

## Federation's pre-Campaign event on Aug. 17 to feature Tamir Goodman

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a pre-Campaign dessert reception featuring basketball player Tamir Goodman on Sunday, August 17, at 7 pm. Goodman will speak on "Spiritual and Life Lessons from the Game of Basketball." (An interview with Goodman can be found in the July 11 issue



Tamir Goodman  
(Photo by Chabad of Binghamton)

**Due to security measures, this is a private event. Those attending must register by Monday, August 11, by visiting [www.jfgb.org](http://www.jfgb.org), contacting the Federation office at 607-724-2332 or e-mailing [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org). The locale will be revealed to those who register.**

of *The Reporter*.) The event will serve as the 2026 Campaign kickoff event. Reservations must be made by Monday, August 11, by visiting [www.jfgb.org](http://www.jfgb.org), contacting the Federation office at 607-724-2332 or e-mailing [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org). Those attending will have the opportunity to make their 2026 pledge.

Goodman, who has been called the "Jewish Jordan," was the first Jewish athlete to play Division I college and professional basketball while wearing a yarmulke and observing Shabbat. In addition to being a basketball player, Goodman is the author of the book "Live Your Dream" and a coach who has worked with thousands of athletes worldwide. As an

entrepreneur, he has brought three products to market, including the Aviv Antimicrobial and Moisture-Wicking Basketball Net. He currently serves as the director of strategic brand initiatives at Fabric. Goodman, who holds a B.A. in communications, has spoken to audiences across the world.

"We are so lucky to host Tamir as our speaker for this special Federation event," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation.

"Tamir has an inspirational story of faith and commitment," said Marilyn Bell, 2026 Campaign chairwoman. "We are excited to engage him as our Campaign speaker. Join us for what is sure to be a meaningful event."

## Federation to hold "Guardian" and "Stop the Bleed" trainings on Aug. 27

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a security training session on Wednesday, August 27, at 6:30 pm, at the Jewish Community Center, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal. The trainings to be featured are "Guardian: Identify. Protect. Respond." and "Stop the Bleed." The program will be led by Mark Henderson, regional security advisor, Rochester, for the Secure Community Network. To RSVP, visit [www.jfgb.org](http://www.jfgb.org) or e-mail [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org); the deadline to register is Monday, August 25.

"To keep our mindset and skills evolving, we are pleased to bring back our security professional, Mark Henderson," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of

the Federation. "These trainings have been updated and are unfortunately becoming more relevant to our day-to-day lives. I hope you will join us for this important training that could help save a life."

**"Guardian: Identify. Protect. Respond."**

"Guardians are active participants in the safety and security of their families and communities. This training will focus on the development of a guardian mindset and concrete skills that include identifying suspicious people, vehicles and packages," said organizers of the event. "These are principles critical to protecting oneself, family and community institutions, as well as principles surrounding how to respond during emergencies. A small segment on de-escalation skills is

also included."

"This training is aimed at all members of an organization or congregation because at some time almost everyone will open a door and need to make a decision about whether or not it's safe to do so," said Hubal. "It teaches how to identify suspicious people, vehicles and packages, and learn ways to protect our community. We all should become active bystanders who can respond to incidents and situations."

**"Stop the Bleed"**

"Stop the Bleed® Training is a nationally recognized, standardized course created and sponsored through [stopthebleed.org](http://stopthebleed.org)," organizers added. "This interactive course stresses the importance of understanding why bleeding is the number one preventable

cause of death after an injury, how to save a life through identifying life-threatening bleeding, recognizing different types of injuries, and learning how to control bleeding when someone is injured through wound packing and tourniquet application. Hands-on exercises are a required component of this course and are designed for every member of the community."

"Sometimes people are not able to escape a dangerous situation and may be injured," Hubal noted. "It takes time for the police to secure a scene and the medical personnel can't enter until that happens. If someone is injured, then those who are with them are the only ones who can offer medical care. This program will give people some basic skills to do that."

## BU Hillel, Federation pen pal program

By Reporter staff

Hillel at Binghamton and the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will offer a L'Dor V'Dor Pen Pal Program. The program will match Binghamton University students with seniors in the local Jewish community for the fall semester, September to December. The semester will end with a meet-and-greet. Seniors who are interested in engaging with a pen pal should visit [www.jfgb.org](http://www.jfgb.org) and click on the L'Dor V'Dor Pen Pal Program slide to sign up for a pen pal. The deadline to submit the form is Tuesday, August 26. Pen Pal pairings will be sent out by Tuesday, September 2. For any questions or help filling out the form, contact Ellie Spivak, incoming president of Hillel at Binghamton, at 585-770-8312 or [espivak1@binghamton.edu](mailto:espivak1@binghamton.edu), or Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation, at 607-222-9026 or [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org).

The program will run from September to December. "Our program will give you the opportunity to write back and forth to your pen pal to get to know each other, learn from each other and discuss meaningful prompts and questions that will be sent out monthly," said organizers of the program. "You will have the option of e-mailing,

texting or handwriting letters to your pen pal, whatever is most comfortable to you. We will try to match pen pal pairs with the same letter format preference. Pen pals are expected to write to their match no less than once per month. At the end of the semester, before finals week, there will be a meet-and-greet event on the Binghamton University campus for you to meet your pen pal."

"When I first came up with the idea for the L'Dor V'Dor pen pal program, I was thinking about the divide that I have felt between our on-campus Jewish community and the wider Binghamton community and, more

specifically, the lack of connection between the generations," said Spivak. "In high school, I got the chance to write to a senior pen pal, and I learned so much from the experience. Students have so much to learn from the older generation, but, in college, we are very isolated amongst only people of our age."

Spivak noted that "the goal of this program is to promote connectivity and community amongst the on-campus student Jewish community and the Jewish senior community living in Binghamton. Students and seniors will write back and forth with their matched pen pal throughout the academic semester,

and the program will culminate at the end with a meet-and-greet, where pen pals will have the chance to meet in person! I will send out monthly prompts that pen pal pairs can have the option of addressing in their letters. Please consider signing up to receive a student pen pal and new friend!"

"I was excited when Elie Spivak from Hillel at Binghamton University approached me with this idea," Hubal said. "Having a university student pen pal is a great way to make a new friend and to cross a generational divide. If you are curious about the younger generation, this is a great way to learn something new."

## Hillel Academy to celebrate community at Sept. 11 journal dinner

Hillel Academy will hold its annual Journal Celebration on Thursday, September 11, from 6:30-9 pm, at Temple Israel. "This year's event promises to be a vibrant evening of recognition, gratitude and community spirit featuring a lively Pop Art theme inspired by student artwork from the 2024-25 school year," said organizers of the event.

The cost for the dinner is \$100 per person or \$600 for a table. To purchase tickets, or to place an ad honoring this year's honorees, e-mail [hilleljournalgroup@gmail.com](mailto:hilleljournalgroup@gmail.com) or visit [givebutter.com/generalhabc1](http://givebutter.com/generalhabc1). For information on the cost of journal ads, see the ad on page 4.

The Theodore Sommer Community Ser-

vice Award will be presented to the CHOW Food Pantry in honor of its contributions to the local Broome County community. Organizers said, "Our students participate in CHOW food drive competitions throughout the year and have even taken field trips to help deliver their donations and stock the See "Hillel" on page 3

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Jewish baseball players**  
Bill Simons considers why Jewish fans still want to know if a baseball player is Jewish.

.....Page 3

**JCC Friendship Club**  
The JCC Friendship Club announces meetings in August and September.

.....Page 7

**Plant-insect interactions**  
Israeli researchers have found evidence of acoustic interaction between plants and insects.

.....Page 7

**Special Sections**  
Book Reviews..... 4  
Family Living..... 5  
Personal and Business Services ... 7  
Classifieds ..... 8

Opinion

First Camp Auschwitz, now Alligator Alcatraz – why the right is obsessed with commodifying brutality

By Nora Berman

This story originally appeared in the Forward. To get the Forward's free e-mail newsletters delivered to your inbox, visit forward.com/newsletter-signup.

A prison looms over a murky swamp. The building is framed by an alligator with its jaws open, teeth bared in a threatening smile, and a writhing python. Below that image, blood drips down from the words “Florida GOP.”

Welcome to Alligator Alcatraz, and the commodification of brutality in the United States. President Donald Trump’s administration and its supporters are taking troll tactics and turning them into merchandise –and memes –to commodify their atrocious immigration policies, and make it more dif-

ficult for critics to effectively protest them.

“Surrounded by miles of swamp and bloodthirsty wildlife, this ain’t no vacation spot,” wrote the Florida Republican Party, which is responsible for the above design – which now festoons T-shirts, beer koozies and baseball caps – in an email advertising the merch for the new detention facility, which currently holds more than 700 detainees.

Scrolling through the Alligator Alcatraz-themed items in the Florida GOP’s online store reminded me of how it felt to watch live footage of the January 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, and see the image of the now-infamous rioter wearing a “Camp Auschwitz” hoodie. It was impossible to understand at the time how

someone could find that brutal concentration camp entertaining enough to advertise it on an article of clothing. I couldn’t see how Jewish death could be – as the sweatshirt implied it was – a joke.

I still don’t understand. But now, I can see how when you make merch out of suffering, it makes that suffering seem less real. Even funny. In the U.S., this wave of branding misery is making it easier for the government to get away with transparently inhumane policies.

“I never thought I’d see the day in America where people are profiteering off of effectively what could be a concentration camp,” Florida House Minority Leader Fentrice Driskell told Fox13 in Tampa.

The kind of “edgelord” behavior that’s led to that development has been a defining tool to assert power by the Trump administration. It was on view, for example, the

day after pro-Palestinian activist Mahmoud Khalil was arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement in March, when the White House posted on X “Shalom Mahmoud,” appropriating a Hebrew word for “peace” to celebrate Khalil’s detention.

The idea behind the tactic is simple: Making fun of something damages the integrity of the butt of the joke. Earnest pleas for civility can be met with a cool, assured “I was just joking.”

“That’s a common defense you see from the far right,” Jon Lewis, an extremism researcher at The George Washington University, told my colleague Mira Fox, a Forward culture reporter, about the recent trend of right wing figures like Steve Bannon and Elon Musk giving a Nazi salute.

The truth is that concerns about the conditions at the new detention center in See “Alcatraz” on page 8

Correction

In The Reporter’s annual Community Guide, the holiday dates for the 2025-26/5785 were incorrect. The error has been corrected in the online version of the Community Guide and is printed correctly below. The Reporter apologizes for the error and any confusion caused.

Jewish Holiday Calendar		
HOLIDAY	2025-26 • 5785	2026-27 • 5786
Rosh Hashanah	Tuesday-Wednesday, September 23-24	Saturday-Sunday, September 12-13
Yom Kippur	Thursday, October 2	Monday, September 21
Sukkot	Tuesday-Monday, October 7-13	Saturday-Friday, Sept. 26-Oct. 2
Shemini Atzeret	Tuesday, October 14	Saturday, October 3
Simchat Torah	Wednesday, October 15	Sunday, October 4
Chanukah	Monday-Monday, December 15-22	Saturday-Saturday, December 5-12
Tu B'Shevat	Monday, February 2	Saturday, January 23
Purim	Tuesday, March 3	Tuesday, March 23
Passover	Thursday-Thursday, April 2-9	Thursday-Thursday, April 22-29
Yom Hashoah	Tuesday, April 14	Tuesday, May 4
Yom Ha'atzmaut	Wednesday, April 22	Wednesday, May 12
Lag B'Omer	Tuesday, May 5	Tuesday, May 25
Yom Yerushalayim	Friday, May 15	Friday, June 4
Shavuot	Friday-Saturday, May 22-23	Friday-Saturday, June 11-12
Shiva'a Asar B'Tammuz	Thursday, July 2	Thursday, July 2
Tisha B'Av	Thursday, July 23	Thursday, August 12

In My Own Words

The purpose of the press

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Political discussions at work often open with my sending someone a provocative quote from an article/e-mail I’ve read or a link to an online article of interest. The reply sometimes leads me to question my first thought. The most recent example led me to ponder the purpose of the press and how that affects the Jewish community.

The article – “No Jews allowed: White supremacists are building a segregated community in Arkansas, but is it legal?” – appeared on the Forward’s website. (The complete article can be found at https://forward.com/news/733168/return-to-the-land-arkansas-jews-eric-orwoll.) It noted that Return to the Land, a white supremacist group, bought 160 acres in Arkansas and, according to the article, “Jews and non-whites are explicitly banned from membership.” Both my coworker and I agreed on the fact that this is awful. Yet, she wondered whether the Forward should be publicizing the group’s activities.

I answered, as I often do, with a question: Does raising awareness of the group raise their profile and bring people to its cause, or will the attention bring legal action to stop its activities? That’s why the press can be either a blessing or a curse. Some people will be pleased to see that others agree with their antisemitic and racist ideas, although the writer in the Forward clearly opposes them. On the other hand, bringing more publicity to the group might force the Arkansas government to enforce the laws against discrimination. Of course, a third possibility might occur. If legal action is taken against the group, they might sue the government for opposing what they see as a legitimate, personal choice: the desire to live a Jew-free, Black-free, people-of-color-free life.

Before this year, I would have expected U.S. courts to enforce the rule of law, including those that forbid discriminating against racial and religious minorities. But,

currently, some of our courts are ignoring the rule of law by permitting the arrest and deportation of people without due process. Due process is a fundamental part of American law and ignoring it risks destroying our legal system. In case you think that is not a Jewish issue, wait until it’s used as an excuse to target Jews. If you think that won’t happen, you’re only fooling yourself.

While people might dismiss this small group in Arkansas as inconsequential, please note that the group plans to expand and open new settlements across the country. I agree this is probably a pipedream, but any success they have will encourage those who are antisemitic to hold tight to their Jew-hatred. In fact, it will make it easier for everyone to express antisemitic and racist views, something that has become more permissible since the election of Donald Trump as president. We’ve seen antisemitism increase during the past few years, since it has become acceptable to spout statements that would once have been condemned by politicians worried about the Jewish vote. How do I know about these antisemitic voices and actions? They appear in e-mails I get from news websites, which thrive on exciting, click-bate stories. The more violent and outlandish, the more clicks.

What is the purpose of the press? It should provide us with unbiased information about important events occurring in our country and the world so we can make educated decisions. Does doing so sometimes mean the press publicizes ideas we oppose? Unfortunately, that happens; sometimes a group or a person whose views should be ignored can become big news. That exposure encourages people who otherwise would not feel free to express similar opinions in public for fear of censure. I don’t see a completely satisfying solution because we need to be informed or our system of government will fail. That’s the price we pay for a free press.



Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

Shelley Hubal, Executive Director  
607-724-2332 ~ www.jfgb.org

The Reporter Editorial Committee  
TBA, chairman  
Rachel Coker, Ben Kasper,  
Rivka Kellman, Toby Kohn,  
Richard Lewis, Ilene Pinsker

HOW TO REACH THE REPORTER

Mail ~ The Reporter, 500 Clubhouse Rd. Vestal, NY 13850  
E-mail ~ TReporter@aol.com  
Phone ~ 607-724-2360 or 800-779-7896  
Extension#/Department ~ 1. Advertising 2. Business Office  
4. Circulation 6. Editorial/News



BINGHAMTON, NY

OPINIONS

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

LETTERS

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

ADS

The Reporter does not necessarily endorse any advertised products and services. In addition, the paper is not responsible for the kashruth of any advertiser’s product or establishment.

DEADLINE

Regular deadline is noon, Wednesday, for the following week’s newspaper (see deadline dates on page 3). All articles should be e-mailed to TReporter@aol.com.

Executive Editor Rabbi Rachel Esserman  
Layout Editor Diana Sochor  
Advertising Kathy Brown  
Bookkeeper Kathy Brown  
Production Associate Julie Weber  
Columnist Bill Simons

Proofreaders

Barbara Bank, Fran Ferentinos,  
Rebecca Goldstein Kahn, Merri Pell-Preus,  
Ilene Pinsker



“The Reporter” (USPS 096-280) is published bi-monthly (second and fourth Friday) for \$40 per year by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Road, Vestal, NY 13850-3734. Periodicals Postage Paid at Vestal, NY and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Reporter, 500 Clubhouse Road, Vestal, NY 13850-3734 or reach us by e-mail at TREPORTER@AOL.COM.

www.thereportergroup.org



# BD Sisterhood held planning meeting



Toby Kohn read the opening prayer at the Beth David Sisterhood planning meeting on July 9.



Secretary Susan Hubal read the minutes from the June Beth David Sisterhood meeting.



Treasurer Deborah Mindick Sliom give her financial report at the Sisterhood planning meeting.



L-r: Nancy Basmann, Susan Hubal, Judy Silber and Stacey Silber posed for the camera during the Beth David Sisterhood planning meeting. (Photos by Cathy Velenchik)



## Jewish Baseball Players

# Celebrating Jewish ballplayers: "Why do we care about this?"

BILL SIMONS

In late August 2004, the American Jewish Historical Society hosted a conference, "A Celebration of 143 American Jews in America's Game 1871-2004," at the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY. At the time, 143 appeared a legitimate count of Jews who had appeared in the major leagues; over the past generation, more than 50 additional Jews have played in the majors. Sportswriters, scholars, former Jewish major leaguers and fans – often accompanied by family members – made for an upbeat and well-attended two-day conference. Although there was acknowledgment that the percentage of Jewish major leaguers has always been modest and that only two, Hank Greenberg and Sandy Koufax, are enshrined in the Hall of Fame, the tone of the conference was, as its title suggests, celebratory. In the last session, "Who's In, Who's Out" – devoted to debating criteria for determining whether a player was indeed Jewish – physician and Little League umpire Rich Cohen asked the key question: "Why do we care about this?"

The "why" may remain elusive, but we that "we care" is indisputable. From 1997-2022, Shel Wallman and Ephraim Moxson edited Jewish Sports Review, a bimonthly publication whose primary purposed was to identify Jewish athletes in all manner of sports from adolescent amateurs to professionals. Scrupulous, obsessive and idiosyncratic, Wallman and Moxson cited Jewish mother or father, self-identification as a Jew and lack of affiliation with another religion as criteria for inclusion in their list.

Other chroniclers have debated inclusion of ballplayers who converted to Judaism after their playing careers, such as Dodgers catcher Steve Yeager, or those who obscured their identity. New York Highlanders third baseman Phil Cohen, for example, adopted the last name Cooney as protection against antisemitism in early 20<sup>th</sup> century baseball. And most compilers would not include Johnny Kling (never converted, although supportive of wife and children's Judaism), Lou Boudreau (Jewish mother, but raised in his father's Catholicism), Rod Carew (never converted, although supportive of wife and daughters' Judaism), and Paul Goldschmidt (Jewish father, but an evangelical Christian) on Jewish player lists.

The initial book-length histories of Jewish participation in sports, which gave significant emphasis to baseball, then the undisputed national pastime, were written by and for American Jews. These pioneer efforts were largely exercises in consciousness raising, offering laudatory and uncritical praise of the character and athletic accomplishments of

Jewish ballplayers. Through profiles of Jewish athletes cast as ethnic standard bearers, the writings of Stanley Frank, Harold Ribalow, Bernard Postal, Jesse Silver and Roy Silver sought to heighten ethnic pride and identity in their readers. These early works exalted Jewish ballplayers, challenging the then pervasive, antisemitic stereotype of the weak, timid Jewish victim lacking physical prowess.

During the late 1920s, Jews flocked to the Polo Grounds to watch landsman Andy Cohen, a journeyman second baseman recruited by New York Giants manager John McGraw, for the specific purpose of attracting ethnic partisans. Cohen was overtly marketed as a Jewish ballplayer, and Jews, not far from the immigrant experience, found the infielder confirmation of their Americanization as they ordered ice cream Cohens.

On the trajectory that culminated in world war and genocide, Detroit Tigers slugger Hank Greenberg, whose 58 home runs in 1938 came within two of Babe Ruth's hallowed 60, was a superhero to the children of immigrants. As antisemitism surged during the Great Depression, Greenberg, who famously chose synagogue over ballfield on Yom Kippur in 1934, provided a proud retort to the bigotry of automobile mogul Henry Ford, radio priest Charles Coughlin and others of their ilk.

During his 1960s prime, Los Angeles Dodgers Hall of Famer Sandy Koufax pitched brilliantly for six seasons, throwing four no-hitters, pacing the National League in earned run average five times, setting a single season strikeout record and earning three Cy Young awards, as well as an MVP selection. Pitching during a time of declining antisemitism, Jewish upward mobility and the widespread perception of Israel as a strong and democratic state, Koufax, the uber mensch, personified the coming of age of American Jews. His refusal to pitch the opening game of the 1965 World Series because it fell on Yom Kippur and then shutting out the Minnesota Twins in games six and seven brought Jewish American pride to an apex.

Today, baseball is no longer the national pastime, and chronological distance from the immigrant experience and the Holocaust, growing criticism of Israel, accompanied by an increase of attacks on Jews in the U.S. since the onset of war with Hamas, and the continued growth of interfaith marriage have rendered Jewish American identity more amorphous. Nonetheless, Rabbi Rachel Alpert, a scholar of baseball and much else, asserts, "Despite assimilation and cultural connections, Jewish Americans remain anxious about antisemitism and uncomfortable about fitting in." Thus, as evidenced by Jewish baseball cards, films, books, articles, support for Team Israel, Jewish/Israel, appreciation nights at ballparks, multiple Jewish halls of fame and museum exhibits, the Jewish obsession with contemporary Jewish players continues. Today, many Jewish Americans still feel they must prove that they fit in and baseball offers a venue for so doing. In recent years, a record number of Jews have appeared on MLB rosters, approaching 20 per season.

I contacted several Jewish friends and colleagues who are baseball fans to gauge their interest in Jewish ballplayers. Some indicated that they followed favorite teams more than individual players and that the players whom they did take a special interest in reflected performance, not ethnicity. And my cousin Robert Benson referenced a negative identification: "Ryan Braun\* embarrassed his

co-religionists." (Robert employed the asterisk to signal his caveats about Braun's accomplishments.)

Most of my Jewish fan correspondents, however, reported a special connection with Jewish ballplayers. Psychologist Stephen Lisman cites "admiration and pride... in whichever Jew has risen to the top of their sport." New York City social studies teacher David Lonborg appreciates Jewish ballplayers "breaking down stereotypes or preconceived notions that others may have at the shock of a Jew who is a stellar athlete rather than the quintessential bespectacled lawyer, accountant, doctor or finance guy." Synagogue teacher Roger Chauveron admires those Jewish ballplayers "acting in accordance with a distinctly Jewish value, such as not playing on Yom Kippur." Retired sportswriter and editor Sam Pollak finds "nachas" in the achievements of "Jewish Nobel laureates, athletes, celebrities, diplomats, scientists... It was and still is a validation that we are a valued part of America."



## DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
August 8-21 .....	July 30
August 22-September 11 .....	August 13
September 12-25 .....	September 3
September 26-October 9 .....	September 17

All deadlines for the year can be found at [www.thereportergroup.org/contact-us/faqs](http://www.thereportergroup.org/contact-us/faqs) under "Q: What Are the Deadlines for the Paper?"

**SUZANNE "SUE" KRAUSE**  
NYS Lic. Associate R.E. Broker

*Laura Melville Team*  
of Warren Real Estate




**(c) 607-760-3366**  
**SUEKRAUSE@WARRENHOMES.COM**  
**33 FRONT STREET | BINGHAMTON, NY 13905**

**Hillel. . . . .** Continued from page 1 shelves. It's a meaningful way to bring lessons of *tikkun olam*, compassion and community service to life."

The A.M. Pierson Award will be awarded to Howard Warner for his commitment to Hillel Academy over the years. "Howard has devoted countless hours to supporting our school," organizers noted. "He's a tireless advocate who understands that the strength of a Jewish day school lies in the strength and support of its community. Through every leadership transition, Howard has been a steady and devoted presence."

The Excellence Award will be given to Rabbi Rachel Esserman in recognition of her decades of leadership at *The Reporter*. "Rachel has done so much to uplift and connect our small community through her work," organizers noted. "Her dedication has made *The Reporter* a vital and respected voice. We couldn't let her retire without showing our deep appreciation."

This year's celebration will also highlight Pop Art-inspired pieces created by Hillel Academy students, who spent the school year studying iconic artists and styles. "Their colorful and imaginative artwork will be featured throughout the event," organized noted.

"Don't miss this unforgettable evening celebrating the people and partnerships that make Hillel Academy and our community shine," organizers added.

Advertisers...

**Rosh Hashanah is coming!**

**Prepare for Rosh Hashanah**  
Issue: August 22  
Ad deadline: August 14

**Rosh Hashanah**  
Issue: September 12  
Ad deadline: Sept. 4

For information on advertising, contact Kathy Brown at 607-724-2360 ext. 244 or [advertising@thereportergroup.org](mailto:advertising@thereportergroup.org)

**THE REPORTER**  
Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

## Women in Business

If you are a woman who owns or manages a business, *The Reporter* has a unique advertising opportunity for you! **WOMEN IN BUSINESS**, the highlight of our August 8 issue, will feature an advertising section of display ads in a variety of sizes to suit your copy. As a bonus, for all ads over 4 col. inches, we'll include a FREE mini feature using the information you provide.

**Aug. 8 issue • Ad Deadline: July 31**  
For information, please contact  
Kathy Brown at  
607-724-2360 ext. 244  
or [advertising@thereportergroup.org](mailto:advertising@thereportergroup.org)

**THE REPORTER**  
Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton



Visit us on the web at [www.thereportergroup.org](http://www.thereportergroup.org)





Off the Shelf

# Adventure, riches and power

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Rudyard Kipling’s short story “The Man Who Would Be King” told the tale of two British adventurers in India who managed to become kings in a remote part of Afghanistan, although later events left one dead and the other impoverished and, perhaps, mad. Adam Rovner offers a riff on Kipling’s title in his “The Jew Who Would Be King: A True Story of Shipwreck, Survival, and Scandal in Victorian Africa” (University of California Press), which tells the story of Jewish Nathaniel Isaacs’ African adventures. While it is pushing it a bit to claim that Isaacs became a king, his story does read like an adventure novel: A poor Jewish boy from England becomes a merchant in Africa before ingratiating himself with the chief of the Zulus and then creates his own not-quite kingdom on a small island off the coast of Africa. Adventurous and clever, Isaacs managed to outwit his enemies, some of whom would have killed him and others who would have seen him thrown in jail for his excesses.

Isaacs was born in England in 1808, although little is known of his childhood. In 1822, he was sent to St. Helena to work in his uncle Saul Solomon’s successful merchant business. However, Isaacs wanted to make his own fortune and went adventuring with James King, formerly of the British Royal Navy. Many travails occurred, including a shipwreck, before Isaacs landed on the east coast of Africa. There he ingratiated himself with the Zulu chief in order to take part in the ivory trade. At one point, Isaacs returned to England, but soon left to again to try his hand at trading in Africa. It was during this time that he took over the governance of Matakong, a small island off the coast of Guinea. It was there Isaacs would become “king,” meaning that he ruled the island like a warlord. This was also when he was

accused of taking part in the slave trade, which had been outlawed by the British. Although the British government tried to prosecute him, Isaacs successfully managed to evade the law. Even though he had not been a practicing Jew for a good portion of his life, in 1872, he was buried in the Canterbury Jewish Cemetery.

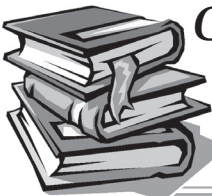
While Isaacs’ many adventures are exciting, for this reader, the most important parts of “The Jew Who Would Be King” are the author’s discussions of the place of Jews and Blacks in the culture of that time. According to Rovner, both Jews and Blacks were thought to “inhabit a lower stratum of human development.” The author added that “to many of their neighbors, Canterbury’s Jews would have seemed little more than savages, or perhaps even worse. At least savages could be romanticized as noble... Jews in Great Britain, however, were imagined as ignoble and figured as ‘crass and venial, lacking honor and virtue, in thrall to a slave religion or unrestrained passion.’ They might exist on the fringes of polite society, but the trappings of civilization were only a veneer.” That explains why Isaacs was happy to leave England: Africa offered him a better chance of success since his Jewish background mattered little to the Black population of the continent, which would not have shared British prejudice because, at that time, they had little knowledge of European religions.

What is also interesting is the author’s discussion of the differing racial theories of the time. Some believed in a racism similar to that of today: that Blacks and Jews are born inferior and nothing can be done to change that. Others, particularly those who wanted to convert Africans to Christianity, felt that Jews and Blacks had not yet achieved the same level of social

development as Europeans. They thought that, with the correct education and training, both groups could be civilized to European standards. It was this latter group that wanted to colonize Africa, which is ironic because this led to the oppression of anyone who was not white or Christian. But it was not religion alone that prompted these missionaries. Rovner notes that “economic salvation and spiritual redemption were intertwined goals for London’s missionary societies,” since this would benefit Europeans in financial ways. In order to influence people to support their efforts, the missionaries “felt a need to represent the people they assisted as victims of degrading cultural practices.” That meant they could be helped; if there was no way to improve them – meaning converting them to Christianity – then there was no point in traveling to Africa. Rovner notes that, to many, both Jews and Blacks were “despised peoples once thought to be

theologically damned.” He also writes that the tools that had been used to oppress Jews in England soon found their way to Africa and were used to oppress Blacks.

“The Jew Who Would Be King” is a scholarly work, which means it reads more like a work of history rather than an adventure story. It is an impressive achievement – filled with a great deal of detail and an interesting analysis of the culture of the time. The author debates if Isaacs’ Jewishness played a role in his life, but admits it’s difficult to determine. Leaving England gave him more economic advantages than if he’d remained in his native land. There were also many non-Jewish adventurers at the time because the lure of riches and power is not to be underestimated. One thing is clear: While Isaacs might not be a Jewish hero to emulate, his story offers insights into the role race and religion played in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



Off the Shelf

# A thriller and a mystery

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Deciding whether a novel qualifies as a thriller or a mystery isn’t always easy. A novel that features police officers or private detectives usually falls into the mystery, who-dun-it category. Other popular mysteries feature amateur detectives who manage to cleverly determine who committed the crime. (The overwhelming majority of mysteries include a death, but not all.) However, the best of them also contain a certain amount of suspense, or readers would lose interest. Thrillers, on the other hand, place their characters in danger, leaving them struggling to survive. The cause of that danger is often only discovered toward the end of the novel, which does give readers a mystery to solve. Two recent works show how these categories can overlap: “The Safari” by Jaclyn Goldis (Emily Bestler Books) is definitely a thriller, but also offers a who-dun-it aspect, while “The Goniff: An Amos Parisman Mystery” by Andy Weinberger (Prospect Park Book) features a private eye, but also offers some of the same suspense as a thriller.

Goldis’ first two novels – “The Chateau” and “The Main Character” – were thrilling, exciting works filled with devious plot twists and turns. (*The Reporter* reviews of them can be found at [www.thereporter.org/book-reviews/celebrating-jewish-literature-two-mysteries-and-a-thriller](http://www.thereporter.org/book-reviews/celebrating-jewish-literature-two-mysteries-and-a-thriller) and [www.thereporter.org/book-reviews/off-the-shelf-an-almost-pi-a-manipulative-mystery-writer-and-a-cynical-lawyer](http://www.thereporter.org/book-reviews/off-the-shelf-an-almost-pi-a-manipulative-mystery-writer-and-a-cynical-lawyer).) I’m happy to say that “The Safari” lives up to its promise: it’s filled with exciting action and devious characters. Readers may also find themselves rooting for particular characters, as in, “Don’t make them the bad person! I like them!” (I deliberately used a plural pronoun because I am not going to give that part of the plot away.)

As in her other novels, Goldis presents several different characters’ points of view, which offer subtle clues to the action, even when the characters are unaware they are doing so. The plot is set in motion when Odelia Babel, who runs a company that makes sustainable clothing, decides to marry a man 25 years her junior. Odelia, Asher Bach (her fiancé) and her three children have traveled to the family compound in Africa for the wedding. The area brings back memories of their father, someone about whom the children have mixed feelings, much like they have about the idea of their mother’s marriage. Joshua, who is married and has a young child, and his sister, Bailey, work for their mother, although they both

recognize problems with the company. Sam, Bailey’s twin, is the one most vocally against the match; he is also mad that his mother refuses to give him the funds he needs to start a photography business. The viewpoints of several staff from the camp complete the voices offered.

Of course, someone dies. The question is not only the identity of the murderer, though, but the secrets held by different characters, all of which are slowly revealed. Just when I thought that Goldis had revealed all her surprises, another twist came along that took my breath away. I’m sure some readers will guess parts of the plot, but I doubt anyone will figure out all of them correctly. This book was so much fun I’ve already promised to lend it to a friend who loves thrillers. She’s in for a real treat.

While “The Safari” offers narration from a wide variety of characters, “The Goniff” is solely narrated by Amos Parisman, an elderly Jewish PI, who still takes cases when they are offered. Although I haven’t read the previous works in the series, Weinberger makes it clear from the start that Amos is a good person: that includes the care he gives his wife, Loretta, who suffers from dementia, and the ways he tries to help Carman, who takes care of Loretta during the day.

After someone unsuccessfully attempts to steal a 200-year-old Torah from a small Sephardic synagogue, Amos is recruited to prevent future robberies. However, before all his security suggestions can be put into place, another robbery attempt leaves a security guard dead. Amos is forced to use all his resources to discover who wants the Torah scroll and track down those hired to steal it before they can harm anyone else.

Although I did guess parts of the plot, the story still included some surprises. Amos is an appealing character – a hard-boiled detective with a Yiddish slant that makes him fun to read about. Although the resolution of the plot was satisfying, my favorite part of the story occurred early in the novel when Amos meets the rabbi of the congregation that owns the Torah. I laughed when Amos thinks, “I can’t read [the rabbi’s] mind, but I’ve spent more time than I can remember in the company of rabbis. The truth is, they are given to arguing. They’ll argue with you just to make sure you’ve got all your marbles – and if you are not up to the task, they’ll argue with themselves. It may not be genetic, but it comes with the job description.” Weinberger knows his rabbis; he also knows how to write a good detective novel.

HILLEL  
ACADEMY

PRESENTS THE 61<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL

JOURNAL  
CELEBRATION

HONORING

HOWARD WARNER | CHOW FOOD PANTRY  
RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

SEPTEMBER 11, 2025

6:30 - 9:00 PM | TEMPLE ISRAEL SOCIAL HALL

TICKETS

TICKET: \$100 | TABLE (8): \$600

VENMO: @HILLELACADEMYBC

GIVEBUTTER: GIVEBUTTER.COM/GENERALHABC1  
CASH OR CHECK PAYABLE TO HILLEL ACADEMY

PLACE AN AD

EMAIL [HILLELJOURNALGROUP@GMAIL.COM](mailto:HILLELJOURNALGROUP@GMAIL.COM)  
NO LATER THAN AUGUST 1, 2025

AD SIZE: 5.5" X 8.5"

- ◆ VISIONARY: \$10,000\*
- ◆ HUMANITARIAN: \$5,000\*
- ◆ PHILANTHROPIST: \$2,000\*
- ◆ INVESTOR: \$1,000\*
- ◆ SUSTAINER: \$800
- ◆ BENEFACTOR: \$600
- ◆ FULL PAGE: \$400

AD SIZE: 5.5" X 4.25"

- ◆ HALF PAGE: \$200

AD SIZE: 2.75" X 4.25"

- ◆ QUARTER PAGE: \$100
- AD SIZE: 2.75" X 2.1875"
- ◆ EIGHTH PAGE: \$50
- ◆ GRANDPARENTS: \$36

LISTING

- ◆ CHAI: \$36
- ◆ ALUMNI: \$36

\*INCLUDES 2 COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS



## Moving any time soon?

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! E-mail [reporter@aol.com](mailto:reporter@aol.com) with “Reporter Address change” in the subject line.





On the Jewish food scene

## Tomatoes, cucumbers, mint leaves and more

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

I had to laugh when I saw the link to an article about how to make an Israeli salad. It brought back memories of my 10 months in Be'er-sheva (Beersheva), Israel during the mid-1990s, and my three 24-year-old Israeli roommates who had some very different ideas about food.

First, for those who don't know what an Israeli salad is, according to my roommates, it consists of tomatoes and cucumbers only. No lettuce, no onions, no peppers, etc. Sometimes they put a light dressing on their tomatoes and cucumbers, while, at other times, the vegetables were eaten plain. What was odd was that they made a wide variety of salads with just those two ingredients. Wondering how

they could do that? They cut the cucumbers and tomatoes in different sizes and shapes depending on the meal. How did they decide what type of cut was appropriate for each meal? I still don't know. It was impossible to determine by observation and they were unable to explain it. They seemed to know automatically what kind of salad it should be.

We also differed about teas. At that time, I wasn't supposed to drink caffeinated tea, but, fortunately, I liked herbal tea. I was particularly fond of several kinds of Celestial Seasonings teas and was lucky to find a store in Israel that carried them. For the most part, my roommates didn't use any type of traditional tea bag. Instead, they would brew

mint leaves in their glass mugs. Instead of an infuser, they just placed a leaf or two into the hot water. My most food-skittish roommate thought my herbal teas were weird. I offered to let her try one, but it took months before she would even consider doing that (and then she didn't like it). I wonder if she thought I was going to poison her or if the herbal teas – now available in almost every major American grocery store – would make her sick.

In fact, that same roommate was so conservative in her eating habits that she refused to taste a bagel when a friend and I brought some back from Jerusalem. It didn't See "Mint" on page 7

## FAMILY LIVING

### Babies bounce into community families



Samuel Jacob Preus (Photo by Alexander Preus)

Information was supplied by the families.

**Florence Betty Duncan**

October 21, 2024

Parents: Rachel Roberts and Paul Duncan

Grandparents: Eve Berman and Bruce Roberts and Dawn and Leonard Duncan

Great-grandparent: Margaret Berman

**Kyler David Green**

November 18, 2024

Parents: Mark and Amanda Green

Grandparents: Linda and Bill Green

Great-grandparents: Ann Suskind and Ethel Brown

**Samuel Jacob Preus**

August 5, 2024

Parents: Anna Binstock and Alexander Preus

Grandparents: Debbie Berlyn and Stuart Binstock; and Merri Pell-Preus and Tony Preus



Florence Betty Duncan



Kyler David Green (Photo by Amanda Green)

### Jewish family online resources

By Reporter staff

◆ The Jewish Grandparents Network will hold the virtual talk "Connecting with Your Teen Grandchild in the Age of Social Media" on Wednesday, August 6, from 7-8 pm. Erica Hruby and Rivkah Schack from the Jewish Education Project will discuss "digital literacy fundamentals (understanding the platforms, language, and cultural norms of teen online spaces) and will address common challenges grandparents face" (<https://jewishgrandparentsnetwork.org/event/connecting-with-your-teen-grandchild-in-the-age-of-social-media>).

◆ The Blue Dove Foundation website has a section for caregivers called "Hineni | Caring for the Caregiver." To view the resources,

visit <https://thebluedovefoundation.org/caring-for-the-caregiver>.

◆ The Jewish Grandparents Network will hold the virtual program "Grandparenting with Grace: Organizing Your Home and Heart for the Jewish New Year" on Wednesday, September 10, from 7-8 pm. The event will help attendees "explore how to prepare our homes and hearts for the New Year with purpose by embracing Jewish values like *chesed* (loving-kindness), *hachnasat orchim* (hospitality) and *kavanah* (intention/presence)." For more information or to register, visit <https://jewishgrandparents-network.org/event/grandparenting-with-grace-organizing-your-home-and-heart-for-the-jewish-new-year>.



### Helping cats and dogs have healthy joints

(NAPSI) – Your four-footed friends could benefit from your taking four important steps to keep your pets in peak condition.

1. See the vet for regular checkups. Dogs and cats age faster than humans. Regular wellness exams let your veterinarian diagnose, manage and protect against potential health problems before they become serious.

2. Don't let your pet have a fat chance of being fit. Obesity is a big health risk for pets.

3. Exercise their right to exercise. Dogs should get at least 20 minutes of exercise a day. Play with your cats often

to keep them moving.

4. Keep their joints supple. Common signs of a joint problem include:

◆ For Dogs: reluctance to climb stairs; falling behind on walks; difficulty getting up in the morning or after a nap; and personality change

◆ For Cats: reluctance to jump; less prowling and chasing of prey; lying around the house more often; dislike of stroking, particularly of the back or tail; and no longer seeking affection or other personality change.

**Please support our advertisers and tell them you saw their ad here!**

**THE CAT DOCTOR**  
Darcy Sobel, DVM  
Kaitlin Pace, DVM  
Lea Callan, DVM  
*Exceptional care from kittenhood to the senior years!*  
*Celebrating 31 Years of Care!*  
825 Vestal Parkway W., Vestal  
754-7221

Visit us on the web at [www.thereportergroup.org](http://www.thereportergroup.org)

### THE BINGHAMTON SPIEDIES RETURN JUL. 31 - AUG. 3

#### BOWLING SHIRT GIVEAWAY SATURDAY, AUGUST 2ND

GAME TIME 6:07 PM  
GATES OPEN 5:00 PM  
PRESENTED BY

**LUROS**  
1st 1,000 FANS 13+

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 1ST**  
GAME TIME 7:05 PM  
GATES OPEN 6:00 PM  
**SPICY MEATBALLS TAKEOVER**  
AUGUST 14TH - 16TH  
PRESENTED BY mirabito

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 3RD**  
GAME TIME 5:05 PM | GATES OPEN 4:00 PM  
**KIDS EAT FREE**  
ALL AGES 12 & UNDER  
FREE HOT DOGS AND REGULAR SODA.  
**PRE-GAME POOL PARTY**  
4 PM - 5 PM  
**Home SENIOR STRILL**  
SUNDAY

607.722.FUNN | [www.BINGRP.COM](http://www.BINGRP.COM)

### Why Choose Hillel Academy?



- Jewish community microschool
- Pre-K through 6th Grade
- Student-Teacher Ratio: 4:1 - Personalized attention for every child
- Rooted in Jewish Values: Nurturing identity, kindness and a love of learning
- Dual curriculum: secular studies & Judaic studies including Hebrew language
- Tuition assistance available: no family turned away for inability to pay

### Academic Highlights



- STEAM-focused curriculum
- Hands-on science & engineering projects
- Robotics, coding, and real-world problem solving
- Inquiry-based learning
- Integration of visual arts and music enhancing creativity and expression
- Multi-age enrichment classes

### Beyond the Classroom



Community Outreach



Art Club



Crazy 8s Math Club



Chess Club

### Small School, Big Impact



- Intimate learning environment
- Strong teacher-student relationships
- Whole-child approach to education
- Building community & character

### Contact Information

Contact us for a private tour!

607.304.4544

[hillelacademyofbroomecounty.org](http://hillelacademyofbroomecounty.org)

[frontoffice@hillelacademyofbc.org](mailto:frontoffice@hillelacademyofbc.org)





# Still leaving Egypt

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

The second of this week’s two *parashot* begins with the verse, “These are the journeys of the children of Israel by which they went forth from out of the land of Egypt...” The wording of this verse begs a question: Only the first of the 42 journeys that the Jews took between Egypt and Israel actually constituted a leave-taking from Egypt. Why, then, does the Torah speak in plural form of “the journeys”?

The Lubavitcher Rebbe taught that the answer lies in understanding the difference between Mitzrayim, the biblical term for Egypt, and the land of Israel that is elsewhere in the Torah described as the “good and spacious land.” Mitzrayim is etymologically linked with the notions of confinement and restriction. Thus, the

juxtaposition of Egypt and Israel has a profound spiritual message for the Jew.

Each one of us should ideally strive to leave our respective places of confinement and come to a “good and spacious” place – to leave our narrow, frustrated straits for a place of openness and newfound breadth in terms of our relationship with God. The first verse of this *parasha* tells us that it is a process. In relation to where we were yesterday, we hope to arrive today to a place of spaciousness. Relative to where we are going, however, we are still leaving Egypt, still in a state of confinement and narrowness. In other words, leaving Egypt physically is the easy part; negating the Egypt within is an ongoing process. We always have to strive toward new vistas of expansiveness compared to

which our present state is constricted and confined.

The 42 journeys listed in this *parasha*, all in the process of leave taking from Egypt, serve to warn us of two possible errors we are liable to commit. One is our tendency to believe that we have arrived. The Torah warns us of the danger of complacency and reminds us that we were meant to journey onwards – always. Conversely, we might despair thinking that we are so far from our goal; what difference might one advancement make? Thus, the Torah teaches that each single journey is a liberation from Egypt and the direction in which one is traveling matters more than how far one has come along the way.

The summer season is a favorite time to travel. May all of our journeys be toward greater expansiveness.

## Congregational Notes

### Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative  
Rabbi: Micah Friedman  
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 607-723-7461 and 607-231-3746  
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-3:30 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm  
E-mail: [office@templeisraelvestal.org](mailto:office@templeisraelvestal.org)  
Website: [www.templeisraelvestal.org](http://www.templeisraelvestal.org)  
Service schedule: Tues., 5:30 pm; Fri., 5:30 pm; Sat., 9:30 am

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Micah Friedman via Zoom and in-person.

On Saturday, July 26, Shacharit services will be held at 9:45 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Numbers 22:2-25:9 and the haftarah is Jeremiah 2:4-28, 3:4. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:30 pm.

On Saturday, August 2, Shacharit services will be held at 9:45 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22 and the haftarah is Isaiah 1:1-27. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:15 pm.

Upcoming events:  
“Torah in Our Times” class on Tuesday, August 5, at 4:30 pm.  
Rabbi Micah Friedman will be out of the office July 28-August 3.

### 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](http://www.tikkunvor.org), E-mail: [info@tikkunvor.org](mailto:info@tikkunvor.org)  
Presidents: Martha Armstrong and Mitch Grossman, [presidents\\_22@tikkunvor.org](mailto:presidents_22@tikkunvor.org)  
Education Director/Admin. Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky  
Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin  
Services: All services currently on Zoom. E-mail [info@tikkunvor.org](mailto: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.

### Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Rabbi: Caleb Brommer  
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: [president@tbeithaca.org](mailto:president@tbeithaca.org), [secretary@tbeithaca.org](mailto:secretary@tbeithaca.org)  
Website: [www.tbeithaca.org](http://www.tbeithaca.org)  
Presidents: Melanie Kalman and Alexis Siemon  
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman  
Director of Education: Calle Schueler  
Services: Friday 8 pm; Saturday 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sundays and legal holidays).  
Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday afternoons, 3:45-5:45 pm. The teen No’ar program meets twice per month (every other Sunday from 5-7 pm) and is designed with the flexibility to accommodate busy student schedules.  
Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.  
For upcoming services and events on Zoom, visit [www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE](http://www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE).

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

### Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union  
Rabbi: Zev Silber  
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Phone: 607-722-1793, Rabbi’s Office: 607-722-7514  
Fax: 607-722-7121  
Office hours: Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm  
Beth David e-mail address: [bethdavid@stny.rr.com](mailto:bethdavid@stny.rr.com)  
Rabbi’s e-mail: [rabbisilber@stny.rr.com](mailto:rabbisilber@stny.rr.com)  
Website: [www.bethdavid.org](http://www.bethdavid.org)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton](https://www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton)  
Classes: Rabbi Zev Silber will hold his weekly Talmud class every Tuesday evening after services.

### Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch  
Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors  
E-mail: [aslonim@binghamton.edu](mailto:aslonim@binghamton.edu), [rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com](mailto:rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com)  
Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 607-797-0015, Fax: 607-797-0095  
Website: [www.Chabadofbinghamton.com](http://www.Chabadofbinghamton.com)  
Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education  
E-mail: [zchein@Jewishbu.com](mailto:zchein@Jewishbu.com), [rchein@Jewishbu.com](mailto:rchein@Jewishbu.com)  
Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development  
Chabad Downtown Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton  
E-mail: [lslonim@Jewishbu.com](mailto:lslonim@Jewishbu.com), [hslonim@Jewishbu.com](mailto:hslonim@Jewishbu.com)  
Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming  
E-mail: [yohana@Jewishbu.com](mailto:yohana@Jewishbu.com), [gohana@Jewishbu.com](mailto:gohana@Jewishbu.com)  
Regular service times: Daily 7:30 am, Friday evening 6 pm, Shabbat morning 9:30 am, Maariv and Havdalah one hour after candle-lighting time, Sundays 9:30 am.  
To join the mailing list, for up-to-date information on adult education offerings or to arrange for a private tutorial, for details concerning the Judaica shop and resource center, or for assistance through the Piaker Free Loan Society or Raff Maasim Tovim Foundation, call Chabad’s office at 797-0015.  
Chabad will be holding pre-Shabbat virtual programs. For more information, visit [www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership](http://www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership).

### Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive  
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815  
Phone: 334-2691  
E-mail: [fertigj@roadrunner.com](mailto: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.: Call ahead, text or e-mail to confirm dates.

### Penn-York Jewish Community

Treasurer: Beth Herbst, 607-857-0976  
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.

Friday, July 25, light candles before ..... 8:11 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, July 26 ..... 9:10 pm  
Friday, August 1, light candles before ..... 8:04 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, August 2 ..... 9:03 pm  
Friday, August 8, light candles before ..... 7:55 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, August 9 ..... 8:54 pm

### Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism (this header block updates the current one.)  
Rabbi: Leiah Moser  
Address: 9 Riverside Dr, Binghamton NY 13905  
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm  
Phone: 607-723-7355  
Office e-mail: [TempleConcordBinghamton@gmail.com](mailto:TempleConcordBinghamton@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.TempleConcord.com](http://www.TempleConcord.com)  
Please contact Temple Concord for Zoom links.

Some services and programs are online only.

Fridays, July 25 and August 1: At 7:30 pm, Friday Shabbat services are in person, on Zoom and Facebook.com.

Saturdays, July 26 and August 2: At 9:15 am, Torah study is in person and on Zoom. An in-person only service will take place at 10:30 am.

Wednesdays, July 30 and August 6: At 5:30 pm, evening prayers in person only. At 6 pm, adult education class in person and on Zoom.

Upcoming event:  
Saturday, July 26: At 6 pm, Community Board Game Night for all ages. Refreshments will be provided. The suggested donation is \$5 per person or \$20 per family to cover the cost of refreshments.

### Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Cantor: David Green  
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820  
Phone: 607-432-5522  
E-mail: [TBEOneonta@gmail.com](mailto: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: Leo Searfoss  
Cemetery Committee: 315-696-5744  
Website: [templebrithsholomcortland.org](http://templebrithsholomcortland.org)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/>  
Service leaders: Lay leadership  
Shabbat services: Services are usually on the third Friday of the month and led by a variety of leaders. 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.” The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences. The Board of Trustees meets on the second Tuesday of the month.  
Services and programs are held by Zoom usually on the third Friday of the month.

NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT...  
YOUR AD SHOULD BE HERE!

For information, contact Kathy Brown at 607-724-2360, ext. 244, or [advertising@thereportergroup.org](mailto:advertising@thereportergroup.org)

THE REPORTER

Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton



# TAU researchers discover first evidence of auditory interaction between plants and animals

By JNS staff

(JNS) – In a world-first study, researchers at Tel Aviv University have discovered an acoustic interaction between plants and insects.

Focusing on female moths, the study found that the insects make critical decisions about where to lay their eggs based on sounds emitted by nearby plants. When plants emit ultrasonic distress signals – inaudible to the human ear but detectable by moths – the moths avoid them in favor of healthy, silent plants.

The study was conducted in the laboratories of professors Yossi Yovel, from the School of Zoology, and Lilach Hadany, from the School of Plant Sciences and Food Security, at Tel Aviv University's Wise Faculty of Life Sciences. It was led by students Rya Seltzer and Guy Zer Eshel, in collaboration with scientists from the Plant Protection Institute at the Volcani Institute. The findings were published in the journal eLife.

The study builds on a groundbreaking discovery published by the same research team about two years ago, which revealed that plants under stress emit ultrasonic sounds – frequencies beyond human hearing but perceptible to many animals. “After proving in the previous study that plants produce sounds, we hypothesized that animals capable of hearing these high-frequency sounds may respond to them and make decisions accordingly,” said Yovel. “Specifically, we know that many insects, which have diverse interactions with the plant world, can perceive plant sounds. We wanted to investigate whether such insects actually detect and respond to these sounds.”

Hadany added that “we chose to focus on female moths, which typically lay their eggs on plants so that the larvae can feed on them once hatched. We assumed the females seek an optimal site to lay their eggs – a healthy plant that can properly nourish the larvae. Thus, when the plant signals that it is dehydrated and under stress, would the moths heed the warning and avoid laying eggs on it?”

In the first experiment, designed to isolate the auditory



From left: TAU researchers Guy Zer Eshel, Lilach Hadany and Rya Seltzer. (Photo by Tel Aviv University)

component from other plant characteristics such as color and scent, the researchers presented female moths with two boxes: one contained a speaker playing recordings of dehydrated tomato plants, while the other remained silent. The moths showed a clear preference for the “noisy” box, which they likely interpreted as indicating the presence of a living plant, even if it was under stress.

The researchers concluded that the moths do, in fact, perceive and respond to playback of plant-emitted sounds. When the moths' hearing organs were neutralized, their preference disappeared, and they chose between the two boxes equally – clear evidence that their original behavior was driven specifically by auditory cues rather than other stimuli.

In the second experiment, female moths were presented with two healthy tomato plants – one accompanied by a speaker playing the sounds of a drying plant and the other silent. Once again, the moths showed a clear preference, this time for the silent plant, which emitted no distress sounds.

In another experiment, the female moths were again presented with two boxes – one silent and the other containing male moths, which emit ultrasonic sounds at frequencies similar to those produced by plants. This time,

the females showed no clear preference and laid their eggs equally in both boxes. The researchers concluded that, when deciding where to lay their eggs, female moths respond specifically to plant-emitted sounds rather than to similar sounds made by males.

“In this study, we revealed the first evidence of acoustic interaction between a plant and an insect. We are convinced, however, that this is just the beginning. Acoustic interaction between plants and animals doubtlessly exists in many more forms and serves a wide range of roles. This is a vast, unexplored field – an entire world waiting to be discovered,” the researchers said.

## Jewish Community Center

### JCC Friendship Club

The JCC Friendship Club met on July 16. We went out to eat lunch. Several members are away on vacation. We discussed future programming.

On Wednesday, August 20, we will meet at the JCC at 1:30 pm. Sue Herzog will give a book review on “The Lion Women of Tehran” by Marjan Kamali. Come, listen and join in the discussion.

On Wednesday, September 17, we will meet at the JCC at 1 pm to hear a speaker from Leviene, Gouldin and Thompson talk about financial planning, wills and trusts.

I look forward to seeing you on August 20 at 1:30 pm and September 17 at 1 pm. Come have a snack with us.

Sylvia Diamond  
President

## Israeli toddler finds 3,800-year-old amulet

By JNS staff

(JNS) – In early March, during a family trip to Tel Azekah near Beit Shemesh, three-and-a-half-year-old Ziv Nitzan from Moshav Ramot Meir stumbled upon a piece of history – an ancient scarab amulet dating back approximately 3,800 years.

The young girl's discovery was purely accidental, ac-

cording to her sister, Omer Nitzan. “We were walking along the path when Ziv bent down and picked up a particular stone,” she said, according to a press release published by the Israel Antiquities Authority. “After rubbing off the sand, we saw something was different about it. We quickly called our parents and realized we had found an See “Amulet” on page 8

## Mint . . . . . Continued from page 5

matter that I explained to her that it was simply bread in a different shape; she turned down the chance to try one. That was actually OK, since it left more bagels for me.

I can't look at tomatoes and cucumbers without thinking about the Israeli salads my roommates made. Since I'm a big fan of salads with lettuce and other ingredients, I don't make them often. However, I won't turn down one if it's offered.



**ERNEST H. PARSONS FUNERAL HOME**  
Faithfully Serving Broome County Since 1928

**PRE-ARRANGEMENTS AND PRE-FUNDING AVAILABLE**  
**Joseph Fritsch**  
Managing Director

71 Main St., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Phone 607-724-1336  
Fax 800-948-5844

parsonsfuneral@yahoo.com  
www.ParsonsFuneral.com  
**HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE**

Advertise in the next  
**Personal & Business Services**  
Special Advertising Section •

If you are the owner or manager of a local business, *The Reporter* has a unique advertising opportunity for you! **PERSONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES**, the highlight of our Nov. 28 issue, will feature an advertising section of display ads in a variety of sizes to suit your copy.

**THE REPORTER**  
Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

**November 28 issue**  
Ad Deadline: Nov. 20  
Contact Kathy at 607-724-2360, ext. 244  
or advertising@thereportergroup.org to advertise

**Disaster Clean-Up**  
Fire & Water Damage Restoration

**Mold Removal**  
**Dehumidification**  
**Moisture Testing • Contents**  
**Building Cleaning**  
**Packouts & Storage**  
**Construction & Repairs**

**24/7 Including Holidays**  
**607.748.0128 (ph)**  
**607.748.3604 (fx)**

**Arthur Diamond, President**  
**3216 Watson Blvd.**  
**Endwell, NY 13760**  
**www.disaster-cleanup.com**

**Greater Binghamton's Preferred Electrical Contractor**

**BLANDING ELECTRIC, INC.**

**729-3545**  
429 Commerce Road  
Vestal, New York 13850  
blandingelectricinc.com

Complete Home Rewires  
Service & Meter Upgrades  
Panel Change-outs  
GFCI / AFCI Plugs  
Appliance circuits / outlets  
AC & Heating Circuits  
Outdoor landscape lighting  
Pool & Spa Wiring  
Insurance Claims

**FREE ESTIMATES**  
**GUARANTEED WORK**  
**24 HOUR**  
**EMERGENCY SERVICE**

**Summer Home Improvement**  
**\$75 OFF**

**Electrical Panel Change-out OR Service Upgrade (200 Amp)**  
**\$50 OFF 100 Amp or 150 Amp**  
Change-out or upgrade  
Valid for residential service only.  
Cannot be combined with other offers.  
Not valid on prior sales or services. Offer expires 8/31/25

**HOPLER & ESCHBACH FUNERAL HOME**  
“A new family tradition”

**Personal Service**  
**Professionalism**  
**Experience You Can Trust**

**COMPARE OUR PRICES**  
**We charge far less than other area funeral homes**

**Kurt M. Eschbach, Funeral Director**  
**483 Chenango Street Binghamton**  
**607-722-4023**  
**www.HEfuneralhome.com**

Visit us on the web at [www.thereportergroup.org](http://www.thereportergroup.org)



# 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 Museum of Jewish Heritage will hold the “Virtual Walking Tour: Tarnów, Poland” on Wednesday, July 30, at 11 am. The cost to attend is \$25. For more information or to register, visit <https://mjhnyc.org/events/virtual-travel-tarnow>.
- ◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage will hold several virtual book talks: “The Art Spy” on Monday, August 18, at 7 pm (<https://mjhnyc.org/events/the-art-spy>); Stories Survive: “From Generation to Generation” on Tuesday, August 26, at 7pm (<https://mjhnyc.org/events/generation-to-generation-2>); and “Unstoppable: Sigi B. Wilzig’s Astonishing Journey from Auschwitz Survivor and Penniless Immigrant to Wall Street Legend” on Monday, September 29, at 7pm (<https://mjhnyc.org/events/unstoppable-sigi-b-wilzig>).
- ◆ Uri L’Tzedek will hold the virtual book talk “Going Out with Knots: My Two Kaddish Years with Hebrew Poetry” on Tuesday, September 30, at 6 pm. The cost to attend is \$18. Rabbi Dr. Wendy Zierler will speak about her new book, which looks at her literary and personal Jewish mourning journey in the aftermath of familial loss. For more information or to register, visit [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_iES2nLoyS2GwX5dBi9RbPg#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_iES2nLoyS2GwX5dBi9RbPg#/registration).
- ◆ In conjunction with the Museum at Eldridge Street’s current exhibition, “Lower East Side, 1975: Portrait of a Changing Jewish Neighborhood,” photographer and photography professor Sarah Barsness will to explore the cultural history of photography on Monday, August 18, at 6 pm. There is sliding scale cost to attend. For more information or to register, visit <https://fareharbor.com/embeds/book/eldridgestreet/items/647290/calendar/2025/08/?-flow=918844&full-items=yes>.
- ◆ The Community Scholar Program will hold the virtual talk “Ghosts of a Holy War: The 1929 Massacre in Palestine That Ignited the Arab-Israeli Conflict” with Yardena Schwartz, on Sunday July 27, from 7-9 pm. For more information or to register, visit [https://ocsp.dm.networkforgood.com/emails/but-it-s-a-tradition-adapting-fiddler-on-the-](https://ocsp.dm.networkforgood.com/emails/but-it-s-a-tradition-adapting-fiddler-on-the-roof-in-its-60th-year-rabbi-rose-prevezer-be6f896b-e792-4b69-9590-494a7f3322e1)

- ◆ The National Yiddish Theatre Folksbienne is streaming the video series “Pearls of Yiddish” with Zalmen Mlotek, who will explore Yiddish music and welcome guest performers. To view the series, visit <https://nytf.org>.
- ◆ Tikvah is holding the online series “Living Through History: Learning from the ‘12-Day War.’” Jonathan Silver will be in discussion with Victor Davis Hanson, Ambassador Yechiel Leiter, Rabbi Meir Soloveichik and Hussein Aboubakr Mansour. For more information or to watch, visit <https://lp.tikvah.org/living-through-history>.
- ◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold the hybrid program “Family History Today: Genetic Census of the Jewish People” on Sunday, August 3, at 2 pm. The program will discuss the Genetic Census of the Jewish People project. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/stream-tickets/family-history-today-2025-08-03>.
- ◆ The Jewish Heritage Alliance will hold the virtual course “Sefarad: The Untold Story that Changed the World” on Thursdays, August 21-28 and September 4, from noon-1:30 pm. The cost to attend is \$75. For more information or to register, visit <https://jewishheritagealliance.com/new-online-adult-education-series>.
- ◆ My Jewish Learning will hold the online class “Ancient Literature of the Jews of Iran: Mystical Epics, Poetry and Hidden Gems” on Wednesdays, August 6-27, at 7 pm. The cost to attend is \$60. For more information or to register, visit <https://my-jewish-learning.teachable.com/p/ancient-literature-of-jews-of-iran-25>.
- ◆ Uri L’Tzedek will hold the virtual program “Beyond Tikun Olam: A Jewish Case for Social Justice” on Wednesday, July 30, at 7 pm. The cost to attend is \$18. Rabba Melissa Scholten-Gutierrez will discuss “texts that provide nuance and depth to the Jewish imperative for social justice.” For more information or to register, visit [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_MO7Qng-bYRIWFSjzeNR6kgA#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MO7Qng-bYRIWFSjzeNR6kgA#/registration).
- ◆ My Jewish Learning is offering a new e-mail series “Jewish Views on Contemporary Issues.” The eight-part series explores “each issue to gain understanding through a Jewish lens.” For more information or to register, visit [www.myjewishlearning.com/](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/)

explore-contemporary-issues-through-a-jewish-lens. For additional resources, see previous issues of *The Reporter* on its website, [www.thereportergroup.org/jewish-online-resources](http://www.thereportergroup.org/jewish-online-resources).

## Alcatraz. . . Continued from page 2

the Everglades, which some critics have taken to calling “Alligator Auschwitz,” are very, very serious. Officials allege that the makeshift facilities, which were constructed in eight days and are already flooding, can withstand a Category 2 hurricane. But recent hurricanes in the region have regularly exceeded this strength, and it’s unclear if the facility has any ability to protect those inside from them.

Detainees are reporting “mosquitoes the size of elephants”; that their one meal a day is filled with maggots; that they have no water to shower with; that bright lights remain on 24 hours a day. A draft operational plan obtained by the *Miami Herald* includes references to minors and pregnant women eventually being held at the site. Historian Andrea Pitzer, who has written a book about concentration camps, wrote a recent op-ed titled “Don’t call it ‘Alligator Alcatraz.’ Call it a concentration camp.”

But for their intended audience, the memes – and the merch – are meant to easily deflect all those concerns. They invite their supporters to ask: Can Alligator Alcatraz really be a concentration camp if it has an official beer koozie?

The now-defunct online store where Robert Keith Packer – who was officially pardoned by Trump, along with 1,600 other January 6 defendants, earlier this year – purchased his “Camp Auschwitz” hoodie was deluged with negative reviews in the wake of January 6.

But others defended it. “Notice all the crybaby snowflakes calling shirts racist and the company racist because they supply an item because people demand it,” one user commented a month after the insurrection. “...note to snowflakes just because you don’t like it and you let cnn tell you what to think doesn’t make it racist.”

We’re seeing natural evolutions from that logic today. On a visit to the Everglades facility, Trump joked that detainees “shouldn’t run in a straight line” to avoid the alligators. Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier, who is also selling Alligator Alcatraz merchandise, said that the facility didn’t need to invest in a lot of perimeter security: “If people get out, there’s not much waiting for them other than alligators and pythons.”

## Amulet. . . Continued from page 7

archaeological artifact. We immediately reported it” to the IAA, she continued.

Judah Region District Archaeologist Semyon Gendler commended the family for their prompt reporting and awarded Ziv a certificate of appreciation for her good citizenship. The amulet will now be displayed in a special Passover exhibition at the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein National Campus for the Archaeology of Israel, alongside other rare artifacts from the periods of Egypt and Canaan, many of which are being displayed publicly for the first time.

Daphna Ben-Tor, an expert in ancient amulets and seals, identified the object as a Canaanite scarab from the Middle Bronze Age. “Scarabs were used during this period as seals and amulets, often found in graves, public buildings, and homes,” she said, according to the release. “Many feature symbols and messages reflecting religious beliefs or social status.”

Scarabs are artifacts originating in ancient Egypt, shaped like a dung beetle. The beetle held religious significance in ancient Egypt as a symbol of creation and renewal, believed to represent the incarnation of the Creator God.

This scarab was discovered at the foot of Tel Azekah, considered an important archaeological site with evidence

of multiple cultural shifts throughout history, according to the IAA. Tel Aviv University-led excavations there have uncovered remnants from the Judahite Kingdom, including city walls and agricultural installations. Tel Azekah is also most famously linked to the biblical battle between David and Goliath, as described in the Book of Samuel.

“We have been excavating here for almost 15 years, and findings confirm that during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages, Tel Azekah was one of the most significant cities in the Judean Foothills,” said professor Oded Lipschits, director of the Tel Aviv University excavation, according to the release. “This scarab joins a growing collection of Egyptian and Canaanite artifacts found at the site, underscoring the deep cultural connections between Canaan and Egypt at the time.”

Israeli Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu emphasized the historical significance of Ziv’s discovery: “This seal connects us to the grand civilizations that lived on this land thousands of years ago. It is a reminder that even children can play a role in uncovering history.”

IAA Director Eli Escusido praised the family’s decision to hand over the artifact to the National Treasures of Israel. “Thanks to Ziv, the public will be able to see and appreciate this remarkable find. As part of our special Passover exhibition, we will showcase seals of the pharaohs, Egyptian statues, ritual vessels and other artifacts reflecting Egypt’s influence on the Land of Israel.”

Laura Loomer, a Jewish far-right activist and close advisor to Trump, had the most disturbing response: “Alligator lives matter. The good news is, alligators are guaranteed at least 65 million meals if we start now.” (The estimated population of Latinos living in the United States is 65 million.)

Even the name Alligator Alcatraz, a goofy moniker Uthmeier came up with, waters down the stark reality of the horrors taking place at the detention center. Videos are circulating online of tourists driving into the remote Everglades to take a picture standing below a newly installed sign for “Alligator Alcatraz” – as if it were just another theme park in the sunshine state.

Memes, silly names, jokes and cartoonish merch – all of this commodification does the same thing: It turns the Trump administration’s devastating crackdown on immigrants into a joke for his supporters to laugh at, rather than a set of real-world policies affecting very real people for whom they could conceivably have compassion. The merchandizing of the ICE detention center in Florida takes this noxious trend to the penultimate step: Capitalizing off of human suffering.

“The goal is to raise awareness to what the policy is,” Evan Power, the chairman of the Florida Republican Party, told Fox 13 about the line of merchandise. “But second of all, when you sell merch, you get names, you get e-mails, and then you make some money off of all of it.”

Nora Berman is the *Forward*’s deputy opinion editor. She can be reached by e-mail at [berman@forward.com](mailto:berman@forward.com) or follow on Twitter @noraebberman.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are the author’s own and do not necessarily reflect those of the *Forward*.

Eye-Catching  
**Classifieds**

YOUR HEATING & PLUMBING SPECIALISTS

**BAKER'S PLUMBING & HEATING**

*We Also Do Natural Gas Conversions & All Plumbing Work*

Free Estimates • Fully Insured • Residential & Commercial

*We Install, Service & Repair...*

Furnaces • Air Conditioners  
Water Heaters • Gas Fireplaces

**SERVING BROOME & TIOGA COUNTIES**

754-6376

Emergency Service 24 Hours

pbaker927@yahoo.com

It just makes cents to advertise here in **The Reporter!**

For information on advertising, contact Kathy Brown at 607-724-2360, ext. 244, or [advertising@thereportergroup.org](mailto:advertising@thereportergroup.org).

**THE REPORTER**  
Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

The Reporter is offering sponsorships!

Celebrate your simcha with the community or honor your loved one.

There are four levels: Bronze \$200, Silver \$400, Gold \$600 and Platinum \$1,000.

To arrange for a sponsorship or for answers to questions, contact Rabbi Rachel Esserman at [rachel@thereportergroup.org](mailto:rachel@thereportergroup.org).

**STAY UP TO DATE!**

Follow the Jewish Federation on Facebook and Instagram

**@jewishbinghamton**