an enormous help,” Hubal said. “It also makes it easier on our volunteers since there are fewer phone calls to make and less follow-up to do.”

The Federation is looking for volunteers to make calls and write thank-you notes in support of the Campaign. “We learned last year that organizing the Campaign virtually so volunteers can do the work from home is easy,” said Hubal. “We hope to continue that this year.”

Although the past year was difficult, Hubal noted that the local community rose to the occasion. “I am so proud of the way we came together and raised money to help our Jewish organizations,” she said. “We have a wonderful community and I know that it will rise to the occasion again this year.”

Larry Kassan and “Fiddler on the Roof”

By Reporter staff

Larry Kassan will facilitate the film discussion of “Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracle” at Super Sunday on August 29. For more information about the event, see the article on this page.)

Larry Kassan, who is coordinator of special events and theatre at the Rod Serling School of Fine Arts at Binghamton City School District, knows “Fiddler on the Roof”: not only has he seen more than a dozen productions of the musical, but he has directed, designed or produced “Fiddler” at least six times. Why does he feel the musical is so popular? “I can say that in one word: *tradition*,” he noted in an e-mail interview. “Honestly, Tevye’s story is universal. It touches all who see it. Recently, I was watching ‘The King and I.’ I could even see Tevye’s struggles [as similar to those of] the king of Siam: a changing world [where one is] so desperately trying to hold onto one’s traditions.”

The many performances he’s seen range from community theater to Broadway. He noted, “[I saw] the recent revival and a revival a few years back starring Harvey Fierstein, who took over the role from Alfred Molina. I must admit my favorite to date was the all-Yiddish revival directed by



Larry Kassan

Joel Grey at the New York City Museum of Jewish Heritage. It was wonderful and held a special place in my heart since my daughter was getting married a month later. I sobbed through the wedding scene and ‘Sunrise Sunset.’ I also got to see a local actor, Claus Evans, play the lead in an outdoor summer production in Albany, but surprisingly never saw him here at the former Cider Mill Playhouse.”

His connection with the musical began young. He noted that his first production took place during his high school years at his temple on Long Island. Other performances include those at community theaters and summer stock productions, including one in Lake Placid, NY, just prior to the 1980 Winter Olympics. But some of his favorite memories are from productions held in the Binghamton High School Helen Foley Theatre.

“As you know, [Binghamton High School is] a very diverse school and our cast both reflected and celebrated this diversity,” Kassan said. “Tevye, who makes a point often throughout the musical that he has five daughters! In our production of his five daughters, one was African American, See “Kassan” on page 5

TI to hold Honeygram fund-raiser

Temple Israel is holding a Honeygram fund-raiser as a way to wish friends and family a sweet New Year 5782. The Honeygrams can be sent locally and out of town. Each Honeygram will include two 1 oz. jars of Bonne Maman honey (OU certified kosher), a wooden honey dipper and a New Year greeting card.

Organizers of the event said, “Bonne Maman honey was chosen because the company may have helped save Jews during the Holocaust.”

There are two delivery options:
◆ Bumblebee: A gift box is \$18 and will be sent to a single recipient anywhere in the U.S. along with a custom greeting.

◆ Honeybee: Group gifts that are for local delivery only. The first box sent is \$18, additional boxes are \$6 each. The person’s name will be included on a group card delivered with the gift box.

Orders with payment must be received by the Temple Israel office by Monday, August 15, and include the recipient’s name and address. To place an order, call the temple office at 723-7461 or e-mail titammy@stny.twcbe.com.

The Reporter’s Annual Community Guide is inside this paper.

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Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

“I pledge to be funny.” Those are the words my son Joshua wrote several years ago when he was asked to sign a behavior contract before going to sleep-away camp. Not satisfied with just committing himself to respecting others and following the camp rules, he made a commitment that to keep himself and those around him in good spirits was just as important. I have no doubt he fulfilled his pledge. He came home from camp that summer with a huge smile, an endless repertoire of catchy camp songs and lots of newly acquired knowledge of Jewish ideas and principles. Last week, we dropped Joshua off at Camp Ramah New England where he will be participating in its special needs Tikvah program for the first time. After being home with his parents for the last 15 months, we feel blessed that Joshua can once again spend time with his peers and participate in

fun, age appropriate activities in a Jewish setting. Sending a kid off to camp in 2021 is a very different experience from other years. Joshua had to have two COVID tests before camp and another one before he could even get out of the car on drop-off day. For months now, the camp has been sending weekly e-mails outlining COVID procedures and policies. Staff also held several town hall Zoom meetings to answer camper and parent questions. Luggage this year had to be sent weeks in advance via FedEx because parents are not allowed to step foot in camp. There will be no packages sent to camp this year because the staff needs to focus on other things and there will be no field trips outside of camp. As a person who appreciates good communication and planning, I have marveled at the enormous efforts the camp

administrators underwent this last year to create not only a safe space for their campers, but a joyous place where they could come together and share their pride as young Jewish people after what has been a very difficult year. It has been an inspiration to witness the camp staff solving each challenge for the greater good of the young people in their charge. In some ways, Federation has the same mission: we are committed to creating a meaningful Jewish life for the people of the Binghamton community. There was no behavior contract for Joshua to sign this year, but I am certain there is a bunk somewhere in the woods of the Berkshires where a young man is upholding a commitment he made several years ago to be funny and share his good spirits with others. I am wishing you all a meaningful summer filled with laughter and joy.

Making meaning: Tisha B’Av and connecting to Zionism

By Julianna Bat-Simeon

(JNS) – Sometimes, prayer can seem like a daunting task. For some of us, we feel like without a rabbi to tell us what page to turn to or where to start in our siddur, we don’t know if we’re “doing it right.” For all of us, the goal is never to go through the motions and simply say the Hebrew words without feeling that spark, that connection to God. Prayer helps us as a Jewish people have a unified connection to the Almighty, which is a pretty big deal. While at university, a rabbi at my school encouraged me to get in the habit of always saying the *Modeh Ani* before getting out of bed as a way of saying “thank you” to God every day. This small act of saying such a short, but meaningful, prayer has added a little burst of spirituality to my day. Even if you’re not used to praying outside of Shabbat or other holidays, developing a new habit of making an effort to say even one prayer a day can strengthen our unity as Jews. When I think about ways to elevate our everyday and sometimes mundane lives (especially during this time of pandemic) by reminding ourselves of our connection

to prayer, I am also reminded of the inseparable tie between Jews and Zionism. I am writing this article as we approach Tisha B’Av, where our goal is not merely to mourn and wallow at the tragedies that have befallen our people. Rather, in the words of another rabbi at my university’s Hillel, “When people feel yearning for God, that is the manifestation of God’s compassion. Compassion is holding someone where they are and helping them to grow.” As Jews, God wants us to strive to be our best selves, and through it all, we have evidence that God has not abandoned us. How does this relate to Zionism? Well, God made it a point to tell our ancestor Rachel in the biblical book of Jeremiah, “Thus says God, hold back your voice from crying, and your eyes from tears: for there is reward for what you have done, says God, and they will return from the land of your enemies. There is hope for you in the end, says God, your children will return to their borders.” Indeed, these prophetic words have come true: After years of exile, today the Jewish people have reclaimed their homeland and returned to Israel. When we challenge

ourselves to be better people and reconnect with God, we also come closer to achieving our goal of living peacefully with each other in the land God has granted us. On Tisha B’Av, we will mourn a broken connection between the Jewish people and God, but God has always granted us the space to rebuild that connection. As we continue to fight for our homeland against those enemies who work to destroy it, as we make mistakes and struggle to pray sometimes, and as we don’t always view all Jews as our family, God is still there to help us grow. Zionism is a dream, and taking steps like saying the small *Modeh Ani* daily prayer or taking time to educate yourself about Israel can help us make meaning by coming closer to God, and through our actions, to each other as well. *The full Modeh Ani text in English is: “I offer thanks to you, living and enduring King, for You have graciously returned my soul within me. Great is Your faithfulness.”* Julianna Bat-Simeon is a member of the Herut North America Youth Cabinet from the Midwest. Herut is an international movement for Zionist pride and education; its U.S. website is <https://herutna.org/>.

In My Own Words

Emerging from the pandemic

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Sometimes I forget to take a mask with me, so I’ve been keeping extras in the car. I’ve felt weird walking into buildings or homes without wearing a mask: the former normal now seems a bit abnormal. I’m still wearing masks when going shopping and still limit the number of places I go. Informal “I’m just looking” shopping still rarely happens. There are still places I have to wear a mask and I don’t

Another baby!

The following photo came too late to make it into *The Reporter’s* Family Living section in the July 2 issue.
Eitan Lev Kaminsky
Born: March 2, 2021
Parents: Alex and Tara Kaminsky



mind because my preference is to err on the side of caution. That’s a summary of what life is like now that we are emerging from the pandemic. Please note that I didn’t say “now that the pandemic is over” because it isn’t. The Delta variation of the virus has reached our shores and there are far too many unvaccinated people to say this illness is completely under control. It might even be reoccurring, requiring us to get yearly shots, much like we do with the flu. Of course, no one knows what will happen because so much about the virus is still unknown. I am doing more than I thought I would. Go to a restaurant? My first reaction was “forget about it!” Then I remembered that one purpose of getting the vaccine was so that life could start to resemble the pre-2020 normal. So, I have eaten out a few times and felt comfortable doing so, although it’s still a rare occurrence. There are places I am required to wear a mask and one of those is my mom’s nursing home. But we are now allowed to visit any time during regular visiting hours so I can go to her room and just hang out. Spending time together was what we did before it was no longer safe for her to be at home. I can’t go to the dining room or the lounge, but I can take her outside. Of course, this all depends on the number of virus cases in our area staying low. If the rules change back, then we might have to schedule visits again.

Reporter staff are still mostly working from home this summer. We figured it was easier since Camp JCC includes young children who can’t get vaccinated yet. This way, we stay safe and help the campers stay safe. One good thing is that I can still sleep in a bit each morning; the not-so-great side is not having air conditioning during the hotter summer days. But I’m managing. I am not the only one, though, who’s found that life during the pandemic has had its blessings. Things are starting to get hectic again and the quieter pace of the pandemic suited me. There were fewer choices to make and decisions to juggle: now I have to choose whether to go somewhere and how much running around I do. Before I had no choice: I wasn’t allowed in many of the places that I would normally go. While I will be glad when the pandemic is behind us, I do want life to stay quieter and easier. A great deal of that is beyond my control – just like it was during the pandemic – but I need to reconsider my obligations based on my new energy level. All of us can think about what really matters and what doesn’t. We need to mourn those who are no longer with us and connect with the people who are important to us. And we need to make certain the lessons we’ve learned do not get lost in the hustle and bustle of the everyday non-pandemic world.



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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.

- ◆ Tablet presents new episodes of the cooking show “Joan Knows Best” at www.tabletmag.com/tags/joan-knows-best. Last year, Joan Nathan and her son, David Henry Gerson, cooked together on Zoom. This year, they are doing it in person. The first episode is up and new episodes will air every other week for the rest of the summer.
- ◆ The Tikvah Online Academy will hold “Great Speeches and Great Leaders,” a new program for middle and high school students. The classes will study the “defining moments of Jewish, Zionist and American history. It will take place in August 2021 on weekdays, week nights and Sundays. The registration deadline is Tuesday, July 20. For more information, visit <https://tikvahfund.org/speeches/>.
- ◆ JewishFiction.net announced that its summer 2021 issue is up at www.jewishfiction.net/index.php/current-issue/. Ten stories, originally written in Yiddish, Hebrew and English, are ready to read at no cost.
- ◆ The BAS Scholars Series will hold the virtual seminar “The Book of Genesis: Tracing the Origins of the Ancestral Narratives” with Professor Gary A. Rendsburg, Rutgers University, on Thursday, August 26, from 8-9 pm. The cost to attend is \$10. His focus will be on the stories of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, along with their primary wives Sarah, Rebekah and Rachel. For more information or to register, visit www.biblicalarchaeology.org/travel-study/bas-scholars-series/.
- ◆ Jewish Live offers the program “Sacred Science,”

hosted by Sinai and Synapses Founding Director Rabbi Geoffrey A. Mitelman, on Tuesdays, at 2 pm, at www.jewishlive.org/sacredscience. Mitelman talks with professors and rabbis, academics and practitioners, and scientists and religious thinkers. Prior episodes can be found on the site and transcripts are available a few days after the program airs.

- ◆ The Bible 365 Podcast covered the complete Hebrew Bible in one year and is taught by Rabbi Dr. Meir Soloveichik. Subscribers receive a new, 20-minute episode every day, daily e-mails with lesson summaries, and access to every new podcast and the full Bible 365 archives. The cost for a year is \$100. For more information or to register, visit <https://lp.bible365podcast.com/>.
- ◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust will hold several programs in July and August, including “Legacies: Judy Heumann,” about the disabilities activist on Tuesday, July 27, at 2 pm (<https://mjhnyc.org/events/legacies-judy-heumann/>); “Olympic Pride, American Prejudice,” about the 1936 Olympics in Nazi Germany, on Thursday, July 29, at 7 pm (<https://mjhnyc.org/events/olympic-pride-american-prejudice/>); “Stories Survive: Dorian Grunbaum,” about her family’s experiences in World War II, on Tuesday, August 3, at 2 pm (<https://mjhnyc.org/events/stories-survive-dorian-grunbaum/>); “Sarah Aroeste with Shai Bachar: Ladino Music From Yesterday to Today, Live From Edmond J. Safra Hall” on Sunday, August 8, at 3 pm (<https://mjhnyc.org/events/sarah-aroste-with-shai-bachar-ladino-music-from-yesterday-to-today-live-from-edmond-j-safra-hall/>); “Nu Jewish Storylab,” a rhythm and movement exploration of Jewish children’s stories

from traditional to cutting edge, on Sunday, August 22, at 1 pm (<https://mjhnyc.org/events/nu-jewish-storylab/>); and “10 Years of Recipes Remembered,” about the book “Recipes Remembered: A Celebration of Survival” that contains more than 80 stories gleaned from personal interviews with Holocaust survivors and their families, on Thursday, August 26, at 5 pm (<https://mjhnyc.org/events/10-years-of-recipes-remembered/>).

- ◆ The Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center and American Inspiration will hold a virtual conversation with Menachem Kaiser, author of “Plunder: A Memoir of Family Property and Nazi Treasure,” and Dr. Bernice Lerner. Kaiser’s book tells the story of his battle to reclaim the family’s apartment building in Sosnowiec, Poland. The event will take place on Tuesday, July 20, at 6 pm. For more information or to register, visit https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ws-DRbKBrS8O9LBqmtX7qQw.
- ◆ The American Jewish University will hold two virtual classes: “What Would Moses Say About Your Smartphone?” with Rabbi Jeffrey Schein on Monday, July 26, from 5-6 pm (<https://learning.aju.edu/event/what-would-moses-say-about-your-smartphone/>); and “Workshop: What Would You Do If You Weren’t Afraid?” with Michal Oshman about her book of the same title on Wednesday, August 11, from 3-4 pm (<https://learning.aju.edu/event/workshop-what-would-you-do-if-you-werent-afraid/>).
- ◆ Jewish Women’s Archive will hold virtual “(Post) Quarantine Book Talks.” All sessions are on Thursdays at 8 pm: July 22, Annelise Heinz, author of “Mahjong”; July 29, Gabrielle Glaser, author of “American Baby”; August 5, Rachel Beanland, author of “Florence Adler Swims Forever”; and August 12, Rachel Sharona Lewis, author of “The Rabbi Who Prayed with Fire.” For more information or to register, visit <https://jwa.org/events#quarantinebookclub>.
- ◆ The Jewish National Fund USA will hold a “Live Rosh Hashanah Cooking Experience: Telling Our Stories Through Jewish Fusion Cuisine,” hosted by Women for Israel San Diego, on Wednesday, August 18, from 4-4:30 pm (optional prep time – recommended if cooking along) and 4:30-5:30 pm for the cooking class. For more information or to register, visit www.jnf.org/events-landing-pages/rosh-hashanah-cooking-experience.

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



On the Jewish food scene Matzah: not just for Passover

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

My family has long eaten matzah all year-round. For dessert (we didn’t have cake or cookies around the house), my father would regularly eat a piece of matzah slathered with jam. My preference is for whole wheat matzah and it’s always in my cupboard. I’ve been eating more of it lately because my doctor recommended I watch the amount of sodium that is in my diet. (FYI: that matzah contains no sodium.) It makes a great snack plain (yes, I do eat it with *nothing* on it), or as a treat with jam. When I’m running late for breakfast, matzah and peanut butter make a terrific duo. If I really want that breakfast to be special, I add some jam. Although I don’t keep butter in the house on a regular basis, my memories of eating matzah with whipped butter during Passover make my mouth start to drool.



Some examples of Matzo Project chips.

That means it didn’t seem strange to me to get publicity material about the Matzo Project, a company that also knows matzah is good to eat all year-round, especially if you tweak it a bit. Although deliberately not kosher for Passover, its food is certified kosher by the Orthodox Union and is also vegan, nut-free, dairy-free and all natural. For those who keep kosher, that means you can use most of its products for meat and dairy meals, or as an anytime snack.

According to its website, Matzo Project began when “summer camp friends Ashley Albert and Kevin Rodriguez set out to bake a new take on the culturally beloved, but traditionally flavorless box of matzo. Instead, they got a super-snappy, extra-sturdy, crazy-versatile cracker that goes with every single thing they’ve tried to put on it.” The packaging includes a cartoon version of a grandmother asking, “Would it kill you to try something new?”

I figure that since I like matzah and enjoy trying new things – at least I do as an adult; I was a really picky eater as a kid – I’d ask the PR person to send me some samples. I received packages of four different types of matzah bites: small matzah crackers that the package calls “The Cutest

Little Matzo Bits.” So, *nu*, are they any good? I am happy to say they are great. When looking at the package in *The Reporter* office, I immediately opened the cinnamon sugar flavored one. It has a great cinnamon taste without being too sweet. *The Reporter* bookkeeper was in the office, too, and tried one. What did she think? She immediately came back for seconds, which I think is answer enough.

The next afternoon, I decided to do an additional taste testing. The (sea) salted chips – those parentheses are on the package – were not too salty and, while fine to eat plain, would be great with any dip, cheese or hummus. The harissa-flavored

chips had a bit of kick at the end, which increased the more chips I ate. However, the result was tasty, rather than mouth burning, which was a plus for me. The final chip was the “everything plus two other things” chip that, believe it or not, tasted like a bagel chip. It would be perfect with butter or cream cheese, but you could also fancy it up with other treats.

The website features a few other matzah products, including matzah ball soup that’s vegetarian and all natural (and includes instructions on how to make sinkers or floaters – who knew it was how much oil you use?), matzah crumbs, matzah flats (a larger version of the salted or everything chips) and, during the cooler weather, milk chocolate and dark chocolate matzah clusters. Oh, those clusters look good. I wonder if they’ll be sending out samples? If so, add me to the list!

Matzo Project products can be found in specialty stores or ordered through its website, www.matzoproject.com.

DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
July 30-August 12	July 21
August 13-26	August 4
Aug. 27-Sept. 9 (Rosh Hashanah) ..	Aug. 18
September 10-23	August 30*

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

Hillel Academy seeks new administrative assistant

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

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

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

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

Moving any time soon? Or just leaving town for a few months?

Whether you’re moving across town or across the country, please let *The Reporter* know so you can stay up to date on community news and quickly receive the paper at your new (or temporary) address!

E-mail treporter@aol.com with “Reporter Address change” in the subject line, or call 607-724-2360, ext. 254, to let *The Reporter* know about your new address.

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Off the Shelf

Memoir, poetry and a woman rabbi

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

I wracked my brain to come up with an opening that would tie together the three books in this review, but had no luck. You may be asking, “Then why did she decide to review them together?” Well, they were next on my to-read pile and didn’t fit with other reviews I’d planned. But they all have Jewish themes so below are reviews of a memoir, a poetry anthology and a children’s picture book.

“Crash”

Some memorists try to portray their decisions in the best light possible. That’s not true of Rachel Michelberg, the author of the memoir “Crash: How I Became a Reluctant Caregiver” (She Writes Press). Instead she is brutally honest, offering a picture of a woman who decided to accept her limitations, even when society – and family members – disapproved of her actions.

Michelberg, who is a cantor and voice teacher, knew her marriage was no longer viable even before her husband, David, was in a plane crash that left him severely injured physically and mentally. Although she was only having an emotional affair, rather than a physical one, with another musician, she knew she was no longer in love with David. When he was in the hospital, Michelberg was bombarded with questions she didn’t know how to answer: How will David’s accident affect their two children? Since David will always need nursing care and was no longer able to work, will they be able to afford their home and take care of his medical needs? Does she want to live with, and care for, someone with whom she is no longer in love? The stress from these questions and others cause the anorexia that Michelberg struggled with in her younger years to return and she finds herself in the hospital. Over the course of the memoir, she debates her choices and notes the good,

and bad, decisions that she made.

“Crash” made for compulsive reading: I found it hard to put the book down because I wanted to learn what happened. While readers may not agree with Michelberg’s choices, I did respect her desire not to martyr herself. The ethical dilemmas she discusses make this work perfect for book clubs, although readers who have experienced similar traumas may find the work raises thoughts and emotions they’d rather not relive.

“101 Jewish Poems for the Third Millennium”

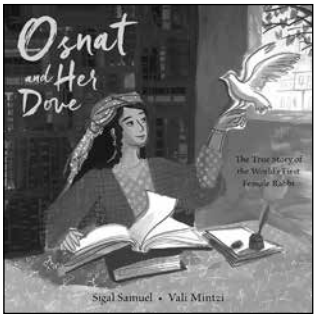
The poetry collection “101 Jewish Poems for the Millenium,” edited by Matthew E. Silverman and Nancy Naomi Carlson (The Ashland Poetry Press), differs from other poetry anthologies I’ve read. The majority of the poems have not been previously published and the poetry is presented in alphabetical order by the authors’ last names. The editors deliberately sought variety, which means there are not only poems originally written in English, but others translated from Hebrew and Russian. Some poems have specifically religious subject matter, while others focus on the writers’ personal lives. However, all – either directly or indirectly – offer Jewish themes, although the editors leave what that means open for readers to decide.

Although almost all of the poems were excellent, several stood out: Wendy Barker’s “Waking of *Call It Sleep*,” Moshe Dor’s “Reflections,” Eli Eliahu’s “Underground,” Vladimir Gandelman’s “Stills,” Jane Yolen’s “Shoes: Holocaust Museum, Washington, D.C.” and Elaine Zimmerman’s “Hostage.” Most of these reflect on the difficulty of being Jewish and the horrors that have been done to Jews in the past. However, many excellent poems focus on more mundane themes, which illustrate how Judaism is part of

the poets’ everyday lives. Anyone interested in Jewish poetry will find this a welcome addition to their bookshelf.

“Osnat and Her Dove”

I had never heard of Osnat Barzani before reading the wonderful picture book “Osnat and Her Dove: The True Story of the World’s First Female Rabbi” written by Sigal Samuel and beautifully illustrated by Vali Mintz (Levine Querido.) Osnat, who was born in 1590 in what is now known as Iraq, deserves to be better known, and this work is a great way to introduce children and adults to her life.



The cover of “Osnat and Her Dove”

Osnat, who was the only child of a rabbi, convinces her father to teach her how to read, even though most girls at the time did not receive an education. As a condition of her marriage, her husband, Jacob, agrees to let her continue her studies. When Jacob, who becomes the head of her father’s yeshiva, has little time to teach students, Osnat takes over those duties and, after Jacob dies, continues to run the yeshiva on her own. Legends begin to grow around her, particularly about her pet dove who constantly remains at her side.

I loved “Osnat and Her Dove.” The story is well done and the writing is complemented by the drawings. It’s the great work to awaken the love of study in children and a perfect way to introduce adults to this fascinating woman.



Off the Shelf

Finding and creating families

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

The exploration of family relationships – the families we are born into and the ones we create on our own – forms the basis of three recent novels. Each shows how those relationships form the core of our lives, even while noting how every family has its unique characteristics and problems. Judaism also plays a part in the characters’ lives, even when it doesn’t play a large role in the plot.

“Morningside Heights”

Some books are worth the wait. I received an advance review copy of Joshua Henkin’s novel “Morningside Heights” (Pantheon Books) in 2020, but was later told its publication was being postponed until the summer of 2021. Since I prefer to read books just before I review them, the novel remained on my to-read shelf for more than a year. It had already been getting good press, including the number one spot on the Indie Next List for June. Well, it deserves all that praise: “Morningside Heights” is wonderful.

Although the book features insights into three characters, it is Pru Steiner who is the star of the story. The Ohio-born Pru who went to Yale in the early 1970s had grand dreams of her future. Instead, she falls for her charismatic Shakespeare professor, Spence Robin. While her marriage is a success, the career she chooses after giving birth to her daughter, Sarah, is less than satisfying, as was discovering that Spence has a child, Arlo, from his first marriage. But the real story begins when the formerly brilliant Spence begins to decline mentally. His diagnosis of early dementia is difficult for both of them, especially when Spence begins to need physical help and it becomes clear it’s unsafe for him to be alone in their apartment. How Pru adjusts to her new situation, while still trying to have a life beyond work and caring for her husband, is brilliantly portrayed.

Henkin writes beautifully and the pages of his novel slide

by – that is, until you get to heart-breaking, devastating moments that force you to stop and consider his words. Those short sentences are packed with more meaning than many writers’ paragraphs. “Morningside Heights” is ultimately a love story, one that will warm your heart and leave you grieving at the same time.

“Jacob’s Rainbow”

At first, David Hirshberg’s “Jacob’s Rainbow” (Fig Tree Books) doesn’t seem to have a great deal of Jewish content. However, readers may note some important clues the author places early in the novel when narrator Jacobo Toledano speaks of certain customs that his family and others in their small village in New Mexico follow. Jacobo’s focus, though, is on college, but what he finds is different than he expected: it’s the 1970s, a time when protests for free speech and against the Vietnam War were sweeping many campuses.

Jacob becomes part of two groups on campus, one formal and one informal. As part of the rowing team, he is befriended by Herzl, who talks about the antisemitism he faced as a child and how he used it to become physically and mentally strong. Jacobo also falls under the sway of Myles, a graduate student, who leads his followers into confrontations with the university and the police. Myles demands people’s complete loyalty: anyone who questions him is treated with disdain and exiled from the group. Jacobo is assigned to record the conflict: he fills his notebook with a behind-the-scenes look at what is occurring. During this time, he also learns that not everyone has his best interests at heart. However, with the help of a few loyal friends, Jacobo discovers his true worth and decides to reveal the history and secrets of his village.

“Jacob’s Rainbow” is well done, although a few of the

plot elements weren’t totally convincing. The best parts of the story were the revelations about the true meaning of his family’s customs. Jacobo is an engaging character and Hirshberg’s depiction of the protests of the early 1970s rings true.

“Closer to Fine”

Rachel Levine’s mother is very upset: she refuses to accept that her daughter is bisexual. She demands that Rachel keep the news secret from her grandfather with whom Rachel is going to live while she attends graduate school in Boston. Over the course of Jodi S. Rosenfeld’s novel “Closer to Fine” (She Writes Press), Rachel must decide how she wants to live her life, something that includes re-evaluating her relationship to Judaism.

Rachel is studying clinical psychotherapy, a profession that forces her to look at her own life more closely when her supervisor analyzes her interactions with her patients. Outside of school, she spends time with her grandfather, including attending Saturday morning services with him at his Conservative synagogue. Although he dislikes the changes the new rabbi makes, Rachel finds them refreshing since Judaism begins to feel more relevant to her life. She also finds friendship and more with Liz Abraham, a lesbian who also attends services and opens a new world to her. However, that relationship forces Rachel to make choices about her identity, choices that could affect her entire future.

While some parts of “Closer to Fine” felt predictable, that didn’t detract from the story. Rachel’s conflicts were real and interesting, and the discussions relating to women and Judaism add a greater depth to the novel. Book clubs interested in LGBTQ+ stories or feminism and Judaism might want to explore Rosenfeld’s work.

Intact 1,000-year-old chicken egg unearthed in central Israel

By JNS staff

(JNS) – An intact chicken egg dating back to the Islamic period 1,000 years ago was discovered in Yavne, the Israel Antiquities Authority announced on June 9. IAA archaeologists came upon the unbroken egg in an ancient cesspit during large-scale excavations at a site in the central Israeli city that revealed an extensive industrial area from the Byzantine period.

“Eggshell fragments are known from earlier periods, for example in the City of David and at Caesarea and Apollonia,” said the IAA’s Lee Perry Gal, a leading expert on poultry in the ancient world. “But due to the eggs’ fragile shells, hardly any whole chicken eggs have been preserved.”

“Even at the global level, this is an extremely rare find,” added Gal, pointing out that archeological digs occasionally uncover ancient ostrich eggs, whose thick shells preserved them.



Archeologist Alla Nagorsky held the ancient egg. (Photo by Israel Antiquities Authority)

“Even today, eggs rarely survive for long in supermarket cartons,” said IAA archaeologist Alla Nagorsky, excavation director at the site where the egg was found. “It’s amazing to think this is a 1,000-year-old find!” Nagorsky attributes its “unique preservation” to the “conditions in which it lay for centuries, nestled in a cesspit containing soft human waste.”

Nevertheless, said the IAA, “Despite the extreme caution with which the egg was removed, under the experienced supervision of a conservationist, its shell – preserved whole by the unusual anaerobic conditions – was cracked.”

It was restored to the state in which it was found, however, at the IAA organics laboratory by conservationist Ilan Naor.

The IAA said that it’s unclear how the egg ended up in the cesspit, but other “exciting finds were retrieved from the same pit, including three typical Islamic-period bone dolls used as playthings some 1,000 years ago.”

See “Egg” on page 5

Small-Town Judaism

Fleischmanns, NY, Part I

BILL SIMONS

Fleischmanns, NY, sits in the Western Catskills, approximately 100 miles from Binghamton. Metropolitan areas dominate the demographics of American Judaism, but for more than 125 years, Fleischmanns, with a population of about 350, has reflected Jewry's small-town presence. John Thorn, historian of culture and baseball, captures Fleischmanns' essence: "an appealingly forlorn spot... 50 if not 100 years [separate it] from the rest of America. Its old-fashioned Catskills summers – fresh air, cool mountain nights, porch sitting, ball playing, swimming and dozing off in lawn chairs – have been swallowed up... In Fleischmanns, the mangled evidence of its former glories has not yet become unrecognizable; on the contrary, the eerie remains... form the spur to memory."

To escape the blistering summers of the Midwest, the Fleischmann family – Jewish yeast and whiskey moguls, owners of the Cincinnati Reds, and Ohio political powerbrokers – came to the area, then known as Griffin Corners. The Fleischmann family and their cohorts built great mansions, installed heated pools, funded a uniformed band, created a spacious park and founded and played for a local baseball team. At a time when antisemitism often restricted accommodations to white Protestants, other Jews joined the Fleischmann family in the summer sojourn to the area, establishing seasonal homes, bread-and-boards and opening grand hotels featuring amenities and entertainments. Lake Switzerland, an idyllic construct of human endeavor, hosted swimming, boating and fishing. In 1913, the incorporated and consolidated village adopted the name Fleischmanns. The first half of the 20th century was the heyday of Jewish resorts in Fleischmanns and other Catskill communities.

By the late 1950s, the summer world of Fleischmanns' Jewish resorts experienced

declension. Over the next generation, interstate highways, air travel and air conditioning increasingly made summer vacations in mountain enclaves appear sedate and antiquated. The grand hotels closed, prompting suspicions that insurance incentives prompted certain resort finales by blazing fire. More recently, flood waters wrought devastation. Two rather dark commercial movies filmed on location in Fleischmanns. The community came close to formal dissolution. Amidst the remnants, several impressive Queen Anne and Victorian homes survive. And memories of the halcyon days linger.

In the Clovesville Cemetery, along old Route 28, there is a poignant reminder of the old Fleischmanns. The Jewish portion of the cemetery rests on a gentle rising hill. There, a granite monument denotes the Edelstein/Berg family plot. It domiciles the graves of Jacob and Dinah Edelstein, immigrant Jews, who operated a hotel in Fleischmanns. Their daughter, Gertrude, and her husband, Lewis Berg, share the family plot. The dates on the gravestones indicate that Jacob was 20 and Dinah 17 when their daughter was born. Young Gertrude would write and perform skits in the family hotel. In time, Gertrude Berg achieved fame as a scriptwriter, producer and actress. From the 1920s through the 1950s, she immortalized the character of Molly Goldberg, chronicling Jewish family life on radio and television in comedic drama, breaking ground for the fictive Mrs. Maisel. Fleischmanns figures prominently in the arc of Gertrude Berg's life and legacy. Before departing, I placed a small rock on her gravestone.

A summer resort, Oppenheimer's Regis Hotel, survives in Fleischmanns. The food is ample and kosher, and the clientele is Jewish. Orthodox and Hasidic Jews figure prominently in the summer migration to Fleischmanns.

Over the years, tensions between Jews in Fleischmanns have emerged. Demarcations between summer and year-round residents, downstate and upstate sensibilities, and Orthodox/Hasidic and liberal/secular Jews have flared. The COVID pandemic brought these fissures to a peak in 2020. Disputes took place over the donning of masks. Violation of public health edicts that ordered the closure of several summer enterprises – camps, lodgings, restaurants and a yeshiva – owned by observant, seasonal Jewish residents of Fleischmanns generated confrontation. In response to his insistence on enforcement of public health regulations, Fleischmanns' then mayor, Fred Woller, was accused of antisemitism by the owner of summer businesses frequented by observant Jews. The mayor, secular in his orientation, countered that he grew up Jewish.

By June 2021, the COVID pandemic and tempers had receded in Fleischmanns. On Sunday, June 13, about 100 members, friends and public officials gathered on the front lawn of Congregation B'nai Israel for the 2 pm dedication ceremony of a roadside marker. It was an older group that assembled outside the synagogue on the pastoral setting at 357 Wagner Avenue. Few wore masks and most sat on folding wooden chairs. The program began with the recitation of the *Shehecheyanu* prayer of gratitude. Presiding over the ceremony, synagogue President Gil Rubin remarked that it was good to once again look upon smiling faces. The threat of thunderstorms proved illusionary and this picture-perfect late spring day mirrored the congeniality of the assemblage.

Congregation Bnai Israel had previously received recognition on the United States and

New York state historical registries. After significant research and rigorous documentation attesting to the historic importance of the site, the William C. Pomeroy Foundation awarded the synagogue a roadside marker. With yellow base, post and lettering, the blue face of the roadside marker reads: "B'nai Israel Founded in 1918 By Jewish Farmers & Businessmen From Fleischmanns & The Catskills As A Synagogue For Worship. Building Funds Raised 1919. William C. Pomeroy Foundation 2020." Congregation Bnai Israel is one of the most venerable synagogues in the Catskills.

Affiliated with the Conservative movement, Bnai Israel is inclusive and egalitarian. A white, wooden framed exterior announces the sanctuary, its *bima* forward, Stars of David emblazoned on stained-glass windows and seating for about 250. From late June until the *shofar* marks the conclusion of Yom Kippur, Cantor Shai Simonson conducts services.

At the dedication of the Bnai Israel marker, Assemblyman Chris Tague observed that the history of the synagogue is a "truly American tale... [created in] classic small-town fashion." The Assemblyman wished the synagogue an additional hundred years of "worship and love."

Right next to Bnai Israel is another site central to Fleischmanns' Jewish history, a park centered by baseball. Part II of the series will examine Fleischmanns' field of dreams

Bill Simons 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.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Israel to fund global Jewish education network

Herzog College has been selected to partner with Israel's Diaspora Affairs Ministry in launching one of its flagship international projects. For the first time, there will be one organization liaising with Jewish schools throughout the world, creating a global Jewish education network. Minister for Diaspora Affairs Omer Yankelovich signed a 38 million shekel (\$12 million) agreement with Herzog College at a ceremony in June to lead the two-year project. The initiative includes a global educational and professional network that will work with experts and providers in different languages on matters such as the development of educational content, the training of teachers, the support of school leadership, the building of virtual platforms to share ideas and initiatives, and the provision of professional consulting services to individual schools. The need for this initiative was recognized during the coronavirus pandemic when many communities in the Diaspora were struggling to cope with the closure of schools and the transition to virtual learning, while also facing a shortage of Jewish-studies teachers and high-quality curriculum resources. The initiative will include the creation of connections between Jewish school students worldwide, including virtual events to strengthen relationships and connections between Jewish children in different countries, as well as establishing frameworks for dialogue between teachers and school principals with their counterparts around the world.

Egg.....Continued from page 4

According to the IAA, poultry farming was introduced in Israel 2,300 years ago, during the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods. During the Islamic period, from the seventh century C.E. onwards, there was a marked decrease in the percentage of pig bones at sites in the region, reflecting the prohibition on eating pork.

"Families needed a ready protein

substitute that didn't require cooling and preservation, and they found it in eggs and chicken meat," explained Gal. "Unfortunately, the egg [unearthed in Yavne] had a small crack in the bottom, so most of the contents had leaked out of it. Only some of the yolk remained, which is being preserved for future DNA analysis."

Kassan.....Continued from page 1

one was of Irish heritage and the other was from a Vietnamese family! Our Yente was a wonderful senior at BHS who was also African American. Knowing I was the only Jewish member of the musical faculty, she stuck close and constantly asked me questions about the character of Yente. We often broke into character together and I would take on the role of a resident of Anetevka, in the cafeteria, [while] passing each other in the halls, etc."

Kassan noted that sometimes he and the

student kept acting outside the school. "A most amusing memory was at Wegmans," he added. "She was a cashier there and I would always choose her counter to check out my groceries. She would greet me as Yente asking, 'So, Mr. Kassan, how are you,' in as ethnic a voice that she could muster. I would respond, 'How should I be doing?' She would say, 'Of course, with all this *mishegoss*!' Needless to say, the looks we would get from the shoppers on line were priceless!"

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2) Pledges and payments (checks should be made payable to "Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton") can be mailed to The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Road, Vestal, NY 13850

3) Fill out the form in this ad and mail it to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850

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

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Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____


Zip Code: _____

Phone number : _____

Amount of pledge: _____

Support community programming like the Hanukkah Drive up event!

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





Devarim, Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22

Ruminations on the Three Weeks and beyond

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

This coming Sunday, July 18, marks Tisha B’Av, the saddest day on the Jewish calendar, as it marks the destruction of both Holy Temples and the end of a period of time known as the Three Weeks. The Three Weeks began with the 17th day of the Hebrew month of Tammuz (this year marked on June 27), which, like Tisha B’Av, is observed as a fast day in commemoration of five calamities that occurred on that day. On the 17th day of Tammuz, the first set of tablets of law were broken by Moses; the offering of the daily sacrifices was interrupted, even before the First Temple was destroyed; the walls of Jerusalem were breached before the destruction of the Second Temple; the

wicked Apostomos burned a Torah scroll; and he erected an idol in the Temple.

This three-week period is referred to by our sages as *bein hametzarim*—between the straits—and is distinguished by several customs associated with mourning: marriages are not held during this time; we refrain from music and dancing or from pleasure trips; and from hair-cutting and wearing new clothes. As its name implies, this is a difficult period; aside from the mourning aspect, it is considered an unfavorable time for the Jewish people. Paradoxically, despite its tragic associations, this period is characterized by strong positive spiritual influences. Jewish mysticism

teaches that everything that transpires in the material world is a reflection of the corresponding spiritual forces that operate in the higher realms. Moreover, the way any entity functions on the physical plane results from specific relationships between spiritual forces *that* are the source of all corporeal existence. For example, the sun is associated with the name of God that expresses the Divine attribute of mercy and revelation. The shining of the sun, especially during the Three Weeks when it is at its most powerful, thus indicates the prevalence of intense Godly mercy.

The tragic nature of the Three Weeks and its status as a See “Three” on page 7

Congregational Notes

Beth David Synagogue

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

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

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

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

Kol Haverim

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

Congregation Tikkun v’Or

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

Norwich Jewish Center

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

Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

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

Temple Concord

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

Some services and programs are online only.

Friday, July 16: 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Rabbi Rachel Esserman. To attend in person, contact the office by 2 pm on Friday, July 16. To view on Zoom, visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82733826834?pwd=bIRDaDV6dHRlMjVhY-0JoRmMzVU05QT09>, meeting ID 827 3382 6834 and passcode 880491.

Saturday, July 17: At 9:15 am, Torah study with Rabbi Batsheva Appel on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88298087579?pwd=eTVkMDRVVlpwTmZvMkdYTm1OK0w1Zz09>, meeting ID 882 9808 7579 and passcode 676707. At 7 pm, “Havdalah and Tisha B’Av Program with Rabbi Rachel Esserman at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89741791260?pwd=MzZnQ0trQWhycGFZdzcloczExUkhXdz09>, meeting ID 897 4179 1260 and passcode 408279.

Friday, July 23: 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell. To attend in person, contact the office by 2 pm on Friday, July 23, to sign up. The Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82733826834?pwd=bIRDaDV6dHRlMjVhY0JoRmMzVU05QT09>, meeting ID 827 3382 6834 and passcode 880491.

Saturday, July 24: 9:15 am, Torah study with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88298087579?pwd=eTVkMDRVVlpwTmZvMkdYTm1OK0w1Zz09>, meeting ID 882 9808 7579 and passcode 676707; and 7 pm, “Havdalah with a Bonus” with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell and Rabbi Rachel Esserman at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89741791260?pwd=MzZnQ0trQWhycGFZdzcloczExUkhXdz09>, meeting ID 897 4179 1260 and passcode 408279.

The Kilmer Mansion Summer Concert Series will be held on Saturdays, July 31, The Joel Band; and September 11, String Theory.

Temple Brith Sholom

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

Friday, July 16, light candles before 8:19 pm
Saturday, July 17, Shabbat ends 9:18 pm
Friday, July 23, light candles before 8:13 pm
Saturday, July 24, Shabbat ends 9:13 pm
Friday, July 30, light candles before 8:06 pm
Saturday, July 31, Shabbat ends 9:05 pm

Temple Israel

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

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

On Saturday, July 17, Shacharit services will be held at 10 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22 and the haftarah is Isaiah 1:1-27. At 9:30 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Sunday, July 18, Torah study will take place at 10:30 am.

On Saturday, July 24, Shacharit services will be held at 10 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11 and the haftarah is Isaiah 40:1-26. At 9:30 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Sunday, July 25, Torah study will take place at 10:30 am.

The temple office will be closed Friday-Tuesday, August 6-10.

Rohr Chabad Center

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Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors
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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.

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



Israel set to host world flag football championship

By Josh Hasten

(JNS) – The International Federation of American Football has selected Israel to host the Flag Football World Championships at the Kraft Family Sports Campus in Jerusalem from December 6-8. The three-day tournament is expected to attract more than 40 teams from up to 30 countries competing for the world title and a spot in the World Games 2022.

The biannual tournament was originally scheduled to take place in Denmark in 2020, but was postponed due to the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. The Kraft Family Sports Campus hosted one of the most successful European Championships in 2019.

The men’s and women’s teams that finish in the top eight in Israel respectively will go on to compete in the World Games in Birmingham, AL, in July 2022, when the flag football competition will fall under the auspices of the National Football League.

The Israeli men’s team is currently ranked fifth in the world, while the women’s team is ranked 11th.

Steve Leibowitz, president of the Federation of American Football in Israel and chairman of the 2021 flag Football World Championships Local Organizing Committee, told JNS that “the past year has been very tough for all sports, including American football. Here in Israel, we have been mostly off the field until [early March]. First, Denmark and then Spain



Israel’s women’s flag football team (Photo courtesy of American Football in Israel)

withdrew from hosting the World Championships. Israel has a strong organization and the backing of the Kraft Family and other sponsors, and we saw an opportunity to host.”

He explained that Israel was slated to host the World Championships in 2014, but the Gaza war forced the IFAF to move the championships to Italy. Now, he said, “we have an opportunity to showcase Israel and Jerusalem to the top echelons of the sport we love. We have two huge challenges at the same time – to host the biggest and best FFWC ever held, and to finish in the top eight and qualify the Israeli teams for the 2022 World Games.”

Kenny Zwiebel, a longtime flag-football player who is now the head coach of the Israeli Men’s National Flag Football team, told JNS that hosting the event “adds extra incentive for the team, which is already excited to compete for a top finish and to do so in front of our home crowd. We look forward to showing the world delegations what Israel has to offer both on and off the field.”

Both the men’s and women’s national teams have had success in tournaments at venues worldwide in the past nearly two decades. At the 2019 Jerusalem European Championships, the men’s team just missed the podium finishing in fourth place, while the women had a respectable sixth-place finish.

At the same time as Israel is being put on the international stage in flag football, Israel’s national tackle football team has two European matches coming up as the squad gets ready to host Spain at the Kraft Family Sports Campus in August with an away game versus Hungary this September.

Shana Sprung, the longtime women’s national team quarterback and one of the founders of the women’s flag football league in Israel back in 2004, told JNS that she is “simply in awe” that Israel was selected to hold this year’s world championships.

Sprung, who was also the European Championship’s most valuable player in the 2014 tournament held in Italy, said that “by hosting the European Championships, we proved what an amazing organization the AFI is, and how enjoyable it is to be in Jerusalem and in Israel. Now we are ready for the rest of the world to see that as well.”

IFAF President Richard MacLean said “the Kraft Family Sports Campus in Jerusalem is fast becoming an iconic venue for flag football. I look forward to seeing the world’s finest flag football players coming together for what will undoubtedly be a great event. The competition is tremendous as teams compete to secure their place at the World Games, and only one team will earn the honor of being crowned IFAF Flag Football World Champions.”

Robert Kraft, chairman and CEO of the Kraft Group, which owns the NFL’s six-time Super Bowl champion New England Patriots and has been the top supporter of football in Israel for nearly 20 years, along with his late wife Myra, said: “We love the game of American football and are so proud to see the sport’s popularity continue to grow internationally in its various forms, including flag football.

“When we invested in the Kraft Family Sports Campus,” he continued, “it was with the hope that it would not only provide a location for daily exercise and competition for all Israelis, but that it would also become a destination for championship-level competition for football leagues throughout the Middle East and Europe. It was an investment in both Israel and American football – two of my greatest passions.”



Israel’s men’s flag football team (Photo courtesy of American Football in Israel)

EU unpublished report finds Palestinian textbooks contain antisemitism, incitement

By JNS staff

(JNS) – An unpublished report by the European Union on Palestinian textbooks confirmed that the Palestinian curriculum includes antisemitic content, incitement of violence and the delegitimization of Israel.

The German newspaper *Bild* published findings from the report recently and asked why they were never publicized. The publication stated that the report was commissioned in 2019 by then-E.U. foreign affairs representative Federica Mogherini and examined teaching instructions published by the Palestinian Ministry of Education between 2017 and 2020.

The report, written by the German Georg-Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, was also seen by the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (IMPACT-se), an Israeli NGO that has previously drawn attention to similar offensive content in

Palestinian textbooks.

According to IMPACT-se, the institute found in textbooks the “frequent use of negative attributions in relation to the Jewish people in, for example, textbook exercises [that] suggest a conscious perpetuation of anti-Jewish prejudice.” It even discovered a textbook chapter that “sends the message that the Jews as a collective are dangerous and deceptive, and demonizes them. It generates feelings of hatred towards Jews.”

The examined material also contained depictions of Israeli violence that “tend to dehumanize the Israeli adversary; occasionally with accusations of malice or deception.” When discussing violent actions by Palestinians against Israel, the textbooks label them as part of “a heroic struggle” against the Jewish state; in general, portrayals of violence perpetrated by the Israeli protagonists present them as “a homogenous entity mostly referred to as the

‘(Zionist) occupation’ or by similar epithets.”

“This as yet unpublished E.U. report into Palestinian textbooks is a damning indictment of the Palestinian Authority’s systematic and purposeful insertion of antisemitism, hate and incitement to violence in its textbooks,” said IMPACT-se CEO Marcus Sheff.

He added: “The question is, will E.U. policymakers finally take action to condition E.U. funding to the P.A. on positive reforms to the curriculum as the European parliament has demanded on several occasions?”

A spokesman for Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the findings “prove Israel’s consistent claim that incitement is constantly present in Palestinian Authority textbooks... a claim that Israel has raised with the European Union and its member states for many years.

“Instead of educating for tolerance, coexistence, peace and non-violence – as is required under UNESCO’s mandatory standards – Palestinian textbooks include antisemitic components, deny the existence of the state of Israel and glorify violence as a method of resolving the conflict,” said the spokesman.

The spokesman also noted that the E.U. continues to invest millions in funding the P.A.’s educational system without monitoring content that appears in textbooks or demanding that it stop “indoctrinating its children to hate and kill.”

Three.....Continued from page 6

time in which God’s mercy is manifest, are not mutually exclusive. The inner motivating force of the Three Weeks is God’s love. However, genuine love can at times require conduct which appears harsh. When a parent chastises his/her child, it is unpleasant for both, but the parent is no less motivated by deep concern and love for the child as when he/she presents the child with a reward. The positive and overtly recognizable aspect of this love will be revealed in the Era of Redemption, as Maimonides teaches: “All the commemorative fasts will be annulled and will be transformed into holidays and days of rejoicing.” But we can, if we make an effort, enjoy a foreshadow of that era already. The great sage Rabbi Akiva taught us much about the important exercise of “being within but staying above” – seeing the future as it transcends the present.

Once, relates the Talmud, Rabbi Akiva was walking along the road in Jerusalem with Rabbis Gamliel, Elazar Ben Azariah and Yehoshu when they heard the tumultuous sound of a Roman multitude coming from a great distance. They began to weep while Akiva laughed. They said to him, “Why do you laugh?” He answered, “And why do you weep?” Said they, “These people who bow to idols and burn incense to them, dwell in safety and quiet, and as for us – the house which is our God’s footstool is burned in fire. Shall we not weep?” Said he to them, “For this I laugh – for if this is the lot of those who violate His will, how much more joyous will the future be of those who do His will?”

Another time, they went up to Jerusalem. On reaching Mt. Tzofim (Scopus), they tore their clothes. When they reached Temple Mount they saw a fox emerging from the place of the Holy of Holies. They began to weep, but Rabbi Akiva laughed. They asked him, “Why do you laugh?” He

answered, “Now that I see the fulfillment of the prophets concerning the destruction I am sure that the prophecies concerning the redemption will come to fruition.” Rabbi Akiva was not negating the bitter state of exile, but he taught us to look beneath and beyond the present reality.

The most important way in which we can emphasize the positive dimension of the Three Weeks is by undertaking a study of the laws governing the construction of the Holy Temple; focusing on its building, rather than on its destruction. When God revealed the structural details of the third Holy Temple to be built with the coming of the Messiah to the prophet Ezekial, He told him, “Tell the people of Israel of the House... and measure its design.”

Ezekial, as our sages relate, replied: “Master of the Universe! Why are you telling me to tell Israel the form of the House?... They are now in the land of our enemies. Is there anything they can do? Let them be until they return from exile. Then I will go and inform them.”

God answered: “The study of the Torah’s description of the Temple is deemed equal to its construction. Go, tell them to study the form of the Temple. And, as a reward for their study... I will consider it as if they had actually built the Temple!”

With this kind of study – which is not for the Three Weeks alone, but can and should be done at any time – every Jewish man and woman can fulfill the biblical injunction to build the sanctuary. As well, the study brings us closer to the fulfillment of the prayer, “Re-build Your House as in former times and establish Your sanctuary on its site; let us behold its construction, and cause us to rejoice in its completion.” May this take place speedily in our day.



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NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Bennett taps former Mossad official as national security adviser

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett on July 11 announced the appointment of Eyal Hulata as national security adviser and head of the National Security Council. Hulata, 45, has served in a series of senior administrative positions during his 23-year career in Israel's Mossad intelligence agency, including head of the Strategic Planning and Policy Division and of the Technology Division, according to a statement from Bennett's office. He is a recipient of the Israel Security Prize. Hulata holds a doctorate in physics from Tel Aviv University and a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University. He is a graduate of the Israel Defense Forces Talpiot program at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. A married father of three, he resides in Kfar Saba. Upon government approval of the appointment, Hulata will replace outgoing National Security Council head Meir Ben-Shabbat.

Israel seizes cryptocurrency wallets used by Hamas

Israel's security establishment has begun to seize cryptocurrency wallets belonging to the Hamas terror organization, according to Israeli media reports. The move comes after Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz signed an administrative order authorizing the seizures on June 30. Hamas, which suffered significant losses during the 11 days of fighting with Israel in May, is currently attempting to raise funds via virtual currencies, such as Bitcoin, in an effort to bypass the conventional banking system, Israel's Channel 12 reported. Israeli security bodies, including the Shin Bet and the National Bureau for Counter-Terror Financing, have mobilized to try to shut off the flow of illicit funds, according to the report. Sources in Gaza have confirmed the report, emphasizing that Hamas' goal is the rehabilitation of its damaged military arm.

“Oman not ready to normalize ties with Israel,” says sultanate’s foreign minister

(Israel Hayom via JNS) – Oman will not follow the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain in normalizing the ties with Israel at this time, the Gulf sultanate's foreign minister said on July 10. “Oman believes in striving for a just, comprehensive and lasting peace on the basis of the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,” Badr bin Hamad al-Busaidi told the London-based Arabic-language daily *Asharq Al-Awsat* in an interview. “This is the only option recognized by the Arab Peace Initiative and the international community,” he noted. Muscat, he added, “affirms the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and just as we respect the sovereign decisions of states, we expect others to respect our sovereign decisions.” Oman has been part of the covert rapprochement between Israel and the Gulf kingdoms in recent years, a trend that included an official meeting in 2018 between Israel's then-prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Sultan Qaboos bin Said, who ruled over Oman for 49 years until his death in 2020. The meeting in Oman arguably represented the most important public acknowledgment of ties with Israel by a Gulf state until the Abraham Accords.

Report: Belgium airport scare believed to be Iranian test of Israeli security protocols

(Israel Hayom via JNS) – Belgium's Federal Police evacuated the departure halls at Brussels Airport on July 8 after a suspicious piece of luggage triggered a bomb-threat protocol. According to local news reports, the incident began unfolding on the afternoon of July 8, when Israeli security agents stationed at the airport found a suspicious suitcase and turned it over to airport authorities. The security scare saw police and airport security evacuate the airport's two departure halls, as well as a nearby compound serving as a COVID vaccination center. A Qatar Airways flight to Doha was then recalled mid-flight after it was determined the owner of the suspicious bag was on it. Local media, as well as Israel's Channel 13 News, cited Belgian security sources as saying the passenger, an Iranian woman, was detained on suspicion of planting the bag to gather intelligence on the airport's security protocols, and especially

on measures taken to secure Israeli airlines. Israeli officials assisted Belgium in increasing security at the airport after a 2016 terrorist attack there left 16 dead and over 150 wounded. Belgian police inspected the bag, the content of which was determined to be mundane, and airport authorities announced that the incident was a false alarm, allowing flights to resume. Overall, the Brussels Airport reported a two-hour delay in operations. Israeli intelligence officials told Hebrew media that they were “investigating the incident.” One official said that as the bag was placed near the check-in desk of an Israel-bound flight, they believed the incident was an Iranian attempt to discern Israeli aviation security protocols on foreign soil.

P.A. introduces new way for terrorists, families to get cash

The Palestinian Authority announced a new mechanism on July 6 for disbursing payments to terrorists and their families by using ATMs at P.A. post offices, according to a report by MEMRI. Those receiving funds will receive cards for withdrawing money from the P.A. postal bank using ATM machines. The change came against the backdrop of a severe deficit in the P.A. budget, which stood at \$417 million in the first half of 2021. It also remains in line with the policy of P.A. leader Mahmoud Abbas, who has repeatedly declared that it the duty of the P.A. to compensate terrorists – whether in prison, released from prison, or injured or killed while carrying out terror attacks. In addition, their families also receive allowances. This, he says, is a national and social obligation, and will not be stopped despite intense Israeli and international pressure to do so. According to the report, the P.A. attempted to set up a bank separate from the existing banking system to avoid Israeli penalties by disbursing payments via the P.A. postal bank. However, long lines and overcrowding at the post office to withdraw the funds reportedly embarrassed the prisoners and their families.

Technion ranked No. 1 in Europe in field of A.I.

CSRankings, the leading metrics-based ranking of top computer-science institutions around the world, has ranked the Technion–Israeli Institute of Technology No. 1 in the field of artificial intelligence in Europe (and, of course, in Israel) and 15th worldwide. In the subfield of machine learning, the Technion is ranked 11th worldwide. The data used to compile the rankings is from 2016 to 2021. An innovation for the Technion's prowess is the Machine Learning and Intelligent Systems (or MLIS) research center, which aggregates all AI-related activities. Currently, 46 Technion researchers are engaged in core AI research areas with more than 100 researchers in AI-related fields: health and medicine, autonomous vehicles, smart cities, industrial robotics, cybersecurity, natural language processing, FinTech, human-machine interaction, and others. The MLIS is co-directed by two leading AI researchers: Professor Shie Mannor of the Andrew and Erna Viterbi Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering and Professor Assaf Schuster of the Henry and Marilyn Taub Faculty of Computer Science.

Pilot program aims to up informal Hebrew ed. at summer camp

The Jewish Agency for Israel has launched a pilot program to increase informal Hebrew education and raise awareness of the language at Jewish camps in the United States and France. As part of the program, emissaries of the Jewish Agency use Israeli songs, educational games, outdoor activities, sports, cooking workshops and more to provide campers with an introductory Hebrew vocabulary and familiarity with Israeli slang. “This innovative project aims to instill kids and teens with a curiosity about Hebrew and Israeli culture by means of informal education,” said former Jewish Agency chairman and newly installed Israeli President Isaac Herzog. “Hebrew is a living, vibrant bridge between the state of Israel and world Jewry, connecting our glorious past and our common future. It is the birthright of every girl and boy to learn the language common to us all.” The pilot program was developed by academics focusing on informal Hebrew learning and the connection between language and society. It was created with support from the Patrick and Lina Drahi Foundation in collaboration with Hebrew at the Center, which developed the educational content. Its website defines the center's mission as engaging institutions and professionals worldwide with the goal of advancing excellence in Hebrew teaching and learning.

Israel, Jordan agreement on increasing water exports, trade

Israel and Jordan agreed to a deal on July 8 whereby Jordan would buy 50 million more cubic meters of water from Israel and increase its exports to the West Bank. The increase in Jordanian exports to the West Bank will go from \$160 million a year to \$700 million. Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi met with his counterpart, Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, at the King Hussein Bridge that connects the two countries, where Jordan said technical teams would work out the details in the coming days, reported the AP. Safadi also called for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and for Israel to stop “illegal” acts that undermine it. Lapid tweeted that the water deal was decided by Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, and that Jordan “is a neighbor and important partner” and that “the foreign ministry will continue an ongoing dialogue.”

Israeli Air Force launches new F-35 training squadron

The Israeli Air Force has in recent days opened a new squadron designed to train and prepare pilots for the F-35 fighter jet. According to the IAF's official website, the 117 Squadron, which had shut down in 2020 as an F-16C squadron, has resumed with a new mission. “The squadron, together with its sister squadrons, will pull the entire air force to the next generation of aerial force activation,” the IAF stated. “The foundations have been placed, the vision and purpose have been written, and the people have been carefully selected,” it added. “Now, all that is left is to act.” In the future, the 117 Squadron will become an operational F-35I squadron. During a ceremony on July 1 to mark the rebirth of the squadron, IAF Commander Maj. Gen. Amikam Norkin noted that the 117 squadron was the first IAF squadron that received jets in 1953. “Today, after seven decades and 33 commanders, we are again deploying the squadron's flag,” said Norkin.

NYPD apprehends man behind string of antisemitic attacks

The New York Police Department announced the arrest on July 7 of a man wanted in connection with a string of antisemitic incidents in late May that culminated with the tossing of an incendiary device that injured a woman in Midtown Manhattan. According to the NYPD Hate Crimes Unit, Mohammed Othman, 24, of Staten Island, NY, was seen on video tossing the device from the back of a pickup truck on May 20 as it drove through the “Diamond District” on 47th Street, where many Jews work, particularly Orthodox Jews. A 55-year-old woman who was walking by at the time was burned in the attack. Othman is being charged with three separate antisemitic hate-crime assaults, all of which occurred on the same day. The arrest comes a day after the NYPD released its latest crime statistics that show antisemitic attacks on the rise in the city, up some 60 percent over 2020 with more than 110 incidents to date.

Palestinian PM: No connection exists between Israelis, Jews

Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh made the false claim on June 29 that “there is no connection between Israelis and the Jews”; rather, they are “Khazar Jews” who converted to Judaism in the sixth century C.E. The Hebrews, the Jews and the Israelis are not the same thing,” he said, according to a report by MEMRI. “Furthermore, the Israelis ... Israel is Jacob. The Israelites are the sons of Jacob, [and] 1,300 years separated Jacob and the Prophet Moses. Therefore, 1,300 years separate the Israelis and Judaism. So there is no connection between the Israelis and the Jews,” he said. “This issue requires research,” he added, noting that “there are many sources and books about the Khazar Jews.” Shtayyeh made these remarks in a public address aired the week of July 2 on Palestine TV, the Palestinian Broadcasting Company.

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