PITTSFIELD – This Jewish community will come together on Saturday, March 5, at 7:15 p.m. for a musical havdalah service in the sanctuary of Knesset Israel. Join our Berkshire rabbis and your fellow community members for an inspirational evening of music and togetherness as we move out of winter and approach the renewal of spring.

This special evening will include two original interactive stories commissioned specifically for the Berkshire Jewish community, and will be enjoyable for children and adults alike. In keeping with the havdalah theme of the evening, storyteller Allison Lerman-Gluck will present tales about finding light in the darkness.

Complementary havdalah candles and spices will be provided while supplies last.

SHARING THE LIGHT! continued on page 3

The Adlayada (“until one doesn’t know”) parade in Tel Aviv is a Purim tradition dating back to 1912. The poster above left dates from 1931, while the one at right is from 1929, proof that life in the Yishuv wasn’t all about draining swamps and making deserts bloom – Israel’s chalutzim (pioneers) were also up for good fun!

HAPPY PURIM 5782! This Year, Celebrate Like Chalutzim

Thank You, Donors!

This free community-wide celebration of sharing the light will be presented by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and its affiliates: Berkshire Hills Hadassah, Berkshire Minyan, Congregation Ahavath Sholom, Congregation Beth Israel, Hevéh of Southern Berkshire, Knesset Israel, and Temple Anshe Amunim. Additional funding is being provided by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Knesset Israel is at 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield. You can livestream the event at knessetisrael.org/livestream.

All ages are welcome. Proof of vaccination required - masking and social distancing will be observed. For more information, please call the Federation at (413) 442-4360, ext. 10.

Storytelling Program

As part of the evening’s interactive storytelling, the audience will share ideas that Allison Lerman-Gluck will weave into the story’s fabric so that the narrative is partially created as it is being told. The story will also contain moments of ritual, song, movement, and lots of laughter.

Allison Lerman-Gluck is a theatre and storytelling educator with over a decade of experience. She earned her master’s degree in education with a concentration in theatre and storytelling from Brandeis University. She is also a theatre teacher for the Berkshire Hills Minyan and its affiliates.

Allison Lerman-Gluck’s “Shabbat Storytelling Program” at Knesset Israel will be presented via Zoom. Please visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org for links to our programs.

When Ferdinand and Isabella became rulers in Spain, a powerful alliance of church and state erased evidence of Spain’s previous diverse culture. It is only since the death of Franco in 1975 that scholars have been allowed to investigate the vibrant, hybrid medieval Spanish world.

This talk will focus on the production of illuminated manuscripts, especially the “Golden Haggadah,” to illustrate the shared use of cultural images in the king’s scriptorium. Representatives of all three Abrahamic religions worked together to produce magnificent manuscripts. "People might want to investigate Geraldine Brooks' novel, 'The People of the Book,'" says Dr. Tomlinson. "Scholars have discovered that at least one of the artists producing manuscripts for the king was a woman.”

Dr. Barbara Tomlinson was a lecturer at Kean University in New Jersey where she established a course for first-year students in cultural history. After retiring from Kean, she spent the last 20 years giving adult education courses in cultural history throughout New Jersey.

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In My View

Ascending Our Communal Ladder

By Elisa Schindler-Frankel

President / Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

Two memorable stories in Parashat Vayetze (Genesis 28:10–32:3) involve the dreams of our patriarch Jacob. The first, more famous episode occurs when Jacob hears God’s call while resting at night, using a stone as a pillow:

And he dreamed and behold! A ladder set up on the ground and its top reached to heaven; and behold, angels of God were ascending and descending upon it. (Genesis 28:12)

Later, Jacob tells his wives Rachel and Leah about how his fortunes have risen thanks to divine intervention and recounts the moment he answered God’s call:

And the angel of God said unto me in the dream: “Jacob”, and I said: “Here am I.” (Genesis 31:11)

As with Jacob, so too with our Federation’s supporters. The dream was to raise $1,000,000. You heard the call. You answered it.

For me, Jacob’s ladder symbolizes our Berkshire Jewish community. Each of you is a vital part of our mission to care for those in need. Together, we nurture and sustain the Jewish community across the Berkshires and beyond.

The ladder is also a metaphor for our campaign. Each rung represents one way that the Federation makes a difference for our vibrant, year-round Jewish community by Caring, Celebrating, Connecting, and Creating. You answered the call to Care for our most vulnerable. Your gifts:

• Enabled our Jewish Family Services social worker to increase her hours to reach out, support, and follow the well-being of more than 100 individuals in need who faced a greater sense of isolation due to the pandemic.
• Supported our food services team in running the Kosher Hot Lunch Program, Kosher Meals on Wheels Delivery to the Homebound, and Grab-and-Go Kosher holiday meals.
• Allowed our volunteer coordinator and cadre of dedicated volunteers to connect through deliveries of holiday packages, drive-through visits at nursing homes and senior living facilities, and holiday cards crafted by our youngest PJ Library volunteers.

You answered the call to Connect and Celebrate by joining us for our engaging virtual educational programs and in-person holiday celebrations, as well as by subscribing to the Berkshire Jewish Voice.

This past year, a highlight for me was Community Day at High Lawn Farm in Lee, which kicked off our annual campaign on Super Tzedakah Day. We imagined an outdoor event where people of all ages could come together as one. And on a beautiful day in May against the exquisite backdrop of the farm, we basked in the sun, convened with nature, connected with one another, met the cows, enjoyed PJ Library storytime, hula hooped, and scooped up the most delicious ice cream in the Berkshires. Another high point was our Chaminakah celebration at NightWood at The Mount in Lenox. We strolled through the ethereal winter landscape under twinkling stars, immersed in sound, light, and color that evoked feelings of wonder, mystery, and magic. We ended our evening around the firepit, kindling the menorah lights and celebrating with live music, Chanukah songs, glow fun, chocolate gelt, and hot drinks. It was an evening filled with laughter, light, and love.

I look forward to connecting with you at Federation events on the calendar for this coming year – our Community-Wide Havdalah, Yom HaAtzmaut film screening and candle lighting, and Shabbat Across the Berkshires.

Join me, too, in welcoming Rabbi Daveen Litwin as our Director of Community Engagement and Programming and Molly Meador as Coordinator of Volunteers and PJ Library. We also wish a fond farewell to Susan Frisch Lehrer, who has served our community so well for the last 14 years.

You answered the call. Together we are building a dynamic and vibrant Jewish Federation – our community’s gateway into the Jewish future. We have been energized by your generosity, which gives us more capacity to pursue essential goals from our Strategic Plan. Thank you again to our donors, our leadership, and our volunteers – for your partnership and support as we head into 2022!

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Rabbi Reflection

Imagining Unconditional Love as Our Fallback Position Towards Others

By Rabbi Neal Borowitz

An old Jewish joke holds that the essential message of every Jewish holiday is, "Our enemy destroys us; our enemy destroys us; our enemy destroys us." The two most joyful festivals on the Jewish calendar, Chanukah and Purim, certainly prove this statement. Both stories are about the successful salvation of the Jewish People from an enemy who threatened our bodies and souls.

So, when we approach Purim and prepare to hear the reading of Megillat Esther, I find myself this year reflecting upon the question: Why was the Book of Esther, with its questionable historical origin, included in the Hebrew Bible? Conversely, why were the Books of the Maccabees 1 & 2, which contain the history of Channukah, deliberately excluded from the canonization of the Hebrew Bible— even though they appear in the Greek Septuagint. From there, they made it into the Latin Bible that became the accepted text of the Christian "Old Testament."

The rabbis of the late 1st and early 2nd century of the Common Era, who made the canonization decisions for the Hebrew Bible, are silent on their choice. However, as the great medieval scholar Maimonides teaches in his codification of Jewish law (Mishna Torah), the mitzvah of reading Megillat Esther on Purim is comparable to lighting the Chanukah lights.

Through these specific mitzvot, we mark these festivals, both of which commemorate Jews being saved from communal annihilation.

Based upon my understanding of Maimonides's correlation between the reading of Megillat Esther and lighting the Chanukah menorah, I find solid evidence backing the broadly-held opinion that the rabbis excluded the Books of the Maccabees precisely because of their historical inaccuracy. In contrast, they included Megillat Esther as a celebration of liberation precisely because they understood it was fiction.

The celebration of Purim described in Megillat Esther is comedic and fanciful.

The chance of it inspiring a national uprising is far less likely than the story of Channukah portrayed in the Books of the Maccabees. In discussions found in the Talmudic tractate Megilath, the Talmud describes two things:

- They intentionally read God's presence into the story of Esther, although the name of God is never mentioned.
- They intentionally read out much of the interincine Jew-against-Jew references in the Books of the Maccabees.

The Talmudic tradition refers to such interincine strife as "sinat chinam" (groundless hatred), which, for the rabbis, was the root cause of the destruction of the Second Temple and the subsequent dispersion of the Jewish People.

What is sinat chinam? The verb "sonet" means to hate, as in the command "lo tishehu et achicha b'monecha"—do not hate your brother in your heart (Leviticus 19:17).

Chinam comes from "chern" (grace). Sinat chinam is, therefore, hatred that is gratuitous. It refers to the interincine strife that unfortunately is not a historical footnote from the time of the Maccabees. Rather, it has been a destructive force in Jewish life in every age.

You could charitably ascribe its existence to the high-stakes decisions that Jewish communities have had to make or to a past that presents people toward the hatred directed at them and then projecting it against other groups of Jews. Either way, there is clearly too much of it about.

The Talmud already knew of the phenomenon and its destructive effect on Jewish life. Transtale Yoma 9b records that the First Temple was burned down because of idol worship, sexual immorality, and bloodshed. On the other hand, at the Second Temple's destruction, the Jews were told, "The Temple was lost, however, because sinat chinam, groundless hatred, was endemic to Jewish national life."

From this, the Talmud infers that groundless hatred is as grave as idol worship, sexual immorality, and bloodshed put together. I believe that because the Books of the Maccabees openly describe the hatred of Jew against Jew, the rabbis designated them as forbidden books and excluded them from the canon.

The rabbis then re-created Channukah as a God-centered holiday, rather than focusing on the Jewish civil war described in the Books of the Maccabees.

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, the first chief rabbi of Israel, famously wrote that the Book of Esther was chosen because of its content and its location between the Books of the Maccabees and the biblical books. Rather, it has been a sociological plague of internecine Jew-against-Jew. Unfortunately is not a phenomenon extremities...unfortunately is not a sociological plague of internecine Jew-against-Jew.

There have been many subsequent moments over the past 2000 years of Jewish history when sinat chinam played a determinative role in the fate of the Jewish People. They stretch from the Channukah story to the early 20th-century Zionist movement, where battles within the Jewish community delayed Jewish settlement in British Mandate Palestine from the end of World War I until the Great Depression. Each of these moments can help us teach us about the danger to communal and individual survival that the current divisiveness that American Jews experience today, particularly over our relationship with the State of Israel and in our relationships with fellow Jews who identify with different religious streams.

I believe that R. Kook's concept of ahavat chinam, of unconditional love, is not just the opposite of sinat chinam, but also the antidote to the pandemic-level plague of sinat chinam in both American society and the world Jewish community. Consider how different the world would be if unconditional love rather than groundless hatred were our fallback position toward our people with whom we have had little or no interaction or our sisters and brothers.

The climatic summation of Megillat Esther is verse 8:16, which tells us: "The Jews had light and joy; gladness and honor." This verse appears in the weekly haftarah prayers, and to it our rabbis added the phrase: "So may it be with us.

We continue to wrestle with both the biological plague of COVID-19 and the sociological plague of sinat chinam that led to a partisan divide overtaking public health actions necessary to protect us all. I pray that this Purim we not only stand guard against the Haman-like villains who are filled with hate and threaten our existence, but also against the sinat chinam within us.

—Rabbi Neal Borowitz, a participating member of Berkshire Minyan in Great Barrington, is Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Emet of River Edge, NJ. He is married to Ann Appelbaum. He is past chair of the North Jersey Board of Rabbis and the Jewish Community Relations Council of Northern New Jersey, and Past National Vice Chair of Jewish Council for Public Affairs.

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Chinam is the prototype for Jews standing together against antisemitism, the Channukah story is a prime example of the type of damage we can do to ourselves through sinat chinam. As R. Kook described, this Jewish civil war laid the groundwork for the continuing internecine Jew-against-Jew strife.

You could similarly ascribe its existence to the high-stakes decisions that Jewish communities have had to make or to a past that presents people toward the hatred directed at them and then projecting it against other groups of Jews. Either way, there is clearly too much of it about.

The Talmud already knew of the phenomenon and its destructive effect on Jewish life. Tractate Yoma 9b records that the First Temple was burned down because of idol worship, sexual immorality, and bloodshed. On the other hand, at the Second Temple's destruction, the Jews were told, "The Temple was lost, however, because sinat chinam, groundless hatred, was endemic to Jewish national life."

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Your Federation Presents

Molly Meador: Federation’s New Coordinator of Volunteers and PJ Library!

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Molly Meador as Coordinator of Volunteers and PJ Library. In her new role, Meador will further develop the network of volunteers engaged in the Federation’s important work and oversee its local PJ Library program, which provides free Jewish-themed books and music for children and hosts entertaining and educational family outings.

Meador moved with her family to the Berkshires from Brooklyn, NY, in 2020 and has held administrative, production, and creative roles with notable theater groups in New York City. She most recently worked as a producer for the Keen Company’s Teen Teens Festival and as associate artistic director at TheatreworldUS, Atlanta. Additionally, she has worked with The Atlantic Acting School, Signature Theatre Company, and Manhattan Theatre Club.

Recent history has taught us about the importance of connection and community,” says Meador. “The Federation fosters these values, providing as many ways to get involved as there are stars in the sky or books in our library. The Jewish family experience is similarly diverse, and it is my goal to make sure all members of our community – from children to our seniors – feel welcome and included, always.”

We are thrilled to have Molly join the Federation team,” says Executive Director Tara Kaufman. “Her creativity and commitment to sharing her Jewish values made her stand out in the hiring process. Being new to the Berkshires, with two young children of her own, Molly understands how important it is for families to forge connections and have opportunities to do and be Jewish on their terms.”

Meador will help us grow an already flourishing community of volunteers nurtured by her predecessor in this role, Susan Frisch Lehrer, who served the Jewish Berkshires so capably for the past 14 years.

Molly can be reached at mmeador@jewishberkshires.org or by calling [413] 442-4360, ext. 14. Thank you so much for your support of our community of volunteers and PJ Library, a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, is funded locally by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires with support from the Spitz-Buchman Family Fund and the Jewish Women’s Foundation of the Berkshires.

The program provides free monthly books and music with Jewish content to children ages 6 months through 8 years.

Letters to the Editor

Your Support Helped the UMass Hillel Community Come Back to Life

Dear Jewish Community:

I want to thank everyone who helped make my virtual retirement celebration in January a very special program for me. I’m truly verklempt!

In this time of continuing challenge, sustaining the fabric of caring community matters. UMass Hillel will be celebrating our 80th Anniversary next year, and we are grateful for your continued partnership in creating a vibrant Jewish future! Rabbi Aaron Fine

Executive Director, Hillel House at UMass Amherst

Verklempt!

Dear Jewish Community:

I want to thank everyone who helped make my virtual retirement celebration in January a very special program for me. I’m truly verklempt! With an outstanding staff, board, and volunteers, it will continue for many, many years in helping so many in our Berkshires community. May we all go from strength to strength.

Thank you - Todah Rabah.

With Love,
Susan Frisch Lehrer
Lenox

One Happy Camper

Dear Jewish Federation,

Thank you so much for contributing for me to go to Easter Camp and for me to continue my Jewish education. Going to camp has let me learn about Judaism and more and make life-long friends in the process.

Thank you,
Avi Mozan

Celebrate the Birth of Hadassah!

Join and contribute

BERKSHIRE HILLS HADASSAH

barakah@berkshirshadassah@gmail.com

HAPPY PURIM!

Supporting the Arts, Culture, Environment and Social Needs in the Berkshires since 1984

GREAT BARRINGTON, MA WEST STOCKBRIDGE, MA CHATHAM, NY
STONEHOUSEPROPERTIES.COM

Jewish Immigrants in the Antiques Trades

On Thursday, February 17 at 6:45 p.m., learn about how, in the early 20th century, Jewish cabinetmakers from Eastern Europe played a pivotal role in the emerging market for antiques and their reproductions. “Jewish Immigrants in the Antiques Trades” is a Jewish Federation of the Berkshires program that will be presented via Zoom. Please visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org for links to our programs.

In this talk, Brianna Greenfield and Erica Lome explore the lives and careers of two immigrants, Israel Sack and Nathan Margolis. They trained together in Lithuania and became noted authorities on Early American furniture. Their clients included some of the most famous collectors of their era, such as Henry Francis du Pont, J.P. Morgan, and Luke Vincent Lockwood.

As an antique dealer and cabinetmaker, respectively, Sack and Margolis exemplified a larger tradition whereby America’s oldest families depended on Jewish immigrant labor to preserve and reproduce their colonial heritage. This talk recovers their fascinating legacy and demonstrates their lasting influence on American decorative art.

Brianna Greenfield is the author of Out of the Attic: Inventing Antiques in Twentieth-Century New England (2009) and is currently director of the National Endowment for the Humanities Division of Preservation and Access. She previously served as executive director of the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center and the New Jersey Council for the Humanities. Greenfield is also a former director of history at Central Connecticut State University, where she administered the public history program and taught broadly across the curriculum.

Erica Lome, PhD is the Peggy N. Gerry Curatorial Associate at the Concord Museum, a grant-funded position sponsored by the Decorative Arts Trust. In March 2022, she will become an associate curator at Historic New England. Erica earned her doctorate at the University of Delaware, where she wrote a dissertation titled “Heritages of Tomorrow: Crafting and Consuming Colonial Revival Furniture, 1890-1945.”

Tomorrow: Crafting and Consuming Colonial Revival Furniture, 1890-1945.

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Executive Director, Hillel House at UMass Amherst

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Your Federation Presents

“BANJEW: A Century of the Banjo in Klezmer Music,” with Henry Sapoznik

On Thursday, March 10 at 6:30 p.m., join us for “BANJEW: A Century of the Banjo in Klezmer Music,” with Henry Sapoznik, an award-winning producer, musicologist, performer, and writer in the fields of traditional and popular Yiddish and American music and culture. This Jewish Federation of the Berkshires program will be presented via Zoom. Please visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org for links to our programs.

The mass emigration of Eastern European Jews to the United States in the late 19th century occurred while the banjo was a dominant force in American popular music, an essential part of ragtime and early jazz. With the invention of a brush new instrument, the tenor banjo, Jews had an unlettered ground floor for a melding of klezmer and American musical styles. Join Henry Sapoznik and explore commercial recordings made by bands like Alexander Olshanetsky’s Water Gap String Band and annotated a 2-CD anthology for the folkloric music of Yiddish, jazz, old-time, cantorial, ragtime, blues, Italian, swing, blackface minstrelsy, and bluegrass recordings.


Sapoznik was the founding director of the sound archives of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York from 1982 to 1995. While there, Sapoznik founded and directed the internationally acclaimed KlezKamp: The Yiddish Folks Arts Program for 30 years. A five-time Grammy-nominated producer/performer, Sapoznik has been on over 50 records. He was involved in reissuing over 30 anthologies of Yiddish, jazz, old-time, cantorial, ragtime, blues, Italian, swing, blackface minstrelsy, and bluegrass recordings.

Sapoznik’s recent projects are his CD, Banjo Eugenio’s clip, and the 3-CD reissue anthology You Will Be Missing Me: The Minstrel and Tin Pan Alley DNA of Country Music 1892-2017, co-produced with Dick Spottswood and David Gaines. It was submitted for 2021 Grammy consideration.

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For more information, contact Molly Meador, Coordinator of Volunteers and PJ Library, (413) 442-4360, ext. 14, or mmeador@jewishberkshires.org.

About Joe’s Project

Named in memory of the late Joe Madison, who started this program with his hiking buddies, Joe’s Project is a community-wide program engaging 100+ volunteers of all ages. Each year, we reach 300+ individuals in Berkshire County, Southern Vermont, and New York’s Columbia County. This program is more than just a gift bag delivery; it is a personal visit to someone who may not get many of them.

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Calling All High School Seniors
College Scholarship Opportunity

Henry Simkin and Frances Simkin Schiller and Dr. Stanley and Fay Simkin Scholarship Fund

Deadline: April 22

Henry Simkin and Frances Simkin Schiller and Dr. Stanley and Fay Simkin Scholarship Fund

Ongoing Services and Programs for Families of All Ages at Congregation Beth Israel

Purim 5782 at Knesset Israel – Prepare to Make Noise and Have Fun
Megillah reading on Purim and Saturday concert with the Knesset Israel Band

PITTSFIELD – Led by its music committee, Knesset Israel parties hard every Purim. This year, celebrations take place the week of March 16-19.

Holiday Fun on Purim

The congregation gathers on Wednesday evening, March 16, for a light dinner (5:30 p.m., no charge, reservations at knessetisrael.org) and chanting of the Megillah, the Book of Esther. Adults and children are encouraged to come in costume, prepared to make noise and have fun. The evening concludes with ice cream sundaes.

Knesset Israel Band in Concert

On Saturday night, March 19, the celebration continues at 8:15 p.m., with Knesset Israel’s annual Purim concert. Each year the Knesset Israel band – six or seven musicians, four or more vocalists – chooses a musical costume, writes parody lyrics to beloved songs, and puts on a memorable show.

In person at 16 Colt Road, this event is open to the community. Admission is $10 per person, payable at the door. See knessetisrael.org or call (413) 445-4872 for more information.

Vaccination is required for all who are eligible; masks may be necessary.

Hamentaschen

Knesset Israel will bake and sell their popular apricot and raspberry hamentaschen again this year for Purim. Over the years, this project has brought together KI and community volunteers to help raise needed funds for the synagogue. Hamentaschen are $14 per dozen and can be ordered from Knesset Israel. Call (413) 445-4872 for more information on ordering and pickup. Some of the hamentaschen baked will also provide a treat for seniors who might need a bit of holiday cheer. “Joe’s Project,” administered by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, provides Purim gift bags to hundreds of local seniors (please see page 5 for more information).

LOCAL NEWS

Purim 5782 at Knesset Israel – Prepare to Make Noise and Have Fun
Megillah reading on Purim and Saturday concert with the Knesset Israel Band

NORTH ADAMS - Congregation Beth Israel, Rabbi Rachel Barenblat, and President Natalie Matus invite everyone to regular Shahbat services, which are both in person and multi-access on most Shabbats. Friday Kahalalat Shahbat services will take place on February 18 and March 18 at CBI at 7 p.m. Shahbat morning services take place on the other weekends of each month at 9:30 a.m. Check with the CBI office (office@cbiberkshires.com) before 2 p.m. each Friday to see if there will be an in-person option or to receive the CBI Zoom link. To worship in person, you must wear a mask.

Families with Young Children

CBI’s growing community of young families enjoys engaging programs designed to introduce children to Jewish stories, holidays, traditions, and songs.

Saturday, February 12 at 4 p.m.: “Jewish Storytime and Havdalah” for children ages 1-8 and their families.

Sunday, March 13 at 1 p.m.: “Cooking with Caleb - Let’s Make Hamentaschen for Purim,” for children ages 1-8 and their families.

Wednesday, March 16 at 6 p.m.: “Celebrate Purim - Join Our Purim Play,” in-person at CBI or via Zoom. Wear costumes and bring noise-makers! Contact the CBI office (office@cbiberkshires.com) before 2 p.m. that day to receive the Zoom link or confirm that it will be in-person.

CALLING ALL HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS
College Scholarship Opportunity

Awarded annually to a graduating senior who has demonstrated leadership and participation in the Berkshire Jewish community. This scholarship is made possible through the generous support of the

Download an application on Jewishberkshires.org or pick one up at the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires 196 South Street, Pittsfield, MA

PURIM 5782 AT KNESSET ISRAEL – PREPARE TO MAKE NOISE AND HAVE FUN

Megillah reading on Purim and Saturday concert with the Knesset Israel Band

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DRIVE

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*APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Hurry, offer available 2/1/2022 - 2/28/2022. Offer subject to credit approval. Rate is determined by model year and credit score. Up to 119% of value. Purchase money only. Assumes 60 monthly payments of $17.96 per $1,000 financed. Other rates and terms are available. May not be combined with any other coupon or offer. Insured by NCUA.
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by Phone: 413.448.2274
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Interested in Volunteering Locally?
Literacy Network of South Berkshire needs volunteer tutors!
Our tutors love what they do!
● Work 1:1 with a local immigrant or US-born adults in learning or improving English language and literacy skills.
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• You have the peace of mind knowing there’s a secure plan in place.
We believe in supporting seniors throughout all stages of life. Contact us today to learn more.
At Geer Village, our rates are all inclusive and affordable. Call 860.824.2625 to schedule your in-person or virtual tour.
77 - 99 South Canaan Road | North Canaan CT 06018 | www.geercares.org | 860.824.2600
**Winter Events at Knesset Israel**

**PITTSFIELD** – This winter, Knesset Israel offers opportunities to gather and engage. Visit knessetisrael.org or call (413) 445-4872 for the most up-to-date information about services and events.

**Shirei Shabbat**

Musicians from Knesset Israel gather once a month to inspire the community with soaring harmonies and creative settings of the melodies of the Kabbalat Shabbat service. Open to all, these Shirei Shabbat services bring a joyful spirit to Friday evenings.

The next Shirei Shabbat event will take place at 16 Colt Road on Friday, March 4. Services at 5:30 p.m. will be followed by dinner (by reservation only) at 6:30 p.m. Register for dinner at knessetisrael.org by Monday, February 28 - $20 per adult, free for everyone 18 years old and younger. Vaccination is required for all who are eligible. Masks may be necessary. Space at dinner may be limited. The service is also available on livestream – knessetisrael.org/livestream - and on the Knesset Israel channel on the Boxcast app (Roku/Kindle FireTV/AppleTV). Shirei Shabbat is sponsored by a generous Rekindle Shabbat grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

**Knesset Israel Weekly Services Continue In-Person and Livestream**

Knesset Israel, Pittsfield’s Conservative synagogue, continues to offer traditional egalitarian services in-person every weekend in its sanctuary on 16 Colt Road. Friday night services begin at 5:45 p.m. on most weekends; Saturday mornings at 9:30 a.m., and Sunday mornings at 8:45 a.m. Services are vibrant, participatory, and led by members of the congregation. Rabbi David Weiner teaches briefly on Friday evenings and more extensively on Saturday mornings. Some Friday night services include acoustic accompaniment or a full band. For in-person attendance, vaccination is required (ages 5 and up), and masking and other precautions are implemented as needed.

All Shabbat services are broadcast by livestream to knessetisrael.org/livestream and on the Knesset Israel channel on the Boxcast app (Roku/Kindle FireTV/AppleTV).

**Purim and More at Temple Anshe Amunim!**

**Family fun and parenting book club**

**PITTSFIELD** – Temple Anshe Amunim is a Reform Jewish Congregation that promotes engaging and widespread participation in services, education, cultural, and social action programs. Here’s what’s going on this winter.

**Purim Events**

- **Young Families Shabbat** – Please join Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch on Friday, March 18 at 5 p.m. for story time, songs, and the celebration of Purim. This is geared for young families in Pre-K through Grade 5. This program is supported by the Grinspoon Foundation. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/Mar18YoungFamiliesShabbat
- **Shabbat Service Celebrating Purim** – Please join Rabbi Hirsch on Friday, March 18 at 5:30 p.m. for a festive celebration of Purim. Please visit the calendar page on the website for more information.
- **Young Families Shabbat**
  Please join Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch on Friday, February 11 at 5 p.m. for storytime and songs. This program is geared for young families in Pre-K through Grade 5. This program is supported by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/Mar18YoungFamiliesShabbat
- **Jewish Parenting Book Club**
  Please join Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch on Tuesday, February 15 at 8 p.m. for the discussion of the book, **Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close** by Jonathan Safran Foer. This program is supported by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/TAAFeb15BookClub

The Temple, located at 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield, is an accessible building. For more information, contact the Temple Anshe Amunim office at (413) 442-3910, email templeoffice@ansheamunim.org, or visit www.ansheamunim.org.
Jewish Federation of the Berkshires – Distribution of Resources in 2021
$1,038,771
Includes distribution of Annual Campaign, earned income, and endowments as of December 31, 2021

- **Sustaining Jewish Community**
  - **Berkeley Jewish Voice**
  - General Programming
  - Jewish Community Day
  - Shabbat Across the Berkshires
  - Chanukah at The Mount Community Havdalah Concert
  - Middle East Update
  - Connecting with Community program
  - Kehillah & Knowledge program
  - Community Calendar
  - Community Relations & Advocacy
  - Holocaust Remembrance Event
  - E-news Program Grants for Local Congregations
  - Jewish Federations of North America

- **Fundraising**
  - Annual Campaign Development
  - Communications & Marketing
  - Legacy Circle Program
  - Major Donors Program

- **Israel & Overseas**
  - Jewish Agency for Israel
  - Joint Distribution Committee
  - World ORT
  - Partnership2Gether- Afula Gilboa
  - Ethiopian National Project
  - Haifa Women’s Crisis Shelter
  - Israel Association for Child Protection (ELF)
  - Meir Panim
  - Neve Michael Children’s Village
  - Sandwich Club-Afula Crowns
  - Yad L’Kashish

- **Caring for Those in Need**
  - Food & Essential Needs Support
  - Hebrew Free Loans
  - Emergency Assistance
  - Friendly Visitors Program
  - Caring Fals Program
  - Community Social Worker
  - Meals on Wheels
  - Older Adult Kosher Lunches
  - Older Adult Holiday Care Packages
  - Tikun Olam Volunteer Opportunities
  - Ahavath Sholem Cemetery Upkeep
  - Community Needs Drive

- **Ensuring a Jewish Future**
  - PJ Library Books & Resources
  - Family Programming
  - Family Volunteer Opportunities
  - Jewish Education Grants
  - ADL World of Difference Program
  - Israel Travel/Study Scholarships
  - Jewish Camp Scholarships
  - Public School Advocacy
  - Taglit Birthright
  - UMASS Hillel

## Across the Berkshires

**Kosher Hot Meals & Care Visits**
Provided more than 4,000 nutritious meals and 725 holiday packages with care visits for over 325 older adults.

**Social Services**
Provided case management and counseling, through a Jewish lens, by a licensed social worker to more than 101 members of our community.

**Emergency & Specific Assistance**
Provided 69 holiday food cards, emergency grants and interest-free loans to provide a safety net for community members.

**Jewish Education**
Provided a high-quality Jewish education for 120 children and young adults through Jewish education grants to five area religious schools.

**Family Programming**
Engaged over 200 parents, grandparents, and children in Jewish programming and Tikun olam, strengthening their connections to the Jewish community and helping them build supportive relationships with Jewish peers.

**PJ Library**
Distributed more than 1,740 books and CDs to 145 children, nurturing their Jewish identity and helping their families embrace Jewish values and traditions.

## In Israel & Overseas

**Camp, Israel, and Campus Life**
Funded transformative Jewish camp and Israel experiences for 27 local youth and enhanced Jewish life for over 2,500 college students at UMASS Amherst.

**Community Programming**
Engaged over 5,000 participants in celebrating, Jewish life and connecting as a community through more than 86 cultural, educational, and holiday programs.

**Berkeley Jewish Voice**
Primary resource for over 5,000 readers, engaging our community in Jewish life and broadening our spiritual, political, and cultural understanding.

**Community Relations & Advocacy**
Provided a proactive voice against anti-Semitism and other biases in local schools, as well as addressing Israel and the Middle East, justice legislation, and media relations.

**Tikkun Olam Volunteer (TOV) Network**
Engaged over 200 volunteers in more than 2,000 hours of service to the Berkshire Jewish Community.

**This is just a sampling of how, together, we made a difference in the lives of others this year.**
Thank You for Making a Difference!

"It is not what one says, but rather what one does that makes all the difference in the world" – Pirkei Avot 1:17

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires acknowledges the tremendous effort of over 1,168 donors and many community volunteers who helped make the 2021 campaign a resounding success. On behalf of those whose lives will be saved, touched, and changed, we thank you for your generosity and caring.
Thank you!
Thank you!
WHERE HARRY MET SALLY, continued from page 1


MAZEL TOV!

Carrie Wright, who joined Jan Perry Realty & Associates as a real estate agent.

Knesset Israel
16 Colt Road, Pittsfield
ONGOING MIYHANS
Sunday 8:45 a.m. and 7 p.m.
Tuesday 7 p.m.
Thursday 7 p.m.
Friday 7 a.m. and 5:45 p.m.
Saturday 9:30 a.m.
and evenings approximately 30 minutes before sunset

SHABBAT CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES
Candle Times
Friday, February 11 ........ 5:01 p.m.
Friday, February 18 ........ 5:10 p.m.
Friday, February 25 ........ 5:19 p.m.
Friday, March 4 ........ 5:28 p.m.
Friday, March 11 ........ 5:35 p.m.
Friday, March 18 ........ 5:45 p.m.

Connecting with Community
Nourish Your Body, Mind, and Soul!

Meals-on-Wheels & Meals to Go – Advance Reservation Required
Kosher lunch will be prepared on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Meals to go will be ready by noon for pickup at the Knesset Israel kitchen door, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield. All meals-on-wheels will be delivered by Federation volunteers in the early afternoon. Please call (413) 442-2200 no later than 9 a.m. to reserve your meal for pickup and to arrange delivery if standing instructions are not in place. All are welcome to reserve meals for pick-up, although delivery may be limited in certain circumstances.

The menus listed below are planned, but may be modified depending on availability of ingredients. When making a reservation, please inform us if a person in your party has a food allergy. Adults 60 and over: $2 suggested donation. Adults under 60: $7 per person.

Volunteers are Vital! Volunteer drivers who can deliver meals-on-wheels are always appreciated. Please call Molly Meador at (413) 442-4360, ext. 14. The Federation’s kosher hot lunch program is offered in collaboration with Elders Services of Berkshire County.

What’s for Lunch?

Gluten-Free Main Entrée ** and Dairy-Free Main Entrée #

February
Monday, 7 ......... Meatloaf **#, chicken soup, mashed potatoes, beans, rye bread, and peas
Tuesday, 8 ......... Stir-fried chicken **#, egg drop soup, brown rice, baby corn salad, Oriental blend vegetables, challah, and tropical fruit salad.
Thursday, 10 ......... Fresh fish **, mushroom soup, iceberg wedge with blue cheese & glazed pecans, beets, rice pilaf, whole wheat bread, and raspberry shortcake.
Monday, 14 ......... Hearty beef barley stew, salad, white bread, and apple dumplings.
Tuesday, 15 ......... Poultry pizzetta **#, zucchini rice soup, rice pilaf, mixed vegetables, rolls, and fruit of chef’s choice.
Thursday, 17 ......... Eggplant parmesan, minestrone soup, side of pasta & sauce, green beans, salad, garlic toast, and pears.
Monday, 21 ........ Closed for Presidents’ Day

Tuesday, 22 ......... Black bean burgers with cheese, Mexican corn, yellow rice, hamburger roll, and churros.
Thursday, 24 ......... Salmon salad & cottage cheese platters **#, zucchini soup, beet salad, Farmer’s loaf, and apricots.
Monday, 28 ......... Hearty split pea & barley stew, baby carrots, broccoli, whole wheat bread, and pineapple.

March
Tuesday, 1 ......... Chicken with sundried tomatoes & artichokes **#, rice pilaf, mixed vegetables, salad, challah, and fruit cocktail.
Thursday, 3 ......... Fish sticks, vegetable soup, cheese pierogi & sautéed onions, salad, multigrain bread, and grapes.
Monday, 7 ......... Meatloaf **#, noodle soup, mashed potatoes, peas & carrots, pumpernickel bread, and applesauce.
Tuesday, 8 ......... Barbecued chicken **#,collard greens, corn cobettes, cornbread, and tropical fruit salad.

Thursday, 10 ......... Macaroni & cheese with smoked cheese & “bacon,” salad, beets, multigrain bread, and mandarin oranges.
Monday, 14 ......... Sweet & sour meatballs **#, Brussels sprouts, noodles, salad, challah, and peas.
Tuesday, 15 ......... Roasted chicken **#, Italian wedding soup, spinach, oven-roasted potatoes, rye bread, and hamantaschen.
Thursday, 17 ......... Corned beef & cabbage **#, brown rice, bread to be announced, and applesauce.
Monday, 21 ......... Spaghetti & meat sauce#, green beans, salad, garlic toast, and peas.
Tuesday, 22 ......... Stir-fried chicken **#, egg drop soup, rice, Oriental vegetables, whole wheat bread, and pineapple.
Thursday, 24 ......... Chef’s selection of macaroni & cheese, steamed tomatoes, salad, muffins, and fruit cocktail.
Monday, 28 ......... Veal & peppers **#, noodles, salad, Italian bread, and apricots.

Homebound or recovering from an illness or injury?
Let us help you arrange for a kosher lunch to be delivered through our Kosher Meals on Wheels Program. Call (413) 442-4360, ext 17


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Robert Bashevkin, 91, warm humor, generosity of spirit, and gentle dignity

SABRINA BASHEVKIN, 91, Robert “Bob” Bashevkin, 91, beloved husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, great grandfather, passed away peacefully on Saturday, December 11, 2021.

The youngest of 9 children born to David and Anna (Abrams) Bashevkin, Bob came into this world on June 6, 1930, was raised in North Adams. He remained a proud member of the northern Berkshires community until 2018, when he followed in his late father Irving’s footsteps to Sarasota, FL, to spend his last years at Kobernick House. Grounded by high values and a strong sense of duty to his community, Bob led a life of civic leadership with humility and purpose. He began his career in the family business, Butler Coal and Coke Corporation and Butler Wholesale Product Inc. – he led the company until his retirement in 1994.

Bob is survived by his wife Barbara, Bob managed the RIB Realty Corporation with his brother Irving. A lifelong champion of community organizations and causes in the Berkshires, Bob proudly served as board president at Congregation Beth Israel in North Adams, and as president of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. Bob and his wife Barbara, Bob was a founding donor to the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA). In addition to being a frequent supporter of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA). When not at work or spending time family, Bob could be found sitting courtside at most (if not all) Williams Ephs Basketball home games in the bleachers on the Steeplecats; visiting Chenal’s farm stand for the world’s best fresh corn and tomatoes; tending to his back yard vegetable garden at his home on Bulkley Street, where he and Barbara shared many of their happiest years together. His family will remember his warm heart, his great sense of humor, and live by his generosity of spirit and gentle dignity.

Bob is survived by Barbara (Cremer) Bashevkin, his wife of 66 years, and their three children: Sharon Bashevkin Peck and husband Todd, of Sarasota, FL; Rhoda Bashevkin of Oslo, Norway, and Joel Bashevkin of Berkeley, CA. He is remembered by his grandchildren, by Maayan, Avital, Issaak, Noah, Tobias, Omer, and Hannah; father-in-law to Simin Bashevkin, Barbara’s mother, and Sarah Herman, great-grandfather to Ilai, Eitan, and Barak.

Making her home in the Berkshires since 1965, she was later appointed executive director of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires in 1981. After retiring in 1989, Rhoda served as the first woman president of Temple Anche Amunin from 1989 to 1991, and as past president of the Jewish Federation and the local chapter of Hadassah. Throughout her life and her late husband, Phil, enjoyed traveling extensively, including to Israel and London as well as many of the National Parks in the US. Collecting paperweights from their travels was a favorite hobby for both mom and dad. Rhoda also enjoyed attending many of the musical and cultural events at Tanglewood and other local venues.

Rhoda was predeceased by her husband, Phil, in 2018. Rhoda is survived by her son Dan, her wife, Wendy, and their children, Stephanie and Matthew, sister-in-law Carol, two nephews, three grand-nieces and a grand-nephew.

Memorial services were private. Memorial donations may be made to the Cantorolian Solstdout Fund at Temple Beth EL. Memorial donations can be made to the Devanny-condron Funeral Home, 40 Maplewood Ave., Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Cindy Jane Andrews, 64, beloved member of the Jewish community throughout her life MONTEREY - Surrounded by family and a lot of love, Cindy Jane (Rubenstein) Andrews, 64, passed away on Monday, December 20, 2021, after a courageous battle with acute myeloid leukemia.

Born in Paterson, N.J., Cindy was the youngest of four children born to J. Mortimer and Jacqueline (Schlossman) Rubenstein. Cindy graduated from Adelphi University in 1973, was married, had three children, and was the mother of Ronald (Amelia), Stacy Andrews (Matt Rosenthal), and David and Annie (Feder) Bashevkin, and five grandchildren.

In addition to being a devoted mother and wife, Cindy was also an active member of the Jewish community throughout her life. Cindy was a real estate agent in the Berkshires for 30 years, having first met in high school. Throughout her life, Cindy supported many educational, charitable, and religious organizations, including Camp Ramah in New England, the Lillian Greenbraum Foundation, and the Berkshire Interscholastic Ski Meet.

There are many ways to encapsulate Cindy’s character, personality, and positive impact on those who knew her. Cindy was a dynamic, emotional human being, who loved her family, friends, and colleagues all know her boisterous laugh, kindness, and ability to adapt. Cindy never met a stranger and maintained friendships with friends she made throughout her life, some for at least 20 years. Cindy always welcomed me into her warm, wonderful world.

Cindy is survived by her husband Mark; their three children, David Olederman, Jennifer Sorensen, and Michael Andrews; sister, Ruthanne Rubenstein Warnick (Larry); two brothers, Jeffrey Rubenstein, (Fred) and Brian Rubenstein (Margaret); ten nieces and nephews; and one great-niece.

A memorial service was held at Hevrei of Southern Berkshire on Thursday, December 23, followed by a reception at Ahavath Sholom Cemetery, Great Barrington, MA.

Sheila Doris Solomon, 80, devoted wife, loving mother, and proud grandmother

HINSDALE - Sheila Doris Solomon, née Dairman, a resident of Suffern, NY, for over fifty years, died on Monday, December 27, 2021.

A graduate of Rockland Community College and Ramapo College, Sheila was a devoted wife, loving mother, and proud grandmother. Sheila was a voracious reader, who enjoyed nothing more than spending 25 years to overcome many health challenges. Despite these difficulties, she was always warm, welcoming presence, full of humor, and thoughtful care, in the lives of her friends and family.

Sheila is survived by her husband Stanley; son Andy; daughter-in-law Rowen; and grandchildren Windows and Malcolm.

Mark Selkowitz, involved in community, kind-hearted, respected by others

FITTSFIELD - Mark Selkowitz passed away on Friday, December 24, 2021. Born in 1936 in Pittsfield, he was the second of six children born to Mort Selkowitz and Milton Selkowitz. Siblings were Judith Selkowitz, New York, NY, Jan Selkowitz, Norwich, CT, Johanna Sisselman, Lenox; Deborah Aronson Neumann, Westfield, NJ, and Carol Greenberg, Pittsfield.

Mark attended local Pittsfield public schools until entering Travelers College for Boys, followed by four years at St. Lawrence University in Canton, NY. At St. Lawrence, Mark received three degrees from ROTC, entering the army after college as an officer.

Mark was a dedicated ski school grade school on, skiing was Mark’s extra-curricular passion. He was on ski teams at each school he attended, often winning awards in one or more disciplines. He won the coveted Skimeister trophy as the best-combined downhill, slalom, jumping, and cross country skier in his senior year at Lenox School. Once he returned to Pittsfield, Mark started his career at the Colt Agency in Pittsfield, he ran the Berkshire Interscholastic Ski Meet, Ski Me! Hide tennis, golf, and boating was one of Mark’s warm winter sports.

Mark was also an avid tennis player and a successful business in the financial services industry.

Mark was a kind-hearted, easy to meet person. His business acumen aside, he knew how to love, respect, and appreciate the goodness and intelligence of others.

Due to the pandemic, no service will be held. Due to the pandemic, no gathering to celebrate Mark’s life will be held when conditions permit in the warmer months.

Those wishing to donate in Mark’s memory can contribute to Berkshire Medical Center, or if it provides, or the Mark Selkowitz Youth Ski Fund through the Berkshire Berkshire Interscholastic Ski Fund, or a charity of your choice.

Sumner N. Milender, 94, eternal optimist, entrepreneur, committed philanthropist

NEASHAMA - Sumner N. Milender, 94, formerly of Tucson, AZ and Lenox died peacefully at home on Tuesday, October 26, 2021.

Born January 17, 1927, in Brooklyn, MA to Charles and Florence Abrams, and dear wife, Edith Morse Milender. Beloved Husband of Edith Milender, he also leaves behind his devoted family, including 4 children, (Susan, Fred, Karen, and Marcia), 10 grandchildren, and 7 great-grandchildren.

For those who are kind enough, he never passed up an opportunity to meet someone or start a conversation. “He was a man with a great smile and song in his goal in life – to makes others smile and laugh. He was an eternal optimist and entrepreneur, lifelong music lover, voracious learner and reader, avoid dancer, skier, and tennis player earlier in life. Summer attended Runkle School, Brookline High, and graduated from Harvard University, with a BA in History in 1948. Afterward, he joined the family leather business for 40 years. After selling the business, he became a serial entrepreneur and consultant.

Mark was a devoted husband, who focused on education and music. With former wife Edith Morse Milender, he founded the Music in the Berkshires program currently used and embraced by the Berkshire Jewish Voice • jewisberkshires.org February 7 to March 22, 2022
Lemberg Children’s Center at Brandeis University. He also endowed The Milerend Seminar in Jewish Communal Leadership for Brandeis medical students, funded a dance program at University of Arizona, and was a generous supporter of Tanglewood music programs.

Services were private. Donations in his memory may be made to The Lemberg Children’s Center, 457 Old South St., M0444, Waltham, MA 02453 or Good Shepherd Community Hospice, 90 Wells Avenue, Newton, MA 02459 or to a charity of your choice.

Dr. Abraham Szmukler, 83, kind, warm, and generosity were ever-present

PALM BEACH GARDENS, FL - Dr. Abraham Szmukler, 83, died peacefully on Monday, January 3 after a battle with lung cancer.

He was born on December 26, 1938 in Guines, in the province of Havana, Cuba. His parents, Samuel Szmukler and Ika Gurinka, were Polish immigrants. After graduating early from high school in 1955, Abe wanted to be an architect. Instead, his mother registered him for medical school, saying the architecture school was filled. He attended medical school in Havana. After former dictator Fulgencio Batista shut the school down, Abe learned medicine from family friend, Dr. Richard Tejera, an anesthesiologist.

In 1961, Abe escaped to Spain to continue his education. He was accepted into Madrid University’s medical school, where he received a scholarship and completed his education in late 1962. He wanted to go to Switzerland, where he worked as a doctor at a ski resort in Verbier. After working briefly in London, Abe attended a one-year course in anesthesiology at Riggs Hospital in Copenhagen.

In late 1963, Abe flew to New York, where he was reunited with his three sisters, Adela Leon, Grace Goldstein, and Ricky Weiner, whom he hadn’t seen in years. He started an internship at Brooklyn Hospital in 1964, then finished his training at Abraham Jacobi Hospital in the Albert Einstein Medical School. During his residency, his sisters introduced him to a nursing student, Esther Haselkorn. They dated and were married on September 4, 1966. Abe entered the Air Force in 1967 and served two years at Homestead Air Force Base. After leaving the Air Force, Abe worked at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami for a year. Following the birth of their son David, the family moved to North Palm Beach in 1970. Abe worked at Good Samaritan Hospital, where he was reunited with his three children, back home.

In 1972, Abe opened a Surgicenter on Burns Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33401 or Trustbridge Hospice Foundation, 5300 East Avenue, West Palm Beach, FL 33407 or www.trustbridgefoundation.org.

Alan L. Model, 88, passion for photography, music, theater, and literature

RYE, NY - Alan L. Model, 88, passed away on Wednesday, December 22, 2021. An attorney and longtime Westchester County resident, Alan will be warmly remembered for his photography, and for his passion for music, theater, and literature. Alan was always eager to learn something new, and took classes on photography and literature until shortly before he died. His family was everything to him. He relished the large family into which he married. He revelled in attending events and performances by his wife, his children and grandchildren. He was a kind and gentle soul with a wry sense of humor.

Alan spent most of his career as an attorney focusing on estates and taxes in the Law Offices of Edward Handelman, which later became the Law Offices of Walter J. Handelman. The practice was located in the Wall Street area until the office moved to White Plains in 1984.

After Alan’s retirement, he shifted his focus to photography and volunteering for Lenox Library Used Book Sale and Tanglewood. His passionate interest in photography began as a teenager, and he now had the time to devote to honing his craft and achieving perfect black & white prints in his home darkroom. Alan’s greatest joy as a photographer was the act of discovery. He ventured out with his camera exploring the environment with no preconceived notion about what subjects would interest him. His images suggest things worth considering that might have been overlooked, and he caught people “in the moment,” sometimes involved in disparate activities.

Alan had keen eye for the ironic. He loved to travel and especially enjoyed city photography and capturing people in their natural habitats. His photographs have been published in the New York Times, Gannett Westchester newspapers, Spotlight magazine, Westchester Illustrated, Westchester Art News, and the Soundview Neus. His photographs have been hung in many galleries, including the Rye Arts Center, Larchmont Library, Larchmont Village Hall, Simon’s Rock College, the Blue Door Gallery, and Sohn Fine Art in Lenox.

Alan’s photographs were also used for promotional purposes by Jacob’s Pillow and Tanglewood Music Center. He was a founding member of the Ground Glass Association and served on the Acquisition Committee at the International Center of Photography.

The obituary is by Caitlin Falkowski.}

If you are struggling with one of these or other issues, Jill can help you find community resources to assist you. Jill has a Master’s degree in social work (MSW) and is licensed as an independent clinical social worker (LICSW).

If you or someone you know needs a little help, give us a call:

Jill Goldstein, MSW, LICSW
(413) 442-4360, Ext 17
j.goldstein@jfswm.org

All services are free and completely confidential.
BERKSHIRE JEWISH VOICES

What Do Noah, Moses, and Jesus Have To Do With Quarantines? Something

That something is one of the many fascinating factoids in Stewart Edelstein’s etymological explorations, The COVID-19 Zeitgeist: Fifty Essays

When the pandemic hit in March 2020, Stewart Edelstein displayed a prescient sense that significant changes to our lives and language were about to come down the pike. He writes that just a few days after Governor Charlie Baker’s first COVID-19 proclamation, he proposed a series of “periodic short essays based on words apt for this pandemic” to Wendy Pearson, director of the Stockbridge Library, Museum & Archives. She green-lit his undertaking.

Two weeks to flatten the curve turned into 50 short pieces posted first on the library’s website and then collected as The COVID-19 Zeitgeist: Fifty Essays, published last summer. You don’t have to be a word nerd to appreciate the essays – each one-word chapter title is a portal Edelstein enters not only to examine word origins but also to capture the vagaries of pandemic life.

Edelstein is a retired commercial trial lawyer and Yale Law School instructor whose earlier book with an etymological focus, Dubious Doublets: A Delightful Compendium of Unlikely Word Pairs of Common Origin, came out in 2003. Although Edelstein’s essays include complex ideas from ancient and modern works of literature, philosophy, and science, the author wears his erudition lightly, using it to entertain as much as enlighten. The COVID-19 Zeitgeist is also infused with something of the Berkshires zeitgeist, and those of us who rode out the early phase of the pandemic in these hills will be able to retrace portions of our collective experience in its pages.

The most refreshing thing about Edelstein’s writing about the pandemic is the absence of rancor or polemic. His essays display a mature (dare I say wise?) detachment from the raw emotionality these times have evoked – his approach is more like, “We’re all going through something big and unprecedented – let’s look into some words and figure out what that might be.”

Unfortunately, the pandemic continues, although fortunately, Edelstein is still writing new essays inspired by it. The Stockbridge resident says he is working on an expanded version of The COVID-19 Zeitgeist – we look forward to reading the results. For now, here are two essays that the author has graciously allowed the BJV to republish.

QUARANTINE

On March 27, 2020, Governor Baker announced that anyone entering Massachusetts is instructed to self-quarantine for fourteen days.

Try this thought experiment: The year is 1348. You are responsible for the health of the citizens of Venice, doing what you can to fight the devastating outbreak of bubonic plague, known as the Black Death, which killed twenty million Europeans in the 14th century. You have no notion of viruses or bacteria, but you do understand enough to realize that you need to implement anti-contagion measures. Venice is a major trade port; incoming ships must unload their cargo. The Black Death may infest your citizens. What do you do?

You impose a quarantine! If a ship was suspected of harboring the Black Death, neither sailors nor goods could come ashore until after a period of forty days. This forty-day period was known as quarantinario, from the Italian word for forty, quaranta, even if someone is not quarantined for forty days.

Why forty days? Forty had symbolic and religious significance. In the Biblical story of the flood, it rained for forty days and forty nights; Moses stayed on Mount Sinai for forty days before receiving the Ten Commandments; and Jesus fasted in the wilderness for forty days.

Bonus fact: Italian quaranta derives from Latin quattuor, meaning four, the source of many four-based words, such as quadrant, quadruped, quart, quarter, quarterback, quarters, quartiles, and, less obviously, catty-corner, cadre, and squad. What about “fourteen?” It’s from Old English “feowertiene,” having nothing to do with Latin, from “feower” (four) and “tiene” (ten), although the “-tine” in “quarantine” and “-teen” in “fourteen” both ultimately derive from the same Indo-European root, “dekmy-,” meaning ten.

“Catty-corner,” also spelled “catercorner” and “kitty-corner,” has nothing to do with cats. In French, a variant spelling of quatre, four, was catre. English speakers adopted catre as “cater,” with reference to the four of cards or dice.

The four spots on a die, and the four symbols on playing cards, can be viewed as forming an “X,” and thus the extended sense of “diagonal” developed.

From The COVID-19 Zeitgeist: Fifty Essays by Stewart Edelstein:

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From The COVID-19 Zeitgeist: Fifty Essays by Stewart Edelstein:
NONCE

Some occasions can give rise to words coined and used to suit particular circumstances, not adopted into general use. They are nonce words, a subset of neologisms. “Nonce” derives from Middle English “for the nonce,” in reference to a particular occasion or purpose, a word in a one-ness family of words, such as alone, any, lone, lonely, none, null, once, unanimous, union (and many other words starting uni-), as well as the individual units inch and ounce.

“Nonce” derives from Middle English “for ðian anes,” which means “for this once.” (That odd letter is an “eth,” pronounced like “th” in “thing.”) By the process of rebracketing, the “n” in “an” shifted over to “anes,” resulting in “nanes,” and our “nonce.”

The current pandemic is no exception to the creation of nonce words. Pandemic-related coinages include corona taxi, coronials, covid sex buddy, covidiots, covidivorce, isolationship, pandemic nice guy, quarantini, social distancing, and virusphere. Some of these require an explanation.

Corona taxi: Vehicles medics drive to check on virus patients who are at home

Coronial: A baby born nine-months after this pandemic

Covidiots: Someone who ignores warnings about public health or safety

Quarantini: An alcoholic beverage specially created to get through social distancing

Coronacoaster: Mood swings during this pandemic

Coronials: The generation conceived or born during this pandemic

Coronadose: An overdose of bad pandemic news

Covid-10: The extra ten pounds gained from comfort-food eating during this pandemic

Bonus fact: The most well-known nonce word is “supercalifragilisticexpialidocious,” from the 1964 Disney film Mary Poppins. This word was the subject of an unsuccessful lawsuit for copyright infringement, the plaintiffs, Gloria Parker and Barney Young, claiming it was copied from their 1949 song, “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious.”

They lost because Disney’s lawyers were able to establish that variants of this word were known many years before 1949. The earliest recorded variant is “supercaliflawjalisticexpialidoshus,” from a 1931 column by Helen Herman in The Syracuse Daily Orange, the Syracuse University newspaper. This columnist described her coinage as including “all words in the category of something wonderful” and “though rather long and tiring before one reaches its conclusion, . . . once you arrive at the end, you have said in one word what it would ordinarily take four paragraphs to explain.”

The COVID-19 Zeitgeist: Fifty Essays, by Stewart Edelstein is available for $10 at The Bookstore in Lenox and other local shops, as well as the Stockbridge Library. All proceeds benefit the Stockbridge Library Association.
I was ten years old the first and only time I was called a dirty Jew. The school bully had taken my bike, and I ran after him trying to get it back. I couldn’t catch him, but eventually, he stopped riding, perhaps bored with a chase that ultimately lacked conflict. He waited a few minutes for me to get closer, and as I did, he dropped the bike to the ground and shouted those awful words.

A dozen years later, I was camping with a close friend from college. He was telling me a story about some stereo equipment he bought at a yard sale and said, “The guy wanted 50 bucks, but I Jewed him down, and he took thirty-five.” And yes, my friend knew I was Jewish. Moments later, he realized what I had uttered and said, “You know, that doesn’t mean anything, right?”

Add a few more years, and I’m in my early thirties having lunch at Jerusalem Pizza in Highland Park, New Jersey. A bald man walked into the restaurant. He looked like someone I knew in high school, a time when he would have had a full head of hair. I said, “Ken, is that you?” My hair was still intact, and he wasn’t a close friend, but he was someone I knew from high school. He was telling me a story about his life in New Jersey, non-Jewish students threw pennies at the Jewish students, egging them on to pick up the coins. And in Pittsburgh, at the Tree of Life Congregation, eleven Jews were slaughtered during Saturday morning Shabbat services. It was the most violent attack on Jews on American soil in our nation’s 245-year history, and it happened just three years ago. Like so many things in America today, what was once under the surface is now in plain sight.

If you pay any attention to the news, it’s hard not to see what’s happening in America. Let alone the rest of the world. In America, 1 in 4 Jews say they experienced antisemitism last year. Let that sink in for a moment.

There is a saying in politics, all politics are local, which means if you want to get things done, start with your community. Here’s what I saw in my community: I see a policeman outside my synagogue whenever I go to services. I see Jewish students on college campuses being harassed and censored for supporting Israel. I see a public-school educator suggesting students learn both sides of Nazism.

And then, just weeks ago, I waited with millions of Americans for the resolution of the hostage situation at Congregation Beth Israel in Colleyville, Texas. I'm looking for a light, but I don’t see it. I know there are public and private organizations doing all they can to call out, educate, and fight antisemitism.

I go on their websites and take to heart the breadth of suggestions to repair our world and address this awful place in time. I pray they are successful.

Thirty-five years ago, my wife and I looked for an apartment in a very affluent town. We met with a realtor who took us to a few places that were all beyond our means. The realtor kept telling us about those people and how those people were interested in her properties but weren’t “right” for the community. It took us a while, but finally, we realized (although the realtor did not) that we were those people. Those people were Jews.

For years, we joked about those people. Today, I know it’s no joke at all. Today, I fantasize about recording on my smartphone every word the realtor said, posting her comments on social media, and finding a very good attorney to make her life miserable. Then I thought about the endless amount of hate and antisemitism on the Internet and realized I can’t be like them. In the short term, my anger would have been satisfied. But in the long-term, I would have accomplished nothing and lost an opportunity for dialogue and change.

It’s often hard to be optimistic, but look at where we have come as a people over the centuries. Our ideals and aspirations have been noble. When we lose sight of our goodness as a people, when we strike back in anger rather than hope, we lose the battle. I never imagined that antisemitism would grow as it has in our nation. It breaks my heart, but it reminds me that as a Jew, I must be vigilant, and as a citizen, I must exercise my right of expression in purposeful ways.

Michelle Obama said it better than anyone: “When they go low, we go high.” In today’s world (in any world), we have no choice. And we and everyone else will be better for it.

Richard Reiss lives in Canaan, NY, with his wife, Paula. He is the author of Desperate Love: A Father’s Memoir. His column, Reiss’ Pieces, appears every other Tuesday in The Berkshire Eagle. He can be reached at rpress63@yahoo.com.
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Have a conversation with Gary Schiff, managing director, and the team at October Mountain Financial Advisors.

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Booze and Jews (A History in [Some] Moderation) Part II
20th century moguls, 21st century kiddush clubs, and 16th century kashrut issues revisited

By Alex Rosenblum / BJV Brontin Correspondent

This is the second installment of our brotlin (whiskey) correspondent’s history of Jews’ relationship with the liquor industry and the products it produces. By and large, the business has treated us well, although its products periodically have been the butt of the “liquor Jews” reputation for moderation. A new opportunity for creative liquor distillers has birthed “kiddush clubs” at synagogues across the country, leading contemporary rabbis to re-examine old texts to determine whether the spirits produced today adhere to established laws of kashrut.

So has the Jewish connection with alcohol affected our people? Here are some thoughts.

Liquor Barons of the 20th Century

The coming of Prohibition in the 1920s and the Great Depression of the 1930s created new economic opportunities for American Jews. Yakov Bronfman and his sons arrived in western Canada in the 1980s. Although he came as a wealthy grain farmer from Russia, he soon ran out of his savings. After several business reversals, the family purchased a small hotel with a bar. The bar threw off most of the profits and prohibition laws were passed in the United States.

The rise of bootlegging and speakeasies in the United States during Prohibition by questionable and later respectable “mobs” were able to create a liquor industry giant.

With the repeal of Prohibition, Cincinnati-born Louis Rosenstiel (an indubitably never convicted bootlegger and friend of Meyer Lansky) bought up several distilleries and formed Schenley Distillers Corporation (one of the largest liquor companies in the United States.

Meanwhile, in Chicago, Philip Bloch invested in and then owned Journal. The most famous of these entrepreneurs was the Kentucky-based Seagram family, founders of Heaven Hill in 1935. With the addition of bourbon brands Elijah Craig and Evan Williams, the founders of Heaven Hill in 1935. With the addition of bourbon brands Elijah Craig and Evan Williams, their products are the top-selling bourbons in the United States.

The Problem of Overindulgence

The sons foresaw the profit in the alcohol market in the late 1980s, Duncan Taylor had a vast distilled of some 4,000 barrels of fine and rare single malt whiskeys aged in “unkosher” barrels. Simply put, when single malt Scotch exploded onto the market in the late 1980s, Duncan Taylor had a vast reserve to sell, comprise, and distill.

The 21st Century ‘Kiddush Club’ and The Problem of Overindulgence

Most Jewish and non-Jewish leaders, scientists, doctors, and other self-appointed experts have trumped the lower rate of alcoholism among Jews than among the general population. They have (sometimes dubiously) relied in various degrees on alleged favorable DNA and gene factors, as well as self-imposed shame and quiet ostracization to under-count the problem. In fact, our grandparents, both in the Old Country and once newly arrived in America, referenced the shikker (depressed and drunkard) and didn’t count a good man, and a synagogue can’t reform a bad one.

The Problem of Overindulgence is one element in the religious community raises the issue that knowing a consumer is drinking a product that has a trace of unkosher wine, no matter how small, is a shumud (shameful) and not to be tolerated. Others raise the concern that no matter how small the ratio of the unkosher wine, the whiskey takes on the taste of the wine or port or cherry. And so on and so forth. (Generally, the Vd Harabanah of the United Kingdom and individual Conservative synagogues have been more liberal in their interpretation of what’s kosher, while North American Vd Harabanah advise a more cautious approach to what’s kosher.

SOME TIMES THEY GIVE ME MAFTIR

The popularity of kiddush clubs has inspired memes...

… and concerns about what lessons we are teaching our kids about bromlin

One element in the religious community raises the issue that knowing a consumer is drinking a product that has a trace of unkosher wine, no matter how small, is a shumud (shameful) and not to be tolerated. Others raise the concern that no matter how small the ratio of the unkosher wine, the whiskey takes on the taste of the wine or port or cherry. And so on and so forth. (Generally, the Vd Harabanah of the United Kingdom and individual Conservative synagogues have been more liberal in their interpretation of what’s kosher, while North American Vd Harabanah advise a more cautious approach to what’s kosher.

For those who have a serious concern, the Chicago Rabbinical Council publishes a comprehensive list on the internet that addresses its kashrut opinion on hundreds of alcoholic beverages.

And, as to the future? Recently, several distilleries in Israel, including Golani Distillery, Yershalami Distillery, and Milk and Honey Distillery began to export their whiskeys outside the Holy Land. The expected growth of these new industries in Israel will have both a favorable impact on Israeli economy and may also raise questions about how their kosher guidance.

And, of course, another question remains: Can we continue to enjoy a good thing in moderation?