Honoring the Past by Stepping Up in the Present

Federation Campaign 2018 kicks off on Super Sunday, May 6

Looking for a meaningful way to bring more goodness into our world? How about making a difference in the lives of seniors, young people, and Jews all over the world?

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Super Sunday Chair Ed Udel with a portrait of his grandfather, Howard Udel, who was director of Pittsfield’s JCC from 1950 to 1954

On May 6, the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires will host its annual Super Sunday phone-a-thon, an opportunity to give back to our community in so many ways. From 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., volunteers from across Berkshire County will be “making the call” at call centers in Pittsfield and Great Barrington, asking for support for Jewish needs.

Funds raised will help feed the hungry, comfort the elderly, build Jewish identity, and inspire Jewish life and learning across the Berkshires and all over the world.

SUPER SUNDAY, continued on page 6

Two Worlds Illuminated by One Another

Now on view in Lenox, works by Afula-Gilboa artist Tanya Friedman use African textiles to explore Rwandan life in juxtaposition with her Jewish identity

St. Louis-born artist Tanya Friedman, who moved to Israel in 2011 and currently lives with her family on Kibbutz Shulhet in the Afula-Gilboa region, says she fell in love with the colors and patterns of Rwandan fabrics while volunteering at the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village in 2009, and has created collages inspired by the stories and personalities of people she met there, as well as by her own Jewish heritage. Works from her Rwanda series and much more are on view at Cranwell Spa & Golf Resort through August. For more on Tanya and her participation in the Federation-sponsored Project Zug, please see page 24. (Above: A detail from “Closer Look.”)

BERKSHIRE JEWISH ENTREPRENEUR

Still Thinking Big

Eiran Gazit reflects on the creation of Times Square hotspot Gulliver’s Gate

Eiran Gazit and the miniature Jerusalem section of Gulliver’s Gate

“Crossing the Line: Anti-Semitism, BDS, and Civil Rights”

Jeffrey S. Robbins tackles a thorny issue at the May 11 Knosh & Knowledge

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Friday, May 11, Knosh & Knowledge welcomes Jeffrey S. Robbins, the former president of the World Affairs Council of Boston and the former chairman of the New England Board of the Anti-Defamation League of New England. His topic will be “Crossing the Line: Anti-Semitism, BDS, and Civil Rights.”

This Jewish Federation of the Berkshires program will take place at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire at 10:45 a.m., and will be followed by lunch.

In addition to the aforementioned roles, Jeffrey Robbins served as a US delegate to the United Nations Human Rights Commission during the Clinton Administration, having been appointed in 1999 and then re-appointed in 2000. He served as Chief Counsel for the Minority on the United States Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, as well as Assistant United States Attorney

CROSSING THE LINE, continued on page 4

Jeffrey S. Robbins
Berkshire Jewish Voice   •   jewishberkshires.org   April 23 to May 28, 2018

Letters to the Editor

Berkshire Baby Box’s Bodinger Belauds B’not Tzedek’s Benevolence

To the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

Todah raba for providing the B’nai Tzedek Youth Foundation with the opportunity to make grant awards to worthy non-profits. What a powerful exercise for them. It sounds like they took their task quite seriously and that they conducted thoughtful and thorough research in making their decisions.

We are so appreciative of this award, which will indeed help us as we provide safe sleeping spaces and important connections for all new families in our county. We have given away more that 1,400 Berkshire Baby Boxes in our first two years. You helped make this possible.

With much appreciation,
Hinda Bodinger
Great Barrington

“Teaching Israel” in Israel – Thanks to You

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

“Thank you” is insufficient to express the gratitude I feel for each of you, and your generosity in supporting the seven young women who traveled to Israel with me in March. As you may know, this was the first youth trip that Hevreh has sent to Israel in many years, and I hope to be able to say that this was the inaugural trip for what will become a benchmark experience for 8th graders in our congregation.

As a rabbi in the Berkshires, “teaching Israel” remains one of my greatest challenges: how can we really teach a connection to a land and people that are so far away? I believe that this trip was indeed life changing for me and those that are so far away.

In addition to your wonder-full financial support, I must also say that the partnership program with the Afula-Gilboa region is spectacular and I am so proud that our small Jewish community is able to sustain and support this connection. Through the partnership, we were made to feel at home: welcomed enthusiastically to Kibbutz Yizreel, hosted for meals, and invited to see the inner workings of this complex and diverse region.

Our community has much to be proud of, and I believe that your support of this youth trip to Israel is truly remarkable.

Fondly,
Rabbi Jodie Gordon
Great Barrington

For an in-depth account of the trip, please see Rabbi Gordon’s story on page 15.

Your Dollars Provide Meals, Dignity, and Companionship in Jerusalem

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

We are very appreciative of the generous funding Meir Panim Jerusalem Free Restaurant received from the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. Your partnership in our mission of alleviating food insecurity among Jerusalem’s citizens is of paramount importance to our success in promoting the health and well-being of Israel’s impoverished population.

Your generous grant of $3,500 will make an enormous impact by providing over 1,000 of the life-saving meals served daily at our Jerusalem restaurant-style soup kitchens. From this location, we also provide Meals-on-Wheels to Jerusalem’s homebound, disabled, and elderly citizens, including Holocaust survivors.

In addition to providing hot meals to those who need it most, our restaurant and delivery volunteers form close relationships with our clients, inquiring into their welfare and overall state of health, and referring them to additional social services as needed. For many of our clients, the caring and friendly faces of our volunteers are their only social interaction of their day.

On behalf of the American Friends of Meir Panim organization, many thanks to the board of directors of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, your allocations committee, and your donors. Your kindheartedness, compassion, and sense of humanity for those less fortunate is emblematic of your caring for the State of Israel, its citizens, and Jews all over the world.

Sincerely yours,
Ariela Schwartz-Zur
Executive Director

Jerusalem’s Yad LaKashish Artisans and Staff Thank You for Your Ongoing Support

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

The importance of this benefit cannot be overstated. Many poverty-stricken older adults in Jerusalem, particularly immi-grants, experience inactivity, social isolation, and disempowerment. The free monthly travel pass we are able to provide to our elderly artisans with your help covers the cost of transportation to and from Yad LaKashish on a daily basis, and beyond that, allows them easier access to essential services such as medical treatment and trips to the grocery store, as well as visiting friends and family and engaging in various cultural and enrichment activities around the city.

Thank you again for your loyal support. We look forward to continuing our fruitful partnership for many years to come.

Sincerely yours,
Ariela Schwartz-Zur
Executive Director

The American Friends of Meir Panim organization has been serving one of Jerusalem’s most under-served populations – elderly persons who live below the poverty line. Thanks to your ongoing support, we are able to continue offering some of the Israeli capital’s neediest residents creative work opportunities, a comprehensive package of financial benefits, and, perhaps most important, a renewed sense of belonging, purpose and self-worth in a warm, community environment.

Among the benefits our elderly artisans receive in exchange for participation in the Yad LaKashish program is an annual travel pass valid on the public busses and light rail system in Jerusalem and the vicinity. We will be using the $2,000 grant from the Federation to pay for 67 of these passes.

Proudly,
Rabbi Jodie Gordon
Great Barrington

For an in-depth account of the trip, please see Rabbi Gordon’s story on page 15.

The Jewish Transportation Network

Discount Taxi Vouchers

for Jewish residents aged 65 years and older

Purchase $50 worth of taxi coupons for $5
($6 if requested via mail)

Coupons are valid for 30 days and can be used with Tunnel City Taxi of North Adams, Rainbow Taxi of Pittsfield or TaxiCo of Great Barrington and Lee.

Some restrictions apply. Limit 10 voucher booklets per person/per 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

Letters to the Editor

The Berkshires Jewish Voice welcomes signed letters on subjects of interest to the Jewish community. Letters are printed upon space availability. The BJV reserves the right to edit all letters for content, length, and style. The BJV does not print anonymous letters, insults, libelous or defamatory statements. Published letters do not represent the views of the Federation, its board of directors, or the newspaper, but rather express the views of their authors. For verification purposes, please include full name, home address, and a day and evening telephone number. Send letters to: Berkshire Jewish Voice, 196 South Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201, or email: astern@jewishberkshires.org.
In 1968, to protest unfair wages and hours, the African American Sanitation Workers Union of Memphis went on strike. To support that strike, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., made his way there, and delivered a sermon at Memphis’s Mason Temple. His remarks would come to be known as his Mountaintop Sermon, and it would be his final public address, because he was gunned down the next day.

Here is the close of his remarks from April 3, 1968: “Well, I don’t know what will happen now. We’ve got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn’t matter with me now. Because I’ve been to the mountaintop. And I don’t mind. Like any body, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I’m not concerned about that now. I just want to do God’s will. And He’s allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I’ve looked over. And I’ve seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, and if necessary, tomorrow, what we, as a people, will get to the promised land. And I’m happy, tonight. I’m not worried about anything. I’m not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.”

Some have identified these words as prescient, and with reflections such as these, King secured his place in religious history. Although I doubt he would have put himself as a modern-day Moses.

Addressing that particular congregation, on that particular pulpit on which King delivered his final sermon, was a humbling experience. And as is typical at these sorts of events, the speakers were impactful. We heard from a student from Parkland, Florida. The Reverends Lawson and Jesse Jackson both told about what it was like to be at the events of April, 1968. But the hands-down, most significant aspect of the conference was the particular collection of people who had gathered together. It was an event that crossed lines of difference in profound ways, and who were unified by an enduring vision. Everyone there believed that they could do their part to leave the world a bit more whole than it was the day before.

In my remarks from the pulpit, I shared a story about a sparrow and a lion. One day, a sparrow is in the middle of a meadow, lying on its back. It is sticking its legs straight up into the air, and keeping those legs there, even as the sparrow begins to fatigue. After a little while, a lion comes out of the jungle, heading to some other destination, when he comes upon the sparrow. “What are you doing?” says the lion. “You should be flitting about!” “I heard the sky was falling,” the sparrow replies, “I’m doing my part to hold it up.” We do what we can to hold up the sky. Everyone there at that conference continued to do their part to hold up the sky, and I believe, to work to repair the fissures they found in the atmosphere.

In March, we celebrated Passover, during which we said, “In every generation, one is obligated to see him or herself as if he or she was personally redeemed from Egypt.” From Passover, we count through the Omer, and head to Shavuot, our mountaintop moment. This spring, we are redeemed from Egypt, and head into the Wilderness. We have not yet reached the promised land, but we get to stand at mountaintops, and affirm ‘Naasei v’Nishmah.’ We will do and we will understand.” In our observance of mitzvot—both ritual and ethical—we come to better understand our world and our relationship with God. Standing with others at the 1 AM 2018 conference, I felt this spiritual message in the actions that these leaders were taking. I was honored to be a part of it. I was grateful for the opportunity.

May we each continue along our own journeys, with strength and with length of strength. For those of us called to pursue justice, may we do what we can to hold up the sky, continuing to strive for a better today than yesterday, and a better tomorrow than today.

Rabbi Neil P.G. Hirsch is a spiritual leader at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire in Great Barrington.

I currently serve as the co-chair for the Reform movement’s campaign for racial justice, and so I was invited to offer a Jewish spiritual reflection on those matters.

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Rabbi Neil P.G. Hirsch is a spiritual leader at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire in Great Barrington.
Each army base on which volunteers in Berkshires to know attending this program since Sar El Program. We have been Israeli Negev as part of the weeks on an army base in the recently returned from three jobs to be done. This time we were stationed in one of the army logistics bases. We were told to clean and inventory, and refill. While doing these chores we also had to sweep and clean the warehouse a number of warehouses. This was a complex task, much more difficult than in the anti-BDS bills that have been enacted almost exclusively in states where the legislatures are Republican-controlled or, in the case of New York and Maryland, where the governor used an executive order to combat BDS.

Last year, the American Civil Liberties Union came out against anti-BDS legislation, claiming it could fulfill protection expression by scaring people into self-censorship. "Although that position has been challenged by many legal experts, the ACLU has filed suit against anti-BDS measures in a number of states.

Some voices in the Boston Jewish community charge that the local JCRC did not do enough to promote the proposed legislation. In its report, the JCRC collaborated in speaking in favor of the bill.

The JCRC’s Burton acknowledged that “in retrospect, there was more we could have done to mobilize other Jewish organizations to make more public noise about the bill.”

But, he emphasized, “I don’t think it would have mattered because people who know the Massachusetts legislative process from the inside have told us that there were just too many obstacles to overcome.”

Here’s how Jeffrey Robbins weighed in on the BJV’s questions about some of the issues surrounding the legislation.

BJV: Was there anything substantially different in the proposed Massachusetts bills than in anti-BDS bills that have passed in other states?

Robbins: The JCRC has a complex task, much more than many understand, in navigating relationships with a variety of Massachusetts public officials and civic leaders, and navigating those relationships for the benefit of the Jewish community and, for that matter, for Israel. Often this requires it to engage in a respectful way and take what is calibrated to serve the good of the community (and of Israel) but which may not be immediately visible. He is sure to say that in the case of this legislation, one of the challenges was the tepid reaction of some of the Jewish legislators themselves. Another was the First Amendment concern that was a factor for some in the Legislature and outside of the Legislative. A third is the set of problems that Israel has come to have among certain Democratic Party constituencies – and Massachusetts, after all, effectively has one party Legislature. I am not one who believes that the JCRC is in a position to simply snap its fingers and overcome those challenges. I am someone, however, who is a big admirer of Jeremy Burton and the JCRC, and who sees how energetic and skilled they are on Israel’s behalf in a place that is complicated when it comes to positions on the Middle East.

BJV: Is Jeremy Burton correct in asserting that the Massachusetts bill failed because of an anti-Israel political climate in heavily Democratic states?

Robbins: As I indicated, Jeremy is absolutely right when he asserts that there is a need to make the case for Israel among Democratic constituencies more vigorously, more effectively, than perhaps all of us are doing. He is also clearly right when he indicates that this is a national problem for Israel, as a number of polls, including a recent one by Pew, reflect, and as I believe from talking to Israeli officials they understand, as well.

BJV: What might the future hold for an anti-BDS bill in Massachusetts?

Robbins: My hope is that if all of us who understand the challenges that the pro-Israel community faces in redoubling (if not tripling and quadrupling) our efforts among Democratic constituencies recommit ourselves, we will be better positioned to demonstrate that the anti-Israel boycotts that have become so fashionable in certain quarters are in fact, rather than “progressive.” If we do that, it may well be that we can bring about a revisiting of the legislation, and bring Massachusetts “in line” with other states who have seen anti-Israel boycotts for what they are more clearly.

IF YOU GO
Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
Date & Time: Friday, May 11 at 10:45 a.m.
Venue: Henneck of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington
Cost: $11 with fresh buffet lunch, Program only, $5.
Advance lunch reservations required for this event. Email federation@jewishberkshires.org, or call (413) 442-4360, ext. 10.

Donate • Volunteer • Make a Difference
On Thursday, April 26 and May 14 at 10:45 a.m., Join Professor Steven J. Rubin for “Current Affairs: Contemporary American and International Politics.” This course will meet once a month to discuss and explore current issues that influence our lives and society at large. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ Connecting With Community series. Topics will be chosen by Professor Rubin in consultation with the class and in view of the issue’s relevance. Members will be encouraged to participate in discussions to express views and opinions in a supportive and informal atmosphere. Steven J. Rubin is professor emeritus of international studies and former dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Adelphi University, Garden City, NY. He is the author of numerous books and articles and frequently lectures both here and abroad on such topics as international anti-Semitism, Jewish history, popular culture, and literature. His radio play “Dem Bums: The Rise and Demise of the Brooklyn Dodgers” was broadcast live on National Public Radio in December 2017 and can currently be heard online.

IF YOU GO
Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community 
Venue: Knesset Israel
Date & Time: Thursday, April 26 and Monday, May 14 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 19).

On Monday, April 23 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires presents “The Process of Aging” with therapist Maggie Bittman. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series. This program will provide an opportunity to be part of a group dialogue, created and facilitated by Bittman, who will explain her outlook and approach, emphasizing that aging begins at birth. She will discuss how all of us are confronted with four existential truths as we age—the search to find meaning and purpose; facing mortality, experiencing alieneness; and engaging free will. Bittman will highlight how this is a lifelong process, and the ways people return to these existential truths at each stage of life with the added wisdom that comes with aging. Within this context, participants will discuss, share, and offer support, as they explore these existential truths.

IF YOU GO
Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community 
Venue: Knesset Israel
Date & Time: Monday, April 23 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 19).

On Thursday, May 3 at 10:45 a.m., Join Linda Novick for “Easy Chair Yoga for Flexibility, Mobility, and Peace of Mind.” This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ Connecting With Community series.

Linda Novick says: “Chair Yoga is appropriate for people of all levels of mobility. It is a series of breathing and stretching exercises done in a chair, which increases mobility of the joints, flexibility, strength and stamina. Some of the exercises are performed standing behind the chair while holding on. Participants will learn breathing techniques to enhance lung capacity, as well as easy stretches and yoga postures. Yoga is good for all bodals. Beginners are welcome.”

IF YOU GO
Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community 
Venue: Knesset Israel
Date & Time: Thursday, May 3 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 19).

On Monday, April 30 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires presents “Our Dogs Understand Hebrew” about the Israel Guide Dog Center for the Blind. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

Join Jeff Lambert, professor and director emeritus of the Disabled Students Support Services at Long Island University- Brooklyn, and his wife, educator Ellen Lambert, who will use multimedia, discussion, and case examples to explain the work of the Israel Guide Dog Center for the Blind in Be’er Ovad.

For the past 10 years, Jeff and Ellen have been raising guide dog puppies for the Israel Guide Dog Center for the Blind. They have also fostered Shannon, a breeding dog who had four litters with a total of 33 puppies, several of which have become working guide dogs.
SUPER SUNDAY, continued from page 1

“At a time of great uncertainty in our world,” says Executive Direct Dara Kaufman, “your gift to the Federation is an expression of our shared values to create a more compassionate and just world. Our work transcends age, gender, geography and levels of religious observance.”

Adds Kaufman: “No one asks about observance before we offer food and blankets to families in the wake of natural disasters, like the hurricane we saw in Houston. We didn’t check synagogue affiliations before we assisted with rent for a local single mother struggling. We don’t insist that a person keep kosher to find nourishment and companionship at our kosher lunch program. We don’t even ask if they’re Jewish. “When people are in need, our differences quickly disappear. Everyone counts and we are compelled to be there for one another.”

Introducing our 2018 Super Sunday Chair
Continuing his lifelong commitment to the Jewish community, Edward Udel has taken on the role of 2018 campaign chair for the Super Sunday community. Edward Udel’s commitment to this Jewish Sunday Chair role demonstrates how high profile Jewish community organization was in the mid-20th century. He shows off a program saved from the 1954 fundraising concert, its honorary chair’s “a pause from the chaos, to restore control in our lives by using Super Sunday as a community outlook emerge from our community’s goals – providing help to those in need, engaging Jewish youth, and building Jewish life, to name just a few.” He adds, “On Super Sunday, we ask if they’re Jewish. Our work transcends age, gender, geography and levels of religious observance.”

He adds: “On Super Sun-

Just as Federation does today, the Jewish community held a summer concert to raise funds. This program is from the 1954 fundraising concert co-sponsored by Leonard Bernstein and other local luminaries at Pittsfield’s “Jewish Community House” on East Street. On piano was Lukas Foss, classmate of Bernstein’s at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and described by the conductor as an “authentic genius”; he would go on to great renown as a composer. 

Edward Udel was the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s concertmaster, and himself a renowned teacher.

Our Federation Presents

A precursor to the BJN, the Jewish Community News was “Published monthly by the Jewish Community Council of the Berkshires Community of Pittsfield.” Penving the September, 1955 Rosh Hashanah message uses Rabbi Harold Salzman, now the rabbi emeritus of Temple Anshe Amunim who remains a cherished member of the Berkshires Jewish community.

As for a campaign pitch, here is how they did it 62 years ago: “The goal of $65,000 is a minimal one and must be met if we are to hold our heads high as a community which faces up to its responsibility.”

See You On Super Sunday, May 6!

Just a friendly reminder – please make a call or answer a call on May 6, when the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires kicks off its annual campaign with its 2018 Super Sunday.

Join us during this important day of community building at either of two calling centers:

• Federation office, 196 South Street in Pittsfield (9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.)
• Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center Administrative Office, 244 Main Street, Ste. 3 (not the theater) Great Barrington (9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.)

When our community needs us, we are there. Do you want to find a comfortable niche within Federation to use their skills and life experience in a way they find fulfilling.

See You On
Super Sunday, May 6!

Just a friendly reminder – please make a call or answer a call on May 6, when the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires kicks off it’s annual campaign with its 2018 Super Sunday.

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When our community needs us, we are there. We think you’ll get a lot out of being there for the Jewish Community of the Berkshires.

Volunteers Wanted for Follow-Up Calls!

Tuesday May 15, 3-5 or 6:30-8 at Federation office
Tuesday May 22, 3-5 or 6:30-8 at Hevreh

Volunteer at: (413) 442-4360, ext. 10
On Thursday, May 10 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Jean P. Moore and Rabbi Rachel Barenblat, who will share the stage as they read from their newly published books of poetry. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield, is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

Jean P. Moore, a novelist and poet, writes fiction and nondiction. Her new chapbook, Time’s Tyranny, includes poems on themes such as life in its fullness; love, in youth and in maturity; mothering and grandfathering. Jean’s presentation will focus on her nature poems, largely inspired by her many years spent in Tyringham.

Rabbi Barenblat is spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Israel in North Adams. Her most recent book of poetry is titled Texts to the Holy, a collection of love poems in the tradition of the Song of Songs. The great Biblical poem that describes love between two human beloveds and is also read as an allegory for the love between us and God,” she writes. “These poems can be read purely as love poems from one human beloved to another, and they can be read as poems of love between a soul and her Source. This is deep emotion expressed in contemporary language, without sentimentality. The yearning heart finds reminders of the beloved everywhere. Even a text message can be a locus for holiness.”

Rabbi Barenblat was named in 2016 by The Forward as one of America’s Most Inspiring Rabbis. In addition to several poetry chapbooks, she is author of book-length poetry collections, as well.

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On Monday, May 7 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Diane Pearlman, an independent film producer who currently serves as the executive director of the Berkshire Film and Media Collaborative. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield, is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

Did you know that the Academy Award visual effects for The Matrix were conceived in the Berkshires? That shots for the show “Game of Thrones” are being completed in Pittsfield? That you may have even bumped into one of the many award-winning screenwriters, actors, and directors while shopping at Guideo’s?

Says Diane Pearlman: “Let’s take a journey through the past several decades and discuss the evolution of the film and media industry in our county. You’ll learn about some of the groundbreaking technologies that have been developed here, and why so many filmmakers have decided to make the Berkshires their home no matter where they work in the world.

“We’ll discuss the evolution of the Berkshire Film and Media Collaborative – a non-profit organization dedicated to creating education, workforce and production opportunities in the film and media industry as an economic initiative for our region. Learn how films that are shot here positively affect our local economy. We’ll even let you in on some of the projects happening around town!”

“Hollywood in the Berkshires – it’s real business!” Diane Pearlman recently produced the award-winning short film, A Tree A Rock A Cloud, based on the Carson McCullers’ short story and directed by acclaimed actor, Karen Allen. She is currently producing a short video, You Have a Voice, which focuses on young women and civic engagement. In the 1990s, Diane was executive producer and general manager of Mass. Illusion, a visual effects movie studio located in Lenox. MI created groundbreaking effects for The Matrix (Academy Award 2000, Best Visual Effects), What Dreams May Come (Academy Award 1999, Best Visual Effects), Starship Troopers, Evita, Die Hard with a Vengeance, Eraser, Judge Dredd, and many others. She lives in Great Barrington.

FREE BOOKS & MUSIC for kids, 6 months - 8 years

PJ Library, a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, is made possible in the Berkshires through the generous support of PJ Library, a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, is made possible in the Berkshires through the generous support of

For further information on all Jewish Federation of the Berkshires programs, please call Nancy Maurice Rogers, Program Director, at (413) 442-4360, ext. 15.

IF YOU GO
Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community
Venue: Knesset Israel
Date & Time: Thursday, May 10 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 19).

SAVE THE DATE

Jewish Women’s Foundation of the Berkshires Annual Brunch & Meeting
Friday, June 29
10:30 a.m.
The Lenox Club
111 Yokun Ave, Lenox, MA

Special Guest: Linda Hirshman
Author of Sisters In Law: How Sandra Day O’Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg Went to the Supreme Court and Changed the World

In the spirit of tikvah olam, the Jewish Women’s Foundation of the Berkshires is dedicated to sharing Jewish values by meeting unmet needs in the community and supporting social action.
Why Fiction Matters in Our Fact-Driven World

On Thursday, May 24 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes novelist Ellen Meeropol for “Why Fiction Matters in Our Fact-Driven World.” This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield, is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

Ellen Meeropol’s novels take on some of the challenging issues in our world: environmental chaos, racism, unlawful detention, enhanced interrogation, and medical ethics. She will talk about illuminating our world, exploring our roles, and offering hope through stories, and how novels can illuminate the nuances and humanity behind the headlines of the 21st century. She will also discuss how stories grow from the fertile ground of memories, imagination, and the daily news.

Ellen Meeropol is the author of three novels: The Star of Chaverim, On Hurricane Island, and House Arrest. A former nurse practitioner and bookseller, Ellen says she is fascinated by characters balanced on the fault lines between political turmoil and human connection. Recent essay publications include The Writer, Guernica, The Cleaver, Necessary Fiction, Pint Up!, and The Writers Chronicle. Ellen has an MFA in fiction from the Stonecoast program at the University of Southern Maine. She is a founding member of Straw Dogs Writers Guild and its current board president.

Benny Bud in the Breadbox: The True Story of Herman Melville

On Thursday, May 17 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Jana Laiz, the first writer-in-residence at Herman Melville’s beloved home, Arrowhead. She will present “Benny Bud in the Breadbox: The True Story of Herman Melville,” a story told from the point of view of the great American author’s nine-year-old granddaughter, Eleanor. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield, is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

Jana Laiz will share the true story that if not for grand-daughter Eleanor, Herman Melville might be mired in obscurity. Eleanor’s discovery, which Laiz will share, brought him to the forefront in American literature and history. While at Arrowhead, at Melville’s desk, looking out the very same window he looked out as he wrote the American literary masterpiece, Moby Dick, wrote a new children’s biography of Herman Melville, “Benny Bud in the Breadbox.” Berkshire Theatre Group adapted it into their 2017/2018 education play.

She is the author of the triple award-winning novel, Weeping Under This Same Moon, and The Twelfth Stone, and Elephants of the Tsunami. She is the co-author of A Free Woman On God’s Earth, The True Story of Elizabeth “Mum-bet” Freeman, The Slave Who Won Her Freedom, soon to be a motion picture. A former refugee resettlement counselor and ESL teacher, Jana says she believes that honoring diversity can change the world. Her new book, Blanket of Stars, will be out soon. She lives in the Berkshires.

Knosh on Famous Nathan for Knowledge about Nathan’s Famous of Coney Island

Documentary filmmaker Lloyd Handwerker on his family’s Brooklyn landmark.

Jana Laiz will share the true story that if not for grand-daughter Eleanor, Herman Melville might be mired in obscurity. Eleanor’s discovery, which Laiz will share, brought him to the forefront in American literature and history. While at Arrowhead, at Melville’s desk, looking out the very same window he looked out as he wrote the American literary masterpiece, Moby Dick, wrote a new children’s biography of Herman Melville, “Benny Bud in the Breadbox.” Berkshire Theatre Group adapted it into their 2017/2018 education play.

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Your Federation Presents

We Do Nothing Halfway – Hafla Night a Complete Success

More than 100 revelers showed up on March 5 for Federation’s Hafla night celebration, which brought Israeli participants in our Partnership2Gether program to Hevreh of Southern Berkshire for an evening of music, stories, socializing, and fantastic food. Many thanks to the volunteers who came to set up and help prepare a delicious dinner, as well as those families who so hospitably housed our new friends from the Afula-Gilboa region. The event inaugurated Federation’s year of “Israel at 70” programming.

Liran Sela leading a sing-along

Volunteers helped our guest chefs prepare a delicious repast

OPEN HOUSE

May 10

Join us to learn more about our compelling curriculum that connects the dots!

What makes us INTENTIONAL, INDEPENDENT & INSPIRED?

Berkshire Country Day School

Preschool through Grade 9: Now Enrolling for Fall 2018
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admissions@berkshirecountryday.org
55 Interlaken Rd (Route 183), Stockbridge, MA

Voted “Best Private School in the Berkshires!”

berkshirecountryday.org
EIRAN GAZIT, continued from page 1

locals and visitors experience Gazit’s approach on a small stage – literally, the small stage in the inn’s cozy lounge where he books accomplished musicians for giga year-round. “The Gateways was never seen as a place for locals,” he says. “That changed with music.” The hundreds of thousands of annual visitors to Gulliver’s Gate in New York are able to experience Gazit’s approach within the 47,000 square feet of exhibition space just steps from Times Square. Trains, roads of Walker and Kemble Streets in downtown Lenox. Gazit started thinking small in a big way after a 1986 visit to Madrourad, an elaborate miniature city in The Hague, Netherlands. I fell in love with the concept,” says Gazit, “and decided to create Mini-Israel. That was a long project.” Work started on the 820 million en-

folding corners of the globe. Gulliver’s Gate, explains Gazit, “is an education designed to cause a reaction. Everything is interpreted in a way as to tell a story.” What makes the backstory of the shrunkened world of Gulliver’s Gate particularly interesting is the way its creation demonstrates how small our world has become in the 21st century thanks to the Internet, international trade and worldwide economic development, transport, shipping, and high-technology. Gulliver’s Gate has all the whimsies and bells you would expect from a Crossroads of the World extravaganza – and yet it was masterminded from the crossroads of Walker and Kemble streets in downtown Lenox. Gazit started thinking small in a big way after a 1986 visit to Madrourad, an elaborate miniature city in The Hague, Netherlands. I fell in love with the concept,” says Gazit, “and decided to create Mini-Israel. That was a long project.” Work started on the 820 million en-

deavor in 1991, with the nearly 15-acre outdoor attraction in Latrun (in the Ayalon Valley between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem) opening in 2003. According to the Mini Israel Wikipedia page, the “park consists of about 350 buildings and landmarks, 30,000 figures, 500 animals, plants and 15,000 real trees, 4,700 cars, 100 motorcycles, 14 trains, 3 helicopters, 32 aircraft, 175 ships and 230 trucks. All trees are real bon-
sa.” During that time, Gazit also helped create mosques for Miniaturk, a model village in Istanbul featuring Turkish and Ottoman landmarks.

“Gulliver’s Gate was born out of my experience with Mini Israel,” says Gazit. “When the concept came up, it was clear I was going to lead it.” In 2012, he was approached by ultra-orthodox Jewish inves-
tors from Brooklyn, who had worked on him on a hotel project in Costa Rica. Gazit had in 2005 relocated from Israel to the Berkshires, a part of the world he says he knew well from visits to his wife’s family, who lived here at the time, he was consulting mainly with high tech firms around the world that valued his perspective as a non-te-
chie, as well as working in hospitality in Lenox, first running the Cornell Inn and then acquiring the Gateways. “To succeed in a project like Gulliver’s Gate, I needed a good team,” says Gazit. “My weakness is that I’m not a tech guy.” He didn’t have to look far for the collaborator he needed, enlisting Matthew Cote, a science and technology teacher from Lenox Memorial Middle and High School who “had taught all three of my kids and was their favorite teacher.” Cote took a two-year leave of absence to work on the project. As for location, “Times Square was the obvious place, but the problem was that real estate there is ridiculously expensive.” Eventually, he secured a 15-year lease on an expansive space on West 44th Street that formerly housed the newsroom of the New York Times. In creating the models, Gazit felt that “it was important that they be built in other places. I didn’t want an Amer-
ican idea of what Europe or other areas of the world might be. I wanted to work with peo-
ple who had a feel for the fla-
der of those places.” He found

in Brooklyn and monuments from Washington, DC were completed in Hoboken. The car system was designed in Den-
mark. Attraction consultants in California helped come up with designs and conceptual plans, and exhibits were tested in an old paper mill in Lee. In the end, more than 800 people worked on the project. To succeed, Gulliver’s Gate had to be more than a novelty – it had to possess an intrinsic appealing that had to be imagined during its creation. “We had to create an idea of the world that appealed to ages 6 to 96,” he says. adding that Gulliver’s Gate is essentially an adult attrac-
tion that kids can also enjoy. “People may come with their kids first, and then return for

FEDERATION ROAD TRIP to see the ISRAEL STORY Live!

Join us for a dazzling, live musical journey through Israel’s 70 years of statehood.

Mixed Tape - The Story Behind Israel’s Ultimate Playlist

Sunday, April 29 at 7 p.m.
UMASS AMHERST Room 151, Integrated Learning Center 650 N. Pleasant Street, Amherst, MA

“Israel Story” – Israel’s leading podcast and radio show – explores seven decades of israeli tunes, in celebration of one big milestone birthday. Go behind the scenes of some of Israel’s most iconic songs, and unpack the stories, complexities and tensions involved. Prepare yourself for an unforgettable evening of phenomenal live music, incredible visuals, and more.

By Bus: 4:50 p.m. pick up, Federation parking lot, 106 South St., Pittsfield 5:20 p.m. pick up, Big Y parking lot, 10 Pleasant St, Lee

By Car: Parking is available at the Campus Hotel Garage located at 1 Campus Way, Amherst, MA. It is short walk to the Integrated Learning Center.

Tickets and bus are free but advanced registration is mandatory. Space is limited. No walk-ins will be accepted.

Registration Required By April 16 (no exceptions)
(413) 442-4300, ext. 10 federation@jewishberkshires.org

Sponsored by U Mass Hill with partial funding provided by the Area P. Hassen Fund for Israel of the Jewish Endowment Foundation

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EIRAN GAZIT, continued on next page
the art, artistry, humor, and storylines” that each diorama contains, quirky details that are impossible to take in on one visit.

“Decisions had to be made - what is the first thing visitors will see?” says Gazit. “Manhattan is the first thing. It’s fresh in their minds. Manhattan has a certain impact that we wanted to bring indoors so there is a continuation of the experience that visitors are already in the midst of experiencing.”

“Every section of Gulliver’s Gate throws visitors in a different direction,” he says. The goal was for a visitor “to understand that it was not all built by the same group.” Gazit’s plan was to let each workshop work with its own personality to the extent possible while still maintaining the coherence of the overall project. That took diplomacy, he says, and he spent most of 2016 traveling the world to stages of development. Live stream cameras in each of the workshops allowed the team in New York working on the project to see and understand what everyone was up to. Once the reasonable project location was secured, his vendors were charged with delivering and reassembling the models on-site in New York; an Israeli logistics firm had the job of coordinating and consolidating all the shipping and receiving – “a nightmare in Times Square in the winter,” remembers Gazit.

Gazit wanted the attraction to be about more than the uncanny models. For one, he says, “I wanted people to understand that what they are seeing is a complex computer- engineered project.” To that end, Gazit implemented a “NASA-style command center” in the midst of Gulliver’s Gate from where the entire exhibit is controlled. Visitors can observe workings that are usually kept behind the scenes, and are invited to pose questions to operations staff.

Another challenge was “how to create an identification between the guest and the site,” he says, so that their visit is not something that happens in time, but rather an interaction that develops over time. Gazit’s idea was to employ 3-D printing and laser cutting technology that create life-like figures from body scans performed by a high-tech camera (one of only three of its kind in the United States) that takes more than 130 pictures of a subject. Guests can order miniatures of themselves in varying sizes as keepsakes, and also opt to have a model of themselves in HO scale that can be placed in the locale of their choosing within Gulliver’s Gate. These guests get pictures of their Liliputian selves in situ via email, and a passport to Gulliver’s Gate.

Gazit also had the idea to open the onsite workshop to the public, so that visitors can see the craftsmanship involved in expanding and maintaining the exhibit. “People are fascinated,” he says. “They see that what is involved is not just engineering and computer design, but also model making.”

The 940 million Gulliver’s Gate opened in May, 2017, and has enjoyed a year of success, employing more than 100 people. After the project opened, Gazit handed the reins to Michael Langer, one of his co-founders, to run the day-to-day operations, though he says he still visits every six or seven weeks, and serves on the company’s board of directors.

Presently, Gazit is content living a life that is half Basil Fawlty and half International Man of Mystery. As summer approaches, Gazit is gearing up for another busy summer season at the Gateways, while also working on new projects via his namesake firm, Gazit Consultants. Appropriately, his profile picture on the firm’s website shows him aboard an airplane.

Mazel Tov to...

Beth and Bernie Abramson on their 50th wedding anniversary.

* Alba Passerini (Jewish Federation of the Berkshires board member) and Dr. Charles Wohl, whose daughter Hannah Wohl has accepted a tenure-track position on the faculty of the University of California, Santa Barbara. She will assume the rank of assistant professor in the Department of Sociology in September.

* Jacob Fanto, whose four-movement composition Mythical Realms was performed by the Empire State Youth Percussion Orchestra at the University at Albany’s Festival of Contemporary Music in March. Jacob, a 9th grader at Lenox Memorial High School and a percussionist, is the son of Clarence Fanto and Andrea Goodman.

* Colin Orvitsky and Josh Cutler for being chosen by Berkshire Community College as two of the 40 Under Forty class of recipients. These honorees have distinguished themselves for professional achievement and contributions to the Berkshires. Colin is the administrative coordinator for the Center for Learning in Action at Williams College. Josh, a current board member of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, is assistant branch manager at Pittsfield Cooperative Bank.

* Jackie Browner and Randy Johnson on the engagement of their son, Evan Kenward, to Kerry Dyer. Evan is also the grandson of Ilse and Irwin Browner.

* Diane Kozl on assuming the role of office administrator at Temple Anshe Amunim.

Elle Hammerling on the kickoff of Berkshire Lightscape, a community project to illuminate the stately structures and public spaces of downtown Pittsfield to further vitalize the area. For more information, visit www.patronicity.com/lanes.

Minatures of Russian landmarks such as the Kremlin were created in Russia and reassembled in New York.
YOUR GIFT TO THE ANNUAL CAMPAIGN WILL HELP JEWS ACROSS THE BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY

Fewer Jews say they are attached to Judaism. Yet 97% of American Jews state that they are “proud to be Jewish.” Our critical challenge is to transform Jewish pride into true participation in Jewish life. And we are already on our way.

Locally, Federation helps children and teens live their Jewishness at school and summer camp. Birthright trips transform young adults’ relationship to Israel. Around the world, in places where the Holocaust and Communism almost wiped out Jewish life, we’re nurturing the efforts of a core of inspiring young people who are reinventing Jewish life.

In the US and around the world, Jewish people and institutions are being threatened. Security is posted at synagogues. At Jewish schools in France, five-year-olds file past armed guards to get to the playground. Jewish students arriving at college encounter toxic anti-Israel and anti-Semitic slogans.

Federation is helping to restore a sense of security by sharing resources, expertise and training to keep our communities safe. Standing up against hatred and combating BDS. So that Jews everywhere can walk without fear, into a synagogue, a Jewish school—or simply down the street.

The world is an unstable place

We bring security.

Millions of Jews find every day a struggle.

We are a lifeline.

Younger people feel detached from Judaism

We build connection.

People just like us, our children, our parents or grandparents, desperately need our help. Fragile Holocaust survivors can’t handle basic daily tasks. Families reel from job loss. Widows and widowers face loneliness. Forgotten Jews, young and old, live in poverty and lack basic necessities.

Federation removes obstacles. We bridge gaps. A hot meal is delivered to a homebound person. An emergency loan covers the rent for a struggling family. Health aides bring food and medicine to an elderly survivor. A social worker helps an older adult find a safer living situation.

In the US and around the world, Jewish values and institutions are being threatened. Security is posted at synagogues. At Jewish schools in France, five-year-olds file past armed guards to get to the playground. Jewish students arriving at college encounter toxic anti-Israel and anti-Semitic slogans.

Federation is helping to restore a sense of security by sharing resources, expertise and training to keep our communities safe. Standing up against hatred and combating BDS. So that Jews everywhere can walk without fear, into a synagogue, a Jewish school—or simply down the street.
You can help provide programs for at-risk students, shelter for abused women, support services for disabled youth, and job training for new Israeli citizens. You’ll also help connect our community to Israel and help Israel connect with the Global Jewish community.

A CLOSE & CARING RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL

You can help young families in the Berkshires embrace Jewish values and traditions while building a supportive community with Jewish peers through programs like PJ Library and Federation Family Days.

JEWISH LIFE FOR YOUNG FAMILIES

Winters are long and cold in the Ukraine, but you can help the most vulnerable prepare with warm clothes, blankets, and heaters. You can also bring food cards, home health aides, and medicine to those who need it most.

FOOD SECURITY, HEALTH CARE, AND WINTER RELIEF

You can help strengthen, sustain, and connect our community through hundreds of educational programs, holiday celebrations, and the Berkshire Jewish Voice, which bring people together and engage them in meaningful Jewish life.

A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

You can share your values and nurture a Jewish future for hundreds of local children by providing a high-quality, meaningful Jewish education through critical grants to all of our local Jewish supplemental schools.

JEWISH EDUCATION & VALUES

You can provide older adults and the homebound with nutritious meals and stimulating programming served up with a side of companionship and compassion through our Connecting with Community kosher meals and Kosher Meals on Wheels.

DIGNITY & COMPASSION

You can help combat anti-Semitism and fight the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement through community, youth and college programming, as well as national advocacy and security resources.

RESOURCES TO FIGHT ANTI-SEMITISM

You can help young people across the Berkshires and in the former Soviet Union build strong Jewish identities and become future leaders through scholarships for Jewish overnight camp and Israel experiences.

A STRONG JEWISH IDENTITY

You can engage them in meaningful Jewish life.

A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

You can help tens of thousands of new immigrants, who are fleeing anti-Semitism in Europe and fighting in the Ukraine, build new lives for themselves and their families in Israel.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

We join with Jewish communities across North America to rapidly mobilize local resources to help in times of crisis. From the recent attacks in Israel to relief efforts in Nepal, you help deliver an SOS response wherever and whenever it is needed.

CARING IN TIMES OF CRISIS

You can help with

Jewish overnight camp and Israel experiences.

A STRONG JEWISH IDENTITY

You can help

FOOD SECURITY, HEALTH CARE, AND WINTER RELIEF

With Winter comes

DIGNITY & COMPASSION

You can

JEWISH LIFE FOR YOUNG FAMILIES

Children are the future

JEWISH EDUCATION & VALUES

You can

A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

You can help

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

You can help

RESOURCES TO FIGHT ANTI-SEMITISM

You can help

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

You can help

A CLOSE & CARING RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL

You can help

ADVOCACY & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

You can help
Temple Anshe Amunim to Celebrate Israel's Birthday

PITTSFIELD – Temple Anshe Amunim will celebrate Israel’s 70th birthday with a Kiddush Shabbat service followed by a Yom Ha’atzmaut (Israeli Independence Day) seder on Friday, April 27 at 26 Broad Street in Pittsfield. The seder will feature traditional Israeli foods, including hummus, tahini, and more.

The cost for this event is $10 per person for TAA members (with a maximum of $30 per family). Plans are underway for 10-day, May 30, from 7 to 9 p.m., which will begin on Wednesday, August 15 at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire. The cost for this event is $810 per person for TAA members (with a maximum of $310 per family) or $813 per person for non-members (with a maximum of $45 per family). Please RSVP as soon as possible.

For more information or to make reservations call (413) 528-6378 or visit www.ansheamunim.org.

GREAT BARRINGTON – Temple Anshe Amunim is pleased to announce its fifth season! The 2017 B’Shalom Chorale’s monthly Friday night events are open to the community and feature a range of musical offerings and musical inspiration through the choral presentation of Jewish music.

The B’Shalom Chorale invites singers for a fifth season

GREAT BARRINGTON – The B’Shalom Chorale, the Berkshires’ only chorus showcasing Jewish music, is pleased to announce its fifth season! Plans are underway for 10 inspiring weekly rehearsals, which will begin on Wednesday, May 30, from 7 to 9 p.m., and culminate with a concert on Wednesday, August 15 at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire.

For a Fifth Season

Celebrate Shavuot with Temple Anshe Amunim

PITTSFIELD – At Shavuot, we acknowledge one of Judaism’s great blessings — the gift of the Torah. To honor this joyous festival, Rabbi Josh Breindel will lead a guided reading of Megillah Rut (Book of Ruth) as part of an uplifting worship experience on Sunday, May 20, at Temple Anshe Amunim.

Rabbi Breindel shares: “The Book of Ruth takes place at exactly this time of year. Even more than that, it teaches that compassion and unity are some of the most profound ways that we can bring blessing into our world. Shavuot is a great moment of celebration and these values guide us as we move through our lives.”

All are welcome to join in the Temple’s celebration of Shavuot. At 9:30 a.m., participants will read the story of Ruth in English and discuss its relevance in the modern day. Services (including a Yizkor/memorial service) will follow at approximately 10:45 a.m. and will conclude shortly after noon. The Shavuot observance is free and open to the community.

For more information, contact the Temple Anshe Amunim office at (413) 442-5910, email templeoffice@ansheamunim.org or visit www.ansheamunim.org.


death with dignity will be held at Temple Anshe Amunim on Thursday, May 31 at 7 p.m. Panelists will be Dr. Kyneret Albert, Dr. Deborah Alecson, and Rabbi Josh Breindel. All are welcome.

Rabbi Breindel is the rabbi at Temple Anshe Amunim. Dr. Albert is the medical director of Hospice Care in the Berkshires. Professor Alecson is a thanatologist, author, and lecturer who teaches “Ethics of Health Care” and related courses for Excelsior College, and also has a curriculum in thanatology that she has taught at Williams College. She writes the column “Using Musings on Mortality” for the Berkshire Eagle.

Temple Anshe Amunim is located at 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield.

The cost for this event is $50. Dues are $30. If you are interested in singing in the B’Shalom Chorale or wish to make a contribution, please call founder and coordinator, Cantor Emily Sperber Mekler at (413) 418-1836 or email bshalomchorale@gmail.com.

The B’Shalom Chorale, Inc. is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization and is sponsored in part by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and private contributions.

The B’Shalom Chorale invites singers for a fifth season

Jack Brown, artistic director of the Berkshire Lyric Choruses and choral director at Simon’s Rock College of Bard and the Hotchkiss School, conducts the B’Shalom Chorale. The accompanist is Joe Rose, also of Berkshire Lyric, and a well-known musician in the region. Selections, from the Jewish tradition, are from various eras and genres, including Baroque, 19th and 20th century, Israeli, and much more! The Chorale is open to all men and women, Jewish or not, who have a pleasant singing voice and the ability to stay on pitch. Choral experience is preferred, as is a love of singing 4-part music. The ability to read music is helpful, though not mandatory. Dues are $50.

Community Shabbat Experience at Hevreh

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Friday, April 27 at 6:15 p.m., join Hevreh of Southern Berkshire for the Community Shabbat Experience. This community Shabbat is a new, free program at Hevreh sponsored by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, and features a fully catered Shabbat dinner and abbreviated service. Hevreh will celebrate Israel’s 70th birthday with a service featuring music from some of Israel’s leading prayer communities, including Nava Tehila and Beit T’filah Israel.

Plans are underway for 10-day, May 30, from 7 to 9 p.m., which will begin on Wednesday, August 15 at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire. The cost for this event is $810 per person for TAA members (with a maximum of $310 per family) or $813 per person for non-members (with a maximum of $45 per family). Please RSVP as soon as possible.

For more information or to make reservations call (413) 529-6378 or visit www.ansheamunim.org.

The 2017 B’Shalom Chorale in the Hevreh sanctuary

The Berkshires’ only chorale showcasing Jewish music, is pleased to announce its fifth season! Plans are underway for 10 inspiring weekly rehearsals, which will begin on Wednes-

day, May 30, from 7 to 9 p.m., and culminate with a concert on Wednesday, August 15 at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire.

All are welcome, but RSVP is required and can be found on the Hevreh website, Hevreh.org.

If you have questions, please call the Hevreh office at (413) 528-6378.

GREAT BARRINGTON – The B’Shalom Chorale, the Berkshires’ only chorale showcasing Jewish music, is pleased to announce its fifth season! Plans are underway for 10 inspiring weekly rehearsals, which will begin on Wednes-

day, May 30, from 7 to 9 p.m., and culminate with a concert on Wednesday, August 15 at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire. The cost for this event is $810 per person for TAA members (with a maximum of $310 per family) or $813 per person for non-members (with a maximum of $45 per family). Please RSVP as soon as possible.

For more information or to make reservations call (413) 529-5010 or send an email to templeoffice@ansheamunim.org.

Shavuot observance is free and open to the community. All are welcome.

For more information, contact the Temple Anshe Amunim office at (413) 442-5910, email templeoffice@ansheamunim.org or visit www.ansheamunim.org.

The B’Shalom Chorale invites singers for a fifth season

Jack Brown, artistic director of the Berkshire Lyric Choruses and choral director at Simon’s Rock College of Bard and the Hotchkiss School, conducts the B’Shalom Chorale. The accompanist is Joe Rose, also of Berkshire Lyric, and a well-known musician in the region. Selections, from the Jewish tradition, are from various eras and genres, including Baroque, 19th and 20th century, Israeli, and much more! The Chorale is open to all men and women, Jewish or not, who have a pleasant singing voice and the ability to stay on pitch. Choral experience is preferred, as is a love of singing 4-part music. The ability to read music is helpful, though not mandatory. Dues are $50.

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The B’Shalom Chorale, Inc. is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization and is sponsored in part by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and private contributions.

Community Shabbat Experience at Hevreh

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Friday, April 27 at 6:15 p.m., join Hevreh of Southern Berkshire for the Community Shabbat Experience. This community Shabbat is a new, free program at Hevreh sponsored by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, and features a fully catered Shabbat dinner and abbreviated service. Hevreh will celebrate Israel’s 70th birthday with a service featuring music from some of Israel’s leading prayer communities, including Nava Tehila and Beit T’filah Israel.

Plans are underway for 10-day, May 30, from 7 to 9 p.m., which will begin on Wednesday, August 15 at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire. The cost for this event is $810 per person for TAA members (with a maximum of $310 per family) or $813 per person for non-members (with a maximum of $45 per family). Please RSVP as soon as possible.

For more information or to make reservations call (413) 529-6378 or visit www.ansheamunim.org.

The 2017 B’Shalom Chorale in the Hevreh sanctuary

The Berkshires’ only chorale showcasing Jewish music, is pleased to announce its fifth season! Plans are underway for 10 inspiring weekly rehearsals, which will begin on Wednes-

day, May 30, from 7 to 9 p.m., and culminate with a concert on Wednesday, August 15 at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire. The cost for this event is $810 per person for TAA members (with a maximum of $310 per family) or $813 per person for non-members (with a maximum of $45 per family). Please RSVP as soon as possible.

For more information or to make reservations call (413) 529-5010 or send an email to templeoffice@ansheamunim.org.

Shavuot observance is free and open to the community. All are welcome.

For more information, contact the Temple Anshe Amunim office at (413) 442-5910, email templeoffice@ansheamunim.org or visit www.ansheamunim.org.
Most of the time, the BJV’s One Story feature focuses on an example of how your campaign dollars are used to help Jews either in Israel or in a far-flung corner of the Diaspora. This time, we show how your generous contributions work at home, with a report from Rabbi Jodie Gordon on how the B’not Tzedek class of Hevreh of Southern Berkshire worked in partnership with our Federation to improve communal life in the Berkshires, and how a group trip to Israel changed the outlook of seven of our young women.

What do Tzedakah and Israel have in common? A lesson in Jewish adulthood.

By Rabbi Jodie Gordon

Picture this: seven young women, aged 13 and 14, standing in a line. Equal parts maturity and youthful nervousness shine through as they step up to a podium in the Hevreh library on a cold February morning, and begin their presentation.

It wasn’t so long ago for any of them that they stood on the bima in the sanctuary, and with the chanting of ancient words of blessing, took ownership over their Jewish lives. On this particular February morning, they are speaking to a packed room of adults, including parents, Hevreh board members, Federation executive director Dana Kaufman, and two special guests. This group of seven young women have taken on the name “B’nai Tzedek,” or “daughters of justice” for their group. Today’s presentation isn’t any old 8th grade presentation—having just completed the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ B’nai Tzedek Youth Philanthropy program, they are making their grant award presentation.

When we speak to our young people about what it means to become bar or bat mitzvah, we often use what I believe is an outdated shorthand about “becoming a Jewish adult.” I often joke with our students that we’re going to have figure out what that means, together, because I can’t offer them a Jewish license to drive a Jewish car, or welcome them to vote in a Jewish election. The markers of Jewish adulthood are often remote to a 13-year-old, and so we have made it a serious priority at Hevreh to help our students grapple with what it means to be a responsible, Jewish teen. What does it mean to mature as a Jewish teen? What does it mean to step into young adulthood as a Jew?

These questions guided us to a wonderful partnership with the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires this year, as we piloted the B’nai Tzedek Youth Philanthropy program with this particular pre-confirmation class. This program invites teens to delve into Jewish philanthropy, and then, as a youth foundation, to decide how to disburse $3,000 of communal philanthropic dollars.

Over the course of the fall semester, using the fabulous materials provided by the Federation, our class explored the meaning of “tzedakah beyond the tzedakah box,” as we came to describe it. They learned about the difference between the type of justice work that provides “band-aid solutions,” and the type of justice work that works to solve the root causes of various social problems. The girls dove deep into the framework that Maimonides provides with his famous “Rungs of Tzedakah” teaching, and they grappling with the idea of a hierarchy to how we give tzedakah.

Inspired by a social experiment that we read about called the “Society for Creative Philanthropy,” the girls exercised their own creative giving muscles and gave away $5 in unexpected and “secret” ways around Berkshire County. Finally, it was time for the real pinnacle of the B’nai Tzedek (renamed by this group of all girls as B’not Tzedek) program: writing a mission statement for their foundation, creating a Request for Proposals (RFP), soliciting grant applications, evaluating them, and deciding how to give away the $3,000.

One of the students, Ruby Citrin wrote: “We learned that to give money as an organization you need a clear vision of who you want to give it to. We thought of ideas that we wanted to put in our mission statement and prioritized our values. We discussed our own experiences and how feminism and equality is important to us. Our mission statement said:”

“We believe in the Jewish value of Lo Sa’amod Al Dim Re’cha: not standing by when others are threatened. Young adulthood is difficult, but we have found that there is a lot of discrimination in our schools. We intend to improve the lives of young people in our community through education that promotes feminism, equality and empowerment for all.

Through a process of group consensus building the students read and analyzed the five different grant applications they received from communal organizations across Berkshire County. When asked about the decision making process, student Ella Novick reported: “It was surprisingly hard! There were so many good choices. And then just when we thought we had made a decision, someone would raise another point—and it felt like a good point, so then we had to reconsider.”

On that February morning, lined up in the library, the B’not Tzedek students presented $3,000 in philanthropic dollars provided by the Federation to the Railroad Street Youth Project for their new QClub, a program for queer and questioning youth in South County, and to the Berkshire Baby Box organization.

Exactly two weeks later, those same seven students lined up again; this time, in matching sweatshirts, in front of a yellow school bus. The group designed their sweatshirts themselves, with the words “Hevreh B’nai Tzedek Israel Trip 2018” proudly emblazoned on the front. With significant support from the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, this group was the first youth trip that Hevreh has sent to Israel in over 10 years. Accompanied by four intrepid mothers as chaperones, I had the honor of leading this group of seven young women for a trip to Israel—the first time there, for many.

Why go to Israel in the year following bat mitzvah?

As student Mary Seckler wrote, “our bat mitzvahs symbolize our becoming women in the Jewish community. We are obligated to take part and responsibility not only in Hevreh, but in our Jewish heritage. Going to Israel was a great first step to learning about the Holy Land and how we can take part in Jewish living. In the past year we have all worked extremely hard on our bat mitzvah studies. Our B’nai Tzedek trip felt like an award, if you will, for completing this major milestone but it was also a welcoming into our new Jewish experience.”

A particular highlight of the trip was the time we spent based at Kibbutz Yare’el as part of the Partnership2gether program, made possible by funding from the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. As part of our sister city relationship with the Afula-Gilboa region, we were welcomed by the Partnership team with loving and open arms.

Through this partnership, we had opportunities that most group trips will never experience: hearing the personal aliya story of a young woman who walked for 3 months up to a podium in the Holy Land and how we can take part in Jewish living. In the past year we have all worked extremely hard on our bat mitzvah studies. Our B’nai Tzedek trip felt like an award, if you will, for completing this major milestone but it was also a welcoming into our new Jewish experience.

In addition to our time in Afula-Gilboa, we also made our way to Masada and the Dead Sea, and spent a lively Shabbat in Jerusalem. It was a wonderful "taste of Israel," and at our closing group dinner, most of the students wanted to know more about the opportunities available to them to travel there again in the future.

One student reflected, “Going to Israel was such a meaningful and amazing experience for me. I learned so much about Jewish history and culture, as well as that of Muslims and Christians. I got to see what life was like in Israel, and participate in many fun activities. Most of all, this trip showed me what it means to be a Jew and embrace my culture.”

As poet Yitzhak Yasinowitz wrote, “One does not travel to Jerusalem. / One returns. Our new Jewish experience.”

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Gypsy Jazz Ambassadors Explore Jewish Contribution to Jazz

PITTSFIELD – On Sunday evening, May 6 at 7:30 p.m., Knesset Israel hosts a concert led by Andy Kelly showing how particularly gifted Jewish immigrants who settled in New York City influenced the “new” American music we know today as jazz.

Musical arrangements by his talented combo, the Gypsy Jazz Ambassadors, will be intertwined with historic commentary in a performance researched and developed specifically for this appearance, titled “Jews and Jazz.”

Andy Kelly – a Berkshire native, son of a choir director, and graduate of Williams College – is a gifted musician and teacher of styles from rock to classical. He served as chair of the Pittsfield Cultural Development Commission, and helped found the Pittsfield City Jazz Festival in 2005 to present mainstream and traditional jazz downtown. If there is a festival or event on North Street or at the First Street Common or similar outdoor venue with a musical group involved, Andy is likely to be present.

Kelly also helped found the Jazz in Schools program, which features performances, demonstrations and discussions throughout many of the schools in Berkshire County. According to a recent interview in the Berkshire Eagle, Kelly notes, “Jewish composers and performers have made some of the most significant contributions to jazz music. Without artists such as Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Benny Goodman, and Stan Getz, jazz would just not be the same! We will have fun exploring this topic musically on May 6!”

All are welcome. Tickets are $20; students, $8. If you call (413) 445-4872, ext. 16 or ext. 10, you may reserve tickets and pay at the door. Tickets should also be available at the door starting at 7 p.m. The concert is in the synagogue located at 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield; please enter through the driveway under the canopy.

“Using Theatre to Extend Community and Deepen Empathy”

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Thursday, May 10 at 7 p.m., Congregation Ahavath Sholom, will host Daniel Kramer, artistic director of the Chester Theatre Company, whose topic will be “Using Theatre to Extend and Deepen Empathy.”

This event is the first of a series of Thursday night talks on varied subjects to be presented at CAS. Daniel Elihu Kramer produced his first season at CTC in 2016, and has directed shows such as Every Brilliant Thing, Sister Play, The Turn of the Screw, and Blink. In 2011, CTC produced his play Pride@Prejudice, and in 2016, CTC premiered his play My Ance. He holds an MFA in Directing from Yale School of Drama, and works nationally as a theatre director, playwright, and film director. He is chair of the theatre department and a member of the film studies program at Smith College in Northampton.

“At Chester Theatre Company, we produce contemporary plays that inspire audience engagement and thoughtful, productive conversations, and that create and extend community,” says Kramer. “Every play opens us up both to difference and to shared humanity: coming to know the stranger, coming to love the stranger, seeking a world where strangers are embraced.”

He’ll also discuss the first play of the company’s five-play season, the American premiere of Bar Mitzvah Boy by Canadian playwright Mark Leiren-Young, which runs from June 21 to July 1. The 2017 Jewish Playwriting Prize winner is being directed by Guy Ben-Aharon, director of 2016’s hit production, Oh God.

Berkshire favorite Tara Franklin (Sister Play) returns to play a rabbi wracked by spiritual doubt, and Boston veteran actor Will LeBow will make his CTC debut as the title character, a middle-aged attorney who feels a desperate need to be bar mitzvahed. Attendees at CAS will be able to buy discount tickets for the first week’s performances.

CAS is located at 15 North Street in Great Barrington. For more information, visit www.ahavathsholom.com, or call (413) 528-4197.
Hevreh Gala to Honor Distinguished Members

GREAT BARRINGTON—Hevreh of Southern Berkshire will inaugurate its Tzedek Circle of Honor with a festive gala on Thursday, June 9 beginning with a cocktail reception at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner and dessert, a presentation ceremony, and an evening of comedy.

The Tzedek Circle of Honor will be an annual Hevreh award, honoring devoted Hevreh members whose life’s work reflects Hevreh’s values and commitment to the broader Jewish and secular community. First year honorees will be Rabbi Everett and Mary Gendler, and Rabbi Barry and Carol Eyster.

Hevreh invites members and non-members alike to join in honoring the Gendlers and the Eysters for their service, and enjoy a festive night.

Each honoree has made significant contributions to Jewish life and values.

Rabbi Gendler has been described as the “father of Jewish environmentalism,” and played a leading role in the civil rights movement in the American South. Within Judaism, he has been acclaimed for his dynamic leadership of the Jewish feminist movement, Jewish egalitarianism and programs for non-violence. In addition to serving Jewish congregations in the United States and Latin America, he has been the author of dozens of articles. At Hevreh, Rabbi Gendler has led the Yom Kippur celebration prayer sessions and has lectured on civil rights. Mary Gendler is a clinician, author and professor of psychology and has written on the role of women in Judaism. Their work is the foundation for the Gendler Grapevine Project to promote environmental sustainability and social justice initiatives within the Jewish community.

Carol and Barry Eyster have been powerhouses in the development of several Jewish organizations. Both Carol and Barry served on the North American Board for the Union for Reform Judaism for 25 years and on its major committees. Barry’s focus has been to create financial strength at Jewish organizations he joins. As a CPA and psychotherapist, Barry used his financial acumen to restructure the URJ’s finances and create a $10 million endowment that will support future generations. He has brought his financial expertise to the URJ pension fund and served on the finance committees of both Temple Shalom in Cedar Grove, N.J. and at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire.

Carol was director of organization development at the Bergen County Y Youth Community Center for 16 years. There, she developed the Kehillah Partnership and the Bergen County Jewish Learning Project, involving 13 synagogues and the JUA Federation. She was the leadership trainer for the YJUC Board and membership. At Hevreh, Carol has been an important leader as congregational vice-president, co-chair of the rabbinic search committee and the archives committee.

The Gala festivities will include comedy performance, presentations, a silent auction, a raffle of exciting items, and a festive night.

PITTSFIELD—Berkshire Hills Hadassah will celebrate Youth Aliyah’s 85 years of achievements at a Mingle and Munch Reception, on Tuesday, May 29, from 2 to 4 p.m. Presenting a panel discussion will be: Carol Goodman Kaufman, Ph.D., Hadassah National Chair of Youth Aliyah Child Rescue; Carole Siegel, Ed.D., Pittsfield Public School Assistant Superintendent (retired); Ellen Masters, Hadassah National Portfolio Council; and Dr. Rosalind Kopstein, LCSW, DSW, Co-President, Berkshire Hills Hadassah.

They will lead a discussion to address both the needs common to all at-risk children and the best practices to provide an environment in which children can flourish.

Youth Aliyah Child Rescue was created in 1933 to provide Jewish children from Nazi Germany and the chaos of World War II, and, based on the philosophy of Henrietta Szold, has saved more than 300,000 children by bringing them “home” to Israel and safety. Some children have come from at least 80 countries – most recently Ethiopia and Russian-speaking republics.

The program has remained steadfast in its vision of saving children, but has found it necessary to expand its mission to include rescuing the futures of children-at-risk who are living in Israel. According to the article, “Hadassah’s Youth Aliyah villages provide at-risk children with support and sanctuary,” by Laura Potter, “…one-third of the children in Israel (almost 800,000) live in poverty, and over 450,000 children are considered at-risk, facing abuse, learning disabilities and neglect, or, for some, an inability to cope with the challenges of a new language and cultural changes.”

Youth Aliyah tries to give them not only safety and stability in the moment, but also a chance to have a productive, healthy life.

The event will be held at the home of Marcia and Charles Mandel in Pittsfield. For more information on location of the event, cover charge, donation, or reservations, please contact: Marcia Mandel, juhalaspi@gmail.com or call (413) 442-7088.
OBITUARIES

Paul Rich, 90, co-founded Paul Rich and Sons Home Furnishings

Paul's needs were simple. In his spare time, Douglas coached Little League baseball in Great Barrington. His love for motocross, music, sports, history, and antiques was well known to everyone he encountered in town.

He leaves his son, Jonathan Levy of Chicago, IL; sister, Lois Calamere of Melick, Long Island; and many nieces and nephews to whom he was very much.

In keeping with Doug's wishes, there were no funeral services.

Joseph Louis Lerner, 93, World War II Army Air Corps veteran

Joseph Louis Lerner, 93, died Friday, March 23 at the North Adams Commons after a sudden illness.

Mr. Lerner was born in New York City, a son of late Sam and Becky Mendel- son Lerner. He was educated in the New York City public schools, and graduated from James Monroe High School. He then attended Pratt Institute and Fordham University, and received his bachelor's degree from UMass Amherst. Joe was a World War II Army Air Corps veteran. During his military commitment, he served as a ground chief with the 103rd Bombardier Squad, volunteered on November 24, 1942. Following his honorable discharge on February 17, 1946, Mr. Lerner returned to New York City where he married the former Frances Leblang on December 21, 1947. Together they started a business, Lerner's Furniture, in 1949, with Joe employed by Nelson's Inc. of Pittsfield as a sales representative for many years. He retired in 1994.

Mr. Lerner was a life member of the American Legion, Veterans, Pittsfield Chapter # 2.

He is survived by his two sons, Lawrence D. Lerner of Wakefield, and Robert C. Lerner and his wife Diane of Westford, MA, as well as two grandchildren. Meredith and Allison Lerner of Boston. Mr. Lerner was predeceased by his wife of 53 years, Frances Leblang on December 19, 1995. Following his honorable discharge, he served as a ground chief with the 103rd Bombardier Squad, volunteering on November 24, 1942. Following his discharge on February 17, 1946, Mr. Lerner returned to New York City where he married the former Frances Leblang on December 21, 1947. Together they started a business, Lerner's Furniture, in 1949, with Joe employed by Nelson's Inc. of Pittsfield as a sales representative for many years. He retired in 1994.

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

Enjoy an educational program followed by a delicious kosher hot lunch!
Programs take place Mondays and Thursdays at 10:45 a.m. Lunch is served Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays at noon. Beginning on June 1 and continuing through the summer months, the Tuesday kosher lunch program will be on hiatus. Tuesday lunches will resume in the fall.

Advanced reservations are required to attend lunch.
Please call (413) 442-2200 no later than 9 am on the day you would like to attend. Open to the public. All are welcome! Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield, MA.

Adults 60 and over: $2 suggested donation
Adults under 60: $7 per person
Program only is free!

When making a reservation please inform us if a person in your party has a food allergy.
The Federation’s kosher hat lunch program is offered in collaboration with Elder Services of Berkshire County.

What’s for Lunch?

# Dairy Free, ** Gluten Free Main Entrée
For more information on specific programs please see “Your Federation Presents” section of this paper.

**APRIL**
Tuesday, 24 ............ Roasted chicken**, baked sweet potato, asparagus cuts n tips, noodles & onions, farmer’s loaf, pineapple, and tea.
Thursday, 26 ............ 10:45 a.m., “Current Affairs: Contemporary American and International Politics” with Professor Emeritus, Steven J. Rubin. Lunch: Spinach mushroom quiche, salad, mixed vegetables, challah, rice pudding, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.
Monday, 30 ............ 10:45 a.m., “Our Dogs Understand Hebrew” Lunch: Turkey salad platters, celery rice soup, coleslaw, marble rye bread, grapes, and tea.

**MAY**
Tuesday, 1 ............ Sloppy Joes**, diced carrots, salad, hamburger rolls, fruit cocktail, and tea.
Thursday, 3 ............ 10:45 a.m., “Easy Chair Yoga for Flexibility, Mobility and Peace of Mind,” with Linda Novick. Lunch: Cheese and bean enchilada casserole, mango juice, yellow rice, garlic bread, brownies, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.
Monday, 7 ............ Closed for Shavuot
Tuesday, 8 ............ Roasted chicken**, baked sweet potato, asparagus cuts n tips, mashed potatoes, peas, rye bread, applesauce, and tea.

**JUNE**
Monday, 4 ............ 10:45 a.m., Program to be Announced. Lunch: Barbecued chicken, corn, red beans and rice, coleslaw, rolls, margarine and tea.
Tuesday, 5 ............ 10:45 a.m., Program to be Announced. Lunch: Meat loaf**, gazpacho, salad, rice pilaf, broccoli, rolls, ice cream and cookies, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.
Thursday, 7 ............ 10:45 a.m., Program to be Announced. Lunch: Fettuccine with tomato goat cheese sauce, salad, peas, garlic bread, grapes, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.

Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield, MA.

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Calendar – Ongoing Events
Around the Community

**Tuesdays, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.** – Torah Portion of the Week study group at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield. Facilitator Myrna Hammerling guides the group through the triennial cycle, year-round in the KI library. Newcomers always welcome to this gathering of students of diverse ages, backgrounds, and perspectives who search together to deepen understanding of our foundational text. Free. Information: (413) 445-4872, ext. 16.

**Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.** – “The Book of Deuteronomy” at Knesset Israel. Please check with KI for dates. Classes taught by Rabbi David Weiner who is guiding an in-depth exploration of a revolutionary book of the Torah that continues to shape Jewish thought and practice to this day. Texts are in English.

**Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.** – Rabbi David Weiner continues the Rachel Korazim’s “Israel at 70” class for adults in the KI library. Upcoming sessions: May 1 and May 15, on Israel’s fourth decade of existence. More information to come. Please RSVP so enough materials are readied – office@knessetisrael.org.

**Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.** – Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington, offers an hour of Shalom Yoga, Gentle Stretch, and Meditation with Nina Lipkowitz, a certified Krispaku and Jewish yoga and meditation teacher. Check https://hevreh.org/calendar/ for updates. All levels welcome. Contact Nina at ninalipkowitz@gmail.com with any questions.

**Wednesdays – at Knesset Israel,** “Enhanced Prayer Class for Adults” 10:00-11:30 a.m. at 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield, KI library. What are we saying when we read prayers at a service? How does the sidur language connect with my life today? How can I build my Hebrew reading fluency and practice my reading skills? How can I be more comfortable with the language and process of prayer? Facilitated by Myrna Hammerling. Newcomers always welcome. Information: (413) 445-4872, ext. 16.

**Thursdays (fourth of each month)** – Hadassah Book Club. For times, locations and perspectives who search together to deepen understanding of our foundational text. Free. Information: (413) 445-4872, ext. 16.

**Friday, last of month, time varies with candle lighting** – Chabad of the Berkshires’ “Friday Night Live,” traditional Kabbalat Shabbat service. Information: (413) 499-9899 or visit www.jewishberkshires.com.

**Fridays at 9:00 a.m.** – Meditation with Rabbi Rachel Barenblat in the Congregation Beth Israel sanctuary, 53 Lois Street, North Adams, overlooking the Berkshires mountains. Silence, chanting, and meditation designed to help prepare for Shabbat. All welcomed. Information: (413) 663-5830 and www.cbiweb.org.

**Fridays, once a month at 5:30 p.m. (followed by a family style Shabbat dinner at 6:30 p.m.)** – Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield. Shirei Shabbat (“Songs of Shabbat”). Unique service combines melodies from Carlebach, Debbie Friedman, and Camp Ramah to create a ruach filled (“spirited”) family friendly experience. Cost for dinner $18 per adult, $15 teens, $50 family maximum. Dinner reservations are due by the Monday before services. Full information: (413) 445-4872, ext. 10.

**Sat., May 19 at Hevreh, 270 State Road in Great Barrington.** Every Shabbat morning, gather in Rabbi Neil Hirsch’s study and dive into the less-often read books of the Bible. All are welcome to begin the day with coffee while studying and relaxing on Shabbat. Sessions will be between 45 and 60 minutes. Please be in touch with Rabbi Hirsch for further information: nhirsch@hevreh.org.

**Sat., May 9 at 9:30 a.m.** – “Torah Plus: Exploring Jewish Text and Culture.” Join Rabbi Josh Breindel for a conversation based on the texts of the Jewish people and reflection on what it means to be Jewish. All texts are offered in English. Temple Anshe Amunim, 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield. Free. Open to the public. Information: (413) 442-5910 or templeoffice@ansheamunim.org.

**Sat., May 19 at 5:30 p.m.** – “Exodus Inspira-tions,” with Rabbi David Weiner. Please check with the KI website for times (which coincide with evening services) and dates. Our people’s central story – our journey from slavery to freedom, from Mitzrayim to the Promised Land – sparks innumerable conversations in every generation. Join in study of passages of Tanhuma Shemot, a creative 5th century commentary on the Book of Exodus, and enjoy the ensuing discussions.

**Knesset Israel 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield**

**ONGOING MINYANS**

- **Sunday:** 8:45 a.m. and 7 p.m.
- **Tuesday:** 7 a.m. and 5:45 p.m.
- **Saturday:** 9:30 a.m. and evenings approximately 30 minutes before sunset

**CANDLE-LIGHTING**

- **Friday, April 27:** 7:30 p.m.
- **Friday, May 4:** 7:38 p.m.
- **Friday, May 11:** 7:46 p.m.
- **Friday, May 18:** 7:53 p.m.
- **Saturday, May 19:** 9:02 p.m.
- **Sunday, May 20:** 9:03 p.m.
- **Friday, May 25:** 8:00 p.m.

**Sam Glaser**

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**August 5 | 7 p.m.**

Duffin Theater
Lenox Memorial High School

General Admission $25
Young Adults under 35, $20
Kids under 10, free

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

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**SOIL AND SHUL IN THE BERKSHIRE**

The Jewish History of a Landmark Jewish Farm Colony

Lorraine J. German
Traveling with Jewish Taste
A Super Buffet for Super Sunday
By Carol Goodman Kaufman

While not an official holiday – after all, we already have so many of them – Super Sunday is on the calendar for virtually every Jewish community in America. Volunteers from all segments of Jewish life gather not in front of a wide-screen television to watch football, but around a bank of telephones. They come together in a herculean effort to call every individual in the area serviced by their local Jewish Federation. Their mission: to raise the funds necessary for the miraculous work accomplished by the many local, national, and international agencies that work on behalf of the Tribe.

Many of our fellow Jews in Eastern Europe live in poverty, dependent on aid from the Joint Distribution Committee – funded by our donations. As a result of resurgent anti-Semitic violence in Europe, parents are sending their children to Israel, much as parents in the 1930s sent theirs to relative safety in pre-State Israel. Federation dollars support the Youth Aliyah villages that house, educate, and counsel these refugees.

And Federation dollars support hundreds of programs here in the United States, from JCCs to day schools to nursing homes.

As on Super Bowl Sunday, there must be food, but since this is a Jewish event we’re talking about, there must be FOOD, right! I’ve been thinking about what an appropriate spread might be for this special day, and I’ve come to the realization that we must represent every single Diaspora community that receives aid via the generosity of our donors.

“What has she been smoking?” you may rightfully ask. Every single community? Jews are scattered around the globe, from Austin to Azerbaijan, Vilna to Venezuela. How could we possibly do that?

Being exiled and dispersed to the four corners of the earth wasn’t great, but it did come with a silver lining, a treasure chest of amazing culinary diversity. No, we won’t have a buffet table that could run from South Street to Jerusalem, but wouldn’t it be fun to consider the menu options? After making dozens of phone calls, hungry volunteers could dive right into the array of:

A variety of eggplant salads
Humus with tahini
Sabbich
Borekas
Soft, fluffy pita bread
Bagels, lox, and cream cheese
Herring in sour cream
Smoked whitefish
Variety of olives and pickled vegetables
Potato kugel
Noodle kugel
For dessert:
Rugelach
Strudel
Mandelbrot
Persian halvah
Coconut macaroons
Flan

Ingredients:
2 1/2 cups dried unsweetened shredded coconut
1 1/2 T. potato starch
1/2 cup sugar
1 1/2 T. salt
4 large egg whites
1 tsp. vanilla
1 package semisweet chocolate chips

Instructions:
In a large mixing bowl, use a fork to stir together the shredded coconut, potato starch, and sugar till well blended. Break up any chunks of potato starch with the fork.
Whip the egg whites and salt on high speed in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment until they make medium-firm peaks.
Carefully fold the egg whites into the coconut mixture, making sure that the egg whites are evenly distributed throughout the coconut.
While mixture sits for 20-30 minutes, preheat oven to 325 degrees F.
Stir the batter again with a fork.
Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Scoop up the batter in a tablespoon and drop onto the baking sheet, leaving about an inch between scoops.
You can then use wet fingers to shape your macaroons if you wish. Cocadas are often made into pyramid shapes.
Bake for 20-25 minutes until the bottom edges turn golden and the tips of the coconut shreds start to brown.
Remove from the oven.
Let the macaroons cool completely on the baking sheet.
When the macaroons have cooled completely, put the chocolate into a bowl and microwave it, starting with 35 seconds, stir, then continue for 10-second bursts until the chocolate is smooth.
With a pair of small tongs, dip the base of each macaroon into the melted chocolate, twisting and coating it about halfway up the sides.
Pull macaroon up and let excess chocolate drip back into the bowl, then place the dipped macaroon onto the flat parchment. Repeat for remaining macaroons.
Once the macaroons are completely dry, store them in a sealed container in layers divided by parchment or wax paper.
Any unused macaroons can be stored at room temperature for weeks, and once opened, should be consumed in 4 days.

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MY ISRAEL

Wait a Minute – Israelis Invented the Cherry Tomato?
By Michel Araten

My earliest memories of Israel are from 1947, when I was seven and traveled with my parents and older brother to visit my grandfather and several uncles who immigrated to Israel in the 1930s. I was somewhat frightened by our car being stopped on the road by the British soldiers who searched the car to see if we had any contraband. I was particularly impressed when visiting my grandfather in Beit Vegan in Jerusalem when he moved aside some books from his library and showed me a hole in the wall that was caused by a cannon ball.

It was only two years later that we moved to Israel and stayed there for a year. I was stunned by the lack of material goods when we were issued ration books that not only covered some food items, but also shoes. My Hebrew was pretty good, having gone to Massad, a Hebrew-speaking Zionist summer camp, and also Yeshivot Ramaz. I attended a private school, Beit Sefer Reali in Haifa. (Two of my granddaughters just returned in February from a Ramaz Chorus visit and entertained in that same school 68 years later!)

I had joined the Cub Scouts there, Shualei Hacarmel, the “Foxes of the Carmel.” What struck me was the complete freedom my brother and I had then – we were nine and thirteen years old, and ran around all over the place on bicycles, unsupervised and unafraid. I recall one time, the two of us were on a long walk and wanted to get home and hitchhiked with a police jeep that gave us a ride.

When I got back to New York, it was clear that the math taught in Israel was quite advanced compared to that in the US, as well.

My parents moved to Israel in 1962 and my brother followed several years later so my family, including my wife and two children, has visited countless times. We stay connected with uncles, nieces, and cousins, including Chaim Rabinowich, the dean of the Hebrew University of Agriculture who invented the cherry tomato.

Editor's Note: Though the cherry tomato is popularly cited as a marvel of Israeli innovation, its Holy Land provenance has been debunked by researchers who have shown that Israel did not actually “invent” the cherry tomato, but rather improved the variety for commercial purposes. Israeli science writer Anna Weder wrote a scholarly article on the subject for Gastronomica (a highly acclaimed quarterly journal founded and edited by Darra Goldstein, a professor of Russian at Williams College), while the Nosher website relates the following:

Tomatoes, large, small, long and cherry-sized were eaten and enjoyed and mentioned in writings over the course of many years but they did not become widely enjoyed and sold until the latter part of the 20th century when the British retailer Marks and Spencer got involved. A clothing retailer sparking a tomato revolution? Yes indeed. They saw a market for tomatoes that were beautiful, decorative and tasty. And they wanted to sell them in their store’s fine food market. They turned to local growers in England, including Bernard Sparkes, who was responsible for developing a commercial cherry tomato that made its debut at Marks and Spencer’s in the early 1980s.

They also sent an emissary to Hebrew University in Jerusalem to see if their agrarian scientists could help refine a tasty, ship-
My First Memories of Israel (As an Israeli)

By Avi Dresner

I know this series is supposed to be about first memories of Israel, however, since so many of my seven trips there before I made aliyah occurred when I was too young to remember them, I thought I would take the liberty of relating my first memories of Israel as an Israeli. First, though, a little background.

My parents, both American, met and married in Israel in 1968, when my rabbi father and psychologist mother (who was teaching the deaf at the time) were on their respective sabbatical years in Jerusalem.

I first visited with them in 1970, when I was a year old, for a Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) convention. After my sister was born in 1971, we returned as an extended family in 1972.

Mount Scopus. I was spending a year there getting my Hebrew up to speed before formally matriculating in the university for a master’s degree in English literature. Yes, that contradiction is not lost on me, but that is the subject of an entirely different article.

Anyway, to support myself as a student, I taught aerobics at two Jerusalem studios and English at the Experimental School in Jerusalem, which was a combined middle and high school, where I taught the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 11th grade. It was in that capacity that everything changed for me in a single shattering moment on November 4, 1995, when a fanatical “religious” Jew assassinated Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin.

I answered, “Excuse me, but I think I know my Jewishness right on my name.” As it said “Avraham” as it said on the card. She said matter-of-factly “no, your name is Avram” not “Arvaham” as it said on the card. She said matter-of-factly “no, your name is Avraham.” I answered, “Excuse me, but I think I know my name better than you do. I’ve had it for 25 years.” We went back and forth like that for several rounds, with the volume getting progressively louder. It ended with me insisting that she make me a new card, and her telling me to take a seat.

I proceeded to wait for another three hours before she gave me my new card with my new old name, and that’s when I knew I was truly Israeli.

Avi Dresner is a freelance journalist and author, and co-chair of the Berkshires Jewish Festival of Books. He is currently working on a documentary with his sister, Tamar, about their Freedom Riding father, Rabbi Israel Dresner, and his exploits with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the Civil Rights Movement.
It's a Match! No, It's a “ZUG”!

Berkshire artist Jeff Kramer recently had the opportunity to meet his Israeli Project Zug learning partner, Tanya Friedman (otherwise known as his “Zug”), who was in the US visiting family in Lenox. Jeff and Tanya are both participants in our Federation-sponsored exchange. Project Zug consists of eight local Berkshire residents studying the Book of Psalms online and creating joint art interpretations with partners from the Afula-Gilboa region of Israel.

A final exhibit of the group’s inspired art and learning will be on exhibit in Afula in October and will make its way to the Berkshires early next year. Shown below is Jeff’s drawing of seashells, completed while he was in Israel on a recent Sar El mission (see page 4). An exhibit of Tanya’s art is on view at Cranwell Spa & Golf Resort through August. Shown below right is “We Fall We Rise,” from a 2012 series of work called “Shadow Dance.” Wrote the artist about the series: “My mobiles are composed of many small dancing figures, drawn from videos of different cultural dancing styles. In 2012, I made the first mobiles by cutting figures out of painted paper and, in 2017, I began using a laser cutting machine to cut them out of Plexiglas and wood. I am currently using different materials to create new versions of these dancing mobiles, which I design to order.” Tanya will be back in the Berkshires in August for an artist’s “meet and greet” at Cranwell. Her website is www.tanyafriedman.com.

Lee – On Sunday, May 20 at 3 p.m., clarinetist Paul Green performs with a new incarnation of his “Two Worlds” klezmer/jazz fusion band at the Lee Congregational Church. The combo released its first album in 2016, but this latest iteration, says Green, takes the exploration of the common ground between jazz and Jewish music even further.

On the first “Two Worlds,” Green says “we took jazz tunes and introduced Jewish scales and integrated them into standards like ‘My Funny Valentine.’ We took the tune ‘So What’ and changed the modal harmonies of the Dorian scale Miles Davis used to the ‘Mi’Sheberach scale” used in klezmer and Romanian music. The group also successfully added jazz and blues elements to Jewish freylechs.

This time, says Green, “I’m creating all my own compositions. The new material is more of an interweaving, more of a fusion – which is an overused term, but is exactly what I’m trying to do. I think it will give the music a more seamless fusing of the musical languages of both genres. He also incorporating the aleatoric approach used by modern classical composers, where part of a composed work’s realization is left to the determination of its performers.

“I’m using this classical form as a ‘house’ for the jazz and klezmer elements. It’s all a progression, in my view.” To realize his vision, Green has enlisted mostly new musicians for this “Two Worlds” band. Playing with Green will be Charles Tokarz (saxophone), Jason Erzuza (guitar), Ben Kohn (piano), Dan Broad (bass), and Pete Sweeney (drums). All are based in the Berkshires or nearby. “That’s the other part of this project – elevating some of the great musicians who live in Berkshire County,” says Green.

The band will also be playing music from the first “Two Worlds” album. Lee Congregational Church is located at 25 Park Plaza in downtown Lee.