“What Federation Sets Out to Do, We Do!”

Get ready for a deluxe Major Donors Celebration featuring radio stars John Pizzarelli and Jessica Molasky on July 27

Our special guests, guitarist John Pizzarelli and stage star Jessica Molasky

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ annual Major Donors Celebration jazzes things up this year with an online evening featuring the married co-hosts of Radio Deluxe, renowned guitarist John Pizzarelli and acclaimed actress and singer Jessica Molasky. This virtual event takes place on Tuesday, July 27 at 5 p.m.

This special celebration will highlight the tremendous impact major donors have on building and sustaining Jewish life in the region. Major donors support the Federation with a minimum gift of $1,000 to the Annual Campaign.

“We are blessed to have such a diverse group of supporters who understand the unique challenges our community needed to move to provide the leadership and safety and learn – Federation continued programming for all ages to connect and social services, expanding kosher meal deliveries, creating a volunteer support corps, and offering virtual and outdoor programming for all ages to connect and learn – Federation continued to provide the leadership and safety net our community needed to move through the pandemic,” Kaufman also cited Federation’s work combating anti-Semitism and partnering with the Jewish Agency for Israel to direct aid to the vulnerable in Israel during the recent conflict. On an upbeat note, she highlighted the leadership and safety and learning – Federation continued programming for all ages to connect and social services, expanding kosher meal deliveries, creating a volunteer support corps, and offering virtual and outdoor programming for all ages to connect and learn – Federation continued to provide the leadership and safety net our community needed to move through the pandemic.

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Plus, meet our new board members and star high school scholars

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Rabbi Reflection

Balancing Our Joy in Renewal with Our Awareness of Loss
By Rabbi Seth Wax

The Zohar, the classic work of Jewish mysticism, introduces its readers to a dazzling array of dynamics that unfold within God. Qualities of love and compassion, of judgment and punishment, of creation and transformation, of beginnings and endings — all appear and interact in a variety of ways. And these qualities also appear in the biblical text and in the Talmud, in the Zohar they are presented in such a way that they invite us to participate in these dynamics and discover how they emerge within our own lives, as well.

As we learn throughout the narrative of the Zohar that each night, God enters the heavenly Garden of Eden in order to delight in the souls of the righteous as they all create new words of Torah. It’s a striking image: nighttime is a time of creativity and generation, and the products of that unfolding are words and ideas of insight and holiness. God enjoys it when the righteous in this heavenly realm create words of Torah, and it is that production that brings life to all the worlds.

In one section of the Zohar (3:30a), however, something surprising happens. In the midst of this celebration and creation of new words of Torah, a voice awakens from the middle of the heavens and calls out in a loud voice, saying, “Remember; O LORD, against the Jewish community in Israel in 1991 — first for the Joint Distribution Committee, and then, since 2007, in my current role as the director of the Israel office for the Jewish Federations of North America. And I’ve experienced it especially deeply lately, as Israel was under relentless rocket attack from ruthless terrorists for two nerve-wracking weeks in May, and my staff and I at JFNA worked around the clock to manage Federations’ emergency response and to keep the North American Jewish community up-to-speed on all the breaking news, up to and including the ceasefire that was finally declared. It was also crucial to us to inform the Israeli public of the wave of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism that crashed upon North American shores in the wake of the conflict between Israel and Hamas. Promoting understanding and building awareness about the different challenges faced by American Jews and Israel helps us all to stay connected through thick and thin.

What was also truly fulfilling was the opportunity, just a few days after the ceasefire had been declared, to host the first senior leadership mission to Israel since the pandemic began. Their high-profile trip came on the heels of an emergency fundraising campaign by Federations that raised more than 83 million to aid the victims of the bombings and the first responders. It included meetings with former prime minister Netanyahu and new Prime Minister Naftali Bennett. It featured a visit with an Israeli woman in Ashkelon whose house was ruined by a direct rocket hit in her living room, and a tour of a neighborhood in Lod where violence between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs jeopardized long-standing relationships that are now being painstakingly rebuilt.

At the moment of awareness of loss, God is asked to remember the relationship, the connection with others.

Building awareness about the different challenges faced by American Jews and Israel helps us all to stay connected. As we emerge from the holiday of Tisha B’Av, we are called on to offer nechama, comfort, to those who still suffer. When we feel ourselves to be in a place of joy and celebration, the way we respond to brokenness appears, another voice emerges in the heavenly realm. It, too, offers a verse from the Bible, as it calls out, “God remembers the covenant, the promise given for a thousand generations, made with Abraham” (Psalms 105:8-9). At the moment of awareness of loss, God is asked to remember the relationship, the connection with others. In particular, God here remembers Abraham. For the Zohar, Abraham represents love, connection, and service. Abraham is the figure who cares for all beings, running out to offer them what they need. So when a voice calls out, God is reminded of God’s capacity for love and connection. And this, the Zohar tells us, brings about great comfort for God.

For that is, in many ways our task. As we emerge from the holiday of Tisha B’Av, we are called on to offer nechama, comfort, to those who still suffer. When we feel ourselves to be in a place of joy and celebration, the way we respond to brokenness is by connecting with our capacity to love and connect. To do what ever it is we can to be present to the suffering in the world and bring love to it. By doing so, we can extend our capacity for joy into a transformation of the world.

Balancing Our Joy in Renewal with Our Awareness of Loss

At the moment of awareness of loss, God is asked to remember the relationship, the connection with others.

Rabbi Seth Wax is the Jewish chaplain at Williams College

Guest Commentary

Staying For Good
By Rebecca Caspi / JFNA

Whenever he called me from the United States, my uncle asked the same question: “Do you think you’re going to stay in Israel?” As the decades passed, the question turned more and more into a jest. And now that I’ve lived in Israel for almost forty years, including marrying and raising a family here, it’s pretty clear that I’m here for good. And I mean that last phrase in two senses — not just that I’m here permanently, but that I’m contributing to the vibrancy and vitality of my adopted homeland.

I’ve felt that profound sense of pride ever since I first started working for the Jewish community in Israel in 1991 — first for the Joint Distribution Committee, and then, since 2007, in my current role as the director of the Israel office for the Jewish Federations of North America. And I’ve experienced it especially deeply lately, as Israel was under relentless rocket attack from ruthless terrorists for two nerve-wracking weeks in May, and my staff and I at JFNA worked around the clock to manage Federations’ emergency response and to keep the North American Jewish community up-to-speed on all the breaking news, up to and including the ceasefire that was finally declared. It was also crucial to us to inform the Israeli public of the wave of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism that crashed upon North American shores in the wake of the conflict between Israel and Hamas. Promoting understanding and building awareness about the different challenges faced by American Jews and Israel helps us all to stay connected through thick and thin.

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The delegation’s message of love and support was heard loud and clear throughout the length and breadth of the land.

That visit was followed just a week later by one by the Israel Travel Alliance — not just that I’m here permanently, but that I’m contributing to the vibrancy and vitality of my adopted homeland.

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So, am I staying? You’d better believe it. I’m staying for good.

Rebecca Caspi is the senior vice president for global operations of The Jewish Federations of North America, as well as the director general of JFNA’s Israel office, a position she has held since joining the organization in 2007. This article was originally published in the El Paso (TX) Jewish Voice.
Goldberger wrote about coming to America as a refugee after World War II (and Dr. Leo on putting on a show. Eminent psychologist Barry Shapiro tion in the Jewish press.

of their prayer shawls. Our interview with process used to make the purple dye used by ancient Hebrews to color the fringes, that described the (disgusting) The Fabric of Civilization Sharon Cohen以外の、ももかんに限定されない情報も公開している証拠が。

Once Upon a New Moon – while Carol couldn’t travel during the children’s book, Professor Udel, who teaches ‘s translations of Yiddish children’s. We also published Roselle Kline Chartock year, Elvis and of Hebrew College in Newton, who relocated here with his wife, Lisa Soleymani, a former president Reflection column was penned by Rabbi Donald Weber

regression hunting for offbeat material that may appear exclusively (please see page 1), who at this Marvel Comics editor and writer, did about the pandemic and about life. Sometimes, it takes getting in touch with my inner nerd, as I did when interviewing former Daniel and Ira Lieberman and restaurateurs were coping. We both observed, row, starting last summer, our favorite hiking trails were suddenly full of people. I shared how one of my recur- ring Berkshire experiences was standing atop Tyringham Cobble on a perfect fall day, or summertime, and would you believe it was the only person out on the trail. However, the parking lot is usually full, with an overflow of cars stretching along Jerusalem Road. It’s under the stars. – We have been discovered. In the pandemic year, what people discovered was not our renowned marquise attractions – they were closed. No, people were discovering the Berkshires that Elisa and her husband, Rob, Bill and Daniel Lehmann, a former professor of Hebrew College in Newton, who relocated here with his wife, Lisa Soleymani. We also welcomed Israel’s new Consul General to New England, Meron. Recently, I started reading the paper on your part, and I hope that what his purpose is to up.

This year, the BJV introduced new arrivals to our Jewish community such as Rabbi Shira Stern, a pioneering female rabbi and stalwart Red Cross chaplain, who moved here with her husband, Rabbi Donald Weber. Our Purim Rabbit Reflection column was penned by Rabbi Polina Shepherd, a former professor of Hebrew College in Newton, who relocated here with his wife, Lisa Soleymani. We also welcomed Israel’s new Consul General to New England, Meron. Recently, I started reading the paper on your part, and I hope that what his purpose is to up.

This publication’s revenues do not cover all its costs, and so your financial help as volunteer subscribers is essential in our efforts to bring you meaningful, positive, and entertaining stories both by and about your neighbors, as well as about Jews around the world. The pandemic again cut into advertising revenue and we were unable to publish Berkshire Jewish Summer for the second straight year. Your generosity last year, a year that was unprecedented, but your support remains vital to sustain this publication and broaden our impact as we develop new ways to reach our readers.

An author interview is always a pleasant challenge. Sometimes it takes a bit of cranking about a subject, like when I spoke to economists Ira Lieberman and Paul DiLeo (both Berkshire second homeowners) about markets and the globe. Other times, it involves amusing an author enough so that he or she will contribute some interesting original material, as Great Barrington’s Paul DiLeo and assistant editor Ira Lieberman, did about the pandemic and about life. Sometimes, it takes getting in touch with my inner nerd, as I did when interviewing former Marvel Comics editor and writer Danny Fingeroth (please see page 1), who at this writing spends time in South Korea.

We also try to bring you stories about the Jewish world you won’t easily find elsewhere, scouring the internet for offbeat material that may appear exclusively in the BJV. Over the past year, we engaged with bloggers in Europe and Israel, and with the National Library of Israel, whose Sharon Cohen contributed an enlightening story about the Star of David’s origins. Also, we obtained exclusive permission to excerpt a short story by the estimable culture journalist Virginia Postrel, that described the (disgusting) process used to make the purple dye used by ancient Hebrews to color the fringes of their prayer shawls. Our interview with Gabrielle Glaser about her important book, American Baby, detailed the problematic history of adoption in the United States, and the shocking practices of the Jewish agency in New York City that matched children and parents – it’s a story that has not received enough atten- tion in the Jewish press.

Above all, the BJV is a community newspaper, a place where local writers can express their ideas. This year, our Berkshire Jewish Voices section features musings by Barry Shapiro on putting on a show. Eminent psychologist Dr. Leo Goldenberger wrote about coming to America as a refugee after World War II (and

he plans to write about his relationship in the Berkshires with psychologist Erik Erikson). Our bronk (briskly) correspondents Alex Rosenblum contrib- uted stories about Israel’s emerging distilleries, and also a charming book review of the anthology How Yiddish Changed America that drew on his love of the 1930s. In this issue, longtime BJV contributor (and our Super Tzadakah Week co-chair) Avi Dresner shares a story he recently published in The Forward about his father’s fragmentary remembrances of the Holocaust – please see page 16.

The BJV is also a forum where younger members of the community can develop their voices. Recent Yale graduate Alex Lederman shared his thoughts about life in the pandemic in his Forward column this year – please see page 16. The BJV is also a forum where younger members of the community can develop their voices. Recent Yale graduate Alex Lederman shared his thoughts about life in the pandemic in his Forward column this year – please see page 16. The BJV is also a forum where younger members of the community can develop their voices. Recent Yale graduate Alex Lederman shared his thoughts about life in the pandemic in his Forward column this year – please see page 16. The BJV is also a forum where younger members of the community can develop their voices. Recent Yale graduate Alex Lederman shared his thoughts about life in the pandemic in his Forward column this year – please see page 16. The BJV is also a forum where younger members of the community can develop their voices. Recent Yale graduate Alex Lederman shared his thoughts about life in the pandemic in his Forward column this year – please see page 16. The BJV is also a forum where younger members of the community can develop their voices. Recent Yale graduate Alex Lederman shared his thoughts about life in the pandemic in his Forward column this year – please see page 16.
Thank you to our supporters!
The Berkshire Jewish Voice extends a very special “thank you” for the generosity extended by those who have sent in their contributions for voluntary subscriptions to the paper. There are 68 households for the year 2021.

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Ellen Kenwood
Sondra Klein
Elaine Lee
Helaine Rose
Gary and Bernice Turetsky
David Wise and Debra Chudnow
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See insert in this BJV for more info

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(Supports color printing in one edition of the Voice)
--- $180 Sponsor
--- $72 Patron
--- $36 Friend
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196 South Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201
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Name to be listed: _________________________________________
I wish to remain anonymous

The Berkshire Jewish Voice

A Rewarding Job in So Many Ways

To the Editor:

My children were toddlers when I began working on the Berkshire Jewish Voice. Then-executive director Bob Kerbel and editor Karen Shreefter came to me with an idea for a Federation newspaper. The eight-page first issue of the Berkshire Jewish Voice came out in the fall of 1992. There were Federation events, local news and events, and also some national and international Jewish news.

As online news sources became more common, the BJV shifted its emphasis to more Federation and local coverage, and under the editorship of Albert Stern, to a welcome focus on arts in the Jewish Berkshires. I’ve always enjoyed knowing what’s going on here, as well as reading about far-flung Jewish communities throughout the world (especially by way of recipes)!

Through several executive directors, editors, and ad reps, I’ve been the BJV’s graphic designer, 28-1/2 years. It has been a rewarding job in so many ways, not least because of the teams—currently Executive Director Dara Kaufman, Editor Albert Stern, and Assistant Editor (and ad rep) Jenny Greerfeld—who have worked together with professionalism and respect for each other.

My children are now adults. With other life changes, this is my last issue. The time has come to say shalom to all things BJV. My work calendar will certainly be emptier nine times a year.

Warmly,
Rose Tannenbaum, Berkshire TypeGraphic
Stockbridge, MA

Exploring Senior Housing Options?

Geer Village Senior Community

Geer Village is a 501c3 and offers an all-inclusive model with additional services available, in case you need them.

The Lodge – 24 hour RN coverage; regular physician visits in the building; observation of all Covid-19 safety precautions.

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77 - 99 South Canaan Road | North Canaan, CT 06018 | www.geercares.org | 860.824.2600

Berkshire Humane Society Grateful for Purrrrrfect Blankets

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

Lev and Sasha Dresner stopped in today to donate 19 no-sew blankets on behalf of the Federation, whose young volunteers made them at your community celebration at High Lawn Farm in May. Charlie the kitten (held by Shelter Manager Cheryl Truskowski) enjoyed the soft blanket on Sasha’s lap and then played with the children along with his sister, Cassie. Charlie and Cassie have since been adopted.

We appreciate this kind and generous donation because all cats go home with blankets they’ve used at the shelter to have something familiar to them in a new environment.

Thanks to all at the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires who contributed to the blanket project!!!

The Berkshire Jewish Voice
Pittsfield

Letters to the Editor

Lee, Sasha, and Charlie the Kitten

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Warmly,
Rose Tannenbaum, Berkshire TypeGraphic
Stockbridge, MA
Your Federation Presents

Re-Opening and Safety Protocols
We look forward to seeing your smiling faces!

As we open our offices and begin outdoor in-person programming, we seek to provide our community with the safest, most enjoyable, and inclusive experiences possible based on the most current science and federal, state, and local health regulations.

Here are a few key things to know about what to expect for the time being. A full listing of protocols is available at jewish.berkshires.org/news-announcements/safety.

Federation Offices
The Federation office is open to the public during regular business hours. All visitors, including board members and volunteers, will be required to wear a mask at all times. Staff will also wear masks when interacting with our visitors.

Kosher Lunches
The Federation is again offering its Connecting With Community kosher lunch, once a week, outdoors under the large, shady tent at Knesset Israel. We look forward to serving our current participants and welcoming new ones. Grab and go meals will still be available Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Individuals currently receiving Meals on Wheels will continue to have this option.

Programming
Throughout July and August, we will be offering a mix of online programming and in-person outdoor programming for all ages. Masks are not required for vaccinated individuals. All unvaccinated individuals, including children over the age of 2, should wear a properly fitting mask at all times.

A Fond Farewell to Our Graphic Designer, Rose Tannenbaum
By Jenny Greenfield / BJV Copy Editor and Advertising Representative

Please join the Federation staff and board as we say farewell and wish Rose Tannenbaum a happy and healthy retirement from the Berkshire Jewish Voice. For over 28 years, Rose has worked diligently “behind the scenes” as our graphic designer, laying out the Berkshire Jewish Voice and helping the Federation bring this wonderful resource to you, our Jewish community.

I had the pleasure of working with Rose for almost 18 years. I clearly remember meeting Rose at the Federation office, then housed at the former Jewish Community Center on East Street, to proof the paper in person before sending it off to print. From the beginning, Rose was warm, welcoming, and a true professional. We formed an abiding friendship. Over the years, Rose has been a pillar of strength, and a dedicated and dependable co-worker.

An exceptionally talented artist, Rose has shown her paintings throughout Berkshire County and has contributed greatly to the broader Berkshire community.

It has been an honor for all of us to work with her. I know I have learned much about the ad and newspaper business from Rose and admired her perseverance and dedication throughout our shared experiences.

While Rose worked as an independent contractor, she was certainly a member of our Federation family. On behalf of all of us at the Berkshire Jewish Voice and the extended Federation staff and board, we wish her well. May her next chapter be filled with good health, much happiness, and lots of adventures.

Thank you Rose!

Reporting Anti-Semitism is Essential – And Federation Can Help

Check our website for a new resource guide

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires recently hosted a special briefing attended by representatives from our local congregations and Jewish organizations, who met members of the FBI Civil Rights Division and the Massachusetts State Police Anti-Terrorism Unit to learn more about their work.

Part of Federation’s ongoing commitment to supporting a secure Jewish community, this meeting enabled attendees to share our local community’s concerns and learn about our rights in relation to hate crimes and civil rights.

Resources Guide

In addition, the Anti-Defamation League of New England (ADL) and the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires collaborated to create an informative resource guide to effectively support our community members in reporting anti-Semitic or bias incidents. You can view and download the guide on our website at jewish.berkshires.org/news-announcements/reporting-antisemitism-in-our-community.

Reporting Bias

If you experience or witness an incident of anti-Semitism in our community, please report it to the ADL using the link on our website (or at adl.org/reportincident) – and let the Federation know, as well.

“We all have a responsibility to report and respond to anti-Semitism or bias when we see it,” says Dara Kaufman, Federation’s executive director. “Doing this can make our community safer, empower us, and assist law enforcement investigations.”

The Future of the Jewish Community is in Your Hands

How Will You Ensure the Jewish Future?

To create your Jewish legacy contact: Dara Kaufman dkaufman@jewishberkshires.org, (413) 442-4360, ext. 12

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

Berkshire Jewish Voice • jewishberkshires.org Page 5

Av/Elul 5781
Your Federation Presents

Dignity Drive a Huge Success

Thousands of essential personal care items distributed to 10 social service agencies across the Berkshires

By Susan Frisch Lehrer / Coordinator of Volunteers and PJ Library

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires held a most successful Dignity Drive of personal care products, specifically period and incontinence supplies, during the month of May. We know that menstrual and incontinence poverty is real.

We asked the community to ensure that those in need received the dignity that many of us take for granted by donating new products to four Berkshire locations – The Berkshire Food Co-op in Great Barrington, Concepts of Art in Lenox, Williams College Bookstore in Williamstown, and our Jewish Federation of the Berkshires office in Pittsfield.

Nearly 400 boxes and bags with approximately 8000 items were collected. We are beyond thrilled with the collection, as are the ten Berkshire County social service agencies that responded to our requests.

• Al Nelson Friendship Center and Food Pantry, North Adams
• Community Health Programs (CHP) Family Center, Great Barrington
• Elizaith Freeman Center, Pittsfield
• MA Department of Children and Families, Pittsfield
• People’s Pantry, Great Barrington
• Salvation Army, Pittsfield
• South Congregational Church Community Food Pantry, Pittsfield
• St. Joseph’s Homeless Shelter, Pittsfield
• Volunteers in Medicine (VIM), Great Barrington

We have to thank so many generous neighbors and friends from our community and beyond who purchased and donated to our Dignity Drive. Our office was filled to capacity with your generosity. Todah rubah – Thank you all who participated in this important mitzvah! We are indeed a community that follows the principles of gemilut chasadim – acts of loving kindness, tezdukah – justice and righteousness, and tikun olam – repairing the world.

We want to thank our volunteers who assisted with the collection and brought them to the agencies. They include:

• Regina Fink and her fellow Williams College students
• Joan Grossman
• Rosalind Kopfstein
• Gayle and Herman Rotenberg
• Tom, Suzanne, and Devorah Sawyer

And, specifically, we want to thank the collection sites and their staff –

• Berkshire Food Co-op, Great Barrington – Devorah Sawyer and staff
• Concepts of Art, Lenox – Tracy and Samuel Haupt
• Williams College Bookstore – Richard Simpson and staff
• Jewish Federation of the Berkshires staff

Your Federation Presents

GET IT DONE

Our home needed some work. Even doing some of it myself, I still needed to get a loan. Fortunately, Greylock now offers an Equity Loan for the full value of our home, so we’re turning our house into our dream home.

Ask about our New Total Equity Program with NO Closing Costs.

Offer subject to credit approval. Borrower must qualify for Greylock Federal Credit Union membership. Financing up to 100% of mortgage balance. Borrower may be responsible for repayment of costs to Greylock if loan is closed or refinanced within 36 months. Insured by NCUA.

Greylock Federal Credit Union
(800) 207-5555
www.Greylock.org
Your Federation Presents

Holocaust Survivor Families: Knowing the Pain and Learning Life Lessons

The Transcending Trauma Project and the role of transformative narratives

On Monday, July 19 at 6:45 p.m., join Dr. Bea Hollander-Goldfein, director of the Transcending Trauma Project (TTP), whose topic will be “Holocaust Survivor Families: Knowing the Pain and Learning Life Lessons.” The TTP is working to make contributions to the fields of trauma, coping and adaptation, and intergenerational transmission of trauma.

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

Writes Dr. Hollander-Goldfein:

Going beyond the oral histories documenting the events of the Holocaust conducted by many Holocaust memorial organizations, the TTP conducted a series of one-on-one deepened life histories with the parents of pre- and post-war survivors in order to understand how survivors coped and how they were able to rebuild their lives after the war. The life histories focused on the pre- and post-war in order to understand the full person.

TTP also conducted deepened life histories with survivors designed to elicit the transformative narratives affecting the children and grandchildren.

To explore how the parents’ experiences impacted the next generation. Many findings emerged from this investigation including, most importantly, the reality that family differences in the quality of parent-child relationships influenced the impact of trauma on the next generation. We also observed the intergenerational impact of hearing the stories of the war and its “transformative” impact on the children. The stories were, of course, painful to hear but through these stories the children learned who the parent is on a deeper level.

Aging: A Lifelong Process

Throughout Life’s journey, seeing qualities in the children and adults transformed us. They are not known to us. Transformative narratives affect all of our lives, often in ways that are not known to us.

Dr. Hollander-Goldfein lectures on a variety of clinical topics including the process of therapy, conflict management, spirituality, and the psychological legacies of the Holocaust. She has co-authored two books: Transcending Trauma: Survival Resilience and Clinical Implications in Survivor Families and Narrative Reflections: How Witnessing Their Stories Changes Our Lives. Dr. Hollander-Goldfein received her doctorate from Teachers’ College at Columbia University and did her post-doctoral research at NIMH. She is a Certified Clinical Trauma Professional.

The program is based on her work with the TTP only, not as a private therapist.

In Person Program: “Aging: A Lifelong Process,” with Maggie Bittman

On Monday, July 26 at 10:45 a.m., we welcome back Maggie Bittman for an in-person program, “Aging: A Lifelong Process.” This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ Connecting With Community series. Kosher lunch will follow this program – please see the menu on page 20.

This program will meet in-person under the tent at Knesset Israel. While masks are not required for vaccinated individuals, we highly encourage those who feel they are vulnerable to continue masking. Unvaccinated individuals should wear a properly fitting mask at all times.

“Aging: A Lifelong Process” is a program created and facilitated by Maggie Bittman, a Licensed Mental Health Counselor who has practiced for more than 40 years.

Writes Bittman:

“Throughout life’s journey, we confront four existential truths:

• The search to find meaning and purpose
• Facing mortality
• Experiencingaloneness
• Engagingself will

We will highlight how this is a lifelong process, and that we return to these existential truths at each stage of life with the added wisdom that comes along with aging.

This conversation format provides an opportunity to be a part of a group dialogue. Participants will discuss, share, and offer support to one another. It is a program designed for people of all ages to allow for intergenerational dialogue.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Family Fun Under the Big Top

We welcome our families and friends to join us for 5 free fun Shabbat programs on Friday mornings this summer using the tents at both Hevreh of Southern Berkshire and Congregation Knesset Israel. Programs will include PJ Library story time, crafts, music, dancing, yoga, blessings and more! Please indicate which program(s) you would like to attend and how many adults and children will be attending.

For further information on all Jewish Federation of the Berkshires programs, please call (413) 442-4360, ext.10 or slehrer@jewishberkshires.org.

Event Locations

Hevreh, 270 State Road in Great Barrington. (Please bring yoga mats or towels and your own chair.)

Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield.

Event Dates

• Friday, July 30, 9 a.m. at Hevreh. Aleph, Bet & Animal Yoga and Shabbat fun with Janet Lee and friends. Please note, time is earlier this week.

• Friday, August 6, 10 a.m. at Hevreh, Jewish musician and educator Felicia Sloin will get us movin’ as we sing and dance our way to Shabbat!

• Friday, August 13, 10 a.m. at Knesset Israel. Jewish educator Shira Rodriguez will share her special fun and creative programs for Shabbat – a different one each week.

• Friday, August 20, 10 a.m. at Knesset Israel. Shira Rodriguez.

• Friday, August 27, 10 a.m. at Knesset Israel. Shira Rodriguez.

For more information, contact: Susan Frisch Lehrer at (413) 442-4360, ext.14 or slehrer@jewishberkshires.org.
“The Origins of Jewish American Literature”

On Monday, August 9 at 6:45 p.m., join scholar and Tablet Magazine contributor Michael Hoberman, who will discuss the surprising “Origins of Jewish American Literature.”

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

Michael Hoberman writes: “The women and men who created North America’s first Jewish communities were unique for their high level of literacy. Unlike their European counterparts, however, these merchants, small-time shop-keepers, and homemakers were not particularly learned in Hebrew or Talmud. What they knew how to read and write was the English language, and what they invented was Jewish American literature.”

Hoberman will explore the earliest vestiges of Jewish American literature by examining the personal correspondence of North America’s 18th- and early 19th-century Jewish settlers.

Michael Hoberman is a professor of American literature at Reed College and the University and is a graduate from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. His books include “A Hundred Acres of America: Jews and Puritans in Early America and, most recently, “The Geography of Jewish American Literature.”

In 2010, he was Fulbright Senior Professor of American Studies, at Utrecht University, in the Netherlands. His articles on Jewish American literature and history can be found in Tablet Magazine.

Hoberman was also selected to be the keynote speaker for the 41st Annual IAJGS (International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies) International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. The 2021 All-Virtual Conference will be from August 1-5. The IAJGS is an umbrella organization of more than 93 Jewish genealogical societies worldwide. Find the IAJGS at: www.iajgs.org. Mazel tov!

Join Us on a Visit to Chesterwood!

STOCKBRIDGE – On Thursday, August 5 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., explore the gardens at Chesterwood on a free guided tour with other members of the Jewish community. Our focus will be enjoying the grounds of the former summer home, studio, and gardens of America’s foremost sculptor of public monuments, Daniel Chester French. In addition, we’ll experience the current outdoor installation “Tipping the Balance: Contemporary Sculpture by John Van Alstine.”

Susan Frisch Lehrer, former curator of Education and manager of Vistor and Volunteer Services at Chesterwood for over 30 years, will lead the tour. Susan is now coordinator of Volunteers and PJ Library at the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires.

About Chesterwood

Chesterwood is the former summer home, studio and gardens of American sculptor Daniel Chester French (1850-1931), who is best known for creating two of our nation’s most powerful symbols: the Minute Man (1871-75) at the Old North Bridge in Concord, MA, and Abraham Lincoln (1911-22) for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC. Daniel Chester French was one of the most successful artists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, producing more than 100 works of public sculpture.

About John Van Alstine

From Chesterwood:

For more than forty years, John Van Alstine has created abstract sculptures with stone and forged or found steel. These constructs explore the nexus of natural forces and man-made objects at the intersection between wild nature and technology. His work reflects a particularly American tension between the natural and manmade environment. Van Alstine’s sculptures give voice to the meeting point of geological time and civilization. Van Alstine’s art is informed by 20th century ideas gleaned from abstraction, constructivism, Eastern art and philosophy, assemblage, found objects and aspects of cubism and collage. The artist’s themes come from Greek and Roman mythology, celestial navigation and the human figure in Western art. He explores the effects of movement and gravity/tension on objects, the synergy of man-made tools for work and the angularity and vitality of urban architecture. He has been described as an abstract artist with a modernist’s sense of composition, a sculptor who finds the balance and energy in the moment, an artist who explores narratives from inanimate objects, a figurative artist.

“Tipping the Balance” is an exhibition that reveals the depth and breadth of this remarkable artist’s creativity and talent. Eleven large outdoor sculptures showcase his aesthetic journey from the 1990s to the present in distinctive explorations of form and composition and meaning.

This special event is limited to 20 participants. Register at jewishberkshires.org/calendar of events. The rain date for this event will be August 12. Please wear appropriate clothing and shoes as the tour will include walking the extensive grounds, woodlands, and gardens.

COVID-10 Policy

Please note – At press time, this was the masking policy at Chesterwood: “Masks are no longer required for those who are vaccinated, but in an abundance of caution, we highly recommend that everyone wear a mask while indoors. Masks should fit tightly and meet CDC guidelines. Gaiters and scarves are not a substitute for a multi-layer mask.” For more on COVID-19-related requirements at the site, please visit www.chesterwood.org/covid19.

Life Can Present Challenges

Sometimes, a little help along the way can make things easier

Our community social worker, Jill Goldstein, LICSW, offers case management, information/referral and consultation to help Jewish community members find support and access to services to help with such needs as:

- Coping with life’s transitions
- Aging and caregiving issues
- Relationship difficulties
- Adjustment to new living situation
- Living with illness
- Grief and loss
- Depression or anxiety

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

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

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

All services are free and completely confidential

Your Federation Presents

Knesset Israel
16 Colt Road, Pittsfield

ONGOING MINYANS

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

Friday 7 p.m.

Thursday 7 p.m.

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

and evenings approximately

30 minutes before sunset

CANDLE-LIGHTING

Friday, July 23…….. 8:04 p.m.

Friday, July 30…….. 7:57 p.m.

Friday, August 6…….. 7:48 p.m.

Friday, August 13… 7:39 p.m.

Friday, August 20… 7:29 p.m.
Summer Events at Temple Anshe Amunim

PITTSFIELD – Temple Anshe Amunim, Jewish Reform Congregation that promotes engaging and widespread education, cultural, and social action programs.

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

Shabbat Morning Hikes

Please join TAA for Shabbat morning hikes throughout the summer. Hikers meet at TAA at 10:45 a.m. Upcoming hikes will be at Kennedy Park on July 24. For more information, contact the Temple Anshe Amunim office at (413) 442-5910, templeoffice@ansheamunim.org or visit www.ansheamunim.org

Shabbat Morning Services

The series concludes Shabbat mornings at 9:30 a.m. this July:
July 24: The Prophetic Message as the Catalyst for Change
July 31: The Downside of Dor L’Tov – Family Dysfunction and Al Pacino Meet the Books of Samuel.
To register: tinyurl.com/TAAShabbatMorningServices

Is the Bible Historically Accurate?

Phil Halpern will examine the latest archaeological and historical evidence and theories about the biblical narrative. To register: tinyurl.com/TAAHistoricalAccurate

Jewish Meditation

On Rabbi Livitza P.G. Hirsch, for a guided meditation for all ages and abilities. The dates of this program are August 4, 11, and 18 from noon to 1 p.m.
The program is free and all are welcome to participate. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/AugustJewishMeditation

PITTSFIELD – With high rates of vaccination throughout Berkshire County, following the evidence-based guidelines of the CDC, local health officials, and Jewish teachings, Knesset Israel has been fully open since June and has a rich schedule planned for the summer.

"Offel" means "tent" and "Ba’ohel" means "in the tent." Even though the CDC and DPH regulations permit all events indoors without restrictions, R/I has chosen to make the most of the Berkshires summer with many outdoor offerings. This allows people to return to in-person gatherings gradually, in a way that may be more comfortable to some.

Several events are scheduled "ba’ohel" and weather permitting, they will take place in the tent in R/I’s backyard. In the case of inclement weather, events will be moved indoors.

New England Chapter of March of the Living Launches Recruitment Drive for Unique 2022 Trip to Poland and Israel

Qualified HS Juniors and Seniors eligible for $2,000 Scholarships

Knesset Israel hosts a two-part seminar Define Your Soul – Finding Meaning in the High Holy Days

A generous $82,000 scholarship is being offered to every qualified high school junior and senior who participates in the 2022 March of the Living (MOTL) Jewish heritage trip to Poland and Israel.

The 2022 MOTL trip will run April 24 to May 8, 2022. Trip guides include educators, rabbis, Holocaust survivors.

“On behalf of MOTL, I urge our efforts to help young people of all backgrounds, to learn about the events of the past and the impact this has on their future. I hope my story will inspire others to join our mission to create a more peaceful world.” - Miriam Halpern, MOTL born during the Holocaust.

The trip schedule includes:
- Visits to historic Jewish sites in Poland
- Visits to concentration camps with Holocaust Memorial Day (Yom HaShoah) ceremonies in Poland
- Tours throughout Israel, climaxing with celebrations in Jerusalem on Independence Day (Yom HaAtzmaut)

For more information or to register, please go to www.knessetisrael.org or call (413) 445-4872 or email office@knessetisrael.org. You may also send inquiries to office@knessetisrael.org.

The New England Friends of MOTL is committed to make the experience affordable for every Jewish teen who wants to participate through its $2,000 scholarship offer. Additional financial assistance may be available from area temples and organizations.

For more information or to contribute, visit New England Friends of MOTL at motlnewengland.org.

New England Friends of MOTL is a tax-exempt charitable organization as defined by Federal Tax code section 501(c)(3).

“MOTL participants at the gates of Auschwitz in Poland.”

Join Rabbi Livitza P.G. Hirsch for a guided meditation for all ages and abilities. The dates of this program are August 4, 11, and 18 from noon to 1 p.m.
The program is free and all are welcome to participate. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/AugustJewishMeditation

PITTSFIELD – Knesset Israel is pleased to announce a two-part seminar series to be held in High Holiday preparation.

In the “Prepare Your Soul” series, Rabbi David Weiner will help participants explore specific liturgy as a way of better understanding your Rosh Hashanah and Yom Rikkiper experience.

The first class, called "The Six Remembrances," is based on a part of the traditional morning service by the same name. In this session, participants will explore six things we are encouraged to remember and let them imagine ways we might choose to remember the last year.

This class is based on the work of Jewish Theological Seminary Chancellor Shuly Rubin-Schwartz. Participants may choose to attend in person under the KI tent. Sunday, August 15, 9:30 a.m., or via Zoom on Thursday, August 19 at 10:45 a.m.

The second class in this series is entitled “Selichot – Thy Rod and Thy Staff.” Participants will be invited to look deeply into Psalm 23 in preparation for the Season of Forgiveness. This class will meet Saturday, August 28 at 7:30 p.m.

All are welcome. For more information and to register, please go to knessetisrael.org.

Come One, Come All: Knesset Israel Fully Open And Welcomes You!

PITTSFIELD – Temple Anshe Amunim is a Reform Jewish Congregation that promotes engaging and widespread education, cultural, and social action programs.

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

Join Rabbi Livitza P.G. Hirsch for a guided meditation for all ages and abilities. The dates of this program are August 4, 11, and 18 from noon to 1 p.m.
The program is free and all are welcome to participate. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/AugustJewishMeditation

With each gift, we address so many causes that are important to our community including feeding the hungry to funding Jewish education and elders care. With your support, we can continue our mission. Together we ensure that the fabric of our Jewish community remains vibrant and strong. That’s what’s
ANNUAL MEETING, continued from page 1

planning committee. Here is a high-level summary of the plan, which you can access in its entirety under the “About Us” tab on Federation’s website, jewishberkshires.org.

Goals
In developing a strategic plan, the Federation sought to:
- Affirm its mission and its core values.
- Understand the community’s needs, concerns, and ideas.
- Frankly and openly discuss challenges the Federation must address, including changing demographics and finding ways to sustain support for programs.
- Identify key opportunities for addressing organizational challenges affecting programming, development, internal operations, and community relations.

Key Recommendations
Federation affirmed its leadership in all of the urgently held organizational roles and will continue to be: a Convenor for the local Jewish community; a Funder of local Jewish organizations and Israel programs; a Community Connector across all of Berkshire County; and a Direct Service Provider.

Recommendation 1: Expand Community Outreach and Engagement
In keeping with the commitment to “meet people where they are” in their Jewish journey, the Federation will expand its outreach to all members of the community throughout the region and actively partner with local organizations to connect with the unaffiliated and under-engaged.

Recommendation 2: Strengthen Existing Programming and Organizational Capacity
The Federation has a solid reputation for organizational excellence in the community, and the plan proposes building upon these strengths and increase the ability of the Federation to implement existing programs more effectively.

Recommendation 3: Increase the Number of Donors and Total Dollars Raised to Support Federation’s Programs and Services
The Federation will reassess its fundraising strategies in view of changes in Jewish philanthropic giving nationally and in the Berkshires.

Recommendation 4: Develop New Leaders, Expand the Number of Volunteers and Provide Leadership Training for the Federation and other Jewish Community Organizations
The Federation will identify, recruit, and train sufficient volunteers for their boards, committees, and programs, focusing on developing strong leaders and younger leaders to sustain community.

How Federation will implement these recommendations will be a focus of our engagement with the local Berkshire Jewish community in the months and years ahead. We hope you will be a part of reimagining how Federation can best fulfill its vital mission.

Our New Board Members
At the meeting, Treasurer Judy Usof thanked outgoing board members and then introduced nominees to Federation’s Executive Board and Board of Directors. The slate of nominees was voted on and approved. The bios of our new board members appear at right.

Executive Board Vice Presidents
Natalie Mendesohn Matus is a development professional who has worked primarily in the field of education, with stints working for the Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Boston and Jewish Family & Children’s Service of Boston. She is currently the director of Alumni & Family Engagement at Miss Hall’s School, where she previously served as director of Leadership. Natalie and her husband, Roger, live in Pittsfield and are members of Congregation Beth Israel in North Adams. Prior to joining CBI, Natalie was a long-time member with numerous leadership roles at Congregation Beth Elohim of Boston. MA. She is a lifetime member of Hadassah and, thanks to her parents, has deep roots in the Berkshires.

Elisa Spungen Bildner is co-founder and co-chair of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation for Jewish Camp. Professionally, Elisa was president of FreshPro, a leading fresh-cut produce company serving the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic food industry. Prior to that, she was a journalism professor at Rutgers University and New York University, taught law at Seton Hall Law School, and was a reporter/editor at the Newark Star Ledger. She is a former attorney as well as law clerk to Federal District Judge H. Lee Sarokin. In 2020, she co-authored The Berkshires Farm Table Cookbook with her husband, Robert Bildner. They live in Becket and are members of Knesset Israel in Pittsfield. Committed to furthering social causes, Elisa has chaired the boards of notable national and international non-profit organizations in the Jewish world and beyond. She is also an active alumna at her alma mater, Yale University. In 2013, President Obama appointed Elisa to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

Board of Directors
Arielle Pink is a full-time Special Education teacher with the Berkshire Hills Regional School District. Prior to joining BHRSID, Arielle lived in Namibia where she tutored students to pass their NRCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) exams. She also served as a full-time lecturer and professor with the International University of Management (IUM) Faculty of Education. Arielle grew up in the Berkshires and is a product of Hevreh, where she most recently served as a Hebrew schoolteacher. Arielle, along with her husband Paul and their three small children, are fixtures at Hevreh, attending all family programming including Shabbat services, Tiny Talmidim, the Hevreh School, and PJ Library, in addition to Eshner day camp. The entire family is active in racial and social justice work and has recently purchased a home in Pittsfield.

ANNUAL MEETING, continued on page 14

SUPERHEROES IN THE BERKSHIRES!
The Berkshire Art Association Presents:
EVERYONE IS A HERO:
A COMIC AND CARTOON ART TRIBUTE TO OUR LOCAL HEROES
AUGUST 6 > AUGUST 28
Lichtenstein Center for the Arts
28 Renne Avenue, Pittsfield, MA

The show is curated by Lawrence Klein, founder of the Museum of Comic and Cartoon Art in New York City.

SNEAK PEAK: AUG 6
First Fridays Artswalk - 5 > 8 PM
OPENING PARTY: AUG 7 3 > 6 PM
Family Friendly • Art Making • Cartoon Sketching • Costumes Encouraged
Special Guest Artists: Luke & Arielle McDonnell

Talk on Jewish Creators
AUGUST 19 @ 6 PM
At Lichtenstein Center for the Arts
Comics industry veteran Danny Fingeroth will present:
“Disguised as Clark Kent: Jews, Comics and the Creation of the Superhero.”
Fingeroth will discuss how many of the most significant comics and graphic novel creators were 1st and 2nd generation Jewish immigrants, and how the creators’ Jewish origins may have helped make comics some of the most familiar popular culture icons of all time. The innovators to be covered include Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, who invented major Marvel superheroes including the Avengers, Hulk, and X-Men; Harvey Kurtzman and Joe Skater, creators of Superman; Bob Kane and Bill Finger, who created Batman in a Bronx apartment. The event is also a celebration of the graphic novel. Danny Fingeroth is a pop culture critic and historian with a focus on comics and graphic novels especially from a Jewish perspective. He is an executive editor and writer at Marvel Comics, and author of books about comics, including A Marvelous Life: The Amazing Story of Stan Lee, which he will be signing at the event.

This event is made possible thanks to a Jewish Community Grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, and the Wasserstein-Stark YIDYAH Memorial Fund, administered by The Berkshires Ta’amei Tofei Community Foundation.

THE HILLS ARE ALIVE AT THE

BERKSHIRE JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL
July 5–August 23, 2021

BerkshireJewishFilmFestival.org
info@berkshirejewishfilmfestival.org

Generous support from the Wolfson Family Foundation, John Bergman Charitable Trust, Greylock Federal Credit Union, Berkshire Bank, MountainOne, Spitz-Tuchman Charitable Trust and Harold Grinspoon Foundation

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
AT HEVREH


Visit www.hevreh.org/family for more information about our educational programs for families and children ages 3-18.

Program options include:
• weekly classes for Kindergarten-7th grade focusing on the holidays, rituals, ethics and rhythms of Jewish life
• a monthly caregiver & child program for preschool aged children
• small group and 1:1 Hebrew instruction
• engaging teen programs including leadership training and social opportunities

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
2021 Annual Campaign
GOAL $1,000,000

DOING EXTRAORDINARY THINGS
YOUR IMPACT IS REAL
ANNUAL CAMPAIGN 2021

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

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

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

This program is funded by the Jewish Women’s Foundation of Berkshire County and administered by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
“Most impressive – and important to me is that everything we set out to do, we do” - Anne Schnesel, Major Gifts Chair

“I'm privileged to work with Jewish communal organizations, and have seen the unique role that they play in small Jewish communities. They have a profound impact on making Judaism accessible and visible. Through their programs, the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires invests in strengthening our communitie” - Jane Karlin, Development Officer, Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

When we moved here full-time four years ago, we wanted to connect with the Jewish community. We enjoyed several "Shabbat Across the Berkshires" programs, which helped us begin to meet other Jewish families. Soon after, Natalie joined the Federation's development committee. She felt the impact of this connection with the Jewish Federation, and we wanted to support their work.

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WHEN OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS US, WE ARE THERE
HELP US BE THERE! MAKE YOUR PLEDGE TODAY!

Your gift to the Jewish Federation’s 2021 Campaign will help bring dignity and care to the vulnerable and elderly, build and strengthen the Jewish identity of our children and young adults, support vital community programs, and create meaningful Jewish life across the Berkshires and beyond.

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.

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.

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.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT & EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE
You help individuals 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 due to COVID-19.

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.

A CLOSE & 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.

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

COMMUNITY RELATIONS & ADVOCACY
You help provide a proactive voice in our community, public schools, media, and government, addressing anti-Semitism, social justice, Israel, and other issues important to our community.

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.

CARING IN TIMES OF CRISIS
When crisis hits, in the Berkshires or around the world, you help mobilize local resources to respond with immediate relief and longer-term recovery. From support through COVID-19 to whatever the future holds, you help deliver an SOS response.

RESOURCE 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.

JEWS EDUCATION & 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 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.

Donate or pledge online at jewishberkshires.org Thank you for making a difference!
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ANNUAL MEETING, continued from page 10

Dr. Jane F. Katin has enjoyed a distinguished career as a fundraiser and leader of institutional advancement programs. Since her introduction to development at Pace University, she has held senior positions at New York University, The New School, Hadassah, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, HUC-JIR, and the Jewish Agency for Israel. In June, 2019 she retired from the Jewish Agency to reflect the intersection of philanthropy and American culture. She is an adjunct associate professor at the Center for Global Affairs at the NYU School of Professional Studies. For more than 50 years, her family has called Stockbridge its second home.

Arlene D. Schiff has served as the national director of the LIFE & LEGACY program (jewishlifelegacy.org) at the Harold Grinspoon Foundation for the past 8 years. In her role at HGF, she provides training and support to communities across North America on how to secure meaningful after-lifetime legacy gifts. Arlene is no stranger to most of you. Prior to joining HGF, Arlene served as our Federation’s executive director for 12 years, during which she provided visionary leadership while devising and executing strategic plans that centered on community building and garnering support for philanthropic giving. Arlene and her husband, Gary (chair of Federation’s Investment Committee), are full-time residents of Lenox and are members of Knesset Israel.

Richard Slutzky serves as chairman of the board of Hazen (hazen.org). He recently retired after 20 years at Bank of America Merrill Lynch and U.S. Trust, most recently as Director of Institutional Sales. Prior to moving to the private sector, Richard was the executive director of the Jewish Community Foundation of MetroWest New Jersey for eight years, and also served as CEO of a $67 million endowment fund (now over $840 million). Richard and his wife Alyson (a retired social worker and volunteer with VIM) are members of Hevreh of Southern Berkshire and reside full-time in Egremont.

Star Students

The Henry Simkin and Frances Simkin Schiller and Dr. Stanley and Faye Simkin Scholarship is awarded to Jewish high school seniors who demonstrated high academic achievement and leadership in the Jewish and broader communities.

Daniel Munsch was a well-rounded student at Lenox Memorial High School, a National Honors Society member who also participated in sports (soccer, Nordic skiing, and baseball) and the arts (musicals, band, and chorus). In the Jewish community, Daniel was one of Hevreh of Southern Berkshire’s “Madruchim” who helped mentor younger students in the Religious School on their paths to becoming b’nai mitzvah. Thanks in part to Federation, he attended Crane Lake Camp for 3 years and went with NFTY to Israel, an experience, he writes, “that had an outsized positive impact on my life.” This fall, Daniel will attend The George Washington University in Washington, DC, where he intends to major in International Affairs.

Yael Snowise was a National Honors Society member at Pittsfield High School who participated in concert and marching bands, as well as the Early Morning Orchestra. She also worked with local youth as an assistant coach for the YMCA swim team and shared her musical gift (she’s an accomplished flautist) with young students at the Berkshire Music School. A product of the Hevreh Israel Hebrew school, she pivoted from her own bat mitzvah experience to tutoring and mentoring younger students as part of the Journey b’nai mitzvah students goes through as they study for their big day,” she writes.

In 2019/20, Yael spent a semester in Israel at Tichon Raman Yerushalayim, her experience funded in part by a Federation scholarship. Federation also helped fund her attendance at Camp Ramah. This fall, she’ll be attending Brandeis University in Waltham.

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Cloudless azure skies arch over white-capped Cycladic waters, and stark white buildings step up hills and down plateaus. That is the Greece of picture postcards and travel brochures. But photos of Jews? Not so many these days. After all, the current Jewish population of this beautiful country on the Aegean and Ionian Seas is no more than 6,000 fellow tribespeople of a total of almost 11 million. It wasn’t always so. There has been a Jewish presence in Greece as early as the 4th century BCE, and three distinct groups of Jews have made their home in the country. The first is the Romaniote Jews, a little-known community that came to Greece from the Byzantine Empire shortly after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. Spaking a blend of Greek and Hebrew known as Yevanic and practicing the ritual of the Byzantine Jews, they established communities from Salonika in the north to Chalkis, on the island of Euboea, in the south. Among Romaniote Jewish names readers may recognize are those of scholar and liturgist Judah HaBassi and Shabbai Tzvi, the rabbi and kabbalista who convinced so many that he was the long-awaited Messiah — before converting to Islam. More recently, Joshua Matza is a former Israeli Minister of Health and former president and CEO of State of Israel Bonds. On this side of the Atlantic is Brazilian entrepreneur, media tycoon, and television host Senor Abravanel, known by his stage name, Silvio Santos. Most Romaniote Jews were murdered in the Holocaust when the Nazi powers occupied Greece during the war and deported them to concentration camps. The vast majority of Jews emigrated after the war, but a small community still exists in the country today. The oldest synagogue on European soil, built by the oldest Jewish community in Europe, is Romaniote and it still operates in Chalkis (now called Chalcida). The largest group of Jews in Greece are those who fled Spain after the Alhambra Decree in 1492. Tens of thousands joined the Romaniotes in Salonika, making it the largest Sephardic population in the world, and the city became a prominent center of Jewish life. The Ottomans, who ruled for most of the time from the mid-15th century until the fall of their empire in the early 20th, welcomed the Jews because they thought they would improve the economy. 

(One of the most prominent Jews the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman gave aid to was Doña Gracia Nasi, the wealthy Portuguese businesswoman and philanthropist who helped smuggle fellow conversos from Lisbon to Constantinople. Although she never lived in Greece, her nephew Joseph was so valued by the Turks that, it was part of the Ottoman Empire that, you’ll recall, had welcomed the Jews during the war and deported them to concentration camps. Only 151 souls survived. In retaliation for Ülkumen’s interference, German planes bombed the Turkish consulate, killing the consul’s wife and two employees. The couple’s newborn son, Mehmet, survived and Ülkumen was deported to the port city of Piraeus on mainland Greece. In 1990, the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem honored Ülkumen as Righteous Among the Nations. Accepting the honor on behalf of his father was Mehmet, the son who had survived the bombing.)

Across the peninsula, south and east of Corfu, is the island of Rhodes. Several years ago, Joel and I had the opportunity to visit the beautiful island, so, of course, we had to visit the Jewish quarter. Once home to a thriving Jewish community of 2,000, a mélange of Greek, Turkish, Italian, and other Mediterranean folks, the current Jewish residents can rarely rustle up enough people for a minyan, so the only remaining synagogue, Rahal Shalom, is now mainly used as a museum and venue for “destination” weddings and b’nai mitzvah.

The docent on the day of our visit was a man who comes every summer from his home in Africa as a volunteer to tell the story of the Jews of Rhodes. And it is a hair-raising tale. But first, a bit of background. Since 1947, Rhodes has been a part of Greece, but for the first half of the 20th century, the island was held by Italy. And before that, it was part of the Ottoman Empire that, you’ll recall, had welcomed the Jews fleeing the Inquisition.

Now, because Italy had allied with the Axis during World War II, the Germans were able to use Greece as a southern base. But upon Italy’s surrender to the Allies in 1943, Germany invaded the island and the Gestapo ordered a round-up of all Jews. But the Turkish consul on Rhodes, Selahattin Ülkümen, declared the island’s Jews to be Turkish subjects and threatened the German commander that he would cause an international incident if he refused to release the people to him. He was successful in saving 42 families, about 200 people in all, but soon after that, the Germans rounded up the other 1,615 Jews and deported them to concentration camps. Only 151 souls survived. In retaliation for Ülkümen’s interference, German planes bombed the Turkish consulate, killing the consul’s wife and two employees. The couple’s newborn son, Mehmet, survived and Ülkümen was deported to the port city of Piraeus on mainland Greece.

In 1990, the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem honored Ülkümen as Righteous Among the Nations. Accepting the honor on behalf of his father was Mehmet, the son who had survived the bombing.

Serves 4

Variations on this salad, popular in both Turkey and Greece, abound. Some use navy beans, some cannellini. Some serve it as a side dish, some as an entree. This one includes both tuna and hard-boiled eggs and makes for a delicious lunch or light supper.

Fassolia Piaz (Greek Bean Salad)

Ingredients:

2 15-1/2-ounce can cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
2 tomatoes, chopped and seeds removed
1 red onion, halved and thinly sliced
2 or 3 high-quality tuna
4 hard-boiled eggs, halved
1 cup fresh parsley, chopped

For the dressing:

¼ cup red wine vinegar
2 tablepoons Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 tablespoon minced garlic
½ teaspoon kocher salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
½ cup olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
Romaine lettuce

Instructions:

1. Put beans, tomatoes, onion, tuna, eggs, and parsley in a large bowl. Whisk together the dressing and pour over the veggies. Toss lightly. Stir well and refrigerate at least one hour, or until chilled.

2. Serve on the lettuce leaves.
Why He Went
57 years ago, my rabbi dad was arrested marching for civil rights. What can we learn from his example?

By Avi Dresner

This story originally appeared in The Forward, and is reprinted with the author’s permission.

The Juneteenth holiday, which commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans, is observed annually (now as a federal holiday) on the anniversary of June 19, 1865.

People and news traveled much slower in those days, but true freedom took even longer. There would be another century of “legal” Jim Crow segregation and discrimination until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 granted full rights to the descendants of those slaves.

All of that history is well known and documented. Far less well known, however, are the events of June 18, 1964, in St. Augustine, FL, when 16 courageous Reform rabbis and one lay leader contributed to the passage of those landmark pieces of legislation in what is still the largest mass arrest of rabbis in American history.

That it occurred on the 57th anniversary of that day seems a bashert coincidence that lends credence to observing this day as a sort of Jewish Juneteenth, but in reverse – a day on which Jews were arrested and jailed as part of the broader struggle for African American Freedom.

To celebrate the 57th anniversary of that day, the Breman Jewish Heritage Museum in Atlanta, the Southern Jewish Historical Society, and the St. Augustine Jewish Historical Society hosted a program titled “Why We Went” with the three surviving rabbis of the original St. Augustine Sixteen. One of them is my father, Rabbi Israel S. Dresner, the subject of the upcoming documentary film, The Rabbi & The Reverend.

The struggle for full emancipation in St. Augustine, the oldest city in America, which was celebrating its quadricentennial in 1964, had been going on in earnest for nearly two years before the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., decided to make it the next testing ground of the civil rights movement after the success of the Birmingham campaign the year before.

In a letter to my dad dictated from the St. Augustine City Jail on June 12, 1964, Dr. King described the city as “the most lawless community in which we have ever worked,” and made reference to “the shootings, the beatings and the burning down of our house here.”

By then, my father had already been arrested and jailed in the first Interfaith Clergy Freedom Ride in 1961, and the largest mass arrest of clergy in U.S. history in Albany, GA, in 1962.

Dr. King likely had those earlier arrests in mind when he wrote to my dad, “I am writing to you, Sy, because you have been so close to our movement and Wyatt [Walker] mentioned that you would be attending your rabbinical assembly next week. I am very much interested in having a task force from the Reform movement to come to St. Augustine and witness with us for self-respect and human dignity. It would do much to buttress our efforts here and across the nation.”

Four days later, my dad read a telegram from Dr. King at the 75th annual convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Reform movement’s rabbinical association. In it, Dr. King asked the rabbis to bear “prophetic witness against the social evils of our time.” Sixteen rabbis — among them Rabbi Allen Secher and Rabbi Jerrold Goldstein, the other two rabbis participating in the Zoom event — answered Dr. King’s call, and left for St. Augustine the very next day.

Straight from the airport, they arrived at a mass meeting held in the sweltering heat of the city’s First Baptist Church, where my dad preached right after Dr. King for so long that, according to Rabbi Secher, his rabbinic colleagues had to shout “Genug!” to get him out of the pulpit. (I can tell you from personal experience that shouting the Yiddish term for “Enough already!” has never worked for me and, according to Secher, it didn’t work that night either.) After the speeches, the rabbis joined hands with local Black activists and marched to the city’s Old Slave Market.

Dr. King and Rabbi Dresner, continued on page 17

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BERKSHIRE JEWISH VOICES
OBITUARIES

Donald Barron, 91, dedication to family, friends, and music

LENOX — Donald Barron, 91, passed away peacefully on June 5 from COPD, a degenerative pulmonary disease since his youth. Although he hadn’t smoked a cigarette in over 50 years, the condition gradually decreased his stamina. It narrowed the scope of his interests, but with adjustments, Donald continued to do what he loved, always choosing his dedication to family, friends, and music.

Born February 7, 1930 to parents Theodore and Julia, as children separately immigrated to the United States from the Ukraine, then a part of the Russian Empire, Donald enjoyed growing up in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn. Both parents were hard-working first-generation Jews, learning the language and skills to successfully bring a small business providing a good life for the Brobn family, his older cousin, Eleanor, who passed away in 2006.

As a teenager, influenced by an older cousin who was a student at Brooklyn Tech and an uncle who had graduated years before, he decided to attend the 324th Army Station Band stationed at Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland. While he never played professionally, through the years, he played in many amateur orchestras and symphonic bands. From his high school into college, the army, and beyond, the oboe gave Don a lifelong social outlet and many, many hours of artistic pleasure.

After briefly considering a musical career, Donald made the decision to go into education, and teaching became his lifelong vocation. He taught elementary school and special education for over 40 years, as well as serving as an administrator, at schools in New York City and on Long Island where he lived most of his life.

After retirement, Donald and his wife Barbara embarked on a 30-year adventure, living full-time in an RV (motor home) in which they drove back and forth across the US, visiting almost every state and parts of Canada. These wonderful memories of the country. After selling their motor home, they set out to live full year in Berkshire County, first in Tyringham, then in Lenox, and the late fall and winters in Deerfield.

The Barrons were members of Congregation Ahavath Sholom in Pittsfield, and Donald immersed himself in the local orchestra scene in Pittsfield. While he never once took a lesson, he played in nearly every band, the Berkshire Eagles Band, the Stockbridge Symphony, and other local community ensembles. In recent years he was a patient and client of the Intergenerational Orchestra of South Florida. He continued playing after developing COPD until the condition made it impossible for him to keep up with the demands of a playing in a group.

He kept up his routine into his 90s, playing at home almost every day.

Another post-retirement hobby was music. His passion for music, sense of pride and accomplishment was genealogy. He dug through his family history, uncovering hard-to-find records and photos, and organized them. Donald thought that this family could gather together, catch up, and learn new details about the people who had back and forth across the US, visiting almost every state and parts of Canada. He was an extremely proud of Roben Zeck, his brother, and the number of his family to immigrate to this country from the Ukraine.

Donald is survived by his wife, Barbara; three children, Steve; and Steven and their spouses, Jeff Omundsen and Bernadette Browne, and their daughter, Shannon Tacone.

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Donald is survived by his wife, Barbara; three children, Steve; and Steven and their spouses, Jeff Omundsen and Bernadette Browne, and their daughter, Shannon Tacone and Bruce Barron. In Long Island on Thursday, June 10 with Rabbi Arthur Schwartz officiating.

Donald has requested no flowers, gifts, but please donations to the Berkshire Music School (www.berkshiremusicschool.org) or to a charity of your choice.

In addition, he requests that you please vote in all elections, donate in his name to a charity of your choice. In addition, he requests that you please vote in all elections, donate in his name to a charity of your choice.

Fred’s life will be a chariot of his music.

Baruch ata Adonai matir asurim (Blessed is the Lord who delivers the oppressed).

Milt had a life-long passion for music. He was a gifted bass and cello player and a master in sociology from Ball State University, IN, and Music performance from The Juilliard School.

Milt married Helen (Edelstein) Fink in 1949, and together they had three children. Throughout their life together, Helen and Milt traveled the world, fought for human rights, and used music as a tool for social change. Together, they worked as a teacher in public schools in New York City, and together they had children. They were an active member of the Local 924 ICM, a musicians union, throughout his career.

Milt and his wife, Helen, lived in Great Barrington. Milt served in the Army during World War II, and after the war, he returned to the Berkshires and his music career. He was a gifted bass and cello player and a master in sociology from Ball State University, IN, and Music performance from The Juilliard School.

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The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires has a strong commitment to Jewish youth, helping to provide a high-quality Jewish education for more than 111 children and young adults through $430,000 in grants to congregational religious schools across the Berkshires. Berkshire County is fortunate to have a diverse Jewish community that offers educational opportunities encompassing a wide range of approaches and family preferences. This section offers an overview of local Jewish schools. Please note that owing to the BJV’s publishing schedule, some key dates and events for local religious schools may not have been finalized at press time. Please contact the congregations for complete details.

**JEWISH EDUCATION IN THE BERKSHIRES 2021-2022**

**Knesset Israel**

Pittsfield

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

Judith Weiner is the director of Knesset Israel Families Together. She is the administrator of the Hebrew School, as well as the Families Together and teen programming. These are both generously funded by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. Drawing on her many years of teaching and Jewish camp experience, as well as her graduate-level study of education at the Jewish Theological Seminary, Judith brings creativity, professionalism and passion to her role.

Registration for Knesset Israel Hebrew School will take place during the summer months. Members and non-members are welcome, and Hebrew School can be an excellent introduction to learning more involved in the community. Interested families are invited to contact Judith Weiner at (413) 445-4872 or jewiner@knessetisrael.org.

**Elementary School:** Grades 3-6 meet twice a week, on Shabbat mornings, and on Wednesday afternoons. Over the course of their 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 history. All students at this age level also participate in Junior Congregation on a weekly basis. Wednesday afternoon classes incorporate formal and informal techniques to help students learn to read Hebrew fluently and accurately. The school is looking forward to continuing to grow its arts program, featuring the participation of local Judaica artists.

**Bar/Bat Mitzvah:** The crown jewel of KI’s education programs, the intensive bar/bat mitzvah program engages students deeply in developing the skills and enthusiasm they will need for lifelong leadership of Jewish religious life. Instruction includes chanting Torah and Haftarah and leading all Shabbat services and is complemented by a mitzvah project and the preparation of a short sermon for the morning of the bar/bat mitzvah.

**High School:** Students converse weekly for a class with Rabbi Weiner. High school students also have the opportunity to serve as teaching assistants in our Hebrew School, especially in Junior Congregation, the bar/bat mitzvah program and Purposeful Play programs. This year, Knesset Israel will be piloting new youth programming, incorporating the arts, social time, leadership development and regional conventions with United Synagogue Youth (USY). These youth programs welcome the participation of members and non-members.

**Family Programming:** Exciting programs for the whole family linking themes of the Jewish holidays and year with contemporary social issues take place on select Sundays, Wednesday afternoons, and Shabbat afternoons throughout the year. Open to non-members as well as members, these programs are a great way for families to experience the Knesset Israel community. Upcoming events include: “Welcome Back Family Get-Together” on Sunday, August 29, and “Apple Picking” on Sunday, September 19. Expect many more throughout the school year! Please check the Knesset Israel calendar (at knessetisrael.org) or the KI Facebook page for further details.

**Congregation Beth Israel**

North Adams

The Nassau Synagogue & Jewish Community Center

Located on Route 20
Village of Nassau, N.Y.

A Haimish Shul Experience!

- Shabbat Services
- Educational Programs
- Traditional, Egalitarian

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For more information, contact us: nassausynagogue@gmail.com

The Nassau Synagogue & Jewish Community Center

**Fun in the garden at CBI Hebrew School information for this Reform congregation was not available at press time. For information, please contact Rabbi Rachel Barenblat by email at rabbi@barenblat@gmail.com.**

**Family Programming at CBI**

Congregation Beth Israel invites families with children ages 2-12 in the Berkshire Jewish community and beyond to its family education programs each month! Each program is designed to interest children of varying ages (as well as their parents!), provide enjoyable educational experiences tied to Jewish holidays and values, and provide experiences that center families around Jewish culture, cooking, and traditions. Programs are experiential, appealing to many senses, and engage children as full participants.

- Between September 2021 and May 2022. CBI will be offering 11 fun programs that are free to attend! More information about these programs will be available in the future — please email the office at cbnadsams@gmail.com if you’d like to be added to the mailing list.
- The first programs will be “Rosh Hashanah Sweet Storytime” on Saturday, September 11 and “Get Ready for Fall: Tend Our Garden & Our Earth” on Sunday, October 17.
- Funding to help make these programs free to all families has been provided by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.
Hevreh of Southern Berkshire

Religious School

Hevreh, a Reform congregation, looks forward to welcoming new and returning students for in-person learning with a focus on outdoor education this Fall. Join them on Sunday, September 12 as they kick-off the school year together with crafts, play and sing. Parents and siblings are invited to join us for the Opening Day blessing and celebration at 11:45 a.m.

Hevreh welcomes interfaith families, GLBTQ families, new members, first timers, neighbors, and friends to explore all the education programs it has to offer.

To schedule a one-on-one appointment and tour, please contact:

Joan Goldberg Munch, Youth and Family Programs Coordinator:

jgoldbergmunch@hevreh.org

Temple Anshe Amunim

Pittsfield

Join this Reform congregation for its ongoing Family Education program for meaningful and enriching Jewish experiences for youth, families, and the entire community.

The ways TAA envisioned its Family Education for next year adapt to our current realities and reimagine how to 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 classrooms in line with social distancing policies and practices.

Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch and a dedicated staff of teachers will lead the children and community through a monthly schedule divided into four categories:

- Art and cooking
- Learning of prayers and blessings
- A juda 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. The group is currently meeting in the TAA Zoom room for these discussions and hope to incorporate some in-person discussion as the year progresses.

Adds 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.”

TAA’s 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.

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. 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 TAA templeoffice@ansheamunim.org, or call (413) 442-5910.

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JEWISH EDUCATION IN THE BERKSHIRES 2021-2022

Simchat Torah at TAA

We’re Hiring!

Director of Community Engagement and Programming

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires seeks a dynamic, creative, and motivated professional to engage community and provide operational and community leadership to strengthen and grow our vibrant Jewish community.

The Director of Community Engagement and Programming will be a strategic thinker who works to understand the needs of our community as identified in our current strategic plan and possesses the vision and initiative required to enhance existing programming and develop and implement new engagement models to connect and support currently underserved constituencies. We are looking for a hands-on self-starter with strong leadership, communication, organization, social impact, and team skills.

This new full-time position offers a rare opportunity to use your talents to benefit a greater good and work with individuals who share a commitment to helping those in need and strengthening Jewish connections and community.

For full job description visit

jewishberkshires.org/news-announcements/Department

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For full job description visit

jewishberkshires.org/news-announcements/Department
Connecting with Community
Nourish Your Body, Mind, and Soul!

As we move to fully re-opening...

At press time, in-person lunches have resumed on Thursdays at noon only – come catch up with your friends and community! However, be sure to read “Re-Opening and Safety Protocols” on page 5 of this paper – more information is also available at jewishberkshires.org/news-announcements/safety. Also as of press time, most Connecting With Community programming is still online. For the most up-to-date information and details on virtual and in-person programming, please visit our website www.jewishberkshires.org. 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 ready by noon for pickup at the Knesset Israel kitchen door, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield. All meals-on-wheels will be delivered by Federation volunteers in the early afternoon.

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

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

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

What’s for Lunch?

# Dairy Free, ** Gluten Free Main Entrée

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

JULY

Monday, 19 ........... Salisbury steak **#, mashed potatoes, broccoli, rice, applesauce.
Tuesday, 20 ........... Barbecued chicken **#, mango juice, corn cobettes, green beans, salad, potato bread, and grapes.
Thursday, 22 ........... Tomato basil quiche, apple juice, salad, confetti rice salad, Challah, and peanut butter cookies.
Monday, 26 ........... Grilled hot dogs **#, hearts of palm salad, vegetarian beans, tater tots, hot dog buns, and watermelon.
Tuesday, 27 ........... Pomegranate glazed chicken **#, mixed vegetables, salad, rice pilaf, pumpernickel bread, and tropical fruit salad.
Thursday, 29 ........... Meat chef’s salad **#, pineapple juice, coleslaw, 3 bean salad, pita bread, and Mandarin oranges.

AUGUST

Monday, 2 .............. Meatloaf, tomato juice, peas & carrots, hash browns, rice bread, and applesauce.
Tuesday, 3 .............. Turkey salad, gazpacho, asparagus vinaigrette, confetti rice salad, Challah, and fruit cocktail.
Thursday, 5 .............. Black bean burgers with cheese, creamy peach yogurt soup, Mexican corn, hamburger rolls, and watermelon.
Monday, 9 .............. Ratatouille with turkey **#, polenta, salad, Farmer’s loaf, and peaches.
Tuesday, 10 .......... Cinnamon honey chicken **#, salad, rice pilaf, meadow blend vegetables, dinner roll, and cantaloupe.
Thursday, 12 ........... Tuna egg salad platter **#, cole-slaw, potato salad, chips, oat bread, and parve chocolate chip cookies.
Monday, 16 .......... Spaghetti & meat sauce #, summer zucchini soup, green beans, salad, garlic bread, and apricots.
Tuesday, 17 .......... Roasted chicken **#, gazpacho, Italian beans, rice pilaf, rice bread, and grapes.
Thursday, 19 ........... Asparagus & goat cheese frittata **, white bean & artichoke salad, Farmer’s loaf, and pudding.
Monday, 23 ........... Salisbury steak **#, salad, brown mixed vegetables, pumpernickel bread, and peaches.
Tuesday, 24 ........... Pomegranate glazed chicken **#, tomato, cantaloupe, and red onion salad, mixed vegetable, brown rice, oat bread, and tropical fruit salad.
Thursday, 26 .......... Fresh fish **, borscht & potato, stewed tomatoes, broccoli, dinner rolls, and baklava.

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

Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to...
Sara and Rabbi Levi Volovik on son Yossi’s upshernish (first haircut for a 3-year-old boy)
Berkshire Jewish Film Festival Concludes with Virtual Screenings and Zoom Talkbacks

The Berkshire Jewish Film Festival, presented by Knesset Israel, concludes its 35th season. The BJFF has shown hundreds of films to thousands of people. Last year, with the pandemic forcing organizers to close the theater doors, the BJFF was able to continue as a virtual festival showing films online and engaging the audience members with Zoom talkbacks. This years films will be screen online, as well. For tickets and information: berkshirejewishfilmfestival.org.

July 19
4 p.m. Soros – Documentary. Demystifying the controversial financier who dares to tackle global problems, illuminating the life of one of the world's richest philanthropists.
8 p.m. Shalom Taiwan – Narrative. This uplifting dramatic comedy follows the misadventures of Rabbi Aaron as he tries to raise funds to repay a loan by embarking on a transformative journey to Taiwan.

July 26
4 p.m. Magic Men – Narrative. An estranged Israeli magician and his son make a sentimental journey through Greece to reclaim the past in this cinematic gem. Talkback: Ticket holders will receive a link to an interview with Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla, the son of Greek Holocaust survivors. This fascinating interview with Albert Bourla and Robert Krulwich was generously shared by the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust in New York City.
8 p.m. ‘Til Kingdom Come – Documentary. A rare look at the unlikely alliance between America’s Evangelical Christians and the State of Israel, revealing the power and peril of wielding prophecy as a political tool.

August 2
4 p.m. The Invisible Line – America’s Nazi Experiment – Documentary. A teacher seeking to explain how Hitler brainwashed the Germans, H.S. students were subjected to a Nazi-like code of conduct. The 5-day experiment spiraled out of control, attracting students to the rising fascist movement. Talkback: On Wednesday, August 4 at 4 p.m., ticketholders can join in on a discussion with director Emanuel Rotstein, Mark Hancock (original class member), and Ron Jones (original teacher).
8 p.m. Tango Shalom – Narrative. Moshe Yehuda, a Hasidic Rabbi and amateur Hora dancer, played by Jos Laniado, enters a televised Tango competition to save his Yeshiva from bankruptcy.

August 9
4 p.m. – 5 Short films. Cinema Rex, Mum’s Hairpins, Eddy’s World, Empty Spaces, and A Father’s Kaddish. Talkback: On Tuesday, August 11 at 7 p.m., ticketholders can join director Jen Kaplan and Potter Steven Branfman for a fascinating discussion of the ways Branfman used pottery during the mourning period after the loss of his son.
8 p.m. 200 Meters – Narrative. A 200-meter distance becomes a 200-kilometer odyssey as a Palestinian father embarks on a perilous journey to reach his hospitalized son in this tense yet tender family drama about the human toll of oppression.

August 16
4 p.m. Comrade Dov – Documentary. A thought-provoking portrait of a unique politician who refuses to give up even as reality deals him one blow after another. Talkback: On Wednesday, August 18 at 3 p.m., ticketholders can join a Zoom Q & A with director Barak Heymann and the real Comrade Dov, Dov Khenin.
8 p.m. Winter Journey – Narrative non-fiction. Centering on a father and his son’s search for the truth about his parents’ experiences during Hitler’s ascent, George Goldsmith (Bruno Ganz) recalls the events leading to his and his wife’s 1941 escape from Germany. Talkback: On Tuesday, August 17 at 4 p.m., please join Winter Journey director Anders Ostergaard and writer Martin Goldsmith in a discussion about the film and his book about his parents’ experiences.

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SUPERHEROES,
continued on page 1

popular culture icons of all time. The innovators to be covered include Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, who invented major Marvel superheroes including the Avengers, Hulk, and X-Men. Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, creators of Superman; Bob Kane and Bill Finger, who created Batman in a Bronx apartment; and Will Eisner, who gave the world the landmark superhero, The Spirit, and pioneered the modern graphic novel.

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

Danny Fingeroth will also deliver a live version of this program on Thursday, August 19 at 6 p.m. at the Lichtenstein Center for the Arts in Pittsfield, part of the Berkshire Art Association’s (BAA) comic and cartoon art show “Everyone Is a Hero: A Comic and Cartoon Art Tribute to Our Local Heroes.” For more on this show, which runs August 6 – 28, see the ad on page 11.

K
nowing how and when to arrive at your goal is important.

We realize this, which is why having shared values can give you confidence and peace of mind in these uncertain times.

Have a conversation with Gary Schiff, managing director, and the team at October Mountain Financial Advisors.

Danny Fingeroth reports that during the pandemic, he and his family spent months in Monterey, escaping the uncertainty in his native New York City. He was back in the Berkshires for a month when the BJV caught up with him in early June. Our conversation touched on some of the themes of his upcoming programs, as well as his 2019 biography A Marvelous Life: The Amazing Story of Stan Lee and what it was like for him to work in comic book publishing as superheroes became a multimedia entertainment juggernaut in the early 21st century.

When the character of Superman was introduced in 1938, comic book publishing was dominated by Jews, both on the business and creative sides. It was among those favored by estabishment businesses – such as movie-making, early on – that wereeschewed by establishment business-people and therefore offered opportunities for creative and ambitious Jewish entrepre-
neurs. As Fingeroth explains, “the comic book business was founded largely by people who had been publishing pulp magazines” – racy men’s magazines with lurid themes and images of provocative-ly posed women – “and many of them were Jewish. So they were not going to keep people from entering because they were Jewish.

That differed from the world of mainstream newspa-

ders, where securing a syndicated comic strip could prove extremely lucrative. “Newspaper comics were very hard for Jews to get into,” says Fingeroth. “There were a couple, but that was sort of a gentle club…unwelcoming to the Jews,” and especially to younger writers and artists who would become pioneers of the comic book industry. Fingeroth says the first comic books republished newspaper strips, and when that source of material was tapped out, publishers needed original work.

Providing that material were teenagers a lot like Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, who created the Superman character. Says Fingeroth: “These were Jewish kids from the Glendale neighborhood of Cleveland, who were into science fiction. They were fully of ideas and they had been doing work for DC Comics on other characters. When they were teenagers, they worked on some of the earliest science fiction fanzines. Much of that world was sort of a Jewish world. Before the Internet, fans would mail each other fanzines and letters, [putting out], with a primitive micro-


tograph technology, publications that included reviews of science fiction [and their own] short work.

“The fact that they were Jewish, I think, was inci-
dental on a conscious level. They were young people who happened to enjoy [this work] and then it became an opportunity to actually do it for a living.” Fingeroth notes that the last thing they were interested in doing was overtly Jewish work although sometimes, as with Hollywood movies from the Studio Era, “there was stuff that we can look back at now and say, ‘oh yeah, this came from a Jewish consciousness. That’s from some body, [who brought that]

traditional kind of immigrant point of view, of outsider status, of kind of being embryonic and punny, it’s a funny accent, by the non-traditional religious customs and observ-

ances, as well as matters of anti-Semitism. That all was in the background.”

“ But I think if the fore-
ground, with a lot of them, was poverty. It was the Golden Age of Depression and they had these abilities to make up stories, to draw stories. Maybe their skills were not polished enough – combined with a kind of uniqueness or sometimes spoken anti-Semi-
tism – for the more traditional lucrative fields like main-
stream publishing or advertising.”

So comic books it was. Publishers, says Fingeroth, “were happy to have these teenagers who had worked for peanuts, but what was, for the teenagers, pretty good money. So you have a situa-
tion where you have 18-, 19-, and 20-year-olds out-earning their father and they were contributing significantly to, or entirely supporting, their fam-

ilies through this new world. Before the Internet, fans would mail each other fanzines and letters, [putting out], with a primitive micro-
graph technology, publications that included reviews of science fiction [and their own] short work.

Fingeroth adds that, gener-
ally speaking, “comics was not a place to go to aspire to” – it was a living, a stepping stone to a better career in film or advertising, or possibly a lucrative newspaper strip. The early comic book writer and artist seemed to be a more practical type of person, who (in contrast to dreamers hoping to make their marks in Hollywood) preferred the security of steady work and proximity to family. Comic book creators churned out as much work as they could, as they were paid by the page – and looked at their output as a commercial, rather than an artist’s own endeavor. “Most of them took it literally page by page, day by day,” says Fingeroth – the idea that their work might have lasting artistic worth or future commercial value to collectors was virtually absent.

Although today the super-

hero is the character-type overarchingly associated with comic books, it took Siegel and Schuster five years to sell their Superman idea. The Man of Steel first appeared in Action Comics in the midst of the Great Depression and on the back cover of the comic book, he adopted his motto “Truth, Justice, and The American Way.” Just as that syndicated into a world, headed by Jews, developed an idealized vision of America that was anti-Semitic, it also broadened the audi-

ces, comic book creators of the Depression Age, and they imbued their superheroes with a stolid brand of patriotism. Superman and his friends, with their powers to light the Forces of Evil, their personalities one-dimensional and their depictions strong enough for school-age children to follow.

The popularity of super-

heroes waned by the 1950s, though myraid comic books continued. In the 1950s, the industry was dealt a devastating blow by a campaign led by by church groups and family groups tying comics to juvenile delin-

quency. In response to public and governmental pressure, publishers implemented a “code of conduct” that squelched much of the wild creativity, diversity, and subversiveness that flourished in the new years. Television further eroded the audience for comic books, and many titles were discontinued, resulting in mass layoffs of staff.

One of the survivors was Stan Lee who, starting as a teenager in the 1940s, worked as a writer and editor at Timely/Atlas publishing house in the Golden Age. Around 1960, superheroes were made a comeback, and Lee was charged by publisher Martin Goodman with coming up with new characters for Marvel. Over the next 26 years, Stan Lee – along with artists Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko – would change the nature of comic books and lay the ground-

work for the Marvel franchise that today rakes in billions of dollars in box office receipts, toy/toychandise sales, comic book sales, and licensing deals.

Lee and Kirby (co-creator of

SUPERHEROES,
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Kirby Black is a painting by Pitch Black and based on a drawing by Jack Kirby of characters he and Stan Lee created. Black is an American pop artist based in New York City / (ethcontemporaryart.com/collections/pitch-black).

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CULTURE & ARTS

SUPERHEROES, continued from page 22

of Fantastic Four, X-Men, and The Avengers were in their 40s, and Ditko (co-creator of Spider-Man and Dr. Strange) was in his 50s. We can only imagine how much the industry would have changed if Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, and the company publisher, Martin Goodman came the idea having characters who were – you know, the easy shorthand is ‘nerotic’ or feet of clay. But the idea is characters who were a step below the contemporary youth culture of the baby boomers, they created a ‘universe’ of characters, imaginary worlds, and storylines imbued with an enduring mythic appeal.

Now, nearly 60 years after their first appearance in comic books, new generations are telling new stories about Thor, Ant-Man, and The X-Men in the way the ancients must have spun tales about their pantheons of divine beings.

Fingeroth writes that Stan Lee’s “one key insight” was to see that, in the early 1960s, there was an audience of adult fans who had read comics as children and were interested in them. If the then-current #1 audience for comics was being lost to TV, then maybe there was some way to rekindle that interest. He adds that Marvel heroes were always in the process of becoming in the eyes of both their civilian and superhero identities – and that manner of storytelling, replete with cliffhangers that leave you wanting more, propels the recent movies about those characters, as well.

“Stories were definitively still in the realm of the fantastic,” he says, “but the superhero industry within in the world the readers also lived in. Fingeroth suggests, “including the way people spoke using colloquialism, contractions, using slang, using humor. And

then there were the methods used to so well with a Hollywood exec, who got excited. He thought, ‘What if they were reading, what could be produced and what kind of experimental things could be risked?’ A strong market emerged for collectors of both books and memorabilia – sales went through the roof in the late 80s and early 90s with people buying comic books not to read, but to sell for a profit.” It was an incredible gold rush period,” he says.

But there still weren’t many movies or TV shows. You needed a few generations of Hollywood executives to retire before you could get someone in Hollywood to say, ‘Oh yeah, Spider-Man isn’t just a dopey thing for 12-year-olds.’” says Fingeroth. “It’s got angst, it’s got backstory, it’s got melodrama.” He relates a (possibly apocryphal) story about Stan Lee pitching the character to a Hollywood exec, who responded, “I love it! But does it have to be about a spider?”

Of course that changed. These days, it can seem like there are no movies that are not about superheroes. In Fingeroth’s opinion, this fascination will continue, as ‘superhero’ is now a movie genre in the same way as ‘westerns’ and ‘musicals.’

“If you start counting with the first X-Men movie in 2000,” he says, “then this superhero craze has gone on for 20 years, when most people thought it would be over in 2 or 3 years. Marvel did similar things with comics – you wouldn’t make much money with romance comics, but you’d have superhero comics that were more about romance than they were about the action.

“Let me just say by the way, oddly enough, superhero comics are not doing so well. The graphic novel and books for children and young adults, the kind Scholastic puts out, sell in the millions. Movies are the vehicle for people to get their superhero fix. I think superheroes are a permanent part of the [entertainment] landscape, but there will be sub-genres.”

He adds, “The Marvel formula seems to pervade a lot of popular adventure fiction. It has lasted longer than anybody in the inside predicted and shows no sign of slowing down. It’s a tribute to what Stan and Jack and Ditko came up with in the early 60s. It has such staying power.”

Danny Fingeroth has spoken about comics at venues including The Smithsonian Institution, Columbia University, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, as well as on NPR’s All Things Considered and NBC’s Today Show, and has written about them for publications including The Los Angeles Times and The Baltimore Sun. He has taught at The New School, NYU, the Media Bistro, and MoCCA. He is on the Board of Directors of The Institute for Comics Studies, and on the Board of Advisors of MoCCA.

Kirby Black is a painting by Pitch Black and based on a drawing by Jack Kirby of characters he and Stan Lee created. Black is an American pop artist based in New York City / (ethcontemporaryart.com/collections/pitch-black).

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**CULTURE & ARTS**

“Feeling Free”

Myla J. Blum will exhibit her paintings in a show titled “Feeling Free” at the Pleasant and Main Café and General Store, 1063 Main Street in Housatonic starting Sunday, August 1, with an opening day reception in the garden from 3 to 6 p.m. Myla, tell us something about yourself:

Great!!!!

I’m a native Pittsfielder.
Born and raised here.
My father was a native.
I LOVE the BERKSHIRESS!!!
I’m a snowbird now and live in Florida part time BUT my heart is ALWAYS in the Berkshires.
I’m a pretty creative person. Whether it be painting, decorating or interacting with my coaching clients.
A year ago November I had a hip replacement and when I finally got my mojo back, I started painting. And I was surprised at what was happening!
I had thrown traditional out and began “painting outside the lines.”
The more I pushed the boundaries the more I pushed the boundaries!!!!
The colors just got brighter and shapes got freer!!!!
I used to panic at a blank canvas and now I can’t wait to see what happens. MAGIC!
The response to my work has left me in disbelief.
When I look at some of my work I wonder “who did that?”
My husband is my biggest supporter.
My friends are a close second in their support.
I truly love them all for always encouraging me.
And Harryet [Puritzman Candee of The Artful Mind magazine and gallery in Lenox] has pushed me in the best way possible.
I’m beginning to think I actually am an artist!!!!!

Myla Jill Blum

Myla also volunteers for the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. Thanks, Myla!