Celebrate Chanukah at NightWood

Kindle menorah lights in an ethereal winter landscape at The Mount

LENOX – On Thursday, December 2, from 6 to 8 p.m., join Federation in a community celebration of Chanukah at NightWood, an ethereal winter landscape of sound, light, and color on the grounds of Edith Wharton’s home, The Mount.

NightWood combines music, lighting effects, and theatrical elements in creating seven unique scenes evoking wonder, mysteries, and magic. Tour the grounds and then join together with community members from across the Berkshires for holiday festivities. At 7:30 p.m., we will meet at the stable to kindle menorah lights marking the fifth night of Chanukah and celebrate with holiday 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 Jewish Musicians Collective – Jonathan Denmark, Noah Cook-Dubin, Matt Morian, and Sherrri James Buxton – 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.

NIGHTWOOD, continued on page 8

The OMfG Podcast: Jewish Wisdom for Unprecedented Times

Coping (like all of us) with the pandemic, two rabbis grapple (entertainingly) with matters mundane to metaphysical

By Albert Stern / BJV Editor

“I like to think that Judaism showed up for people” during the pandemic, says Rabbi Jen Gubitz. “I also think Peloton and Netflix did.”

For the last year, the OMfG Podcast, which Rabbi Gubitz co-hosts with Rabbi Jodie Gordon of Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, has shown up every month or so with the two Jewishly-focused friends’ breezy-but-serious take on matters mundane to metaphysical. The show’s tagline is “Jewish wisdom for unprecedented times.”

As people have started to feel inspired to pandemic life and habituated to its inanities and started to feel inured to pandemic life,” and while many people have

Jewish wisdom for unprecedented times,” and while many people have experienced, as Gubitz puts it, “still unprecedented. Every day seems to be unprecedented.”

And generally not in a good way – nevertheless assert can mean many things aside from the obvious. Gubitz

The OMfG PODCAST, continued on page 8

The Insidiousness of the “Canary in the Coal Mine” Analogy

Author Dara Horn on her new book about today’s overt anti-Semitism and its cultural resonances

By Carol Goodman Kaufman / Special to the BJV

I recently had the opportunity to talk with Dara Horn, the prolific and award-winning author of five novels, essays, and op-eds. Now she has written a book whose title may cause at least a frown of trepidation: People Love Dead Jews: Reports from a Haunted Present (WW Norton). To be honest, if I hadn’t read – and loved – every other word the woman has written, I may not have picked up this book. But the publisher sent me a copy. I’ve read the entire thing and it is brilliant. Disturbing. But brilliant and, of course, well-written.

The interview went on for well over an hour. Here are some excerpts.

The Insidiousness of the “Canary in the Coal Mine” Analogy

Let’s start with the title. Please tell me about how that came about.

Five years ago, I wouldn’t even have considered writing this book. I’m not a particularly brave person in general. I’m not polemical. I hate arguing with people. My husband encouraged me to be braver than I would be otherwise.

I originally wrote the first chapter for Smithsonian Magazine as an essay about Anne Frank. I was filled with dread. Why didn’t I want to write about her? Then I remembered an incident that took place at the museum. An Orthodox Jewish man who worked there wasn’t allowed to wear his yarmulke. So I said, “Yes, I’ll do a piece, but it might not be what you expected.” It was about erasing Jewish identity. I wrote that piece in the summer of 2018 and it came out in the November issue, a few days after Pittsburgh Tree of Life massacre. And then the New York Times called wanting an op-ed about that. I had to ask myself why am I always asked to write about dead Jews?

DARA HORN, continued on page 21

A Great Miracle Happened... Over There

The Jewish Museum’s “Accumulations: Hanukkah Lamps” features over 80 menorahs made over six centuries and on four continents

On view through January 2022, this exhibit in New York City showcases menorahs drawn from The Jewish Museum’s 1,050-piece collection, the largest in the world. The flexuous hanukkiah above was crafted in Troy, NY by Larry Kagan (a longtime Professor of Art at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute) in the early 1980s, one of eight in a series called “Menorah Memories.” Interested in seeing some of the others (and many more)? Then please turn to page 24.
In My View

Welcome and Farewell
By Dara Kaufman

It’s hard to believe another calendar year has come and (almost) gone. It has been an amazing year! Despite the hardships of the pandemic, our community stepped up in such significant ways. Many volunteers are behind Federation’s work, including our board of directors, committee chairs and members, event hosts, and project volunteers. We had volunteers who delivered meals, holiday care packages, and the Berkshire Jewish Voice. We had volunteers who visited and celebrated Shabbat with our elders, implemented programming, and managed our mitzvah drives. We would be remiss not to mention all the volunteers who helped us raise the resources necessary to maintain the critical programs and services upon which our community depends. We would not be the Federation or the Jewish community we are today without our dedicated volunteers. Thank you all!

Behind this amazing volunteer effort is Federation’s PJ Library and Volunteer Coordinator Susan Frisch Lehrer, who recently announced that she would retire at the end of the year. Anyone who has met or worked with Susan knows that she is looking forward to learning more about our Jewish community while stepping into this new role.

We are excited by the opportunities revealed through our recent strategic planning process and are anxious to work with all of you while engaging with staff, board members, donors and program participants over the next year as she begins her journey in this new role. We are excited by the opportunities revealed through our recent strategic planning process and are anxious to work with all of you, our friends and supporters, to create a strong and bright future for our Berkshire Jewish community.

We are so grateful for Susan’s years of service and are working on a way for our community to honor her in a pandemic-safe way. Please watch Federation’s weekly eblast for more details.

While we say farewell to some staff, we also say welcome to a new member of the Federation family. This past October, we welcomed Rabbi Daveen Litwin as our new Director of Community Engagement and Programming. This new full-time position builds upon the Federation’s existing programming and community building efforts while expanding the Federation’s capacity to tackle important priorities for outreach and engagement, as identified in our recent strategic plan. Daveen has started in a part-time remote capacity and will transition to a full-time Berkshirite in early 2022.

You can read more about Rabbi Litwin in the announcement on page 8. I know she is looking forward to learning more about our Jewish community while engaging with staff, board members, donors and program participants over the next year as she begins her journey in this new role.

We are excited by the opportunities revealed through our recent strategic planning process and are anxious to work with all of you, our friends and supporters, to create a strong and bright future for our Berkshire Jewish community.

As we approach the end of our 2021 campaign, your support is necessary more than ever before. If you have already made a gift, thank you! Your caring support will help create comfort, care, and Jewish connection for people of all ages across our community. If you have not yet made a gift, there is still time to do so!

Thank you!

Dara Kaufman is the executive director of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires.
Rabbi Reflection

Plans for Winter (Inner) Travel
By Rabbi Barbara Cohen

How do we know if we are on the right inner path? What are the signposts – do we recognize them and what do they say that gives us the sense that we are or are not living the life that we are supposed to be living? What did you want to be when you grew up? Did the way to that hoped-for future seem clear even in your child mind? How close did you get? Or were there impediments, both real and imposed, from the voices in your personal and communal life that stick in your head to this day that kept you from getting there? If you wanted to be in a relationship, did you find your soulmate? The first time, the second time – or did that person somehow get away? What are your personal beliefs about having free will and the impact of destiny… karma, bashert, pre-ordained experiences?

I had never heard of this word until today…”compatibilism”…but what I learned it means is the extent to which we weigh these two seemingly oppo-

osite beliefs…free will and preordination… and how we might consider their dual

ordained experiences?

belief about having free will and the impact of destiny … karma, pre-

bashert

We see now more clearly than before that it is the synagogue that enables us to find religious support in a lonely world.

It is often the only place that always cares about you as an individual, and where if you are not there someone misses you. It is the one place where no one suffers alone or grieves alone.

It is often the only place that enables us to find religious support in a lonely world.

... and the sense of holiness that community fosters.

Jews find the community that they have been missing, help in raising their children, and the sense of holiness that community fosters.

And the pandemic, interestingly, has made us appreciate the synagogue in ways that we did not before. We see now more clearly than before that it is the synagogue that enables us to find religious support in a lonely world.

We see now more clearly than before that it is the synagogue that enables us to find religious support in a lonely world.

In this new American reality, despite endless moaning about the inadequacies of congregations, the synagogue has become more important than ever. It is there that Jews find the community that they have been missing, help in raising their children, and the sense of holiness that community fosters.

And the pandemic, interestingly, has made us appreciate the synagogue in ways that we did not before. We see now more clearly than before that it is the synagogue that enables us to find religious support in a lonely world.

Although the pandemic has forced people to stay away from each other, the synagogue has become an outlet for passionate political opinions. But it cannot offer meaningful friendship, or “What do you mean?” I know that there is no easy answer to this question, perhaps, most painfully, that authentic self was buried beneath a sense that no one really cared or that the question itself was frivolous, and we were not entitled to find the answer.

I would like to propose that maybe this is a good time to be asking, I imagine that most of the people reading this article are mature and have lots of life experi-

ence behind them – maybe with some time and, one hopes, with some good health and mental capacity to devote to this. “Too late,” you say. “Why bother,” you ask. Because we are living in existentially turbulent times and there is already enough space dedicated to anxiety about COVID, politics, and the future of the planet. All are important topics that we should be thinking and doing something about. They do tend, however, to be draining of our inner peace reserves.

The week to rediscover and reclaim parts of our exiled selves can be very restorative and worth the effort. And with the winter coming, whether you will be here in the snow or in the warmth somewhere else, I hope you might build in the time to just sit and think about your inner heart and what it seeks. This is the work of spiritual direction – the point you point somewhere… a destination longingly recalled and waiting to be found.

With you on this journey.

Rabbi Barbara Cohen is the spiritual leader of Congregation Ahavath Sholom in Great Barrington.

Why ‘Zoom Judaism’ Will Never Work
Former URJ president predicts a rapid return to communal life centered on the synagogue
By Eric Yoffie / The Jewish Experience

What will Jewish life be post-

pandemic?

This will run back to the synagogue. They will not drift back; they will run back.

Yes, adjustments will be made: The Jewish communal world will rethink the need for large facilities and will reduce infrastructure costs. Digital tools will be more important.

Synagogue and JCC memberships will be somewhat smaller. And Zoom worship will remain a fixture for those who need it. (Virtual worship has made worship will remain a fixture for those who need it.)

But what we have learned, more than anything else, is how much we miss tactile, face-to-face Judaism. Zoom-Judaism is wonderfully convenient, but alas, it is also, ultimately, religiously unfulfilling and terribly isolating.

And precisely because some of what we have been doing during the pandemic will be permanent – many, many Jews will spend more time working at home – not 5 days a week but 2 or 3 days a week – the in-person dimension of synagogue life will become that much more important.

The communal aspect of the synagogue is the beating heart of our Jewish expe-

rience. Without community, Judaism survives barely, if at all; our ritual is barren, our worship withers, and we struggle to study Torah. Better death than solitude, the rabbis teach – o chenarah, o mitzvah.

This is hardly a new insight, of course, but in the last half century, it is some-

thing that has become more and more apparent. Most American Jews no longer live in Jewish neighborhoods. They no longer have grandparents who live down the block and who are there for Jewish holidays and for babysitting.

Thank you volunteers Ellen Rosenblatt and the BJV delivery team, Michael Albert and Roman Rozenlyum.

Paid advertisements do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires or its members.
Happy Chanukah!
Celebrating the Festival of Lights

25.4 oz. • Select Varieties
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Kedem Sparkling Juice
25.4 oz. • Select Varieties

Empowering Special Needs Israelis Through Partnership2Gether

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

Biet Uri is an Afula based residential community providing nurturing care and employment for over 100 special needs residents aged 7-62. It is a long term project supported by your Federation through its membership in the Southern New England Communities (SNEC) Partnership2Gether, a program of The Jewish Agency For Israel.

The coronavirus period has been a tremendous challenge, but fortunately no-one has been seriously ill and the great news is that everyone has received their third booster shot!!

Despite a cutback in assemblies and large group activities, the creative staff (working in small groups) has taken day trips to nearby farms and swimming pools, enabling the hot summer to add smiles and joy to everyday village life.

The arts and crafts workshops have been busy building wooden furniture – tables, shelving, storage cupboards – upgrading working conditions for adults over 21 employed in the home.

Despite recent unrest between Arab and Jewish communities, Biet Uri continues to lead the path of co-existence with over a quarter of its dedicated staff from the nearby Israeli Arab towns and villages. Care and dedication definitely helps build bridges.

The support from SNEC allows the wonderful work of this very special village. For more information, visit the website: www.bet-uri.org.il

Sincerely,
Achiya Ben Ari Buganim
Living Bridge Coordinator
Partnership2Gether
Afula-Gilboa/Southern New England

Federation Receives High Marks from the Danmarks

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

Thank you for sending me to Camp Eisner. I was in Bonim Bunk 10 and I loved midnight ga-ga ball. I especially loved Friday night services.

Next year, I’m going into Hatzofim.

Thank you again.
Levi Denmark (age 10)

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

Thank you for sending me to camp. My favorite thing is ga-ga ball.

Noah Denmark (age 8)
Your Federation Presents

A Fond Farewell from Susan Frisch Lehrer, Our Coordinator of Volunteers and PJ Library

Almost fifteen years ago, I came to the Jewish Federation as a part-time staff member on a two-year grant to help jump-start the volunteer program and, a short while later, PJ Library in the Berkshires. I’m happy to report that both programs are thriving in our community and now, after so many meaningful years, the time has come for me to pass along the reins to others.

I’ve been involved in our Berkshire-Jewish community since my first years here in the early 1970s – in Hevrelah of Southern Berkshire as a founding member and as a board member of Berkshire Hills Hadasah, Knesset Israel, and the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. All this happened while I was working and raising a family. Following the examples of my parents and grandparents, I got involved in the community with both Jewish and secular organizations, which has always been the most natural thing for me to do.

I want to thank the many hundreds of volunteers who answered my calls, emails, and texts throughout the years. You all are the backbone of our Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. There is no way we could exist or operate without your generous support, both by participating and contributing financially.

At one time, I figured out that each year we logged about 3,500 volunteer hours. According to research by Independent Sector and the Do Good Institute, a volunteer hour is now worth $28.54. If my calculations are correct, by donating their time, By donating their time, volunteers in the past 14 years have contributed the equivalent of $81 million to our Federation! Wow! Now, that’s not chopped liver!

The extent of what our volunteers assist with is inspiring: delivering lunches to seniors on wheels; collaborating with Elder Services of Berkshire County; setting tables and checking people in at our Connecting With Community to seniors for the meals on wheels collaboration with Elder Services of Berkshire County; holiday programs in our senior facilities; volunteer projects with campers and b’nai students’ Caring Pals program of connecting with homebound adults; Shabbat and the Friendly Visitor Program of visiting seniors; Williams College Jewish Association providing 300+ gift bags to seniors.

The list of volunteer support continues for other programs we developed, as well – the Friendly Visitor Program of visiting seniors; Williams College Jewish Association students’ Caring Pals program of connecting with homebound adults; Shabbat and holiday programs in our senior faculties; volunteer projects with campers and b’nai

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I urge all of you to get involved and join in supporting these important Federation programs. I know that I will continue to be involved with Federation, and look forward to seeing you too!

Todah Rubah – Thank you! Susan Frisch Lehrer

Why is it an important Jewish value to give to the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires?

By Janet Lee / Development Officer

In Jewish tradition, we are taught that tzedakah is a mitzvah, a religious obligation. This statement seems simple enough and probably holds true for many of us. You receive a call or letter, and you respond by making an annual donation. By giving to the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, you support the community in which you live. For that, we are deeply grateful. However, perhaps there is another reason why you give, one that reaches beyond the sense of obligation and leads to a deeper understanding of how our small Federation impacts so many individuals.

For example, your gift makes possible our publishing the Berkshire Jewish Voice. For many individuals in our community, the BJV is the primary source of information for what is happening within the Berkshire-Jewish community. It is their lifeline for understanding what is happening within the Berkshire Jewish community, including the things that are important to them. The BJV serves as a conduit for delivering the news and events that are important to our community.

The Federation doesn’t just support the Jewish community in the Berkshires; it sustains and builds our community. We subsidize religious education in our synagogues, provide scholarships for Jewish summer camp and Israel experiences, offer family services programs through PJ Library, and help run anti-bias programs in our public schools. We are firm believers in Jewish continuity in our young people by giving to the Federation and nurturing the next generation of Jewish leaders.

Food insecurity and the challenges of aging in Berkshire County continue to grow. Our kosher meals on wheels program provides older adults and homebound individuals with nutritious meals. Our social worker, Jill Goldstein, is instrumental in supporting those facing challenges by providing emotional support, resources, and emergency assistance. By giving to the Federation, you are ensuring vital resources to those most vulnerable.

Tzedakah is a Jewish value. We hope that you give to the Federation not purely out of obligation but because you want to make a difference in this community, YOUR community. Give because you know your dollars help build a stronger, more vibrant Jewish community in Berkshire County. Give because you want to help others and be a part of the solution.

The Federation provides a full continuum of care to meet our clients’ needs from independent living to assisted living to skilled nursing care to memory care to 24/7 care. We are guided by the principles of gemilut chasadim (acts of loving kindness), tzedakah (justice and righteousness), and tikkun olam (repairing the world).

I urge all of you to get involved and join in supporting these important Federation programs. I know that I will continue to be involved with Federation, and look forward to seeing you too!

Todah Rubah – Thank you! Susan Frisch Lehrer

Experience luxurious Senior Living with a full continuum of care!

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The Lodge:

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By donating their time, volunteers in the past fourteen years have contributed the equivalent of $81 million to our Federation! Wow! Now, that’s not chopped liver!

the years. PJ Library started in Western Massachusetts in 2005 and has now grown to 30 countries with books published in 7 languages, and it has been inspiring to see it flourish. PJ Library is more than just receiving a monthly book. Our community and many others around the world now offer programs, often collaborating with other Jewish and secular organizations. We know that PJ Library is an entry to Judaism for some families, and we are proud to support them along their Jewish journey. It’s been a thrill to work with so many families and I love it when a child points to me while tagging at a parent saying, “That’s the PJ Library lady…” We are grateful to the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, the Spitz-Tuchman Family Fund, the Jewish Women’s Foundation of the Berkshires, and the Irving HasherFink Fund and other generous donors for supporting PJ Library in the Berkshires.

I am honored to have been part of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and believe in its mission of improving lives, sustaining Jewish community, and promoting Jewish continuity in the Berkshires, in Israel, and around the world. We are guided by the principles of gemilut chasadim (acts of kindness), tzedakah (justice and righteousness), and tikkun olam (repairing the world).

I urge all of you to get involved and join in supporting these important Federation programs. I know that I will continue to be involved with Federation, and look forward to seeing you too!

Todah Rubah – Thank you! Susan Frisch Lehrer

Learn about the benefits of Assisted Living vs. Home Care at www.geercares.org/luxurious-senior-living or call Deb at 860.824.2825 to schedule your in-person or virtual tour.
Journey to Jewish Rome – A 2-Part Virtual Tour Of Italy

See the sights – learn the history

Make your morning coffee an espresso and slip on your virtual traveling shoes to Zoom straight to Rome for two fun, passionate, and personal tours of Rome’s Jewish history and culture with guide, Micaela Pavoncello.

The tour consists of two parts:

- On Thursday, December 9 at 10 a.m., “On Origins of Italian Jews through Emancipation in 1870”
- On Monday, December 20 at 10:00 a.m., “ Mussolini, War, and Italian Occupation”

This free Jewish Federation of the Berkshires program will be presented via Zoom. Please visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org for a link to this program.

About Our Guide

Micaela Pavoncello’s Jewish family in Rome goes back over 2000 years, and she absolutely knows the Piazza (ghetto) – its people, stories, and spirit. She knows everyone from the Chief Rabbi to the humble storekeepers and leading chefs – you may recognize her from her appearance on the popular PBS travel program, Rick Steves’ Europe. And as an art historian, she is uniquely able to illustrate the journey of a community from ancient times to today.

Born in Rome to a Jewish Roman father (proud to be here since Caesar’s time) and a Libyan Jewish Sephardic mother, Micaela is in love with the city of Rome. After studying art history at the University of Rome, she traveled extensively, meeting other Jews along her way and exploring their stories and communities. Later, as the head of exhibitions for the Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome, she realized that most people see Rome only as a city of Christianity, so she has devoted her mission to teaching travelers of all faiths about the bimillenary existence of the Jews in the city.

About the Tour

**Part 1:** “On Origins of Italian Jews through Emancipation in 1870” – Micaela will share the history of the Roman Jewish community from the 2nd century BCE until the end of the Ghetto. You will learn how Jews came to Rome before even Christ was born and never left. You will learn that they are neither Ashkenazim nor Sephardim: their dialect and customs, their food and traditions, and family stories and anecdotes are singular to Italy.

**Part 2:** “Mussolini, War, and Italian Occupation” – Micaela will talk about the rise of Fascism, the racial laws, the Nazi Occupation, and the deportations. She will conclude with thoughts on Roman Jewish life today and challenges for its future.

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Create a Jewish Legacy Campaign

Please remember the Jewish Community in your will.

WE'RE HIRING!

Part-Time Development Officer

The Development Officer works to plan and implement the annual campaign and major gifts fundraising effort. This key position requires passion for Federation’s mission, enthusiasm, excellent fundraising and organizational abilities, creativity, good humor and a goal-focused outlook. Exceptional interpersonal communication abilities and the ability to successfully cultivate and nurture donor relationships is a must.

This flexible, twenty-hour-a-week position offers an opportunity to use your talents to benefit a greater good and work with caring individuals who share a commitment to helping those in need and strengthening Jewish community.

For full job description visit jewishberkshires.org/news-announcements/development

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Your Federation Presents

Jewish Women’s Foundation of the Berkshires Packed 25,000 Meals in One Morning

By Toby Kleban Levine / JWF Board Member & Event Chair

On Sunday morning, September 19, while many in the community were competing in the Josh Billings RunAground. 145 other local citizens gathered at the Berkshire South Regional Community Center in Great Barrington to pack 25,000 Meals of Hope. The Jewish Women’s Foundation of the Berkshires (JWF), a constituent organization of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, sponsored the event.

Meals of Hope (MOH) is a Naples, FL-based organization that runs meal-packing events throughout the country. Each packed pouch contains dry ingredients that need to be reconstituted with water to provide a family of six to eight people. Cartons of pouches will be distributed to local pantries by the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts.

I first learned about Meals of Hope in Florida, where I participated in several packing events. I thought this would be a wonderful way for our JWF members to do something extraordinary for the community. Steve Popper, MOH’s executive director, could not have been more helpful, and his assistant, Matt Durfee, was the point person from MOH on-site that Sunday, was a fantastic partner and organizer.

When we started thinking about this event, we thought the packers would mostly come from our membership. But this quickly turned into a community effort, with volunteers from Construct, Berkshire Bounty, Berkshire South, Muddy Brook Elementary School, and a local hiking group joining JWF members.

As a matter of fact, we had so many volunteers that we created two shifts of workers and had to cajole the first shift into giving up their slots so others could participate.

Organized into six assembly lines, each captured by a JWF board member, tables soon became competitive to see which could finish their quota first as the filled cartons paled up against the wall. A sense of collective accomplishment was evident. Assembly line captains Helice Picheny, Shirley Friedman Yohalem, Phyllis Cohen, Robin Weiser, Pommy Levy, and Jane Glaser trained the volunteers on their lines, kept the tables stocked with ingredients, and cheered workers on throughout.

Liz Jaffe, JWF’s volunteer coordinator, and Anne Schnesel, a JWF board member, checked in all the volunteers, who were required to wear masks, show vaccination cards, and, once in the packing room, don gloves and hairnets. It was not unusual when the volunteers were thanked, for them, in turn, to thank the organizers instead for the opportunity to do something hands-on for their neighbors.

JWF co-chairs Phyllis Cohen and Robin Weiser note: “Established to help our Berkshire Community through charity and acts of kindness, JWF enables our members to pool financial resources and provide grants to help out neighbors in ways we could not as individuals. This Meals of Hope project is especially satisfying: it enabled us to both provide meals for neighbors in need and to provide a hands-on experience for our members.”

Berkshires Packed 25,000 Meals in One Morning

Create Miracles with Us!

Join and support

Berkshire Hills Hadassah
berkshirehills@hadassah@gmail.com

Happy Chanukah!
**Your Federation Presents**

**General Assembly 2021 Recap**

**Jewish Federations to fund security at vital institutions in North American Jewish communities**

Jewish Federations announced at its virtual General Assembly in October a $54 million LiveSecure campaign to ensure that every Jewish community across North America has the resources and know-how to secure its vital institutions in the face of rising anti-Semitism.

Together through our LiveSecure campaign, we’re working to make sure that the entire Federation system has undertaken this task, and that all of them can continue to upgrade their efforts to meet the new risks and adapt newly-developed best practices in security.

### Jewish Federations president and CEO Eric Fingerhut said at the annual General Assembly

"There’s an urgent need to protect Jewish communities," former US ambassador to Israel Mark Herzog. "We must build alliances with other communities that have been the targets of hate, and we must ensure that Jews are safe to be Jews in America and elsewhere around the world."

"There’s an urgent need to protect Jewish communities," former US ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said at the event, praising actions by Jewish communities for enhancing security. "Despite all that’s happening, all the anger and attacks, you refuse to be silenced. Just the opposite: you’re speaking out and standing strong, you’re protecting one another while rallying others to do what’s right, and fight what’s wrong."

Vice-Chair of the House Committee on Homeland Security Rep. Ritchie Torres (D-NY) also called for vigilance in the face of rising extremism. "We are sitting on a powder keg of anti-Semitism, and the Jewish community and all of us cannot afford to be complacent," he said. "The stakes are high, and we have to find with the urgency of now."

The three-year LiveSecure initiative will ensure that each of the 146 communities across the country with a Jewish Federation would have a Community Security Initiative, up from 45 today. "That will more than triple the current number of communities with comprehensive community security initiatives. And we want to help our existing security initiatives to upgrade and continually address emerging threats," said National Campaign Chair for the Jewish Federations and LiveSecure Chair Julie Platt.

One-third of LiveSecure funds will go to the Secure Communities Network, which provides best practices and guidance for Jewish communities across the continent.

"Amazingly, through the incredible generosity of transformational funders, both national foundations and Jewish Federations across the world who are investing in this work, we are nearly two-thirds of the way towards reaching that goal," Platt said.

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) are the backbone of the organized Jewish community in the US and Canada, representing 146 Jewish Federations and over 300 Network communities. They raise and disburse more than $2 billion annually and through planned giving and endowment programs to support Jewish communities domestically and in Israel.

**Your Contributions at Work**

**Since Haiti was struck by a devastating earthquake last summer, we have joined other Federations across North America in raising emergency funds to help allay that crisis. Thanks in part to your contributions, the JDC has made a difference in Haiti. Here is more on both recent developments and the history of the Jewish community's historical relationship with Haiti.**

**Applying Profound Lessons About How to Assist in Times of Turmoil and Great Disarray**

By Ted Merwin / Senior Writer, JFNA

When a massive earthquake struck Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, on August 11, Jewish Federations, working with its partner the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), mounted an immediate, large-scale humanitarian effort to save lives, heal the injured, and rebuild homes. Haiti, which is no stranger to disaster, was already well-acquainted with the power of Jewish relief, according to former Haitian prime minister Michèle Duvivier Pierre-Louis. Speaking on a JFNA-sponsored webinar entitled “Crisis Relief in Haiti: Response to the Emergency” in August, Pierre-Louis recalled that Israel set up the “best-equipped” field hospital after the 2010 earthquake to help the victims of that disaster, which killed more than 200,000 people and injured hundreds of thousands more. She said that there are “extremely positive echoes of the interventions of the Jewish community” and that she “welcomes opportunities to collaborate with them.”

The scale of the devastation in Haiti now is staggering – more than 2000 dead, 12,000 injured, 300 missing, 800 displaced from their homes, and 130,000 houses damaged or destroyed. Nor has the country recovered fully from other natural disasters, such as Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and the 2010 earthquake.

The former prime minister emphasized the ongoing vulnerability of the Haitian people, many of whom are subsistence farmers descended from those who fought for freedom from slavery on the coffee plantations. The long-standing ties between the Jewish and Haitian peoples dates back to when Haiti was one of the few nations in the world to accept Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany in the late 1930s, JFNA board chair Mark Wilf noted at the event.

In 1947, Haiti was one of just three countries (along with Liberia and the Philippines) to change its vote and support the U.N. Partition Plan of Palestine, which paved the way for the establishment of the State of Israel.

Wilf announced that Federations across the continent had already launched drives to help the Haitians. In addition, Israeli aid organizations have sent experts to restore the flow of clean water and energy, and to provide critical psychological counseling. Ariel Zwang, CEO of the JDC, said that while their mission, for more than a century, has been to help Jews in need throughout the world, the organization has “learned profound lessons about how to assist in times of great turmoil and great disaster.” Now, still operating from a Jewish platform, the JDC uses this knowledge to respond to people of all backgrounds who have suffered from natural disasters and other crises.

Working with dozens of Jewish and non-Jewish humanitarian organizations worldwide enables JDC to conduct a coordinated Jewish response, streamlining the process of creating supply chains for aid, organizing volunteers to staff medical clinics, rebuilding schools, and providing resources in both the short and long terms to rebuild. Avital Sandler-Loeff, the executive director of JDC-Grid, which leads disaster relief efforts, said she takes inspiration from a Hebrew phrase that translates loosely as, “Whatever I have to cope with makes me stronger.”

Pierre-Louis suggested that Haitian-Americans, many of whom have prospered, can play a larger role in contributing to the revival of the Haitian economy, a sentiment echoed by the American political leaders and activists who joined the webinar addressing both the magnitude of the crisis and the Jewish community’s response.

Congressman Carlos Giménez from Florida’s 26th congressional district, which has a large Haitian community, reaffirmed his support for the U.S.-Israel relationship, and said that we must also stand by Haiti at this time of crisis. Adriano Espaillat, from New York’s 13th congressional district, pledged the support of the Latino-Jewish Congressional Caucus and praised the JDC and the Hispanic Federation, saying that they “have the know-how and tools to bring help to the Haitian people.”

JFNA CEO Eric Fingerhut called on the Jewish community to increase its own efforts in helping the Haitian people to recover. Citing the laws of Sukkot from the Talmud, which are being studied at this time of year as part of the Daf Yier, the daily learning from Jewish tradition, he noted that acts of charity are deemed more important than all other types of offerings and sacrifices.
NightWood will be on view Thursday through Sunday evenings, November 4 – December 5 (closed November 25, December 24-25).

More Fun With PJ Library

Any family may sign up EACH year for a free-of-charge subscription for books each month. What could be a better holiday gift than age-appropriate books delivered to the mailbox each month? PJ Library’s children’s literature experts curate the book list to provide the very best children’s storybooks that convey Jewish values, traditions, and themes for the broad spectrum of families raising Jewish children.

PJ Library’s parenting experts have updated their Hanukkah Hub (pjl. library.org/hanukkah), where you’ll find everything you need to get ready for the Festival of Lights, including child-friendly versions of the Hanukkah story. Are you the designated “Hanukkah parent” at your child’s school? Be sure to check out PJ Library’s guide, “Sharing Hanukkah at School,” available through the Hanukkah Hub. For that and more, including recipes, book lists, gift ideas, activities, and much more, check out the Hanukkah Hub.

PJ Library, a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, is funded locally by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires with support from the Spitz-Tuchman Family Fund and the Jewish Women’s Foundation of Berkshire County. The program provides free monthly books and music with Jewish content to children ages 6 months through 8 years.

PJ Library Brings Warmth and Comfort to At-Risk Children

As chilly weather returns to the Berkshires, the PJ Library Pajama Drive conducted by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires also returns to help the many children in our community who may lack the comfort of warm sleepwear. Last year’s effort collected more than 400 pairs of pajamas – 150 percent more than the previous year – from individuals, groups, and local businesses. We want to build on that success.

We have again teamed up with Carr Hardware to offer drop-off of brand-new pajamas (sizes newborn to teen) at these convenient locations across Berkshire County:

- Carr Hardware, 256 Main Street in Great Barrington
- Carr Hardware, 488 Pittsfield Road in Lenox
- Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, 196 South Street in Pittsfield
- Carr Hardware, 179 State Road in North Adams

The Pajama Drive runs from November 8 through December 6. Monetary donations towards the purchase of pajamas are also welcome. Questions? Contact Susan Frisch Lehrer (413) 442-4360, ext. 14 or email: slehrer@jewishberkshires.org. 

Donations will be received by the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families in Pittsfield and will be distributed to local families during the holiday season.

PJ Library, in collaboration with the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, is made possible in the Berkshires through the generous support of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, the Spitz-Tuchman Family Fund, and the Jewish Women’s Foundation of Berkshire County.

Jerusalem of Gold Mosaic Workshop

Jerusalem by Mia Schon

On Thursday, December 16 at 6:45 p.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes back mosaic muralist Mia Schon, this time to guide you in creatively repurposing magazines to design your own beautiful mosaic of ancient Jerusalem.

This free-Jewish Federation of the Berkshires program will be presented via Zoom. Please visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org for a link to this program.

Explore this creative technique, stone by stone, as we celebrate Jerusalem of Gold. So, grab a glue stick, scissors, magazine pages or other patterned papers (hues of sand, tan, brown, blues, yellows, gold and greens) you have chosen to work with, and you’re ready to go! All levels are welcome.

Mia Schon is a mosaic muralist and instructor who works in Boston and Tel Aviv. With a strong affinity for public art, Mia has made it her mission to spread cultural themes into her work.

She recently received a Transformative Public Art grant from the City of Boston to respond to COVID-19 and encourage public connectedness piece by piece.

Federation welcomes Rabbi Daveen H. Litwin as Director of Community Engagement and Programming

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires is pleased to announce that Rabbi Daveen H. Litwin is our new Director of Community Engagement and Programming.

This new full-time position builds upon our strong existing programming and community-building efforts while expanding our capacity to tackle important priorities for outreach and engagement as identified in our recent strategic plan.

Rabbi Litwin previously served as the dean and chaplain of the Tucker Center for Spiritual and Ethical Life at Dartmouth College. She has worked in leadership positions on college campuses for more than two decades, including as a chaplain at the Claremont Colleges, rabbi at Grinnell College, and executive director of Hillel at the University of Kansas. She also served as a congregational rabbi in Toronto, Ontario, and Newton, MA.

“Rabbi Litwin stood out for her breadth, her in-depth experience in a variety of Jewish organizations, and her ability to listen and engage people in a thoughtful and meaningful way,” said Natalie Matus, Federation vice president and a member of the search committee. “She is one of successful programming experience working collaboratively with individuals of different age groups and backgrounds.”

“We are delighted to welcome Rabbi Litwin to our Federation family and the Berkshires community at large,” said Federation president Elisa Schindler-Frankel. “Her experience, knowledge, and passion showed us that she is the right person to help move our community forward in a meaningful way.”

“I am honored and excited to be joining the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires staff,” said Rabbi Litwin, “and look forward to continuing the creation of meaningful connections and a vibrant, inclusive community life.”

In addition to her programming, administrative, and pastoral experience, Rabbi Litwin has worked as a teacher and a collaborator with multi-faith organizations, affinity groups, and cultural communities. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Brandeis University and received her rabbinic ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, OH.

Rabbi Litwin will begin in a part-time remote capacity as she relocates to the Berkshires. To reach her, email dlitwin@jewishberkshires.org.
Autumn at Temple Anshe Amunim

Chabad's Chanukah 5782 – “Unique, Unimaginable, and Completely Revolutionary”

Celebration in the Berkshires will “invigorate efforts to spread a message of light, Jewish pride, unity, and hope”

PITTSFIELD – Temple Anshe Amunim offers opportunities to engage and learn this autumn, with a special series on pandemic lessons learned.

TAANovBookClub

“Journey Into Judaism – and Much More – at Congregation Beth Israel”

PITTSFIELD – On Sunday, December 5 at 4 p.m., Chabad of the Berkshires will host a free, socially distanced musical celebration of the eighth night of Chanukah outdoors featuring the fire dancers from Fluxion Entertainment. Co-director Rabbi Levi Volovik said the performers “will rock the stage with a unique, unimaginable, and completely revolutionary experience.” The event takes place at 4 p.m. in the parking lot across the street from the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, 196 South Street in Pittsfield. “We invite the entire community to participate in this uplifting event,” said the rabbi.

A super-sized beautiful menorah lighting will highlight this event, which is hosted by Chabad of the Berkshires and sponsored in part by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, Haddad Auto Dealership, and the Wasserman Street YDIAH Fund.

“The purpose of this event is to bring the community together for Chanukah,” said Sara Volovik, co-director of Chabad. “Chanukah is a holiday of light and freedom, where few overcame the many, and light triumphed over darkness. The menorah is placed in a highly-visible place to publicize the miracle, with its message of hope and religious freedom, to all. Today, people of all faiths consider the Chanukah holiday a symbol and message of the triumph of freedom over oppression, of spirit over matter, of light over darkness.”

“Especially in recent times where we’ve been through challenges we need to strengthen our Jewish pride and spread light and goodness to combat this darkness. This event demonstrates this in a most powerful way!” said Rabbi Levi Volovik.

In addition, the program will feature:
- Hot drinks
- Free raffles and prizes
- Fresh hot fried doughnuts and latkes
- Dredels
- Chocolate gelt

For more information regarding the Chanukah celebration please call (413) 499-9899 or visit www.Jewishberkshires.com

Journey into Judaism, a class for those exploring Judaism and Jewishness, is open to those who are interested in learning more about traditions and teachings. The next cohort of this class, taught by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat, will begin in January 2022. If you are interested in learning more or registering, please contact the CBI office.

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“What Does the Bible Say About Love?” – New Beit Midrash Class at KI

Knesset Israel’s Beit Midrash program welcomes master teacher Gideon Amir for an intriguing Bible class, which will be held online on four consecutive Tuesday evenings, January 4, 11, 18, and 25, from 7 p.m. to 8:45 p.m., in conjunction with evening davening. The class is open to everyone. Although there is no tuition charge, KI welcomes donations in support of adult education.

As to describe his class, Gideon wrote: “The word ‘love’ has so many meanings that it seems impossible to talk in general about it without first asking: ‘What kind of love?’ In this course we will review biblical attitudes towards different types of love: love of parents to their children, man’s love of women and women’s love of men, love of a person to another person, God’s love of us, and our love of God. We will also look at the New Testament’s views, highlighting similarities and differences. Please have a full Bible (Tanakh) available when we study on-line, as we be reading the relevant verses throughout our study.

Gideon Amir was born in Holland to Jewish Holocaust survivors who went to Israel in 1947. He grew up in Jerusalem. After serving as an IDF paratrooper, Gideon received a bachelor’s degree in Mathematics from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and a master’s degree in Computer Science from the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot. He worked for different organizations in Israel and the United States as a computer engineer. In 1999, he followed his old interest in Judaic studies, earning a degree from Baltimore Hebrew University in 2001. He has taught Jewish and Bible subjects at various adult education programs like the Haberman Institute for Jewish Studies, Osher at Johns Hopkins University, and Oasis.

For more information and links to the course, visit knessetIsrael.org.

Lenox’s Michael Stoll to Host Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation Gala

On Sunday, November 21 at 7 p.m., Jewish partisan and Lenox resident Michael Stoll will host the Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation (JPEF) 2021 Gala, its theme “Perpetuating the Legacy.”

Born in Poland, Michael Stoll was 17 years old when he escaped from a moving train bound for the Majdanek death camp. He joined the Bielski partisans, going on missions to gather food and supplies. Stoll will be accompanied by his granddaughter, Suzanne Wolter, who proudly carries on her family legacy.

“Michael’s story of courage is just one among the often untold stories of Jewish partisans and their life lessons, bringing the celebration of heroic resistance against tyranny into educational and cultural organizations.”

Thank you to our supporters!

The Berkshire Jewish Voice extends a very special “thank you” for the generosity extended by those who have sent in their contributions for voluntary subscriptions to the paper.

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Your Federation Presents

It’s “The New Jew” Review, Coming Right at You

On a funny, enlightening, nuanced, and thought-provoking evening, our community previewed the Israeli docuseries, "The New Jew," at the Berkshire Museum on October 26. Popular Israeli comedian Guri Alfi, who hosts the series, explores what it means to be Jewish in the United States, and grapples with his own Jewish identity as an Israeli. Guri was with us, along with co-creators Asaf Nawi and Moshe Samuals, to discuss the impact this show has had on the Israeli public.

As Guri Alfi put it: “Israelis don’t practice [Judaism]. We ignore it. And then sometimes we forget. We forget our Jewish story. Our Jewish narrative. We need someone on the outside, who is a minority [as a Jew], and have them choose over and over again, every day, to be Jewish. And we can learn from that.”

Thank you to The Jewish Agency for Israel for sponsoring this event in collaboration with the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, Knesset Israel, Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, Williams College Jewish Association, and Temple Anshe Amunim, with additional support from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.
CHANUKAH BEGINS AT SUNSET NOVEMBER 28, 2021

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From Our Kitchen

Latkes with Applesauce or Noodle Kugel or Tzimmes 9 to 16 oz
2 FOR $12

In Our Bakery

Lilly's Raspberry Rugelach or Apricot, Chocolate or Cinnamon, 8 oz
4.99

In Our Seafood Dept.

Norm's Naked Scottish Smoked Salmon or NY Nova Lox, 4 oz, Previously Frozen
6.99

In Our Meat Dept.

Empire Frozen Turkey
3.99 lb

In Our Dairy Aisle

Breakstone's Sour Cream 8 oz
1.29

In Our Frozen Aisles

Tabatchnick Soup 14.5 to 15 oz, All Varieties
2 FOR $4

In Our Produce Dept.

Royal Gala Apples 1 lb
1.69

Warm Wishes Bouquet
A soft, charming floral bouquet which exudes warmth and light in celebration of the season
12.99

In Our Bakery

Kedem Tea Biscuits 4.2 oz, All Varieties
3 FOR $2

In Our Grocery Aisles

Paskesz Square Dreidel Single Count
99¢

Manischewitz Chocolate Coins 53 oz
3 FOR $1

Manischewitz Egg Noodles 12 oz, All Varieties
2 FOR $3

Gold's Horseradish 6 oz
1.99

All Prices Valid with a Big Y Membership.
Harold Grinspoon Becomes 2,000th Person to Sign Jewish Future Pledge

Jews from around the world have committed to allocate at least half of the charitable giving at their passing to securing the Jewish future for generations to come. This is the second round of such an ambitious endeavor, following the highly successful 2020 effortBuilding a Better Future, that engaged a diverse group of individuals, families, and organizations across North America.

The diverse group of pledgers are from across the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Panama, Ireland, UK, and Israel, and share the common goal of securing the Jewish future for generations to come. The swept up a wave of future generations to experience a world that allows them to embrace Jewish roots, find meaning in Jewish practice, and feel tall with pride, said Harold Grinspoon upon signing up the pledge. We must cultivate philanthropy, and enable the future of the Jewish programs and organizations that are the fabric of our community.

Grinspoon established the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF) in 1991 with the mission of enhancing Jewish life. The Foundation’s philosophy is infused with his business acumen and works to promote visionary ideas and dynamic partnerships, with a focus on return on investment and a drive to understand and meet the needs of people served.

During my lifetime and upon my passing, nearly all my assets will be directed to the Harold Grinspoon Foundation so that together with other philanthropic partners, we can strengthen and grow the Jewish community through welcoming, engaging and stimulating opportunities for connection with our Jewish tradition and with one another, Grinspoon added.

We are honored that Harold Grinspoon has become the 2,000th signer of the Jewish Future Pledge. These pledgers are helping to ignite a surge in Jewish pride and proving that they care about sustaining the Jewish people, said Jewish Future Pledge founder Mike Leven. I am thrilled to see the rapid growth of pledgers joining our movement. The community we have built is proof of just how bright the Jewish future can be through our unified efforts to reconnect with the next generation.

In the last year, Leven has also spearheaded an initiative to increase the Jewish Youth Pledge, an endeavor that asks Jewish teens to commit their time, talent, and treasure to the growth and strength of their lifetime to strengthen the Jewish people and the land of Israel. With the assistance of several test organizations, JNF, AEPi, NCSY, and Bnai Akiva, the Jewish Youth Pledge has garnered the support of nearly 3,000 pledgers.

Learn more at jewishfuturepledge.org.

Knesset Israel will Celebrate Chanukah on a Festive Friday Night

KI Chanukah Celebration on Friday, December 3

PITTSFIELD – Knesset Israel celebrates Chanukah this year with a festive, musical Friday night service, followed by a communal Shabbat dinner, on Friday, December 3. Chanukah begins at 5:30 p.m., will include favorite Chanukah melodies. Members and non-members of Knesset Israel are welcome. Chanukah vaccination is required for all attendees age 12+, and everyone must wear a mask unless they are actively eating or leading the service.

A volunteer-prepared Shabbat dinner, supported by a Rekindle Shabbat grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, will follow. Space is limited, and RSVP is required Monday, November 29, knessetisrael.org. Cost is $820 per adult, free for children under 13.

OMG PODCAST, continued from page 1

OMG Podcast adds that “the beauty of the podcast, which is not that different from giving a sermon,” is that it taps into “what is the very essence of our faith.”

There’s a certain casualness to the tone of the podcast that is purposeful and intentional, says Rabbi Gordon. “We’re trying to democratize access to Jewish thought, to say that there is a way in which you could relate to these two – I love you with all my heart, and I have young or young people, right? – who think that Jewish life and tradition and thought and text have something to say to us of our present moment, not just the past.

Both rabbis were ordained at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 2011. Rabbi Gubitz joined HUH in 2012, and Gordon in 2014. Their careers and personal lives have taken different routes. Gordon is a rabbinic board member of a congregation in a rural area and is raising two daughters with husband Joshua Bloom, a member of Federation’s board. Gubitz has two siblings and lives in New York.

Both rabbis were ordained at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, Gubitz in 2012, and Gordon in 2014. Their careers and personal lives have taken different routes. Gordon is a rabbinic board member of a congregation in a rural area and is raising two daughters with husband Joshua Bloom, a member of Federation’s board. Gubitz has two siblings and lives in New York.

Over the course of their conversations, the OMG co-hosts believe they’ll always talk about the pandemic. We don’t know if the virus is surrounding us. And so, I think our community is going to try to tolerate risk and see what’s possible. It’s a huge trauma. Maybe we will always talk about the pandemic.

Even if the pandemic ceases to be front-and-center in their conversations, the OMG co-hosts believe they’ll have plenty to discuss. We have inherited a tradition that has what to say about different times of the year, says Gubitz. “We’re lucky to be part of a centuries-old conversation, adding our wit and wisdom to it.”

Gordon describes the disappointment so many people in Massachusetts felt having to retreat into pandemic mode after fully embracing a surge of events and celebrations in spring and early summer. “It feels like the pandemic continues to stumble along, and we continue to stumble along too,” Gordon says. “I still feel a lot about this Chanukah as redelegating ourselves to making it through the other side. And I think so much of the announcement of vaccines for children ages five to twelve, it does feel like, who knows what possibilities lie ahead for Chanukah? What do we know from the High Holy Days, how might we learn into Hanukkah as like an ‘almost-there’ moment? What does it mean to feel closer to the other side? Get a little bit more light each night, one candle, two candles, all the way up. We have a little more light this year than we did last year, and we’re not all the way there yet.”

Both Rabbi Gordon and Rabbi Gubitz use the podcast to humanize the role of the clergy and share their questions while still managing issues of their own. As Gordon puts it, the two have joked about “those moments when you start thinking, ‘my congregants think I have some special secret door that’s not accessible to anyone else through the same pandemic. This is hard for us, too.’

Gubitz: ‘We like to think about the f-word lower case. We like to think about getting the most out of life, like yoga pants and Doritos – a lot. And though it’s the 50th year of women in the rabbinate, even people who grew up in a world where there’s not so much diversity to still say, ‘You’re a rabbi? You don’t have a beard. You don’t look like the God I thought you were.’

So I think the snark is also about showing people that Judaism and the folks who craft it these days are not just an older people’s club. We talk about yoga pants and Doritos – a lot. And though it’s the 50th year of women in the rabbinate, even people who grew up in a world where there’s not so much diversity to still say, ‘You’re a rabbi? You don’t have a beard. You don’t look like the God I thought you were.’

OMG Podcast asks: ‘Who cares about sustaining the Jewish people?’

Sarah Arrosteo to Host Virtual “Hanuka Extravaganza” to Celebrate New Ledino Holiday Album

On Sunday, November 21 at 4 p.m., Local Ladino songstress Sarah Arrosteo hosts a virtual “Hanuka Extravaganza” to celebrate her new all-Ladino Holiday Album. The album, Mandala, along a video premiere, and a bimundo demo and cook-off. (Recipe and song-sheets will be sent ahead to registrants). Join in the fun to help get ready a Hanuka Gitter! Free registration at: bit.ly/AorrosteoHanuka. In partnership with the National Museum of American Jewish History.
OBITUARIES

Alan M. Weinman, 76, chef and restaurateur
STOCKBRIDGE – Alan M. Weinman, 76, died Tuesday morning, September 14 at Fairview Hospital. Born February 13, 1945, the son of Meyer L. and Elaine Freedman Weinman, he was a 1962 graduate of Brooklyn (NY) Technical High School and later attended Brooklyn College. A chef and restaurateur, Alan owned and operated The Restaurant on Church Street in Lenox and later the Glendale River Grille in Glendale. He enjoyed jazz, golfing, cooking, playing poker and, above all else, a good joke and his grandchildren. Alan is survived by two daughters, Rachel Weinman of Martha’s Vineyard and Rebecca Weinman of Stockbridge; brother Harvey Weinman of CA; sister Donna Weinman of WA; and two grandchildren, Sebastian and Scarlet Garcia. Per Alan’s wishes, a graveside service was privately held in Stockbridge Town Cemetery.

Irving Mindlin, 92, veteran, taught ballroom dancing
PITTSFIELD – Irving Mindlin, 92, died on Saturday, October 2 at Craneville Place in Dalton. Born in Pittsfield on December 8, 1928, a son of Harry Herschel Mindlin of Margate, FL and Miriam Alex Mindlin of Sewell, NJ, Irving’s grandchildren David and Joshua; great-grandson Kameron; and nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his son, Ivace Michael Mindlin, who died June 30, 2013; four brothers, Robert, David, Arthur, and his twin brother, Herman; and his sister, Irene. A graveside service was held Tuesday October 5 at Ahavath Sholom Cemetery, Pittsfield, with Rabbi David Weiner officiating. Memorial donations may be made to Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Institute in care of flown & Dagnoli-Benvenega Funeral Home, 5 Elm Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Marion Elaine (Cobert) Pitkin, 84, loved working with children and made a lasting impression on her students
WESTBOROUGH, MA – Marion Elaine (Cobert) Pitkin passed away peacefully on Friday, October 1, surrounded by family. She was born in the Bronx, NY on May 13, 1937 to the late Max and Anna (Laft) Cobert. She attended New York City public schools and, due to her academic gifts, graduated from Taft High School at the age of 16. She went on to earn a bachelor’s degree from Hunter College by the age of 19 and held her first teaching job in the Bronx. She was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa honors society. Marion married Stanley Pitkin in 1957, moving to Pittsfield in 1959, where she lived for the next 25 years and raised her two daughters. Marion’s family were members of Temple Anshe Amunim where she taught pre-school for many years. She loved working with children and made a lasting impression on her students. A job transfer brought Stan and Marion to Wrentham, MA in 1986 where they both lived until Stan’s death in 2002. The couple purchased a vacation/retirement home in Delray Beach, FL where they had started to spend their winters. Marion lived her last eight years at the Highlands independent living community in Westborough, where she was one of its earliest residents. Marion was a creative and artistic soul who dabbled in watercolors, jewelry making, and photo collages. Always a great fan and owner of cats, her collection of miniature cats numbered in the hundreds which she enjoyed acquiring and displaying in her home. Marion is survived by daughters, Lauren Smith (Bradford) of Westborough, MA and Barbara Crooke (Robert) of Underwood, WA; grandchildren Joshua Smith (Tiffany), Johanna Smith, Rachael Crooke (Emiliano) and Alyssa Crooke (Robert); sister-in-law Florence Pitkin; a niece and nephews. In addition to her parents and husband, she was predeceased by her sister, Phyllis Fogel.

Donations can be made to Dakin Humane Society, 171 Union Street, Springfield, MA 01105. A private graveside service was planned at Wellwood Cemetery, W. Babylon, NY.

Selma Miller Rosen, 99, contentment rested largely on the health and happiness of her children and grandchildren
NATICK, MA – Selma Miller Rosen, 99, died Thursday, October 14. Born in Cambridge in 1922 to Eli and Florence Cohen Miller, she was a lifelong resident of Massachusetts. After living in Arlington for a few years, Selma’s family moved to Pittsfield in 1929. She met Earl Rosen when they worked in shops on opposite sides of North Street. They married in 1947. Theirs was the first wedding to be held at Blantyre Castle in Lenox.

Selma was chiefly a homemaker but worked for many years in the lingerie department of The Textile Store, later Kay’s, in Pittsfield. Subsequently, she assisted in the dental office of her high school classmate, Dr. George Grossman. Selma was a member of Temple Anshe Amunim for 82 years. The Temple was a very important part of Selma’s life. She proudly served on many committees and held many offices in the Temple Sisterhood and B’nai Brith Women, which she served as president for three terms. She joined another congregation of sorts after Earl’s death in 1983, when she moved to Salisbury Estates, where many of her dear friends also relocated. Those were excellent years. Outliving many of those friends, she moved in 2012 to Shillman House in Framingham where she decided to be near her daughter Karyn and devoted son-in-law, Stan. Because of the continuing decline of her memory, Selma moved to an assisted living facility in Natick in February 2020 and to a neighboring nursing home in early 2021. Selma was one of its earliest residents. Selma was chiefly a homemaker but worked for many years in the lingerie department of The Textile Store, later Kay’s, in Pittsfield. Subsequently, she assisted in the dental office of her high school classmate, Dr. George Grossman. Selma was a member of Temple Anshe Amunim for 82 years. The Temple was a very important part of Selma’s life. She proudly served on many committees and held many offices in the Temple Sisterhood and B’nai Brith Women, which she served as president for three terms. She joined another congregation of sorts after Earl’s death in 1983, when she moved to Salisbury Estates, where many of her dear friends also relocated. Those were excellent years. Outliving many of those friends, she moved in 2012 to Shillman House in Framingham where she decided to be near her daughter Karyn and devoted son-in-law, Stan. Because of the continuing decline of her memory, Selma moved to an assisted living facility in Natick in February 2020 and to a neighboring nursing home in early 2021.

Make yourself at home here
A retirement community for an active and independent stress-free lifestyle
SWEETWOOD of Williamstown offers the most spacious retirement living apartments in the Berkshires, along with a whole host of concierge services, wellness care, fun activities and exercise amenities. Visit our charming community once – you’ll want to settle in and never leave.

- Plenty of room for your favorite furnishings
- Full-sized kitchens
- Lots of space for entertaining
- Private patios
- Pet friendly

Sweetwood of Williamstown invites you to visit our picturesque property and explore our facilities. Get an up-close view of our facilities, enjoy a delicious gourmet meal prepared by our on-site chefs and meet some of our current residents who are eager to share the inside scoop about life at Sweetwood.

www.sweetwoodliving.com
Selma was a straightforward and uncomplicated person, whose contentment rested largely on the health and happiness of her children and grandchildren, in whom she took enormous pride. She felt blessed that all three of her children married outstanding people. And, she was a devoted daughter. In 1960, Selma and Earl added a room to their house so that Florence, widowed in 1955, could join their household. Flo lived there until her death, fifteen years later, and was a source of joy for the Rosen children and a welcome provider of lunch for Earl.

She is survived by children, Philip (Carol) of Arlington, VA, Karyn (Stanley Drobins) of Natick, MA, and Arnold (Kathleen Kelly) of Loves Park, IL; grandchildren, Kara and Julie; ten great-grandchildren; nieces and nephews. Predeceased by her parents: husband, Earl; and brother, Lewis.

The family extends gratitude to the staff of Shillman House and to Selma’s many caregivers from the staff of Shillman House and Lewis. She was the last surviving member of her class. Edith also attended secretarial school and worked as a legal secretary for three different Pittsfield attorneys, including future Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Francis J. Quirico, all of whom either enlisted or were drafted during World War II. In her later years, Edith owned and operated her own business, Berkshire Market Research. Edie was a member of Congregation Beth Israel in North Adams. She served in numerous synagogue and civic organizations. Edith was also fortunate to enjoy many adventures with her good friend, Audrey Dearing Sweeney. She also loved to travel, paid close attention to current events, and had many friends with her group of more than 50 years. Edith was also an avid reader, and skilled solver of crossword puzzles. Her do-not-disturb hour of power consisted of the TV shows Jeopardy and Wheel of Fortune.

Selma was a master knitter, outstanding cook and baker, devoted and much-desired Mah Jongg player, avid reader, and skilled solver of crossword puzzles. Her do-not-disturb hour of power consisted of the TV shows Jeopardy and Wheel of Fortune.

At the Dewey Elementary School in Great Barrington and graduated from Lenox High School with the class of 1941. She often wondered if it did not prevent her from doing the things she enjoyed in life. She was the widow of Albert Taskin, who died August 18, 1987. They were married on March 20, 1949. Survivors include two sons, Richard S. Taskin of North Adams and Howard E. (Jenny) Taskin of Palm Beach Gardens, FL; three grandchildren, Rebecca Taskin of New York City, Anna Lee Pollick and her husband, Zachary Pollick, of West Palm Beach, FL, and Nathan Taskin of South Hadley; two great-grandchildren, Wade and Brenny Pollick also of West Palm Beach; and one niece, Barbara Gershen Swartz of Newton her husband, Bruce, and their three children.

Selma was predeceased by her two younger sisters, Laura Stoskin and Vera Gangel.

Funeral services took place Friday, October 29 at Congregation Beth Israel, North Adams. Burial followed in Beth Israel cemetery. Memorial donations may be made to the Friends of the North Adams Public Library in care of Flynn & Dagnoli-Montagna Home For Funerals, Central Chapels, 74 Marshall Street, North Adams, MA 01247.

You can now read and share Berkshire Jewish Voice feature stories online! Visit jewishberkshires.org and select Community & Events>Berkshire Jewish Voice for links to highlights of current and past issues.

The Jewish Transportation Network Discount Taxi Vouchers for Jewish residents aged 65 years and older

Purchase $50 worth of taxi vouchers for $5
(6 if requested via mail)
Vouchers are valid for three months and can be used with Tunned City Taxi of North Adams, Rainbow Taxi of Pittsfield or Berkshire Taxi Co. of Great Barrington and Lee.

Restrictions apply. Limit: 10 voucher booklets per person/year.

Purchase vouchers at the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
196 South St., Pittsfield, MA 01201. (413) 442-4360, ext. 10

This program is funded by the Jewish Women’s Foundation of Berkshire County and administered by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires.
Meals-on-Wheels & Meals to Go – Advance Reservation Required
Kosher lunch will be prepared on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Meals to go will be ready by noon for pickup at the Knesset Israel kitchen door, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield. All meals-on-wheels will be delivered by Federation volunteers in the early afternoon.

Please call (413) 442-2200 no later than 9 a.m. to reserve your meal for pickup and to arrange delivery if standing instructions are not in place. All are welcome to reserve meals for pick-up, although delivery may be limited in certain circumstances.

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

Volunteers are Vital! Volunteer drivers who can deliver meals-on-wheels are always appreciated. Please call Susan Frisch Lehrer 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 #

**NOVEMBER**

Monday, 15 ............Salisbury steak ***, tater tots, broccoli, potato bread or roll, and applesauce.

Tuesday, 16 ..........Black bean chili ***, brown rice, salad, corn bread, and apricots.

Thursday, 18 .........Roasted turkey & gravy ***, squash soup, peas & pearl onions, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, salad, Challah, and apple dumplings.

Monday, 22 ............Tuna salad platters ***, vegetable soup, yie bread, and pudding.

Tuesday, 23 ..........Macaroni & cheese, beets, stewed tomatoes, salad, whole wheat bread, and raspberry filled cookies.

Thursday, 25 .........Closed for Thanksgiving

Monday, 29 ............Tuna noodle casserole, beets, salad, rye bread, and sugar cookies.

Tuesday, 30 ..........Lentil chick pea stew ***, brown rice, whole wheat bread, and Mandarin oranges.

**DECEMBER**

Thursday, 2 ...........Brisket ***, latkes & applesauce, baby carrots, salad, Challah, and apple dumplings.

Monday, 6 ............Meat loaf ***, noodle soup, mashed potatoes, peas & carrots, salad, Farmer’s loaf, and apricots.

Tuesday, 7 .............Turkey stew ***, rice, pumpernickel bread, and peas.

Thursday, 9 ...........Black bean burgers with cheese, vegetable soup, yellow rice, mixed vegetables, hamburguer roll, and pudding.

Monday, 13 ...........Salisbury steak ***, hash browns, green beans, salad, rye bread, and peaches.

Tuesday, 14 ..........Roasted chicken ***, mushroom barley soup, salad, parve noodle kugel, asparagus cuts n tips, Challah, and brownies.

Thursday, 16 ...........Fresh fish ***, celery rice soup, French fries, mixed vegetables, salad, Farmer’s loaf, and fruit cocktail.

Monday, 20 ..........Spaghetti & sauce #, mango passion fruit juice, salad, beets, garlic bread, and tropical fruit salad.

Tuesday, 21 ..........Chicken pot pie ***, rice, broccoli, white bread, and grapes.

Thursday, 23 ..........Roasted root vegetable & goat cheese pizza, salad, and cookies.

Monday, 27 ..........Sloppy Joes ***, zucchini rice soup, sweet potato fries, mixed vegetables, hamburger roll, and applesauce.

Tuesday, 28 ..........Roasted chicken ***, oven roasted Brussels sprouts, oven roasted potatoes, salad, oat bread, and Mandarin oranges.

Thursday, 30 ..........Vegetarian moussaka, rice, salad, pita bread, and baklava

**JANUARY**

Monday, 3 .............Meat loaf ***, lentil soup, broccoli & cauliflower, hash browns, salad, Farmer’s loaf, and brownies.

Tuesday, 4 ..........Cranberry chicken ***, corn cobettes, rice pilaf, salad, whole wheat bread, and apricots.

Thursday, 6 ..........“Seafood” linguini, Italian beans, beets, garlic bread, and cookies.

‘ZOOM JUDAISM’, continued from page 3

Judaism that will be desperately needed and personally transformative, built on face-to-face encounters.

God insisted on meeting with Moses in private, face to face. And if Jews of the synagogue wish to retrieve the Jewish soul from oblivion and reunite life’s fundamental holiness, they will do as God did – practicing Judaism face to face, and not on the screen.

Eric Yoffie is the former president of the Union for Reform Judaism (1996 to 2012). His writings may be found at ericyoffie.com.

This article originally appeared in The Jewish Experience, a new website devoted to exploring Jewish history, culture, and traditions published by Brandeis University. For more stories and to sign up for the newsletter, visit brandeis.edu/jewish-experience. The opinions expressed in this article are the author’s and not necessarily of Brandeis University or the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires.

MAZEL TOV!

Marc Jaffe of Williamsanton on celebrating his 100th birthday on November 6.

Pittsfield chiropractor Stephen Tock on his retirement after practicing in the Berkshires since 1977. He was twice featured in the BJV for participating in 2016 and 2019 in the Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF) “Israel on Two Wheels” bicycle tour, an arduous six-day journey in Israel that covers 385 miles with climbs totaling more than 31,000 feet. The ride benefits the Strides Program for wounded IDF soldiers, with proceeds going toward the purchase of prosthetic limbs.

Regina Karas on her special birthday. Federation’s own Cindy Bell-Deane on her special birthday.

Knesset Israel

16 Colt Road, Pittsfield

ONGOING MINYANS

Sunday 6:45 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Tuesday 7 p.m.

Thursday 7 a.m. and 5:45 p.m.

Saturday 9:30 a.m. and evenings approximately 30 minutes before sunset

SHABBAT CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES

Candle Times

Friday, November 19.... 4:09 p.m.

Friday, November 26.... 4:05 p.m.

Friday, December 3.... 4:06 p.m.

(shtir Chanukah candles before Shabbat candles)

Friday, December 10.... 4:02 p.m.

Friday, December 17.... 4:03 p.m.

Friday, December 24.... 4:06 p.m.

Friday, December 31.... 4:11 p.m.

Connecting with Community
Nourish Your Body, Mind and Soul!

Homebound or recovering from an illness or injury?

Let us help you arrange for a kosher lunch to be delivered through our Kosher Meals on Wheels Program. Call (413) 442-4360, ext 17

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I doubt whether Erik Erikson needs much introduction, yet for the record he was born in Halle, Germany, in 1902 (and died at age 91 in Harwich, MA), and is known worldwide as a child-developmental psychologist and psychoanalyst. A prodigious author, he was featured on the cover of Time Magazine and won the Pulitzer Prize in 1969 for his Gandhi psychologist volume, To the Pulpit Prizer – in 1969 for his "Gandhi" psychobiography. The volume on Jesus was never published, but alas the book’s publishers felt it would lessen the sales.

Some final words about Erik’s impact at Austen Riggs come from the Harvard Gazette in April 2020: “Erikson turned the grand experiment of treating very disturbed patients in an open therapeutic community into a Golden Age of conceptual and clinical inventiveness.” Many of us living in and near Stockbridge might to this day see pairs of serious-looking persons walking together down the main road towards or back from the golf course area while talking. These people are likely to be a patient and a therapist during their therapy hour...as most likely endorsed by Erik.

Dr. Leo Goldberger, who resides at Kimball Farms in Lenox, is a psychologist, author, and editor known for his work in sensory deprivation, personality, stress, and aging, as well as for his writings on the rescue of the Danish Jews during the Holocaust. A professor emeritus of psychology at New York University, Goldberger is a former director of its Research Center for Mental Health. In 1993, he was awarded The Order of Dannebrog (Knight’s Cross) by Queen Margrethe II of Denmark.

Norman Rockwell granted co-editors Wallenstein and Goldberger permission to use his portrait of Erik Erikson on the cover of their book.

My Encounters with Erik Erikson – in the Berkshires...

By Leo Goldberger / Special to the BJW

Erikson’s obsession lay obviously with the concept of one’s psychological sense of identity

in the orbit of his development. For him, it was a relationship that became the core of his work as a psychoanalyst. He was interested in how people develop their sense of self, and how this sense of self changes over time. Erikson believed that our sense of self is shaped by our experiences and relationships, and that this sense of self is crucial for our ability to cope with the challenges of life.

Erikson’s theories have had a profound impact on the field of psychology, and his ideas have been influential in many areas of human development. His theory of psychosocial development has been particularly influential, and it has been used to understand the development of children and adults alike.

Erikson’s work has also had a significant impact on the field of education. His ideas about the importance of education and the role of teachers in shaping children’s development have been influential in the development of educational policies and practices.

Erikson’s work continues to be influential today, and his ideas continue to be studied and debated by psychologists, educators, and other professionals. His theories have had a lasting impact on our understanding of human development, and they continue to be an important part of the field of psychology.
Traveling with Jewish Taste
Hanukkah and the Nectar of an Ancient Evergreen
By Carol Goodman Kaufman

Olive oil was the fuel for the golden lamps in both the Tabernacle in the desert and the Temple in Jerusalem, and it was part of various offerings, either by itself (Exodus 29:38-40) or mixed with flour into cakes (Leviticus 7:11-12).

But during another period of Jewish history, the Inquisition, using olive oil could mean trouble for those secretly practicing their Judaism. Because Jews would never use pork fat, the aroma of meat frying in olive oil wafting from converso kitchens alerting their Catholic neighbors, who would then report them to the “Holy” Office of the Inquisition.

An oil menorah on the eighth day of Chanukah

In the bowl of an electric mixer set on high, beat the sugar, eggs, and citrus zest until very thick and combined.

Directions:
Set the oven to 375 degrees.

Olive Oil Cake

If you’ve kept up with this column over the past decade-plus (or attended one of my talks) you’ll have heard about the various delicacies Diaspora Jewish cooks prepare for Hanukkah. From latkes to loukoumades and sufganiyot, we typically think of Hanukkah as the festival of lights that we decorate with multicolored candles. But a quick moment of historical reflection should remind us that the origins of Hanukkah are much more ancient – going back to the time of Judah the Maccabee.

The story as told to children of the Greek Seleucids persecuting the Jews, so the Maccabees revolted and sent them packing. Then, having thoroughly cleansed the Temple that Antiochus’s troops had defiled, the Jews searched high and low for pure olive oil to rededicate it by relighting the seven-branched menorah. What they found was enough oil to burn for only one day. But, miracle of miracles, it lasted for eight days, enough time to produce a new supply from the fruit of that almighty-green-leaved evergreen.

The very same oil that we use to drizzle on our salads and sauté everything from onions to tofu was the co-star of the Hanukkah tale.

But wait. What we have in our cupboards today may not be quite the same pure, extra-virgin olive oil of Jewish history. It turns out that there is an enormous international trade in adulterated olive oil. Journalist Tom Mueller, interviewed on the CBS newsmagazine 60 Minutes, stated that the profit margin on non-pure olive oil is three times that of the drug cocaine – at $816 billion per year. And most of the fraud consists of trying to pass off adulterated olive oil as extra-virgin Italian.

There’s even a name for this fraud: ‘Agro-mafia.’ And Mueller reports that only about 40% of olive oil sold as “extra virgin” in Italy actually meets the criteria for that designation. Although the Italian government tried to enact a law with strict labeling requirements, the European Union vetoed it.

Olive Oil was also essential for sacred purposes, such as anointing kings and high priests. In the Torah itself we read, “And he [Moses] poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron’s head, and anointed him, to consecrate him” (Leviticus 8:12). In the Prophets we read that “Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the agent of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward” (Samuel I 16:13). Also in Prophets, “There Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent, and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, “Long live King Solomon!” (1 Kings 1:39).

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So, if you happen to have a hanukkiah that uses oil instead of the typical multi-colored candles, take a moment to think about our Tribe’s long-time relationship with the juice of the olive.
Here are three songs about the rain that those of us of an older generation enjoyed.

Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head," by B.J. Thomas

Rainy Days and Mondays," by The Carpenters

"Have You Ever Seen the Rain?" by Creedence Clearwater Revival

In Chapter Four, you talk about two recurrent general themes of antisemiti-

ism: Hanukkah antisemitism and Purim antisemitism. Can you explain what you

mean by those terms?

In the Purim version, exemplified by the genocidal decrees in the Book of Esther, as well as by more recent ideologies like Nazism and today’s Iran and Hamas, the regime’s goal is unambig-

uous: kill all the Jews. In the Hanukkah version, the Hellenized Seleucid regime criminalized all expressions of Judaism. The goal then was, and continues to be, to eliminate Jewish civilization. It’s basically a weaponized shame, and we participate in it. We’ve seen it from the Spanish Inquisition to the Soviet regime, and it often employs Jews as its agents. These “converted” Jews openly renounce whatever aspects of their Jewish identity are unacceptable to the relevant regime, proudly declare their loyalty to the ideology of the day, and boldly urge other Jews to follow them and publicly flush thousands of years of Jewish civilization down the toilet in exchange for the prize of not being treated like dirt or murdered. It may work for a few years.

After the Holocaust, we had a couple of decades where overt antisemitism was unacceptable. But now we’re back to normal.

After a series of attacks on the Hasidic community, the news coverage blamed the Jews that they had moved into New Jersey with their money to push out the residents. The reality was that they left Brooklyn because they couldn’t afford to live there. But the Hasidic community was poorly served by this narrative. Why? It didn’t call me to write about it.

I believe Mark Twain had some truth to this quip. However, the weather does change in minutes but climatically it is starting to snow right as a big storm begins is “Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow.” It makes me feel so excited and happy. It is especially good when I am with my family and it is starting to snow right as a big storm begins is a “snow day.”

I appreciate this experience you have given me, thank you, and one last thing, remember berkshireweather.com is the place to go. Reach me at berkshireweather@gmail.com.

CULTURE & ARTS

DARA HORN, continued from page 1

You write about visits to Holocaust mem-

orials in Washington, DC, Yad Vashem, March of the Living, the Anne Frank house, and in particular the one you call the Blockbuster exhibit that got every-

thing right but was still wrong. Horn’s "Auschwitz Is Not a Metaphor" outline an exhibition at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City, appeared in The Atlantic. If you had the opportunity to design the perfect Holocaust memori-

al exhibit, how would it differ from those you’ve seen?

Don’t give me that job! One small piece of the whole industry is moti-

vated by this idea that teaching will prevent genocide. One idea animating Jewish community Holocaust museums, Schnell’s 25th, memorial things is that at the time they were being built and promoted, there was something hopeful that if we teach people where hating Jews leads, it will stop. This doesn’t seem to work. Jewish identity is too much based on Holocaust education. For twenty years I’ve been writing about Jews. Not dead Jews, but Yiddish writers, Jewish artists, Jews in the Civil War, Jewish life from within, based on life on their own terms.

You introduce readers to Jews we’ve never heard of before, such as those you call the “Frozen Jews” of Harbin, in Manchuria. The Jews in effect built by Jews, sent by the government to help build the trans-Siberian railway. But the Jews were all murdered or exiled. Tell me about that.

Harbin is so remote that there’s not even a Chabad. Don ben Canaan is an Israeli journalist who’s been living in Harbin for 20 years. He’s employed by the Chinese government and has done enormous research into the history of the Jewish community of Harbin. But he can’t go to his home country, so he tracked down descendants of Harbin Jews. He interviewed them, got photos and other things, and published them. These are other dead Jewish communities with restored synagogues used as museums for destination b’nai mitzvah and weddings, but no Shabbat services and certainly no daily minyan. Why do we like to go to these places?

Now we’re visiting Jewish graves. “Jewish heritage sites” sounds better than property seized from dead and blame the Jews that they had moved from New Jersey with their money to push out the residents. The reality was that they left Brooklyn because they couldn’t afford to live there. But the Hasidic community was poorly served by this narrative. Why? It didn’t call me to write about it.

I’m about 60,000 words into novel number six. It’s very different from anything else I’ve ever written. Also I’m writing a graphic novel for children. For that I have grants from PJ Library. I also have a new podcast called “Adventures with Dead Jews.” I’m also writing a graphic novel for PJ Library. I also have a new podcast called “Adventures with Dead Jews.”

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Move over, Tevye the dairyman. Make room for Moshkele the thief, the rough and tumble rogue hero from the wrong side of the shtetl in a newly rediscovered work of fiction by Sholom Aleichem.

The recent publication of Moshkele the Thief: A Rediscovered Novel (Jewish Publication Society/University of Nebraska Press), translated from the original Yiddish and with an introduction by Curt Leviant, marks the first ever English-language translation of the novella by perhaps the most popular and most widely read Yiddish writer. Sholom Aleichem, the pen name of Sholom Rabinowitz (1859-1916), was a masterful storyteller whose keen eye, wit and humor earned him the reputation as the Jewish Mark Twain. He left a legacy of novels, plays, essays and stories that have been translated into dozens of languages. His fictional stories of Tevye, the everyman’s philosopher of Jewish life, family and faith in a shtetl village in Czarist Russia, inspired the musical Fiddler on the Roof.

But even though Aleichem could write about flawed characters and the grittier side of Jewish life, Moshkele is a far cry from Tevye. The all-but-forgotten tale, first serialized in Yiddish in a Warsaw newspaper in 1903 – a year before Rabinowitz would leave Kyiv for New York City, and three years before his death at 57 – explores the underside of Jewish life in Eastern Europe. The novella brims with the doings of horse thieves, cheats, swindlers and a pious tavern keeper who doesn’t hesitate to show off his comely daughters to sell a few more bottles of vermouth.

The book also captures relations between Jews and non-Jews, another rarity in popular Yiddish writing of the day. It took the astute eye of Leviant, a seasoned translator and scholar of Sholom Aleichem’s work, to spot references to Moshkele the Thief (“Moshkeleh Ganev” in Yiddish) while doing research at the Hebrew University Library in Jerusalem. A retired Rutgers University professor of Hebrew literature and the author or translator of more than 25 books (including the forthcoming novel, Me, Mo, Mu, Ma & Modi, translated from the original Yiddish), Leviant was thumbing through old copies of the Yiddish quarterly Di Goldene Kind (The Jewish Publication Society) when he noticed a brief mention of the title.

Sholom Aleichem himself was pleased with the novel, Leviant explains in the book’s introduction. “I felt I was at the edge of a gold mine,” Leviant wrote in an email. He immediately began translating.

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The Story of “Oy Vey”

Half Hebrew, half Aramaic, this classic lament is all Jewish

By My Jewish Learning

Oy vey! – also: Oy vavoy! Oy vey iz mir! Oy gevalt! Or quite simply: Oy! – is an iconic Jewish expression that conveys the weariness of a people overly familiar with hardship and oppression, as well as the resilience of a people that finds hope and sometimes even humor in catastrophe. It’s both heavy and light. It’s tragic and funny. It’s so much better with a thick Yiddish accent. But where did it come from?

The word “oy” (וֹי) goes back thousands of years, all the way to the Hebrew Bible. In that classical biblical mode, there is nothing funny about it – “oy” is simply an expression of anguish, and may well be etymologically related to that English word “woe.” Of all the biblical authors, the prophet Jeremiah uses it the most, a total of eight times. (Not for nothing has his name become synonymous with lament – giving us the English word “jeremiad.”)

A few examples will give a sense of the way this word was originally used. In the Bible, “oy” can be wielded as a curse or at least a poetic barb thrown at one’s enemies. For example:

Oy to you, O Moab!
You are undone, O people of Chemosh!

Numbers 21:29

Today we think of “oy” as a Jewish exclamation, but in the Bible it is used by all peoples. Another sworn Israelite enemy, the Philistines, have this to say when they realize that the Ark of the Covenant is back on the battlefield, protecting the armies of Israel:

Oy to us! Nothing like this has ever happened before.

1 Samuel 4:7

As with many onomatopoeic words, oy has variations – including in the Bible itself. Consider this line from Proverbs:

Who cries “oy” and who “avoy”?

Proverbs 23:29

Here, “oy” and “avoy” sound similar and clearly mean the same thing. Other variations of “oy” appear in Aramaic, a language closely related to Hebrew that was the lingua franca of Jews for many centuries in antiquity (and is also the language of the Talmud). So, for instance, the Talmud’s Aramaic version of “oy” is the word “vay” (וָי) – which may well give us the “vey” in “oy vey.” As we saw from Proverbs, doubling the expression of woe was common even in biblical times.

Although “oy” seems to have been a nearly universal expression of lament, today the expression “oy vey” comes to us in English through Yiddish, where it feels very much a part of the Jewish character of that language. It is perhaps for this reason that Merriam Webster’s dictionary traces “vey” not to the Aramaic “vay” as suggested above, but to the Middle High German “we” – which also means “woe.”

Yiddish also gives us all the resonant variations of this lament, most notably oy vey iz mir (“woe to me!”) and oy gevalt (“woe! violence!”). This last variant might seem the most disturbing, but it is usually the one used in the most comical way, employed to ruefully bemoan surprise disasters, such as: “He wore that? Oy gevalt!”

By My Jewish Learning

According to an analysis run through Google Books, the word “oy” has been in steady decline in English since the 1980s. Nonetheless, “oy” and “oy vey” continue to be some of the most resonant and recognizable Jewish expressions. This was on literal display with Deborah Kass’s devilishly simple bright yellow aluminum sculpture of the word. One side reads “OY” in capital letters, and the reverse side reads “YO,” an English slang term that not only mirrors the original word but is nearly opposite in tone. Funnily enough, “yo” is pretty close to that older English “ahoy” that was also sometime shortened to “oy.”

My Jewish Learning is all about empowering Jewish discovery for anyone interested in learning more. They offer thousands of articles, videos and other resources to help you navigate all aspects of Judaism and Jewish life – from food to history to beliefs and practices. The site is geared toward all backgrounds and levels of knowledge. Sign up for a daily newsletter at myjewishlearning.com. My Jewish Learning is a part of 70 Faces Media.
CULTURE & ARTS

A Few Good Menorahs

A holiday exhibit at The Jewish Museum in New York City showcases myriad artistic reimaginations of the hanukkah

The Jewish Museum’s collection of Chanukah lamps is the largest in the world at nearly 1,050 pieces, and was amassed over the 114 years of the museum’s existence.

Through the centuries, the importance of the holiday has grown and with it the centrality of the lamp. The material that lamps should be made of has also been prescribed by rabbinical authorities in order to fulfill the commandment in as beautiful a way as one could afford, using the most precious materials possible, ranging from gold and silver to acorn shells. There were no restrictions on the manner of decoration. This has allowed artists, designers, and craftsmen great artistic freedom, often producing fantastical designs and shapes. The selection of lamps on view range in date from the Renaissance to 2013, and originated in North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

"Accumulations: Hanukkah Lamps" will be on view through January 2022. The Jewish Museum is located at 1109 Fifth Avenue at 92nd Street in New York City. For more information, visit thejewishmuseum.org.

CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT:
Photos courtesy of The Jewish Museum.

Celebrate Chanukah at NightWood
Thursday, December 2 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 that evoke feelings of wonder, mystery, and magic!

Menorah Lighting and Holiday Fun
After your NightWood tour, join us at 7:30 pm at the stable 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 and firepits to keep you warm.

Online Purchase of Timed Entry Tickets Required
Federation Group Tickets: Adults $8, Youth 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.