ANNUAL CAMPAIGN 2022

YOUR IMPACT IS REAL

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’
2022 Annual Campaign

GOAL $1,100,000

We are almost there, but we need your help!

If you have not yet made your gift to the 2022 Annual Campaign there is still time to do so.

Your gift will help us engage the next generation, support the elderly and vulnerable, and sustain Jewish life all year round.

Donate online at jewishberkshires.org

THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!
RABBI REFLECTION

Rededicating Our Community, Our Homes, and Ourselves this Chanukah

By Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch

In just a few weeks, we will celebrate Chanukah in our congregations and our homes. It is a joyous holiday for so many - a time for gathering with family and friends, for bringing warmth and light to our winter season. Perhaps it’s a favorite latke recipe, a menorah passed down from generation to generation, or a family dreidel game-night tradition that makes this holiday special for you.

Chanukah literally means ‘dedication’ or ‘inauguration’ and is often understood as ‘rededication,’ recalling the story and lore around the return to the holy Temple in Jerusalem. I have always connected with that idea of rededication. This Chanukah, I invite you to consider how we can practice rededication - for our communities, our homes, and ourselves.

This year, at my synagogue, Temple Anshe Amunim, we are rededicating ourselves to communal gathering in earnest, after so many compromises and less-than-ideal alternatives during the course of the COVID pandemic. Each community is on its own path and journey regarding health and safety; all of us are able to gather more fully this year and in recent years past. Chanukah will truly be a rededication for so many in the Berkshires and beyond, as we reconnect with our communities. I hope many of you will spend Chanukah in person in some way with a Jewish community this year – lighting the menorah, sharing a meal, singing and being together. We delight in our return to community engagement and involvement. While virtual options enable us to remain in touch and keep our traditions alive, in-person celebrations create those lasting moments of connection and joy. This Chanukah, this year, let us rededicate ourselves to our Jewish communities.

This winter, I will have the opportunity to officiate at an especially sweet ritual for members of my community - a chanukat habayit, the dedication of a new house. We will hang a mezuzah on the doorposts, embracing the commandments and blessing contained within its scroll, signifying that this is a Jewish home. For so many of us, our homes took on a new level of sanctity during the pandemic. We made our homes our own mikdash me’at – a small kind of synagogue or sanctuary. We observed holidays at home, either with immediate family, a small group of friends, or by tuning in on our television sets and computer screens to services near and far. Each week on Friday nights, as we reach L’cha Dodi, the prayer in which we invite in the Sabbath bride, I acknowledge that we welcome the presence of Shabbat into our Temple’s sanctuary, but also, for all those joining our services virtually, into each of our homes.

While we rejoice in gathering together in our communal spaces, we have also elevated the sacred activities of our homes, perhaps connecting with the practice of lighting Shabbat candles each week, making challah, or cooking an elaborate Chanukah dinner. Judaism lives both in our synagogues and in our homes. This Chanukah, this year, let us rededicate ourselves to our Jewish home practices and rituals.

It is only natural for our minds to turn toward the close of the year 2022, as our lives integrate both the Jewish and secular calendars. Looking toward 2023 and a new year, many of us make resolutions and commitments. We set goals and wishes, hopes and dreams. Many of these are personal practices we would like to take on - for our communities, our homes, and ourselves.

While virtual options enable us to remain in touch and keep our traditions alive, in-person celebrations create those lasting moments of connection and joy. This Chanukah, this year, let us rededicate ourselves to our Jewish communities.

Thank You Jewish Women’s Foundation of the Berkshires

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

We wanted to share with the entire community some of the appreciation expressed by recipients of Jewish Women’s Foundation of the Berkshires grants, which totaled $64,000 in 2022.

“This grant is arriving just in time to be factored into our plans to upgrade our facilities for our clients and our many volunteers. We could not do this without community supporters like you.” - Nancy Cook, South Community Food Pantry

“Youngestrosity helps us further our mission to connect young people with their community and the great outdoors in hands-on, meaningful ways.” - Will Conklin, Executive Director, Berkshire Bounty

“This grant will help participants make strides toward financial independence and self-sufficiency and position themselves and their children for a better future. We couldn’t do it without you and we are full of gratitude for your generosity.” - Sarah Cook, President and CEO, 18 Degrees

For more information on JWF grants go to JWFBI.org.

With best wishes and gratitude,
Esther Messing and Arlene D. Schiff
Chair & Vice Chair, JWF Grants Committee

Yasher Koach to Those Sharing Shabbat in the Jewish Berkshires

From Federation board member
Stuart Masters:

Here is a photo from Kimball Farms in Lenox, where my wife, Ellen, and I celebrated Shabbat with some of the residents. From row on the left is Lillian Bender (a brand-new resident that day, with her son Shaun in the background), Shirley Rubenstein, Margo Yondorf; Iris Krieger, Audrey Salzmann, and my wife, Ellen Masters. Carol Walker is in the back, next to Shaun Bender.

It was a wonderful way to welcome Shabbat!

Wishing you Peace and Light at Chanukah and throughout the year.
Ticking Clock: Behind the Scenes at 60 Minutes, with Ira Rosen

On Thursday, December 8 at 6:45 p.m., “Jewish Literary Voices: A Federation Series in collaboration with The Jewish Book Council” welcomes two-time Peabody Award-winning writer and producer Ira Rosen, who will reveal the intimate, untold stories of his decades at America’s most iconic news show. His book Ticking Clock: Behind the Scenes at 60 Minutes, is a 60 Minutes story on 60 Minutes itself—a wild ride through the world of network news from the late 1970s to the present day.

This free 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.

For the JLV interview with Ira Rosen, please turn to page 21.

When producer Ira Rosen walked into the 60 Minutes offices in June 1980, he knew he was about to enter television history. His career catapulted him to the heights of TV journalism, breaking some of the most important stories in TV news. But behind the scenes was a war room of clashing producers, Minutes offices in June 1980, he knew he was about to enter television history. His career catapulted him to the heights of TV journalism, breaking some of the most important stories in TV news. But behind the scenes was a war room of clashing producers, writer and producer Ira Rosen, who will reveal the intimate, untold stories of his decades at America’s most iconic news show. His book Ticking Clock: Behind the Scenes at 60 Minutes, is a 60 Minutes story on 60 Minutes itself—a wild ride through the world of network news from the late 1970s to the present day.

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Yiddish novels written by women have remained largely unknown because they were never translated into English or never published as books. Unlike works translated from the language by such male writers such as Sholem Aleichem, Isaac Bashevis Singer, and Chaim Grade, Yiddish fiction by women was long dismissed by publishers as insignificant or unmarketable to a larger audience. But in the past several years, there has been a surge of translations of female writers by Yiddish scholars devoted to keeping the literature alive.

Dr. Norich has discovered works of women writers by scrolling through microfilms of long-extinct Yiddish newspapers and periodicals that serialized novels and other painstaking research. Until Norich began translating and publishing these novels and stories, there had been only one book of Yiddish fiction by a female writer translated into English. Learn with Dr. Norich about this amazing “literature that has been hiding in plain sight, but we all assumed wasn’t there.”

Hiding in Plain Sight: Women Writers in Yiddish Literature

On Thursday, December 15 at 6:45 p.m., we host Anita Norich, Professor Emerita of English Language and Literature and Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan, whose topic will be “Hiding in Plain Sight: Women Writers in Yiddish Literature.” This free 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.

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The Art of Chanukah

On Monday, December 19 at 6:45 p.m., Nancy Kotz will explore an overview of artworks related to the miracle of the oil and the re-dedication of the Holy Temple.

“The Art of Chanukah” tells the story of this holiday through art objects from many centuries. You’ll see illuminated manuscripts, etchings, woodcuts, photographs, paintings, and Chanukah lamps of marble, brass, silver, stone, iron, and glass. As Kotz reminds us: “Chanukah is both the ‘Holiday of Freedom’ and the ‘Holiday of Lights.’” This free 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.

Nancy Kotz holds a B.A. (Skidmore College, 1984) in Art History and Business, as well as a Certificate in Nonprofit Management (Georgetown University, 2011). Professionally, Nancy began her career in arts and public policy (Congressional Arts Caucus) before transitioning to the museum world (Smithsonian Institution and National Gallery of Art) where she held positions in museum education and museum retail. Nancy is also the founder and content curator for VisualArtsDC, a social media-based community with over 1300 followers focused on the visual arts in the metropolitan Washington, DC region.

The Art of Chanukah: Women Writers in Yiddish Literature

Anita Norich

Anita Norich is Collegiate Professor Emerita of English and Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan. She is also the author of Writing in Tongues: Yiddish Translation in the 20th Century. Discovering Exile: Yiddish and Jewish American Literature in America During the Holocaust; The Homeless Imagination in the Fiction of Israel Joshua Singer.

She translates Yiddish literature and lectures and publishes on a range of topics concerning modern Jewish cultures, Yiddish language and literature, Jewish American literature, and Holocaust literature.

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Contemporary Jew Hatred in Universities and Popular Culture in America

On Thursday, January 26, 2023 at 6:45 p.m., respected scholar, author, and speaker Dr. Charles Asher Small will explore issues of contemporary Jew hatred in the United States, including antisemitism in American universities, popular culture, and hip hop.

This free Jewish Federation of the Berkshires program will be presented via Zoom. Please visit our calendar of events at jewisberkshires.org for links to our programs.

Dr. Small is the Founder and Executive Director of International Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP) and the Director of the Fellowship Training Programme on Contemporary Antisemitism Studies at Wolf Institute, Cambridge.

Through ISGAP, he has convened groundbreaking academic seminar series, conferences and programming in the emerging field of contemporary antisemitism studies at Harvard University, Yale University, Columbia University, Stanford University, Fordham University, McGill University, University of Miami, La Sapienza University in Rome, the Sorbonne in Paris, the National University of Kyiv, the CNRS (the French National Center for Scientific Research or Centre national de la recherche scientifique), and other top-tier universities around the world.

NIGHTWOOD, continued from page 1

songs, glow fun, chocolate gelt, and hot drinks. There will be fire pits and heaters to keep everyone toasty – be sure to arrive dressed for the weather, as all activities will be outdoors.

Members of the Berkshire Jewish Musicians Collective – Jonathan Denham, Noah Cook-Dubin, Matt Moutan, and Colin Orbitsky – will be on hand to help kindle the lights of the menorah and lead us in a festive Chanukah singalong.

This special event is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, PJ Library, and The Mount. The Mount is at 2 Plunkett Street in Lenox.

Tickets

Federation group tickets, available for tours in three time slots, are $10 for adults and free for children and youths 18 and under. Tickets are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. To register, visit tinyurl.com/JewFedChanukah. Please note, tickets are only available at this URL, and not via Federation’s website or office.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED along with proof of full COVID vaccination.

Tours are self-guided and traverse approximately a ¼ mile route through wooded and gardens. Pathways are through paved and unpaved areas and may be uneven.

About NightWood

NightWood combines music, lighting, and theatrical elements to create eight unique scenes that evoke feelings of wonder, mystery, and magic. It was conceived by Chris Bocchiaro of Clerestory Light, in partnership with scenic designer Megan Kinneen and sound designer and composer Greg Hanson.

This is the third year of NightWood, a winter landscape inspired by The Mount’s unique architecture and history. Building upon last year’s captivating scenes, Bocchiaro has expanded the experience with revised soundscapes and three new installations: The Pool, The Glass Garden, and The Heart of the Forest.

NightWood will be on view through January 1. Visit edithwharton.org/calendar/nightwood/ for information.

Dr. Charles Asher Small

From Shtetl to Ellis Island: One Woman’s Story

On Thursday, January 5, 2023 at 6:45 p.m., join Leah Kaplan as she traces the journey of one Jewish immigrant, her maternal grandmother, from her shtetl in Belarus to her grand-arrival on Ellis Island.

Kaplan will unpack the larger context of their journey talking about the general movement of Jewish immigrants to this country. If you had family emigrate from Europe, you will certainly be interested.

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Leah Kaplan will create a picture of what the turn-of-the-20th-century voyage was like with details about the immigration process, the prevalent conditions, and the rules imposed on immigrants who had little money to travel. Following her extensive study at five major research institutions, including the Red Star Line Museum of Immigration in Antwerp, Kaplan will relate stories of these immigrants and share some surprising facts.

Writes Kaplan: “You probably know that your ancestors left the Old Country to seek a better life in America. Have you ever wondered how they traveled as much as a thousand miles overland to reach an Atlantic port of debarkation? What were the tests they had to endure at the port before even boarding a steam ship to America? What was it like to sail steerage class at the turn of the 20th Century? What further tests awaited them after they arrived at Ellis Island?” Join me to learn the answers to these questions and learn about one emigrant who stands for so many.

Leah Kaplan is a retired physical therapist. She has a B.S. degree from the University of Michigan.

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True Colors: Stories from Jews of Color Exploring Identity and Community

On Thursday, January 23, 2023 at 6:45 p.m., join a conversation with Pulitzer Prize-winning author Debby Applegate about her new biography that tells the rollicking story of Polly Adler, Manhattan’s most notorious madam, whose decadent parties made the Jazz Age roar. The New York Times Book Review praised Madam: The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age as a "fast-paced tale of radical transformation" and "a breathless tale told through extraordinary research."

This free program is part of "Jewish Literary Voices: A Federation Series in collaboration with The Jewish Book Council." It will be presented via Zoom. Please visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org for links to our programs.

Madam: The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age is a colorful and unusual history of Jewish life told through the perspective of a "good Jewish girl" from a Russian shtetl who immigrated to Brooklyn and rose to become "the Female Al Capone" and one of the most renowned Jewish American women in the 20th century. Polly "Pearl" Adler (1900–1962) was a diminutive dynamo whose Manhattan brothels were more than cases of illicit sex, where men paid top-dollar for the company of her girls; they were also swinging salons where the culturati and high society partied with the elite of showbiz, politics and organized crime.

Write Applegate: "No one would’ve guessed that Pearl would become the first Lady of the Underworld when she arrived in America as a 13-year-old Russian Jewish immigrant. But Polly’s life became a topsy-turvy Horatio Alger tale—a childhood that could be so glamorous and so transformational, showing how this riotous collision of the Vanderbilts and the Rockefellers to Walter Winchell, Frank Sinatra, Desi Arnaz, the Algonquin Roundtable, Dutch Schultz, Meyer Lansky, and, it was rumored, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Applegate immerses the reader in Polly’s world and uses her up-and-coming life to unpack what made this era so corrupt, so glamorous and so transformational, showing how this riotous collision of high and low gave birth to modern American culture.


With her second book, Madam: The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age, she plunged from the world of virtue to the underbelly of vice. It took 13 years of immersion in the archives to research and write and — to give fair warning to all readers — is much riper than the first.

Berkshire Community College is partnering with the Jewish Voice and the Jewish Book Council to host this event. As part of our commitment to our Jewish community, we are pleased to provide this program for everyone and hope you will enjoy hearing about this fascinating period of Jewish history.
ORT Rescue Mission Evacuates Families from Zaporizhzhia and Odesa, Secures Safe Accommodation in Western Ukraine

Unlike many other federations, we keep most of the funds donated to our annual campaign right here in the Berkshires. But when unforeseen crises affect the Jewish world beyond the Berkshires, the funds we raise can be used by our partners such as World ORT, a global education network driven by Jewish values. This year, Jewish Federation of the Berkshires provided a $10,000 allocation to World ORT in support of their work in the former Soviet Union.

As attacks across Ukraine continue, ORT launched an ambitious mission to evacuate students, teachers and their families from some of the worst-affected areas.

To date, 153 people have been successfully relocated from Zaporizhzhia and Odesa, both home to ORT Schools, to new accommodation in western Ukraine – and it is thanks to the ongoing support of our donors worldwide that this vital assistance has been provided.

Mila Finkelshtein, ORT Ukraine Chief Executive, said: “The evacuations were very difficult as in addition to students and teachers, family members evacuated included elderly grandparentents and babies. The trip from Zaporizhzhia took almost 20 hours by bus. We have given people the chance to sleep at night, to study, to work.”

Zaporizhzhia is less than 15 kilometers from the front line. Similarly in Odesa, students and their families are in constant danger. While many thousands of ORT students left their home cities in the past eight months, many remain and are seeking shelter.

Under the guidance of ORT leaders in Ukraine, suitable accommodations have been secured in a hotel in Truskavets, a town close to Lviv and the Polish border.

The hotel provides security and comes with requirements. Parents were also provided with all the necessities for a peaceful life – we have meals and live in very good conditions. It is warm in the rooms – we have everything we need. We are very happy to be here and thank everyone who contributed to this effort and helped us.”

One mother from Zaporizhzhia said: “We are endlessly grateful for this evacuation, for allowing children to rest peacefully, to smile, to run around. Now, in Truskavets, children can continue their studies We are very thankful and very happy for this opportunity.”

ORT continues to cover a range of needs, from sources of sustainable warmth to covering the costs of living every day.” JDC CEO Ariel Zwang said in a statement. “Our staff and volunteers have not stopped our life-saving services within Ukraine, along with those for refugees in Europe, and will continue to ensure that Jews and Jewish communities have the supplies they need to survive the coming months.”

Eric Fingerhut, JFNA’s president & CEO, stated, “The winter forecast in Ukraine is extremely concerning, with the potential for an even graver humanitarian crisis, and our latest allocation reflects our attention to the evolving needs on the ground and our ongoing commitment to provide relief where it is most needed. The North American Jewish community continues to respond in tremendous ways to this crisis, and this collective response is a reflection of our Jewish values that dictate the utmost importance of charity – tzedakah.”

The $7 million JFNA allocation will also help subsidize the costs of Aliyah (immigration to Israel) from Russia.
Local Leaders Represent Jewish Federation of the Berkshires at JFNA General Assembly

CHICAGO – Leaders from our Federation joined over 1,200 Jewish communal leaders in Chicago at Jewish Federations’ three-day General Assembly in November, where they set the shared Jewish communal agenda for the year ahead and heard from a diverse array of voices on critical issues facing the North American Jewish community. First held 90 years ago, The General Assembly is the most consequential gathering of the leadership of the North American Jewish community, and brings together Jewish leaders of diverse backgrounds in a space that fosters productive dialogue and debate.

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires sent Executive Director Dara Kaufman and executive board member (and Congregation Beth Israel’s president) Natalie Matus to the confab. They will report back on their experiences and impressions in the next Berkshire Jewish Voice.

This year’s General Assembly focused on responses to the geopolitical challenges and global events impacting the Jewish community, and challenges and opportunities towards building flourishing, Jewish communities. Topics that were discussed include the urgency of Jewish communal security, Jewish Federations’ response to the Ukraine crisis and the uncertainties that lie ahead for Jews in Ukraine and Russia, and new initiatives and partnerships to combat the rise in antisemitism.

Global figures, activists, public officials and communal leaders addressed the audience. Noteworthy names include President of Israel Isaac Herzog, U.S. Ambassador to Germany Amy Gutmann, Israel’s Ambassador to the U.S. Michael Herzog, journalist and news anchor Andrea Mitchell, Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism Ambassador Dr. Deborah Lipstadt, philosopher and author Bernard Henny Levy, among many others.

The agenda also included a special reception to mark the 60th anniversary of National Young Leadership Cabinet and the 50th anniversary of Lions of Judah, which represent models of leadership for the Jewish world.

During the opening plenary of The General Assembly, Jewish Federations of North America Board Chair Julie Platt announced that since the launch of LiveSecure last year, the number of Jewish communities in North America that have security programs has increased by 42 percent. LiveSecure is a $130 million investment in Jewish communal security that aims to protect every single Jewish community in the U.S. and Canada through a grant issued by Jewish Federations of North America, with matching funds raised by the local Federation.

Also announced at The General Assembly is an agreement made between the leadership of major Jewish organizations and financial ratings powerhouse Morningstar on a new set of commitments regarding anti-Israel bias in its ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) ratings. The agreement follows months of deliberations between the parties.

“We are living in complex times when antisemitic incidents are increasing at an alarming rate, anti-Israel rhetoric is rampant, millions of people are displaced by war and our communities are overwhelmed by a mental health crisis,” said Julie Platt. “These extreme challenges we face require bold solutions and broad collaborations, so that we can effectively strengthen our communities and ensure that they are safe, compassionate, inclusive and vibrant. The General Assembly is a unique opportunity that comes around once-per-year for our communal leaders to come together to tackle these complex challenges, discuss practical steps towards building flourishing Jewish communities and return to our communities invigorated to implement these strategies.”

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Celebrate the Festival of Lights with Hevreh!

GREAT BARRINGTON – Hevreh of Southern Berkshire hosts a panorama of Chanukah-themed events this Kislev, with fun events planned for celebrants of all ages.

Tot Shabbat: Chanukah Style! On Saturday, December 17 at 9 a.m., join Hevreh for a special Chanukah-themed Tot Shabbat celebration! Sing and dance, and enjoy a special Chanukah activity before concluding with blessings and a Shabbat snack.

Yachad Chanukah On Sunday, December 18 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., families with school-aged children are invited to get into the Chanukah spirit with a special family celebration. The day begins with "Bisket Tov, Hevreh: Chanukah Edition," and concludes with the annual Holiday Gift Wrap in partnership with Volunteers In Medicine. The celebration includes with a Chanukah party complete with DJ, party games, dreidels, and holiday treats. Each family is encouraged to bring at least one of the following items to donate for the Holiday Gift Wrap: new/unwrapped soccer or basketballs, art supplies, Legos or other building toys, children’s books, or warm winter wear for adults. This program is generously underwritten by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Latke Cooking Party On Tuesday, December 20, 10 a.m. until it’s done! The congregation brings back a beloved Hevre Chanukah tradition – join other volunteers for a festive cooking party in the Hevrehev kitchen frying up enough latkes for the Chanukah Shabbat celebration later in the week. Be in touch with Suzanne Sawyer to RSVP or with questions.

Menorah Lighting and Soufganyot On Wednesday, December 21 at 5:30 p.m., the community is invited to join Hevreh’s Hebrew School students and families for a Chanukah candle lighting, and special soufganyot treat to light up the 4th night of Chanukah! On Sunday, December 18 at 5 p.m., the congregation celebrates Chanukah with a communal dinner and candle lighting. For more information, please call (413) 442-5910.

Shabbat Chanukah: Service + Dinner On Friday, December 23 at 6 p.m., light up the night with the rabbis, artist-in-residence Peri Smalor, and the Hevre House Band! Welcome Shabbat and the 6th night of Chanukah together with a festive musical service, followed by a Chanukah potluck and latkes.

Hevrehev Resumes Community Shabbat Dinners GREAT BARRINGTON – Hevreh of Southern Berkshire is thrilled to resume its monthly Community Shabbat program, which is free and open to the public. The regular service and dinner events for the community were stopped when the pandemic hit the Berkshires in March 2020.

Upcoming dinners are planned for December 9, 2022 and January 13, 2023. Community Shabbat is a collaborative project at Hevreh to bring an intentionally intergenerational community together around the Shabbat dinner table. Each of the Community Shabbat events will be hosted and led by Hevreh’s rabbis – Rabbi Neil Hirsch and Rabbi Jodie Gordon – and a group of Religious School students, teachers, and families. Following a service with participation from the students, the entire community will share a festive Shabbat dinner complete with blessings and Shabbat table singing. To ensure no one leaves hungry, Hevreh is requesting that you RSVP to info@hevreh.org to indicate how many people will be attending.

The Community Shabbat dinners are generously supported by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. The regular service and dinner events – only for the dinner. For more information and to RSVP, visit jewishberkshires.org.

Chanukah and Shabbat with Temple Anshe Amunim PITTSFIELD – As temperatures grip the region, Temple Anshe Amunim continues to offer different opportunities to celebrate Chanukah. TAA Jewish Museum Virtual Tour: “Chagall: Love, War and Exile” On Wednesday, December 14 at 7 p.m., Congregation Ahavath Sholom is proud to announce a third virtual museum tour – “Chagall: Love, War, and Exile,” with renowned lecturer Rena Tobey. This 2014 groundbreaking and courageous exhibit tackled what is easily the most vexing subject in the career of the most beloved of Jewish artists, Marc Chagall (1887-1985), namely: his persistent, indeed obsessive, use of the crucifixion as a symbol of Jewish suffering and persecution. The exhibit traces Chagall’s lifelong fascination with the emblem of Christianity, especially in his work created during the Holocaust.

The voice of the artist rings loud and clear as he links his controversial images to specific events: Berlin anti-Semitic riots (1930), Hitler’s takeover (1933), deportation of Polish Jews (October, 1938), Kristallnacht (November, 1938), massacre of the Vetebes (25, April, 1941), among many other Holocaust horrors. Seen here, his work using the crucifixion dates from the early masterpiece, “Calvary” (1912, Museum of Modern Art), to late in his career, “In Front of the Picture” (1971, Fondation Maeght, St. Paul de Vence, France). Questions immediately arise: why did Chagall use this potentially painful symbol of the Jews’ persecutors to symbolize Jewish suffering? Cost: Congregation members 820, non-members 825. Information and registration: ahavathsholom.org.

Chanukah and Shabbat with Temple Anshe Amunim PITTSFIELD – Chabad of the Berkshires family Chanukah celebration will take place on Sunday, December 25, at 4 p.m. at the Holiday Inn and Suites, One West Street in downtown Pittsfield. There will be a menorah kindling ceremony and live entertainment. Community volunteers will assist in kindling the giant “Menorah of Freedom.” This free program, sponsored in part by The Edward and Josephine Haddad Dealerships of the Berkshires, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, and Chabad, the Federation of the Berkshires, will be open to the public.

There will be a concert featuring Israeli araisation Yoel Shabati, potato latkes, donuts, Chanukah gelt, a grand raffle, dreidels, and an awesome winning family entertainer that will amaze and mesmerize audiences of all ages with his magnifi-cent Bubblemania show.

The evening will include a kosher Chinese dinner at the cost of $83 per person RSVP for dinner by December 19. There is no charge for the entertainment – only for the dinner. For more information and to RSVP, visit jewish-berkshires.com.

Chanukah, a celebration of freedom, is highlighted by the kindling of the menorah each night of the holiday. “It is a holiday that enriches our lives with the light of tradition,” says Rabbi Levi Volovik, co-director of Chabad of the Berkshires. “In ancient times, our ancestors rededicated the Temple in Jerusalem with the menorah. Today, we rededicate ourselves to making this world a better and brighter place.”

Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, brings back fond memories of childhood years and serves to renew a sense of identity,” says Chabab’s co-director Sara Volovik. “The Chanukah lights provide warmth, joy, strength and inspiration. Such is the purpose of the community-wide celebrations.”

More Chanukah Fun with Chabad This Chanukah, Chabad of the Berkshires hosts several holiday-themed events. All are welcome! Women’s Celebration PITTSFIELD – On Wednesday, December 21 at noon, Chabad hosts a Chanukah party for women only – “an afternoon that will feed the mind, body and soul,” says co-director Sara Volovik. “Join a Chanukah gourmet luncheon with an assortment of latkes, salads, and delectable desserts while celebrating the lighting of Chanukah’s miracle!”

Suggested Donation: $25 Please RSVP to Sara Volovik at (413) 499-9899 or saravolovik@gmail.com.

To order your Chanukah gift wrap contact Suzanne Sawyer at 413.442.0983.
**LOCAL NEWS**

Knesset Israel’s Families Together Presents ‘It’s A Wrap: Caring for Our Neighbors’

A program including brunch, an art project, tzedakah, and parents’ discussion group.

**PITTSFIELD** – On Sunday, December 11 from 10 a.m. to noon, join Knesset Israel’s Families Together for ‘It’s A Wrap: Caring For Our Neighbors’.

The organizers write: It’s become a tradition over the years for Knesset Israel members to collect and purchase gifts for Adopt-a-Family (a program run by the Department of Children and Families). On December 11, K.I. Families Together will gather for a brunch and a variety of activities, including letters to soldiers, relating to current events, stories to read, craft projects to make decorations for the family that RI adopts, and wrapping the gifts we’ve gathered. While the kids are busy with wrapping and decorating, the parents will have a group discussion led by Rabbi David Weiner, where we’ll learn about the work of the Department of Children and Families in the Berkshires from Susan Staskin, and discuss how to incorporate mitzvot related to caring for others into family life. Brunch will be served. Please RSVP at knessetisrael.org/rsvp. The more the merrier! Invite friends!

Keep Growing This Winter – Adult Education at Knesset Israel

**PITTSFIELD** – The flowers and black bears may go dormant over the winter, but the thirst for knowledge and inspiration does not.

In December and January, Knesset Israel continues to offer adult education opportunities around a variety of themes, including a deep dive into the siddur. It’s intended for those who already read Hebrew but are looking for greater understanding of the language and the prayer book, Tuesdays, usually 10 a.m. to 11:15 a.m., but please check the calendar before attending. In person only.

Teshuva and Criminal Justice – A Course by Tzitzah Bronson of Hadar, facilitiated by Rabbi David Weiner: What do Jewish sources say about starting anew after breaking the law, and how can that inform our understanding of modern-day criminal justice?

This course will do a deep dive into teshuva (repentance) and the rehabilitation process after one has committed various types of offenses. Is it ever too late to turn over a new leaf, and what the consequences should be for a communal leader who speaks or acts inappropriately? For example, what should happen to a shochet, a community butcher, who fraudulently sold his customers non-kosher meat? What about a police officer who wants to return to public office? Should the damage to someone’s reputation or employment ever be permanent? Via Talmudic texts, explore complex real-life cases. In doing so, see firsthand how approaching these moral questions through a lens of Jewish tradition can offer unique insights.

The course meets on ten (almost) consecutive Thursday mornings, and participants may attend in-person or online (bit.ly/thursdaymorningdialin). There are video lectures to watch between classes. New participants please contact the synagogue office to register – office@knessetisrael.org

Thursday mornings, 10:45 a.m. to noon. Hybrid in person or online. First classes January 5 and 19, 2023.

A Melodic and Delicious Start to Shabbat at Knesset Israel

**PITTSFIELD** – Sing in Shabbat at Knesset Israel!

Shirei Shabbat with Community Dinner: Friday, December 16, 2022 (Hanukkah edition) and January 20, 2023 at 5-45 p.m. The extended musical family of Knesset Israel relishes the privilege of coming together each month to lead an upbeat Friday night service, including contemporary songs alongside traditional Kabbalat Shabbat melodies. The raucous and community feeling at Shirit Shabbat services is irresistible, encouraging all to raise their voices in song and prayer.

The December 16 edition will feature favorite Hanukka songs to celebrate the season in addition to Kabbalat Shabbat. Register in advance for the community dinner following the services:

knessetisrael.org/rsvp. Dinner is $20 for adults, free for <18.

Musical Minyan: Friday, January 13 and January 27, 2023 at 5-45 p.m. The Musical Minyan offers a truly unique Kabbalat Shabbat experience, with a small acoustic ensemble providing the backdrop for the Friday night service.

The music comes from Israel, Eastern Europe, the US, and South America, with a variety of traditional and contemporary songs and melodies to welcome the Sabbath. Bring your own cup of tea or coffee, and at times spirited, this musical service is the perfect start to a sweet and spiritual Shabbat. But be forewarned: the samba-inspired “Lcha Dodi” may get stuck in your head for the whole week!

Young Family Programs at CBI – Chanukah Cookies and a Songfest Around the Bonfire

**NORTH ADAMS** – This is an exciting time for family programming at Congregation Beth Israel. To celebrate Chanukah cooking class to our annual bonfire and songfest, as well as fun family services, you are invited to participate and meet other young families.

Make Chanukah cookies with your children with professional baker Caleb Weiselson on Sunday, December 11, at 1 p.m. “Cooking with Caleb – Let’s Make Chanukah Cookies” is one of our most popular family programs. Families will learn how to make cookies and be able to take them home to enjoy together. Last year there was an overflow crowd, so don’t miss out! RSVP at cbiberkshires.com so there will be enough supplies for all to enjoy.

Don’t miss the annual community Chanukah Bonfire and Songfest. Friday, December 18 at 5 p.m. Join celebrants around the bonfire in CBI’s beautiful backyard at the foothills of Mount Greylock for singing, a dreidel spinning contest, hot apple cider, and homemade latkes and donuts! Bring your own camp chair / folding chair, and dress warmly! Rabbi Rachel Barenblat will lead the Chanukah songs with her guitar. All are welcome – families and adults of all ages – at the Chanukah bonfire and songfest! RSVP at cbiberkshires.com.

Families Celebrate Shabbat on Saturday, January 14, 2023 at 9:30 a.m., in a joyful, engaging and participatory family service led by Rabbi Jarah Greenfield. All are welcome, and there will be roles for children of all ages.

On Saturday, January 21 at 4 p.m., get out of the house and join Rabbi Rachel and teacher (and resident storyteller) Jane Shipak in the CBI sanctuary for Havdalah & Storytime! You’ll hear stories that uplift Jewish values with audience participation and laughter, and then ritually end Shabbat with song, grape juice and fragrant spices, and the shadows cast by a braided candle as darkness settles over the hills.

CBI family programs are free and open to all thanks to the generosity of The Grinspoon Foundation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Berkshire Jewish Voice welcomes signed letters on subjects of interest to the Jewish community. Letters are printed upon space availability. The BJV reserves the right to edit all letters for content, length, and style. The BJV does not print anonymous letters, insults, libelous or defamatory statements. Published letters do not represent the views of the Federation, its board of directors, or the newspaper, but rather express the views of their authors. For verification purposes, please include full name, home address, and a day and evening telephone number.

Send letters to: Berkshire Jewish Voice, 196 South Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201, or email: asterl@jewishberkshires.org.
Virtual Symposium: Researching Jewish Roots in Bessarabia

The Bessarabia Special Interest Group (Bessarabia SIG) and JewishGen invite all to participate in a Virtual Winter Symposium, a series of live online presentations to run from Tuesday, December 13 through Thursday, December 15, 2022. “Sessions will explore historical experiences of our ancestors – often called Russians, but also to other regions. Topics include: ‘Bordersland: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren’; ‘Every single old photograph can be useful in telling a story’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 300 years of Jewish History’; ‘From klezmer to maestro: Jewish musicians in the cultural life of Bessarabia and Moldova’; ‘Borderlands: Traces of Jewish Life in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova’; ‘How to teach family history to children and grandchildren; ‘Rediscovered Rashkov: 30 Kimball Farms Life Care Discover retirement as it was meant to be at Kimball Farms Life Care Community. Nestled in beautiful Lenox, Mass., on 63 stunning acres, Kimball Farms is conveniently located near Tanglewood and many other cultural attractions.

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Celebrate Chanukah at NightWood

Chanukah at the Mount
Sunday, December 18 from 6-8 pm
The Mount, 2 Plunkett Street, Lenox, MA

Immerse Yourself in NightWood
Stroll through an ethereal winter landscape and immerse yourself in sound, light, and color. NightWood combines music, lighting, and theatrical elements to create seven unique scenes, including four new installations, that evoke wonder, mystery, and magic!

Menorah Lighting and Holiday Fun
After your NightWood tour, join us at 7:30 pm at the Mansion Forecourt as we kindle the menorah lights and celebrate with live music, Chanukah songs, glow fun, chocolate gelt, and hot drinks! If you finish your tour earlier, there are heaters to keep you warm.

Online Purchase of Timed Entry Tickets Required
Federation Group Tickets: Adults $10, Kids 0-18 free. Three time slots available. Limited tickets available first come, first served. Registration and more info at: https://tinyurl.com/JewFedChanukah

This Event is Exclusively Outdoors. Dress Warmly!
Trails can be uneven and require secure footing. Self-guided route is 3/4 of a mile through the woods and gardens and includes both paved and unpaved pathways.

NEW INDEPENDENT LIVING RATES STARTING AT $2,675

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Welcome to the Jewish Berkshires

Everyone is welcome to attend services and events at any of the organizations listed here. Please call the organizations directly to confirm service times or to inquire about membership.

Learn more about our Jewish community and find great events on the community calendar at:

JEWISHBERKSHIRES.ORG

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BERKSHIRE JEWISH CONGREGATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

Berkshire Minyan
Lay-led, Traditional, Egalitarian Minyan
South County
berkshireminyan.org

Berkshire Hills Hadassah
P.O. Box 187, Pittsfield, MA
(413) 443-4386,
Berkshirehillshadassah@gmail.com

B’nai B’rith Lodge, No. 326

Chabad of the Berkshires
450 South St., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 499-9899,
jewishberkshires.com

Congregation Ahavath Sholom
Reconstructionist
North St., Great Barrington, MA
(413) 528-4197, ahavathsholom.com

Congregation Beth Israel
Reform
53 Lois St., North Adams, MA
(413) 663-5830, cbiberkshires.com

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire
Reform
270 State Rd., Great Barrington, MA
(413) 528-6378, hevreh.org

Israel Philatelist Society
C/o Dr. Ed Helitzer,
(413) 447-7622

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
196 South St., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 442-4360, jewishberkshires.org

Jewish War Veterans
Commander Robert Waldheim
(413) 822-4546, sellit4@aol.com

Knesset Israel
Conservative
16 Colt Rd., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 445-4872, knessetisrael.org

Temple Anshe Amunim
Reform
26 Broad St., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 442-5910, ansheamunim.org

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Your Federation Presents

Little Hands Art in the Park

By Molly Meador / Coordinator of Volunteers and PJ Library

On October 23, PJ Library families gathered at Stockbridge playground to make some art and make some new friends! We did an art project that was as fun and easy for little hands as it was for their older siblings. Grownups got to connect while the kiddos played and we all enjoyed a perfect fall day.

And as we were packing up and leaving I thanked everyone for coming, One of the kiddos said, “we should thank you – this was so much fun!”
Your Federation Presents

Federation Helps Make Our Jewish Community More Secure

Supporting a safe and secure community is a priority for our Jewish Federation. Thank you to Dan Levenson of CJP – Combined Jewish Philanthropies and Officer Darren Derby of the Pittsfield Police Department for presenting at our community security training in November. And thank you to Temple Anshe Amunim for hosting us.

Federation recently allocated $45,000 in grants to Chabad of the Berkshires, Congregation Ahavath Sholom, Congregation Beth Israel, Knesset Israel, and Temple Anshe Amunim to support the hardening of security at their organizations.

May your spirits be merry and bright as you gather with friends and family. Wishing you a holiday season of joy and peace, and a prosperous new year.
Chanukah Begins at Sunset on Sun., Dec. 18, 2022

PRICES EFFECTIVE NOV. 25 THROUGH DEC. 28, 2022
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- **Kedem Tea Biscuits** 4.2 oz, All Varieties: 3 FOR $2
- **Manischewitz Chocolate Coins** .53 to 1 oz, All Varieties: 3 FOR $1
- **Manischewitz Potato Pancake Mix** 6 oz, All Varieties: 2 FOR $4
- **Spence & Co. Smoked Salmon Pinwheels** 4 oz, Previously Frozen: 8 FOR $49
- **Gold’s Horse Radish** 6 oz: 2 FOR $19
- **Temp Tee Whipped Cream Cheese** 8 oz: 3 FOR $9.99
- **Lilly’s Raspberry Rugelach** or Apricot, Chocolate or Cinnamon, 8 oz: 2 FOR $12
- **Potato Latkes with Apple Sauce or Tzimmes** 9 to 16 oz: 2 FOR $12
- **Washington State Royal Gala Apples** 179 lb: 2 FOR $12
- **L’Hava Candles or Rokeach Chanukah Candles** 44 Count: 99¢
- **Lilly’s Raspberry Rugelach** or Apricot, Chocolate or Cinnamon, 8 oz: 6 FOR $9.99
- **Temp Tee Whipped Cream Cheese** 8 oz: 3 FOR $9.99
- **Spence & Co. Smoked Salmon Pinwheels** 4 oz, Previously Frozen: Naturally smoked salmon is sliced thin then hand rolled around cream cheese infused with chives.

Visit bigy.com to See All Your Chanukah Favorites
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Nourish Your Body, Mind, and Soul!

Meals-on-Wheels & Meals to Go – Advance Reservation Required
Kosher lunch will be prepared on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. 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 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: $3 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 Elder Services of Berkshire County.

What’s for Lunch?
Gluten Free Main Entrée ** and Dairy Free Main Entrée #
Kosher lunch will be prepared on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

DECEMBER
Thursday, 8 .......... Hot dogs and beans**, stuffed pepper soup, salad, hot dog roll, and pears.
Monday, 12 .......... Spaghetti and meat sauce#, noodle soup, green beans, salad, garlic bread, and grapes.
Tuesday, 13 .......... Chicken and vegetable skillet**# (dark meat only), California blend vegetables, oven roasted potato, rye bread, and apricots.
Thursday, 15 ........ Pumpkin lasagna roll-ups, salad, broccoli, Italian bread, and cookies.
Monday, 19 .......... Red lentil and chick pea stew (vegan)**#, brown rice, salad, oat bread, and tropical fruit salad.
Tuesday, 20 .......... Puerto Rican chicken and rice**# (dark meat only), salad, Mexican corn, crusty white bread, and tea biscuits.
Thursday, 22 .......... Brisket**#, latkes with applesauce, baby carrots, salad, Challah, and apple dumplings.
Monday, 26 .......... Closed for Christmas (falls on Sunday).
Tuesday, 27 .......... Tuna noodle casserole, tomato soup, beets, whole wheat bread, and peaches.
Thursday, 29 .......... Fresh fish**, vegetable soup, noodle kugel, spinach, salad, Farmer’s loaf, and chocolate chip cookies.

JANUARY
Monday, 2 .......... Closed for New Year’s Day (falls on Sunday).
Tuesday, 3 .......... Stir fried chicken**, Thai red curry noodle soup, brown rice, rye bread, and pineapple.
Thursday, 5 .......... Macaroni and cheese, tomato soup, beets, salad, potato bread, and peach cobbler.
Monday, 9 .......... Meat loaf**#, vegetable soup, mashed potatoes, peas, Farmer’s loaf, and applesauce.
Tuesday, 10 .......... Orange glazed chicken**, brown rice, mixed vegetables, salad, pumpernickel bread, and ears.
Thursday, 12 .......... Fish sticks, salad, green beans, baby carrots, hamburger bun, and apricots.
Monday, 16 .......... Closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
Tuesday, 17 .......... Penne “carbonara,” light minestrone soup, broccoli with garlic, garlic bread, and grapes.
Thursday, 19 .......... Fresh fish**, mushroom barley soup, rice pilaf, green beans almondine, multi-grain bread, and cookies.
Tuesday, 24 .......... Turkey stew**, noodles, salad, wheat bread, and parve cookies.
Thursday, 26 .......... “Chicken” souvlaki (soy based chicken), lemon rice, tzatziki, shredded lettuce, falafel on the side, pita bread, and baklava.

PLEASE NOTE: The Elder Services Senior Nutrition Program, under which the Federation operates its kosher lunch program, raised the suggested donation to $3 a meal. The suggested donation is completely voluntary. Seniors who cannot pay a voluntary donation will continue to receive a meal, no questions asked. We appreciate your understanding.

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) 442-2200.

MAZEL TOV!

Drew Zuckerman (son of Rabbi Rachel Barenblat of Congregation Beth Israel) on his bar mitzvah.
Frederic Rutherford on receiving the Massachusetts Governor’s Award for the Humanities.
Phyllis and Joel Curran on their 65th wedding anniversary.
Ira Lieberman on his 80th birthday.

Volunteers are Vital!

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Volunteers ARE VITAL!
OBITUARIES

Jane Reusche, 90, loved being a therapist, devoted to family and friends

PITTSFIELD – Jane Reusche, 90, passed peacefully on Wednesday, October 19. She spent much of her life living in New Jersey, later moving to Massachusetts to be near her children and grandchildren. She earned her master's degree in Social Work from Rutgers University and enjoyed a long career as a social worker, working in both New Jersey and Massachusetts. She loved being a therapist as it was her life's calling.

Jane, above all, was devoted to her family and friends. She took great delight in the accomplishments of her four children and nine grandchildren. She was an avid reader, moviegoer, bridge player, and advocate for women. She loved and valued conversation, whether in person or on the phone, and kept in touch with friends and her extended family. She loved nothing more than to sit at her kitchen table with a cup of tea and catch up with whoever was in front of her.

Over her life, she lived in Jersey City, West Orange, Livingston, and Summit, NJ. She also lived in Pittsfield and South Hadley, MA. She was married to Alverick E Verney III and later to Frank L. Reusche. Both husbands are survived by Jane, as is Gal Spooner. Jane's sister. She also enjoyed the companionship of Daniel Sullivan in her later years.

Jane is survived by her son, Steven Verney and wife Kay; daughters, Karen (Bill) and her husband, Ken Stone and husband Greg, and Alison Wight; grandchildren, Jamie, Michael, Joshua and Ev, Ryan, Forrest, Heather, Sophie, Dylan, and Sam; great-grandchildren, Caroline, Asa, Daniel, and Leah, all of whom gathered much happiness.

There was a private family burial at the North New Salem Cemetery. A Celebration of Life will be held in Austerlitz.

Since Jane loved books and libraries, please send a donation to one of the following libraries: The New Salem Library, The Wendell Library, The Warwick Library, or the Pittsfield Library.

Diane Molty Ditman, 62, side by side at The Berkshire Athenaeum

PITTSFIELD – Diane Molty Ditman, 62, died on Monday, October 24, at Berkshire Medical Center. Born in Pittsfield on January 31, 1960, daughter of the late Edward J. and Barbara A. (Dubois) Ditman. Diane attended local schools and graduated from Pittsfield High School. She attended Curry College and received her bachelor's degree in communication. Diane was a library aide for many years at The Berkshire Athenaeum, Pittsfield's public library. Diane leaves her brother and sister-in-law, Jeffrey and Tammy Ditman of Merry Lea, NY; sister and brother-in-law, Robin and Alan Kimmel of Hillborough, NJ; her longtime companion Diane Swain and several nieces and nephews.

A graveside service was held on Tuesday, October 27, at Keter Israel Cemetery. Donations may be made to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, 305 Broadway, Pittsfield MA 01201.

Carmi Rapport, 91, successful attorney, devoted to family and community

GREAT BARRINGTON – Carmi Rapport, 91, of Great Barrington, died peacefully on November 8, 2022.

Carmi was born in New York City on August 10, 1931, to Albert and Sara Rapport. After a short sojourn in Los Angeles, the young family moved to Hudson in 1937, and later to Great Barrington.

Carmi graduated from Scarsdale High School and Yale, class of 1953. Carmi served in Korea, returned home in 1956, married Marilyn Levitt, and returned to Columbia Law School. In January 1956, while in law school, he met and married on December 23, 1956.

Upon graduation from law school, Carmi returned to New York, and he joined his family's law practice and the community.

Carmi was successful in his career, retiring in his mid-80s. He practiced with his father as Rapport and Rapport, and later as Rapport, Meyers, Griffen, and Whitehead. He was a member and officer of the Columbia County Bar Association, member and officer of the Hudson Lin's Club, board member of the Columbia Memorial Hospital, board member of Columbia-Grenville Community College, Trustee of Colegrove Foundation, and in more recent years, chair of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.

Carmi gave of himself in innumerable ways, offering his time, wisdom, legal and practical advice to those in need.

Carmi was an avid golfer and opera enthusiast. He loved NYC plays and operas. He spent many winters in Arizona. In his home, the young family moved to Hudson in 1937, and later to Great Barrington.

Carmi leaves his wife, Marilyn; children, Sarah, and brother in-law Henry Levitt and wife Deborah; and niece Sarah. Carmi will be greatly missed by so many.

A memorial service was held on Friday, November 11 at Congregation Arshe Emeth, interment forevered at Ahavath Sholom Cemetery in Great Barrington.

Isaak Saltanovich, full of life, with a great sense of humor

PITTSFIELD – Isaak Saltanovich passed peacefully surrounded by his family on Monday, November 7, 2022 at Berkshire Medical Center.

Isaak was born in Odessa, Ukraine, in 1930, his childhood was during World War II and he was a Holocaust survivor.

During his younger years, he served in the Army for four years, often relo-

cating from one location to another. One of the places that he moved to was Belarusz, where he met his future wife, Nina. They were married for 69 years. While in Ukraine, Isaak worked in a beverage production factory. He was a supervising manager, a team man-

ager responsible for automated production. He immigrated to the United States with his family in 1955 to Berkshire County. Isaak loved being surrounded by a great sense of humor. He loved playing chess, skiing, skating, bicycling, and driving. He also enjoyed daily exercise and fitness and taking long walks around his neighborhood daily.

Isaak was very funny and very tech-

nically and computer savvy. He had the latest version of everything and was always on his phone and computer with so many people! He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and friend.

Isaak is survived by his wife, Nina; sons Boris (Inna) and Leonid; and granddaughters Julia and Alla.

Graveside services were held on Thursday, November 10 at Keter Israel Cemetery. Donations may be made to the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, or to the Women Composers of Massachusetts Fund in care of the Flynn & Dagnoli-Benvenga Funeral Home, 3 Elm St. Pittsfield MA 01201.

Honorable Richard Jerome Israel, 91, spent life in public service, selflessly devoted to clients, constituents, county, and religious congregations

GREAT BARRINGTON – The Honorable Richard Jerome Israel, 91, died on Monday, November 7, 2022 at a local hospital.

Israel was born on December 9, 1930 in New York City. He grew up in Providence, Rhode Island, his parents, S. Elliot and Rose (Kantorowitz) Israel. Israel attended Classical High School, Providence, RI. His academic achievements led to his admission to Brown University, where he earned a B.A. in English Literature. He then attended Yale Law School. He spent the first several years of his career in partnership with his father, Fred, in Woonsocket. RI. Richard spent a life in public service, selflessly devoting himself to his clients, his constitu-
ents, his county, and his religious congregations.

He joined the Rhode Island Army National Guard in 1955, serving over 20 years and attaining the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He left his law practice in 1967 to serve as an Associate Attorney General in RI and was twice honored to be elected to serve as the Attorney General of the State of RI. In 1974, he returned to private practice. In 1984, he was nomi-

nated to serve as an Associate Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court. He retired from the bench in 2000, serving in senior status until he stepped down from the bench.

Richard was survived by his wife Lana Israel (Herb), whom he married on November 30, 1977, in Woonsocket, RI. The extraordinary depth of their mutual love and devotion defined the remaining 45 years of Richard’s life and brought him infinite happiness. They enjoyed opening their home to the large blended families required for holiday dinners and other celebra-

tions. The welcoming warmth of their home was felt by every guest and the love, literature, attended performing arts, or had a quiet dinner in their beloved Great Barrington.

Richard is also survived by his brothers, Irving Israel (Karen); sister, Judith Israel; two daughters, Susan Molislan and Karen Molislan (Briar); and six grandchildren, Ben Molislan (Victoria Rand-Biller), Kenneth Biller (Hope), Cameron Biller (Kara), and Mindy at Tanglewood, Berkshire children and 7 great-grandchildren.

A funeral service was held on Friday, November 11 at Congregation Arshe Emeth & Stevens Funeral Home, Great Barrington. Please make donations to the American Heart Association. Rip.

Joy Robin Dronge, 87, passion for the arts, education and unwavering love for family and friends

STECKSBURIDGE – Joy Robin Dronge, 87, died on Sunday, November 6, in Fairview Hospital from pneumonia and complica-
tions of Alzheimer’s disease. She was a beloved teacher and was very close to her family and received exceptional care from her doctor and nurses.

Joy had a passion for the arts, education, and family. She was a family man, composer, teacher, scholar, mother, grandmother, aunt, sister, friend, and so much more.

Joy was a trained flutist who studied with Beryl Barrington at the Berkshire Music School and Hunter College, as well as many other programs. She had her work performed locally at Bard College, Hunter College, University Lesley College, Simmons Rock College of Bard, Spencer trom the concert hall, Long School of Music. American Women Composers of Massachusetts Concerts at the First Parish Church in Watertown, Kripalu Center, and community television, among others. The compositions of 2 of her father, Steinsimson fifty years ago. Joy taught music in the Pittsfield public schools for 14 years and attended Tanglewood in the Berkshires. She taught 3rd grade in the New York City public schools. She was a tenant of the Kennedy Center and performed at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, and has received several grants from the Massachusetts Council of the Arts.

She continued to compose through the Berkshire Music School with her beloved teachers and friends Alice Spatz, Norman Thobodeau, and Tracy Wilson.

Her greatest joy was her four chil-

dren, Risa, Amy, Michael, and David Grashard, and her two granddaugh-
ters, Rebecca Rose and Emma Pearl Payne. She also loved spending time with her companion Sam Barnes. She is remembered for her passion for the arts, her beauty, talent, and unwavering love for family and friends.

Her death is preceded by her husband, Douglas David Dronge, her daughter Risa Grashard, and her brother Mark Dronge. She is survived by her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, sister, nieces, nephews, and many, many friends.

As one of her friends said: “I loved her, and she loved me. What more could you ask for?” She is missed, and her love.

The family requests donations to Stockbridge Simonia and/or Ahavath Sholom.
“What I Could Have Done…”

By Alex Rosenblum / Special to the BJV

My son-in-law AJ Reisman – amateur chef, prolific blogger, published children’s author, and product manager at a startup Arbor, focused on bringing families together through shared history – sent me a text message with a recent article from The New Yorker titled, “Recipes from the Survivors of Auschwitz.” By Hannah Goldfield. The introductory blurb read: “Survivors of the Holocaust meet up to launch a cookbook – recipes for matzo-ball soup, kugel mogel, and Marion Wiesel’s onionless latkes, favored by her husband, Elie.”

“What do you think?” wrote AJ. “No, what do I think?!” – I asked myself this question over and over again, without reading past the introduction. “Recipes from the Holocaust” simply did not make sense to me.

In my ignorance of the contents of the article, I was annoyed and perhaps even angry. To put Auschwitz and recipe in the same sentence was the perfect oxymoron – a hurtful, incongruous use of words. And so, in response to my son-in-law’s inquiry, I, a son of an Auschwitz survivor, sat down to memorialize my thoughts and answer him. By coincidence, at the very same time AJ prepared his daily blog with The New Yorker article as his central theme. Fully prepared after reading and digesting the article, AJ, a generation American, pointed out to his readers: “Food is how we remember families, honor tradition, and understand stories.”

Only later did I bother to read Hannah Goldfield’s wonderful account of the Auschwitz survivors who celebrated the recent publication of the cookbook, *Honey Cake and Latkes: Recipes from the Old World by the Auschwitz-Birkenau Survivors*, at the Neue Museum in New York. (The museum’s patron, Ronald Lauder, is also chair of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Foundation, which organized the publication of the book.) The survivors described how the excruciating pain of cruel days and nights in the death camp was slightly alleviated by the inmates’ conversations about the food from the pre-war days in the *bahem* (pre-war home) that they so dearly missed and longed for. In their own small way, overhearing the few surviving conversations about the past kept many alive.

I turned to my wonderful wife of fifty years, Sabina, and told her about The New Yorker article my son-in-law forwarded to me and my initial reaction to it. Sabina was the richter-gutsher – the real American – in our family, born in Brooklyn with parents born in Manhattan. Her Bubbe Sadie and Zydeh Louie Laybush arrived in Ellis Island from the Pale of Russia circa 1905. In the late 1960s, all three generations lived in an extended family setting in Bensonhurst, which is where I courted my wife. And Zydeh Louie was my winning connection. No other suitor could get past Zydeh Louie in his rocking chair near the home entrance. Once I was able to engage him with discussions of pogroms, the voyage to America, and living on the Lower East Side – all in my tzehebrokheite (broken), but passable, Yiddish – I became his choice as the boyfriend with the best kholos (groom) potential.

Upon our marriage, Sabina became a real balleh:bosteh, working full time as a teacher, managing our house in Brooklyn and the weekend home in the Berkshires, and raising our two daughters. Early on, she decided that it was time to show the in-laws her own American-style cooking prowess. She prepared a sumptuous vegetarian meal with pastas and numerous vegetables and soup. After the meal, she turned triumphantly to my father and inquired as to his reaction to this grand vegetarian meal. My father smiled, nodded, and declared to the family, “zayer git – very good!” As my wife walked toward the kitchen with the tray of empty dishes, my father turned and whispered into my ear, “Takeh, zayer git... ober, vos hot gesheyn tzu a shrifkt fleysh un brayt?” (“Really, very good – but what happened to a piece of meat and bread?”)

Only years later did I tell my wife what my father had said to me that day in confidence. I simply could not explain with any comfort and certainty why bread was important to him. What remains to this day is a form of a legacy and memory of ‘Auschwitz and food’ based on the passive participation of my brothers and me in an unusual ritual at our family’s Friday night Shabbos meals. We listened and watched without understanding, and I’m not sure I understand even today. The Shabbos lights were lit, the wine was poured, and the khalubah was torn apart and passed around. My father would pause and stand up while holding a small piece of khalubah, then show it to us and say, “Vos ikh velt gekent teagen in khalbah mitn dos shrift brayt?” – “What I could have done in the concentration camp with this little piece of bread?”

Ramblings from me, a child of survivors and an older man now, or an important lesson for the grandchildren from their father and their grandfather, saved and passed on for posterity.

*Alex Ziske Rosenblum is an attorney and the Berkshire Jewish Voice’s brodlin (huskly) correspondent, whose last article for this paper was the second installment of his history of Jews and alcoholic beverages. He has a home in Richmond.*
Berkshire Hills Hadassah News Update

Hadassah, the power to heal our world. Together.

We believe we can and must do all we can to advance justice and healing. We’ve been defying the odds for more than a century, creating new leadership roles for women, sustaining a vibrant Jewish state and paving the way for a pioneering health care system that saves lives every day. We are the power of women who do. And, we believe that each of us has the power to heal the world, to take action, to make an impact. Learn more at www.hadassah.org

Hadassah's Areas of Focus:

• Advancing Health Care & Medicine  • Connecting to Israel & Zionism  • Advocating for Change

What We Do

Whether we’re fighting for Holocaust and anti-hate education funding in schools, discovering groundbreaking medical advances, or setting a young person on a path to success—our global impact brings healing to the world. During these difficult times it is good to know Hadassah can be of help to refugees from Ukraine, both on-site and through our Youth Aliyah Villages. Elsewhere throughout the United States, Israeli youth have started a new school year. Setting a record in enrollment, Hadassah’s Meir Shifrah’s Youth Aliyah Village has 678 students on the first day of school. Shifrah carries on the rich tradition of Youth Aliyah, which from its inception in 1934 has rescued and educated thousands of needy, at-risk youth from Israel and around the world.

Our Hospitals

Supported by generous donors in the United States and around the world, the Hadassah Medical Organization’s (HMO) two Jerusalem hospitals are innovative and compassionate global leaders in medical care, treatments and research serving more than a million women, men and children a year, regardless of religion, race or nationality.

Please support Hadassah

Join us and help us to sustain Hadassah’s critical work in saving the world in so many ways. Keep in touch with us with your email or on Facebook. Berkshire Hills Hadassah is part of Hadassah’s Connecticut Region. Order your Mah Jong cards from us. To order and pay online go to: events.hadassah.org/mahjongcards.

Rosalind Kopfstein, President

Contact us at:
Berkshire Hills Hadassah
PO Box 187
Pittsfield, MA 01202
or at:
www.Berkshirehillshadassah@gmail.com

Happy Chanukah!
TRAVELING WITH JEWISH TASTE
A Jewish, Afro-Atlantic Memoir as Told Via Food

By Carol Goodman Kaufman

Koshersoul. Michael Twitty’s latest book, is a memoir as told through the lens of foodways. The book, as the author avows, “is not an academic journey, and it’s purposely not a cookbook.” Rather, it is a collection of memories and meditations on his life attempting to merge his Afro-Atlantic roots with his Jewish identity or, as he states, “what it means to be a person with multiple families.” He takes his inspiration from the global Jewish and African diasporas by tracing the history of foods and their meanings in their respective cultures.

Black, gay, and a convert to Judaism at the age of 22, Twitty tells a story that is at times uplifting and other times depressing. He has faced enormous challenges while attempting to bridge divides among people. Through the various experiences he’s had, whether working as a Hebrew School teacher or a caterer, relationships have run the gamut from welcoming, respectful congregants and loving students to encounters with a racist rebbezman whose vitriol made me cringe with embarrassment for our people. A light unto the nations she was not.

And as if we weren’t already battling racism and anti-gay hatred, Twitty encountered virulent antisemitism while speaking at, of all places, a food festival. When he had the audacity (maybe?) to mention the Jewish version of sambusak that has its roots in the foods of the Silk Road, Iranian and Armenian Muslim women attacked him for using the word “Jewish.” Other participants shunned him. Memories of the shameful Durban women’s conference came to my mind.

As he promised at the outset, Koshersoul is not a cookbook, so it’s only in the last chapter that actual recipes appear, arranged by their relevance to specific holidays and Shabbat. I chose to prepare three. First up was “Jamaican Jerk Spaghetti” that merges Twitty’s Afro-Caribbean roots with what I assume must be the Sephardic experience of the Italian diaspora. The recipe required four pots, three glass measuring cups, and five measuring spoons. So, yeah, it was a process that took many hours. Although the fritters were golden brown and crispy, they had no flavor. I ended up smothering mine in mustard while Joel used ketchup. (Just FYI, the discarded skins look like a Halloween set-up of fake eyeballs. Perhaps the source of the bean’s name?)

“Black-Eyed Pea Fritters,” on the other hand, were definitely not worth the tremendous effort of soaking and peeling the skins off the little legumes, a process that took many hours. Although the fritters were golden brown and crispy, they had no flavor. I ended up smothering mine in mustard while Joel used ketchup. (Just FYI, the discarded skins look like a Halloween set-up of fake eyeballs. Perhaps the source of the bean’s name?)

Much less work with a tastier outcome was the “Yam Kugel.” To be botanically correct, however, the main ingredient is sweet potato. Yams and sweet potatoes are entirely different species of plants. Yams have rough, dark brown skin that is often compared to tree bark, and their flesh is dry and starchy like a regular potato. Sweet potatoes, on the other hand, have smooth reddish skin, softer flesh, and are much sweeter. And while sweet potatoes originated in Central or South America, the yam’s origin is in Africa.

Having said all that, the kugel, no matter what it’s called, was delicious. However, it was so sweet that it felt more like a crustless sweet potato pecan pie than a side dish.

Last autumn, Michael W. Twitty spoke to cookbook author Adeena Sussman about Koshersoul as part of our “Jewish Literary Voices” series presented with the Jewish Book Council. You can view a recording of that conversation at: youtube.com/watch?v=aASf0qAKDMw.

Carol Goodman Kaufman has just published the second picture book in what is planned as a series about nature for young children. Written under the name Carolinda Goodman, Pirate Ships and Shooting Stars is written in rhyme, and its lively stanzas encourage young children to use their imaginations when looking up at the sky. From rainboxes to constellations to pictures in the clouds, Kaufman believes there is much to see if only they lift their eyes.

In addition to her work for children, Kaufman also writes under her “real” name about food history (including for the Berkshire Jewish Voice), and her first novel, a murder mystery, will drop in 2023.
The Happy Mistake That Gave Us the “Soup Almond”

How did a bureaucratic mix-up during Israel’s 1950s austerity period lead to one of Israel’s most unique culinary innovations? How did an Ashkenazi Jewish Passover recipe end up on the holiday table of every Jewish Israeli, and where does the distinctive yellow color of the soup almond come from? In short, here is the story of Israel’s prized “shakedei marak.”

By Amit Naor / National Library of Israel

Nothing fills us with more pride than the list of exclusive Israeli inventions, right? Every year during the Independence Day ceremony, we are reminded of how we invented drip irrigation, the cherry tomato and the disk-on-key. But there is one Israeli invention that is a special source of national pride and that no holiday table dares be without—the “soup almond”.

According to the story on the Osem website, each manufacturing plant was facing a rationing crisis. The story on the Osem website, each manufacturing plant did not receive its flour allowance. It’s not clear whether human error or some other unfortunate accident was to blame, but one month the Osem plant did not receive its flour allowance.

Everyone is familiar with the saying, “when life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” In this case, the lemons were 300 kilograms of oil gifted to the Osem company to compensate for the missing flour. Lemonade was going to be a loss hit, but during a time of severe shortage, Osem wasn’t about to pass up the opportunity to use the oil to fry flour. And lo and behold— miracles of miracles—Osem’s fried flour morsels became a satisfying and heart-warming dish, and this was also the thinking of the Osem company’s food engineers.

It was the early 1950s, the days of tza‘ar – Israel’s national austerity plan. Two years earlier, Osem had come up with another brilliant invention to deal with the rice shortage. They called it petitim – “soup nuts,” or the Yiddish equivalent to “soup almond”.

First there were zup mandlen, “soup almonds” in Yiddish, which were added to the soup that Ashkenazi Jews ate during Passover. They were made from matzah meal and egg and were apparently much larger, perhaps more similar to the matzah balls (kneidlach) that many know today. But, unlike the matzah ball which is boiled, the homemade soup almonds were either baked or fried, just like today’s soup almonds.

The product evolved over time. It was adapted to the local market and was given new and sophisticated packaging. The soup almond finally settled on its square and puffy shape, unique yellow color, salty taste, becoming a must-have product on every holiday table, because how can you eat soup without it?

Like any product created by accident or under improvised circumstances, the initial appearance of the Osem soup almonds did not resemble what they look like today, and there were also variations in name and use. In the beginning, Israeli soup almonds were made in two forms: one was diamond-shaped and flatter (but larger than today’s version), and the other was oval like an egg and was called an “egg almond.” The home-made Ashkenazi soup almonds may have been the inspiration, but the company believed that the fried flour morsels might also have other uses. Early newspaper ads and posters preserved in the Ephemeris Collection at the National Library of Israel recommend adding the egg almonds to cold or hot drinks, and even to a glass of beer. Feel free to try this at home and let us know what you think.

The product’s unique history, which includes a bureaucratic mix-up, makes it a fun conversation piece. And who can resist something that began as a bureaucratic mix-up, ended up on the holiday table of every Jewish Israeli, and developed into something so unique and beloved? Nothing fills us with more pride than the list of exclusive Israeli inventions, right?
The award-winning news producer talks about his career in television, his memoir, and the state of the media

byline Albert Stern

On Thursday, December 8 at 6:45 p.m., “Jewish Literary Voices,” a Federation series in collaboration with The Jewish Book Council welcomes renowned television news producer Ira Rosen. His book Ticking Clock: Behind the Scenes at 60 Minutes presents a trip to Israel. He talked about his book and shared insights about the current state of the media. Our interview was edited for length and clarity.

Although Ticking Clock is a short and manageable book, you cover so much ground from when you started in the 1970s, a time when the mainstream media were the gatekeepers of the news, all the way up to the Internet age, where there are news sources coming at you from many different directions. What was better then about the way news was delivered to the public and what’s better now?

I think back then – and I don’t want to sound like an old fuddy-duddy – but the story-telling was a lot better. One of the things that did in its heyday was to present both sides of the story. One of the stories that I loved was something called “Driving While Old.” Harry Reasoner did this story a long time ago about some old people who didn’t have licenses and really shouldn’t have. He interviewed them, got a license and gave it to them. He didn’t try to entice them to go to the supermarket, golf, whatever it is they do. One of the things that he used to call this a “Hey, Mildred Story” – as in, “Hey, Mildred, come over here. What do you think?” “God, get the guy off the road.” “No, no, you’re going to kill the guy if you do that.” That was the cacophony that existed on a person’s couch on a Sunday night. People would argue about that sort of thing. We gave you both sides of a story that allowed you, as the viewer, to decide. Today, people are watching TV and the news, for the most part, to have their ideas reinforced. So if you’re pro-Democrat, you know what to expect. You’re not going to reflect their positions in a story because I think you, as a viewer, want to hear what your ideas are. Tell me what your thinking is.” I would always try to get the facts out there, because I think that’s what you, as the viewer, want to decide. Today, people are watching TV and the news, for the most part, to have their ideas reinforced. So if you’re pro-Democrat, you know what to expect. You’re not going to reflect their positions in a story because I think you, as the viewer, want to hear what your ideas are. Tell me what your thinking is.”

So that kind of segue into my next question. We’re speaking just a couple of days after CBS News reported that indeed the Hunter Biden laptop is real. It’s a true story. That’s about two years after the news about the authenticity of the laptop broke, and the CBS story seemed, to me anyway, to be following the same breadcrumbs that the New York Post reporter did to confirm her story back then. In a 90 minute interview Leslie Stahl did with Donald Trump before the election two years ago, she famously said that this information cannot be verified. And it didn’t seem like she had much interest in verifying the story. So do you think this adherence to particular political narratives is causing today’s mainstream media to suppress a given your historical perspective as an investigative reporter trying to get to the bottom of malfeasance and corruption, how does that make you feel?

Well, I think Leslie’s one of the fairest correspondents I know – she is really right down the middle. I think when she did that Donald Trump interview, I think nobody had any certainty about the validity of the computer. The New York Times didn’t, the Washington Post didn’t. You’re right. The New York Post did, but the New York Post is the New York Post. So I think that, just to be fair to Leslie, when she did that interview, there were a lot of questions evolving, and it really was a job. An interview or her story at the time or going looking at that particular computer. She was there to do an interview with Trump. But anyway, I think your question really is, is there a lot of a slant in terms of some of these stories? From what I know, there is absolutely a bias in certain news organizations. And that’s seriously unfortunate. I mean, before the election in 2020, I think there was some discouragement about going after Biden, who was running against Trump, in certain quarters of the media. So I think there were certain slants that were going on and it makes me sad that that sort of thing exists.

But how do you feel it affects public trust in the mainstream media, particularly now? You also have the very powerful entities of social media. Just to go back to the Hunter Biden laptop, Facebook would not allow you people to post stories about it, nor would Twitter, et cetera, et cetera. I mean, it seemed like the news was being suppressed. Why should we trust the news sources now?

Well, I think the facts they’re printing are generally accurate – but what you don’t know is what they’re excluding. It’s the exclusion that sort of worries me right now. Journalism schools are doing something called news literacy, basically teaching students to be critical readers of newspapers and TV to be able to, in terms of what they read, analyze it on their own. I think in many ways that doesn’t exist among consumers of the news. People, like I said, go to have their ideas reinforced, not to have them challenged.

One of the great things also about your book is it does give us an incredible behind-the-scenes look into the personalities of TV news presenters. It seemed like there was definitely some bridge building that might have been going on on your part. And you were that frank about the people you worked with back then?

Who are you talking about specifically? I mean, Mike Wallace is the macho character of 60 Minutes. I’ve always wanted to do it, but I actually needed to write an honest portrayal, both good and bad. I’m pretty open about his genius in terms of what he did. On the other hand, I’m also pretty open about how he treated me. It’s not something that I’m the first one to report. Mike Wallace, at his father’s funeral, talked a little about it. Morley Safer, in the final interview with Mike, talked about it. He actually used the word “prick” to Mike’s face, saying “that you are one.” I could have written a book where everybody is great, and everyone works together, but it would not have been an honest book. And I feel it’s really important to write an honest book.

What fallout has there been for you professionally and personally?

People who actually read the book love the book. And the people who didn’t read the book didn’t like the book. So I think in terms of the fallout, some people aren’t talking to me now, but they weren’t talking to me before I wrote the book. So it’s not much of a loss in that regard. When you write these things, half the people are going to really love it. And the producers I work with would talk to me for hours about the book on the phone, loving it and kvelling over it. Others who hadn’t had a chance to read it would say, “well, why did you write this or that?” But they haven’t read it within the context of the larger story. So when I approached the book, I wanted to let the chips fall where they may.

You were a pioneer in the use of the hidden camera to expose people involved in your stories. How do you feel about the way that it’s being used now by, let’s say, Project Veritas?

I project Project Veritas is despicable, but the use of hidden cameras in mainstream media has really gone away. After Food Lion, which I wrote a bit in the book, it kind of disappeared. [Editor’s Note: In 1997, a federal jury ordered ABC to pay Food Lion more than $8.5 million in punitive damages for a hidden-camera exposé on the grocery store chain’s sanitation practices. ABC ultimately won the case on appeal, but the legal wrangling was prolonged and the cost of litigation was high.] Project Veritas is doing [hidden camera] in an entrapment kind of way. When we did our hidden camera stories, the key was to be a fly on the wall, to go into a place and let the wrongdoing expose itself. So if you’re in a nursing home, for example, you expose the abuses that are going on. You go to the packaging plant, you see how they’re treating the animals, and you didn’t try to influence what you’re seeing. What did you say was you were capturing what the abuses were and the wrongdoing. What Veritas is doing is trying to entrap you, trying to get you to say something or do something that you normally would not do. They train their people to do that. So it’s a totally different world.

We had a society of professional journalist standards checklist that we had to go through the checklist, and the equivalent of a search warrant for the police. You couldn’t do it unless you got all these various levels of approval.

Towards the end, you write about [hedge fund heirens and conservative activist] Rebekah Mercer. [Editor’s Note: Rosen writes, “It seemed with the election of Trump...”

IRA ROSEN INTERVIEW, continued on page 22

Image 36x41 to 270x178

On the other hand, I’m also pretty open about how he treated me. It’s not something that I’m the first one to report. Mike Wallace, at his father’s funeral, talked a little about it. Morley Safer, in the final interview with Mike, talked about it. He actually used the word “prick” to Mike’s face, saying “that you are one.” I could have written a book where everybody is great, and everyone works together, but it would not have been an honest book. And I feel it’s really important to write an honest book.
Community share a tremendous amount in spirit. In some ways, Kibbutz Ein Harod’s Mishkan Museum of Art and the Berkshires this is the telltale sign of winter’s approach, not the crisp golden leaves and pilgrimages south to Africa in search of warmer weather. Here in northern Israel, the migrating pelicans catches my eye. The birds arc through the sky, making their yearly pilgrimage. Perhaps only migrating birds know - suspended between earth and sky - the heartbeat of two homelands.

Perhaps only migrating birds know - suspended between earth and sky - the heartbeat of two homelands. A few years back, when I was walking up the white stone stairs to begin my day as an educator at the Mishkan Museum of Art, my husband, Len Pader, who spent his summers since childhood in the Berkshires. I grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, and we met in college at Brandeis University. I remember the first time he took me to visit his family in Lenox. As we pulled off the Mass Pike, enveloped by blue green hills, he turned to me and said, “Welcome to the most beautiful place on Earth.” As an artist and art educator, I immediately fell in love with the way nature, art, and community seamlessly blend into one another, each only enhancing the other’s exquisiteness. Even after moving to Israel, I knew that we would keep the magic of the Berkshires in our lives, and are lucky enough to return often to visit family and bring our three children to explore the forest of sculptures at the Mount, move to the beat of dancers at Jacob’s Pillow, picnic on the lawn at Tanglewood, and be inspired by the evocative Psalms and create artwork inspired by the texts. I learned over Skype with Berkshires artist Jeff Kramer and together with the other ZUG artists, we exhibited Art of the Fighting Men of Psalms and create artwork inspired by the texts. I learned over Skype with Berkshires artist Jeff Kramer and together with the other ZUG artists, we exhibited art-in-the-foyer gallery of the Miron Sima auditorium at the Mishkan Museum, and the Afula-Gilboa region in Israel, and specifically with the museum, I found a bridge between two worlds. I first became involved with the partnership in 2018 when I participated in Project ZUG, an artistic collaboration that paired Berkshires artists with artists in the Afula-Gilboa region to learn together from the Book of Psalms and create artwork inspired by the texts. I learned over Skype with Berkshires artist Jeff Kramer and together with the other ZUG artists, we exhibited our work in the foyer gallery of the Miron Sima auditorium at the Mishkan Museum of Art in October 2018. That initial connection between the Berkshires and the Mishkan Museum of Art, Ein Harod has led to a growing number of collaborations and a beautifully developing partnership.

The Mishkan is the beating heart at the center of the broader community. Time and again, Mishkan educators witness how the process of encountering and creating art in the museum allows students to express their own inner spark. The Mishkan is the beating heart at the center of the broader community. Time and again, Mishkan educators witness how the process of encountering and creating art in the museum allows students to express their own inner spark.

By Tanya Fredman / Special to the BFJ

My family and I fly between our life in northern Israel – with my role as an art educator at the Mishkan Museum, our Kibbutz Shluhot community, my children’s school, and my husband’s work – and our families in the US. I often feel not unlike poet Leah Goldberg wrote in her poem “Pine”:

I walk up the white stone stairs to begin my day as an educator at the Mishkan Museum of Art, Ein Harod...
dialogue that emerges from the exhibition outlines a familial and communal existence, rooted in the complex political, cultural and social reality of Israeli society. Exhibiting the Abu-Shakra Family exhibition alongside the Mishkan’s permanent collection exhibition and Judaica wing, which include spaces dedicated to the Jewish historical narrative, opens up an opportunity for a meeting and dialogue between narratives, cultures, and values. Orit Lev-Segev, director of the Mishkan Museum of Art, says of the exhibition, “In the face of voices who seek to close us off, we seek to open. To open the mind, to open hearts and perspectives, to create a pluralistic space for getting to know each other, for discussion, for dialogue.”

The educational programs accompanying the exhibition are vital now more than ever. When the discourse in society seeks to alienate us from one another, art offers us an opportunity to come together with respect. Focusing on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) skills, the program encourages local Arab and Jewish school children to find common interests and values through art, and deepen their connection to their own identity while developing their understanding and appreciation for another community’s cultural heritage. This encounter between art and people in the respectful space of the Mishkan Museum of Art will create a ripple effect of understanding that will impact visitors’ families and communities and make a significant contribution to the fabric of shared life in Israel.

One of the lessons learned from the COVID period was the power of connecting beyond our borders. In 2021, we collaborated with the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, one of my favorite places to visit on our Berkshires trips. Together with Mishkan Head of Education Development Ofrim Gardi-Cohen and Clark Director of Education Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, we developed “Disruption and Reemergence,” a museum program for teenagers to explore responses to times of change through art in different historical periods and today. The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires generously sponsored local Israeli teenagers’ participation in the program, visiting the Mishkan and encountering artworks from both the Mishkan and Clark collections and embarking on their own artistic journeys of creating change through art. Students use the two museum collections as a platform for exploring ways cultures experience change and have an opportunity to ask questions to peers in the US in a video conference. “Disruptions and Reemergence” continues this year, as do other opportunities for connection between the Berkshires and the Mishkan Museum through ZoomArt virtual tours, resources and art workshops, and of course in-person visits and group programs.

When I leave the Mishkan Museum of Art after a day of exploring with local Israeli youth, I gaze beyond the Kibbutz lawns and homes to the Biblical Gilboa mountains beyond and know that connecting to our past and to one another through art will help us create a better future. And as the last birds make their way from the sky before the setting sun, and make a difference for the future, and that there, 6,000 miles away, a beautiful Berkshires day is about to begin.

Come see the magic of the Mishkan for yourself. This May 2023, join other art lovers in Israel for a one of a kind, behind the scenes, well-curated Art and Culture trip on behalf of the Mishkan Museum of Art. Details and registration here: arts-and-culture.forms-wizard.biz/