

Berkshire JEWISH VOICE

A publication of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, serving the Berkshires and surrounding NY, CT and VT

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Abigail Pogrebin at the November 3 Knosh & Knowledge

Author to share how she navigated the full Jewish holiday calendar

By Albert Stern / BJV Editor

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Friday, November 3, Knosh & Knowledge hosts Abigail Pogrebin, author of *My Jewish Year: 18 Holidays, One Wondering Jew*, in which she chronicles her mission to research, observe, and write about every Jewish holiday on the calendar – without skipping one festival or fast. This Jewish Federation of the Berkshires program will take place at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire at 10:45 a.m., and will be followed by lunch.

Reading *My Jewish Year*

I first encountered Pogrebin's holiday project when it appeared as a blog on *The Forward's* website in 2014, filed in installments corresponding to the holiday cycle beginning with Rosh Hashanah 5775. My initial reaction was to wonder what would make her journey so special, given that millions of observant Jews organize their lives according to the Jewish calendar of holidays, punctuated by the weekly holy day of Shabbat. Having grown up in a Modern Orthodox community, my early experience of the holidays was as an intensification of ritual and custom within an already intense, busy, and seamless routine of daily observance. Why would I want to read about a mountaineering expedition that set as



Abigail Pogrebin

its goal merely making it part of the way up Mt. Everest, rather than aiming for the peak?

And then there was the shadow cast by A.J. Jacobs's bestselling *The Year of Living Biblically: One Man's Humble Quest to Follow the Bible as Literally as Possible* (2007), in which that author tried to outdo even the most ardent traditionalists by hewing to the precepts and laws appearing in the Torah, strictures that perhaps – *perhaps* – made more sense in Iron Age Israel than modern day New York City. I wondered whether Jacobs had already used up the stunt value of the endeavor.

In *My Jewish Year*, Pogrebin diffuses the potential comparison with Jacobs even before she begins her own introduction – she enlisted Jacobs, whom she's known since childhood, to write

MY JEWISH YEAR, continued on page 4

Justice League of Zion

Jewish superhero figurines – collect 'em all



As the United States eagerly awaits the mid-November blockbuster film about DC Comics' *Justice League of America*, Tel Aviv's *Piece of History* design studio offers a superteam of action figurines portraying Jewish heroes from Israel's 80-year past. From left: Golda Meir, Menachem Begin, David Ben-Gurion, Moshe Dayan, Yitzchak Rabin, and Ze'ev Jabotinsky, any one of them tougher than Aquaman. For more on *Piece of History's* creative contemporary Jewish gifts, please see page 24.

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Williams College Welcomes New Jewish Chaplain

WILLIAMSTOWN – Rabbi Seth Wax is the new Jewish chaplain at Williams College, replacing Cantor Bob Scherr, who held the position for 13 years before retiring last January.

A native of Sharon, MA, Rabbi Wax completed his rabbinical studies and received ordination in 2013 from Hebrew College in Newton, MA. He holds a bachelor's degree in religion from Columbia University (his senior thesis focused on the intersection of Buddhist mediation and Judaism) and a master's in Buddhist studies from Harvard Divinity School.

His previous position was at Congregation Mount Sinai in Brooklyn Heights, where he led a congregation of 130 families. He also served as co-president of the Brooklyn Heights Clergy Association's interfaith outreach, which brought together the leaders and members for events like a prayer vigil to combat gun violence.

However, he and his wife, Dr. Liz Berger, have a young daughter and "loved the idea of living in a more rural



Rabbi Seth Wax

area," he said, and so he applied for the post at Williams, which will be his first as a university chaplain.

Still early into his first school year,

RABBI WAX, continued on page 13

Right in Our Own Backyard

Bright idea realized as a *tikkun olam* project to feed the hungry



Mark Lefenfeld and Jay Horowitz, co-founders of Backyard Bounty of the Berkshires

Legend has it that Isaac Newton came upon his great idea, the theory of gravity, when a falling apple hit him on the head as he cogitated beneath a tree.

Jay Horowitz, one of the co-founders of Backyard Bounty of the Berkshires, had the "a-ha!" moment for his great idea after watching scores of apples falling to the ground of his small orchard

in Alford following a bumper crop in 2015.

"I figured that if I had so many apples," says Horowitz, a retired financial analyst, "others must have apples, too." He started to explore ways to harvest fruit that might otherwise go to waste, not only from his trees, but from the wealth

BACKYARD BOUNTY, continued on page 13

Guest Editorial

We Have Seen the Future, and It Looks Orthodox

By Lawrence Grossman / American Jewish Committee



COURTESY OF AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

(JTA) – The 2013 Pew survey “A Portrait of Jewish Americans” shows that Orthodox Judaism, while currently attracting the allegiance of only about 10 percent of all American Jews, is the fastest growing sector of the community. The high birthrate and retention rate confirmed by the survey have led some observers to predict that within a generation, American Jewry will be predominantly Orthodox, culturally if not demographically.

Of course we cannot presume that present trends will continue, but it’s surely worth thinking about what such a Jewish community might look like.

A glimpse of that hypothetical future community may be found in the 2017 American Jewish Committee’s Survey of American Jewish Opinion, the latest installment of the organization’s annual report on the attitudes of a representative sample of American Jews, conducted in August. The stark differences it finds between Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews today go far beyond varying patterns of religious observance, and suggest the profound social, political and ideological changes that may lie ahead.

The survey confirms that Orthodox Jews are highly pro-family and pro-natalist. An astounding 42 percent of the Orthodox respondents are aged 18-29, as compared to just 15 percent of Conservative Jews, 19 percent of Reform and 16 percent of those calling themselves “Just Jewish.” And despite their relative youth, 83 percent of the Orthodox respondents are married, far more than the 54 percent of Conservative, 52 percent of Reform and 44 percent of Just Jewish who are.

Jewish identity is strongest among the Orthodox. While virtually all respondents declared that being Jewish was important in their lives, a significant denominational difference emerged as to whether being Jewish ranked as very important: 99 percent of the Orthodox said it did, as compared to 71 percent of Conservatives, 44 percent of Reform, and 30 percent Just Jewish.

Another large gap emerged in regard to visiting Israel: 84 percent of the Orthodox had done so, 65 percent of Conservatives, 49 percent of Reform, and 37 percent of Just Jewish. A remarkable 66 percent of the Orthodox sample had been to Israel more than once — a higher rate than that for any of the non-Orthodox groups visiting once.

In addition, the AJC survey demonstrates intense political polarization between Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews. The Orthodox are far more politically conservative, Republican, and pro-Trump than other American Jews. Only 3 percent of the Orthodox sample describe themselves as liberal, as compared to 46 percent of Conservative Jews, 64 percent of Reform, and 60 percent of those who say they are Just Jewish. Sixty-nine percent of the Orthodox identify as politically conservative, as do only 29 percent of Conservative Jews, 14 percent of Reform, and 16 percent of Just Jewish. (About an additional 20 percent in each of the denominations identify as “moderate, middle-of-the-road.”)

Even as Orthodox Republicans outnumber Orthodox Democrats by 43 to 22 percent (the rest are Independents), other Jews are overwhelmingly Democratic — 52 percent of Conservatives, 70 percent of Reform, and 58 percent of the Just Jewish. And while 54 percent of the Orthodox voted for Trump in November, 60 percent of Conservatives, 89 percent of Reform Jews, and 78 percent of the Just Jewish voted for Hillary Clinton. When the survey was done in August, 71 percent of the Orthodox had a favorable impression of Trump’s performance as president. In contrast, 73 percent of the Conservatives, 88 percent of Reform, and 81 percent of the Just Jewish judged it unfavorably.

Responses to questions about Trump’s performance on specific policy issues — national security, terrorism, U.S.-Russia relations, NATO and the transatlantic alliance, race relations, immigration and the Iran nuclear issue — showed a similar pattern. Non-Orthodox respondents view the administration’s record unfavorably by roughly 3 to 1, even as the Orthodox give it favorable ratings by about the same margin.

On Israel, the survey findings clearly indicate that Orthodox Jews are much more hawkish and supportive of the current Israeli government than other Jews. Although clear majorities in all the non-Orthodox groups favor the establishment of a Palestinian state under current circumstances, 78 percent of the Orthodox oppose the idea. And asked their opinion of the way Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is handling his country’s relations with the U.S., 86 percent of Orthodox respondents approve, 51 percent “strongly.” In contrast, 38 percent of Conservatives, 51 percent of Reform, and 53 percent of the Just Jewish disapprove.

Questions on the relationship of religion and state in Israel elicited strong American Orthodox backing for the status quo. For example, 57 percent of the Orthodox believe that Israel’s recognition of Orthodoxy as the sole official form of Judaism has no effect on the country’s ties with American Jews, and another 28 percent feel it actually strengthens those ties. In sharp contrast, however, clear majorities of each of the non-Orthodox groups responded that the religious status quo in Israel in fact weakens the ties between the two Jewish communities.

If, indeed, American Jewry turns more Orthodox in coming years, and the Orthodox maintain their current values and views, we will see a community more family-centered, more strongly Jewish, more politically conservative, more

engaged with Israel and more committed to Israel’s Orthodox and right-leaning camps.

But before making plans to prepare for this future scenario, bear in mind that prognosticators have been wrong before.

Lawrence Grossman is the American Jewish Committee’s director of publications



CREDIT: COURTESY OF YITZCHOK MOULLY

“Man’s Search for Meaning,” by Yitzchok Mouilly, “The Pop Art Rabbi.” The BJV featured Mouilly’s work in May/June 2016, when Chabad of the Berkshires brought an exhibit of his canvases to Lenox. Since then, Mouilly’s work has continued to receive acclaim, and was not only exhibited this autumn in the 2017 Jerusalem Biennale for Contemporary Jewish Art (its theme “PopThodox / Black Humor”), but was also featured on the event’s poster. For more on The Pop Art Rabbi, visit Mouilly’s website at mouillyart.com.

Letters to the Editor

Think You’re *Tiftuf*? Try Your Hand at *Shechita*, Like This Camper

To the Editor:

I want to thank the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires for granting me the opportunity to go to Eden Village Camp again this summer. I had an incredible time there and was able to expand my knowledge of my religion and heritage.

Because one of the main focuses of the camp is farming and educating about food production, I was able to spend a lot of time farming and gardening. We were taught how to use Israeli methods of drip irrigation (*tiftuf*) to successfully water our crops. We got firsthand experience planting, weeding, and harvesting. On numerous occasions, the camp got into small groups to discuss how food is grown, how it is or is not kosher, and how meat production affects the climate.

One of the days, a small group of older campers went to learn about and participate in a kosher chicken slaughter with a *shochet*. That really opened my eyes to what it means to be kosher and to kill an animal for one’s food. We ate the chicken we killed a few days later.

I could go on and on about all the fun things we did at camp like playing sports, singing around a camp fire, hiking, having outdoor services...

This was my third summer at Eden Village. It was another great summer where I made friends and learned a lot. Thanks for your generosity.

Sincerely,
Ezra Rosenberg
The Berkshires

To Discuss Jewish Values with Dedicated Peers is a Privilege

Dear Jewish Federation:

Thank you for giving me money to go to Camp Ramah this summer. I feel most connected to my Judaism at Ramah, and the camp is a truly life-changing experience. The ability, for instance, to have an hour each day to discuss Jewish values with dedicated peers is a privilege that I know many Jews will never have. I hope to be able to return next year.

Talia Caine
Richmond

Letters to the Editor, continued

A Favorite Was The Blob – Head of Lower Bonim Unit Also Fun

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

Thank you so much for the scholarship to help me go to camp. My summer at Crane Lake Camp was, by far, one of the best summers of my life. On the morning of opening day, second session, I was nervous and scared, but mostly excited. Questions kept repeating in my head: "What if my bunkmates don't like me?" and "What if I have bad counselors?" All those questions flew out of my head as soon as we drove through the red gates. Counselors were waving, and they all had big smiles. I knew that this was going to be a great summer.

Once we kicked off the summer, we were doing all sorts of activities, including softball, soccer, football, hockey, ga ga, Just Dance, karaoke, talent show, and more. They were all very fun. One of my favorite activities was lake. There were giant inflatables! There was the trampoline, the rocket, the deep swim, the shallow swim, the Blob, and Pride Rock. The Blob was my favorite out of all of them. It was basically a giant pillow filled with air, where someone sits on the far end while another person jumps on the other end and launches you off into the water.

I also liked the services there. Everyone was up and doing the motions and singing along. They were fun to watch. The Lower Bonim unit head was also fun. My sister, my unit head, and I were all "related" (just for fun) – but as the summer progressed, I felt as if he were really my brother. The counselors, the unit heads, and the leadership team were not afraid to be energetic!! And they were all nice. I am glad that I got to go to Crane Lake Camp. I will never forget my camp brother, my bunkmates, my counselors, and my friends.

Sincerely,
Shira Sawyer
Great Barrington

Jewish Camp – Fun and Also Educational and Powerful

To The Editor:

Thank you so much to the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires for making it possible to go to Eden Village Camp this summer. I enjoyed my time there very much and especially loved all the Jewish experiences. Camp was/is a place where I can be myself and everyone supports me. It means a lot that I could go back for my third year.

Some of the cool Jewish things I did at camp: I made Shabbat candles and a Havdallah candle from scratch. We also got to make our own challah every Friday. On Saturday mornings, we put on skits that taught other campers about the *parshat ha'shavuah*. All of these activities were fun and also educational and powerful.

Eden Village is a special place and I am lucky that I go there. Thank you for being so generous. I really love camp.

Sincerely,
Maayan Rosenberg
The Berkshires

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The *Berkshire Jewish Voice* welcomes signed letters on subjects of interest to the Jewish community. Letters are printed upon space availability. The BJV reserves the right to edit all letters for content, length, and style. The BJV does not print anonymous letters, insults, libelous or defamatory statements. Published letters do not represent the views of the Federation, its board of directors, or the newspaper, but rather express the views of their authors. For verification purposes, please include full name, home address, and a day and evening telephone number. Send letters to: Berkshire Jewish Voice, 196 South Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201, or email: astern@jewishberkshires.org.

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Thank you volunteers Ellen Rosenblatt and the BJV delivery team, Michael Albert, Jeff Kramer, Roman Rozenblyum, and Ron Turbin

Something Called "Ruach" Got His Feet Moving

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires,

My name is Eliot Stern and this is my third year going to camp. I live in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and go to Knesset Israel and Chabad of the Berkshires. Thank you for being so generous towards my camp, JCC Camp Kingswood, located in Bridgeton, Maine.

One of my favorite parts of camp was Shabbat services. It was so nice sitting down twice a week and praying and being with your friends for two hours on Friday and Saturday. Another great thing about camp was that before every meal we would sing the *hamotzi* and after meals we would sing the *birkat ha'mazon*!

Also after Shabbat we would have *Havdallah*. We would all get in a circle and the C.I.Ts and counselors would walk around the circle with spices and candles so we could smell the spices and see the candles. Finally after Shabbat dinner the whole camp would go to the Old Wreck (which is a place where we hold events) to have something called *ruach* where you would dance to songs and have lots of fun. Again, thank you so much for making it possible for me to go to camp!

Sincerely,
Eliot Stern
Pittsfield



Eliot Stern (center) with pals from Camp Kingswood

Amazing Summer, New Friends, Such a Great Time

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

Thank you so much for your generous donation helping me go to Camp Eisner. I had an amazing summer and I made a lot of new friends and had such a great time.

I loved going to Shabbat services with everyone else. Thanks again!

Sincerely,
Emma Adelson
Lee

(Please see page 19 for Emma's sister Charlotte's story on her Federation-supported trip to Eastern Europe and Israel.)

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Berkshire Jewish Voice e-mail: astern@jewishberkshires.org
Phone: (413) 442-4360, ext. 11 Fax (413) 443-6070

Your Federation Presents

MY JEWISH YEAR, *continued from page 1*

the foreword to the book and explain how it differs from his own. "Her quest is more explicitly Jewish," he writes – an interesting, and apt, distinction. More importantly, she deflects any potential accusations of dilettantism by defining her objective in a meaningful and relatable way: "I wanted to understand what we non-Orthodox Jews are missing. Not just the facts and figures of Judaism, but their expression in real life. I wanted more of the intensity that I'd observed other people feeling."

I enjoyed Pogrebin's year of blogging as it unfolded because of the way she let the unique qualities of each holiday meet her where she was at – culturally and spiritually. I also liked the way she integrated her personal responses to her observance with valuable historical information and unconventional insights about the meaning of each holiday. I learned a lot. For the book, Pogrebin did more research and interviewed more people, but the emotional core of *My Jewish Year* remains intact from its original online incarnation.

I picked up the book over the summer in order to formulate some questions for Pogrebin in advance of her appearance at a Knosh and Knowledge originally scheduled for August. I had a hard time formulating those interview questions, not a problem I normally experience. I realized

that the difficulty was a result of my wanting to hear her thoughts on issues that were not directly addressed in the book, questions that reflected the concerns I was grappling with as part of my own Jewish life. After her talk was postponed until November 3, it became a valuable touchstone for me (along with Alan Lew's *This is Real and You Are Completely Unprepared*) during this year's High Holy Day season.

Pogrebin's greatest success is that the questions she raises prompt you to ask your own questions about Jewish observance, and the world view that may (or may not) underpin the rituals you repeat year after year. She characterizes herself as a "wondering Jew," and *My Jewish Year* – whether you read it straight through or in sections corresponding to the Jewish calendar – may make you one, as well.

IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

Date & Time: Friday, November 3 at 10:45 a.m.

Venue: Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington

Cost: \$11 with fresh buffet lunch. Program only, \$5.

Advance lunch reservations required for this event.

Email federation@jewishberkshires.org, or call (413) 442-4360, ext. 10

Q&A with Abigail Pogrebin

BJV: *In your epilogue, you write that you "are moved, more than anything, by what our tradition imposes: Moments of deliberate intermission." There is a clear tension between "imposes" and "intermission," and given all the description in your book of the preparation for (and sometimes recovery from) Jewish holidays, "moments" is also an interesting word. Can you expand on what you meant, and share the point in the process at which you had that insight?*

Abigail Pogrebin: It's a great question, because it hits on something that surprised and struck me once I had embarked on this expedition, namely that the demanding structure of the calendar itself – the rigor of ritual – begins to slow you down. Or it did for me. The cascade of early holidays from August to October was just one stretch that took me out of my own life. The fall holidays (which actually begin in August) forced me to look hard at my own character, my relationships, my blessings and what I owe the people who have less than I do. So while I was kind of "running" to keep up with these holidays, I was also pausing more often to think, to pray, to walk, to reflect. Jewish time is not voluntary, it's imposed. But I now believe there's a purpose to what it requires – to get off of our hamster wheels several times a year and take stock of why we're lucky and why we're responsible.

BJV: *In his review of your book in the NY Times, David Gregory called your Jewish year a "pilgrimage." How accurate is that characterization? In the end, how much of your journey felt spiritual and how much was anthropological?*

AP: I think "pilgrimage" is accurate in that it definitely was a journey, a trek, an exploration. And I certainly was looking for where it would take me. But I can't characterize it as just "spiritual" or "anthropological" because it was those things and more. It was intellectual. It was physical. It was journalistic and it was personal. I tried not to decide what I was looking for or hoping for. I wanted to go in armed with more understanding

and see if I could taste something spiritual.

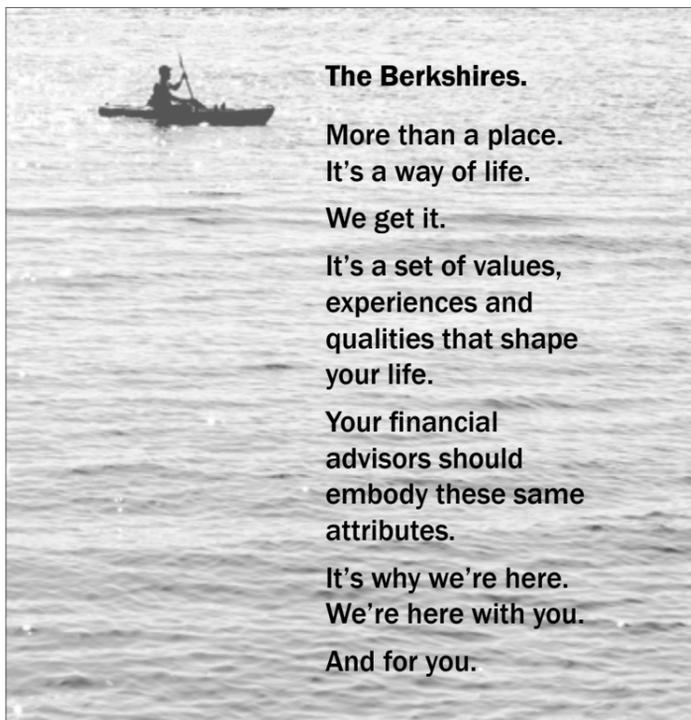
BJV: *I liked how you referred to the time between the holidays as "holidays from holidays," but it also made me consider how intense daily spiritual practice is for strictly observant Jews. Did you adopt a daily spiritual practice that connected to your holidays project, Jewish or otherwise?*

AP: The one daily spiritual practice that I've adopted is to say the traditional "Modeh Ani" prayer of thanks the instant I wake up, thanking God for returning my soul to me – in essence, giving me another day. If I learned anything in this "Jewish Year" it's that we have to pay attention to fragility. No one is guaranteed another day. So we should pause to notice that we were lucky enough to wake up and do everything we love to do one more time, see the people we love one more time. I became especially alert to this prayer when two people I know lost young spouses who died in their sleep.

BJV: *You write several times about how you felt carried through the year, and also about the communal experience of all showing up and slowing down together. Toward the end of the book, however, you describe a Friday evening at your shul: "Nothing is asked of me. I'm surrounded by friends but not obligated to them. We're connected but on our own." Those lines made me more acutely aware of the ways that Shabbat is specifically designed to foster this kind of personal experience within a communal context. Was your experience of Shabbat different from that of the holidays and, if so, how so?*

AP: Again, you point out a key dichotomy – between the communal experience and the private one. I would say my Shabbat is absolutely both – communal in that I'm buoyed and comforted by so many people around me reciting the same Hebrew passages each week, singing the same songs. But it's also intensely personal because no one but me knows the week I've had, or how the prayers and melodies are affecting me this time.

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Send cover letter and resume to Dara Kaufman, Executive Director, at dkaufman@jewishberkshires.org.

Your Federation Presents

Connecting With Community Programs / Kosher Hot Lunch

Programs in the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires' Connecting With Community series are free and start at 10:45 a.m. most Mondays and Thursdays at Knesset Israel (16 Colt Road, Pittsfield). Programs are followed by a kosher hot lunch. Lunch is a \$2 suggested donation for adults over 60 years of age or \$7 for all others. Advance reservations are required for lunch and can be made by calling (413) 442-2200 before 9 a.m. on the day of the program.

For further information on all programs, please call Nancy Maurice Rogers, program director, at (413) 442-4360, ext. 15. **For lunch menus and a chronological list of all scheduled programs, please see page 15.** Note that lunch menus are subject to change.

The Process of Aging, with Maggie Bittman

On October 30 and November 27, both Mondays at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires presents "The Process Of Aging" with therapist Maggie Bittman. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield, is part of the Federation's Connecting With Community series.

This program will provide an opportunity to be part of a group dialogue, created and facilitated by Bittman, who will explain her outlook and approach, emphasizing that aging begins at birth. She will discuss how all of us are confronted with four existential truths as we age – the search

to find meaning and purpose; facing mortality; experiencing aloneness; and engaging free will.

Bittman will highlight how this is a lifelong process, and the ways people return to these existential truths at each stage of life with the added wisdom that comes with aging. Within this context, participants will discuss, share and offer support, as they explore these existential truths.



Therapist Maggie Bittman

IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community

Venue: Knesset Israel

Date & Time: Monday, October 30 and November 27 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 15).

Cellblock Visions: Set Free in the Penitentiary

On Thursday, November 9 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires presents Phyllis Kornfeld, who will present "Cellblock Visions: Set Free in the Penitentiary," about her work creating art with people in prisons. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield, is part of the Federation's Connecting With Community series.

Phyllis Kornfeld is the author of *Cellblock Visions: Prison Art in America*, published by Princeton University Press. She has been working directly with incarcerated men and women around the country for 35 years—in all levels of security from county jail to death row—providing the transformative experience of creating beautiful art. Kornfeld worked with



"Kuality Nightmare" from the Cellblock Visions collection

some individuals for as long as 10 years.

Her presentation will provide a glimpse at the powerful artwork, drawings, paintings, and objects, created primarily by people she has worked with. She will also share the prisoners' candid insights about their lives, art, and imprisonment.

The Cellblock Visions Permanent Collection tours university galleries, and Kornfeld is the founder of several public projects whereby prison artists donate their artwork to benefit people in need. "The Envelope Project: Incarcerated Men and Women Making Art for a Cause" benefit sold hundreds of original pieces of envelope art from six institutions at the Outsider Art Fair in NYC.

IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community

Venue: Knesset Israel

Date & Time: Thursday, November 9 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 15).

Bringing Heritage to Life in the Berkshires

On Thursday, November 2 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires presents "Bringing Heritage to Life in the Berkshires," with Dan Bolognani, executive director of the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield, is part of the Federation's Connecting With Community series.

The Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area (Housatonic Heritage) is a program that serves 29 communities in the Housatonic River watershed region. Created by Congress, and funded through the National Park Service, this program supports culture, history and natural resource organizations throughout Berkshire and Litchfield Counties. The group has been working in our neighborhoods for over 15 years, supporting youth education, natural resource conservation, and historical societies, as well bringing creative programs to the region's downtowns.

Dan Bolognani is a lifelong resident of the area who possesses a broad knowledge of and appreciation for the region's heritage, and couples that knowledge with a 'big picture' view of the many fine organizations that exist in our communities. In his capacity as director of sales and



Dan Bolognani

marketing at several area resorts, and as a member of the Berkshire Visitors Bureau's board of directors, he has seen first-hand the immense value of sustaining the authentic fabric of our beautiful area. Dan continues to serve as a board member and/or advisor to several nonprofit organizations, working to illuminate local heritage and improve the region's economy for all who live and visit here.

IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community

Venue: Knesset Israel

Date & Time: Thursday, November 2 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 15).

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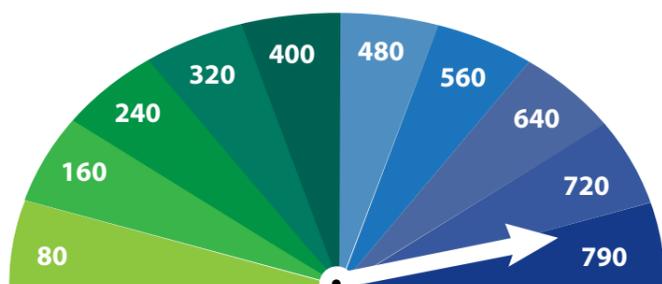
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THANK YOU FOR MAKING DIFFERENCE!



“Just Plain Folk” – American Music with Lee Rogers

On Monday, November 20, at 10:45 a.m., musician Lee Rogers will mine his repertoire of folk songs and share some favorites and also some lesser known tunes that stem from the older folk tradition. As Thanksgiving approaches, Rogers says this classic American music will put everyone in a cheerful and festive holiday mood.

This free program at Kneset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield, is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

Lee Rogers is also a professional photographer who works at Bard College of Simon’s Rock. He plays music in and around Berkshire County at various indoor and outdoor venues.



Lee Rogers

IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community

Venue: Kneset Israel

Date & Time: Monday, November 20, at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 15).

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

Berkshire JEWISH VOICE

A publication of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, serving the Berkshires and surrounding NY, CT and VT

Thank you to our supporters!

The Berkshire Jewish Voice extends a very special “thank you” for the generosity extended thus far by 177 households YTD who have sent in their contributions for voluntary subscriptions to the paper in 2017.

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- Jewish Federation of the Berkshires Camp Scholarship Fund
- Dr. Arthur & Helen Maislen Camp Scholarship Fund
- Jewish Women’s Foundation of Berkshire County

APPLICATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 16

Download an application at jewishberkshires.org or pick one up at the Federation’s office, 196 South St., Pittsfield, MA

Additional funding is available:

- Harold Grinspoon Foundation (hgf.org): \$1,000-\$1,500 grants
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Your Federation Presents

2017 Grants Announced by The Jewish Women's Foundation of Berkshire County

Thirteen worthy projects chosen

The Jewish Women's Foundation of Berkshire County continues to support vital local programs in the Jewish and broader Berkshire community. Dedicated to sharing Jewish values by meeting unmet needs in the community and supporting social action, the group conducted an open grant application process, inviting community organizations to submit grant proposals for funding.

From a pool of 20 applications, 13 worthy projects across Berkshire County were chosen to receive a total of \$24,800 in support. The recipients are:

Alchemy Initiative/Downtown Pittsfield Farmers Market: Funding for the Double Value Program, a money-matching program for low-income residents using SNAP, WIC and Senior FMNP benefits.

Barrington Stage Company, Inc.: Funds to support the Playwright Mentoring Project for youth ages 13-19, which uses the tools of theatre to help at-risk youth.

Berkshire Baby Box: Funds to provide Swedish baby boxes and supplies to low income new mothers.

Berkshire Children & Families: Funding for teacher training to support Kids 4 Harmony Music Program.

Berkshire Community Diaper Project, Inc.: Funds to facilitate the more economical purchase of diapers in bulk.

Berkshire Hills Regional School District: Funds for summertime food supplies

sent to the homes in backpacks for identified children in need, plus a reading program supporting summer literacy.

Berkshire Pulse: Funding for the Young Choreographers Initiative.

Center for Peace Through Culture (CPC): Funds for the year-long Life School program to introduce practical techniques that promote psychological and physical well-being.

Construct, Inc.: Funding for THRIVE: Transitional Housing to translate successful elements of transitional housing work to community-based clients.

Literacy Network of South Berkshire, Inc.: Diversify LitNet's collection of teaching materials to support students seeking high school equivalency.

Railroad Street Youth Project: To strengthen mentoring programs for at-risk teens.

Volunteers in Medicine Berkshires: To continue funding the services of a community social worker working with patients.

In addition, the Foundation continued their ongoing support of these additional programs in 2017:

- The Jewish Transportation Network
- The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires' Community Seder
- BMC's Care Navigation – Medical Transport Program
- Food Insecurity (supplemental Meals on Wheels)

This year, the Women's Foundation also became a community partner in the Federation's PJ Library program. PJ Library is an outreach and engagement program that sends free, age-appropriate Jewish themed books and occasional musical selections to the homes of families with children ages six months through 8 years of age on a monthly basis. A program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, PJ Library is funded locally by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and the Spitz

Tuchman Family Fund.

"We are so grateful that the Women's Foundation has joined our efforts to bring PJ Library books and family friendly programs to families across the Berkshires. PJ Library is one of the core ways we can engage young families in Jewish life and connect them to each other and our community" said Dara Kaufman, Federation's executive director.

Founded in 2010, the Jewish Women's Foundation of Berkshire County operates un-

der the auspices of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. Its membership has grown to 117 women in 2017.

Elaine Silberstein and Liz Jaffe, the Women's Foundation's co-presidents, say the group realizes its work in Berkshire County is just beginning. "We are so pleased that we can support our local community in this meaningful way and we're grateful to our members who contribute their time and resources to make this impact," says Liz Jaffe.



Jewish Federation
OF THE BERKSHIRES | Jewish Women's Foundation

Building Bridges Between Israel and Local Communities

On Monday, November 6 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Israeli Young Emissaries who are creating meaningful connections and living bridges between partnership communities in the US and Israel, through the Federation-funded Partnership2gether program of the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI). This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield, is part of the Federation's Connecting With Community series.

Sivan Gvili and Ziv Lavi will share their personal perspectives on the life of young adults in Israel and share more about their work as part of a group of twelve Young Emissaries living and working in six southern New England communities who participate in the Afula-Gilboa Partnership.

Instead of entering the Israel Defense Forces immediately after high school,

as in the public schools. Incorporating these young Israelis into schools and communal programs is an incredible opportunity for students, families, and the community at large. These students are role models of the best Israel has to offer. The Young Emissary Program is a joint project of the Jewish Agency and Jewish Federations of North America.

Sivan Gvili is from the southern Israeli city of Ashkelon, where she majored in biology and Arabic in high school. She chose to learn Arabic because she thinks it is very important for the Israeli people to know both the languages in Israel. A talented lacrosse player, Sivan played in the 2015 World Cup and was a member of the Israeli National Lacrosse team in this year's Maccabiah games. A longtime participant in the Israeli Scouts, she mentored 5th grade boys scouts and worked with a special needs group. As a Diller Teen Fellow, Sivan spent 15 months

exploring Jewish identity, leadership, and service, building connections to other Jewish youth from across North America and Israel.

Ziv Lavi is from Kfar-Vitkin, a moshav north of Tel Aviv, where she majored in chemistry and biology in high school. Focusing much of her volunteer work on serving children, Ziv has volunteered as a mentor and song leader at a boys' boarding school shelter, with children with special needs, and with the children in the oncology department of Schneider Hospital. Singing is an

important part of Ziv's life. She has spent over 15 years as a member of the Moran Choir, and has traveled the world performing in Choral concerts in China, South Korea, France, and Switzerland. Ziv was also Israel's champion for middle-distance running in her age bracket.

The Federation also sends a special thank you to the Jewish Federation of Eastern Connecticut for sharing Sivan and Ziv with us for this learning opportunity.

IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community

Venue: Knesset Israel

Date & Time: Monday, November 6 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 15).



Sivan Gvili and Ziv Lavi

Israeli Young Emissaries defer their army service for a year, and go through an intense year-long training process in order to perform a year of service in Jewish communities across the United States. The Emissaries are trained as experiential, hands-on educators, working toward creating meaningful connections and living bridges between their partnership communities in the US and Israel. Most have leadership backgrounds in the Israeli youth movements.

The emissaries live with American host families and work in local Jewish schools, JCCs, and Federations, as well

A Day of Holocaust Education in NYC

Museum of Jewish Heritage
Sunday, December 3, 2017

Meeting Hate with Humanity

7th and 8th grade Jewish students from across the Berkshires are invited, with an adult chaperone, to join us for this meaningful day of learning.

We will have a guided tour and explore life during the Holocaust through the eyes of the children. We will also have the opportunity to hear from a Survivor who will share their personal story.

FREE for Jewish teens in 7th and 8th grade

and their adult chaperone (one per family). No affiliation required. Includes bus transportation, admission, guided tour, speaker and lunch.

To register contact your congregation's school administrator or contact Dara Kaufman at dkaufman@jewishberkshires.org.

This trip is made possible thanks to the generosity of the Jewish Women's Foundation with support from the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires.

Your Federation Presents



Your Federation Dollars at Work

Your Response to Recent Devastating Storms and Earthquakes

As Hurricanes Harvey and Irma battered the southern United States and the Caribbean late this summer, the Jewish community quickly activated to help those in crisis.

Hurricane Harvey – one of the most devastating hurricanes on record in U.S. history – delivered its worst blows to Houston's Jewish community. Nearly three-quarters of the city's Jewish population live in areas that received extensive flooding, and nearly every Jewish-owned business and institution has felt the impact in some way. For many, this is the third time in as many years that they have had to rebuild after a hurricane.

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, along with Federations across North America, immediately set up the Hurricane Relief Fund to help meet urgent needs such as food, medicine, cleaning supplies and trauma counseling, and to enable rebuilding.

More than \$14 million has been raised so far by Jewish federations, foundations, and the Government of Israel, including more than \$15,000 raised by the Berkshire Jewish community coupled with an emergency assistance grant from our Federation. In addition, Hevreh of Southern Berkshire was able to donate \$30,000 to relief efforts, made possible by the Barrington Foundation.

The money raised is a little over one third of the estimated \$30 million needed to rebuild. Experts say that full recovery could take many years.

Already, that money is being put to use. In the first few days after the hurricane, Federation helped displaced and affected families with urgently needed temporary housing, food, and cleaning supplies.

After flooding and released toxins rendered homes and large parts of the central JCC nearly unusable, distraught families were able to send their children to a day camp so that they could focus on recovery and rebuilding.

Three synagogues have catastrophic damage, and rabbis are working tirelessly to help congregants in need. Initial grants have been given to rabbis to help congregants rebuild.

To help Houstonians, the Hebrew Free Loan Association will match resources from four cities to create a new Hurricane Harvey loan pool.

Without much time to recover after Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, one of the largest storms on record, hit the East Coast. The storm caused widespread damage and flooding and left more than 10 million people without power for many days. Federation quickly expanded its relief efforts

to include communities affected by Irma and all other hurricanes that followed.

The impact on the Jewish community in this case was more widespread. Major flooding in Naples and Jacksonville, and the catastrophic damage in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Key West, heavily impacted individual Jewish families. A number of Jewish communal institutions also sustained severe damage in Key West, Miami, Naples, and St. Augustine.

The prolonged power outages left tens of thousands of older adults isolated in apartment buildings throughout Florida, with a big concentration in Broward County. Emergency outreach and wide-scale distribution of meals, water, and ice were provided, with Federation, Jewish Family Service agencies, and Chabad extremely active on this front.

Hurricane Maria

On the heels of Harvey and Irma, Hurricane Maria had a crushing impact on several island nations and in Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rican Jewish community of about 1,500 people has two synagogues and a Chabad presence. The entire power grid for the island will be out for months and the challenges ahead for the Jewish community and for the general population are enormous. Jewish Federations of North America expanded its relief efforts directing support to the beleaguered Island and working actively with local leadership in Puerto Rico to bring assistance to the island as quickly as possible by providing emergency assistance, trauma counseling, medical and construction supplies.

Caribbean Communities Outside the US and the Earthquake in Mexico

Federation funded overseas partners, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), also escalated their response to the Caribbean Islands affected by the hurricanes outside the U.S. and in Mexico, where at least 96

people died in the 8.1 magnitude quake that struck off the southern Pacific coast in September.

Volunteers from JAFI were able to immediately mobilize in two Mexican communities, packing and distributing food parcels, clean water and early childhood packages consisting of diapers, milk substitutes and other necessities.

The JDC was able to immediately work with CADENA, their humanitarian partner in the Mexican Jewish community, to provide search and rescue support and emergency aid.

And following Hurricane Irma's wrath in the Caribbean, including Cuba and Haiti where JDC has a long-standing presence, they were able to move quickly to support the Cuban Jewish community and provide critical relief throughout the region by offering hygiene kits, safe drinking water, psychosocial support for children, and access to safe educational facilities.

More Help is Urgently Needed

In times of turmoil we can remind the world, and one another, that there's a simple and powerful way to make these dark times a bit brighter: caring for each other and those in need. It is because of support from you and thousands of others like you that Federation and its partners, can be on the front lines as soon as disaster strikes – but the work is not done. **More help is urgently needed.**



Piles of ruined books from United Orthodox Synagogues of Houston. The congregation lost many of its prayer books and replenished them through donations. (Courtesy of United Orthodox Synagogues via JTA)

If you would like to help, please donate directly to the Hurricane Relief Fund through our website at jewishberkshires.org or send a check directly to Jewish Federations of North America (Memo: Hurricane Relief), Wall Street Station, PO Box 157, New York, NY 10268.

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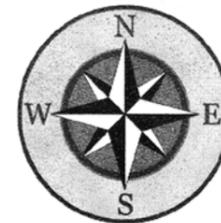
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Your Federation Presents

Local History on Film

A Trumpet at the Walls of Jericho: The Untold Story of Samuel Harrison

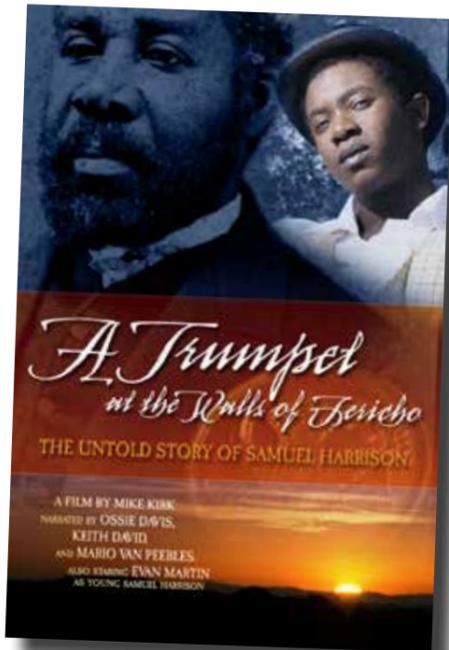
On Thursday, November 16 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires will screen *A Trumpet at the Walls of Jericho: The Untold Story of Samuel Harrison*, the story of a 19th-century visionary (and freed slave who lived in Pittsfield) who fought prejudice, slavery, and war. This free program at Kneset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation's Connecting With Community series.

This screening was postponed from last August. The film will begin at 10:45 a.m., and will break for lunch before noon, continuing after lunch. The film's running time is 2 hours.

The Samuel Harrison House at 82 Third Street in downtown Pittsfield is on the National Register of Historic Places. Built about 1850, it was for many years the home of Samuel Harrison, a prominent African American minister and a giant of his time in the civil rights and anti-slavery movement. He was born a slave in 1818 (he and his mother were freed in 1821) and lived until 1900, crossing paths with many of the great figures of the 19th century, including John Brown, Frederick Douglas, Mark Hopkins, and Herman Melville.

During the Civil War, Harrison served as chaplain of the famed Massachusetts 54th Regiment commanded by 26-year old colonel Robert Gould Shaw, the first all black infantry to fight in the conflict. The exploits of this unit were dramatized in the movie *Glory*. Harrison also went head to head with Abraham Lincoln over equal pay for blacks serving in the Union Army, and won – in 1864, Congress granted equal pay for the 180,000 blacks who fought on the side of the North.

Harrison left an impressive record of years of dedicated service, and his words provide an insight into the thoughts and aspirations of African-Americans during a critical era of American history. The film is narrated by the late Ossie Davis, his final completed project before his death. Also contributing are filmmaker Mario Van Peebles and jazz trumpeter Wynton Marsalis. The film was written, directed, and produced by Mike Kirk.



IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community

Venue: Kneset Israel

Date & Time: Thursday, November 16 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 15).

Flexibility Training for Seniors, with Thea Basis

On Monday, November 13 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes back Thea Basis, a certified senior fitness specialist who will present the next installment of "Silver Wellness and Nutrition for Seniors," this time focusing on flexibility. This is a drop-in series, with no prior registration necessary. This free program at Kneset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation's Connecting With Community series.

"Tight, shortened muscles can affect our joints," says Thea Basis, a certified senior fitness specialist and orthopedic exercise specialist. "In this class we will learn routines that we can safely practice at home to keep ourselves more limber, and reduce stiffness. I will guide the group through this process." The class includes a warm-up, light cardio, strength training, and stretching.

Thea Basis earned an ACE Group Fitness Instructor Certification in 1988. She specializes in the conditions that make exercising more challenging, including arthri-



Thea Basis

tis, fragility, balance and gait issues, respiratory disease, diabetes, and lack of motivation. She is also an orthopedic exercise specialist serving groups and individuals in promoting healthy, independent lifestyles, while addressing the unique challenges of aging.

IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community

Venue: Kneset Israel

Date & Time: Monday, November 13 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 15).

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

Immigrants in the Berkshires: Welcoming Newcomers, and Why It Matters

On Thursday, November 30 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Brooke Mead, director of the Berkshire Immigrant Center, for "Immigrants in the Berkshires: Welcoming Newcomers and Why It Matters." This free program at Kneset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation's Connecting With Community series.

Mead will provide an overview of the Berkshire Immigrant Center, who they are and what they do. She will share myths and facts about Berkshire immigrants, and talk about why the estimated 10,000 foreign-born residents of the Berkshires are so important to our region. Mead will also be prepared to answer questions about the current state of immigration policy at the local, state and federal levels.

Brooke Mead was formerly a high school Spanish teacher and holds her masters degree in Spanish from Middlebury College. She has lived in Venezuela and Mexico and, having been an immigrant herself, brings with her the cultural understanding and sensitivity necessary to work with the immigrant and refugee population.



Brooke Mead

IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community

Venue: Kneset Israel

Date & Time: Thursday, November 30 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 15).

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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

Your Federation Presents

Go Blue & White Sox!



Attendees at the Federation's Connecting to Community kosher lunch program welcomed the young Israeli baseball players of the "Blue & White Sox," players from the Israel Baseball Association. Organized by Ira Moskowitz, a native Berkshire now living in Israel, the team was in town for a baseball tournament at the Dan Duquette Sports Academy located in Hinsdale, MA.

Federation and Berkshire Community Diaper Project Lend a Hand

By Sandra Josel / Special to the BJV

A few months back Dara Kaufman, the executive director of our Federation, reached out to me in my capacity as a board member of the Berkshire Community Diaper Project. The Berkshire Community Diaper Project purchases and delivers diapers to local food pantries and programs across Berkshire County for distribution to low income families using public services.

Dara shared her concern for a local Jewish family whose toddler suffered from Short Bowel Syndrome. This mal-absorption disorder is caused by a lack of functional small intestine. The primary symptom of this chronic condition is diarrhea that can lead to dehydration, malnutrition, and weight loss. Because of her condition, this sweet child required frequent diaper changes to avoid irritations, rashes, and infections, but the cost was putting a significant strain on this already struggling family.

The family already received some diapers and other services by using public services when possible. Dara inquired whether there was any way of providing some extra, since this child needed so many more changes than normal, especially when her illness

flared up. The family had thought about cloth diapers but the child attended a day-care program which required disposable diapers only.

Did you know that a child cannot attend day care or nursery school if they do not have enough disposable diapers on hand daily? Diaper need is often invisible, but we know that it affects about 30 percent of families with low income or that are in distress. Diapers can cost up to \$100 a month, and they are not covered by many of the social service agencies like WIC or by the Food Stamp program.

Often parents will have to miss work and stay home with a child if they cannot bring disposable diapers to the school, defeating the purpose by not working and earning enough money to buy diapers. More often it's a question of having money for food, medical expenses or gas for a car to get them to work.

With Federation acting as the connecting organization to this family, the Berkshire Community Diaper Project stepped in to help with this special need.

Started in 2014, the Berkshire Community Diaper Project has distributed over

295,000 diapers to families in need. Diapers are bought in bulk on a monthly basis, with the help of the National Diaper Bank Network. Boxes are stored at a warehouse in Lee (for free), and then distributed by volunteers to the various distributions centers as needed. One hundred percent of the tax deductible donations we receive are spent on diapers, as the program is run by a group of dedicated volunteers and no overhead or administrative costs are incurred.

The collaboration of Federation and the Berkshire Community Diaper Project helping people in need is a work in progress and will continue if others in our Jewish community find themselves in distress and require a little extra assistance.

Sandra Josel lives in Alford and is a retired clinical social worker (LCSW). She is a member and former trustee on the board of Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, where she also co-chaired this year's BerkshireSPEAKS. In addition to her work on the board of the Berkshire Community Diaper Project, she is a past president of the Alford Garden Club.

Check out our website!

www.jewishberkshires.org

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Your Federation Presents

Pajama Donations Will Keep Kids in Need Warm This Winter

As chilly weather returns to the Berkshires, the PJ Library Pajama Drive conducted by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires also returns to help the many children in our community who may lack the comfort of warm sleepwear. Last year's effort collected more than 150 pairs of pajamas from individuals, groups, and local businesses, and the push this year will build on that success. The Pajama Drive will be conducted from November 3 through December 8.

Donors can drop off brand new pajamas (sizes newborn to teen) at the following locations:

- Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, 196 South Street, Pittsfield
- Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington
- Congregation Beth Israel, 53 Lois Street, North Adams

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

PJ Library is a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and is offered locally by



the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires thanks to generous funding from local donors, the Spitz Tuchman Family Fund and the Jewish Women's Foundation of Berkshire County. The program provides free monthly books and music

with Jewish content to children ages 6 months through 8 years of age.

For more information about PJ Library and the Pajama Drive, contact Susan Frisch Lehrer at (413) 442-4360, ext. 14.

Yasher Koach, Joe's Project Volunteers



Thank you to the more than 100 volunteers who helped in sending out over 300 Rosh Hashanah gift bags to residents in senior facilities, nursing homes, homebound folks, and those who are ill in our Jewish community. Federation wishes to thank our local PJ Library families and campers from Eisner Camp and Crane Lake Camp who made some very creative designs on the gift bags. And, extra thanks are sent to our volunteer bakers who worked with Susan Gordon at Bagels Too, our bag packers and all of the families and individuals who delivered the bags throughout the Berkshires and Southern VT. Thank you, too, to Merle Ferber for helping us compile the lists of recipients. *Today rabah* to all who participated in this important mitzvah!

(From left: Anne Hershman, Volunteer Coordinator Susan Frisch Lehrer, Alice Jonas, Martin Jonas, Major Donor Brunch co-chairs Elie Katzman and Marilyn Katzman, Esther Budnick, and Marilyn Schwartzberg.)

A Day of Holocaust Education and Remembrance for 7th and 8th Graders

Sponsored by the Jewish Women's Foundation of Berkshire County and Federation

From 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday, December 3, the Jewish Women's Foundation of Berkshire County, in collaboration with the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, will sponsor "A Day of Holocaust Education and Remembrance" at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in Manhattan.

This program for b'nai mitzvah students and other 7th and 8th grade affiliated and non-affiliated Jewish students is free. Post-b'nai mitzvah students who did not attend the last trip in 2015 are also welcome to join. We further extend the invitation to one parent or chaperone per family, as well as to one rabbi and one educator from each congregation.

There will be pickup and drop-off sites in both Lenox (Price Chopper) and Great Barrington (Big Y), exact times to be determined. A kosher lunch will be served after arrival at the museum, and dinner will be en route back to the Berkshires

There will be a guided tour exploring life during the Holocaust



through the eyes of children. A Holocaust survivor will share a personal story about their experiences.

Congregations are responsible for communicating trip details to students, obtaining accurate RSVP numbers for their respective classes, and submitting final reservation lists with names of all attendees by November 20. Unaffiliated students wishing to attend should contact Dara Kaufman, executive director of the Federation.

For more information, please call (413) 442-4360, ext. 10.

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Your Federation Presents

Illuminations of Genocide

“Thinking through art” about a challenging topic with Amy Fagin at the December 1 Knosh & Knowledge

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Friday, December 1, Knosh & Knowledge hosts genocide scholar, author, and illumination artist Amy Fagin for a visual perspective of global incidents of genocide and mass violence. Fagin has traveled throughout the world in her study of genocides and creates illuminations to interpret the politics of justice and truth.

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

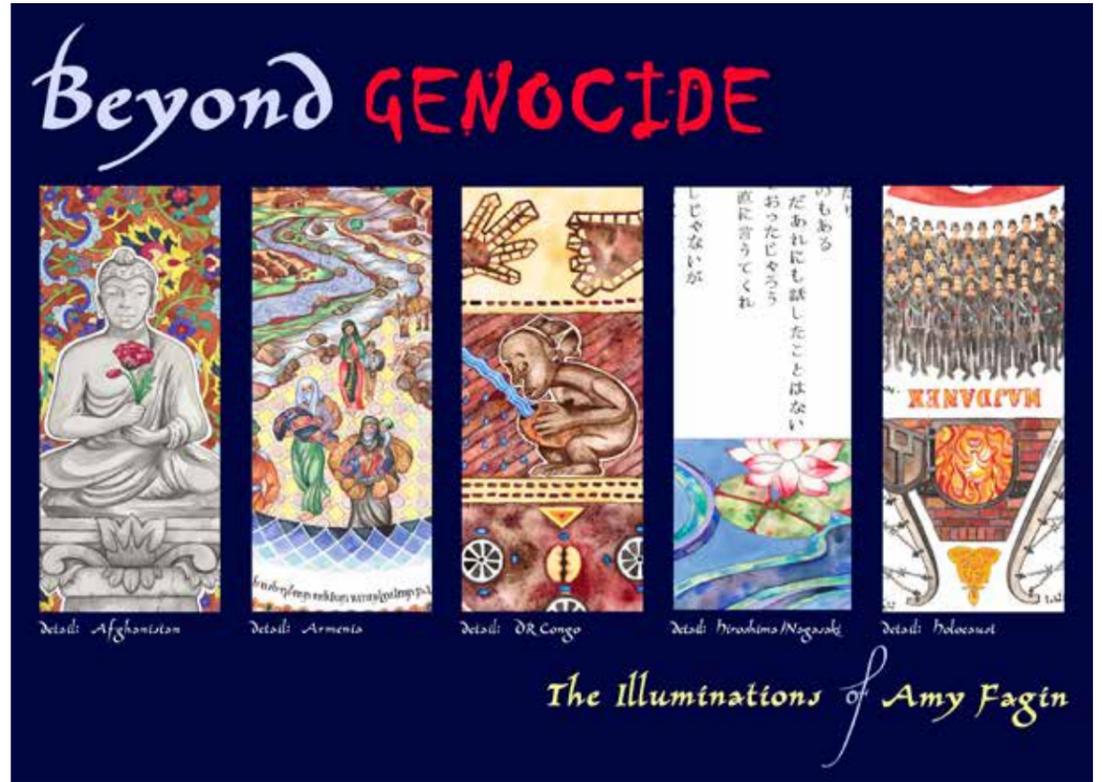
Amy Fagin’s presentation will begin with a brief background of the concepts of genocide and prevention, and then lead into discussion. She will introduce her artistic process that results in individual illuminations that are similar to historical illuminated manuscripts. She will engage in discussion on art, genocide, prevention, and the 21st century, sharing information about current areas of the world where mass scale violations are occurring.

Fagin’s *Beyond Genocide* is an emerging series of illuminations narrating a visual documentary arts perspective

on global incidents of genocide and mass violence. She is also an independent scholar in genocide studies and conducts research seminars, lectures, workshops and advisory work on global initiatives of memory and memorialization through individual and collective arts expression and the museum experience.

Fagin is a visual artist specializing in the traditional art form of manuscript illumination, embracing modern techniques and applications. Her body of work represents a meta-modernist approach to the materials, techniques, and theoretical principals used in manuscript illumination for contemporary consideration. She has contributed expertise in international consultative events such as the African Union Human Rights Memorial Project in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and the 5th International Symposium on Genocide and the Pursuit of Justice in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Fagin currently serves on the executive board of the International Association of Genocide Scholars and as an international advisor for the Winter School in Genocide



Studies Dhaka, Bangladesh. She regularly publishes editorials, reviews, and essays on genocide, memory, memorialization, art, and 21st century expression and education, conducting scholars’ travel seminars to societies victimized by mass violence to better understand the social processes and pursuits of collective memory, truth, and justice.

IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

Date & Time: Friday, December 1 at 10:45 a.m.

Venue: Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington

Cost: \$11 with fresh buffet lunch. Program only, \$5.

Advance lunch reservations required for this event.

Email federation@jewishberkshires.org, or call (413) 442-4360, ext. 10

Calling All Berkshire Artists: Connect and Create through Project Zug

Inspired learning and art making with Israelis through the Berkshires’ Afula-Gilboa Partnership

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and other communities in Southern New England, as part of their partnership with the Afula-Gilboa region of Israel, are introducing a new program that will allow artists to collaborate on original art projects. Leveraging the resources of Project Zug, an online learning platform that connects Americans and Israelis, this free 10-week program begins January 8, 2018.

Artists will be paired together in order to explore themes suggested by the Book of Psalms. They will be using Project Zug’s facilitated curriculum and online video chat technology, and then create joint artistic interpretations of the text. (“Zug” means pair in Hebrew.)

The final works of art will come together for a traveling exhibition throughout our local communities (including the Berkshires), accompanied by some of the Israeli partners.

Artists of all levels working in any medium are eligible to participate. A Partnership2Gether facilitator and Israeli coordinator will pair artists from the Berkshires and Afula-Gilboa. Knowledge of Hebrew is not necessary.

Each week, Zug artists will receive a simple document with a few selections of text and guiding questions. Pairs will schedule a convenient time to meet together online via Skype or Google Hangout, usually for 30 to 45

minutes. (A strong and reliable internet connection and a computer on which you can video conference will be necessary.)

The text and questions are only intended to serve as a starting point – artists are expected and encouraged to bring their own life experiences into the conversation, and respond to current events and other themes. At the beginning and end of each month, the Zug facilitator will share a brief framing video that will allow participants to gauge their progress. Online forums will allow participants to share work and engage with other Zug pairs.

Registration must be completed online by November 12 via the Project Zug home page – projectzug.org. Use group code: P2G_Afula-NE. For more information, contact Dara Kaufman at (413) 442-4360, ext. 12.

About Project Zug

Project Zug is an online learning platform operated by Mechon Hadar and Panin, two Jewish outreach organizations, that also offers other educational opportunities to connect Americans and Israelis. Check out their website for more information on courses on topics related to the Bible, social justice, history, rabbinic literature, and prayer and spirituality.



The past few weeks have wreaked devastation and caused catastrophic damage and trauma from Houston to Florida, Puerto Rico to St. Thomas. And the season is not yet over.

Your support is still greatly needed!

Give online at jewishberkshires.org

or send check to:

The Jewish Federations of North America
Wall Street Station, PO Box 157, New York, NY 10268

100% of funds raised will be used to help those impacted by catastrophic flooding and damage cause by recent hurricanes.



When Our Community Needs Us, We Are There

LOCAL NEWS

BACKYARD BOUNTY, *continued from page 1*

of fruit trees in yards throughout southern Berkshire County. That fruit, he reckoned, could be donated to food pantries or other providers of sustenance to the needy.

Horowitz not only had a good idea, but also presented it to the right person – Mark Lefenfeld of Great Barrington, a retired lawyer and past president of Hevreh of Southern Berkshire.

“We’re both compulsive,” says Lefenfeld, and thus Backyard Bounty of the Berkshires was born.

Lefenfeld and Horowitz started to explore ways to make this vision a reality in preparation for the 2016 harvest. The idea was to start small, explained Horowitz, with the partners taking a methodical approach in their planning to ensure that their ambitions could be realized. “Lots of people have wonderful ideas,” says Lefenfeld. “We dug in our heels because we knew that there was a lot we did not know.”

They had enlisted 25 homeowners and 30 pickers for what was to be the 2016 debut of Backyard Bounty, but their ambitions were temporarily thwarted when Mother Nature did not cooperate – a warm snap during late winter caused fruit trees across the region to blossom prematurely. The killing frost that ensued destroyed the blossoms, and trees bore a small fraction of the fruit that they would normally be expected to produce.

Though temporarily unable to implement Backyard Bounty, Horowitz and Lefenfeld’s planning continued. The scant harvest of 2016 provided one of their first lessons learned – when they finally got rolling in 2017, they would not only gather fruit, but vegetables, as well. This “bifurcation of the original idea,” says Lefenfeld,

is designed to ensure that Backyard Bounty will be able to access some kind of fresh produce (and keep its volunteers mobilized and motivated) no matter what the growing season might be like.

Horowitz and Lefenfeld had to forge relationships with homeowners with fruit trees and vegetable gardens; volunteers who could pick and transport produce; and commercial farmers who might have a surplus. “We were particularly sensitive to the farmers,” says Lefenfeld, “as they operate on a razor’s edge economically. We didn’t want to take anything they could otherwise sell.” He and Horowitz visited local farmers markets as they shut down, asking for unsold items that vendors did not want to transport back to their farms. They also inquired whether the farmers might have crops that had been left unpicked.

Horowitz and Lefenfeld also developed a relationship with Barbara Zheutlin, executive director of Berkshire Grown, a Great Barrington group that links farmers in the Berkshires and beyond, as well as advocating for locally-grown and produced food to create a thriving local food economy.

Horowitz reports that among homeowners, awareness of Backyard Bounty spread by word of mouth, first in 2016, and then this season as work got underway. “We have the best homeowners,” he says, adding that sometimes neighbors will see the volunteers picking, and when they find out the fruit is being donated, will offer some from their own trees. “Most homeowners don’t spray their trees,” says Horowitz, “so the apples aren’t perfect. We stress that ‘ugly apples taste good.’”

But gathering the produce is only half the logistical chal-

lenge – distributing the food to where it is needed in a timely fashion is the second, perhaps more challenging, part of the equation. Lefenfeld says an early challenge was “supply versus our ability to distribute. We had too much supply.”

Backyard Bounty reached out to the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, which maintains a network of member food agencies in the Berkshires and the Pioneer Valley. They sent out an email on behalf of Backyard Bounty, and “got a great response,” according to Lefenfeld.

In its inaugural season, Backyard Bounty distributed 7,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables. As its co-founders wrapped up their first harvest season in mid-October, they shared their takeaways.

“We’re going to have to time our gleanings more effectively,” says Lefenfeld. “We missed peak picking times, and we don’t pick up fruit that is already on the ground. We could have doubled our yield.” He says that they need to learn more about the trees and farming, in general.

Finding out more about refrigeration options in order to preserve green leafy vegetables is what Horowitz identifies as another major goal. Both partners say they also want to find more effective ways to use their volunteers. “We want to give them more ownership,” says Lefenfeld, “and delegate more responsibility in the future. This is truly a communitywide effort”

Backyard Bounty of the Berkshires is looking ahead to 2018, and invites members of the community to participate.

Visit their website: www.backyardbountyberkshires.org. They’re looking for fruit growers, local farmers, gleaners, and distributors.



Some of the “ugly apples” gleaned off backyard trees



Produce delivered to a local food pantry

RABBI WAX, *continued from page 1*

Rabbi Wax says he is enjoying connecting with students and has learned “how much counseling is a part of this work. All chaplains at Williams are here to support students of all religions.” He joins a collaborative staff of three other chaplains – Rev. Rick Spalding (Chaplain to the College), Fr. Gary C. Caster (Catholic), and Sharif Rosen (Muslim).

Rabbi Wax oversees an active campus Jewish community (approximately 10 percent of Williams students are Jewish), working with the Williams College Jewish Association in planning events at the handsome Jewish Religious Center on campus. There he leads holiday services and a weekly Friday night service, which is followed by a student-prepared meal in the center’s kosher kitchen.

According to Williams College sophomore Jacob Lezberg: “My sister Emma and I are both on the Williams College Jewish Association (WCJA) board, which organizes a variety of events on campus for both the Jew-

ish community and general student body. For example, roughly 80 to 100 students (of many faiths and backgrounds) come to the Jewish Center on campus each week for Shabbat dinner. Different student groups sign up to help cook, which is a wonderful way to bring normally disparate parts of our community together.

“Rabbi Seth has already made an impact on campus as the Jewish chaplain and as a friendly resource for students. On Rosh Hashanah, he and his family put a small jar of honey with a ‘Chag Sameach’ note in every Jewish student’s mailbox, which definitely brightened my day.”

For now, Rabbi Wax says he is still learning on the job, and hopes to develop a class for the college’s winter study program. As he told the *Williams Record*, the student newspaper, he “wants his position to reflect the diversity of Judaism, and is especially interested in exploring meditation, music, social action, and other types of learning and worship.”

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires Presents

Knosh & Knowledge

Friday, November 3 10:45 a.m.

Abigail Pogrebin: My Deep Dive Into Jewish Time

Join author of *My Jewish Year: 18 Holidays; One Wondering Jew* Journalist, author and broadcast producer shares her yearlong mission of researching, observing, and writing about every Jewish holiday on the calendar-without skipping one festival or fast.

Friday, December 1 10:45 a.m.

Illuminations of Genocide

Join genocide scholar, author and illumination artist, Amy Fagin, for a visual perspective of global incidents of genocide and mass violence. Amy has traveled throughout the world in her study of genocides and creates illuminations to interpret the politics of justice and truth.

LOCATION: Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Rd, Great Barrington

COST: \$11, includes program and catered lunch.
\$5, program only



Jewish Federation
OF THE BERKSHIRES

Advanced Lunch Reservations Required
Please call (413) 442-4360, ext 10 or federation@jewishberkshires.org

MAZEL TOV

Mazel Tov to...

Susan Merrill and Michael Albert (honorary publishers of this BJV and volunteers extraordinaire) on their marriage in Israel

Hinda Bodinger, founder of Berkshire Baby Box, who *Berkshire Magazine* chose as one of its 2017 Berkshire 25, which recognizes "a group of leaders, doers, creators, and community stalwarts who help make the Berkshires a dynamic place to live and work." **Berkshire Baby Box** also received a 1Berkshire Trendsetter Award for Non-Profit Impact.

Guy David Benari, son of **Esther Benari-Altmann** and **Uri Benari**, on receiving his PhD in Space Engineering from York University

Bob Nason on his retirement as Lee's Town Manager

Sid and Lisa Freund on the birth of their grandchild

Rachel and David Eidex on the bat mitzvah of their daughter, **Dora**

Chuck and Judy Myers on the marriage of their son, **Seth**, to Rachel Pano

Richard and Claudia Kirsch on the marriage of their daughter, Lindsay, to Geoffrey Katz

Shelley and Marty Rolf on the birth of their first granddaughter, Lulu

Harold and Gretchen Hastings on the birth of their granddaughter, Ellery Morse Buckley Hastings

Joyce and Steve Pyenson on their 50th wedding anniversary

Alba and Bob Tutnauer on their 60th wedding anniversary

Dr. Everett Lamm, winner of a 1Berkshire Trendsetter Award as a "newcomer of the year"

Sandisfield Art Center, which received a \$500 grant from the Wasserman-Streit Y'DIYAH Memorial Fund to continue work on *Soil and Shul in the Berkshires: The Untold Story on Sandisfield's Jewish Farm Colony*, a history project inspired by a section on Jewish farming that appeared in the BJV

Ethan Pratt on his bat mitzvah at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire

Alex Cohen, son of **Barbara and Mark Cohen**, on winning gold in the 400-meter dash and softball throw events at the Special Olympics Massachusetts Summer Games last June

Seymour Glaser on his 80th birthday

Mara Goodman Davies, Federation board member, on graduating with an MSW from the Simmons School of Social Work and starting work at the Brien Center for Mental Health, Child and Adolescent Division

Jesse Cook Dubin, who received a 1Berkshire Trendsetter Award as an Under 40 Change Maker

Eli Hochfelder, son of **Scott Hochfelder and Jen Sacon** (Federation board member), on his bar mitzvah at Knesset Israel

Mr. G (aka Ben Gundersheimer, profiled in the last issue of the BJV), who received the Parents' Choice GOLD Award for his new *Mundo Verde/Green World* recording of music for children

Ella Novick on her bat mitzvah at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire

Susan Lord, granddaughter of **Jeff and Ethel Kramer**, on her outstanding performances in basketball and softball in the Capital Region JCC MacCabi games held in Albany last August

Elisa Spungen Bildner and Robert Bildner, who were honored (along with Sheila Johnson Robbins) by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum with its National Leadership Award for their dedication to Holocaust education and remembrance. They were recognized at the annual "What You Do Matters" New York Tribute Dinner

on October 16 in New York City. The couple has a deep connection to the museum, their support and leadership continuing the tradition of Rob's parents, who were founding donors. Elisa, whose family members were victims of the Holocaust, has served on the museum's presidentially-appointed council since 2013.



Former Holocaust Museum chairman Tom Bernstein (left) with Elisa Spungen Bildner and Robert Bildner at the awards dinner, which raised more than \$2.5 million.

Spend the Summer or the Year in Israel

ISRAEL TRAVEL & STUDY GRANTS FOR YOUTH

The Michael Nathaniel Shute Endowment Fund provides grants to Berkshire area youth for educational travel or study in Israel.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Awards are made within 45 days of receiving the application. Additional funding is available through the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Download an application at jewishberkshires.org or pick one up at the Federation's office
196 South Street, Pittsfield, MA

 **Jewish Federation**
OF THE BERKSHIRES

 **Library**

PAJAMA DRIVE

November 3 - December 8

During the cold winter months, many children in the Berkshires go to sleep cold, without the comfort of warm pajamas.

To meet this critical need PJ Library is running a community-wide pajama drive.

Pajamas will be distributed to families across the Berkshires by the MA Department of Children and Families.

Drop off your brand new pajamas (sizes newborn to teen) at any of these convenient locations:

- Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
- Hevreh of Southern Berkshire
- Congregation Beth Israel

Questions? Contact Susan Frisch Lehrer (413) 442-4360, ext. 14
slehrer@jewishberkshires.org

Thank you for your Support!

 **Jewish Federation**
OF THE BERKSHIRES

PJ Library, a free children's Jewish book initiative, is made possible through the generous support of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, the Spitz Tuchman Family Fund, the Jewish Women's Foundation and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Homebound or recovering from an illness or injury?

Let us help you arrange for Kosher Meals on Wheels, to be delivered to your home. Call the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires at (413) 442-4360, ext 10. We are here to help!

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Connecting with Community

Nourish Your Body, Mind, and Soul!

Enjoy an educational program followed by a delicious kosher hot lunch!
Programs take place Mondays and Thursdays at 10:45 a.m. Lunch is served Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays at noon.
Venue: Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Rd, Pittsfield, MA.

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

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

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



Jewish Federation
OF THE BERKSHIRES

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.

OCTOBER

Monday, 30 10:45 a.m., "The Process of Aging" with therapist, Maggie Bittman. **Lunch: Chicken pot pie#, quinoa, salad, pumpnickel bread, applesauce, and tea.**

Tuesday, 31 Stuffed cabbage casserole, chicken soup, baby carrots, brown rice, rye bread, parve cookies, and tea.

NOVEMBER

Thursday, 2 10:45 a.m., "Bringing Heritage to Life in the Berkshires" with Dan Bolognani. **Lunch: Tuna noodle casserole, tomato soup, beets, multi-grain bread, raspberry pillow cookies, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.**

Monday, 6 10:45 a.m., "Building Bridges Between Israel and Local Communities." **Lunch: Meat loaf##, noodle soup, spinach, mashed potatoes, salad, marble rye bread, tropical fruit salad, and tea.**

Tuesday, 7 Veal stew##, noodles, salad, Italian bread, apricots, and tea.

Thursday, 9 10:45 a.m., "Cellblock Visions: Set Free in the Penitentiary" with artist Phyllis Kornfeld. **Lunch: Fish chowder and grilled cheese sandwiches, salad, stewed tomatoes, fruit cocktail, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.**

Monday, 13 10:45 a.m., "Flexibility Training" with Thea Basis. **Lunch: Northern Indian lamb meatballs##, brown rice, beets, Naan bread, biscotti, and tea.**

Tuesday, 14 Chicken marsala##, celery rice soup, rice pilaf, green beans, potato bread, brownies, and tea.

Thursday, 16 10:45 a.m., Screening of *A Trumpet at the Walls of Jericho: The Untold Story of Samuel Harrison*. **Lunch: Roast turkey##, squash soup, mashed potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, peas & pearl onions, Challah, apple dumplings, and tea.**

Monday, 20 10:45 a.m., "Just Plain Folk" with guitarist and singer, Lee Rogers. **Lunch: Pasta and meat sauce#, salad, broccoli, Italian bread, peaches, and tea.**

Tuesday, 21 Roasted chicken##, vegetable soup, mixed vegetables, French fries, multi-grain bread, mandarin oranges, and tea.

Thursday, 23 Closed for Thanksgiving

Monday, 27 10:45 a.m., "The Process of Aging" with therapist, Maggie Bittman. **Lunch: Eggplant parmesan and pasta, minestrone soup, salad, garlic bread, white chip macadamia cookies, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.**

Tuesday, 28 Black bean burgers**, soup TBA, yellow rice with red peppers, hamburger rolls, chef's choice of dessert, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.

Thursday, 30 10:45 a.m., "Immigrants in the Berkshires: Welcoming Newcomers & Why it Matters" with Brooke Mead, Executive Director of Berkshire Immigrant Center. **Lunch: Beef stew##, noodles, salad, potato bread, grapes, and tea.**

DECEMBER

Monday, 4 Program to be Announced: **Lunch: Meat loaf##, chicken soup, mashed potatoes, broccoli, rye bread, tropical fruit salad, and tea.**

Tuesday, 5 Chef's pleasure of leftovers, salad, bread TBA, dessert TBA, and tea.

You may request that the *Berkshire Jewish Voice* be mailed to your home. Just email us at federation@jewishberkshires.org for information.

Sheila K. Thunfors
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LOCAL NEWS

Chaim and Dorothy Wildman Scholar-in-Residence Weekend at Knesset Israel

PITTSFIELD – Knesset Israel welcomes Dr. Rachel Korazim as scholar-in-residence for the 2017 Wildman Shabbaton from Friday, November 3 through Sunday, November 5. Dr. Korazim, a freelance Jewish education consultant who focuses on curriculum development for Israel and Holocaust education, opens a window to Israeli society through the lens of literature.

“Rachel Korazim has a knack for sharing three dimensional snapshots of Israeli culture and history that bring the country and its people to life,” writes Myrna Hammerling, KI’s director of adult education and programming. “Through stories, poems, and songs of Israel’s best writers, she invites listeners to engage with Israel. This is not the Israel of the prayer book, the pulpit, the news or the Jewish Agency. Instead Rachel will introduce us to the Israel of the living room, an authentic and complicated experience that we, in the diaspora, can mine and absorb.”

Dr. Korazim has been a personal favorite teacher of Rabbi David Weiner as he continues his professional development studies at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. Opportunities to learn with Rachel Korazim over the course of the weekend in the Berkshires:

Friday, November 3

5:30 p.m.: *Shirei Shabbat* service, followed by 6:30 p.m. dinner

RSVP required – \$20 per adult, \$15 per teen, free under 13. Call (413) 445-4872, ext. 10.

7:30 p.m.: “Connections to the Land”

The core Zionist narrative of Israel presents an unbroken, unwavering connection between the people of Israel and its land. True as that is, individuals have also expressed doubts, pain, and critique as an aspect of their particular attachment to Israel. Attendees will explore works by Yitzhak Shalev, Nathan Alterman, Yehuda Amichai, Ephraim Kishon, Balfour Hakak, Lysie Doron, and Amos Oz.

Saturday, November 4

8:40 a.m.: “Jewish Fundamentals You Thought You Knew” (*For teens only*)

Rabbi Weiner’s Teen Torah study class will enjoy a session with Dr. Korazim where she complicates their understanding of the Shema, the binding of Isaac, and/or the story of Hannukah using modern Israeli poetry.

9:30 a.m.: Shabbat Morning Services begin.

10:45 a.m.: “The Image of the Other”

Arabs have been portrayed in Israeli literature from the very early days of the first Aliya. Their image constantly changes from romantic biblical figures to suspicious enemies. They show up as neighbors and critical witnesses to Israel’s ever changing reality. Participants will read short excerpts from works by authors such as David Grossman, A.B. Yehoshua, and Savyon Liebrecht.

Noon: Lunch. Please call (413) 445-4872, ext. 10 before November 1 to reserve for the free catered Kosher lunch pro-

vided by the Wildman Fund.

1-2 p.m.: “The Other as Mirror”

Having explored images of Arabs in Jewish Israeli literature in the earlier session, Dr. Korazim will then juxtapose them with Arab Israeli literary works that depict a society in which they often feel disenfranchised. Poems of Yehuda Amichai and Agi Mishol will offer conflicting images of friend and foe. Sami Michael and Emil Habibi will present complementary views of life of Jews and Arabs living together on the same street in the Haifa that they both love.

Saturday evening: “Women’s Voices”

Rachel Korazim will join the Knesset Israel Rosh Hodesh group at a time to be determined. This session is a compilation of women’s poetry. Women poets express their nuanced connection to the land of Israel, offer their unique way of reading Torah, create new individual poetic prayers and speak out in the political arena.

Sunday, November 5

12:30 p.m.: Berkshire and Regional Educators’ Lunch and Learn

Educators from across Berkshire County, as well as a radius including Albany, West Hartford, Northampton, and Bennington who teach Israel to Jewish afternoon and day school students are being invited to join Dr. Korazim at Knesset Israel for an exceptional professional development experience. Teachers, principals and rabbis are invited to RSVP to Knesset Israel for lunch at (413) 445-4872,



Dr. Rachel Korazim

ext. 10. A generous grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation is making this gathering possible.

About Rachel Korazim

Born in Israel, Dr. Korazim served in the Israel Defense Force as an officer in the central training base for women, and was later a member of the IDF delegation to Niger (West Africa). She is a graduate of Haifa University with a PhD in Jewish education. She has vast experience in Jewish education both in Israel and worldwide. As one of the founders and directors of a special program for soldiers from disadvantaged backgrounds, she was responsible for creating the educational framework and training teachers for the implementation of the program.

Dr. Korazim was the head of the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) delegation to Canada from 1985 to 1988. This is when she became involved with Jewish education worldwide, creating and implement-

ing in-service training programs for educators, writing educational materials, and counseling and teaching. Since 1990, she has invested a lot of time and energy in helping the emerging Jewish schools of Hungary. She was also the academic director of distance learning programs at the JAFI, Department of Education, until 2008.

Presently, Dr. Korazim teaches at well-known Israeli learning centers such as Pardes and the Shalom Hartman Institutes, as well as numerous world Jewish communities.

In her free time, she enjoys scuba diving in the cenotes of Playa del Carmen in Mexico and the amazing coral sites in the Red Sea. She is also a very active grandmother of eight grandchildren who all live in Israel.



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LOCAL NEWS

Return of the KI Coffeehouse

PITTSFIELD – On Sunday, November 12 starting at 7 p.m., Knesset Israel is hosting KI Coffeehouse, an evening of music and song.

Says guitarist Phil Coleman: "It's not a talent show. It's not a cabaret. It's not a singalong." Instead, explains Coleman, it's an evening where seven acts will perform a mix of original songs and covers in an informal environment that recreates the coffeehouse vibe of the early 60s.

Coleman says there is a lot of musical talent in our community – as evidenced by KI's annual Purim concert and Shirei Shabbat – and the Coffeehouse joins other original Knesset Israel musical events in offering a showcase to musicians, singers, and songwriters. Snacks will be served.



Some of the musicians who will be at the KI Coffeehouse

Knesset Israel is located at 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield. Cost is \$10.

CBI Program to Spotlight Early Judaism and Christianity

NORTH ADAMS – The first three centuries of the Common Era were a bubbling cauldron of ideas and religious practices for Jews and early Christians. On November 30, Congregation Beth Israel will present Williams College religion professor Denise Buell in a discussion of how these two groups overlapped and interacted, although neither their "Jewishness" nor "Christianity" were the same as we know them today.

Professor Buell, Dean of Faculty and Cluett Professor of Religion at the College, will talk about how the new Jewish Christians and the traditional Jews who followed the teachings of the Talmud were able to forge relationships, and how we might see the results of that time today.



Denise Buell

Following her talk, there will be an opportunity for discussion with the audience.

It will take place Thursday, November 30 at 7:30 p.m. Congregation Beth Israel is at 53 Lois Street in North Adams. The program is part of a series developed by the Speakers Committee of Congregation Beth Israel. It is open to the community free of charge.

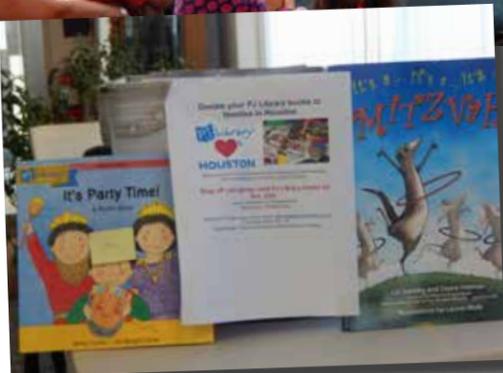
For further information about the program, contact Jack Hockridge at the synagogue by email cbinadams@gmail.com or by phone at (413) 663-5830.

PJ Library Families Having Fun, Doing Good

This September, local PJ Library families got together at Congregation Beth Israel in North Adams for a concert by Ellen Allard. The event was co-sponsored by PJ Library, Federation, and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. A good time was had by all, ice cream by most.



In October, our community responded to the call of PJ Library's national office for donations to replace children's books that were lost to Hurricane Harvey in Houston (see related article on page 8). We were one of 50 communities participating, sending more than 70 PJ Library books from the Berkshires for the hundreds of Jewish families whose homes and possessions were destroyed or damaged by the storm.



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BERKSHIRE JEWISH VOICES

Traveling with Jewish Taste

Cookbook Review: Fress a Little Fussy, but Baharat Spiced Chicken Beyond Scrumptious

By Carol Goodman Kaufman



As anybody who reads this column knows, I've been the lucky recipient of many cookbooks over the past year, sent by publishers who want their writers' works reviewed. I've tried many recipes and enjoyed most of them. Now it's time to pull on the elastic waistband slacks again because I'm reviewing yet another. This one is called *Fress*, a collection of Middle Eastern and Eastern European recipes gathered from author Emma Spitzer's extended family members. I've now prepared a dozen dishes in the book, and can honestly say that most of those I tried were good. Some fantastic. A couple not so great.

The publisher's blurb states, "Emma's style of cooking is unfussy and uncomplicated, extracting the maximum taste from the humblest of ingredients without spending hours in the kitchen." I beg to differ. The woman does love her exotic flavorings, and I've been buying so many little jars and bags that my cabinets are overflowing. Who just happens to have nigella seeds, baharat, juniper berries, or barberries in the house? (Okay, I do have both orange blossom water and rosewater in my kitchen cabinet, but, hey, I write about food.)

One of the out-of-the-ordinary spices that Spitzer uses is mahleb powder. Made by crushing the seed inside the pit of the St. Lucie cherry, mahleb powder provides a flavor that is a cross between bitter almond and cherry, with a hint of vanilla. It has been a staple in Middle Eastern and Mediterranean desserts for centuries. Archaeologists, in fact, believe that it was first used in Ancient Mesopotamia. You may ask (as I certainly did) who ever had the idea to find spice there? Were a bunch of guys sitting around a campfire on the banks of the Euphrates

River, eating cherries and spitting the pits at each other, when a bored Sumerian decided to crack one open with a rock? Did he then taste it? Was he so hungry that he wanted to suck out every iota of the fruit?

At any rate, the flavor must have been a hit, as it has definitely stood the test of time. Mahleb is now a unique and intriguing addition to my baking repertoire.

In the dessert section of the cookbook was a recipe for Spiced Date Ma'amoul Cookies that called for said mahleb powder, as well as an item called a ma'amoul mold, something I just happen to have in my kitchen.

Off the track for a moment: Never having heard of ma'amoul cookies before, I went into research mode, where I learned something that brought me back in time and solved a mystery. Back in 2004, our daughter Elana spent a semester at the University of Haifa, studying Hebrew and Arabic. Naturally, being not-quite-helicopter parents but missing our baby, we went over to visit and followed her around to places she loved to frequent. One of these places was the Druze village Daliat el-Carmel, where she had heard that a particular type of tea she favored was sold.

Elana approached the proprietor of one particular shop and asked, in Arabic, if he stocked the sought-for item. He did indeed, and the young man and his father were so taken with her that they refused to accept payment for said tea. (The father also tried to marry her off to the son, but that's yet another story.)

Their generous gesture meant, of course, that I felt obligated to purchase something. The item I bought looked like a mold of some sort, with a long handle and four deep indentations in different sizes, each with its own distinct design. It turns out that what I had bought was a ma'amoul mold, used for making ma'amoul cookies!

So, I made a batch of these very rich and buttery cookies, stuffed with a spiced date and nut filling. The cookies were mouthwateringly luscious, prompting "most delicious cookie" status from several members of the family. The

only negative is that the called-for confectioner's sugar dusting obscures the beautiful designs.

Another spice, or rather spice mix, that Spitzer favors is baharat. Unfortunately, she neglects to provide the recipe for it. On poking around the internet, I found that there as many formulae for baharat as there are regions and cooks,

so I chose one and used it for the Baharat Spiced Chicken. The dish, made aromatic with a dozen spices, garlic, and onions, was redolent of the Middle Eastern shuk. It was beyond scrumptious and, even better, relatively easy to prepare.



Baharat Spiced Chicken

Made a day ahead, this recipe is super easy to prepare. You can use chicken breasts if you prefer them to thighs.

Ingredients

12 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
2 red onions, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons baharat
2 teaspoons ground sumac
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
4 preserved lemons, halved and flesh scooped out and discarded
3 garlic cloves, crushed
1-3/4 cups chicken stock (using 1 tablespoon chicken stock powder)
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon sea salt
A few grinds black pepper
Rice or couscous, to serve



Directions:

Add the chicken thighs to a large, sturdy resealable plastic food bag with all the other ingredients, then seal securely before massaging the bag to mix everything together. Let marinate in the fridge for a minimum of 2 hours but preferably overnight.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Add the chicken and all the remaining contents of the bag to a roasting pan and roast for 45 to 50 minutes until the chicken is golden brown and the juices run clear when pierced with a knife.

Serve the chicken with a generous amount of the onions and lemon skins over rice or couscous, ladling the juices on top.

Baharat

You'll only use two tablespoons of the baharat for this recipe, so after you mix all the spices together, seal them in an airtight jar for future use. I'm pretty sure you will make this recipe again. If you don't, call me and I'll take it off your hands.

Ingredients:

4 tablespoons ground black pepper
2 tablespoons ground coriander
2 tablespoons ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons ground cloves
3 tablespoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground cardamom
4 teaspoons ground nutmeg
4 tablespoons paprika

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

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BERKSHIRE JEWISH VOICES

Young Judaism

Learning About Jewish Heritage through Survivors' Stories and Her Israeli Peers

By Charlotte Adelson

This summer I had the honor and privilege to spend five weeks in different countries throughout Europe and the Middle East to learn about my Jewish heritage.

I went on this trip with a group of my friends from Camp Eisner in Great Barrington, operated by the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ). Although I was with them for most of the time, we also got to see kids from other URJ camps that were on the trip, as well. The first week we spent in Europe – a few days in Prague, Krakow, and then Warsaw. This week was especially hard because it was focused around the Holocaust and World War II. In Prague, we visited Theresienstadt, which was the “model” ghetto that later became a concentration camp. Prague is also home to the one Jewish neighborhood in Europe left intact by the Nazis, who wanted it to be a part of their “Museum of Extinct People.”

We left Prague and continued to Krakow and Warsaw in Poland. We visited Auschwitz-Birkenau and the Warsaw ghetto. We heard many personal stories, visited Schindler's factory, and were able to hear the recount of a Righteous Among the Nations recipient. It was crucial for us to have this experience, because our generation is going to be one of the last to be able to hear these stories in person.

For the remaining month of our trip, we traveled all over Israel. Our first four days there, spent in the Negev Desert, were not the most

comfortable, but some of the most impactful. We slept in sleeping bags on the ground, woke up early, hiked all day, and went to bed late. Although it was hard, we were able to experience some of the best views in the country. The first hike we completed was that of Mount Shlomo. If I had been on the trip alone I don't think I would've had the motivation to complete it, but being on trip with people I had known since I was little made all the difference.

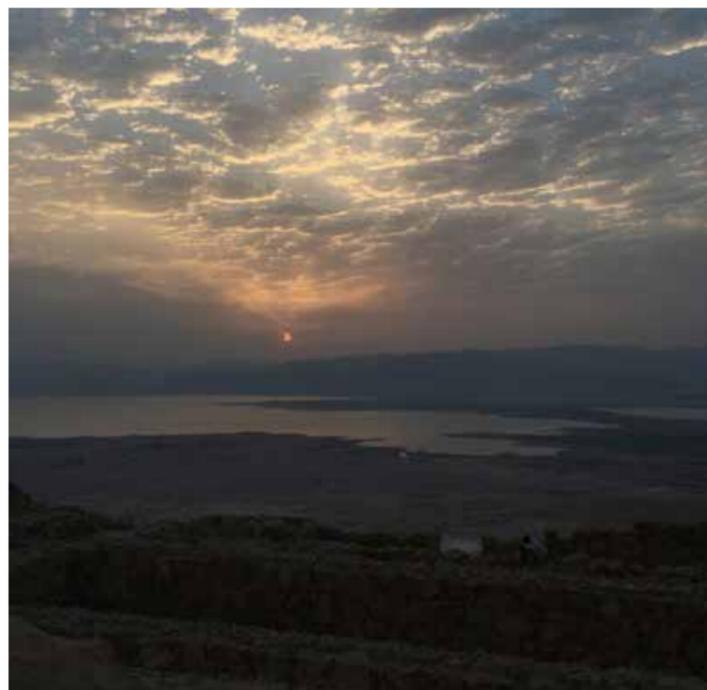
After those four days in the searing heat, we were welcomed into the (mostly) air conditioned city of Jerusalem. From this point forward, we traveled to almost every big and small city in Israel. We stayed in different youth hostels or kibbutzim, and ate the delicious local food. We were able to not only learn about our Jewish culture, but about the many other religions of Israel. We spent the night in the Bedouin tents, ate dinner at a Druze home, had a late-night lecture from an Israeli Arab speaking on the Palestinian conflict, and also visited mosques and cathedrals. These experiences really opened my eyes to why there is so much competition over Israel. During our stay, we also climbed Masada at 4:30 in the morning so we could see the sun rise, rode camels, went to the Dead Sea, and visited the Western Wall.

Another section of our trip was Chavaya – “choice” in Hebrew. We split into four different groups, depending on the activity we wanted to do.

Our options were: Archaeology, Sea to Sea, Charity Work, or IDF training. Each of these activities lasted for four days, so it was a great opportunity to bond with people from other camps. I chose Sea to Sea, which was where we hiked from the Sea of Galilee to the Mediterranean Sea. I made some amazing friends on the trip, most of them being people I had never met before. This was similar to our Negev experience, but it was more humid, and the hiking was more intense. It was also a lesson in independence because for long stretches of time we were in small groups, navigating on our own without an adult. We were given emergency supplies, a map, and a walkie talkie to use if we needed it. We ended up using the walkies a lot to talk to other small groups we had friends in, and making up funny call names. I was Char Char Binks – it was hilarious.

During lunch, we were given some food and cooking materials and were told to make ourselves a meal. Well, my small group decided we were not going to just make a sandwich with the raw food we were given. We went all out. We made stir fried rice and added sautéed onions with caramelized sausage, as well as Israeli salad. We were feeling fancy one day and even made dessert from food we hadn't used from breakfast. That memory in particular will stay with me forever.

One of my favorite parts of the trip was meeting Israeli teens. In one of our last weeks in Israel, six Israelis our age



From the top of Masada at sunrise, by Charlotte Adelson

joined our group. There were some of the nicest people I've met and I'm still in contact with every single one of them. While they were here, we mostly learned about the Palestinian and Israeli conflict. It was amazing to hear their side of story, since there is no better way to learn than from firsthand accounts. We learned about the first and second Intifadas, as well as the Syrian civil war still going on. We visited the Green Line, as well as the Syrian border, or as close to it as is allowed. All of the Israelis that were with us had very personal stories about all of this, as well as opinions that we as Americans can't really understand. It was heartbreaking when the

Israelis left us but they later surprised us by meeting us at the airport!

This trip changed my life and really gave me a sense of my Jewish identity. The memories I made this summer will stay with me forever, and the friends I made will last double that. Thank you Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and the Michael Nathaniel Shute Scholarship Fund!

Charlotte Adelson lives in Lee and is a junior at Miss Hall's School in Pittsfield. She has an interest in engineering, as well as dance. She is involved in her Jewish community through Heureh of Southern Berkshire and Camp Eisner.

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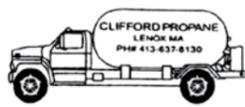
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OBITUARIES

Joyce Barrow, 89, teacher, artist, writer

LENOX – Joyce Barrow, 89, passed away peacefully of natural causes at Kimball Farms Nursing Care Center on Thursday, August 24.

The eldest of four children of Belle and Jacob Gitelman, Joyce Shyra Gitelman was born and raised in Rochester, NY. She was immersed in the arts at an early age, with intensive studies of both classical piano and ballet at the Eastman School of Music through high school. In 1949, she graduated with honors in English from the University of Rochester, where she wrote for the school newspaper and edited the yearbook. Seeking new horizons, after college graduation, she adventurously set out on a cross-country trip, residing in San Francisco and Honolulu before returning to settle on the East Coast.

Joyce married Bernard Barrow in 1954 while he was a doctoral student at Yale School of Drama; daughter Susan was born in New Haven. Bernard began his academic career at Brooklyn College and the couple moved to Brooklyn, where son Thomas was born. In 1960, the family settled in suburban Great Neck, NY, where Joyce raised her children after the marriage ended in divorce.

Continuing her studies, Joyce earned a Masters in Art Education from Teacher's College, Columbia University, and taught art in public school on Long Island for several years. However, preferring the business world to the classroom, she became a specialist in the complex field of employee benefits. She began her corporate writing career at Martin E. Segal Company and worked for Warner Communications before her retirement from professional life as manager of Benefit Communications at Con Edison, New York City.

Beyond writing, it was to the art of painting that Joyce devoted her creative energies. She was a dedicated student of painter and critic Sam Feinstein (1915-2003), whose teachings reflected the aesthetic theories of his mentor, Abstract Expressionist Hans Hofmann. Joyce was a regular at Feinstein's painting classes held at his New York and Cape Cod studios for many years. Her acrylic paintings on canvas, largely still-life and abstract compositions, are striking for their vibrant color palette and complex inter-related shapes; they reflect the richness of her luminous artistic vision.

After more than five decades of residence in Great Neck, Joyce moved to Kimball Farms Life Care Community in the fall of 2013, where a one-person exhibit of her works, *Explorations in Color*, was shown in May 2015.

She is survived by son Tom Barrow of Waltham, MA, daughter Susan Barrow of New York City, sister Nathalie Schwartz of Rochester, NY, and brother David Gitelman of

Port Orange, FL. She was predeceased by her brother Hillel in 2015.

At her request, no memorial service was held. Contributions may be made to Gould Farm Therapeutic Community, Office of Development, through Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home, 426 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires mourns the passing of Myra S. Waldinger, mother of Jesse Waldinger and mother-in-law of Barbara Waldinger. Following Myra's wishes, the family made private funeral arrangements. Donations to honor her memory may be made to Temple Anshe Amunim, 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Nancy Mindlin Schneider, 48, greatest joy was her children

PITTSFIELD – Nancy Mindlin Schneider, 48, of Shelton, CT, wife of Jamie Schneider, passed away on Monday, September 18 at Bridgeport Hospital after a long, hard battle with cancer.

Born in Pittsfield on October 10, 1968, to the late Herman and Gail Mindlin, Nancy graduated from Pittsfield High School in 1986 and attended The University of New Haven, where she studied travel and tourism. She worked for many years as a corporate travel agent, where she was well respected.

She was predeceased by her former husband, Dean Federici, the father of her three loving children, Nick, Tyler, and Sara Federici, all of Stratford, CT. One of the greatest joys in her life was spending time with her children and attending all of their school and sporting events. Her husband Jamie was by her side and took care of her throughout her illness. She is also survived by her sister, Harriet Mindlin of South Windsor, CT and her aunt, uncles and cousins.

A funeral service was held at Ahavath Shalom Cemetery, Pittsfield, on Wednesday, September 20.

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires extends condolences to Hattie Leonard on the recent passing of her father, Lawrence O. Decker. Funeral arrangements were private. Donations may be made to Temple Anshe Amunim, Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Helen Bashevkin Yulman, 102, strength, dignity and wisdom

PALM BEACH, FL – Helen Bashevkin Yulman, 102, passed away Tuesday afternoon, September 12, in Palm Beach, FL.

Born January 21, 1915, in North Adams, the middle of nine children, to Anna and David Bashevkin, Helen and her late husband of 65 years, Morton H. "Mike" Yulman, split their time between first Schenectady and then Albany, NY, and Palm Beach, FL until 2005, when they became full time residents of Palm Beach. A woman of strength, dignity and wisdom, Helen will be remembered as a devoted wife and wonderful mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, aunt and friend.

She is survived by her children Nedra Oren (and husband Dr. Mark Oren) and Richard Yulman; brother, Robert Bashevkin (Barbara) of Williamstown, MA; five grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. Helen was preceded in death by her husband, Morton, and daughter-in-law, Janet K. Yulman; sisters Sayde Levine, Ruth Kelman, Esther Lipton, and Hilda Betten; and brothers Albert, William and Irving Bashevkin.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, <http://jewishmiami.org>; Temple Beth Am, <http://www.tbam.org>; United Way of Miami-Dade, <https://unitedway-miami.org>; or another charity of the donor's choice.

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires extends condolences to Rabbi Levi and Sara Volovik and family on the passing of Rabbi Levi's father, Rabbi Yosef Volovik. Shiva was observed at the Volovik residence in Brooklyn, NY and at Chabad of the Berkshires.

Leo Seligsohn, 91, journalist, theatre and film critic, feature writer

NORTH ANDOVER, MA – Leo Seligsohn, 91, died peacefully on Monday, September 18, in his apartment in North Andover. He was a respected journalist and theater critic; beloved husband, father, and grandfather; amateur cartoonist, philosopher and inventor; and lifelong wonderer, wanderer and documenter.

Born July 15, 1926 in Manhattan, he graduated from Far Rockaway High School. He then served in the Pacific in the US Navy during World War II, where he started a newsletter for a naval base in the Marshall Islands. He continued his career in journalism, spending a year in Europe and earning a degree in journalism from the University of Missouri.

Leo went on to work as a page and news writer at NBC, and joined *Newsday* in 1956 where he worked as a reporter, theater, and film critic and magazine feature writer. After 33 years, Leo retired but continued to review theater in the Berkshires; penned letters to editors of the *Berkshire Eagle*, the *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, and the *New York Times*; and avidly documented current events alongside personal musings on the human condition.

Through his retirement,

Leo lived with his beloved wife, Adrea, in Becket and Lake-wood Ranch, FL where they remained committed activists and global adventurers, visiting over 45 countries. For 10 years, Leo volunteered as a reading and writing tutor for underserved students at Booker Middle School in Sarasota. He loved playing tennis, swimming and sailing.

Leo brought laughter, wisdom and a dash of philosophy to the many lives he touched. He breathed insatiable curiosity, childlike wonder and a continuous stream of poems and puns until his last day of life.

Leo is survived by Adrea, his wife and partner of 59 years, whom he adored and admired. He is also survived by his three children Ben, Rob, and Susan; son-in-law Steve; grandchildren Olivia and Jake; and a dynamic community of friends and relatives.

A memorial was held on Sunday, September 24 at his daughter's home. Donations can be made in Leo's name to the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Diana Fisher Berkowitz, 100, lived long blessed life to the fullest

NEW HAVEN, CT – Diana Fisher Berkowitz, 100, formerly of New Haven, CT, devoted wife of the late Joseph C. Fisher, died on Saturday, September 23. Born in New Haven on August 11, 1917, she was the daughter of Lillian and Sol Rabinowitz. She was the beloved mother of Karen Feldman, Arthur Fisher, and Lisa Chamberlain (Eric) of Stockbridge, and the sister of the late Mildred Groves, Allen Robin, and Reva Rollin. Diana is additionally survived by five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

She was the wife for twenty-one years of Elihu Berkowitz, until his death in 2009.

Diana lived her long and blessed life to the fullest. She cared for her family, ran a successful business, traveled the world, and sustained lifelong friendships. She will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

A funeral service was held at Robert E. Shure Funeral Home, New Haven on Tuesday September 26 with interment following at the B'nai Jacob Memorial Park, New Haven. Memorial contributions may be sent to Congregation Ahavath Shalom, 15 North Street, P.O. Box 464, Great Barrington, MA 01230 or (www.ahavathshalom.com).

David T. Kaplan, 66, career in public service

GREAT BARRINGTON – David T. Kaplan, 66, of Kensington, MD, died Wednesday, September 27, of cancer.

Born April 28, 1951, son of the late Lillian Westerman and Carl Kaplan and the late Ben Westerman (stepfather), he graduated from Hudson High School in Hudson, NY. He obtained a bachelor's degree from Drew University in botany, a master's degree from University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and a doctorate from the University of California,

Riverside, in Plant Pathology.

Dr. Kaplan spent most of his career in public service with the United States Department of Agriculture. He worked as a research scientist in Orlando, FL, to protect citrus plants. In 2002, he shifted his focus towards plant protection policy work in Raleigh, NC. In 2005, he joined the Senior Executive Service in Washington, DC and ultimately retired as Associate Deputy Administrator for Plant Protection and Quarantine, Science and Technology at USDA. He played a key role in safeguarding the nation's plants and food supply and in setting domestic and international agricultural policy.

Dr. Kaplan and his wife, the former Lynne Pevzner, were married in Pittsfield in June, 1973. They shared a deep and abiding love for one another. He had a lifelong-love for the Berkshires. After his retirement, he served as a board member of Project Native, an organization that worked to protect the Berkshires from invasive species. He loved nothing more than an evening with Lynne, family and friends sitting on the lawn of Tanglewood and sharing his love of music and the arts.

In addition to his wife of 44 lovely years, he leaves a daughter, Rachel (and Eric) Reicher of Bethesda, MD; a son, Benjamin Louis Kaplan of Washington, DC; a brother, Jim Kaplan of West Palm Beach, FL; two grandchildren, Eli and Avi Reicher; and many nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held on Friday, September 29 at Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home in Great Barrington.

Michele Renee Novick, 60, dedicated, nurturing special education teacher

PITTSFIELD – Michele Renee Novick, 60, passed away peacefully on Friday, October 6, at Hillcrest Commons Nursing in Pittsfield.

Born July 29, 1957 in Montreal to Harold and Gladys (Schortz) Novick, she received her bachelor's degree from Connecticut State University and her master's degree in Special Education from Westfield State University. Michele was a dedicated and nurturing special education teacher for over twenty years.

She was known for her continuous generosity to her students and colleagues, both in and out of the classroom. Michele was also an incredibly loving daughter, sister, aunt, cousin, and friend.

Michele is survived by her father, Harold; her brother and sister-in-law, David and Joanna; her nephews and niece, Zachary, Brandon and Rachel; and by many cousins. She was preceded in death by her mother, Gladys.

Funeral services were held Monday, October 9, at Knesset Israel, Pittsfield, with Rabbi David Weiner officiating. Burial followed in Knesset Israel Cemetery.

Contributions may be made to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund at Knesset Israel in care of Flynn & Dagnoli-Bencivenga Funeral Home, 5 Elm Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

OBITUARIES

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires extends condolences to Michael and Bobbi Cohn, Jonathan, Lara, Levi, and Noah Denmark on the passing of Michael's brother, Robert Cohn. The funeral took place on Sunday, October 15 in Cleveland. Donations can be made to the Bobbi Cohn fund for beautification of Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Ruth Sidransky Rosenberg, 88, lifelong student and deep love for her family

PITTSFIELD – Ruth Sidransky Rosenberg, 88, died Saturday, October 7 with her son Mark Hyman and her daughter-in-law Mia Lux Koning at her side at Berkshire Medical Center.

Born July 1, 1929 in Brooklyn, NY to deaf parents, Mary and Ben Sidransky, she grew up in Brooklyn and the Bronx. She went to Hunter College in Manhattan, graduated Phi Beta Kappa, and went on to become a teacher. In 1949, she married Saul Hyman and left for Europe where they lived in Vienna, Munich, and Barcelona for 11 years. She was the co-founder and principal of the American School of Barcelona. In 1967, she married Richard Rosenberg and moved to Toronto with her children Mark and Carrie Hyman.

Ruth was a lifelong student with a rich life of the mind and a deep love for her family, reading and writing. In 1990, she published the book *In Silence* about growing up hearing in a deaf family.

She is survived by her son Mark, daughter-in-law Mia Lux Koning, and grandchildren, Rachel, Misha, Ben, and Sarah; her brother and sister-in-law, Fred and Gina Sidransky and niece Claudia Sidransky; her brother and sister-in-law Lewis and Vera Rosenberg. She was predeceased by her daughter, Carrie, in 2012

and by her husband, Richard Rosenberg.

She deeply loved her family and was there for them, always.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, October 11 at Knesset Israel in Pittsfield.

Mark I. Cohen, D.D.S., 69, respect of colleagues and patients

LENOX – Mark I. Cohen, D.D.S., 69, died Tuesday, October 10.

Born on October 6, 1948 in Brooklyn, NY, the son of Hyman Cohen and Elsie Gomberg Cohen, he attended G.W. Hewlett High School and received his BS degree from Syracuse University in 1970. He attended Loyola Dental School in Chicago, doing a 3-year residency in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, at Cook County Hospital. Dr. Cohen and his family moved to the Berkshires in 1980 where he practiced in Pittsfield for 21 years. He enjoyed the respect of colleagues and patients alike, many of whom credited him with changing their experience of dentistry. His gentle and assured manner calmed many an anxious patient and, for his younger patients, their parents, as well. He was sorely missed when he retired in 2001, at the age of 51, as the result of a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease.

He and his wife, Barbara Kipnis Cohen, would have celebrated their 44th wedding anniversary December 25, 2017 and the 50th anniversary of their first date in the summer of 1967. They are the parents of Alex Cohen of Mashpee and Philip Cohen (Emily) of Richmond, and the grandparents of Charlotte Hunter Cohen, of Richmond. There is nothing that pleased Mark more than being 'Pops' to his boys and 'Poppy' to his granddaughter. He also leaves his sister, Donna Schuler (Barry), of Boynton Beach, FL and many nieces and nephews. He was also much loved as a brother-in-law by Linda (Kipnis) Mitchell (Giora) and Ellen (Kipnis) Kan-

ner; and by his mother-in law, Lillian Kipnis, who knew him for so long she considered him her 'son'.

Dr. Cohen was a great fan of the New York Jets, New York Giants, New York Yankees, and New York Mets. His first love, however, was the Syracuse Orange basketball team; watching the Orange play on television was a fall family ritual with the ever present hope that the team would continue to play into the tournament season. Involvement with sports didn't stop with being a spectator. Dr. Cohen coached Minors (baseball) in Pittsfield and served as the president of South Little League in Pittsfield. He supported the athletic involvement of both of his sons – Philip in baseball and tennis and Alex in swimming and basketball – and arranged his schedule to be at games and matches whenever he could.

Attention to detail, so crucial in his professional life, translated to a love of creating beautifully manicured gardens and to a creative and technical excellence in carpentry. Clean lines and aesthetically well-crafted shapes were his goals in anything he put his talented hands to. His gardens were once selected to be featured on the Pittsfield Garden Tour. Congregation Ahavath Sholom, his beloved synagogue community in Great Barrington, was beautified by Dr. Cohen's skill as he applied his carpentry talents to renovations after his wife assumed the pulpit in 2005. His office, his family's home, and the homes of his children were also the focus of his efforts.

He had a legendary dry sense of humor and you could actually watch and wait as a smile slowly bloomed on his face as he conceived and then delivered gems that left his listeners laughing, even as they recalled the comments years later. His impersonations of Ethel Merman and Georgie Jessel were hilarious.

A memorial service was held on Thursday, October 12 at Temple Anshe Amunim,

Pittsfield, conducted by his wife, Spiritual Leader Barbara Kipnis Cohen, with a opening welcome by her dear friend and colleague, Temple Anshe Amunim's Rabbi Josh Breindel. On Sunday, October 15, the community was invited to be with the Cohen family as they gathered at Congregation Ahavath Sholom, Great Barrington, where Dr. Cohen's wife serves as Spiritual Leader.

Contributions are much appreciated and may be sent to Congregation Ahavath Sholom, P.O. Box 464, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

Shirley M. Rubin, 100, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother

NEW YORK CITY – Shirley M. Rubin, 100, long time Pittsfield resident, died peacefully in New York City on Saturday, October 7. She was the wife of the late Dr. Irving Rubin who practiced medicine in Pittsfield for many years.

She is survived by her daughters, Ilene Fish and Judith Richman, sons-in-law Dr. Irving Fish and David Richman, five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

She was an elegant, smart, beautiful, charitable, and cultured woman who will be missed.

Nancy Kaufman, 87, honest, compassionate, and community minded

LINCOLN, MA – With great sorrow, the Howard Kaufman family of Pittsfield and Lenox announces the passing of their beloved matriarch, Nancy Beth Rappaport Kaufman, 87, of natural causes, on Sunday, October 8.

Nancy Beth was born on June 6, 1930, in Lynbrook, NY. Her father, Murray Rappaport, was a senior partner in the New York City accounting firm of Harris, Kerr, Forster, and Company. Her mother, Judith Israelson Rappaport, was a noted painter, ambulance driver, and charitable volunteer. Her older brother, Roy, known as Skip, was head of the Department of

Anthropology at the University of Michigan, and widely considered one of the greatest anthropologists of his generation.

Nancy Beth graduated Simmons College in Boston and worked at Grey's Advertising Agency. She met her future husband, Howard Kaufman, a Pittsfield native, and married in 1954. Howard owned and ran KB Toys, a national chain of toy stores.

Nancy Beth raised five children and pursued extensive volunteer work, ranging from Temple Anshe Amunim Sisterhood to Berkshire Medical Center patient visits to various human resource assistances. Nancy Beth was known for being kind, generous, and unpretentious, for being honest and compassionate. She had an original sense of humor at life's twists and turns. She will be deeply mourned and wonderfully remembered.

She leaves her husband, Howard, her five children, numerous grandchildren, and many great-grandchildren. Her memory should be a blessing for us all.

Donations can be sent in memory of Nancy to Chabad of the Berkshires, 450 South Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201 or online at www.Jewishberkshires.com.

Elise V. England, 86, dynamic businesswoman, natural athlete

LENOX – Elise V. England, 86, died Thursday morning, October 12.

Born May 9, 1931 in New York City to the late Carl and Anne Van Dam, she received her bachelor's degree from Goucher College in Baltimore, MD. Prior to meeting her husband, Elise, a dynamic businesswoman, worked in the advertising specialty field. She was able to manage her business out of her home in White Plains, NY while she raised her children. Her clients were large national and international corporate accounts.

OBITUARIES, continued on next page

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

Thank you to these individuals who through their gift to the Legacy Circle will ensure that the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires thrives long into the future. May your name be a Blessing, and may the example you set inspire others to create their own Jewish Legacy.



Anonymous (10)
Ed Abrahams
Norman Avnet*
Barbara Bashevkin
Robert Bashevkin
Linda J. L. Becker
Robert Berend
Shelley Berend
Helene Berke
Lawrence Berke

Lee & Sydelle Blatt
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Monroe B. & Isabel England
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Jerome Silverberg
Richard A. Simons & Marcie
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Lisa Fletcher-Udel
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Michael & Joan Ury
Mark & Judy Usow
Henry* & Beate Voreberg*
Alexandra Warshaw
Florence Wineberg*
Rabbi Deborah Zecher & Rabbi Dennis Ross

**Of blessed memory*



Jewish Federation
OF THE BERKSHIRES

Calendar – Ongoing Events Around the Community

Continuous – Chabad of the Berkshires “Smile on Seniors,” or “S.O.S.,” volunteer program to serve senior citizens in the Berkshires. Information for families who can benefit and volunteers: Rabbi Levi Volovik at (413) 499-9899 or visit www.jewishberkshires.com.

Monthly, fourth or fifth Sunday – Volunteers from Congregation Beth Israel, 53 Lois Street, North Adams “Take and Eat” program cook, package, and deliver hot meals for all North Adams clients of “Meals on Wheels.” Information: (413) 663-5830 or office@cbiweb.org.

Sundays (second of each month) – Berkshire Hills Society of Israeli Philatelists meet. Discuss Israeli and American stamps. Coffee and donuts. Information: Ed Heltzer, (413) 447-7622, daytime.

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

Tuesdays at 10:45 – “The Book of Deuteronomy” at Kneset Israel. *Please check with KI for dates.* Classes taught by Rabbi David Weiner who is guiding an in-depth exploration of a revolutionary book of the Torah that continues to shape Jewish thought and practice to this day. Texts are in English.

Tuesdays at 6:15 p.m. at Temple Anshe Amunim – “Reading Hebrew Through the Siddur,” with Esther Benari-Altmann. This course will improve fluency in reading Hebrew. Special emphasis will be given to words and prayers from the Siddur.

Knowledge of and comfort with Hebrew letters (and vowels) is required. Open to all members of the community; free for TAA members, \$50 fee for non-members. Registration, full information: (413) 442-5910, extension 12, or eba@ansheamunim.org.

Wednesdays, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. – Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington, offers “an hour of morning stillness” with Nina Lipkowitz, a certified Kripalu Yoga Teacher. Donation of \$10 is asked for from non-members. Information: (413) 528-6378.

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

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. – Learn Hebrew for free with Temple Anshe Amunim through Read Hebrew America. Tens of thousands of Jewish adults gather in hundreds of locations across North America for Hebrew lessons for beginners to learn to read Hebrew. An ideal way to learn how to follow services, to be more involved in your children’s Jewish education, or simply enhance your own ties to Judaism. For more information, contact Esther Benari-Altmann at (413) 442-5910, extension 12 or email eba@ansheamunim.org.

Thursdays at 10:45 a.m. – “The Ethical Life,” with Rabbi David Weiner” (new class starting November 2). From political and financial scandals to rapid progress in biomedical science and technology, the

complex issues of modern society are, at their core, issues of ethical and moral concern. Judaism has a long history of wrestling with moral questions, responding to them in a way that considers all sides of an issue. This class incorporates videos featuring Jewish Theological Seminary faculty, other expert scholars, and practitioners in the field; classical and contemporary texts; and additional resources online.

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

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

Saturdays at 8:45 a.m. – at Hevreh, 270 State Road in Great Barrington. Every Shabbat morning, gather in Rabbi Neil Hirsch’s study and dive into the less-often read books of the Bible. All are welcome to begin the day with coffee while studying and relaxing on Shabbat. Sessions will be between 45 and 60 minutes. Please be in touch with Rabbi Hirsch for further information: nhirsch@hevreh.org.

Saturdays at 9 a.m. – “Walking with Mitzvot,” with Judith Weiner. Classes follow the schedule of the Kneset Israel Hebrew School. Judith Weiner leads an exploration of the purpose, development and form of *mitzvot*. This curriculum, de-

veloped by the American Jewish University of Los Angeles, introduces participants to some of the most compelling thinkers of the contemporary Conservative movement and guides them towards greater understanding of the role of *mitzvot* in their lives.

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

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

Kneset Israel 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield

ONGOING MINYANS

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

CANDLE-LIGHTING

Friday, November 3.....5:24 p.m.
Friday, November 10.....4:16 p.m.
Friday, November 17.....4:10 p.m.
Friday, November 24.....4:05 p.m.

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OBITUARIES

OBITUARIES, continued from page 21

Elise and her husband, Moe, were married on July 15, 1977 in Scarsdale, NY and settled into their home on October Mountain in Lenox. From the top of October Mountain for over 20 years, Elise and Moe were early pioneers of today’s craft beer movement. They started Merchant du Vin-East in 1981, a beer importing company representing some of the most iconic breweries in the world. As president and chief executive, Elise was instrumental in building a distribution system for 23 states.

Her passion and commitment to beer education was renowned. Elise conducted beer dinners and seminars throughout the East Coast to introduce different brewing styles to the United States. She received national recognition by being honored for her contributions for the development of the Belgian beer market in the United States (such as Lindeman’s Framboise and Peche) and introducing the U.S. to British beers from Samuel Smith and The Old Brewery (Oatmeal Stout, IPA, etc.). Elise was one of the first high-level female executives in the beer industry.

She wasn’t an “all work no play” woman. Elise and Moe were avid travelers and visited exotic places all over the world. As astute as she was in her home office, she was even more passionate on the tennis court and golf course. In her younger years, she loved to ride horses and was a competitive swimmer. She was a natural athlete

who enjoyed the social, mental and physical aspects of all sports.

Elise volunteered at Berkshire Medical Center and was a member of Temple Anshe Amunim in Pittsfield. A lover of culture and the arts, she was a member of Tanglewood, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Jacobs Pillow, the Norman Rockwell Museum, and the Clark. She also contributed to UMass Medical School.

Besides her husband, Elise is survived by her children: Susan Stephens (George) of Vestal, NY; Wendy Bachrach of NYC; and stepdaughter, Elizabeth England (Tony Scott) of NYC; five grandchildren, David Shaw (Katie), Lauren Fortin (Andrew), Daniel Shaw (Nicole), and Olivia and Cameron Scott; five great-grandchildren; and brother Henri Van Dam of Stamford, CT.

A private memorial service will be held at a later time at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers, donations in Elise’s memory may be made to either: Elise and Moe England Religious School Scholarship Fund, Temple Anshe Amunim, 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201 or to a charity of one’s choice, both in care of the Roche Funeral Home, 120 Main Street, Lenox, MA 01240.

The family would like to thank the staff of the LEP unit at Kimball Farms, the nursing staff at Hillcrest Commons, and to Hospice in The Berkshires for the care that was given to Elise toward the end of her life.

CULTURE AND ARTS

Why Jews Love Seltzer: The History of Jewish Adoration for Fizzy Water

Or, "Ess machts mier tzu grepsen"

By Sara Gardner

Every Jew has a seltzer story. From the adorable – my brother's first word was "seltzer" – to the morbid – a family friend's grandmother died due to a fatal de-capping (true story!) – the fizzy stuff is a familiar facet of Jewish life. For Jews from the most Hasidic to the most secular, this carbonated beverage is a touchstone, as ubiquitous in Jewish culture as it is on Jewish tables – rightfully earning its nickname of "Jewish champagne." But why did seltzer become so synonymous with Jewish culture in the first place?

Funnily enough, the origins of seltzer actually have nothing to do with Jews. As Gil Marks explains in his Encyclopedia of Jewish Food, in the 16th century a town by the name of Niederselters, near Frankfurt, Germany, "began producing a naturally carbonated tonic water called *Selters Wasser*...

presented a quick business start in the land of opportunity without much overhead: all you needed were some glass bottles and a capping machine. Along with the peddling of other Old World favorites like half-sour pickles and farmers' cheese, seltzer men and their circuitous drop-off routes became a fixture of turn-of-the-century cityscapes, hawking a drinkable connection to the Old World up until today.

At the same time, seltzer was also a sparkling symbol of the new land of possibility for Jewish immigrants. The bumper crop of soda fountains and delicatessens that popped up had at their center the seltzer tap, from which thirsty customers could sip New World creations, like the egg cream and Dr. Brown's Cel-Ray soda, or stick with "two-cents plain" — a welcome digestive aid to the heavy Eastern European fare

these locales served. Proof of American bounty, seltzer transcended public soda fountains to adorn the tables of American Jewish homes; a *pareve* beverage, it was beloved by Jews, observant and assimilated alike. With the home-carbonation possibility of the Soda-Stream, the drink became an even more readily available treat: the only things required being a tap of water and a full carbonation cartridge.

The invention of the original home-carbonation machine by a London gin distiller named Guy Hugh Gilbey in 1903 meant that seltzer could be made at home, on demand. This device was the ancestor of the SodaStream, which was widely popular in the United Kingdom in the 70's and 80's not only for the soda it produced, but also its catchy motto "get busy with the fizzy." When SodaStream became an Israeli-owned company in 1998, the carbonated beverage yet again marked its connection to the Jewish people. Instead of the seltzer men of New York – a figure reminiscent of the shtetls of Eastern Europe – a sleek SodaStream shone with the updated patina of American Jewish identity, the fresh look of the Israeli machine replacing the Old World aesthetic of glass.

In that way, seltzer came to occupy a place in the Jewish psyche that loomed even larger than its requisite spot on the dinner table. As Alfred Kazin recalls in his evocative memoir *A Walker in the City*, "seltzer is still the poor Jew's dinner wine, a mild luxury infinitely prized above water out of the faucets." A thirst-quenching sip of seltzer thus held – and still holds – a flavor of nostalgia for American Jews: the effervescent taste of home. And while new players in the seltzer game like La Croix, Polar, and Perrier are contributing to a recent "seltzer boom," for American Jews, seltzer is a fad that has – and will always – retain its fizz.

Sara Gardner is a food historian and blogger. After living for a year in Madrid as a Fulbright scholar researching the historical cuisine of the Sephardic Jews, she currently lives in Connecticut. You can find her writing about Jewish food and food history on her blog Boka Dulse (www.bokadulse.com). This article originally appeared in the Nosh column of My Jewish Learning, which is part of 70 Faces Media.



considered to have medicinal value." Its reputed curative qualities made the beverage popular to Germans from Niederselters and its surroundings, Jew and non-Jew alike. It was from the German word *selters* that we have the Yiddish *zeltzer* and *seltzer vasser*.

Thanks to an English scientist named Joseph Priestley about a century later, the artificial carbonation of water became possible. In his biography *The Invention of Air*, Steven Johnson describes how Priestley discovered that by infusing plain water with the off-gassing of fermenting liquid, he could "add [to it] an agreeable fizz that was reminiscent of certain rare mineral waters." Yet commercial carbonization didn't get into full swing until Swiss citizen Johann Schweppe (gin and tonic, anyone?) patented a method of mass producing carbonated water. Bolstered by its supposed health benefits and temperance advocates alike — seltzer offered a "fun" non-alcoholic alternative to booze — seltzer's popularity continued to grow throughout the 19th century.

So what does this all have to do with the Jews anyway? Well, at the time of the natural tonic's discovery, it seems some inventive German Jewish businessmen were some of the first to sell Niederselters' curative waters. With the advent of mass production later on, droves of German and Russian Jewish entrepreneurs jumped on the bubbly bandwagon, manufacturing seltzer themselves. As a cleaner alternative to the questionable water quality of the time (thanks, multiple filtration!) these manufacturers also developed a taste for seltzer and popularized it within the Jewish community as a status symbol.

It was also these Jewish manufacturers who brought their love for seltzer to America. For those who did not come with manufacturing credentials, producing and distributing seltzer

NEWS

Cornell and Israel's Technion Institute Open High-Tech Campus in NY

By Josefin Dolsten



The Cornell Tech campus is located on Roosevelt Island in New York

NEW YORK (JTA) — In September, a high-tech teaching and research center born of a collaboration between Cornell University and the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology inaugurated its newly built campus on Roosevelt Island.

Over 500 people were present for the inauguration of Cornell Tech and the Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute, including Mayor Bill de Blasio, Gov. Andrew Cuomo, former Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Cornell University President Martha Pollack and Technion Institute President Peretz Lavie.

"Today we take a bold step in the tech arena with the opening of this campus," Cuomo said prior to the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "It's ambitious — it was almost an audacious dream when we started."

De Blasio joked, addressing the Technion president, "In New York, Peretz, we would say this is a mitzvah." Bloomberg, who conceived of the \$2 billion project when he was mayor and donated \$100 million to it, said Cornell Tech would help re-establish New York as a technological center.

"In many ways, this project helps bring New York City back to the future," he said, citing various technological features of the campus, such as the goal to make the main academic center one of the largest net-zero energy buildings in the world.

In 2010, Bloomberg invited top universities to submit pitches to build

the campus. The winners would receive both funding and land on Roosevelt Island, a two-mile long island on the East River. In 2011, the city declared Cornell and the Technion winners, and the project opened the following year, operating out of a temporary location in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood.

Cornell Tech will offer master's and doctoral programs in fields related to technology, computer science and engineering.

De Blasio echoed Cuomo's vision of the campus, which he said, "says to people that we will be forever a global center of technology and innovation."

Lavie recalled thinking the Israeli institute had a slim chance of winning the bid.

"Since we have such a slim chance of winning — be wild," he recalled telling Technion staff. "Use your imagination, think outside the box."

Lavie referenced Cornell University's founder in showing how Israeli startup culture plays into Cornell Tech's technology focus.

"With this campus, Cornell and Technion are making a clear statement: practical knowledge, to paraphrase Ezra Cornell, is not inferior nor second to basic knowledge," he said. "They are the two sides of the same coin. This concept is part of the Technion's DNA and more broadly the State of Israel, which is known as startup nation."

CREDIT: IWAN BAAH VIA JTA

CULTURE AND ARTS

Where Are They Now?

Folk artist Paul Graubard still creating, cementing a legacy

BJV December 2014 – On its cover, the BJV featured Paul Graubard's painting of a Hasid riding a bicycle and reported on a retrospective of the artist's work at Pittsfield's Lichtenstein Center. Graubard, a psychoanalyst, shared how he originally took up painting to combat the grief he felt after losing his daughter to cancer. His playful canvases in the folk art continuum – his stated goal is to create "paintings that twirl and surprise" – feature circuses, Jewish themes, and imagery inspired by American folklore, all topics that have fascinated him since childhood.

BJV October 2017 – Now 85 years old, Graubard says he is working hard to place artwork in quality museums, places like the Smithsonian, the Jewish Museum, and the American Folk Art Museum, the latter two in New York City. These works, he hopes, will represent his legacy and join his other artworks already in the collections of major folk art museums.

When he spoke with the



"Three Ring Circus"

BJV in September, he was about to leave for a gala at Baltimore's American Museum of Visionary Art (AVAM), which is featuring his work in a year-long group exhibition. Titled "The Great Mystery Show," the show aims to "peel away the veil of the unknown, playfully exploring mystery as that one secret power behind great art, science, and pursuit of the sacred." It's Graubard's fifth time exhibiting at AVAM, one of the nation's premier museums for outsider art, where he also has seven paintings in the

permanent collection.

In the last two years, the International Museum of Folk Art in Santa Fe, NM, has taken four of his paintings for their collection, which is the largest of its kind in the world. This fall, the Jewish Museum in Switzerland exhibits "The Black Biker," which is from the same series of Hasidim-pedaling-bicycles that the BJV used for its 2014 feature story on Graubard. That show features artists riffing on the work of Marc Chagall, and will be shown simultaneously with a



"Folk Singers"

Chagall exhibit hanging in another Swiss museum. "I don't know how they found me," admits Graubard, who donated the work to the museum's permanent collection. Finally, his work is being featured in an exhibition at a museum in Waterloo, Iowa.

Though he admits to slowing down a bit, Graubard's work schedule is still robust – he spends about eight hours each day painting and cogitating in his first floor studio in the Brotherhood Building on Pittsfield's North Street.

(He says visitors are welcome to stop by to see some of the paintings stored on site.) He works on one canvas at a time, and it usually takes him about a month to complete a new painting.

He says that on occasion he might have to think about a painting for about a year before getting to work on it. "Sometimes I don't feel I have a certain skill" necessary to execute the work. "But I'm still working to develop my skills, and once I feel skilled enough, I take it on."

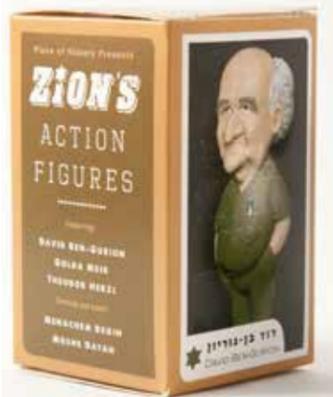
Piece of History

A small Israeli design studio revamping Jewish memorabilia market

TEL AVIV – Established in 2010, Piece of History is a design studio focused on creating contemporary history-oriented, collectibles, prints, t-shirts, and more.

The studio is based in Tel-Aviv, and creates modern (and cool) gifts, collectibles and souvenirs that Asaf Harari, the studio's founder, hopes will be an alternative to "the archaic Judaica products."

The idea first came up 7 years ago, while Harari was a student in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It seemed to him that the Israeli souvenir market needed to be thoroughly revamped, and that there was room for more updated souvenirs. "My love of design (specially for Pop Art, vinyl figures, etc.), together with my love of Israel led me to start designing souvenirs with a more contemporary feel," says Harari. The flagship product of the studio is the Zion's



David Ben-Gurion action figure

Action Figures series (shown on the front page), depicting the figurines of Moshe Dayan, David Ben-Gurion, Golda Meir, Menachem Begin, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, Yitzhak Rabin, and Theodor Herzl.

"In the United States, every gift shop sells figurines of movie stars, cartoon characters, athletes and politicians," says Harari. "The whole

culture of action figures and vinyl figures (such as Kid Robot) is part of United States art scene, folklore and the country's identity.

"I thought that the time has come for Israel to develop its own action figures culture. I believe that souvenirs and collectibles are part of the any country's showcase, not only for tourists, but especially for internal self image and identity. I wanted to affect it

in a positive way – bringing modern style to the historic culture of Israel, Judaism and Zionism."

Piece of History items are selling in several stores in Israel located mostly in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, but Harari says his main target audience is in the United States and Canada, which the company reaches through its website, www.piece-of-history.com.

"Besides anti-Semitic and

anti-Israeli comments that we are getting through the social media," says Harari, "the overall response from the Jewish community is very enthusiastic. It's like people really waited for something like this to happen, we keep hearing people saying how come no one ever thought about it before. People here finally have something to bring to their family when they visit them abroad."

Correction: Mark Podwal

By Albert Stern / BJV Editor

Due to an editing error, artist Mark Podwal's name was spelled incorrectly on the front page of the last BJV. Also, he practices dermatology in New York, not Los Angeles. While it never feels good to make mistakes, the upside was that Dr. Podwal (alerted to the errors by a patient of his who reads the BJV, and who gave me an earful about my carelessness over the phone before calling him up) was kind enough to give me a ring. We had the opportunity to talk, which we were unable to do earlier owing to deadline constraints. We talked about our family histories, and the complex, often tortured, relationship Jews with Eastern European roots have with the past given the pall cast over our memories (individual and collective) by World War II. Can we really feel nostalgia for that lost world? How can post-Holocaust Jews express it? These are some of the questions raised by Dr. Podwal's work, which emphasizes light rather than darkness.

Dr. Podwal also related interesting information about "Kaddish for Dąbrowa Białostocka," the exhibit of his work now on view at the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst that pays homage to his mother's birthplace, a shtetl that was destroyed by the Nazis in 1941. He also shared images from *Reimagined: 45 Years of Jewish Art*, a handsome monograph of his work (with foreword by Elie Wiesel and preface by Cynthia Ozick) that was published in 2016 and is available through Amazon. And when I told



him how disappointed I was that I had been unable to secure permission to reproduce one of his paintings of Dąbrowa Białostocka before our press deadline, he said it would be fine if I wanted to do so now. But that I should run a correction. And mention his book and website, markpodwal.com

Done and done, so here is "Sabbath Clouds," courtesy of the artist, now on view at the Yiddish Book Center.



Theodore Herzl t-shirt