

# THE REPORTER

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Discussion to be held Dec. 11

## Binghamton Jewish Film Fest to hold virtual showing of “The Automat” in December

By Reporter staff

The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest will hold a virtual showing of the documentary film “The Automat” in December. The showing is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton in conjunction with the Ithaca Area United Jewish Community. Registration is required prior to Wednesday, December 7; the 72-hour link will be distributed to registrants in the afternoon of Thursday, December 8. A discussion with the film’s director and producer, Lisa Hurwitz, will take place on Zoom on Sunday, December 11, at 5:30 pm, and be moderated by Dr. Elissa Sampson (see sidebar for more information). Registration is free, but donations are welcome.

“The Automat” tells the history of the restaurant chain Horn and Hardart, which served food to millions of New Yorkers and Philadelphians for more than a century. Found



Inside a Horn and Hardart automat. (Photo courtesy of John W. Romas Collection of Horn & Hardart Memorabilia)

by Joseph Horn and Frank Hardart in 1888, it was said to have revolutionized the nation’s restaurant scene “with comfortable interiors, quality food and state of the art technology for the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The chain welcomed those who had been ignored, including immigrants, the working-class, Blacks and women, all of whom were often not welcome in restaurants.”

According to the film’s publicity, “Horn and Hardart’s technology captured the

public’s imagination like nothing else in the 1900s – the customer put nickels into slots and little windows opened to reveal the customer’s pick, be it a slice of pie, macaroni and cheese, or a Salisbury steak. The gleaming glass and stainless-steel windows looked ‘sanitary’ and like nothing else in existence. ‘The Automat’ illustrates how the company both served the public with great food and at the same time treated its employees with fairness and integrity.”

The documentary’s theme song – “(There Was Nothing Like The Coffee) At the Automat” – was composed by comedian and writer Mel Brooks, who used to eat at the automat. Brooks’ composer Hummie Mann wrote the rest of the film’s score, which was done in the Gentleman’s Swing genre and performed by a 26-piece orchestra.

Pete Hammond of Deadline said the See “Film” on page 8

## BD luncheon on Dec. 10 to feature David Sliom

Beth David’s Luncheon Speaker Series will continue in person on Saturday, December 10, with guest speaker David Sliom. The title of his talk is “South African Jewry: A Personal Perspective.” Beth David’s Luncheon Speaker Series takes place the second Saturday of the month after Shabbat morning services, and is open to the community. People are encouraged to attend the morning service, which begins at 9:30 am. There is no charge for the luncheon.

Born in Durban, South Africa, Sliom and his family migrated to the United States in 1977, living first in San Antonio, TX, and then in St. Louis, MO, where he completed his high school education and then attended Washington University, graduating with a degree in mathematics in 1985. He is employed in the field of cybersecurity for

several federal agencies, and resides in Annapolis, MD.

Sliom will discuss what it was like being Jewish in the 1960s and ‘70s in South Africa. He will also speak about the Jewish community and how its practices compare to U.S. ones. “I will discuss some of the traditions that are the same, as well as those that may differ,” Sliom indicated. “I also look forward to sharing some of my family history, which has historical significance. When I used to ask my father why we did things a certain way in our Jewish practice, he always replied, ‘This is the way your great-grandfather did it.’”

The year 2019 was the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Sliom’s great-grandfather, Shmaryahu Sliom, who was the first rabbi in the Afrikaaner Republic in the 1890s. A commemorative article in the *Pretoria Jewish Chronicle* marked that anniversary, indicating that there was an active Jewish community there, and that Rev Sliom ministered to that community, taking on the additional functions of cantor, *shochet* and *mohel*. The creation of a Chovevei Zion Organization, as well as a Ladies Benevolent Society and Ladies Zionist Society, were also due to the efforts of Sliom and his wife, Hannah.



David Sliom (Photo courtesy of David Sliom)

“We are delighted that David will be sharing his insights based on his experiences growing

up in South Africa,” organizers say, “and his personal connection to an important part of its Jewish history. His talk is sure to generate a lively and thought-provoking discussion!”

Since the monthly series’ continuation depends on the generosity of contributors, Beth David welcomes and appreciates donations to the Luncheon Fund in order to keep the program going. Donations, as well as sponsorships, can be made in honor of or in memory of someone, or to mark a special occasion. Those wishing an acknowledgment to be sent to the person being honored, or to the family of someone being remembered, can indicate that along with the necessary information. Donations can be sent to Beth David Synagogue, 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905, Attention: Luncheon Fund.

### Spotlight

## Honor Flight honors Elsie Doetsch

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Elsie Doetsch resisted going on an Honor Flight for years. The flights, sponsored locally by Twin Tiers Honor Flight, transport veterans to Washington, DC, to honor their service, allowing them to visit memorials and reflect on their time in the armed services at no cost to the veteran. Doetsch, who served in the U.S. Army from January 1975-June 1978, was reluctant to go on the trip because each veteran is attended by a guardian and she worried that she wouldn’t be comfortable with the person chosen. What changed Doetsch’s mind is when she learned Bridget Traver (who has been a guardian on seven Honor Flight trips) would be hers for Mission 14.

“Bridget Traver had been trying for several years before COVID to convince me to go,” Doetsch said in an e-mail interview. “This past January, when I had one of my

dogs at the vet’s for a check-up, Bridget told me about the historic all female Twin Tier Honor Flight scheduled for November. It was to be an all female veteran, guardian and staff trip. I have been acquainted with Bridget from taking my dogs to the animal hospital where she has worked for 26 years. I told her if someone like her were my guardian, I would feel comfortable going. Without hesitation, she told me she would be my guardian.”

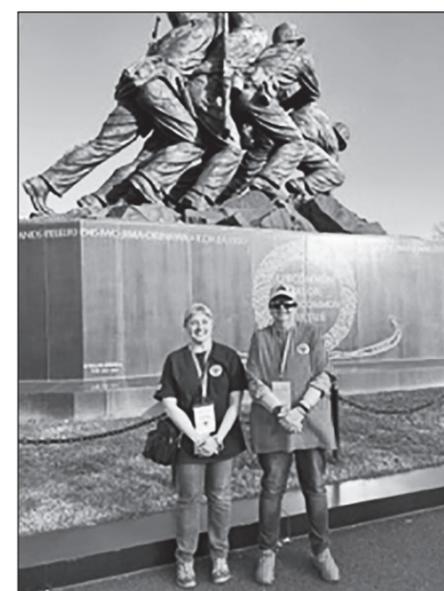
She noted that “if it had not been for Bridget’s perseverance, encouragement and willingness to be my guardian I most likely would not have gone. Throughout the trip, we shared laughs and tears. I cannot thank Bridget enough. She helped to make this Honor Flight trip, Mission 14, more meaningful. I asked Bridget at one point, ‘When does your commitment to me end?’ I meant to ask, ‘When does your responsibility to me

end when we get back?’ Her quick reply was, ‘Never, you will always be my veteran!’”

Doetsch found the trip a moving and important experience. “The trip was all I expected and more,” she said, “From start to finish, it was all meaningful. The camaraderie on the bus (how can you not have fun on a bus with around 50 women) and throughout the trip was a lot of fun and laughs. Learning the stories of other veterans was inspiring.”

She finds it impossible to pick one experience as the most important. “Every step of the trip was significant and telling,” Doetsch added. “Every memorial evoked emotions and some tears. How can one not become overwhelmed with emotion at ‘The Wall’” See “Honor” on page 8

At right, l-r: Bridget Traver and Elsie Doetsch at the Iwo Jima Memorial.



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# Play Ball! Jews in the outfield (and the infield, too)

## Jewish baseball roundup 2022

By Bill Simons

Baseball 2022 featured a robust Jewish presence. Over a dozen Jewish players notched Major League Baseball roster spots, and most committed to joining Team Israel for the March 2023 World Baseball Classic. Two Jews received All-Star Game invitations. For the first time, three Jews hit

## Book burial at Temple cemetery



On November 6, Temple Concord and Temple Israel buried books at the Temple Israel cemetery. Shown are Suzanne Holwitt (back to camera), chairwoman of Temple Concord's Ritual Committee, and Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell, spiritual leader of Temple Concord, standing by books that were going to be buried.

20-plus home runs in the same season. A lefty, nicknamed "Maximus," made a strong case that he is the best Jewish pitcher since Sandy Koufax. An observant Orthodox pitcher labored in the minors, keeping alive his longshot hopes of playing big league ball. In Flushing, a big-spending owner turned a long-suffering team around. Jewish general managers and field managers led prominent franchises. And a player who proclaimed MLB ambitions at his bar mitzvah batted cleanup on baseball's newest dynasty.

Despite injuries, including an on-field tumble that resulted in a concussion, lefty Max "Maximus" Fried, the Atlanta Braves All-Star pitcher and Cy Young Award runner-up, recorded an impressive 14-7 won-lost record for the second consecutive season. At 2.48, his 2022 ERA ranked third in the National League. A past participant in the Maccabiah Games, the 28-year-old Fried currently has a higher career winning percentage — .684 to .655 — than his hero, Sandy Koufax. Although the comparison is facile, Fried is probably the top, post-Koufax Jewish hurler.

Winning their fourth pennant and second World Series championship in the past six seasons, the 2022 Houston Astros merit the designation dynasty. The Astros' cleanup hitter, third baseman Alex Bregman, announced major league aspirations at his bar mitzvah. With his batting average dipping to .259, Bregman has not yet regained the form that led to him finishing second in the 2019 MVP voting. But his 23 home runs, 38 doubles, 93 RBIs and stellar fielding, pacing third basemen in assists, contributed heavily to the 2022 Astros championship.

Even without his famous pearl necklace, leftfielder Joc Pederson was named to the NL All-Star team. A fan favorite, the colorful Pederson paced the weak-hitting San Francisco Giants in batting average (.274), home runs (23), RBIs (70) and slugging percentage (.521). Pederson spurned free agency to accept a \$19.65 million qualifying offer to return to the Giants in 2023.

For Pederson's manager — and fellow Team Israel alum — Gabe Kapler, the 2022 season was disappointing. Kapler,

deft at tactics and motivation, led the 2021 Giants to more regular season victories (107) than any other team, garnering him National League Manager of the Year honors. In 2022, Kapler's Giants fell to a mediocre 81-81 won-lost record. For the baseball savvy Kapler, the most politically progressive and physically imposing manager in MLB, expectations run high for a Giants rebound in 2023.

In addition to perennials Bregman and Pederson, a third Jew hit 20-plus home runs in 2022. Milwaukee Brewers first baseman Rowdy Tellez led the Jewish contingent with 35 round trippers. Although the 6'4", 260-pound slugger strikes out too much and fails to hit for average — .219 in 2022 — his power is well documented. During his career, more than 46 percent of the balls Tellez has put into play have had an exit velocity of 95 mph or more. And yes, his real birth name is Rowdy, a testament to prenatal exuberance.

Traded by the St. Louis Cardinals to the New York Yankees in early August, Harrison Bader, one of the game's premier defensive outfielders, created quite a buzz with an unexpected display of power hitting, walloping five home runs in the post-season. As a metropolitan New York City native, Team Israel enlistee and Yankee centerfielder, a position made iconic by predecessors Joe DiMaggio and Mickey Mantle, Bader will prove a big draw amongst Jewish fans.

The son of Israeli parents who held his bar mitzvah in the Jewish homeland, pitcher Dean Kremer went 8-7 with a 3.23 ERA for the Baltimore Orioles.

Pitching in relief for the Cleveland Guardians, Eli Morgan posted five wins, lost three and recorded a 3.38 ERA.

Spotting a 3.55 ERA, Miami Marlins pitcher Richard Bleier made 54 relief appearances.

Landsman Scott Effross, Jake Fishman, Kevin Pillar, Garrett Stubbs and Zack Weiss played major league ball in 2022.

Jacob Steinmetz, the first observant Orthodox Jew ever selected in the MLB draft, struggled in 2022 to gain traction is his quest for a major league berth. Playing for the Diamondbacks affiliate in the Arizona Complex League, **See "Baseball" on page 8**

## Opinion

### In My Own Words

## Is it too early? Preparing for Hanukkah

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

It's become a holiday tradition. Once the countdown to Christmas starts, I send a Christian friend notices from e-mails and websites about how many days there are to the holiday. I've also been known to let her know when displays start going up in stores, especially if it's August or September. Her answer to these notifications (especially the ones that say, "Only 120 days until Christmas!") is "NOOOOOOO!!!" She did appreciate a photo I sent to her recently of an inflatable turkey sitting on an inflatable Santa Claus. The turkey held a sign that said, "It's not your turn yet, Fat Boy."

I sympathize with her, which may seem strange since I started my Hanukkah preparations during the second week in November this year. (The holiday doesn't start until the evening of December 18, so I was more than a month early.) To place this into perspective, you have to understand what happened in 2020 and what I did differently last year.

## Corrections

In the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary section of the November 18 issue of *The Reporter*, two advertisements had incorrect spelling of names. On page 2A, the ad should have read Jean and Lewis Hecht. On page 8A, the ad should have read Bob and Helene Phillips.

*The Reporter* apologizes for the errors and any inconvenience or confusion they caused.

My family has never been sentimental about the holidays. I can't remember if it was during or after high school that my parents stopped giving us presents. My father never mentioned what his family did (they were non-observant), but my mom would note that she used to get a quarter and an orange, so presents were not a big deal to her. My favorite part of the holiday has always been lighting the candles so I didn't mind the lack of presents; they didn't really matter.

Move ahead to 2020 and the pandemic. The Federation held a Hanukkah event in the Jewish Community Center parking lot. I was so busy taking pictures for the paper that by the time I went to get a doughnut, there were none left. While driving home, I felt very unhappy and wondered why since I'm not that big a fan of doughnuts. I knew that meant the doughnut was standing in for the real problem. I quickly realized that the lack of Hanukkah gatherings that year made me feel like I was missing an important part of the holiday.

So, last year, I decided I was going to do what was necessary to make the holiday fun. That meant two things: 1) for the first time in my life I was going to have eight nights of presents even if they all came from me (at least I knew I'd like them all) and 2) on the last night of Hanukkah, I was going to clean off my kitchen table, put down sheets of aluminum foil and light all my menorahs.

Last year was so much fun, I decided I was going to do the same thing again this year. That meant starting to

put things aside (for example, the daily calendars I buy every year) so I'll have enough gifts for eight days. I do exchange gifts with one couple and we've already sent those to each other, so I also put those books aside. At the grocery store last week, I bought something fun (AKA a toy) so there will be a silly aspect to at least one of the gifts. And I found another holiday menorah so I now have seven I can light on the eighth night. (Two of my menorahs are the same because I bought one for me and one for my parents when I was in Israel during rabbinical school, but that's OK.)

I have resisted some temptations, including the six-foot tall inflatable dinosaur holding a giant dreidel. (Yes, I am a sucker for inflatables.) But it was too expensive, as was the adorable menorah I saw on a museum website. (That's \$170 for the inflatable and \$240 for the menorah.)

Last year, I did manage to find time to spend with friends during Hanukkah and my synagogue had a modified celebration. Even if COVID gets to the point where we can't do either of those this year, I plan to make sure I still enjoy the holiday. Over the years, I've realized that my attitude is an important part of any celebration. Plus, I've learned to have realistic expectations about what will happen. So, I am mentally preparing for the holiday, being fully aware that programs and gatherings might be cancelled, but knowing that I am lucky and blessed enough to be able to create my own fun.



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#### OPINIONS

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

#### 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

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# Chabad now holding its holiday toy drive

Building on the success of previous years, the Rohr Chabad Center for Jewish Student Life at BU, along with the SDT sorority, are again running a holiday toy drive dubbed "Light up a Life." New toys of all kinds are being collected and will be distributed to children suffering with cancer through Chai Life Line, a New York City based organization that provides services to cancer stricken children and their families. Community members interested in participating in the drive can do so by dropping toys in the bin located in the Chabad Center lobby (only new toys in original packaging will be accepted) or by making a contribution earmarked toward this project. Checks should be mailed

to Chabad Center, 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850. Contributions can also be made online through the secure site set up for this purpose at [www.Jewishbu.com/toydrive](http://www.Jewishbu.com/toydrive). The campaign will culminate with a bash at Binghamton University, featuring a display of all toys collected throughout the drive and treats, on Tuesday, December 6, at 6 pm. The celebration will include refreshments, a performance by the Crosbys and other treats.

"Social justice and charity are an integral aspect of the Chabad dynamic on campus," explained Goldie Ohana, director of programming and engagement. "Each year, in conjunction with Hanukkah, Chabad holds a charity drive,

thus twinning this holiday of light and joy with our need to remain sensitive to those who have less in their own lives. This is a practical way in which our students can make a big difference."

"The best part of the culminating event will be seeing a display of all the toys we collected, which represents so much joy we will be bringing these kids. I am so honored and happy to be involved in this" asserted Danielle Ganchrow, who together with Benjy Hoff and AJ Keiser is chairing the Toy Drive. The project is being co-sponsored by tens of Greek groups, professional fraternities and various clubs on campus.

## Jonathan Pachter to entertain at BD Sisterhood pre-Hanukkah party on Dec. 14

The December meeting of Beth David's Sisterhood will be a pre-Hanukkah party, which will be held on Wednesday, December 14, at 7 pm, at Beth David Synagogue. Entertainment for the evening will be provided by Jonathan Pachter, a local pianist, who will present a program titled "A Celebration of the Festival of Lights," with selections ranging from classic to contemporary. The program will include older and original music.

Cathy Velenchik, Sisterhood co-president, said, "Sisterhood events are typically open to all members of the Jewish community. This year, in order to encourage men to attend our pre-Hanukkah party, we decided to reach out to Charles Manasse, head of Beth David's Men's

Club, and suggest a joint venture. Both groups are hopeful that this will be the first of many future collaborations."

In addition to entertainment, there will be refreshments, including traditional holiday food.

"We are grateful for the support of the Eisenberg Foundation, which has made it unnecessary for us to charge a fee for the evening," said organizers of the event. "We do, however, request that you let us know if you plan to attend, so we can be certain to have enough food for everyone. (Being a Jewish event, there probably will be



Jonathan Pachter (Photo by Moonrae Photography)

enough food for you even if you show up and forgot to RSVP, but please do.)"

Reservations should be made as soon as possible by contacting the Beth David Synagogue office at 722-1793, or [bethdavid@stny.rr.com](mailto:bethdavid@stny.rr.com).

Donations for CHOW will be accepted, and Sisterhood members will be able to renew their Sisterhood membership if necessary, and pay for any mitzvah cards that they may have requested.

"So, please join us as we start celebrating Chanukah early, and don't forget to bring your dreidel if you want to challenge your friends to a game," organizers added.

## Chabad, Federation to hold "Tea and Talk" on Dec. 22

Chabad of Binghamton, with co-sponsorship from the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, announced that going forward its "Tea and Talk" program will meet twice a month by request of those who have been attending.

The next program will be held on Thursday, December 22, from 11 am-noon, in Chabad's atrium lounge. "Tea and Talk" is a monthly hour-long gathering for local Jewish seniors who are looking for "a meaningful conversation." To RSVP and for more infor-



Some of the attendees at the November Tea and Talk.

mation, visit [www.JewishBU.com/Tea](http://www.JewishBU.com/Tea) or call 797-0015.

"Our December 22 program will be a special Chanukah edition with Chanukah-themed pastries and discussion," said organizers of the event. "Our discussions have covered varied topics so far, some of which were prayer ahead of the high holiday season and gratitude ahead of Thanksgiving. Sometimes, we do an interactive game where people share a fun fact about themselves, too."

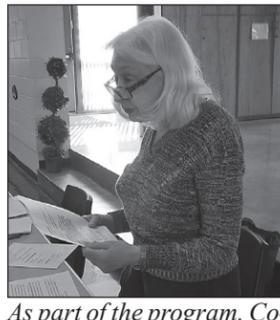
## BD Sisterhood held paid-up membership lunch



At left: On November 9, the Sisterhood of Beth David Synagogue held the paid-up membership lunch, which was prepared by Toby (right) and Harold Kohn.



Toby Kohn served up the paid-up membership lunch of the Beth David Sisterhood on November 9.



As part of the program, Co-President Cathy Velenchik read articles from the 1938 Binghamton Sun newspaper about Kristallnacht.



At left: Members and friends of Beth David Sisterhood enjoyed conversation and the meal at the paid-up membership luncheon.

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of **Alice Zappert Bonis**

### REPORTER DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
December 16-29.....	December 7
Dec. 30-Jan.12, 2023 .....	December 21
January 13-26.....	January 4
January 27-February 9 .....	January 18

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

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Off the Shelf

# Novels for teens and tweens (and some adults)

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Sometimes I think that someone sneaks into the room where I keep my review copies and adds more to the book piles without my knowledge. OK, I can't blame gremlins: it's my own fault that I find it difficult to resist any book that sounds fun, interesting or intriguing. I originally planned to review only two books, but somehow during the past month that number morphed to five. In fact, I was worried that I wouldn't get the final book in time, but thankfully it arrived before I finished my reading. The novels in this review vary from literary to rom-com to fantasy, which just shows how many wonderful books featuring Jewish tweens/teens are currently being published.

## "The Life and Crimes of Hoodie Rosen"

I was so impressed with "The Life and Crimes of Hoodie Rosen" by Isaac Blum (Philomel Books) that I did something I rarely do: I wrote to a friend (and a regular reader of this column) to tell her that she should read this book, rather than waiting for her to notice the novel in this review. (I was actually tempted to tell her that she *had* to read the book, but didn't want to push that hard.) Not only is Hoodie a great character (OK, so I'm a sucker for characters who are sarcastic – strange because I don't particularly like sarcastic people in real life), but the novel made me laugh out loud. What I wasn't prepared for were the serious and moving sections, some of which left me in tears.

Hoodie, his family and other members of their Orthodox community have moved to the small town of Tregaron. They aren't welcomed and the proposed high rise apartment building Hoodie's father was supposed to build has been put on hold because the mayor and town council changed the zoning restrictions. That was done to prevent more Orthodox Jews from moving into the area because many older citizens feel that the influx of newcomers will radically change the nature of the town. The two groups already don't mix: the Jewish community has opened its own school and relations are fraught. When Hoodie finds himself attracted to a girl who isn't Jewish, tensions rise. It doesn't help that Hoodie is the only boy in a family of sisters or that he's not

academically inclined. Meeting and talking to a girl outside the community is a disgrace, not helped by the fact that she is the daughter of the mayor. Hoodie is ostracized until an unexpected event affects both sides of the town.

Although "The Life and Crimes of Hoodie Rosen" does note some of the problems that can occur in an close-knit community, it is not anti-religion. In fact, the greatest words of wisdom come from an elder of the community: words that will show readers the true meaning of what it means to be religious. The book is perfect for book clubs and discussion groups because it offers much to ponder. That's one reason why I told my friend she should read this: I can't wait to talk to her about it.

## "Black Bird, Blue Road"

When the publicity person for Sofiya Pasternack contacted me months ago with the information that she had a new book out, I immediately jumped at getting an advance review copy. I enjoyed and reviewed her first two books; how could a fan of fantasy not like books that combined dragons and Judaism? (To read those reviews, visit [www.thereportergroup.org/past-articles/feature-book-review/feature-book-review-stream/book-review-stream/off-the-shelf-music-dragons-alternate-worlds-and-time-travel](http://www.thereportergroup.org/past-articles/feature-book-review/feature-book-review-stream/book-review-stream/off-the-shelf-music-dragons-alternate-worlds-and-time-travel) and <https://www.thereportergroup.org/past-articles/feature-book-review/feature-book-review-stream/book-review-stream/off-the-shelf-the-adventure-continues-by-rabbi-rachel-esserman>.) There are no dragons in her latest work, "Black Road, Blue Bird" (Versify), but there are some other wonderful creatures, including a demon, half-demon and a fascinating version of the Angel of Death.

Ziva and her twin brother, Pesah, live before modern medicine, which means there is no cure for the leprosy that is slowly killing Pesah. The two siblings are searching for a way to save him, something their parents refuse to believe is possible. After Ziva learns that they are planning on sending Pesah to a city for lepers, the two siblings run away, hoping to find a doctor in one of the larger cities who might help Pesah. But their plans change when they encounter Almas, a half-demon, whom Ziva

accidentally frees from his current masters. Almas tells them that he knows of a place where people never die and agrees to lead the siblings there. But they have very little time: Pesah had a vision that the Angel of Death will take him on Rosh Hashanah, which is only a few days away.

The introduction to each section of "Black Road, Blue Bird" is intriguing and the story is well done. Ziva is a great character: spunky, caring and kind. The pages turned quickly and the ending turns out not exactly as might be expected in a teen novel (at least when I was that age), but which rings true. I'm already looking forward to Pasternack's next work.

## "Eight Nights of Flirting"

I regularly search for Jewish books on the web, but many still slip my notice. That's why I was happy to receive an e-mail about "Eight Nights of Flirting" by Hannah Reynolds (Razorbill). Rom-coms can be fun to read and this one definitely is. The opening is cute: Shira Barbanel has to offer shelter to Tyler Nelson, whom she used to have a crush on, but now despises. They arrived at their families' vacation houses before other members of their families, whose transportation has been cancelled due to a major snowstorm. The two live next door to each other and, when Tyler realizes his

house has no electricity, Shira feels she has no choice but to ask him to spend the night with her.

The two manage to be civil, but they completely disagree on the way they view the world. Plus, Shira feels as if nothing in her life has worked out: she gave up playing piano in order to practice skating. However, after not placing in competitions, she feels like a failure. She does have one plan for this winter vacation: she wants to start a relationship with someone who works for the family business, only she's a complete failure at flirting. However, Tyler is a world-class flirt and they arrange for him to teach Shira. The results are not unexpected, especially when Shira learns the truth about the facade Tyler presents to the world.

"Eight Nights of Flirting" is not only fun reading, but offers unexpected depth as Shira learns some important lessons. One that adults can appreciate occurs when Shira begins to enjoy playing music again: "Emotions as fizzy as our drinks coursed through me. This is what you spent your life chasing after: not work or success or genius, but whatever brought you this level of happiness and joy and comfort. This is what makes life good."

See "Teens" on page 9



Off the Shelf

# A lost community

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

When, in 2015, Michael Frank arrived last minute to a lecture being held at the Casa Italiana, the home of New York University's Department of Italian Studies, it's doubtful that he knew how occupying the only available seat remaining would change his life. It was there he met Stella Levi, a Holocaust survivor who would not only introduce him to the customs of the lost Jewish community on the island of Rhodes, but allow him to write "One Hundred Saturdays: In Search of a Lost World" (Avid Reader Press), which won the 2022 Jewish Book Council's Natan Notable Book Award.

Levi and Frank began talking when Levi was 92. They met on Saturdays, during which time Levi slowly began to feel comfortable enough to tell Frank details about the Jewish community of Rhodes and of her family, including offering glimpses of her personal life (although there were some private parts at which she only hints). Her words offer a glimpse of not only the many cultural changes that were occurring, but how the Jews on the island lived in the years before the Holocaust.

While the previous generation of Jews identified with Turkish customs since Turkey had formerly controlled the island, Italian customs were a major influence by the time Levi was growing up. Judeo-Spanish was the main language of the older generation, although Hebrew was also used. Even the women, who received less education, could usually speak Turkish and Greek, though. When Italy took control of the island, the younger generation learned Italian, but were also taught French at school. However, even then the population of the Jewish community was decreasing as sons and daughters were sent overseas for better opportunities in the United States and Africa. This included several siblings of Levi whom she barely knew since they left the island when she was young.

The most interesting section of the work speaks to the culture of Jewish Rhodes. For example, Levi discusses the customs her family observed before they became acculturated to European life as exemplified by the Italians. Franks writes that "meant, if you were a woman of an earlier generation, like Stella's grandmother Mazaltov, never venturing out of the neighborhood. It meant taking off your shoes before you walked into a room where there were rugs and sitting, often, on the floor with cushions;

or fitting out your living room with a sofa built into three walls and upholstered, as the Levis' was, and instead sitting there. It meant wearing a fez to work (Stella's father – until his children made him stop) or a djellaba in the house and, if you were elderly, staying home and brewing and drinking chai (her grandmother Mazaltov again). It meant (if you were a woman of a certain age, or sometimes also a man of that age) never bathing in the sea. To the young people living in a la turca was shorthand for being behind the times."

Levi talks about dressing up for Purim; about how the women of her class never shopped for food, although they did cook; the custom of bringing "sweet water" to the synagogue so that people could drink it to break the fast on Yom Kippur; and the women called *enserradura* who served as healers at a time when many people didn't go to doctors. However, Levi always knew there was a world beyond her island and planned for more advanced schooling than many women her age. She was interested in ideas, and several male friends and teachers who encouraged her learning. Unfortunately, World War II started before she could pursue that goal.

At first, Rhodes' Jews were not much affected by the war, at least compared to Jews in Germany or Eastern Europe. However, when Italy surrendered to the Allies, Germany took over the island and things changed radically. Except for a few who were rescued due to being citizens of Turkey, the rest of the Jewish population – 1,650 Jews – were collected and taken on a boat whose final destination was a concentration camp. When Frank pushes Levi as to why they didn't realize what was happening and try to escape, her answer shows the difference between living through an experience and hindsight. Frank writes, "Calmly Stella answers: 'Michael, you are looking back from a point of knowing. You must remember that. *We did not know*. Even as we were boarding the boats that took us away from Rhodes, we thought, *oh, we're going to another island. We're going to a work camp. All this is temporary. We'll be back, of course we will.*'"

The after-effects of that experience remained with Levi for the rest of her life. Levi tells Frank that "quite honestly, I am what I am from the racial laws. Being kicked See "Lost" on page 9

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# U.S. Postal Service has new Hanukkah stamp

By JNS staff

(JNS) – American Judaica artist Jeanette Kuvin Oren is well-known for her work in many media. She designs Torah mantles, ark curtains, chuppah wedding canopies, *ketubah* marriage contracts, papercuts, stained glass and nearly any ritual object or decoration a synagogue, Jewish home or family would ever need.

On October 20, Kuvin Oren added “designer of a U.S. Postal Service stamp” to her résumé. The “Hanukkah Forever” postage stamp is based on one of Kuvin Oren’s works.

“Jeanette’s art came to my attention several years ago and I am very happy to be able to bring her work to a very wide audience,” Ethel Kessler of Kessler Design, who serves as art director for stamps at the USPS, says enthusiastically. “Her work has a glowing and joyful spirit and that’s what I wanted to add to our U.S. Hanukkah series.”

A first-day-of-issue dedication ceremony for the stamp was held recently at Temple Emanu El in Orange Village, OH, an eastern suburb of Cleveland. This year, Hanukkah begins on the evening of December 18.

Kessler adds, “Stamps are a joy for me to art direct. What it entails is getting familiar with people across the country who are making interesting art that can be used at stamp size.”

The USPS states, “The stamp art features the design from an original wall-hanging. The fiber art was hand-dyed, appliquéd and quilted to form an abstract image of a *hanukkah*.”

The stamp is being issued in panes of 20. It will always be equal in value to the current First Class Mail one-ounce price (currently 60 cents). Kessler acknowledges, “First class mail may have dropped off in the past decade... But we still print over 10 million Hanukkah celebration stamps.”

Kuvin Oren has now received an education in stamp collecting and stamp releases. She explains that the first-day-of-issue dedication ceremony took place in Cleveland since the USPS wanted it to be in the Midwest. And Emanu El was “enthusiastic to host.”

She has also learned that the stamp date and location will appear on every 6¾-inch envelope with the state and date of issue and location. Stamp collectors traditionally go to the Post Office to buy new stamps, put them on a clean white blank envelope and mail them for a first-day-of-issue cancellation. These are known as

first-day covers. Many aficionados also collect cachets, an illustration usually on the left side of the envelope.

“The USPS doesn’t create a cachet so it is up to the artist or a dealer to create one. It is a nice souvenir for the first day of issue, so I created my own,” reports Kuvin Oren.

Kuvin Oren, a resident of Connecticut and Jerusalem, recently offered a tour of her home studio in Woodbridge, CT, and shared her many works in progress and stories of her artwork with JNS.

In describing the process of being discovered by the USPS, she reports, “I sent a piece 30 years ago to the USPS and always had a dream of being on a stamp – this is the culmination of a lifelong dream. I am very honored and it is very emotional to see my artwork there. It is something so historical.”

Kuvin Oren explains that a small wall hanging of her stamp will hang in the National Postal Museum in Washington, DC. “It will be Hanukkah forever!”

The artist, a graduate of Princeton and Yale universities, has talents in many areas. She completed a master’s degree in public health and most of her doctorate in epidemiology. Since deciding in 1984 to work on commissioned art and graphic design full-time, she has created installation pieces for more than 400 houses of worship, schools, community centers and camps around the world. She specializes in large installations of glass, mosaic, metal, fiber art, calligraphy, paper-cutting and painting. Her Torah covers, ark covers, ark curtains and wall hangings may be seen in homes and Jewish institutions around the world.

Kuvin Oren shares with great excitement a donor recognition art wall project she recently worked on for a synagogue in Miami. She demonstrated the equipment and process (in her basement studio) needed to produce 40 Torah covers for a *shul* that has three sanctuaries.

She has also shared her talents close to home – at her beloved synagogue, Congregation B’nai Jacob in Woodbridge. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she helped create a video of departed members of the synagogue; the faces of each person were incorporated into the video, which was shown as part of the Yizkor memorial service.

Kuvin Oren plans to use the Hanukkah postage stamps on the invitations to the wedding of one of her daughters, which will take place in March 2023.

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# Baseball.....Continued from page 2

the 18-year-old pitcher lost seven games, failed to win any and endured a 7.88 ERA.

A minor leaguer in 2022, pitcher Ryan Sheriff, the grandson of Holocaust survivors and an MLB journeyman in parts of four seasons past, battled to return to the majors.

Although NL MVP Paul Goldschmidt (.317 BA, 35 HRs, 115 RBIs) respects his paternal Jewish heritage, he identifies as an evangelical Christian.

Former catcher and longtime respected field manager Bob Melvin, the son of a Jewish mother, neither observes nor identifies with Judaism. His 2022 San Diego Padres went 89 and 73.

In 2022, Jews remained prominent in the operational end of baseball. The on-field deconstruction of the Red Sox put the job security of Chief Baseball Officer Chaim Bloom in jeopardy. Philadelphia General Manager Sam Fuld, a former MLB and Team Israel player, helped President of Baseball Operations Dave Dombrowski create a Phillies

resurgence. Spending considerable money and making good personnel decisions, Mets owner Steve Cohen ignited a baseball renaissance in Queens.

In 2022, Theo Epstein, now an MLB consultant and formerly the wunderkind GM who enabled the Red Sox and Chicago Cubs to exorcize their curses, announced a campaign to help the faltering game regain its status as the national pastime. Epstein, once a prime exponent of the new analytics, now recognizes that the best of baseball lies in its past and that over reliance on metrics has made the game more efficient and less interesting.

Years from now, chroniclers might deem the selection of former MLB second baseman Ian Kinsler as the rookie manager of Team Israel the milestone event in Jewish baseball 2022. Kinsler faces the dual challenge of growing baseball in Israel and facilitating his team – still largely composed of assimilated Jewish-American ballplayers,

dual citizens and scions of interfaith families – coming to terms with Jewish identity.

Bill Simons is a professor emeritus at SUNY Oneonta where he continues to teach courses in American 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.

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# Honor.....Continued from page 1

[the Vietnam Veterans Memorial] – the simplicity of the design of the long black wall with all its panels with the names of over 58,000 men and women who sacrificed their lives for our country? While at the wall, Bridget helped me find the name of a classmate who died in Vietnam in 1971. She took a picture of me doing a rubbing of his name. After witnessing the changing of the honor guard and a wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington Cemetery, I felt if you are not overcome with emotion there is something wrong with you, especially when hearing 'Taps' being played. A Korean War veteran from our group had the honor of laying the wreath from our group, Twin Tier Honor Flight, Mission 14."

However, one thing did stand out. Doetsch served during the Vietnam War, although she was not assigned there. (Her assignments included stints with the 2nd Armored Division in Fort Hood, TX, and with the 172nd Infantry Brigade in Alaska.) "At the dinner on Saturday night, it meant a lot to all of us Vietnam veterans who served on active duty between November 1, 1955, and May 15, 1975, regardless of the location, to receive a Vietnam lapel pin, commemorating and recognizing our service," she added. "This was a result of a proclamation signed by President Barack Obama [on May 25, 2012], which recognized May 28, 2012, to November 11, 2025, as the 50th Commemoration of the Vietnam War."

The experience did not end when they left Washington,



At "The Wall," Elsie Doetsch rubbed the name of a classmate who was killed in Vietnam.

DC. "When we arrived home, it was overwhelming and emotional to each of the veterans that, as we stepped off the bus, we were welcomed back by a cheering crowd holding signs and waving flags," she said. "As I stepped off the bus, it was announced, 'Welcome home, U. S. Army Vietnam veteran Elsie Doetsch.'"

# Film.....Continued from page 1

film is "joyous and a hoot to watch." Hannah Brown of *The Jerusalem Post* wrote that "The Automat" is "a very accomplished debut film." Joe Morgenstern of *The Wall Street Journal* called the film "beguiling."

"Join us for this delightful slice of American history," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "The automat was a unique experience in the history of the United States and one several generations of Jews were able to enjoy. I loved this film. We are also fortunate that the film's director and producer will discuss the film with us."

## Dr. Elissa Sampson to moderate discussion

Dr. Elissa Sampson, who will moderate the discussion of "The Automat," is an urban geographer who studies how the past is actively used to create new spaces of migration, memory, heritage and activism. She is a visiting scholar in Cornell's Jewish Studies Program, where she teaches courses on Jewish urban life. Her life-long interest in migration, re-diasporization and culture was nurtured by residence on the Lower East Side, Brooklyn, Jerusalem and Paris. She has given academic and public tours and lectures on the Lower East Side's built environment and communities for many years, and was a featured interviewee and consultant for the documentary film, "Streit's and the American Dream," as well as for PBS' Triangle Fire anniversary program, "The Fire of a Movement."

# CHANUKAH Greetings

Deadline: December 8 (December 16 issue)

Once again this year, *The Reporter* is inviting its readers and local organizations to extend Chanukah greetings to the community by purchasing a Chanukah greeting ad, which will appear in our December 16 issue (deadline: December 8). You may choose from the designs, messages and sizes shown here - more are available. You may also choose your own message, as long as it fits into the space of the greeting you select. (Custom designs available upon request.) The price of the small greeting is \$20 (styles B, E & F), the larger one is \$38 (styles A, C & D) and the largest one (style G) is \$74.

To ensure that your greeting is published or for more information on additional styles, sizes & designs, please contact Kathy Brown at 724-2360, ext. 244; or e-mail [advertising@thereporter.org](mailto:advertising@thereporter.org). Checks can be made payable to The Reporter and sent to: The Reporter, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

# CHANUKAH Greetings

Deadline: December 8 (December 16 issue)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Greeting Style \_\_\_\_\_  
Message \_\_\_\_\_  
How you would like it signed \_\_\_\_\_  
We accept  Visa  Mastercard  American Express  Discover  
Print Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_  
Card Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Address, City, State, Zip (Registered billing address of card) \_\_\_\_\_



Checks can be made payable to  
**The Reporter,**  
500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850

Wishing you a Happy Chanukah  
light • peace • love



Your Name(s)

Style C - \$38 • Actual Size: 3.22" x 1.975"



CELEBRATE  
CHANUKAH

Your Name(s)

spread the light!



Your Name(s)

Style G - \$74 • Actual Size: 3.22" x 3.95"

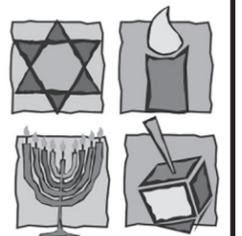
Style A - \$38  
Actual Size: 3.22" x 1.975"



Your name(s)

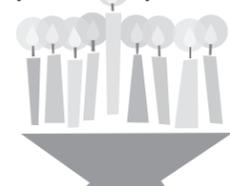
Style B - \$20 • Actual Size: 1.5278" x 1.975"

May the lights  
of Chanukah  
shine in  
your hearts  
forever



Your name(s)

Warm Chanukah wishes to  
you and your family!



Your Name(s)

Style D - \$38  
Actual Size: 3.22" x 1.975"

Style E - \$20  
Actual Size: 1.5278" x 1.975"

HAPPY  
CHANUKAH!



YOUR NAME(S)

Style F - \$20  
Actual Size: 1.5278" x 1.975"

# 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 New York Jewish Book Festival on Sunday, December 11. Some of the programs will be available virtually, including “A Banker’s Journey: How Edmond J. Saffra Built a Global Financial Empire” from 10-11 am; “Approaches to Portraiture of Holocaust Survivors and Global Conflicts with Martin Schoeller, B.A. Van Sise, and Jonathan Alpeyrie” from 11:30 am-12:30 pm; “Women Holding Things with Maira Kalman” from 1-2 pm; “Writing a Life in Film: A Conversation with A.O. Scott, Mark Harris, and Annette Insdorf” from 2:30-3:30 pm; “Our Country Friends” with Gary Shteyngart and Alex Halberstadt from 4-5 pm; “Happy Hour with Sloane Crosley, Isabel Kaplan, and Stephanie Butnick” from 5:30-6:30 pm; and “Koshersoul: Cooking and Storytelling with Michael Twitty and Jane Ziegelman” from 7-8:30 pm. For more information or to register, visit <https://mjhnyc.org/new-york-jewish-book-festival/new-york-jewish-book-festival-keynote-events/>.
- ◆ The Blue Dove Foundation has published

new articles to help parents help their children with mental health issues: “Five Ways to Foster a Young Person’s Mental Health” ([https://thebluedovefoundation.org/five-ways-to-foster-a-young-persons-mental-health/?mc\\_cid=d671e59e8b&mc\\_eid=31b946dce2](https://thebluedovefoundation.org/five-ways-to-foster-a-young-persons-mental-health/?mc_cid=d671e59e8b&mc_eid=31b946dce2)); “How Parents and Caregivers Can Support Their Kids’ Mental Wellness” ([https://thebluedovefoundation.org/how-parents-and-caregivers-can-support-their-kids-mental-wellness/?mc\\_cid=d671e59e8b&mc\\_eid=31b946dce2](https://thebluedovefoundation.org/how-parents-and-caregivers-can-support-their-kids-mental-wellness/?mc_cid=d671e59e8b&mc_eid=31b946dce2)); and “What Are the Most Common Mental Illnesses in Children?” ([https://thebluedovefoundation.org/what-are-the-most-common-mental-illnesses-in-children/?mc\\_cid=d671e59e8b&mc\\_eid=31b946dce2](https://thebluedovefoundation.org/what-are-the-most-common-mental-illnesses-in-children/?mc_cid=d671e59e8b&mc_eid=31b946dce2)).

- ◆ Qesher will hold several virtual programs, including “The Bene-Israel of India: an ancient living community” on Thursday, December 8, at 3 pm; “Shtetl: A Jewish Universe” on Sunday, December 11, at 3 pm; “Shtetl: A Virtual Tour of the Once Jewish Towns of Eastern Europe” on Thursday, December 15, at 3 pm; “Salonica and Sarajevo: Balkan Sephardi Metropolises” on Sunday, December 22, at 3 pm; “Kavkazi ‘Mountain Jews’: Ancient Hebrew and Persian roots at the border of Azerbaijan and Russia” on Thursday, December 29, at 3 pm; and “Jewish city tour of Riga, the

hidden gem of the Baltic” on Thursday, January 5, at 3 pm.

- ◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold the hybrid program “Jewish Soldiers in the Civil War: Discoveries from the Shapell Roster” on Monday, December 12, at 7 pm. Professor Adam D. Mendelsohn, author of “Jewish Soldiers in the Civil War: The Union Army,” will give a talk in conversation with Professor Deborah Dash Moore (University of Michigan), current Editor-in-Chief of the Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization, and author of “GI Jews: How World War II Changed a Generation.” For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/tickets/civil-war-2022-12-12>.
- ◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold the book talk “Arthur Miller: American Witness” with author John Lahr and MacArthur Prize-winning playwright Sarah Ruhl on Monday, December 19, at 4 pm. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/tickets/arthur-miller-2022-12-19>.
- ◆ The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research will hold the lecture “A Very Jewish Christmas: Jesus and Shabbtai Zvi, from Heretic to Hero” on Thursday, December 22, at 7 pm. Professor David Biale will discuss the transformation of Jewish thought about Jesus and Shabbtai Zvi during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. For more information or to register, visit <https://yivo.org/Jewish-Christmas2022>.

◆ Diller Tikken Olam Awards are “seeking teen leaders who show significant initiative and leadership in creating and leading a new initiative – or have considerably deepened or expanded an existing project – that embodies the values of tikkun olam, repairing the world.” Nominations are due December 22 and applications are due January 5. For information about nominating someone or applying, visit [www.dillerteenawards.org/apply-and-nominate/](http://www.dillerteenawards.org/apply-and-nominate/).

◆ The American Psychiatric Association offers a “Stress & Trauma Toolkit for Treating Jewish Americans in a Changing Political and Social Environment,” which can be found at [https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/cultural-competency/education/stress-and-trauma/jewish-americans?mc\\_cid=74afa4121b&mc\\_eid=31b946dce2](https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/cultural-competency/education/stress-and-trauma/jewish-americans?mc_cid=74afa4121b&mc_eid=31b946dce2).

◆ Ritualwell will hold “This Little Light of Mine: 8 Mindful Rituals for Hanukkah” on Tuesday, December 13, from noon-1:30 pm. Dr. Mira Neshama Weil will reflect on the meaning of the festival, meditating and teach rituals for the menorah lighting for each night. For more information or to register, visit <https://ritualwell.org/event/this-little-light-of-mine-8-mindful-rituals-for-hanukkah/>.

◆ The Museum at Eldridge Street will hold several virtual programs in December: “Divine New York Book Talk: In Conversation with the Photographer and Author Michael Horowitz and Elizabeth Anne Hartman” on Thursday, December 8, from 6-7:30 pm ([https://www.eventbrite.com/e/divine-new-york-book-talk-in-conversation-with-the-photographer-author-tickets-462572004317?aff=odeimcmailchimp&mc\\_cid=b1c53698a8&mc\\_eid=4fef1bef3a](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/divine-new-york-book-talk-in-conversation-with-the-photographer-author-tickets-462572004317?aff=odeimcmailchimp&mc_cid=b1c53698a8&mc_eid=4fef1bef3a)); “The Chanukah Miracle: What are we Celebrating?” on Tuesday, December 13, at 7:30 pm ([https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-chanukah-miracle-what-are-we-celebrating-tickets-463760699737?aff=odeimcmailchimp&mc\\_cid=b1c53698a8&mc\\_eid=4fef1bef3a](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-chanukah-miracle-what-are-we-celebrating-tickets-463760699737?aff=odeimcmailchimp&mc_cid=b1c53698a8&mc_eid=4fef1bef3a)); “Art History through a Jewish Lens: See Chanukah in a New Light!” on Wednesday, December 14, from 7-8:30 pm ([https://www.eventbrite.com/e/art-history-through-a-jewish-lens-see-chanukah-in-a-new-light-tickets-359482962217?aff=odeimcmailchimp&mc\\_eid=b1c53698a8&mc\\_eid=4fef1bef3a](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/art-history-through-a-jewish-lens-see-chanukah-in-a-new-light-tickets-359482962217?aff=odeimcmailchimp&mc_eid=b1c53698a8&mc_eid=4fef1bef3a)); and “Cinema Chats with See “Resources” on page 11

## Lost . . . . . Continued from page 4

out of school was the greatest possible humiliation, as I’ve told you. This experience formed me, you might say malformed me.” Frank noted that “she goes on to explain that she still, to this day, feels inferior to most people she knows. Even when she worked, she struggled to assert herself, to advocate for her rights. She helped other people make money but, for a long time, didn’t do as much for herself in that regard as she might have. She failed to see projects, plans, ambitions through.”

After the war, Levi moved to the United States and was reunited with some of her siblings, although she eventually went her own way. Her older age is rich, filled with volunteering and friends, although she is not immune to loneliness. Frank notes that it took decades for Levi to feel ready to visit Rhodes, a trip he took with her. None of the surviving Jewish community who were expelled returned to the island

permanently: nothing of interest remained for them.

The chapters of “One Hundred Saturdays” are generally short and the prose is easy to read. Frank records snatches of their conversations, including stories told in Levi’s own voice. Toward the end of the book, Frank questions Levi about being Jewish. Although she declares herself a non-believer, she offers her thoughts about religion in general: “You don’t need to believe to be a Jew. You are a Jew because you are born into a tradition. But whether you believe in God, it’s important to remember a simple thing: no one idea about God is better than another. In the end we are all similar, everyone with differences and defects. What’s essential is to value humanity.” The stories Frank tells about her life not only offer a look at a lost community, but the important lessons Levi learned during her long life.

## Teens . . . . . Continued from page 4

“Where You’ve Got to Be”

It’s not easy to be the younger sister of someone who not only has more talent than you, but far more friends. That’s the situation Nolie finds herself facing when entering sixth grade in Caroline Gertler’s “Where You’ve Got to Be” (Greenwillow Books). Her sister, Linden, who is only 14 months older than her, is a ballerina up for an important role in a Lincoln Center production of “The Nutcracker.” She’s also successfully balancing her ballet practice with school, private bat mitzvah studies and a large group of friends. Nolie, on the other hand, only has one friend and begins the school year learning even that might no longer be true: her best friend, Jessa, has a new cooler friend and wants Nolie to change her looks and personality. To counter the stress she is feeling, Nolie begins to take objects from family and friends that bring her comfort. However, this “borrowing” leads to even greater problems. The question becomes whether Nolie can make amends and find a way to accept herself as she is.

“Where You’ve Got to Be” is well done, showing not only how Nolie learns to be her authentic self, but that the sister she thinks is perfect has her own problems and stresses to overcome. The novel also shows the subtle antisemitism that affects both girls’ lives, as it becomes clear that not everyone is accepting of their religion.

“How to Excavate a Heart”

There’s nothing like not understanding the abbreviations teens use in texting to let you know you’re not young anymore. However, that didn’t stop my enjoyment of “How to Excavate a Heart” by Jake Maia Arlow” (HarperTeen). The first meeting of

the college students in this rom-com was different from any other I’ve read: they first see each other when Shani’s mother hits May with her car during a snowstorm while driving Shani to Washington, DC, where Shani is spending the winter break of her freshman year on an internship. Fortunately, May is unhurt, but Shani hopes never to see her again. That doesn’t happen: one of Shani’s roommates asks her to take her dog-walking job when she goes home for Christmas. It turns out that dog is owned by May’s father. May hates the dog and wishes she were with her mother for the holidays, rather than her father.

Shani is attracted to May, but had a terrible experience with a former friend/girlfriend during her first semester of school. She knows she’s attracted to women, but is scared about what that means in physical terms. But the novel is not just about her growing relationship with May. Shani’s internship working with fossil fish at a major natural history museum makes her understand how difficult it can be to balance work with a distracting social life. She also learns more about her grandmother because the woman whose house she and several other students are staying at is owned by an elderly family friend.

“How to Excavate a Heart” does a good job showing how difficult it can be to understand not only the nature of a relationship, but what is happening in other people’s lives. Both main characters also discover the need to communicate more fully. As a bonus, the novel includes an adorable dog, one that even non-dog lovers may be able to appreciate. Readers of rom-com will find much to enjoy.

## Annual Campaign 2023

TOGETHER WE CREATE COMMUNITY. MAKE YOUR PLEDGE EARLY!

We hope we can count on your generosity again in the year to come.

You can make your pledge 3 ways:

- 1) Visit the Federation website at [www.jfgb.org](http://www.jfgb.org) and click on “make a pledge.”
- 2) E-mail Federation Executive Director Shelley Hubal at [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org) with “pledge” in the subject line.
- 3) Fill out the form in this ad and mail it to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

Mail this form to:

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Pledge: \_\_\_\_\_

# We Create Community



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



## What matters most

RABBI LEVI Y. SLONIM, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND CO-DIRECTOR OF CHABAD DOWNTOWN, ROHR CHABAD CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDENT LIFE AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

As Jacob leaves his hometown Beersheba and journeys to Charan, the Torah tells about a consequential stop he makes en route at “the place,” later to be known as Mount Moriah or the Temple Mount.

The verse reads: “And he arrived at the place and lodged there because the sun had set, and he took some of the stones of the place and placed [them] at his head, and he lay down in that place.” (Genesis 28:11)

Rashi, the pre-eminent commentator on the Torah, says that Jacob placed the stones “in the form of a drainpipe around his head because he feared the wild beasts.”

This begs the question as to the intent of Jacob’s placing those stones around his head. If Jacob trusted that God would protect him from any wild animals causing him

harm, why the need for any type of protection? If not, of what efficacy was the protection around his head, what about the rest of his body?

King David writes in the book of Psalms (128:2), “If you eat the toil of your hands, you are praiseworthy, and it is good for you.” Chasidic philosophy teaches that this verse is a moral guide for approaching the “ins and outs” of life and specifically the degree of investment in procuring a livelihood. We need to be sure that it is the “toil of our hands” and not the toil of our head that occupies us. As it relates to our head – which represents the cognitive parts of our anatomy the more refined elements of our persona – those should be focused on the more meaningful pursuits of life: namely, focused on having an impact, and finding

and revealing purpose in our every interaction. As for making a livelihood, sure, that must be done, but it should be primarily the “toil of our hands.” When we approach life this way, never allowing making a living to eclipse making a life, it will be as King David writes “praiseworthy and good for you.”

As Jacob was embarking on this monumental journey to Charan for the purpose of finding a wife and building a family, he sought extra protection for his head. Come what may, no matter what he would have to do to make a livelihood, he wanted to make sure that his head would remain focused on what matters most.

*This parasha is based on the teachings of the late Lubavitcher Rebbe.*

## Congregational Notes

### Temple Israel

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

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

On Saturday, December 3, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Genesis 28:10-32:3 and the haftarah is Hosea 12:13-14:10. At 5:45 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

There will be an Executive Board meeting on Tuesday, December 6, at 7 pm.

On Wednesday, December 7, Torah study will be held from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

On Saturday, December 10, at 9:30 am, Shacharit services will be held via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Genesis 32:4-36:43 and the haftarah is Malachi Obadiah 1:1-21. At 5:45 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Wednesday, December 14, there will be a Ritual Committee meeting at 10 am and Torah study from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

There will be a Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday, December 20, at 7 pm.

### Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

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

Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen  
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman  
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody  
Services: Fri. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sun. and legal holidays).

Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday, 3:45-5:45 pm. The Midrashah (eighth grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers. Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.

For upcoming services and events on Zoom, visit [www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE](http://www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE).

### Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated  
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045  
Phone: 607-756-7181  
President: Carol Levine, 315-696-5744  
Cemetery Committee: 315-696-5744  
Website: templebrithsholomcortland.org  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/>

Service leaders: Lay leadership  
Shabbat services: Either Friday evening at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 10 am from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot. Holiday services are also held. Check the Facebook page or weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.

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

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

### Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

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

### Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch  
Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors  
E-mail: aslonim@chabadofbinghamton.edu  
rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com

Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 797-0015, Fax: 797-0095  
Website: www.Chabadofbinghamton.com  
Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education  
E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com  
Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development  
Chabad Downtown Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton  
E-mail: lslonim@Jewishbu.com, hslonim@Jewishbu.com  
Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming  
E-mail: yohana@Jewishbu.com, gohana@Jewishbu.com  
Regular service times: Daily 7:30 am, Friday evening 6 pm, Shabbat morning 9:30 am, Maariv and Havdalah one hour after candle-lighting time, Sundays 9:30 am.

To join the mailing list, for up-to-date information on adult education offerings or to arrange for a private tutorial, for details concerning the Judaica shop and resource center, or for assistance through the Piaker Free Loan Society or Raff Maasim Tovim Foundation, call Chabad’s office at 797-0015.

Chabad will be holding pre-Shabbat virtual programs. For more information, visit [www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership](http://www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership).

### 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: Nomi Talmi and Shawn Murphy  
Rabbi: Shifrah Tobacman, rabbishifrah@tikkunvor.org  
Education Director/Administrative Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky  
Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin  
Services: All services currently on Zoom. E-mail info@tikkunvor.org for the times and links. Contemplative morning services every Tuesday from 8:30-9:30 am. Saturday mornings, Gan Shabbat and other special services at least once a month. Call for the weekly schedule.

Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE) for second through seventh grade classes meet on Sunday mornings. Sixth and seventh grades also meet on Wednesday afternoons. Family programs for kindergarten and first grade held monthly.  
Adult Education: Offered regularly throughout the year. Check the website for details.

### Penn-York Jewish Community

President-Treasurer-Secretary: Harvey Chernosky, 570-265-3869

B’nai B’rith: William H. Seigel Lodge  
Purpose: To promote Jewish identity through religious, cultural, educational and social activities in the Southern Tier of New York and the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania, including Waverly, NY; Sayre, Athens and Towanda, PA, and surrounding communities.

### Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive  
Rabbi: David Regenspan  
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815  
Phone: 334-2691  
E-mail: fertigj@roadrunner.com  
Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 373-5087

Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.  
Adult Ed.: Shabbat study sessions are held on designated Saturday mornings at 10 am. Call ahead, text or e-mail to confirm dates.

Friday, December 2, light candles before..... 4:14 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, December 3 ..... 5:14 pm  
Friday, December 9, light candles before..... 4:13 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, December 10 ..... 5:14 pm  
Friday, December 16, light candles before..... 4:14 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, December 17 ..... 5:15 pm

### Beth David Synagogue

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

### Temple Concord

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

Some services and programs are online only.  
Friday, December 2: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell. Masks are optional for those attending in person. Join via Zoom at <http://bit.ly/3XDnVRE>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/templeconcord/](http://www.facebook.com/templeconcord/).

Saturday, December 3: At 9 am, Shabbat school; at 9:15 am, there will be Torah study, in person and via Zoom at <http://bit.ly/3XDnVRE>, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892; and at 10:30 am, Shabbat family service.

Sunday, December 4: From 10 am-2 pm Sisterhood Rummage Sale; lunch and learn with Professor Anthony Preus on “Separate and Not Separate: Jewish Food and Mediterranean Cuisine,” reservations for lunch were required.

Wednesday, December 7: At 10:30 am, TC Book Club will discuss “The Matzah Ball” by Jean Meltzer. Anyone new to the book club or who needs the Zoom link should contact Merri Pell-Preus at 222-2875 or [merrypell.preus@gmail.com](mailto:merrypell.preus@gmail.com).

Friday, December 9: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service; join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/templeconcord/](http://www.facebook.com/templeconcord/).

Saturday, December 10: At 9 am, Shabbat school; at 9:15 am, there will be Torah study, in person and via Zoom at <http://bit.ly/3XDnVRE>, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892; at 10:30 am, Shabbat family service, in person; and at 7 pm Havdalah with a Bonus on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3e8mZsy>, meeting ID 833 9654 6578 and passcode 333740 or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/templeconcord/](http://www.facebook.com/templeconcord/).

Tuesday, December 13: At 7 pm, Executive Board meeting and at 8 pm, General Board meeting.

Sunday, December 18: Hanukkah Celebration, from 3-4:30 pm, activities and candle lighting, and from 4:30-6 pm, potluck dinner and program.

### Temple Beth El of Oneonta

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

# Resources.....Continued from page 9

Lee Grant: 'In the Heat of the Night' on Wednesday, December 28, at 6 pm ([https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cinema-chats-with-lee-grant-in-the-heat-of-the-night-tickets-446146876317?aff=odeimchimp&mc\\_cid=b-1c53698a8&mc\\_cid=4fef1bef3a](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cinema-chats-with-lee-grant-in-the-heat-of-the-night-tickets-446146876317?aff=odeimchimp&mc_cid=b-1c53698a8&mc_cid=4fef1bef3a)).

◆ The American Jewish Committee is offering "The Forgotten Exodus," a new limited podcast series about the 800,000 Jews who left or were driven from their homes in Arab nations and Iran in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to forge new lives for themselves and future generations. Episodes are available at [https://www.ajc.org/forgotten-exodus?ms=EL\\_EML\\_20221117\\_Podcast2022-11.17.2022](https://www.ajc.org/forgotten-exodus?ms=EL_EML_20221117_Podcast2022-11.17.2022).

◆ Ritualwell will hold the virtual program "Healing Through Writing: For Cancer Survivors and Those Facing Illness" on Monday, December 19, from noon-1:30 pm. It will "focus on writing and ritual as a means of healing, which has been studied as an effective way to heal from both physical and emotional trauma." For more information or to register, visit <https://ritualwell.org/event/healing-through-writing-for-cancer-survivors-and-those-facing-illness/>.

◆ The Tikvah Fund is looking for college students and recent graduates for its Beren Summer Fellowship. For more information, visit [https://tikvahfund.org/beren-fellowship/overview/?\\_kx=ziv05K145GHCg1FcKld6ubaCAzRH-B8ySvSZChFO-Jho%3D.LFdrfw](https://tikvahfund.org/beren-fellowship/overview/?_kx=ziv05K145GHCg1FcKld6ubaCAzRH-B8ySvSZChFO-Jho%3D.LFdrfw).

◆ The Institute for Jewish Spirituality and Or Halev will hold a virtual 10-month program, "Yesod: Foundations for Deepening Jewish Mindfulness Meditation," beginning in January. It will offer anyone with an established meditation practice a new, systematic, stage-by-stage approach to deepen your mindfulness meditation skills within an authentic Jewish spiritual framework." For more information, visit [www.jewishspirituality.org/go-deeper/yesod-foundations-for-deepening-jewish-mindfulness-meditation/](http://www.jewishspirituality.org/go-deeper/yesod-foundations-for-deepening-jewish-mindfulness-meditation/).

◆ Judaism Your Way will hold the class "Jewish Cooking with Bubbe (Grandma)," featuring Hanukkah recipes, on Sunday, December 11, from 12-1 pm. For more information or to register, visit [www.judaismyourway.org/cooking-classes/](http://www.judaismyourway.org/cooking-classes/).

◆ The Shalom Hartman Institute is offering the podcast series "Heretic in the House." Naomi Seidman will discuss Hasidic Jews with believers and heretics to uncover their hidden stories. For more information, visit [www.hartman.org.il/program/heretic-in-the-house/](http://www.hartman.org.il/program/heretic-in-the-house/).

◆ The Forward will hold "Yiddish Tonight! with Rukhl Schaechter" on Thursday, December 15, at 2 pm. For-

ward's Yiddish editor Rukhl Schaechter for an informal conversation with comedian Rabbi Barry Schechter. The talk will be recorded and sent to registrants. For more information or to register, visit [https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9216686385286?pwd=WN\\_46fyfiDpTPYwutokymjPfg?utm\\_source=Iterable](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9216686385286?pwd=WN_46fyfiDpTPYwutokymjPfg?utm_source=Iterable).

◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage will hold the virtual program "Arise, My Friend, My Beautiful One, and Go Forth! - Hanukkah Edition" on Tuesday, December 13, from 7:30-8:30 pm. The Braid, a troupe that transforms stories from the page to the stage, will portray contemporary stories that focus the Hanukkah's themes of empowerment and triumph. For more information or to register, visit <https://mjhny.org/events/arise-my-friend-my-beautiful-one-and-go-forth-hanukkah-edition/>.

◆ Maven will hold the virtual program "Mayim Bialik: Being Jewish in Hollywood" on Tuesday, December 6, from 3-3:45 pm. Bialik will be in conversation with AJU's Chief Innovation Officer Rabbi Sherre Hirsch to explore her Jewish journey, her newest projects and her response to the most recent streams of antisemitism in the media. For more information or to register, visit <https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/mayim-bialik-being-jewish-in-hollywood>.

◆ 18 Doors will hold two virtual programs about the December holidays: "To Tree or Not To Tree: Navigating the December Holidays" on Wednesday, December 7, from 8-9 pm (<https://18doors.org/event/national-2022-12-to-tree-or-not-to-tree-navigating-the-december-holidays/>); and "What To Do in December - A Live Q&A for Parents Balancing Hanukkah and Christmas" on Thursday, December 8, from 8-9 pm (<https://18doors.org/event/national-2022-12-what-to-do-in-december-a-live-qa-for-parents-balancing-hanukkah-and-christmas/>). There is no charge to attend, but registration is required.

◆ The Blue Dove Foundation, which addresses mental illness and addiction in the Jewish community and beyond, offers resources for the holiday of Hanukkah at [https://thebluedovefoundation.org/resource/hanukkah/?mc\\_cid=617b9241ae&mc\\_cid=31b946dce2](https://thebluedovefoundation.org/resource/hanukkah/?mc_cid=617b9241ae&mc_cid=31b946dce2).

◆ HUC Connect will hold three webinars: "The Land as Woman: Esther Raab and the Afterlife of a Metaphorical System" on Monday, December 5, at 5 pm; "Street Visions: Europe, 1934 - Photographs by Richard J. Scheuer" on Wednesday, December 7, at 2 pm; and "Zionism in Seminary Education" on Thursday, December 15, at 4:30 pm. One may attend one or all of the seminars. For more

information or to register, visit [https://huc-edu.zoom.us/join/register/WN\\_45TZgDdXQuq2yK1ODaxP\\_g](https://huc-edu.zoom.us/join/register/WN_45TZgDdXQuq2yK1ODaxP_g).

◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage will hold the virtual program "Kosher Nostra: The Life and Times of Jewish Gangsters in the United States" on Tuesday, December 6, from 1-2 pm. Robert Rockaway, author of "But He Was Good to His Mother: The Lives and Crimes of Jewish Gangsters," and Joe Kraus, author of "The Krieger Capones: A History of Chicago's Jewish Gangsters," will speak. For more information or to register, visit [https://898a.blackbaudhosting.com/898a/tickets?tab=2&txobjid=9eb09eb1-a47a-4bbd-b493-c3c765b0243a&\\_ga=2.116513230.939670056.1668434648-2047842403.1667495158](https://898a.blackbaudhosting.com/898a/tickets?tab=2&txobjid=9eb09eb1-a47a-4bbd-b493-c3c765b0243a&_ga=2.116513230.939670056.1668434648-2047842403.1667495158).

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

## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

### IRONMAN Israel competition draws 2,500 competitors

Patrick Lange of Germany took first place in the IRONMAN Israel-Middle East Championship in Tiberias on Nov. 25, with a personal best time of 07:42:00. In the women's pro category, Ruth Astle from Great Britain finished first, with a time of 08:41:13. The event featured two races: a full distance one and a shorter race. The full distance race included a 2.3 mile swim in the Sea of Galilee, a 111-mile bike ride and a 26-mile run. More than 800 Israeli and 400 international athletes competed in the full-distance race, while 1,500 Israelis and 360 international athletes competed in the shorter one. Second place in the men's pro category went to Daniel Baekkegard of Denmark (07:43:40), and third to Gregory Barnaby of Italy (07:47:02). Daniela Bleymehl of Germany placed second in the women's category (08:50:13), and third went to Barbara Riveros of Australia (08:55:49). Israel's senior triathlete, Dan Alterman, finished the full competition in a total time of 08:54:18. Businessman and philanthropist Sylvan Adams, who helped bring the event to Israel, said, "The friendships built today will last a lifetime. This is just one international sporting event that we are bringing to Israel, and we hope to have many more in the future."



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# ADL acquires Jewish investor network JLens in bid to combat corporate antisemitism

By Mike Wagenheim

(JNS) – The Anti-Defamation League announced recently that it has acquired Jewish investor network JLens, in a bid to become more prominent in corporate advocacy. The ADL, whose stated mission to fight antisemitism has often been carried out through political lobbying, media campaigns and partnership building, said it feels it needs to enter a new front, with a seat in corporate boardrooms.

“You think about the ADL lobbying Congress or making a pilgrimage to this town or to that city council. But I think we’re living in a world where so much of our lives is mediated by brands, where there’s a high degree of cynicism about elected officials and political parties and the news media,” Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO and national director of the ADL, told JNS. “And so influencers – often in the form of brands – are the way people identify and interpret the world.”

JLens, which advises Jewish donors and

organizations on values-based investment opportunities, has been at the forefront of exposing BDS practices within the burgeoning ESG (environmental, social and governance) investment movement, whose aim is to advise on and promote socially-conscious corporate investment. JLens manages a \$200 million fund, with investments in some of the largest companies in America, providing them a say in their shareholder meetings.

JLens initially brought to public attention alleged anti-Israel bias within the investment ratings system at Sustainalytics, a subsidiary of investment firm Morningstar, which is now under investigation by at least 19 states for potential violations of anti-Israel boycott laws and other practices.

“It’s a great opportunity for JLens to scale our work and our impact and take it to the next level,” Julie Hammerman, JLens CEO and founder, told JNS. “We’ve worked with the ADL for many years and we collabo-

rate on a lot of issues around the corporate space. It’ll help both of our efforts in this area. JLens will get the scale, the resources and the reputation of the ADL, and they will get all the expertise that JLens brings from the investor space and the corporate advocacy arena.”

Hammerman will now be able to bring on two additional members to a small staff, including hiring a day-to-day director.

While the ADL has been involved in pushing corporations like Unilever, Facebook and others to clamp down on antisemitic activity within their respective purviews, the acquisition of JLens will provide the organization with a seat inside valuable corporate boardrooms, with more direct influence on policy.

The recent decisions by a number of companies to separate themselves from entertainer Ye (formerly Kanye West) following his repeated antisemitic comments brought to the forefront the importance of this idea. While Adidas announced an an-

ti-hate partnership with the ADL recently, had there been a functioning corporate relationship between the two before the West controversy, the ADL and JLens might have been able to affect quicker change in the apparel giant, which dragged its feet in dissolving its lucrative branding partnership with West.

Greenblatt said his position allows him to reach out to any CEO, but those fighting antisemitism and anti-Israel activity need a “ground game that will not just get us in the door, but have a seat at the table.”

Meanwhile, Hammerman said JLens will continue to keep a watchful eye on the ESG movement, which hardened anti-Israel activists have long endeavored to exploit to bring an anti-Israel agenda into the shareholder advocacy space.

“It’s a space where the Jewish community should be long term,” said Hammerman. “Israel is one of the issue areas in the [ESG] field, and that’s even more reason that the Jewish community should be there.”

## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

### Lapid: Netanyahu embraces judicial reform to save himself

Outgoing Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid sharply attacked the incoming government’s planned judicial reforms on Nov. 28, claiming that Prime Minister-designate Benjamin Netanyahu’s motivations are entirely personal. During a speech at the 2022 Annual Conference on National Security and Democracy in Jerusalem, Lapid said, “Why do they want to pass an override clause? Why do they want to appoint judges themselves? Why do they want to change the Basic Laws? Why now?” Singling out Netanyahu, who faces three corruption cases, and Shas Party leader Aryeh Deri, recently fined for tax offenses, Lapid said, “For personal reasons, completely personal, they are dragging the country into a dangerous, anti-democratic tailspin that harms the economy, harms security and will lead to international sanctions.” For 15 years as prime minister Netanyahu didn’t think an override clause was necessary, he said, referring to a proposed law that would give legislators the power to reverse, or “override,” the Supreme Court when it strikes down laws as “unconstitutional.” “He did not think that politicians should appoint judges. It did not enter his mind to separate the position of the attorney general from that of chief prosecutor,” said Lapid. “But now he knows that if they don’t pass these laws, the bottom line is he’ll become the second prime minister in the country’s history to go to prison. There’s nothing he won’t do to prevent this,” he continued. “This is not legal reform, this is not ideology, this is criminality taking advantage of an opportunity.”

### P.A. raids “large Palestinian Islamic Jihad bomb lab” in Jenin

Palestinian Authority security forces on Nov. 24 raided a Palestinian Islamic Jihad bomb lab in Jenin, arresting two members of the terror group, seizing a number of bombs

and a large quantity of explosives, Israeli media reported on Nov. 27. Five large bombs and six smaller pipe bombs were seized, according to Kan News. A second, related raid was conducted in the city of Tubas, northeast of Nablus, according to the report. Two Israelis were killed and over 20 injured in a pair of bombings in Jerusalem on Nov. 23. Israeli security forces continue to hunt for the perpetrators.

### Survey: A quarter of U.S. hiring managers discriminate against Jews, survey shows

A quarter of hiring managers say they are less likely to move forward with Jewish applicants, according to a survey conducted by a San Francisco-based employment resource firm. In light of recent high-profile cases of antisemitism in the U.S., ResumeBuilder.com polled 1,131 recruiters. Twenty-three percent say they want fewer Jews in their industry, while 17 percent add that managers have told them to avoid hiring Jews. The top reason for discriminating against Jews, the results show, is a supposed fear of their “power and control,” with 38 percent of hiring managers citing that excuse. Recruiters also justified discrimination by claiming that Jews consider themselves the “chosen people” and they have too much wealth, in addition to listing that “Jews are greedy,” “Jews killed Jesus,” “Jews are an inferior race,” “Jews are oppressors” and “Jews are less capable.” “In this era of fighting for equality in hiring, Jewish individuals have largely been left out of the conversation and the issue of antisemitism has, for the most part, gone unaddressed,” said Stacie Haller, ResumeBuilder.com executive recruiter and career counselor. “Antisemitism in the workplace starts at the hiring process with individuals who do not want to hire Jews because of bigoted stereotypes, but that is not where it ends.” Among current employees, 33 percent said that workplace antisemitism is frequent and 29 percent said that antisemitism is acceptable within the company that employs them, according to the survey. While 56 percent of hiring managers understood that candidates were Jewish because they had confirmed it themselves, 33 percent said they identified their Jewishness by their last names and 26 percent of hiring managers make decisions about who is Jewish based on a candidate’s appearance, the survey found. Some recruiters said they had identified Jewish candidates by their “voice,” their “mannerisms,” or because, “they are very frugal.” Said Haller, “Organizations need to commit to oversight, training and having meaningful conversations about antisemitism. Removing prejudice and ensuring the workplace is equal, fair and accessible for all is not an easy challenge for organizations to tackle, but it’s absolutely essential.” There does appear to be some room for optimism, however. Thirty-one percent of those surveyed claim their attitude toward Jews has improved over the last five years. Nine percent say their attitudes towards Jews have worsened, though, while 60 percent noted no change.

### Israel approves Qatar’s drilling in a Lebanese gas field

After a maritime border agreement with Beirut in October, Israel on Nov. 22 gave Qatar permission to take part in drilling for natural gas in the Kana-Sidon field in Lebanon, Israeli media reported. Israel’s Energy Ministry confirmed that a state-owned Qatari business would join the consortium exploring the gas field. Given that the two nations do not have diplomatic ties, it is “particularly significant” that Jerusalem approved the Qatari enterprise. Nonetheless, Doha permitted direct commercial flights from Israel to Qatar for the World Cup, which began on Nov. 20. The Gulf state also approved the presence of Israeli officials on the ground and the opening of a temporary office to assist Israelis attending the tournament. The historic maritime accord, which ended a protracted dispute between Israel and Lebanon, stipulates that Jerusalem has the right to veto the approval of any company engaged in gas exploration from the field. Even though it is primarily located in Lebanese territorial waters, the field crosses Israel’s economic zone.

### NY governor signs hate crime prevention laws after coming under criticism on the issue

New York Governor Kathy Hochul, who has come under criticism for her response to crime, on Nov. 22 signed two laws that support hate crime prevention and education efforts. The laws - one which requires individuals convicted of hate crimes to undergo mandatory training or counseling, and the second which establishes a statewide campaign for the acceptance, inclusion, tolerance, and understanding of diversity – come after Hochul’s Jewish Republican opponent in the state’s recent gubernatorial election targeted her record on crime. Hochul also encouraged community-based organizations to apply for \$50 million in available funding to strengthen safety measures and protect against hate crimes. “Our hearts are broken after a weekend during which LGBTQ Americans were massacred and Jewish New Yorkers were targeted in horrific acts of hateful violence,” Hochul said in a statement. “New York belongs to the good, not those with hate in their hearts – we’re taking bold action to reclaim our city and state from the haters, bigots and white supremacists.” In his campaign against Hochul, U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin had aimed to take advantage of the perception that Hochul and New York Democrats were weak on crime and positioned himself as the law-and-order candidate.

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