Answer the Call on Tzedakah Sunday, August 16

Supporting Federation’s 2020 Annual Campaign is vital in this challenging time

While Federation’s traditional Super Sunday campaign had to be canceled due to the unfolding pandemic back in May, we are so grateful for the many community members who have stepped up and made their gifts to our 2020 Annual Campaign. You have helped us make a great start but we still have a ways to go!

On Sunday, August 16, the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, with support from community volunteers, will host Tzedakah Sunday. Everyone’s help is needed to keep the momentum going in order to maintain our vital programs and services into the future.

If your phone rings or you receive an email on August 16 (or in the days following), please answer it! Your contribution—however much you can give—will help feed the hungry, comfort the elderly, and care for Jews in need across the Berkshires, in Israel, and around the world. Your gift helps nurture and sustain Jewish life today and for future generations.

We understand that you may not be home to receive your call, or may prefer not to be called. If so, please take a moment to visit www.jewishberkshires.org to make a pledge or donate online.

“Whoever practices tzedakah and justice fills the world with loving kindness” (Talmud: Sukkah)

Life in a Time of Pandemic and Civil Unrest

A conversation with Rabbi Everett Gendler

Rabbi Everett Gendler has long written passionately, incisively, and extensively about two of the issues currently roiling American society in this time of pandemic and civil unrest—how to define the relationship between faith and nature and how to achieve the ideal of social justice. As a thinker, Rabbi Gendler developed an approach to environmentalism that reconnects the modern practice of the Jewish faith to its ancient engagement with the natural world. As an activist, he marched in the 1960s with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and later worked for decades with the Tibetan exile community of the Dalai Lama on strategic non-violence. In late June, BJV editor Albert Stern spoke by phone with Rabbi Gendler, 91, who had just completed two weeks in self-quarantine with his wife, Mary, at their home in Great Barrington after returning from Florida. Please turn to page 23 for their conversation.
In My View

A Source of Strength to One Another

By Dara Kaufman

On June 30, the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires held its 80th annual meeting. This column is adapted from Executive Director Dara Kaufman’s report and remarks to the community.

Each of you with us tonight are the heart and soul of our work together. I want to focus on just a few key areas of our past year and share an update on our COVID-19 response and our plans moving forward.

This past year, with your support, the number of Berkshire County schools participating in the ADL’s A World of Difference® anti-bias peer leader training program nearly doubled. This program has laid a solid foundation for hundreds of students and educators to have important discussions with their families and friends about the complicated systems of racism and bias in our world today. We are in a time when we, as individuals and as organizations, all need the skills and courage to listen and learn, and to stand up and speak out about racism, anti-Semitism, and injustices of all kinds. There is still much work to be done.

Communal security continued to be a priority this past year. In September, Federation hosted the Secure Community Network for a full-day security training for the staff and leadership of our local Jewish organizations. Situational awareness training, hands-on active shooter scenarios, and a greeters and ushers training gave affiliate organization vital resources to strengthen their own security protocols and consider additional security upgrades to their facilities.

This past year, Jewish Federations across Massachusetts, including ours, actively advocated to encourage Governor Baker to significantly increase the dollars available through the Commonwealth’s Non-Profit Security Grant Program and to specifically require that a portion of those grants be made to organizations in western and central Massachusetts. This past March, Knesset Israel, Congregation Beth Israel, and Hevrach of Southern Berkshire were all awarded non-profit security grants which will allow them to make important security upgrades to their facilities.

But the largest and most pressing priority this past year has been supporting our community through the unexpected challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The needs of our community changed almost overnight. It took less than 48 hours for Federation to mobilize a force of over 70 volunteers to begin an outreach campaign that we could never have imagined needing. Volunteers were at the heart of our efforts to deliver meals in the home, to pick up medicine, to help people figure out how to order from Instacart, to figure out how Zoom worked, or, in so many cases, just to be there to listen. Thank you to all the many, many volunteers who stepped up to help.

We expanded our kosher meals on wheels program to include regular participants of our weekly Connecting With Community lunch program, with some participants receiving double meals to carry them through the week. Federation is committed to maintaining this expanded format through September, at which time we will re-evaluate the needs of our older population.

Our community social worker, Jill Goldstein, received referrals from dozens of volunteers and community members during our initial outreach and helped community members connect to resources for food, housing support, and counseling and other mental health services. As the effects of long-term isolation intensify, Jill continues to support more than 30 community members each week.

A Thank You

Deborah Lebowitz

We have already made nearly 97,000 in assistance grants to help community members with essentials such as rent and mortgage payments, utility bills, food, and gas assistance. If you or someone you know is struggling as a result of this crisis please reach out to us.

In addition, we have approved $820,000 to support critical needs for our friends and neighbors across the Berkshires.

Our first round of community needs focused on assistance to food pantries, many in the smaller underserved hill towns and rural communities. We are in the process of a second round of relief focused on helping families and children, as well as under-resourced populations.

During these critical times, your support is also helping local organizations like Berkshires Bridges expand the hours of their community navigators. These folks work hand-in-hand with individuals in the most under-resourced areas of our community to help them access housing support, government benefits, and unemployment insurance, and even provide transportation to food pantries.

Demand for these critical services is expected to rise as eviction moratoriums lift and the increased unemployment benefit recedes, leaving people scrambling to figure out how to keep themselves and their families afloat in this new reality.

Recently, Federation’s executive committee approved an additional $12,000 in grants to support technology upgrades that will help our affiliates offer meaningful and accessible High Holiday services and experiences to our Jewish community.

A community member recently asked me when I thought everything would return to normal again. The truth is we do not know what the future holds. Our world is changing rapidly.

Federation as an organization and all of us as a community will need to continue to be nimble, creative, courageous, and willing to think strategically and pragmatically about what really matters for our future.

There are many things that are unique in our small federation, but over the last year, I have come to realize that it is strong leadership, authentic relationships, and the trust that Federation has with our affiliate organizations, our donors, our volunteers, and our program participants that makes this community so special.

We are a source of strength to one another. We are a community that cares deeply and works together to help one another. That is what makes our Jewish Berkshires strong!

Interested in more details on Federation’s work over the past year? Check out our website at jewishberkshires.org.

Thank you volunteers Ellen Rosenblatt and the BJV delivery team. Mitch Greenwald, Roman Rozemblyum, Colin Orvitsky, Pattie Lipman, Amy Cott Filson, and Chris Kelly

Letters to the Editor

Words That Can Just Make You Melt

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

This is short note to thank you so much for the beautiful parade you put together for the residents of the local assisted living facilities. The event was not “clement” at some point, but I am glad our residents were able to see the parade. One of them told me “That was so nice of them to do that for us!” These are words that can just melt your heart.

You can feel that they really appreciated what you did for them. Thank you, thank you, and again, thank you!

Ohnine Aslijie (Nene), Activities Director
Kimball Farms Life Care
Lenox

For More Photos

SEE PAGE 12

A Thank You from Federation

Dear Amy Freeman and Lenox Troop 65021 Grade 3 Brownies:

On behalf of the meals on wheels program of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and its partner, Elder Services of Berkshire County, we thank you for the donation of a case of Toffee cookies for 60+ lunches. Our recipients loved that special treat with their lunches.

So many of our seniors are by themselves in their homes and the only people they may see in a day is the mailman and their lunch delivery volunteer. The cookies brought a little joy to their day! Several of them told me how delighted they were by the cookies, and shared experiences working with Brownies and Girl Scouts many years ago.

Fondly,

Susan Frisch Lehrer
Coordinator of Volunteers and PJ Library
Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

Thank you volunteers Ellen Rosenblatt and the BJV delivery team.

Mitch Greenwald, Roman Rozemblyum, Colin Orvitsky, Pattie Lipman, Amy Cott Filson, and Chris Kelly
Jewish Wisdom for Walking into the Unknown

By Rabbi Jodie Gordon

From one of my favorite poems, written by Marge Piercy:

The courage to let go of the door, the handle…

The courage to walk out of the pain that is known into the pain that cannot be imagined, mapless, walking into the wilderness, going barefoot with a canteen into the desert…

We Jews are all born of wanderers, with shoes under our pillows…

These excerpts from her poem “Maggid” remind me that walking into the unknown is something the Jewish people have been doing from the very beginning. Throughout history, from the moment that God leads Moses and the mixed multitude the long way around, to the stories of Jewish migration that brought each of us here, we have been a wandering people. We know what it means to put one foot in front of the other, without guarantees that our destination will indeed be that promised land.

As we approach six months of this new reality, I find this very comforting. We too, are walking into the unknown, but that does not mean we have to walk forward, unknowing. Even as we try to soak in the small pleasures of summer, there is an undeniable shadow cast by all of the many unknowns. The heart of our tradition is wise, and offers us sustenance for the journey ahead.

Choose good walking companions

If there was ever a prayer for walking into the unknown, it’s “Hashkiveinu”; that prayer for protection that we say each evening, cushioned between our prayers for redemption and our personal prayers. I imagine our ancestors, walking into the unknown, watching the sun set on another day of journeying, and uttering those words, “Shelter me beneath the canopy of your peace.”

One of my favorite creative renditions of the prayer Hashkiveinu adds:

Adonai, help us to walk with good companions, to live with hope in our hearts and eternity in our thoughts, that we may lie down in peace and rise up waiting to Do Your will.

(Mishkan T’filla, p. 161)

Part of living with fear, is to be surrounded with good companions. We make our way through the darkness, ready to face another day, when we are surrounded by love, comfort, encouragement, and hope.

Lighten your load

We can’t carry it all, and we certainly cannot carry it all by ourselves. I am reminded of the verses in Exodus that describe the way that the Israelites went walking into the unknown, watching the sun set on another day of journeying, and uttering those words, “Shelter me beneath the canopy of your peace.”

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Part of living with fear, is to be surrounded with good companions. We make our way through the darkness, ready to face another day, when we are surrounded by love, comfort, encouragement, and hope.

Hope need not be a passive enterprise; in fact, our Jewish tradition commands us to pursue hope, to work toward it, and to reach for it. Later this summer, we will mark Rosh Chodesh Elul, the beginning of a monthlong journey toward the start of a new year. Our tradition gives us the words of Psalm 27, as a lens through which to view that journey. The last verse of Psalm 27 reads:

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Jewish Ceremonial Objects Used in the Home, with Frann Addison

On Thursday, September 3 at 6:45 p.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires programs were scheduled to be presented via Zoom or other platforms. Please check your emails from Federation to find the necessary links, or visit our calendar of events online at www.jewishberkshires.org.

Many Jews know very little, if anything, about the history and evolution of Jewish ceremonial objects used in the home, even though they may possess and use several of them. Based on research done for her master’s thesis, Frann Addison has compiled a fascinating and informative presentation exploring the origin and development of these pieces.

Addison will discuss major holidays and celebrations and the ceremonial objects used in accordance with them.

Rituals, superstitions, Christian influence, and the artistic influence of the country in which the pieces were made will be explored, as will the evolution of the style and function of each object.

In addition to showing historical ritual objects, Addison will also share a few ceremonial pieces that she has created, as well as those done by other contemporary Jewish metalsmiths.

Find out more about this aspect of Jewish cultural and ethnic heritage.

After receiving a BA in Art History from Skidmore College, Frann Addison went on to pursue an MFA in metal smithing at Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan. In 1977 while at Cranbrook, she was inspired by an article which became the turning point in her career. The author of the article believed that there was a need for contemporary design in Judaica, as so much of what was then available simply mimicked antique ritual objects. This led Addison to do extensive research which culminated in the writing of her master’s thesis, “The History of Jewish Ceremonial Objects Used in the Home.”

As part of her work, Addison also created a kiddush cup, a havdalah spicebox, and a mezuzah, all of which were part of her graduate degree show in the school’s gallery. A rabbi happened to see the student show and was drawn to her ritual objects, and she made a sale. Could she possibly make a living at this she wondered? The answer is “Yes,” as she has been doing so since 1980.

Her work has been featured in ten books and numerous major publications, and can be found in the permanent collection of the Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia.

“IT gives me great pleasure to know that my Judaica creations will be lovingly used by individuals or families as they perform ancient rituals linking past and present,” she says. “Tradition, spirit, family – this is what is important to me.”

How Rock ‘n’ Roll Has Contributed to Improved Race Relations in the U.S.

On Monday, August 3 at 10:45 a.m., join “Radio Dave” Milberg – a “disc jockey-at-law” who has been broadcasting since 1965 and lawyering since 1979 – as he discusses how rock ‘n’ roll music is more than a soundtrack of events online at www.jewishberkshires.org.

Milberg will spotlight the first integrated rock group to have a hit record, a legendary Chicago soul group with a string of hits that promoted racial pride, and show the ways that The Beatles and Rolling Stones helped make rock ‘n’ roll music a force for improved race relations in the United States.

Milberg owns more than 60,000 records, including “the largest collection this side of the North Pole” and “the largest-known archive of original versions of Elvis Presley ремakes, as well as songs about or mentioning the King of Rock ‘n’ Roll.”

In a 2018 interview with the music blog Black News, Milberg was asked about how teenaged radio listeners changed America’s cultural norms during the 1950s. He answered: “They broke down divisions of race and class. Music companies used to have their mainstream label for white people and ‘race records’ for African-Americans and other ethnic groups. Black artists would create original songs; the music companies would release covers by white artists like Pat Boone or rabbis McGuire Sisters. White kids would listen to the covers, and then hunt down the originals. Kids then started crossing the color line at concerts by both white and black musicians. ‘Kids started a cross-fertilization between cultures, and that opened the door to bigger changes.’

“Radio Dave” has been a featured radio disc jockey on stations across the Midwest, and has also been a radio announcer for the Chicago Bears and Chicago White Sox. He has received more than 20 national awards for broadcast station management, journalism, sports, and community service.

As “Lawyer Dave,” Milberg retired from the Chicago-based firm of Schiff Hardin LLP in 2014, and has taught Media Law. His “Rare & Scratchy Rock ‘N’ Roll” podcast is regularly downloaded by nearly 100,000 listeners in more than 135 countries worldwide. As a musicologist, Milberg, an authority on popular music history, was among a group of scholars who were 2019 finalists in the “Documentary Record” category for the Grammy Awards. He also is a volunteer consultant to medical professionals, creating customized music mixes that are used in the therapy for their patients suffering cognitive impairment.

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For further information on all Jewish Federation of the Berkshires programs, please call Nancy Maurice Rogers, Program Director, at (413) 442-4360, ext. 15.
“The Shtetl Kitchen,” with co-owners of The Gefilteria

On Thursday, August 6 at 6:45 p.m., join Jeffrey Yoskowitz and Liz Alpern, co-authors of The Gefilte Manifesto: New Recipes for Old World Jewish Foods and co-owners of The Gefilteria, for a food venture that has been reimagining Old World Jewish foods since 2012. Expect an evening of dynamic discussion on Eastern European Jewish foodways, past and present, in a talk called “The Shtetl Kitchen.”

At press time, all Jewish Federation of the Berkshires programs were scheduled to be presented via Zoom or other platforms – please check your emails from Federation to find the necessary links, or visit our calendar of events online at www.jewishberkshires.org.

Find their website, gefilteria.com: “The Gefilteria is a new kind of food venture launched in 2012 with the mission of reimagining Eastern European Jewish cuisine, adapting classic dishes to the values and tastes of a new generation. We’re the people with the chutzpah to believe that Old World Jewish foods can be beautiful, inspiring and delicious. We produce limited runs of our signature artisanal gefilte fish in the spring and the fall. While we don’t have a storefront, we’re regularly cooking a wide range of Jewish foods from the Ashkenazi – central and eastern European Jewish – culinary tradition, for unique dining events. Along the way, we’re looking to inspire others to reimagine and rediscover this incredible cuisine in their home kitchens.”

The Gefilteria has been compiling The Official Guide to Jewish Eats, which explores the Jewish cuisine found in cities in the United States and around the world. For more, visit myjewishlearning.com/noshers-category/city-guides/.

On the Chocolate Trail, with Rabbi Deborah Prinz

On Thursday, August 20 at 6:45 p.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Rabbi Deborah Prinz for “On the Chocolate Trail: A Delicious Adventure Connecting Jews, Religions, History, Travel, Rituals and Recipes to the Magic of Cacao.” The online talk will be based on her 2012 book of the same name.

At press time, all Jewish Federation of the Berkshires programs were scheduled to be presented via Zoom or other platforms – please check your emails from Federation to find the necessary links, or visit our calendar of events online at www.jewishberkshires.org.

The next time you pick up a piece of chocolate, consider that you are partaking in an age-old passion for religion and food. Explore the surprising chocolate narratives and rituals of pre-Columbian Native Americans, Jews, Catholics, Protestants, and Quakers.

Rabbi Prinz’s unique take explores the popularity of chocolate through her fascination with world religions, showing the connectedness among peoples through this most popular of confections. Delight your mind and your taste buds as Rabbi Prinz unscrambles the mysteries of religions and chocolate along a trail of economic development spanning cultures, countries, centuries, continents, and convictions.

Rabbi Prinz has lectured about chocolate and religion around the world, and uses information gathered from travel in several countries, including Belgium, Canada, England, France, Israel, Italy, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States. She has held a number of leadership positions in the national and regional Reform movement, having recently served the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) as director of Program and Member Services and the director of the Joint Commission on Rabbinic Mentoring.

She is rabbi emerita of Temple Adat Shalom in San Diego County, where she held the position of senior rabbi for almost 20 years. Prior to that she was, for seven years, the rabbi of a synagogue in Bergen County, NY, and also the assistant rabbi of Central Synagogue in Manhattan.

HILDA VALLIN FEIGNBAUM
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION LECTURE
SUNDAY – AUGUST 30, 2020 – 7:30 PM

Election 2020
America at the Crossroads
with Guest Speaker
Mara Liasson

International political correspondent for National Public Radio, a political analyst for FOX News Channel and a regular panelist on Special Report with Brit Hume and on Fox News Sunday.

The lecture will be held online and is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is required — go to https://www.ansheamunim.org/sched

Sponsored by The Hilda Vallin Feigenbaum Lecture Endowment

Temple Anshe Amunim – 26 Broad Street – Pittsfield, MA – (413) 442-5910
Life Chapter 40”, by Flora Rosefsky

**Family Tree of Life** – A Hands-on Collage Workshop

On Thursday, August 27 at 10:45 a.m., join us for “Family Tree of Life,” a hands-on collage workshop for both novice and experienced artists led by Yiddish artist Flora Rosefsky. Use your imagination in a risk-free environment where you can experiment in new ways to think and to work will be encouraged.

At press time, all Jewish Federation of the Berkshires programs were scheduled to be presented via Zoom or other platforms – please check your emails from Federation to find the necessary links, or visit our calendar of events online at www.jewishberkshires.org.

Create a “Family Tree of Life” work of art honoring and remembering loved ones, as well as cherishing one’s current family. Using the Polish traditional method of paper cutting, Wyckczynski (pronounced “Vee-chee- NON-key”), Flora Rosefsky will show us how to fold paper and cutting connecting lines and shapes is magically transformed into a finished piece of art.

Participants will learn about the paper cutout process attributed to Henri Matisse, and can also choose to “draw with their scissors” by adding symbols, family photographs or handwritten messages to embellish their tree. The designs can be framed or later be transposed into greeting cards or needlework projects.

Flora Rosefsky is known for her collage and mixed media work, designing and coordinating community quilts for public institutions and creating Jewish ritual works for synagogues as a teaching artist.


**Supply List**

Here’s what you’ll need for the workshop:

- 1 glue stick – ELMER’S brand works well – and/or white school glue
- 1 paper scissor
- 1 no. 2 pencil with eraser
- 1 black pen (medium point)

**PAPERS:**

- 1 sheet of paper 8 ½” x 11” (for the “support” of your art, not to be cut) card stock paper white or any color, or other paper like poster board, Bristol, or any white heavier drawing paper or construction color paper.
- 5 sheets of paper – 8 ½” x 11” – colored copy paper (any color), or construction paper, any color except the same as the color used for the “support”.
- 10 assorted papers – shades of greens, blues, reds etc. Can be magazine cutouts from ads, photos of foods where there are textures, or Origami papers, gift wrap paper, or other papers you have at home. You can also take white copy paper, and use a color crayon, or watercolor paint – to draw or paint over the white paper to create your own colored papers.

**TZEDAKAH**

You can also call us at (413) 442-4360, ext. 16. Volunteers are needed to help reach out to donors in the community. All calls can be made from the safety of your home. If you are an experienced Super Sunday caller, please consider joining us. Contact Leslie Izouropsky at (413) 442-4360, ext. 19 or email izouropsky@jewishberkshires.org.

Since the beginning of this pandemic, we have all experienced new and unexpected challenges. The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires has been a leading force in addressing our community’s most pressing needs, protecting the vulnerable, building resilience, supporting our affiliate organizations, and maintaining our strength and unity.

The Federation’s Annual Campaign is the foundation for this work. For over 80 years, in times of triumph and times of despair, the Jewish Federation’s Annual Campaign has sustained our community and provided the resources to care for those in need and ensure a safe and strong Jewish community today and in the future.

Now, more than ever, we need everyone’s support.

Silver tzedakah box, mid-20th century

**A Jewish camp is opening — on the video game Minecraft**

By Ben Sales / JTA

This was going to be Jake Offenheim’s 14th straight summer at Camp Ramah in Canada. Then camp was canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Offenheim, who was set to be a counselor for the fifth year, couldn’t bear a summer without Ramah, so he re-created it on Minecraft.

In the popular “sandbox” video game, users not only can play as characters but can construct entire worlds to their fantasy, within certain limits. Offenheim, 22, loved the game as a middle schooler and has been playing since this era of social distancing.

With time on his hands, he programmed the entire campus of Camp Ramah in Canada on Minecraft, from the cabins to the sports fields to the lake. It took 73 hours in total.

“One of my main goals was to be as faithful as possible to the real thing,” Offenheim said. “People are blown away by how close I got. Even the distances are pretty accurate.”

Many camps have transitioned from in-person to virtual, which usually means activities and programs held via Zoom. Offenheim, however, has created a virtual copy of his actual camp. He downloaded a suite of tools for Minecraft on his computer, fashioned a re-creation of one cabin, then copied and pasted it across camp, changing the shape as necessary. The interiors were made from memory.

To get the proper distances between buildings, as well as the shapes of certain fields, he relied on satellite photos. Offenheim was able to fill spaces with virtual grass, dirt, and gravel as necessary.

A YouTube video providing an overview of the landscape shows docks, wooden buildings with red roofs, plenty of grass and trees, cabins, a dining hall and a communal prayer space.

“There’s no oddly shaped buildings,” he said. “They’re all rectangles. There’s one building that was an octagon. You just start placing blocks and see what feels good.”

He’ll be inviting campers to enjoy the virtual world he built.

Offenheim was going to be “Rosh Canoe,” or head of the camp’s canoeing program, this year. Now he’s going to be “Rosh Gaming and ESports.” For three weeks, he will lead campers, divided by age group, in free games on the Ramah in Canada Minecraft platform.

Games will include virtual horse racing, canoe racing, archery and the like. Campers can also compete in virtual parlour.

“A shot of the campus of Camp Ramah in Canada re-created on Minecraft. (Courtesy of Jake Offenheim, via JTA)”

Campers will need an approved user name to log on to the space, so trolls will be locked out. And Offenheim is taking precautions to protect his virtual world from even invited users.

“We’re going to set up a lock on all of the things that I built,” he said. “So you can’t break or place anything in certain areas, so nobody accidentally breaks something or burns down the whole camp.”
Preparing for the High Holy Days with Temple Anshe Amunim

Plus other opportunities to learn and connect

PITTSFIELD – On eight consecutive Thursdays beginning August 6 at 7 p.m., Professor Elizabeth Rosen will conduct an 8-week mindfulness course created by the Institute of Jewish Spirituality called “Awareness in Action.” This class takes participants through the month of Elul, the traditional preparatory time around the High Holy Days, and concludes after Yom Kippur. Rabbi Hirsch has extensive training in Jewish mindfulness and meditation, and each week participants will view a short video on their own to prepare for their group conversation. All are welcome to join this guided journey. Registration is required and closes on August 2. To register visit: https://tinyurl.com/taa-awarenessaction. Participants will meet on the following Thursdays: August 6, 13, 20, 27, September 3, 10, and October 1 and 8.

Women in Leadership

PITTSFIELD – On Tuesday, August 4 at 7 p.m., Professor Robyn Rosen will moderate a forum titled “Women in Leadership,” hosted by Temple Anshe Amunim. Writes Professor Rosen: “One hundred years ago, in the summer of 1920, after a seventy year struggle, the 19th Amendment was ratified. Since then women have made extraordinary strides and contributed robustly to our nation’s political and religious life. In these challenging times, we come to look to women leaders for insight and direction.” Join TAA for a conversation with local women leaders. Speakers will include Pittsfield’s Mayor Linda Tyler, Berkshire County’s District Attorney Andrea Harrington, Massachusetts State Representative Tricia Farley-Bouvier, and the Temple’s Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch. Discover what inspires and guides their role for the last two years supporting their period of transition.

“In the last two years, Rabbi Hirsch has become a beloved member of our congregation community. In good times and bad, particularly during this pandemic, she has provided our members with wisdom, stability, inspiration, and forward thinking,” said Joshua M. Cutler, president of Temple Anshe Amunim’s Board of Trustees for the last two years. “As we continue to celebrate our 150th anniversary this year, we are delighted that Rabbi Hirsch will lead us for many years to come as we enter our next 150 years as a Temple,” Cutler added.

In her time with the congregation, Rabbi Hirsch has overseen numerous aesthetic and safety upgrades to the synagogue’s building, grown the congregation’s popular Saturday morning Torah Study Learning Institute. Rabbi Hirsch has also served as the director of the congregation’s religious and adult education programs, guiding students of all ages. During this unprecedented period of social distancing, Rabbi Hirsch has seamlessly been able to pivot the congregation from sanctuary-based worship and programming to virtual Zoom offerings, which has allowed the congregation to continue to be meaningfully enriched, and has allowed for greater connections to the larger community beyond the Berkshires.

“It is my sacred honor to serve Temple Anshe Amunim, an historic congregation with a bright and innovative future,” said Rabbi Hirsch. “I am eager to continue to partner with our lay leadership and to represent our synagogue in the broader community.”

Rabbi Hirsch, a New England native and a graduate of Brown University, was ordained at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. While in rabbinical school, Rabbi Hirsch was honored as a student rabbinic fellow, named one of the directors of Camp Eisner in Great Barrington. In the greater community, Rabbi Hirsch has been active in Jewish and community organizations, provided invitations and b’nai mitzvah services for numerous community gatherings, and has taught at Berkshire Community College’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.


A formal installation ceremony for Rabbi Hirsch will be held at a date to be announced.

Congregation Beth Israel

Hebrew School this Fall

NORTH ADAMS – At press time, Congregation Beth Israel’s Hebrew school information was not available. Please contact Rabbi Jarah Greenfield at rabbijgreenfield@gmail.com for up-to-date information.

Check out our website! www.jewishberkshires.org For calendar listings and events

BERKSHIRE JEWISH CONGREGATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

Shalom

Welcome to the Jewish Berkshires

Everyone is welcome to attend services and events at any of the organizations listed here.

Please call the organizations directly to confirm service times or to inquire about membership.

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

BERKSHIRE JEWISH CONGREGATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

Berkshire Minyan

Lay-led egalitarian minyan

held at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Rd., Great Barrington, MA
(413) 229-3618, berkshireminyan.org

Berkshire Hills Hadassah

P.O. Box 187, Pittsfield, MA
(413) 442-4386, berkshirehillshadassah@gmail.com

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

196 South St., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 442-4360, jewishberkshires.org

Jewish War Veterans

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

Knesset Israel

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

Temple Anshe Amunim

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

Congregation Ahavath Sholom

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

Congregation Beth Israel

Reform
53 Lois St., North Adams, MA
(413) 663-5830, cbib 😀.org

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire

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

Israel Philatelic Society

c/o Dr. Ed Heltzer,
(413) 447-7622

WB酵母 Graduated Fellow and Tisch Fellow. Prior to her time at Anshe Amunim, Rabbi Hirsch served as the rabbi and one of the directors of Camp Eisner in Great Barrington. In the greater community, Rabbi Hirsch has been active in Jewish and community organizations, provided invitations and b’nai mitzvah services for numerous community gatherings, and has taught at Berkshire Community College’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Rabbi Hirsch lives in Great Barrington with her husband, Rabbi Neil P.G. Hirsch, who serves at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, and their son, Lior. A formal installation ceremony for Rabbi Hirsch will be held at a date to be announced.
Hevreh’s Virtual Study and Worship Programs

GREAT BARRINGTON – This summer, Hevreh of Southern Berkshire continues to offer spiritual connection and intellectual stimulation, albeit virtually. Here is some of what’s going on – visit Hevreh’s website, hevreh.org, for more information and Web links.

**Lunch N Learn Torah Study**

On Wednesdays at 11:45 a.m. through the first week of September, lunch and learn with Rabbi Niel P.G. Hirsch, who writes: “Now, having consistently met for over a year and studying the Book of Judges, the water is warm and welcome to anyone who wants to dive in. We have just begun to study First Samuel. No prior knowledge is necessary, just an interest in having thoughtful conversations with one another.”

If you would like to join remotely please reach out to Rabbi Hirsch. If you have other suggestions for what you would like to learn in these sessions, please reach out to Rabbi Hirsch at nihirsch@hevreh.org. Classes are free and open to all.

**Creative Beit Midrash**

On Saturdays at 8:30 a.m. on August 1, 15 and 29, all are invited to participate in Hevreh’s Creative Beit Midrash, a house of learning that will foster and be fostered by creative exploration of Jewish ideas and practices. No prior experience of any kind is needed. Join the group with an open mind.

From Hevreh’s description: “Creativity exists within each of us. How we ignite that spark varies. Creative release may be through writing, sculpture, dance, pottery, painting, music, quilting, etc. “How it will work: Over several weeks, we will explore a topic of Jewish interest ranging from sacred sources to sacred themes. Participants will drive the direction of the topics and the discussion.”

Rabbi Hirsch will introduce each topic with a small packet of materials including a video. Sessions will be used for sharing and processing individuals’ creative product, whether that be visual art, music, dance/movement, or written word. Discussion will be in the form of nurturant, not critical.

This ongoing experience will begin with Zoom sessions and then continue in person when that is again possible. Writing, music, and art that result will be curated (if the creator wishes) and used on Hevreh’s website. Friday evening Visual Torahillah, and bulletins. They anticipate an exhibit as part of the re-opening of Hevreh’s building.

Questions? Reach out to info@hevreh.org to be directed to Heidi Katz or Larry Frankel.

**Ongoing Services**

Kabbalat Shabbat

Fridays at 6 p.m. through early September.

Join Rabbi Hirsch and Rabbi Jodie Gordon for a festive Kabbalat Shabbat Service over Zoom each week to reflect on the past week and set an intention to rest and recharge before the week ahead. Every week, same time, same place (if you’re staying at home). Contact info@hevreh.org to be added to the listerv and receive login credentials.

Shabbat Morning Experience

Experience Saturdays at 10 a.m. through early September.

Join Hevreh each week for a contemplative Shabbat morning experience. Pour yourself a cup of coffee and log on to enjoy a restful Shabbat morning with a rabbi and other members. “We hope you’ll find oneg in communal song, prayer, discussion, and study.” Contact info@hevreh.org to be added to the listerv and receive login credentials.

**Knesset Israel Families Together Begins New Year This Fall**

**PITTSFIELD** - The Knesset Israel Hebrew School, a part of the congregation’s Families Together program, welcomes students from preschool through 12th grade to dynamic classes where they learn Hebrew, Jewish studies, history and culture. The school prides itself on its intimate classes and extracurricular activities. In addition to teaching skills for meaningful Jewish living, the school also incorporates a hidden curriculum helping students learn to value and prioritize their own involvement in Jewish community life.

Jodie Gordon is the director of Knesset Israel Families Together. She is the assistant director of the Hebrew School, as well as Families Together and Teens. Members are invited to attend the Tot Shabbat and Bar/Bat Mitzvah scheduling sessions, held throughout the year.

Join Rabbi Hirsch and Rabbi Jodie Gordon for a festive Kabbalat Shabbat Service over Zoom each week to reflect on the past week and set an intention to rest and recharge before the week ahead. Every week, same time, same place (if you’re staying at home). Contact info@hevreh.org to be added to the listerv and receive login credentials.

On Saturdays at 8:30 a.m. on Shabbat mornings and on Wednesday afternoons. Over the course of the elementary school years, students study stories from the Torah, lifecycle, holidays and Jewish values. Grades 5 and 6 will use discussion of current events to explore issues in modern Jewish life.

All students at this age level also participate in Junior Congregations on a weekly basis. Wednesday afternoon classes use formal and informal techniques to help students learn to read Hebrew fluently and accurately. The school is looking forward to continuing to grow our arts program, featuring the participation of local Judaica artists.
Hats Off To Hadassah! Annual Chai Tea with Jane Austen’s Emma

Berkshire Hills Hadassah invites members and guests to its annual summer Chai Tea on Thursday, August 6 from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Join on Zoom with your finest hat creations and a cup of tea for an informative program about Jane Austen’s Emma, with author and Professor Sharon Sobel. There will also be updates about Hadassah’s youth programs – Youth Aliyah and Young Judaeas.

About the Speaker
A writer for most of her life, Professor Sharon Sobel is also the author of 16 published novels and novellas, several short stories, and many essays. She earned a Ph.D. in English and American Literature from Brandeis University and is currently a professor of English at UConn Stamford and at Norwalk Community College, where she teaches composition and literature and chaired the annual writer’s conference for five years.

She has been involved with UJA/Federation Westport-Wilton-Wilton-Norwalk and is currently organizational vice president of the Connecticut region of Hadassah and co-president of the Norwalk Hadassah chapter. She and her husband live on an 18th century farm in Wilton, CT where they raised their three children and continue to entertain their four grandchildren.

Suggested minimum donation is $18, payable to Berkshire Hills Hadassah to support Hadassah’s youth programs. For more information check out the Berkshire Hills Hadassah Facebook page or email berkshirehillshadassah@gmail.com.

Donations should be sent to Berkshire Hills Hadassah, P.O. Box 187, Pittsfield, MA 01202. Please include your email so they can email your Zoom invitation to the Chai Tea event, upon receipt of your donation.

Berkshire Hills Hadassah Invites You – 2020 Donor Event On Zoom!

On Sunday, September 6 at 11 a.m., Berkshire Hills Hadassah will recognize Dr. Roselyn Kolodny and Dr. Edwin Kolodny at its annual donor event.

Dr. Ed Kolodny, Professor Emeritus, Department of Neurology, NYU School of Medicine, will be the honored guest speaker. Dr. Kolodny’s specialty is the genetics of inherited diseases and he is a world expert on Gaucher Disease.

Also appearing will be Hilary Price, the syndicated “Rhymes with Orange” cartoonist, who will uplift spirits in these trying times with her upbeat sense of humor.

Everyone is welcome! Invitations with RSVP information will be sent soon. Contributors to Hadassah Medical Organization will receive an email response with the link to the Berkshire Hills Hadassah Zoom Donor event.

For more information or questions, please call (413) 443-4386.

Thank You!

The Federation extends its deepest gratitude to our many volunteers and to the many people who are serving on the front lines during this uncertain and challenging time.

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Hats off – C.E. Brock’s 1898 illustration of a scene from Emma

Vision Ride Fundraiser to Benefit Hazon

Richard Shultzky of Egremont is chair of the board of directors of Hazon, the largest faith-based environmental organization in the United States and operator of the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center in Falls Village, CT. He’s inviting members of the Berkshire community to join his team and participate in Hazon’s 2020 Vision Rides.

The vision for each team is to collectively “travel” 360,000 miles through Labor Day in order to raise $360,000, culminating in a celebration festival over Labor Day weekend.

The goal, according to Shultzky, is to get people outside in a way that’s meaningful to them, in order to lessen the use of cars: reconnect with the natural world; maintain emotional, spiritual, and physical health; build community during this complicated moment in time; and drive systemic change for us all to live healthily, sustainably, and equitably on Earth.

How to do it? Join the team by committing to contributing miles from now until Labor Day (anything that’s not in a car – biking, walking, jogging, hiking, etc.); give or raise funds for the team’s miles logged; and invite family, friends, communities, and institutions to join.

To join Shultzky’s team, visit https://donate.hazon.org/team/302645. There you’ll click the JOIN TEAM button, and register.

“At this complicated time in the world, we can be part of a movement for change, while we also get in shape, build community, and have fun,” writes Shultzky. “Let’s combine forces to create this awesome team, as one step closer to creating the world that we believe in. Together, we will travel more miles and raise more money than we ever could alone.”

About the Speaker

Professor Sharon Sobel. There will also be a scene from Jane Austen’s Emma and a cup of tea for an informative program about Jane Austen’s Emma, with author and Professor Sharon Sobel. There will also be updates about Hadassah’s youth programs – Youth Aliyah and Young Judaeas.
Debora Cole-Duffy, Andy Hochberg Named Temple Anshe Amunim’s 2020 Members of the Year

PITTSFIELD – Debora Cole-Duffy and Andy Hochberg were named 2020 Temple Anshe Amunim Members of the Year at the Temple’s annual meeting, conducted via Zoom, on June 11.

“I could think of no one more deserving; that is, I chose two people to share the award this year,” outgoing president Josh Cutler remarked at the annual meeting. “Deb and Andy have served as pillars of our congregation for decades, and have guided our Temple in so many ways behind the scenes.”

“This past year, Cole-Duffy served as the co-chairs of the Temple Anshe Amunim, may be made in their honor to the Cantorial or Mitvah Fund of Temple Anshe Amunim. This is no mistake that both households have multiple generations of Temple leaders, as these two families who have given so much to our community in the past, the present, and I am certain in the future, as well.”

Donations to Temple Anshe Amunim, may be made in their honor to the Cantorial or Mitvah Fund of Temple Anshe Amunim.

About the Speaker
Mara Liasson’s voice as the national political correspondent for NPR is often memorable. Her words are often memorable. Her reports can be heard regularly on the NPR News and Weekend Edition editions of Morning Edition and All Things Considered. She provides extensive coverage of politics and policy from Washington, D.C., – focusing on the White House and Congress – and also reports on political trends beyond the Beltway. Liasson provides key coverage of candidates and issues in presidential and congressional races. During her tenure she has covered seven presidential elections, those in 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016. She is actively covering the 2020 elections. Prior to her current assignment she was NPR’s White House correspondent for the eight years of the Clinton administration. She was White House Correspondents’ Association’s Merrian Smith Award for daily news coverage in 1994, 1995, and again in 1997. From 1989-1992, Liasson was NPR’s congressional correspondent. Liasson joined NPR in 1985 as a general assignment reporter and newscaster. Prior to joining NPR, she was a freelance radio and television reporter in San Francisco. She was also managing editor and anchor of California Edition, a California Public Radio nightly news program and a print journalist for The Vineyard Gazette in Martha’s Vineyard, MA.

Liasson attended Columbia University as a recipient of a Knight-Bagehot Fellowship in Economics and Business Journalism. She is a graduate of Brown University where she earned a bachelor’s degree in American history.

Check out Mara Liasson’s profile on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/mara.liasson/.

The lecture, sponsored by Temple Anshe Amunim Feigenbaum Lecture Endowment, is free and open to the public.

The event will be held virtually this year because of COVID-19. Those wishing to attend will find registration information for the event at www.ansheamunim.org.

As my parents planted for me before I was born, so do I plant for those who come after me. – Talmud

Thank you to these individuals who through their gift to the Legacy Circle will ensure that the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires thrives long into the future. May your name be a Blessing, and may the year you set inspire others to create your own Jewish Legacy.
Family Education at Temple Anshe Amunim This Fall

PITTSFIELD – Join Temple Anshe Amunim (TAA) for its ongoing Family Education program for meaningful and enriching Jewish experiences for youth, families, and the entire community.

“In the era of COVID-19, we view the challenges presented by social distancing as opportunities to reimagine Jewish life and learning,” says Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch. “The ways we have envisioned our Family Education for next year look to adapt to our current realities and reimagine how we connect with our youth.”

Students will experience a monthly rotation of experiences in the classroom, in the sanctuary, and outdoors. Unless otherwise specified, all events can be held within the participants’ homes, in TAA’s virtual space, or at TAA in line with strict social distancing policies and practices.

Rabbi Hirsch and a dedicated staff of teachers – Rachel Alemany, MSEd and Michael Duffy, MSEd – will lead the children and community through a monthly schedule divided into four categories:

- Art and cooking
- Learning of prayers and blessings
- A t'Hilah (field trip) experience
- A monthly family story time for younger children or a quarterly tikun olam project for teenagers.

This year TAA offers parents Jewish learning opportunities with a once-a-month Jewish book club. The book will be announced at the beginning of the month, and parents will meet at the end of the month. Attendance by video conference may become a popular option regardless of COVID-19.

Add’s Rabbi Hirsch: “Our program is designed to educate our children and provide the possibility of connecting students with our greater TAA community. Art, baking and prayer projects often enhance congregational efforts to celebrate our holidays together, providing frequent opportunities for members of all ages to learn from each other and celebrate as one TAA family.”

All of these leaders have extensive experience in educating Jewish youth. Rabbi Hirsch came to TAA from her position as rabbi and assistant director at URJ Eisner Camp in Great Barrington. Both Michael Duffy and Rachel Alemany are high school faculty. Michael a gifted musician who uses music to engage even the most resistant students and Rachel an experienced leader with PTTY, TAA’s teen youth group.

Writes Rabbi Hirsch: “All of the proposed programming is built for socially distant or completely remote implementation with the flexibility to transition to in-person implementation. This nimble approach includes plans for strict social distancing, picking up of materials, and both synchronous and asynchronous online learning plans. During synchronous online learning, we will create smaller group environments with breakout Zoom rooms based on age or interest, and asynchronous activities will offer levels of engagement for a variety of ages.”

To learn more or register, visit ansheamunim.org, email templeofoffice@ansheamunim.org, or call (413) 442-5910.
Your Federation Presents

Community CARE’avan Delivered Good Cheer to Local Elders

On the sometimes-stormy Sunday afternoon of June 28, our PJ Library families decorated cars with balloons, signs, flags, and messages of love and hope for elders who have been hit hard by the isolation brought on by measures necessary to stop the spread of COVID-19. Our CARE’avan was greeted by residents and staff of Devonshire Estates, Kimball Farms Life Care, Kimball Farms Nursing Care Center, and The Landing at Laurel Lake, who welcomed our waves, cheers, and honks. Our parade was a gift to all.

Our PJ Library Provided Pizzas for Frontline Professionals

Our PJ Library families held a special family program in May with a mitzvah component – for every selfie picture they snapped and sent in, the Jewish Federation would send pizzas to local healthcare or frontline workers. Pizzas went to the staff of the mothers and baby units and pediatric units at both Fairview Hospital in Great Barrington and Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield on Friday, June 26. Sarah Aroeste Blaugrund and her daughters, Irit and Dalia, made the deliveries to Fairview Hospital, and Avi and Natasha Dresner and their sons, Lev and Sasha, visited Berkshire Medical Center. Both families were greeted by hospital staff to accept the pizzas for the departments. And how nice to see Marcie Greenfield Simons, BMC chaplain and former founding director of PJ Library, as one of the greeters at BMC.

PJ Library aprons and t-shirts were worn by the families, and the children made notes and drawings for the covers of the pizza boxes.
TZEDAKAH SUNDAY IS AUGUST 16

For over 80 years, in times of triumph and times of despair, the Jewish Federation’s Annual Campaign has sustained our Community and provided the resources to care for those in need and ensure a safe and strong Jewish future!

Help Us Be There! Donate to the Annual Campaign Today!

Jewish Life for Young Families
You help young families in the Berkshires embrace Jewish values and traditions while building a supportive community with Jewish peers through family programming, PJ Library, and volunteer opportunities.

Resources to Fight Anti-Semitism
You help young people stand up against hate through anti-bias education in our public schools. You also combat anti-Semitism and the BDS movement through community programming, national advocacy, and security resources.

Dignity & Compassion
You provide older adults and homebound individuals with nutritious meals and stimulating programming served up with a side of companionship and compassion through our Connecting With Community program and Kosher Meals on Wheels.

Jewish Education and Values
You nurture a strong Jewish future by providing a high-quality, meaningful and affordable Jewish education for hundreds of children through critical grants to all of our local Jewish religious schools.

A Sense of Community
You 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 Strong Jewish Identity
You help young people across the Berkshires and at UMASS Hillel build strong Jewish identities and become future leaders through scholarships for Jewish camp and Israel experiences, as well as leadership development and holiday meals on campus.

Emotional Support and Emergency Assistance
You help individuals across the Berkshires who are facing unexpected challenges and life transitions receive the support they need through the Federation’s social worker. You also provide a safety net of emergency assistance when needed.

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

A Safe Place to Call Home
You help tens of thousands of new immigrants, who are fleeing anti-Semitism in Europe and fighting in the Ukraine, build better lives for themselves and their families in Israel through job training and support services that ease their transition.

Caring in Times of Crisis
When crisis hits, in the Berkshires or around the world, we join with Jewish communities across North America to rapidly mobilize local resources to help. From support during COVID-19 to whatever the future holds, you help deliver an SOS response.

A Close and Caring Relationship with Israel
You help connect the Berkshire Jewish Community with Israel and you also help provide programs for at-risk students, shelter for abused women, and support services for disabled youth.

Community Relations and Advocacy
You help provide a proactive voice in our community, public schools, media, and government, addressing anti-Semitism, religion, Israel, justice legislation, and other issues important to our community.

We Need Your Support Now More Than Ever! Donate Online at Jewishberkshires.org.
Some Days You Get Out There Into the Big Wide World

By Albert Stern • BJV Editor

Note: This story is dedicated to Bob Rosenblatt, a friend to so many in our community. May his memory be a blessing.

A few years back, my son, Eliot, took to asking me if I had ever heard of the basketball player Bol Bol. I told him I heard of Manute Bol, and Eliot said Bol Bol was his son, who was then still in high school. “He’s actually great,” Eliot assured me — he followed Bol Bol on Instagram, and is also an avid watcher of websites that post videos of basketball greats past, present, and future. Apparently, Bol Bol — from Sudan and five inches shorter than his father at 7’2” — has been a hero to a legion of 11-year-old boys since he was a teenager.

Over time, Eliot asked me multiple times if I knew who Bol Bol was. Either he forgets having spoken to me about Bol Bol, or just uses it as an opportunity to hear me talk about the times I saw Manute play, just as he enjoys when I repeat the same tales about MJ, and Larry Bird in person. I repeat the same tales about the times I saw Manute play, just as he enjoys when I mentioned the grousing — did I mention the grousing? Did I have to? En route, we stopped to see Eliot’s grandfather at the assisted living facility in Lenox. As usual, my father-in-law was surly and non-communicative although, as usual, his tablemate in the dining room, 96-year-old Bob Rosenblatt, was thrilled to see us.

When we told him that we were heading to a basketball tournament, Bob exclaimed, “That’s AMAZING! What FUN you’ll have! What a SPECIAL, EXCITING day! ENJOY IT YOU TWO!” I felt shamed, shamed by a near-centenarian possessed with a font of compassionate understanding. I doubt I could accrue even if I lived another 40 years and tried hard. I was so ashamed that when Eliot and I got back in the car, I apologized for being such a pain in the tuchis and told him I was happy to be going.

And I really was happy — that’s how Bob Rosenblatt’s magic worked.

We got to the gym at Springfield College — packed to the rafters with rabid hoops fans, college scouts, coaches, and “yoots.” Someone pointed out Knicks great (and Georgetown University coach) Patrick Ewing, and soon after we found some seats in the third row, we saw University of Kentucky coach John Calipari settling in. This event was clearly a huge deal if he was there. We bought a program, and on the inside front cover, the top players were listed.

Among the “Best of the Best” was a picture of…Bol Bol. Eliot and I looked at each other — No! Noooo. No way no way no way. We tore through the program — Bol Bol would be playing in the third game of the afternoon.

Then it happened. The anticipation leading up to Bol Bol’s game was almost unbearable. We witnessed some great basketball — the kids are amazing, the best of them already dunking like pros. Eliot loved it, and I plugged into the part of me that was once passionate about sports stuff, but that now passionately wants you to get the hell offa my lawn. The

BOL BOL, continued on next page
buzz in the stands was all Bol Bol Bol Bol. Bol Bol. When the 3:30 game ended, the court cleared and seemingly all the 11-year-olds in attendance pressed around courtside, waiting for Bol Bol to come out. And suddenly, there he was, all 7 foot 2 inches of him — and he wasn’t even the tallest guy on the team. He had a 7’3” teammate, a spindly white guy who Eliot could probably box out of the paint.

Watching people gawk at Bol Bol, I wondered what it felt like to be inside that body. Naturally, I came up completely blank. No doubt the center of attention in any room he has ever been in or will be in, Bol Bol seems bemused by the attention, and already capable of maintaining a psychic wall between himself and the people who want something from him — an autograph, a high five, a glance of recognition.

His famous dad might have prepared him for the ride he’s now on. In any case, his poise was remarkable. I gave Eliot my pathetic Tracfone and told him to take some pictures of Bol Bol. He went off for a few minutes, then came running back.

“I just met Coach Calipari!” he said.

“Omigod,” I responded. “He shook my hand and looked me in… the… eye.”

“Where did you see him?”

“As he was leaving. I started shouting ‘Coach K! Coach K!’ and he came over to me and shook my hand!”

“Alright!” And Eliot ran back to take more pictures of Bol Bol.

Bol Bol looks quite like his dad, and as play started, seemingly had the same game — standing around, taking up space, looking a little out of it. But unlike Manute, Bol Bol has soft hands and, when he gets the ball around the basket, an explosive step to the rim, which is about one foot above his outstretched arms. He made me think of a caiman you might see on the nature shows — barely moving, shifting his eyes back and forth until the gazelle gets a little too close to the watering hole and then a BOOM flash of mayhem ending with the gazelle between its jaws. But in addition to the vicious dunks, Bol Bol has a sweet touch from middle range and moves well, plus he made all of his free throws. He’s got game.

The crowd went nuts after each play Bol Bol made, all except for the group of “yoots” Eliot and I were sitting among, who were studiedly nonplussed by the show, too cool to jump up and down screaming like we were. Until the last dunk. Bol Bol was standing just about outside the paint when he got the ball and delivered a thunderous windmill slam — I don’t know, but it was as if we had just seen something that could not have actually happened. Could NOT have actually happened. The arena erupted, and even the too-cool “yoots” sitting next to us all linked arms and started chanting Bol Bol’s name.

When Eliot and I were waiting for the car to warm up as we headed home, he said to me: “Dad, I think this was our best day ever.” I told him whether that was true or not, it was certainly a good day to have been us.

We stopped for hamburgers on the way home and talked about how when we woke up in the morning, neither of us had any idea we would be seeing Bol Bol, but how some days you get out there into the big wide world and you do see Bol Bol, and that’s what makes life great. Absolutely. Just great.
Traveling with Jewish Taste

We're off on the Road to Morocco — culinarily, at least

By Carol Goodman Kaufman

As anyone who reads this column regularly may guess, I love to travel. And, much of what I love about traveling to points around the globe is sampling the amazing variety of native foods and flavors.

So, since we can’t really visit places much farther than a gas tank’s capacity right now, why not do it in our kitchens? And, while we’re imagining our tour, why not “meet” some members of the Tribe.

Let’s start our global trek in Morocco. Jews have been present in Morocco for two and a half millennia, tolerated under heavy taxation in the best of times, persecuted and executed during the worst.

The first recorded presence of Jews in Morocco was in the 8th century under Carthaginian rule. Their numbers grew between the 8th and 12th centuries, and Fez was a particularly attractive destination due to its diverse and tolerant population. A golden age for Fez Jews lasted for almost three hundred years.

The next couple of centuries saw a somewhat tolerant Almoravid rule, although Jews lived under dhimmi status, meaning “protected person.” As non-Muslims, they were required to pay special taxes in exchange for being able to practice their religion.

But in the middle of the 12th century, the militant Almohad dynasty overwhelmed the Almoravids and, in a dark foreshadowing of things to come, forced Jews to convert to Islam or face death. And, again an omen of future oppression, those who did convert were required to wear a yellow head covering that exposed them to scorn and violence.

Then in 1492, following the fall of Granada, Spain completed its Reconquista, and King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain issued the Alhambra Decree that ordered Jews and Muslim to convert to Christianity or leave the country. Potential followers mutinied four years later. While about 100,000 converted, another 175,000 Jews of the Iberian peninsula refused to betray their faith and were summarily exiled. About 20,000 sought refuge in Fez alone, where local Jews gave assistance to the refugees, including helping conversos to reclaim their Judaism.

The sheer numbers of Sephardim overwhelmed the tiny Jewish community and, as might be expected, some culture clashes ensued. But, over time, as local Maghrebi Jews and Sephardim intermarried, Sephardic traditions became the norm.

Before the establishment of the modern State of Israel in 1948, Morocco was home to over a quarter million Jews. Today there are only 2,000.

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Moroccan Braised Chicken With Dates

Serves 6

If there is one food that conjures up images of camel caravans, desert oases, fragrant spices, and coffee boiling over an open fire, it is the date. Often referred to as “the king of dates,” the Medjool was once actually reserved for Moroccan royalty. This recipe conjures up an exotic night in the Maghreb.

Ingredients:

- 6 chicken breasts
- 2 T. flour
- 1 T. extra-virgin olive oil
- 10 large garlic cloves, peeled
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- ½ t. ground ginger
- 1 t. ground cumin
- ½ t. turmeric
- 3 T. lemon juice, divided
- 1/8 t. cayenne pepper
- 3 c. chicken broth
- 5 T. fresh lemon juice, divided
- 12 dates, pitted and halved, preferably Medjool
- ½ c. almonds, toasted and chopped
- 1 T. fresh parsley, chopped

Instructions:

1. Sprinkle chicken breasts with salt, pepper, and flour. Heat olive oil in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Add half the chicken to pot and cook until browned on all sides, turning occasionally, about 15 minutes. Increase heat to high and add broth and 3 tablespoons of lemon juice. Bring to boil, then reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer until the garlic begins to soften, about 15 minutes.

2. Place chicken on top of garlic in the pot and bring to boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer for about 25 minutes. Transfer chicken and garlic to platter; cover with foil. Place in cold oven and set to 250 degrees to keep warm while sauce is cooking.

3. Boil juices in pot until slightly thickened, about 10 minutes. Stir in dates and remaining 2 tablespoons lemon juice. Reduce heat and simmer gently until dates are heated through, about 2 minutes. Pour sauce and dates over chicken. Sprinkle with almonds and parsley, and serve on a bed of couscous.

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Carol Goodman Kaufman is a psychologist and author with a passion for travel and food. She is currently at work on a food history/cookbook, tracing the paths that some of our favorite foods have taken from their origins to appear on dinner plates and in cultural rites and artifacts around the world. She invites readers to read her blog at carolgoodmankaufman.com and to follow her on Twitter @goodmankaufman.
Young Judaism

Through the Lens of a Jewish Upbringing, Strengthening Different Parts of Her Identity in College

By Pailey Feakes

This column is adapted from remarks delivered by Pailey Feakes on June 5 when accepting Temple Anshe Amunin’s Kelm Scholarship. She has been a member of the Pittsfield congregation since pre-school and is now a rising junior at Skidmore College, where she studies psychology, political science, and dance.

Her Jewish identity has been bolstered along by Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ support of her Hebrew school, overnight camp experiences, and Israel scholarship.

When I went off to college I had a deep sense of my Jewish identity. During high school, I helped lead Temple services with the religious school and participated in multiple community service projects with our youth group. I was immersed in Judaism at Camp Brewer both as a camper and counselor. I also traveled to Israel and other parts of Europe learning about Jewish history with my camp friends. I was drawn to it like these helped me learn to love and accept my Jewish identity.

This is off to college I was faced with the opportunity to shape my identity independently. I’m able to make my own decisions on how to express different parts of my identity as a Chinese Jewish adoptee, and how I might continue to strengthen it. Although the transition to college was challenging my freshman year, I was able to make my own decisions on how to express different parts of my identity as a Chinese Jewish adoptee, and how I might continue to strengthen it.

Being a camp counselor and a teaching assistant for the Temple’s Hebrew classes taught me to be a role model for the younger members of the community. At college, I volunteered to host a prospective student of color, giving them a tour of the school and sharing an overnight living experience. Also sharing Shabbat dinners and rituals at Hillil helped me develop a sense of community and belonging in a new and different place.

Since I was familiar with the college environment during my sophomore year, going back to school this year was not as challenging. I wanted to continue doing what worked best for me the previous year while making sure that I was still exposing myself to new things and learning more about myself. This past school year, not only did I become more comfortable and content with who I am, I made more friends, stepped out of my comfort zone and made the most out of my college experience. This also allowed me to put myself out there and share a sense of belonging in real community, family, and student organizations. As I worked on worrying less about how other people perceived me, I was able to be more focused on myself and what I wanted to achieve during my time at Skidmore. Looking back on the school year, I was most proud of how I kept busy, staying efficient with my school work while maintaining a balanced social life. Both have been imperative to strengthening different parts of my identity.

One of my favorite courses I took in the spring semester was called Middle Eastern Politics. I decided to take the course because besides having prior knowledge about Israel through Temple and camp, I wanted to further understand the major issues that the region has been experiencing. Because Western media does not always give us the full lens of international politics, we tend to make negative generalizations of groups of people that differ from our own. The most important thing I have learned from the course is that the Middle East is a lot more complex than I had assumed as there is a significant amount of political, economic, social, and cultural diversity throughout the region. Just because the majority of a region shares the same religion/language does not mean that all practice it in the same way or have extremist views.

The course made me think more deeply about the power of stereotypes and how they have been used against minority groups, including Jews. Once the pandemic began and we were sent home to complete the semester with remote online classes, I, like most students, was disappointed to leave school. At home, I had a lot of alone time to reflect on what is happening in the world and how it relates to what I have been studying at school, as well my own racial and religious minority status as an Asian and a Jew. This issue of stereotypes has become prevalent to me once again as some people began to blame Chinese people as the cause of the coronavirus. Even though I have not personally experienced or been seen in any hate crimes against my race, I have started to feel self-conscious in public.

When we are exposed to uncomfortable situations or unfamiliar or different groups of people, we tend to categorize things to make things simpler. During times of crisis, people tend to use their fear to incite hatred toward a particular group. In my psychology, anthropology, and political science courses we have studied this topic of stereotyping and how we are all hardwired to make stereotypes even when we don’t mean to. It is important to realize that we all make them and question why we create them because when we make stereotypes and shy away from uncomfortable situations, we miss out on learning about different opinions, experiences, and truths.

While it feels easy and safe to have a group of friends and community similar to you, if we are going to have a stable, diverse, and democratic country, people need to be willing to open themselves up to different things. This is a scary time of uncertainty, where things feel like they are falling backwards. I don’t know what to make of it all yet, where it will lead, or what answers or ways forward will emerge. However, each of us has a role we can take part in to ensure a hopeful future. I look forward to going back to campus and learning about and discussing these issues with my friends, classmates, and professors.

Pailey Feakes on her 2016 Federation-supported trip to Israel
Dispatch from a Distillery in Israel

By Alex Rosenblum / Special to the BJV

My wife Sabina and I landed in Erets Israel on March 5, the vanguard of a delegation of 20 Berkshirites planning to visit hundreds of former North Americans in a nine-day tour of Israel sponsored by Chabad. Within hours of landing we were informed that the tour was canceled, and within a few more hours we were told by the Israeli government that it would be very good if the tourists go home and let the Israelis face the coronavirus without visitors traipsing around the country.

Talk about miracles in the Holy Land? Try communicating with El Al during a crisis in order to change your flight plans. After numerous telephone calls and ignored emails, we drove over to Ben Gurion International Airport to track down a live El Al representative. He told us that we had just gotten lucky – he could fix us up with two seats on a midnight flight to Newark in the nick of time.

We now had five days to see what has to be seen in Erets Israel to the fullest. Hundreds of her “must see/don’t miss” list, editing it down to Yad Vashem, the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, the Yitzkhak Rabin Museum, Herzl Cemetery, Caesarea, and the Golan Heights. At the mention of Golan Heights, I had an epiphany. I reached deep into my back pocket and pulled out a note sent to me from a friend who had attended my whisky tasting in my shul in Riverdale reminding me that his daughter living in northern Israel is friendly with the woman who is married to one David Zibell, co-owner and mister distiller of Golan Heights Distillery in the town of Kfarzim, in the heart of the Heights.

The trip to the Golan Heights immediately went to the top of my agenda. Last summer at the Berkshire Hills Hadassah-sponsored whisky tasting, I was able to procure (via Scotland) a bottle of Israel’s first single malt whisky from the new Milk and Honey Distillery in Tel Aviv. Now I had the opportunity to visit Golan Heights Distillery and come back to America and boast that while others scrambled to get out of Israel, I was able to visit Israel’s other whisky-making distillery. And so with my cousin Menachem (Ph.D., economist, professor, consultant to a dozen coun-
tries in Asia and Africa, former tank commander in the Golan Heights during the Yom Kippur War, and recent convert to the religions of a good whisky) as our guide and driver we made our way through Tiberias, past Lake Kinneret and into the Heights until we reached Kfarzim, the home of Golan Heights Distillery.

We were greeted by both Mr. and Mrs. Zibell and given a tour. David explained how he arrived at making whisky in Israel via France and Canada, where he grew up. We walked through the warehouse with its numerous casks of nearly labeled casks. David informed us that the distillery had only recently begun to sell grain whisky within the last few years and he was in the very early stages of finishing off his first single malt whiskies.

For a dose of reality and to remind us what living in Israel was like, before returning to central Israel we stopped at the nearby Shalom Ridge, formerly occupied by the Syrians until 1967. We could throw rocks at the Israeli kibbutz which lay straight down below our feet. Syria was between us and Lebanon about 400 yards to the northwest. Yet where we stood, our Israeli cousins were working, learning, growing, and making whisky and living fruitful rich lives.

There was more to see, but as we prepared to depart for Tel Aviv and flight home to the States, we had our story. And great feelings were real—mazel tov!
The Summer of Our Discontent

A Shakespeare & Company stalwart reflects on a Berkshire summer without live performing arts

By Jonathan Epstein / Special to the BJV

What a strange, frightening, otherworldly summer it has been. For everyone of course, but in some ways most especially for those of us in the live performing arts. The world is consuming recorded performing arts like never before – Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, Disney, and the like – but the community can’t gather for the live event in person without terrible risk. I suppose at least I understand the concept of Minyan – a threshold condition – is a pretty slender pleasure. But the community can’t gather without terrible risk. I suppose at least I understand the concept of Minyan much more clearly – the blessings are still the blessings but the mitzvah is different if they’re celebrated without terrible risk. I suppose what I’m getting at is that this frightening, unwelcome, discomfited pause may be an opportunity to change direction.

Jonathan Epstein, left, as Shylock in The Merchant of Venice in 2016 at Shakespeare & Company in Lenox. He is also a member of the teaching faculty for Acting at the Florida State University/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training in Sarasota, FL.

The summer is a threshold condition – you’re moving from one room to another, that’s all. In January, for me personally, the summer glimmered in the distance like an opalescent dawn. First, there was to be an outside production in Sarasota of Romeo & Juliet – my first as a director – with a cast made up of my students, an especially talented and gifted group Asolo Conservatory MFA class. Then, playing Kent in King Lear; my favorite of all plays, at Shakespeare & Company, my long time artistic home, with one of my very favorite actors – Christopher Lloyd – in the title role. Then Much Ado About Nothing outdoors, before rushing back to greet my next class in Sarasota. All gone, like so much else, and when and how anything of the kind can come back again is an unnecessary question. So, what have I been doing meanwhile? Well, taking long walks, mostly around the beautiful grounds of The Mount, my wife’s Ariel. Eating lettuce from her garden which has never looked better. Giving myself a backlash re-shuffling the front of the house. Reading – partly for pleasure and partly to fill in gaps in my understanding – Hendi, Fleming, Ohio, and others. Writing. And thinking – a lot of thinking. Because amid all the discontent there has been the opportunity for reflection, and for considering what it is that really matters most. There’s lots of nameless anxiety – for me, at least, often overwhelmingly strong but there’s little sense of pressure or competition when everyone is on the bench. And so, it seems that perhaps some of the things we’ve hidden away from ourselves and now at last have time to experience and explore. The outwarding of grief and fury at the murder of George Floyd and the surge of support for the Black Lives Matter movement is perhaps the most vivid example. There have been other such brutalities when people have shaken their heads and moved along, but that hasn’t happened this summer.

Likewise in the lively arts, we have time to question what we’ve been doing and recognize our own discontent with it. Live theatre is a retail event trapped in a wholesale world, and it’s very easy these days to become utterly frustrated with how little it seems to matter. What difference does it make if a few hundred people in Lenox hear a few old words newly made truthful and vivid, see a fictional king die, a fictional “hero” falsely accused and then exonerated, when real people are being murdered in Minneapolis and Atlanta and Louisville, when real heroes are being falsely accused without hope of exoner- ation and language becomes increasingly a tool for divisio- n and obfuscation? These frustrations are swelled up by immediate concerns when the show must go on, but when the season doesn’t go on, we become terribly aware of them.

The thing is, it’s rare for me to see a certain time that live theatre, especially classical theatre which is what I’ve spent the better part of my life learning how to do, is in horrible trouble. This summer has finally afforded me time to write a book about how to do it, but I may be writing for ghosts. Classical theatre, which since Periclean Athens has been a central feature of every culture except Europe in the Dark Ages, may outlive me. But unless something changes, it won’t outlive many of our children. Our audience is aging and shrinking almost as fast as our paychecks. There are hardly any stage-act- ing jobs left. Our other source of income subsidize our participation in live theatre. It’s almost – not quite just yet – a hobby, like phonograph repair. This last reality has actually been some comfort until now – if we’re so poor we must surely be virtuous – a last pure bastion of liberality and inclusion.

Jonathan Epstein, left, as Shylock in The Merchant of Venice in 2016.

But lately even that illusion was swallowed up by immediate concerns when the show must go on, but when the season didn’t go on, we become terribly aware of them. What difference does it make if a few hundred people in Lenox hear a few old words newly made truthful and vivid, see a fictional king die, a fictional “hero” falsely accused and then exonerated, when real people are being murdered in Minneapolis and Atlanta and Louisville, when real heroes are being falsely accused without hope of exoner- ation and language becomes increasingly a tool for divisio- n and obfuscation? These frustrations are swelled up by immediate concerns when the show must go on, but when the season doesn’t go on, we become terribly aware of them.

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Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training in Sarasota, FL. *Editor’s Note: From the mission statement of “We See You, W.A.T.” (White American Theater): “In reaction to civil unrest in our country see – Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) theatre-makers – formed a collective of multi-generational, multi-disci- plinary, early career, emerging and established artists, theatre managers, executives, students, administrators, dramaturges and producers, to address the scope and pervasiveness of anti-Blackness and racism in the American theatre.
Memorial School of Nursing in Skole, Bettie attended local Rehabilitation at Amherst Center for Extended Care and died Saturday, May 30 at Bettie (Skole) Kravetz, 93, her price is far above rubies." of worth who can find? For<br>AMHERST, MA – “A woman minded<br>93, civic and community<br>Bettie (Skole) Kravetz,<br>20090-7077.<br>his children, Richard Joel<br>daughter Kaya Stern-Kaufman<br>in New England with his<br>inquisitive he encountered. For the last<br>enthusiastically with everyone<br>kind, playful and inquisitive<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided<br>in his way once he decided

Michael was born May 19, 1936, in Brooklyn, NY – “The Hub of the Universe” and grew up there as an avid Brooklyn Dodgers fan. Michael lived multiple lifetimes in one life. He was mathematically inclined with a lifelong passion for technology and working with people. He had a keen business sens<br>the arts and a dehiding faith in<br>Michael's family, faith and friends were the pillars of his existence. The love of his life, his wife Loretta, brought him immense joy. He was a voracious reader and accumulator of<ref>OBITUARIES, continued on next page</ref>
Connect with Community

Nourish Your Body, Mind, and Soul!

In response to coronavirus guidelines...

As of press time, all in-person Connecting With Community programming has been canceled. For the most up-to-date information and details on virtual programming, please visit our website www.jewishberkshires.org to sign up for our eblasts to receive a weekly listing of online opportunities.

Meals-on-Wheels & Meals to Go – Advance Reservation Required

Kosher lunch will be prepared on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Meals to go will be made by noon at the Kneseis Israel kitchen door, 14 Cold Road in Pittsfield. Meals-on-wheels will be delivered by federation volunteers in the early afternoon. Please call (413) 442-2200 no later than 9 a.m. to reserve your meal for pickup and to arrange delivery if standing instructions are not in place. All are welcome to reserve meals for pick-up, although delivery may be limited in certain circumstances.

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

What’s for Lunch?

# Dairy Free, ** Gluten Free Main Entrée

For more information on specific programs please see “Your Federation Presents” section of this paper.

JULY

Monday, 27 ............Fish sticks**, sweet potato fries, mixed vegetables, salmon, potato bread, peas, and tea.

Tuesday, 28 .........Tomato basil quiche**, green salad, fruit salad, Farmer’s loaf, cookies, and tea.

Thursday, 30 ..........No meal for Tisha B’Av

Monday, 3 ............Meat loaf**, carrots, mashed potatoes, pumpernickel bread, peas, and tea.

Tuesday, 4 ..........Chicken with Ayar (red peppers, egg plants, garlic & spices)**, rice pilaf, zucchini & yellow squash, pita bread, apricots, and tea.

Wednesday, 5 .......Blintze souffle, asparagus cuts & tips, green salad, Challah, watermelon, and tea.

Monday, 10 ...Veal stew**#, noodles, salad, Italian bread, applesauce, and tea.

Tuesday, 11 ...Chicken with sundried tomatoes & artichokes**#, noodles, mixed vegetables, Farmer’s loaf, tropical fruit salad, and tea.

Thursday, 13 ...Fresh fish**, juice of chef’s choice, mixed vegetables, rice pilaf, rye bread, chocolate chunk cookies, and tea.

Monday, 17 ....Barbecued chicken**, corn cobettes, coleslaw, 3 bean salad, corn bread, watermelon, and tea.

Tuesday, 18 ....Salisbury steak**, tater tots, green beans, salad, whole wheat bread, grapes, and tea.

Thursday, 20 ............Oriental tuna salad (gluten free upon request), Farmer’s loaf, lemon pudding, and tea.

Monday, 24 ...........Spaghetti & meat sauce#, Italian blend vegetables, salmon, garlic bread, peas and tea.

Tuesday, 25 .........Corned beef**, salad, pickle, potato chips, rye bread, applesauce, and tea.

Thursday, 27 ............Vegetarian chili with cheese, brown rice, salad, muffins or chef’s choice of bread, buttercush pudding, and tea.

Monday, 31 ...........Turkey salad platters**, gazpacho, potato chips, bean salad, bread TBA, grapes, and tea.

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday, 1 ............Meat loaf**, salad, green beans, mashed potatoes, Farmer’s loaf, fruit cocktail, and tea.

Thursday, 3 ..........Hot dogs and hamburgers**, potato chips, coleslaw, fixings, assorted rolls, watermelon, and tea.

Monday, 7 ............Closed for Labor Day

Tuesday, 8 ..........Bean and cheese enchilada casserole**, yellow rice, salad, Mexican corn, white bread, churros, and tea.

Thursday, 10 .........Fresh fish**, juice of chef’s choice, noodle kugel, broccoli, salad, oat bread, mandarin oranges, and tea.

Monday, 14 ....Asian flavored turkey tenderloins**, miso soup, rice, Oriental blend vegetables, breads TBA, chocolate chip cookies (parve), and tea.

Homebound or recovering from an illness or injury?

Let us help you arrange for a kosher lunch to be delivered through our Kosher Meals on Wheels Program. Call (413) 442-4360, ext 10

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OBITUARIES, continued from previous page

Ormond Beach, FL 32174 and Chatham of Palm Coast, 10 Cypress Point Pkwy #108, Palm Coast, FL 32164.

Julian N. Lichtman, 92, teacher, volunteer, Renaissance man

LEXNO – Julian N. Lichtman, 92, loving husband, father, and grandfather passed away peacefully on Wednesday, July 8. He led a rich life full of varied experiences.

Born August 1, 1927 in Newark, NJ, Julian grew up in South Orange, NJ. A two-time veteran, Julian served in the Pacific Theater on the island of Guan in 1945 to 47. After World War II, he went to college and earned his bachelor’s degree in Liberal Arts from the University of Pennsylvania in 1950. Julian then joined the Korean Conflict as a radar operator in Newfoundland.

Soon thereafter, Julian met the love of his life, Nancy Schenck of Worthington, NJ, and they married in 1958. They raised two boys together, William and Harry, after moving to Pittsfield and then to Richmond. Julian was manager of the family business, Lichtman and Sons Tanning Corp., for 10 years before leaving the tannery to pursue a career in high school education. Julian taught grades 7-12 at New Lebanon Central School from 1962 to 1984, providing innovative experiential teaching concepts that sought to teach students traditional subjects through real-life industry experiences like forestry, astronomy, civil engineering, and tanning. Julian would often make coats, hats, and mittens from the farm and hunting animal hides his students brought to him. During his teaching career, Julian earned masters’ degrees in Education and in Library Sciences, from North Adams State and SUNY Albany, respectively.

After retiring from teaching, Julian dedicated over 10,000 hours of volunteer service to Berkshire Medical Center, where he was a staff favorite. Up until the last few years, Julian was a volunteer driver to the local senior citizen community, taking them to and from their medical appointments. Julian was an active member of Temple Anshe Amunim for over 50 years.

Julian was a bit of a renaissance man. He was an early adopter of solar energy, starting Berkshire Solar Heating in the mid-1970s. He enlisted his boys to cut trees, used by family and by local businesses. He also had a deep passion for hockey, and baseball. And when he could no longer drive long distances, he would send a weekly package full of artichokes from The Berkshire Eagle or The New York Times he thought they would enjoy.

Julian is survived by his wife, Nancy; sons, William and wife Leslie of Pittsfield, MA; grandchildren Benjamin and Daniel; and son Harry and wife Stephanie of Newmarket, NH.

There will be a private service followed by a life celebration at a time in the future to be determined. Donations can be made to Berkshire Medical Center or Temple Anshe Amunim, in care of the Devanny-Condon Funeral Home, 40 Maplewood Avenue, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Knesses Israel

16 Cold Road, Pittsfield

ONGOING MINYANS

Sunday 8:45 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Tuesday 7 p.m.

Friday, 7 a.m. and 5:45 p.m.

Saturday 9:30 a.m.

and evenings approximately 30 minutes before sunset

CANDLE-LIGHTING

Friday, July 31 ..........7:55 p.m.

Friday, August 7 .......7:46 p.m.

Friday, August 14 .......7:35 p.m.

Friday, August 21 .......7:25 p.m.

Friday, August 28 .......7:14 p.m.

Friday, September 4 ....7:02 p.m.
The coin to the left is 1 agora with 3 oats, currency in Israel in the 1970s and 1980s equivalent to the US penny. The 3-grain model is a replica of an ancient coin shown in the image to the right. This coin was minted in Jerusalem in 41/42 CE.

There were 100 agorot to the Israeli lira, the basic unit of currency now known as the shekel. An agora was colloquially known as a “grush,” after a Turkish coin that had a hole in its center that was in use when the Land of Israel was part of the Ottoman Empire.

The word “grush” is no longer used in Israel when referring to money, but as a 2003 article in The Forward explained: The grush lives on in a number of common Israeli idioms... An item that is extremely cheap is said to cost grushim. If an Israeli wishes to say “I’m broke,” this may be expressed as eyn li grush, “I don’t have a grush,” or eyn li grush al ha-ne’uhurna, “I don’t have a grush on my soul.” Anyone talking simplistically about matters psychological, philosophical, political, et cetera is spouting filosofiya or politika b’grush, that is, “a grush’s worth” of the subject. A person who measures things solely by their financial value sees them “through the hole in the grush.” And something that happened a long time ago? Yes, indeed. That was when the grush had a hole in it.

Virtual Berkshire Jewish Film Festival Wraps Up

The Berkshire Jewish Film Festival is going virtual this summer for its 34th consecutive season presenting outstanding films of Jewish interest from around the world.

In these unprecedented times, organizers assert that they are continuing their goal to build community.

Films that examine Jewish history, heritage, and culture will be shown online on Mondays through August 10 at 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. Please visit the new festival website, berkshirejewishfilmfestival.org, for more information. Ticket prices have been lowered to $5 per film for this year. All proceeds are directed to the Knesset Israel Hebrew School.

August 3
4 p.m.
Reunited
(Documentary) Sasha Joseph Neulinger takes a brave and wrenching look at his childhood and the journey to reconcile his past. By probing the gap between image and reality, the film depicts how little and how much a camera can capture. (Courtesy Independent Lens)

8 p.m.
Holy Silence
(Documentary) The Catholic Church’s response to the Holocaust, examined with historic film, rare documents, and interviews, reveals a failure of moral authority.

August 10
4 p.m.
Oliver Sacks: His Own Life
(Documentary) This fascinating film explores the life and work of the legendary neurologist and storyteller, a fearless explorer of unknown mental worlds who helped redefine our understanding of the brain and mind, the diversity of human experience, and our shared humanity.

8 p.m.
Igor and the Crane’s Journey
(Narrative) Igor and the Crane’s Journey touches the core of the migration experience. A charming film about a young boy facing new challenges and finding his own voice and strength by connecting to the world of nature.

What are your financial goals?
Are you saving for a long and secure retirement? Hoping to build a legacy for you and your family?

Our Greylock Investment Group can help you with your goals by developing an investment plan or fine tuning an existing plan aligned with your needs, goals and level of investment experience.
Life in a Time of Pandemic and Civil Unrest
A conversation with Rabbi Everett Gendler

This conversation was edited for space and clarity.

BERKSHIRE JEWISH VOICES

Rabbi Gendler (far right) marching with (from left) Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Rev. Ralph Abernathy, and Rabbi Joseph Heschel at Arlington National Cemetery in 1968. Detail from a photo by John C. Goodwin.

God creates something and here’s this all-powerful God, with a kind of confidence that, years read the story of Genesis creation. We have for so many whole question of the divine traditionally creation epic and the look as Genesis and the tradi-
a deeper level, at which this is warning.

As this profound, perhaps final world-felling pandemic was a more constant contact. If it be about the destruction of wild have been articles speaking of imminent distress. There do view this as an environ-
mentally, the the human.

I fear we are more than 7 billion on Earth. I fear we have done more than be involved with process theology

Still against the idea that God was involved with process theology. In the human.

Let’s talk first about this virus while now – the increasing

that forces us to re-evaluate not only our own lives and our own society, but really something even more profound than that. Close?

Rabbi Gendler: Yep, close. Wow. Meanwhile, I’m glad you had something to say about this before – that even semi-compre-

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Rabbi Everett Gendler photographed at his home in 2016 during the pandemic and then use it on a segue into the next broad area I want to talk about. So what I have seen is that there are many people who are just very, very afraid. The High Holidays are coming and the rabbits around here, of course, are planning and worrying, trying to figure out the best thing to do. What message might you have for people who are contemplating returning to their congregations, returning to the social aspect of worship, but who may be afraid?

Rabbi Gendler: Oy! Look, we’re not going to do that. That is way too small – it’s something that forces us to re-evaluate not only our own lives and our own society, but really something even more profound than that. Close?

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Rabbi Gendler: Yep, close. Wow. Meanwhile, I’m glad you had something to say about this before – that even semi-comprehensible?
causing a lot of fear to a point, not very long down the road, of violence, which I always believed was inevitable given the level of fear so many are experiencing. Especially in light of your lifelong commitment to civil rights, progressive causes, and social unity, how do you see what’s going on in our country at this time?

Rabbi Gendler: First of all, I should say in 1995, following my so-called retirement from regularly-scheduled commitment, my wife Mary and I were guided toward involvement with the Tibetan exile community of the Dalai Lama. For 22 years we committed regularly to India doing educational work on strategic nonviolent struggle. That pretty much consumed my attention until very recently, so I was a dropout, you might say, from the active engagement of black and Jewish communities.

From a larger perspective, what I see happening is an unprecedented, broad awareness of the pain to which our fellow citizens have been subjected because of the color of their skin. And I think it was the clarity of this confrontation with what we cannot accept, because of the color of their skin. And I believe that this confrontation with evil has really shocked us into a largely unconscious consciences that really shocked us into a largely unconscious awareness of the pain to which our fellow citizens have been subjected because of the color of their skin.

I believe that this confrontation with undeserved pain has really awakened our unaware consciences. The bottom line message from that was most countries would take few if any — that included the United States — Hitler got the message that Jews’ lives don’t matter. Contrast that with the world’s subsequent confrontation with the Holocaust and the different place of the Jew in the eyes of many parts of the world. I think of the Talmudic wisdom of the agin rooh or the “observing eye.” You know, the rabbis discuss, maybe in Pirke Avot, the restraining effect on human behavior if one took seriously the notion that God is observing your actions. Well, wow. Suddenly, electronic devices as an extension or electronic devices as an extension or electronic devices as an extension or electronic devices as an extension or electronic devices as an extension or electronic devices as an extension.

What’s so important is that we recognize the slow, steady, dependable effects of conscience when unsullied by hostility, hatred, and violence. What’s most remarkable is the small amount of violence which must not be accepted and the overall affirmation of human decency in all of this — by the way, I want to be sure that we keep in mind also, and I will say it explicitly: Policemen’s lives matter. The specter of the two policemen murdered in New York not so long ago by a gunman who invoked Eric Garner’s killing as justification — we have to be sure that we give no sanction to that. But it is a testament to the existence of human sensitivity and to the function of conscience in human life — it reminds me also of an amazing poem by Robinson Jeffers in which he says, “I have learned that happiness is important, but pain gives importance.”

I believe that this confrontation with undeserved pain has really awakened our unaware consciences. BJV: So how do we tap into that new awareness? It’s almost the same question I asked about how we’re going to overcome dealing with each other in views of the virus. What do we need to do in a practical sense to overcome this suspicion, the hostility that has been unshrouded during this period of time?

Rabbi Gendler: A great deal of personal workshops. Way back, way back in the 60s, when I was serving a congregation in Princeton, New Jersey, I was close to a Quaker friend, Ross Planagan, who in those years was doing sensitivity training with the Philadelphia police force. How’s that for ahead of the curve? I think we need a lot of that. We need legislation to that. But it is a testament to the existence of human decency in all of this. I believe that this confrontation with evil has really shaken us.

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