

## Federation held annual allocation meeting

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton held its yearly allocation meeting on November 17 to discuss the allocations for its member agencies. "This is always a very thoughtful meeting with many viewpoints shared through open discussion and this year, even on Zoom, was no different," said Suzanne Holwitt, president of the Federation. "There was much discussion about the different allocations."

The agencies that received the amounts requested include *The Reporter*, Jewish Community Center, Hillel at Binghamton,

HillelAcademy, Beth David *mikvah* and the Jewish Federations of North America. The Federation's budget had been approved in October and includes funding for Jewish Family Service.

"After much discussion, it was decided that, in the future, we will reduce the funding for HillelAcademy," Holwitt added. "This is not because of the quality of their education, which we know is excellent, but due to the reduction in the number of students who attend; the demographics of our area show that we are an aging community. We are

ever hopeful that more families will move into the area and will choose to send their children to Hillel. If this happens, we will, of course, revisit this decision. We hope that you, the members of our community, will

understand our decisions and know that we do not make any of these decisions lightly."

The Federation is also looking into other avenues to invest Federation dollars in ways that will strengthen the local community.

## Chabad's annual toy drive underway

Building on the success of previous years, the Rohr Chabad Center for Jewish Student Life at BU, along with the SDT sorority, is once 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-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).

"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 Chanukah, 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 campaign will culminate with a Chanukah Bash at Binghamton University featuring a display of all toys collected throughout the drive, to be held on Monday, December 6, at 6 pm. The celebration will include dreidels, gelt, a performance by the Crosbys and other holiday treats. The community is invited to attend; reservations are not required.

"The best part of the Chanukah Bash 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," said Danielle Ganchrow, who together with Maya Hoff and Chaviva Liss is chairing the Toy Drive. The project is being co-sponsored by Greek groups, professional fraternities and various clubs on campus.

Temple Concord will co-sponsor the virtual lecture "The Bible as a Resource for a Time of Crisis" on Saturday, December 11, at noon. The lecture will be given by Rabbi Dr. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi, Effie Wise Ochs Professor of Biblical Literature and History at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion's Skirball Campus in Los Angeles and the editor of "The Torah:

**By Reporter staff**

Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, wants to remind people that they may be able to give a tax-free gift from their individual retirement accounts to the Federation. "This is the time of year that people are thinking about their required withdrawals from their IRAs, which makes this the perfect time to consider a gift to the Federation," she said.

Individuals who are aged 70½ and older may be able to make direct transfers to the Federation of up to \$100,000 per year per person from an IRA account. This

withdrawal may also be tax free if gifted directly to the Jewish Federation and can satisfy the required minimum distribution without increasing the amount of income taxes owed. To qualify, the gift must be made by December 31.

Other tax-deferred retirement plans – for example, a 401(k) or 403(b) – do not qualify; however, it may be possible to rollover those into an IRA and then make a charitable rollover gift to Federation.

"Talk to your financial advisor," Hubal said. "This is the perfect time to make a donation."

## TC co-sponsor for "The Bible as a Resource for a Time of Crisis"

A Women's Commentary." To register for the event, visit <https://congregationorami.shulcloud.com/event/bible-as-a-resource-rabbi-dr-eskanazi-december-2021>.

Cohn Eskenazi was the first woman appointed as professor to the rabbinical faculty of HUC-JIR. Her book "The Torah: A Women's Commentary" won the top prize at the 2008 National Jewish Book Awards.

The commentary includes contributions from hundreds of women scholars, clergy and poets, and has brought the voices and visions of women to the interpretation of the Torah in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Her most recent book, a commentary on Ruth (the "JPS Bible Commentary: Ruth" (with the late Tikva Frymer-Kensky), won the National Jewish Book Award for Women Studies in 2012.

## BD Sisterhood to hold post-Hanukkah celebration on Dec. 8

The Sisterhood of Beth David Synagogue will hold a post-Hanukkah celebration on Wednesday, December 8, at 7 pm, on Zoom. Members and friends of Sisterhood and the entire Jewish community are invited to join the festivities. Zoom information will be sent to everyone on the Sisterhood and Beth David congregation e-mail lists. Anyone not on those lists should contact the Beth David office at [bethdavid@stny.rr.com](mailto:bethdavid@stny.rr.com)

to receive the Zoom link.

"Why should you attend a post-Hanukkah party?" said organizers of the event. "Just because we are no longer lighting candles doesn't mean we have to admit the holiday is over. We want to keep the spirit

of Hanukkah and the Maccabees alive for a few more days.

"This will be a great opportunity during the informal portion of the evening to tell your friends about that special gift you See "BD" on page 3

## TC Sisterhood plans "Kahoot and Kookies"

Temple Concord Sisterhood will hold an interactive trivia game, "Kahoot and Kookies," on Sunday, December 19, at 2 pm, at Temple Concord. This will be an in-person only activity where participants will play using their smartphones. Anyone who attends and doesn't have a smart phone will team up with a sister who has one.

Reservations must be made by Thursday,

December 16, by e-mailing Deb Daniels at [ddaniels2@stny.rr.com](mailto:ddaniels2@stny.rr.com) or phoning her at 743-1427. She will answer any questions participants may have.

There is no charge for this program. Daniels, Phyllis Kellenberger and Roz Antoun, Temple Concord Sisterhood program chairwomen, are encouraging members to attend and they say, "It will be lots of fun."

### THE REPORTER

December 3, 1971-December 3, 2021

Celebrating 50 years of serving the Southern Tier community and beyond



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## Jewish Baseball Players

# Pitcher Max “Maximus” Fried: The new Koufax?

BILL SIMONS

Game six of the 2021 World Series – November 2, 2021 – produced an indelible Jewish vignette. During the bottom of the second inning, Atlanta Braves pitcher Max Fried faced Houston Astros batter Alex Bregman. Bregman lined Fried’s pitch to rightfield where the Braves’ Joc Pederson speared the drive for an out. Pederson, Fried and Bregman are all Jewish. Garret Stubbs, a reserve, came off the bench to catch the ninth inning for the Astros. Four is not a minyan, but it set a record for Jewish players in a World Series game.

Fried pitched masterfully in game six before 42,868 in-person fans, mainly Astros’ partisans, at Minute Maid Park in Downtown Houston. Another 14 million viewers watched the live Fox Sports broadcast. The Astros have formidable offense, loaded with dangerous batters, but on this night, Fried silenced the Houston bats.

Game six provided redemption for Fried. Uncharacteristically, he had faltered in his last two post-season outings. Fried’s game five performance in the National League Championship Series, on October 21, was a disaster. Against the Los Angeles Dodgers in game five of the NLCS, Fried, the losing pitcher, was removed after 4.2 innings, having given up eight hits, five earned runs and two walks, as well as hitting a batter. On October 27, in game two of the World Series, Fried, pitching five-plus innings before exiting as the losing pitcher, yielded seven

hits and a walk, threw two wild pitches and allowed six earned runs. Critics charged that Fried, who posted a 14-7 won-loss record and 3.04 ERA during the regular season, folded when it mattered most.

Fried soon silenced the naysayers. As the Braves starting and winning pitcher in game six, he returned to form, pitching six strong innings. It did not begin well, however. Jose Altuve, the Astros’ diminutive dynamo, led off with a single, beating out a ground ball to shortstop. On a Michael Brantley dribbler, Fried, normally an outstanding fielder, bumbled coverage of first base and was charged with an error, putting a second Astro on base. Even more ominously, Brantley stomped on Fried’s right ankle. Fortunately, Fried’s ankle proved impervious to the Brantley rubber-cleat spiking. Then, Fried rebooted. With Houston runners on first and second base and no outs, Fried set down the formidable middle of the Astros’ batting order. Deftly mixing a repertoire of four-seamed fastballs, change-ups, curves and sliders, Maximus, as Fried is known, allowed only four scratch hits and did not issue any walks. Of his 74 pitches, 50 were strikes. The Astros failed to score in a 7-0 game that made the Braves the 2021 World Series champions and established Max Fried as a big-game pitcher, baseball celebrity and Jewish hero.

The ultimate measure of a Jewish pitcher is how he stacks up against the Dodgers’ Sandy Koufax. After game six of the 2021 World Series, some Jewish pundits and fans suggested that Fried was the second coming of Koufax. Such encomiums are premature. Although Koufax retired in 1966, the 27-year-old Fried honored his hero by requesting Koufax’s number 32 on his high school uniform. Both southpaws are tall, handsome, intelligent, modest, circumspect and gifted. While Koufax packed 205 pounds of sleek, hard muscle on a 6’2” frame, the 6’4”, 190 pound Fried, although possessed of an imposing wing span and delivery, has found the adjective “skinny” attached to him.

More to the point, contemporary pitch counts, five-man rotations and the ubiquity of relief specialists impede today’s hurlers from matching the on-field presence possible in Koufax’s generation. For example, Fried in 2021, pitching only 165 innings (limited early in the season by a pulled hamstring and index-finger blister), completed two games

– only one behind the NL high – and his two shutouts tied for the league lead. In contrast, Koufax, over 311 innings in 1963, completed 20 games and recorded 11 shutouts. Fried’s top three season win totals (17, 14, 7) juxtaposed to those of Koufax (27, 26, 25) suggest differences in context and performance. Koufax holds the edge over Fried in strikeout average per 9 innings (9.3 to 9). Koufax topped the circuit five times in earned run average, thrice in victories, twice in won-lost percentage and four-fold in strikeouts; pitched a then record four no-hitters, including a perfect game; and won a Most Valuable Player and three Cy Young awards. In the preceding categories, Fried, at this juncture, is absent, aside from registering a perfect 1.000 won-lost percentage during the COVID-abbreviated 2020 season.

The arc of Fried’s career, however, may come to exceed Koufax’s in some areas. While Koufax was an atrocious hitter, Fried is an excellent batsman for a pitcher, hitting .273 in 2021 and earning a Silver Slugger award. Winner of two Gold Glove awards, Fried is the better fielder. Moreover, Fried’s current career won-lost percentage is a phenomenal .690, exceeding Koufax’s .655. Due to an excruciatingly painful arm injury, Koufax, at age 30, retired, at his absolute peak. If he remains healthy and durable, Fried, currently with 40 total wins, may well pass Koufax’s 165 career victories.

Statistics aside, Koufax is a legend to Jews because, coming off an incredible 1965 regular season (26-8 won-lost mark, 2.04 ERA, then record 382 strikeouts), he refused to pitch the opening game of the World Series as it fell on Yom Kippur. Koufax came back to shut out the Minnesota Twins in game five. Then, with only two days of rest, Koufax shut out the Twins again, making the Dodgers the World Series champions. Perhaps Fried, who played for the U.S. junior baseball team in the 2009 Maccabiah Games in Israel and appears more synagogue-inclined than Koufax, will have his iconic Jewish baseball moment.

Make no mistake: Fried is the real deal. During the second half of the 2021 season, he emerged as the NL’s most dominant pitcher (8 wins-2 losses, 1.74 ERA after the All-Star break). Time will tell if Fried is on a Hall of Fame trajectory – and challenges the great Koufax for the top spot on the all-time Jewish all-star pitching rotation.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

### U.S. tests Israel’s Iron Dome air-defense system in Guam

The U.S. military is testing Israel’s Iron Dome air-defense system in Guam because of the threat of Chinese cruise missiles. Iron Dome has demonstrated an ability to intercept cruise missiles that travel below the speed of sound that the Pentagon says could be fired from Chinese bombers at Guam, according to a recent report in *The Wall Street Journal*. Congress had ordered two Iron Dome systems in 2019 and said that one should be deployed this year.

## Opinion

### In My Own Words

## Book burning

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

On June 17, 1242, King Louis IX and Pope Gregory IX ordered that every copy of the Talmud on French soil be burned. The reason for this destruction was that the work contained sayings and sentiments they believed were offensive. Since this was before the printing press, the volumes sacrificed to the fire had been hand-written; all future copies of the Talmud were censored to remove the objectionable parts.

Anyone familiar with Jewish history should shudder when they hear of book burnings. I’m betting, though, that most don’t associate book burnings with 15<sup>th</sup> century France. What they do think of is Nazi Germany and the burning of books by Jewish authors and others whose ideas the Nazis found offensive. Book burning is thought to be the first step in a long, dark descent into increased censorship and repression. Although that doesn’t always happen, reading about book burnings rightly makes most of us nervous.

Why am I writing about book burnings? Some of you may have seen the following headline on yahoo.com or other news sites: “Virginia school board members call for books to be burned amid GOP’s campaign against schools teaching about race and sexuality.” School board members are *not* only calling for works they find offensive to be removed from library shelves. That in itself is bad enough.

But they not only don’t want their children to read them, they want to physically destroy them so that *no one* can ever read them.

There seem to be several objections to the books the board members want destroyed. Several of these works include LGBTQ+ characters. Perhaps they fear their children might explore their own sexuality and decide they aren’t straight. Or perhaps they worry that their children won’t mind if others make different lifestyle choices, which the board members see as undermining societal values.

They also seem upset about books that tell of the history of slavery in America, particularly noting how horrific those slaves were treated. The board members want to protect their children from uncomfortable notions and the idea that our country sometimes treated people unfairly and unkindly. However, what they end up doing is narrowing their children’s vision. They also refuse to see that America’s aspirations – its ideals – while wonderful have not always been fulfilled. That does *not* mean our country is evil: it means, like *every other* country in the world, there is *always* room for improvement. *That* is the American way.

Before I started writing this column, I debated what to write in the opening paragraph. I thought about saying how I like to read books that offer me different worldviews, even if I disagree with them. I thought about mentioning

that the Talmud includes minority opinions, ones that did not become law, but which continue to be studied for the lessons they teach. Another possibility was to mention that, when I used to subscribe to Rolling Stone magazine (several decades ago), there was a columnist with whom I radically disagreed: rather than suggesting that the magazine not publish him, I decided to simply not read his work anymore. Sometimes we can agree to disagree.

What I cannot support is censorship and book burning. The reason that books get published (and TV shows and movies are produced, etc.) is because people *buy* those products. Don’t like a book? Don’t buy it. Think a TV show is vile? Don’t watch it. You can also write to the sponsors to say you won’t buy their products if they advertise on the show. That’s legitimate. But demanding that anything that makes anyone uncomfortable should be censored tells more about the people making those demands than it does about the objectionable work.

There are parts of life that are, and should, make us uncomfortable. That includes parts of American history. There are types of sexuality we may not understand until they are explained. We don’t have to agree with them, because we are allowed to disagree with each other. That’s also the American way. But burning books? Threatening authors, writers, actors, etc.? That’s simply unacceptable.



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#### OPINIONS

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#### 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

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# Nefesh B’Nefesh inaugurates campus in Jerusalem to better serve new immigrants

By Eliana Rudee

(JNS) – The *aliyah*-facilitating organization Nefesh B’Nefesh inaugurated a new, state-of-the-art campus in Jerusalem at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on November 16. Among those present included Israeli President Isaac Herzog, Minister of Aliyah and Integration Pnina Tamano-Shata, Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel David Lau and Nefesh B’Nefesh co-founders Rabbi Yehoshua Fass and Tony Gelbart.

According to Fass and Gelbart, the new permanent home in Jerusalem “opens endless possibilities of expanding our *aliyah* services and initiating new projects.”

The campus – opposite the Supreme Court in Israel’s government quarter – includes an office floor, conference hall, meeting rooms, a multimedia presentation center and multiple outdoor and indoor spaces to be used for *aliyah* *aliyah*-related programs.

Fass and Gelbart said programming was scheduled to begin with joint events with the Jerusalem Municipality, mission visits to the campus, personal meetings for new immigrants and a planned Thanksgiving celebration for lone soldiers in the Israel Defense Forces and for B’not Sherut, women who serve in Israel’s national service.

“Nefesh B’Nefesh has strived for the past 20 years to make *olim* feel welcome in Israel and help them become an integral part of the Jewish state,” said Fass. “Our *aliyah* campus is yet another resource that will aid us in making dreams come true.”

The growth of Nefesh B’Nefesh, emphasized Herzog

at the inauguration event, “is vital for the story of *aliyah* from all over the world and the story of *aliyah* from the United States.

“We can reach 100,000 *olim* [‘new immigrants’] a year if only we want to and if we move ahead with a grand plan, whereby we can bring half a million *olim* to Israel within five years and change the state of Israel, the nation-state of the Jewish people, in a very dramatic way,” he added.

Laura Ben David, 52, who was on the very first flight sponsored by the organization back in 2002, attended the November 16 inaugural event. “Watching how it has evolved from being something unusual to something cool and exciting that so many people are doing or want to do is incredible,” she told JNS.

“*Aliyah* was so unusual – and the concept of taking a full plane of American Jews to live in Israel so unique – that we were constantly getting calls from the media asking for interviews. In fact, a team from our local newspaper not only interviewed us, but followed us for days beforehand, came with us on the flight and continued to follow us afterwards,” said the marketing and digital media specialist, photographer and author.

Though Ben David was the first off the plane, she said,



Israel’s Minister of Aliyah and Integration Pnina Tamano-Shata with Nefesh B’Nefesh co-founders Tony Gelbart (center) and Rabbi Yehoshua Fass at the dedication ceremony for the new *aliyah* campus in Jerusalem on November 16. (Photo courtesy of JNS)

“I considered myself part of the whole group – those pioneers willing to take a chance on a new organization that was daring to think big and try and change history.”

According to Fass, the new location of the campus aligns Nefesh B’Nefesh with many national and governmental establishments in the Government Quarter, making it another domestic institution serving the needs of the citizens and the state of Israel.

“The proximity to the government offices with which we work on a daily basis allows us to meet the necessary officials, and hold planning and strategic meetings with ease,” he told JNS.

“In addition, the new location centrally located in Jerusalem allows for effortless access from within the city, while the See “Campus” on page 4

## On the Jewish food scene My seasonal iced cookie craving

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

About four or five years ago in December, I stopped into a coffee shop and noticed an iced cookie shaped like a moose among the baked treats on offer. Although I rarely ate iced cookies, I couldn’t resist buying it. I showed the cookie to a friend when I got to *The Reporter* office and was promptly informed that it was *not* a moose, but a reindeer. (Eh, what do I know from reindeer? It still looked like a moose to me.) Either way, I enjoyed the cookie and then promptly forgot about it.

Fast forward ahead to the next December and I’m heading into that same coffee shop and suddenly think, “Oh, maybe they’ll have that cookie again. It was really pretty good.” But, to my sorrow, there were no iced cookies – no moose, reindeer or any other kind. Note that I’d gone a whole year without thinking about the cookie, but now I *really* wanted one.

Why not bake one myself, you might think. Sorry, I find it impossible to use sugar in a recipe. I do now eat foods that contain sugar, but, after once being on a restricted diet for five years and only eating dessert twice during that period, I still note every time I put something in my mouth that contains sugar. The idea of adding sugar to food I make at home makes me shudder.

But, there I was, still wanting a cookie. You might think if I was that desperate, that I might start haunting bakeries demanding that they make me one. But, no, I didn’t. However, I got lucky. I was shopping in a grocery store that I go to infrequently (I prefer the one near my house because I want it to stay in business) and for some reason walked down its large bakery aisle. And suddenly I saw it: a large stand filled with iced cookies in all shapes and sizes!

Since this was December, you can imagine what most of the shapes were. My preference is for a less Christian religious shape, although I can’t remember exactly what I bought. (Maybe a snowman?) But if a Christmas tree or a Santa Claus had been the only shapes the cookie came in, then I would have gotten one. Please note: I only bought one cookie. That’s right: my craving is for one iced cookie a year.

This brings us to last year during the pandemic. My shopping was limited to grocery stores and drugstores. The

coffee shop was definitely not on my list of places to risk. I was even avoiding the grocery store with the large bakery aisle because it was usually too crowded for my taste. But one day last December, I had to go somewhere early in the morning and passed by the store on my way home. To my surprise, I saw the parking lot looked relatively empty. Since there are a few things it sells that I can’t find anywhere else, I decided to go in for a quick shopping trip. Oh, and I also bought my yearly iced cookie while I was there.

I normally don’t think about that cookie during 11 months of the year. This year, it came to mind early because I was thinking about the food columns that appeared in the November issues of this paper. My mind jumped around and began to ponder December foods. That’s when it landed on my yearly iced cookie. Since I’m writing this in October (just after writing the November food columns), I don’t have a craving for it yet. There’s more than a month to go before my brain even starts thinking good thoughts about that cookie. Will I manage to find one this year? Will I risk going into the grocery store during the biggest shopping month of the year? Your guess is as good as mine. But the real question is, what shape do I want to bite into if I do? There is something about that original cookie shape that appeals to me. So, if possible, I hope they have a moose-shaped one – yeah, I know it was a reindeer, but I still think of it as a moose – because that first cookie remains my favorite.

**BD.** . . . . . Continued from page 1 either received or gave during this holiday, and to *kvell* over your grandchildren while bringing everyone up to date on your family members who no longer live locally,” organizers added.

The program committee members are currently searching the internet to find what they consider to be the best of this year’s Hanukkah offerings. There may even be a locally produced offering. “We hope you will make time during your busy schedule to join with us for an hour or so,” organizers said. “We promise to keep our business meeting brief!”

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of  
**Diane Gartell**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of  
**Alan Grass**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Lisa Berk** on the deaths of her father and stepmother,  
**Richard and Ursula Mansbeck**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of  
**Rabbi Joyce M. Olum-Galaski**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of  
**Naomi Staiman**

**REPORTER DEADLINES**

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

| ISSUE                          | DEADLINE    |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| December 17-30.....            | December 8  |
| Dec. 31, 2021-Jan. 13, 2022 .. | December 22 |
| January 14-January 27 .....    | January 5   |
| January 28-February 10 .....   | January 19  |

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

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|-------------|-------------|
| DECEMBER 17 | DECEMBER 9  |
| DECEMBER 31 | DECEMBER 23 |

**TRIPLE CITIES SKI CLUB**

Upcoming events:

- Killington Race Camp: Dec. 5-10
- Holiday Valley: Jan. 20-23
- Bristol Mountain – “Ski With a Heart” Day: Feb. 11
- Whiteface Mountain: Feb. 13-16

**Monthly meeting every 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday at 177** Robinson st, Binghamton, NY 13904. For more info visit [www.triplecitysskiclub.com](http://www.triplecitysskiclub.com).



Off the Shelf

# Resistance, betrayal and survival

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

If I had to summarize Roxane Van Iperen's "The Sisters of Auschwitz: The True Story of Two Sisters' Resistance in the Heart of Nazi Territory" (Harper) in three words they would be resistance, betrayal and survival. Janny and Lien Brilleslijper did the unthinkable: They opened a safe house in the woods of Holland that hid partisans and members of the arts community who were threatened by the Nazi invaders. What made the sanctuary known as the High Nest even more amazing is that the sisters were Jewish. Unfortunately, their betrayal, which came after the Allied invasion, placed them, their family and friends on the last train to Auschwitz. How the sisters helped each other survive makes for riveting, if distressing, reading.

Although the Brilleslijper family was not rich, the girls had a warm and comfortable childhood with their parents and younger brother, Jacob (known as Japie). Van Iperen notes that while Janny and Lien were good friends and devoted sisters, they had very different temperaments: "Lien is spontaneous, outgoing, light-hearted like her father and a dreamer. Janny is down-to-earth, at times reserved, and has a strong will like her mother." Although her father

believes Lien's interest in the arts is frivolous, Lien defies him: she becomes a dancer and singer, even though she leaves home to follow her dream. At first, Janny has more difficulty settling on what to do with her life, but becomes involved in politics, originally with the International Red Aid, a group supporting Dutch volunteers who were fighting against the fascists in Spain.

Neither sister married someone Jewish: Janny married Bob Brandes, but was never accepted by his family, who disliked her lower social status and her Jewish background. Lien lived with, and later married, Eberhard Rebling, a German who left his country when the Nazis came into power. When the Germans invaded Holland, both couples worked with the resistance, risking their lives to help those who were in danger. When it became impossible for them to remain in Amsterdam, they found the house known as the High Nest and moved there: going with them were their children, the sisters' parents and brother, members of the resistance and others who were seeking shelter from the Nazis.

The last chapters of "The Sisters of Auschwitz" were particularly difficult to read because they discuss in great

detail what Janny and Lien faced during their time in detention and in concentration camps. It's amazing that the sisters survived, although it is heartbreaking to read about their family and friends who perished. In the work's conclusion, Van Iperen lists all major figures who appeared in the book and tells what happened to them during the war and after (if that information is available).

Writing this book was a personal experience for Van Iperen, partly because she now lives in the High Nest. She and her family restored the house and invited the children who had hidden there to visit: She notes that those children "are now in their seventies. They came back to the house from various corners of the globe to see the places where they had played during war, and where my children now play in freedom. The desk where this book is written is right above the hatch where all the important papers were hidden when Jew hunters surrounded the house." As for Van Iperen's feelings about the Brilleslijper sisters, she writes that "the memory of the war seems to fade, but their fearlessness is now carved into the stone of The High Nest for ever."



Off the Shelf

# Looking for romance

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

A recipe for romance novels: 1) Take two insecure people who are attracted to each other. 2) Have them each believe the other can't possibly be interested. 3) Mix in several misunderstandings and at least one major crisis. 4) Stir until you have a happy ending.

This oversimplification explains why people like to read romance novels: while life may be uncertain and scary, these works always reward you with a happy ending. That's true of two recent romance novels that feature Jewish characters: "The Matzah Ball" by Jean Meltzer (Mira) and "I Kissed a Girl" by Jennet Alexander (Sourcebooks Casablanca). Additional pleasures abound: both contain copious amounts of humor, but also manage to discuss serious subjects without ruining the fun.

"The Matzah Ball" features two characters who've had a grudge against each other since Jewish overnight camp. Rachel Rubenstein-Goldblatt thinks Jacob Greenberg pretended to care for her in order to publicly embarrass her in front of his bunkmates. Jacob believes that Rachel deliberately stood him up at the camp dance. The two have not seen each other since then, but they are thrown together when Rachel needs an invitation to the Matzah Ball, the fancy Hanukkah party Jacob is producing.

Although proudly Jewish, Rachel makes her living writing Christmas romances under a pen name. In fact, Rachel is so in love with Christmas that she's filled her carefully locked home office with Christmas decorations and 236 porcelain Santa Clauses. Unfortunately, at her latest meeting with her publishers, Rachel learns Christmas romances are no longer selling well; this time, they want her to write a Hanukkah romance. At a loss since she never considered Hanukkah a romantic holiday, Rachel learns of the Matzah Ball and realizes Jacob is the key to getting a ticket. However, she can't tell him why she needs a ticket because her family and community have no idea she writes Christmas romances. Rachel and Jacob are still attracted to each other, though, but coming together is not easy: misunderstandings abound and goodwill attempts to reconnect backfire – that is, of course, until the end of the book.

What makes the "The Matzah Ball" stand out, though, is that Rachel suffers from chronic fatigue syndrome, some-

thing she hides from her agent and publisher. She's been faced with doctors who are unfamiliar with her condition and people who don't believe her illness is real. Anyone looking at her would think she is in perfect health, which makes life that much harder. Meltzer beautifully captures Rachel's feelings: "She wanted what so many others had, what everyone standing around her parents' Shabbat table seemed to take for granted. She wanted normalcy. She wanted a career and a family and the ability to walk around a museum for two hours without her body punishing her for it. But Rachel couldn't allow herself to think about the future. It was too scary and gray, too terribly overwhelming. She had learned to survive by just focusing on the day. Focusing all her energy on one task, one goal, and pouring everything she had into it."

Meltzer does a wonderful job balancing the romance and humor with Rachel's struggles and Jacob's search for family and community, something he's longed for since his parents divorced, and he moved with his French mother back to Paris. Watching Rachel and Jacob dance around each other – trying to discover if the other is actually interested – was great fun, as were the many Jewish references. The final scenes during the actual ball were crazy, ridiculous and delightfully slapstick. Filmmakers take note: This would also make a great movie.

While the plot in "The Matzah Ball" centers around a Jewish event, that's not true in "I Kissed a Girl." Both main characters do identify as Jewish and discuss the way they practice – well, mostly don't practice – their religion. Noa Birnbaum has just dropped out of college to work as a special effects and makeup artist for a horror movie. Noa wants to work in the industry full time and this is the first step to receiving a union card. Adding to the pleasure is that Lilah Silver, the female lead in the film, is someone on whom Noa has had a crush for ages, although Noa knows she has to act professionally to keep her job. Lilah is hoping that this movie will be her big break: she wants to move to A-list films and finally do what she considers real acting.

Noa is out as a lesbian, but Lilah has only recently begun to explore her attraction to women. Although readers immediately know the two are destined for each other, they

each think the other isn't attracted to them. This makes for some amusing scenes as each acts awkwardly or completely misunderstands the other's intentions. The novel also explores Lilah's feelings about being bisexual and her worries about how her friends will react if she reveals her newly developed feelings. This is one reason why Noa and Lilah are unable to understand each other at first, as is the fact that Noa frequently jumps to judgment about other people based on their clothing or taste in literature. Both characters need to learn something about themselves before they can come together as a couple.

In addition to the romance, there's the fun of reading about the making of a horror film, particularly watching how Noa and her fellow special effects artists relish creating gory scenes and disembodied parts of human bodies. Alexander is a big fan of these films and includes references to them throughout the book. (She also offers the answers so readers can see if they guessed correctly.) For those who are not fans of the genre, Noa offers an excellent explanation of why she loves them so much: "Like the world is a mess, we all know it. When we talk about it, it's all big corporations this and heat death of the glaciers that. It's all so uncontrollable and terrifying. At the same time, being grown-up adults means we're not allowed to throw temper tantrums when we're freaking out... Horror gives you a chance to let it out. To be scared and feel your feelings. You're scared but you're safe, so it's okay to scream and cry and let the whole tension-release thing work on you."

You don't have to like horror films or identify with the sexuality of its characters, though, in order to appreciate "I Kissed a Girl." This well-done work offers much to enjoy, including the cheesecake its characters eat on Shavuot. (You'll just have to read the novel to discover how that happens.)

## Campus . . . Continued from page 3

short distance to the train and central station makes the journey from outside of the city to our offices that much simpler."

The grounds for the campus were allocated by the Jerusalem Municipality, according to a Nefesh B'Nefesh press release.

Mayor of Jerusalem Moshe Lion told event attendees in a video message: "Nefesh B'Nefesh works all year round on behalf of Israel and Jerusalem, and does a wonderful job with the young people of the Diaspora, serving as a link connecting the city to its *olim*. I believe and hope that in the coming years more and more *olim* will choose to establish their place of residence here in the capital of Israel."



Israeli President Isaac Herzog (center), and Nefesh B'Nefesh co-founders Tony Gelbart (left) and Rabbi Yehoshua Fass cut the ribbon at the dedication ceremony of a new aliyah campus in Jerusalem for the organization on November 16. (Photo courtesy of JNS)

## Quick Reference Guide to Planned Giving

Use this planned giving quick reference guide to help determine the best strategy for achieving your philanthropic and financial goals.

For further information or assistance, please contact Shelley Hubal at 724-2332 or [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org)

### If Your Goal is to:

Make a quick and easy gift

Avoid tax on capital gains

Defer a gift until after your death

Receive guaranteed fixed income that is partially tax-free

Avoid the two-fold taxation on IRA or other employee benefit plans

Make a large gift with little cost to you

Reduce taxable income from IRA Required Minimum Distributions

### Then You Can:

Simply write a check now or use a credit card

Contribute long-term appreciated stock or other securities

Put a bequest in your will (gifts of cash or a share or the residue of your estate)

Create a charitable gift annuity

Name a charity as the beneficiary of the remainder of the retirement assets after your lifetime

Contribute a life insurance policy you no longer need or purchase a new one and designate a charity as the owner

Make a qualified charitable donation directly from your IRA (after age 70½)

### Your Benefits May Include:

An income tax deduction and immediate charitable impact

A charitable deduction plus no capital gains tax

Exemption from federal estate tax on donations

Current and future savings on income taxes plus fixed stable payments

Tax relief to your family on inherited assets

Current and possible future income tax deductions

Reducing taxable income



# Stiletto's Fine Arts Studio

## First Annual Fundraiser Art Exhibition

FEATURING THE ART WORK OF

# JONATHAN LERMAN

SATURDAY DECEMBER 4 : 5-8 PM

STILETTOS FINE ARTS STUDIO: OAKDALE MALL GALLERY SUITE 74



Artist Jonathan Lerman, captured the attention of the world at the 2002 Outsider Art Fair. His unique depiction of emotion and expression quickly gained national and international recognition and acclaim.

*Show Title: The Art of Jonathan Lerman*

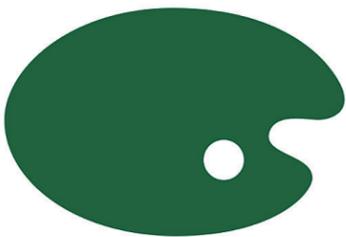
Jonathan and his artwork has been featured in : The New York Times, on Nickelodeon, Dan Rather's CBS News, MTV True Lives, and Teen Magazine, 48 Hours and The Today Show.

His work has been on display at Kerry Schuss Art in Manhattan, Boston Berrenberg, Toronto Lonsdale, and Anthony Brunelli Gallery in Binghamton, NY.

After taking a 13 year break from the professional art world, Jonathan Lerman is making his return. As a practicing artist at Stiletto's Fine Arts Studio, Jonathan has been pursuing excellence in his studies of art under founder, Rebecca Whitman's tutelage. Jonathan has become a house artist at Stiletto's and is a proud member of the Stiletto's Family of Artists. For the first time in 13 years, Jonathan has joined forces with Stiletto's, to once again display his breath-taking work.

Stiletto's Fine Arts Studio proudly welcomes Jonathan as a featured artist in their *First Annual Holiday Fundraiser Art Exhibition*, raising money to provide free art lessons to children in the local community. Jonathan is an artist who has shown the world what a difference art can make in an individual's life and now he is choosing to support a cause to make a difference in the lives other aspiring young artists in his community and the world.

*"Creativity takes courage"- Henry Matisse*





# The power of dreaming

RABBI SUZANNE BRODY, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING,  
TEMPLE BETH-EL, ITHACA

My husband often shares his dreams with me in the morning. Unlike my dreams, which I rarely remember even though science claims I have three-six a night, my husband's dreams are vivid, detailed and complex. No matter how strange they sound – with sudden scene shifts, people and point of view changing unexpectedly and more – when recounted in the light of day, there are no elements which, in and of themselves, are unknown to us. It is the way in which these familiar elements are combined that makes these dreams so foreign or surreal.

So, too, Pharaoh's dreams were made up of components that were common in everyday Egyptian life. As Radak (a French medieval rabbi who lived 1160-1235) points out, the river Nile rises annually above its embankment, irrigating the farmland surrounding it. Furthermore, it was common for cows to both pull the ploughs and thresh the grain after harvesting. This view is echoed by Rabbeinu Bahya (a Spanish rabbi and renowned biblical commentator who lived 1255-1340), who points out that the Nile was Egypt's economic base; it provided the key to its

food supply. Given this, one might find it difficult to see how the Egyptian wise men could have missed the simple interpretation Joseph gives to Pharaoh's dreams. It also doesn't seem like there is anything particularly remarkable in the dreams themselves.

However, as we know from our own dreams (or those shared with us by friends and family), it is the out of place or unusual components that both alert us to the fact that we are dreaming and lead us to believe that the dream is **See "Dreaming" on page 7**

## 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 4, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Genesis 41:1-44:17 and the haftarah is Zechariah 2:14-4:7. At 5:45 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Wednesday, December 8, Torah study will be held from 4-5 pm.

On Saturday, December 11, at 9:30 am, Shacharit services will be held at 10 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Genesis 44:18-47:27 and the haftarah is Ezekiel 37:15-28. At 5:45 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Wednesday, December 15, Torah study will be held from 4-5 pm.

### 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.

Friday night services will be held on December 3; January 7; February 4; March 4; April 1; May 6 and Saturday morning, May 7; and June 3.

### Congregation Tikun v'Or

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

### Temple Brith Sholom

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

### Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

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

### Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union  
Rabbi: Zev Silber  
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Phone: 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

### Norwich Jewish Center

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

### Rohr Chabad Center

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

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

### Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

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

Friday, December 3, light candles before ..... 4:14 pm  
Saturday, December 4, Shabbat ends ..... 5:15 pm  
Friday, December 10, light candles before ..... 4:13 pm  
Saturday, December 11, Shabbat ends ..... 5:14 pm  
Friday, December 17, light candles before ..... 4:15 pm  
Saturday, December 18, Shabbat ends ..... 5:16 pm

### 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 3: 10 am-2 pm, Judaica Shop open; 5 pm, First Friday at the Kilmer Mansion; 7 pm, menorah lighting; and 7:30 pm, Shabbat Hanukkah services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell. All are welcome to come in person, but a mask is required. Those attending in person can bring their Hanukkah menorahs and seven candles to light. To view on Zoom, visit https://bit.ly/37UQSpK, meeting ID 829 9450 3102 and passcode 708450.

Saturday, December: 9 am, Hanukkah celebration activities and Tot Shabbat; 9:15 am, Torah study in the temple library and on Zoom (to view on Zoom, visit https://bit.ly/3CVxM14, meeting ID 882 9808 7579 and passcode 676707); 10 am, Shabbat Hanukkah celebration in the sanctuary, including consecration of the pre-kindergarten-first grade class; 10:30 am, games and refreshments; and at 7 pm, (Zoom and Facebook Live) hanukkah lighting, Havdalah and URJ Hanukkah celebration video presentation at https://bit.ly/3zd0atv, meeting ID 897 4179 1260 and passcode 408279.

Sunday, December 5: 10 am-2 pm, Sisterhood Rummage Sale (buy one sweater, get one sweater free); and 3 pm, menorah lighting.

Tuesday-Thursday, December 7-9: Judaica Shop open.  
Friday, December 10: 7:30 pm, Human Rights Shabbat services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell. All are welcome to come in person and no reservations are needed, but a mask is required. To view on Zoom, visit https://bit.ly/37UQSpK, meeting ID 829 9450 3102 and passcode 708450.

Saturday, December 11; 9 am, Shabbat school; 9:15 am, Torah study (in the temple library and on Zoom at https://bit.ly/3CVxM14, meeting ID 882 9808 7579 and passcode 676707); 10:35 am, Shabbat family service; and at 7 pm, "Havdalah with a Bonus" at https://bit.ly/3zd0atv, meeting ID 897 4179 1260 and passcode 408279.

Tuesday, December 14: 6:30 pm, executive board meeting; and 7:30 pm, general board meeting.

### 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.

### Kol Haverim

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

# 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 Shalom Hartman Institute offers free virtual course through its Shalom @ Home program. Courses and lectures that begin in January include “Old Jew, New Jew, Israeli Jew: A Fresh Look at the Jews of Zion”; “Salon@475 Book Talk: Sanctified Sex”; and “Religion or Nation? Modern Debates about Jewish Identity.” Courses being held in March include “An Exceptional Hatred? Understanding Antisemitism” and “Beginnings and Order: Jewish Creation Myths.” For more information or to register, visit [https://athome.hartman.org.il/?mc\\_cid=ec-4c06e79e&mc\\_eid=96085fa8a5](https://athome.hartman.org.il/?mc_cid=ec-4c06e79e&mc_eid=96085fa8a5).
- ◆ Hadar is offering a weekly e-mail about the Torah portion by Rabbi Aviva Richman. For more information or to sign up, visit <https://info.hadar.org/dvar-torah-signup-0>.
- ◆ The National Museum of American Jewish History’s core exhibition is now available on a virtual tour. For more information, visit [www.nmajh.org/coreexhibition/](http://www.nmajh.org/coreexhibition/).
- ◆ The Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy will hold the virtual lecture “New York in the Progressive Era,” a new book talk with author Paul Kaplan on Wednesday, December 1, from 7-8:30 pm. For more information or to register, visit [www.nycjewishtours.org/event-log/progressive-era-book-talk](http://www.nycjewishtours.org/event-log/progressive-era-book-talk).
- ◆ The Jewish Women’s Archive will hold the virtual course “The Hidden History of Jews and Reproductive Rights in America” on Thursdays, December 2, 9, 16 and 23, at 8 pm. The sessions are designed to stand alone. No advanced reading or preparation is required. Registrants will also receive access to session recordings. For more information or to register, visit <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/6VAapgz/DecemberHistoryCourse>.
- ◆ The Asif: Culinary Institute of Israel

offers a variety of free recipes at <https://asif.org/recipes/>. The site also features rotating exhibitions that explore the “intersection of food and society, fashion, history and more” at <https://asif.org/exhibition/>.

- ◆ Hadassah will hold the virtual conference “The Power of Purpose” on Sunday, January 9, from 11 am-5:30 pm. It will focus on empowering women, teaching them how to engage their voice, body, soul and mind to effect change. For more information or to register, visit <https://www.hadassah.org/powerofpurpose>.
- ◆ Moment Magazine will hold “Becoming Dr. Ruth with Ruth K. Westheimer and Tovah Feldshuh” on Monday, December 6, at 11 am. Westheimer will be in conversation about how to live life to the fullest with Feldshuh, the six-time Tony- and Emmy-nominated actor who will play her in the Off-Broadway show “Becoming Dr Ruth” in December. Westheimer and Feldshuh will be joined by Moment Editor-in-Chief Nadine Epstein. For more information or to register, visit [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/7016370889759/WN\\_gnzFYerRRmpvnIz0QVPsg](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/7016370889759/WN_gnzFYerRRmpvnIz0QVPsg).
- ◆ The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research will hold the virtual program “Jewish Identity in Lithuania Today” on Tuesday, December 7, at 11 am. The program will explore the historical and social realities of Jewish-Lithuanian relations, and the challenges of building a multi-cultural, democratic society in Lithuania today. For more information or to register, visit <https://yivo.org/JewishLithuania2021>.
- ◆ The Leo Baeck Institute will hold the virtual panel discussion “Perspectives on Jewish Life in Germany Today” on Wednesday, December 22, from noon-1:30 pm. For more information or to register, visit [www.lbi.org/events/perspectives-on-jewish-life-in-germany-today/](http://www.lbi.org/events/perspectives-on-jewish-life-in-germany-today/).
- ◆ The Meyerson JCC of Cincinnati will hold several virtual book talks in 2022: “Billy Wilder on Assignment” by Noah

Isenberg on Wednesday, January 12, at 7 pm; “The Plot” by Jean Hanff Korelitz on Wednesday, March 9, at 7 pm; “At the End of the World, Turn Left” by Zhanna Slor, Jon Steadman thriller series by Nellie Neeman and “Nerve Attack” by S. Lee Manning on Thursday, April 7, at 7 pm; and “Big Time” by Jen Spyra on Tuesday, May 10, at 7 pm. For more information or to register for individual programs, visit <https://mayersonjcc.org/programs/jewish-book-series/>.

- ◆ The Jewish Theological Seminary will hold a three-part virtual program “The Torah of Conservative Judaism” on Tuesdays, December 7, 14 and 21, from 8-9 pm. To register, visit [www.rabbinicalassembly.org/civircm/event/register?id=1401&reset=1](http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/civircm/event/register?id=1401&reset=1).
- ◆ The Forward will hold two film-related webinars in December: “The Chosen at 40: A conversation with the writer-director of the classic Jewish film” on Wednesday, December 8, at 7 pm (<https://forward.com/culture/477949/december-8-the-chosen-at-40-a-conversation-with-the-writer-director-of-the/>); and “An Evening With Writer-Director Nicholas Meyer” on Tuesday,

December 14, at 7 pm (<https://forward.com/culture/478458/december-14-an-evening-with-writer-director-nicholas-meyer/>).

- ◆ The Yiddish Book Center has two virtual programs scheduled for January: “The Letter’s Project: A Daughter’s Journey,” with Eleanor Reissa on Thursday, January 20, at 7 pm; and “Shakespeare & Yiddish,” with Ilan Stavans on Thursday, January 27, at 7 pm. There are limited Zoom seats, but the programs will also be broadcast on the Center’s Facebook page. For more information or to register, visit [www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events-and-store/virtual-public-programs-calendar](http://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events-and-store/virtual-public-programs-calendar).
- ◆ The Brandeis Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education will host the virtual program “How the Study of Jewish History Informs the Arts,” a conversation with Professor Miriam Heller Stern, on Tuesday, December 9, from 1-1:30 pm. For more information, visit [www.myjewishlearning.com/the-hub/learning-about-learning-a-conversation-with-professor-miriam-heller-stern-how-the-study-see-resources-on-page-8](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/the-hub/learning-about-learning-a-conversation-with-professor-miriam-heller-stern-how-the-study-see-resources-on-page-8)

## Dreaming . . . . . Continued from page 6

revealing a previously unknown aspect of reality. There are a lot of different theories about why we dream and what the benefits of dreaming are. Some experts believe that dreams are a way of consolidating and processing information gathered during the day, helping us to develop our long-term memories. Others claim that dreaming serves as a form of psychotherapy to work through issues that are difficult for us to process consciously. Yet others believe that dreams either represent unconscious desires and wishes, or help us prepare for possible future threats.

Maybe Pharaoh had noticed something about the behavior of either the river or the cows, and subconsciously was prodded to pay attention to things that would normally go unnoticed. According to Or HaChayim, one of the most prominent rabbis of Morocco who lived 1696-1743, Joseph picked up on a subtle point regarding the way that Pharaoh spoke about the cows in relation to

the river. Rather than saying “seven cows were rising from the river,” the Torah records Pharaoh as saying “from the river seven cows arose,” implying that the existence of those cows was entirely due to the river, as if the river itself had produced them. It probably goes without saying that in real life, rivers do not produce cows, even when the river is viewed as the source of prosperity.

Sometimes, it is not the big things that have the ability to change the course of our life and the lives of those around us. It may just be the details or a point of view that changes our understanding of the world. Perhaps the difference between what Joseph and the Egyptian magicians understood came from Joseph’s ability to look at the world just a little bit differently than those around him. Maybe, if we keep sharing our dreams with one another, we, too, will help one another look at things just a little bit differently, making the world a little bit better, one dream at a time.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Bipartisan lawmakers call for SEC inquiry into Unilever over Ben & Jerry's boycott

Four lawmakers from the U.S. House of Representatives are urging the Securities and Exchange Commission to investigate whether Ben & Jerry's parent company Unilever should amend its regulatory filings to reflect the potential risks shareholders face over the ice-cream maker's decision to boycott Israeli settlements.

Menorah-lighting held in PA day after it was vandalized

Hundreds of people attended the lighting of the menorah in Lancaster, PA, on the night of Nov. 28 – the first night of the eight-day holiday of Hanukkah – a day after it was badly damaged. The menorah's metal arms were found bent on the morning of Nov. 27, making it unusable, reported Lancaster Online.

Squash championship cancelled after Malaysia excludes Israeli team

The World Squash Federation cancelled a Dec. 7-12 tournament in Malaysia on Nov. 29, after the country banned the Israeli team from entering. The cancellation comes after the U.K. Lawyers for Israel (or UKLFI) sent a letter to the WSF warning it would be in breach of U.K. anti-discrimination law as well as the WSF's own Articles and Rules if the tournament took place without the Israelis.

Resources.....Continued from page 7

of-jewish-history-informs-the-arts/. ♦ The Sandra Seltzer Silberman HBI Conversations Series will hold three virtual book talks: Rachel Sharona Lewis, "The Rabbi Who Prayed With Fire," on Sunday, January 19, from 7-8 pm; Laura Arnold Leibman, Ph.D., "Once We Were Slaves: The Extraordinary Journey of a Multi-Racial Jewish Family," on Tuesday, February 15, from 7-8 pm; and Judy Heumann, "Being Heumann: An Unrepentant Memoir of a Disability Rights Activist," on Wednesday, March 23, from 7-8 pm.

To register, visit https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf8CkRIm-AX4B-nw1L6-y-s1tt1S1VR29vmYKX8nE6C-06JSzeg/viewform. ♦ Yiddish New York will hold its annual cultural festival virtually this year. The event will take place from Sunday, December 24-Thursday, December 30. For more information, visit www.yiddishnewyork.com/2021-registration/. For additional resources, see previous issues of The Reporter on its website, www.thereportergroup.org.

and Malaysia does not allow Israelis to enter the country." The Israel Squash Federation had asked the WSF in May to confirm that the team would receive visas, UKLFI reported. With days to go before the tournament, the visas had still not been provided. WSF President Zena Wooldridge assured in a letter concerning the incident that measures had been put in place "to prevent this kind of situation reoccurring. ... The attribution of any future WSF Championship will require the formal written approval of the host nation's government that all participants who are eligible to compete will be allowed to do so," she wrote.

Erdan blasts U.N. "Palestine Day," reminds of Jews expelled from Muslim countries

Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Gilad Erdan, along with the World Jewish Congress, blasted the United Nations for its annual "Palestine Day" while ignoring the expulsion of Jews from Muslim countries. "On Nov. 29, exactly 74 years ago, the U.N. recognized the Jewish people's right to a state. The Jews and Israel accepted this partition plan, and the Palestinians and the Arab countries rejected it and tried to destroy us," said Erdan. "The Palestinians and the Arab countries not only attacked Israel, the Jewish state, they also persecuted, massacred and ultimately expelled the Jewish communities in their own countries. Shockingly, this atrocity is completely, completely ignored by the U.N."

Dreidels with Chinese lettering produced for Kaifeng Jews

In honor of Hanukkah, the Jerusalem-based nonprofit Shavei Israel designed and produced hundreds of dreidels with Mandarin lettering for the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng, China, as well as for 20 members of that community who have already made aliyah to Israel with the organization's assistance. Kaifeng, a city in the central Chinese province of Henan southwest of Beijing, is home to hundreds of descendants of a once-thriving Jewish community that resided there for more than a millennium. The dreidels are probably the first ones to have Chinese text on them. According to Michael Freund, founder and chairman of Shavei Israel, the first Jews to have settled in Kaifeng – one of the ancient imperial capitals of China – were Iraqi or Persian Jewish merchants who traveled along the Silk Road in the seventh or eighth century C.E. "At its peak, during the Ming Dynasty, Kaifeng had as many as 5,000 Jews," said Freund.

Scroll of Esther written by teen girl to be auctioned off in Jerusalem

By JNS staff

(JNS) – A Megillat Esther ("Scroll of Esther") written by a 14-year-old Jewish girl from Rome was revealed recently in Jerusalem. The discovery, especially significant as Scrolls of Esther inscribed during that time period by women are few and far between, sheds light on the role religious women occupied in Italian Jewish community life.

The young female scribe was Luna Amron, daughter of a prominent and wealthy Roman Jewish family. Her identity was revealed from the colophon printed on the last page of the scroll, following the list of blessings recited after reading it: "With the help of the awesome G-d/the writing of these blessings and Scroll are now complete/on the 10th day of the month of Adar I, 5527 [1767]/all handwritten, with the hand of G-d who bestowed wisdom to a maiden who is humble/and pleasant. Mistress Luna Tama daughter of the honored philanthropist, the honorable Yehudah Amron and she/is in the fourteenth year of her life. Give her from the fruits of her hand/and they shall praise her actions in the city gates./And we shall merit witnessing miracles and wonders speedily in our days and her days."

The Amron family's position in 18th-century Italian Jewish society is evident from the family seal stamped at the top of the scroll, which is formed of two heraldic shields with a lion and crescent. The fact that this Scroll of Esther was calligraphed by a woman is particularly fascinating when accounting for the fact that it renders the halachic status of the scroll arguable.

Tractate Gittin 45b establishes that a Torah, tefillin or mezuzah scroll written by a woman is invalid, whereas the halachic status of a Scroll of Esther written by a woman is lodged in debate. Some notable rabbinical opinions, including that of Rashi's grandson, Rabbeinu Tam, maintain that the laws of writing a Sefer Torah are



A Megillat Esther ("Scroll of Esther") written by a 14-year-old Jewish girl from Rome was revealed in Israel. (Photo courtesy of Kedem Auction House)

parallel to those of writing a megillah and that a megillah written by a woman is thus invalid. Others, as Maimonides, permit it on the grounds that a woman is obligated to listen to the reading of the Scroll of Esther.

Among various manuscripts that are known to be copied by famous women are only two other copies of Scrolls of Esther in Italy: One was written by Hannah daughter of David Joseph Pepirno (1840); and the other by Estalina daughter of Captain Menachem of Venice (1564). There are also known cases of Scrolls of Esther written outside the borders of Italy, including a Scroll of Esther written by the daughter of Rabbi David Oppenheim (1664-1736), chief rabbi of Prague, who permitted it to be read.

Meron Eren, co-owner of Kedem Auction House in Jerusalem, noted that "what's so beautiful about antique items like these is that they offer us a fascinating glimpse of how Jewish history is intertwined with Jewish law. Some 250 years may have passed since the day this scroll was written, yet the message it contains remains as relevant as ever."



At left: A Megillat Esther ("Scroll of Esther") written by a 14-year-old Jewish girl from Rome was revealed in Israel. (Photo courtesy of Kedem Auction House)

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