

# Berkshire JEWISH VOICE

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

Vol. 26, No. 2

Adar/Nisan 5778

February 19 to March 18, 2018

jewishberkshires.org

## Music, Food, Stories for Israel at 70!

Interactive Hafla Night kicks off community festivities in the Berkshires



Learn to play the doumbek drum

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Monday, March 5 at 6 p.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires invites the community to gather in celebration of Israel's 70th birthday. Hafla Night brings the tastes, sounds, and stories of the Jewish homeland to the Berkshires. The event, which will take place at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire,



inaugurates a year of "Israel at 70" programming, and is free and open to the community.

"Hafla" is an Arabic word (often used in modern Hebrew, as well) for a party, one evoking an intimate gathering focused on food, music, dance, and socializing. This interactive evening will feature culinary tastings presented by a visiting delegation of Israeli musicians and cooks from the Afula-Gilboa region of Israel, as part of the Federation-supported Partnership2gether program of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

Israeli home cooks Rina Cohen and Shirli Abitbul-Zakay will share culinary tastings and stories from their

**HAFLA NIGHT**, continued on page 6

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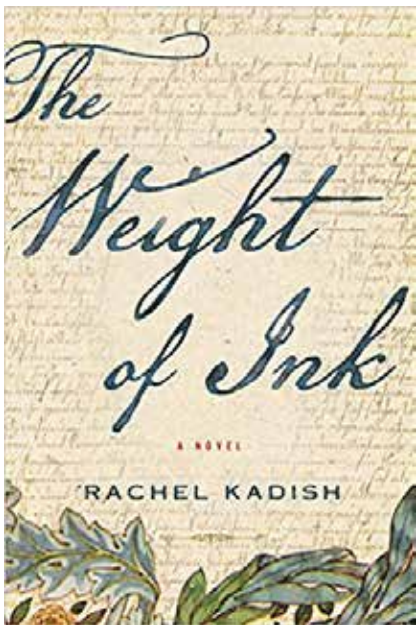
## Rachel Kadish on *The Weight of Ink*

Author to discuss her best-selling novel at the March 23 Knosh & Knowledge

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Friday, March 23, Knosh & Knowledge hosts Rachel Kadish, whose 2017 novel *The Weight of Ink* last year won a National Jewish Book Award for best book club story and the Association of Jewish Libraries' inaugural Jewish Fiction Award.

She will be talking about the path she took in researching and writing this acclaimed historical novel that shifts back and forth from 1660s England to the present day. 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.

*The Weight of Ink* tells the interwoven tale of two women of remarkable intellect: Ester Valasquez, an emigrant from Amsterdam who is permitted to scribe for a blind rabbi; and Helen Watt, an ailing historian with a love of Jewish history. As the novel opens, Helen has been summoned to view a trove of newly discovered 17th century Jewish



**RACHEL KADISH**, continued on page 8

## Purim 5778

Late winter longing for sun, sand, and balmy weather



Some of our loyal readers, we know, are reading this issue of the BJV in Florida or other warmer climes, leaving us in the still chilly Berkshires to dream about walking barefoot in the sand and picking juicy winter citrus fruits right off the tree. Did you know you can thank Jews for those delicious fresh oranges you're eating, snowbirds? Please turn to page 24 for more on how the late Roman Empire etrog trade led to today's citrus industry in Israel and beyond. (This 1927 poster was created by Ze'ev Raban [1890-1970], a leading artist of the Bezalel school art style, an art movement in Eretz Israel in the late Ottoman and British Mandate periods that has been described as "a fusion of 'oriental' art and jugendstil [similar to Art Nouveau].")

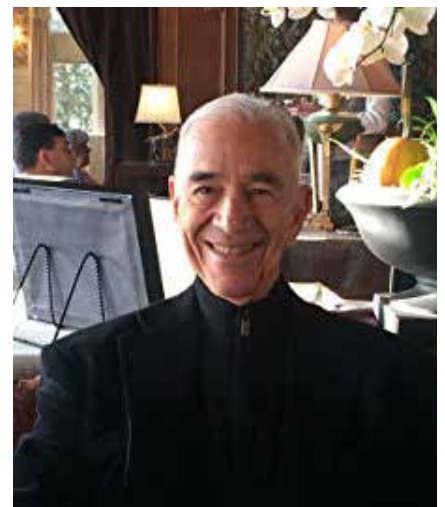
## "The Man Who Never Forgot," on March 19

Novelist Kenneth Markel presents his new book, *To Catch a Nazi*

PITTSFIELD – On Monday, March 19 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Kenneth Markel, who will discuss his new book *To Catch a Nazi* in a program titled "The Man Who Never Forgot." This free program at Kneset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation's Connecting With Community series.

*To Catch a Nazi* is a twisty psychological thriller centering on the efforts of David Menard – originally Willy Mannheim, son of a Jewish mother and a German father – to unravel a mystery set in motion the last time he saw his mother, six years before the start of World War II. Menard was sent to live in America by his grandparents while still a child, where he took his adoptive parents' name and grew up to work in New York City as a bookbinder. In 2004, Menard sees a listing for an auction of artwork, and remembers that his mortally injured mother had whispered the artist's name – Anton Kessler.

Deepening the intrigue is the fact that Menard has, since the late 1960s, been corresponding with his "Uncle Kurt" – who is, in fact, his father, the former Nazi Ernst Mannheim, who wishes to hide his shameful identity from his son, but



Kenneth Markel

shares the need to find out what happened in 1933 Berlin.

Like we said, it's twisty, full of overlapping storylines and a rogue's gallery of characters who may or may not be able – or willing – to answer Menard's questions about the past.

Kenneth Markel was kind enough to share a selection from the gripping opening chapter of *To Catch a Nazi* with the BJV, starting on page 9.

**KENNETH MARKEL**, continued on page 9



# President’s Message

## Thanks to All Who Helped Us Every Step of the Way

By Judy Usow / President, Jewish Federation of the Berkshires



As we close the books on our 2017 Annual Campaign, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the generous Federation donors and volunteers, listed in this edition, whose collective efforts helped us surpass our campaign goal by raising over \$802,000!

Kudos to Jen Sacon and Scott Hochfelder, who started us off with a tremendous Super Sunday, and to Eli and Marilyn Katzman, who kept the momentum rolling at our Major Donors’ breakfast. They, together with the many volunteers, host committee members, and board members reached out to so many people in our community, sharing the critical role of our Federation and asking for your support.

Thank you, too, to the Federation’s terrific staff, which was there every step of the way. Without the dedication of our community members, volunteers, and professionals, we simply would not have this wonderful Jewish community in which we live.

In recent years, our Jewish Federation has made tremendous strides in advancing our mission of building and supporting a vibrant Jewish community. Engaging more Jewish individuals and fostering a powerful sense of Jewish identity are essential for the health and vitality of our community. We must never forget, however, that we are also responsible for the welfare of those in need, whether that person is our neighbor down the street or an impoverished single mother living across the ocean.

That is the thought on the minds of the members of the Federation’s Allocations Committee, who as I write are reviewing grant proposals in order to decide how to make a meaningful impact with these dollars in 2018. There will be thorough and thoughtful discussion on many important priorities, such as how to

*Our campaign dollars will support the care of fragile Jewish populations, engage new leaders, and help build Jewish community in places where Jewish life was once almost erased*

balance the need for a quality Jewish education for our young people at our local congregations against the importance of funding identity-building experiences for them at Jewish summer camps, on college campuses, and on Birthright trips to Israel.

As a small community, we are deeply committed to meeting our local needs while also recognizing the importance of being part of the wider Jewish community’s efforts of *tzedakah* and *tikkun olam* that are so desperately needed in our world today.

Our Allocations Committee will also determine how we will support the needs of our brothers and sisters in Israel and overseas through our partners – the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), the Jewish American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), and World ORT. Our campaign dollars will support the care of fragile Jewish populations, engage new leaders, and help build Jewish community in places where Jewish life was once almost erased. In addition, the committee will decide on allocations that will be made to specific social service organizations in Israel that care for elderly Holocaust survivors, at-risk and abused children, and the disabled.

Shaping the lives of young adults, supporting those in crisis around the world, strengthening the Jewish identities of teens, and ensuring that older adults in the Berkshires continue to live independently and with dignity—this holy work of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and our partners transcends age, gender, geography, and levels of religious observance. At our core, we are committed to building community and raising the funds needed to support the critical programs and services relied upon by thousands across the Berkshires, in Israel, and in more than 70 countries around the world.

Please take a moment to review our annual report on page 12 of this paper. While there is much more to be done, we are deeply proud of all that we have accomplished. This important work is only possible through the commitment and generosity of our donors and volunteers like you.

On behalf of our community, we are deeply grateful for all you have done.

## Letters to the Editor

### Studying in Israel Thanks to a Federation Scholarship

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

I am truly grateful for the scholarship you have provided to attend Alexander Muss High School in Israel. Traveling to Israel is an amazing gift, and being able to study abroad there is simply incredible. I look forward to furthering my education in not just my core curriculum, but also in my Jewish studies and the history of Israel.

Thank you for supporting me in my education.

Elena Brown  
Lenox

### Even at Camp, Science is Fun

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

I would like to thank you very much for your very generous contribution to my summer camp scholarship so that I could attend Camp Ramah in the Berkshires last summer.

While I was there, I participated in tennis, archery, robotics, science, music, and swimming. My favorite activity was science, because it is my favorite subject in school. Also, science is fun!

In addition, I learned about Israel while I was there. These experiences helped to further increase my Jewish identity. Again, thank you very much for your kindness and generosity.

Sincerely,  
Robert M. Ferrin  
Lenox

Editor’s Note: Camp scholarships are made available through the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires with support from the Jewish Women’s Foundation of Berkshire County.

### Your PJ Donations Keeping Berkshires Kids Warm

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

The Department of Children and Families Pittsfield Area Office deeply appreciates your generous donation of 150 pajamas through your PJ Library pajama drive program.

With your donation, the Department was able to provide children with new warm pajamas. The Department is excited and looks forward to working with you again. Thank you!

Respectfully yours,  
Margie Gilberti, MSW, M.Ed.  
Director of Area

Tiffany Bassi, M.S.  
Supervisor

#### 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](mailto:astern@jewishberkshires.org).

### He Found Out What’s Cooking at Camp, Thanks to Federation

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

Thank you for sending the money that allowed me to go to camp this year. I really enjoyed the new dining hall last year.

Again, thank you.  
Joseph Weiner, Shoafim Camper  
Pittsfield

### He Liked *Pulat Tzrif*

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

Thank you for sending me to camp. I especially liked Shabbat, morning music, and *pulat tzrif* (bunk activities). Again, thank you.

Your friend,  
Ari Weiner  
Pittsfield

### Your Generosity Aids Vermont Congregation in Time of Need

To the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:

It was such a nice surprise at a stress-filled time to open your envelope of caring. On behalf of the members of Congregation Beth El [in Bennington, VT] and the Jewish community of the tri-state region, we would like to thank you for your support in a time of need.

This *tzedakah* gift will help us on our journey to repair our century-old sanctuary and lower educational space in which we join in community.

With great gratitude,  
Robyn Kozierok and Dianna Ivey  
Co-Presidents,  
Congregation Beth El



Congregation Beth El in Bennington, VT, suffered significant water damage due to burst pipes.

ADDITIONAL LETTERS on page 4



# Rabbi Reflections

## A Purim Message: Knowing is Ultimately about Connection

By Rabbi Seth Wax



It seems that today, it so hard to talk to each other, especially across political lines. When was the last time you actually tried to speak to someone who you knew held political beliefs that you find difficult, if not abhorrent? Perhaps you thought twice about speaking with the person, fearing what might be said?

We live in challenging times: we face so many challenges to our planet and to our physical and mental health. How can we possibly meet those challenges if we cannot work together and learn

from each other, if we see each other as the enemy and not united in common goals?

The story of Purim is set in a time of deep and existential uncertainty. In *Megillat Esther*, the Purim story, we encounter Mordechai, who watches as the world around him falls apart. When the fragile ego of the evil Haman is slighted, this chief adviser to the king dooms the Jewish people to destruction. Then, upon hearing the decree, the city of Shushan is dumbfounded (Esther 3:15) as Mordechai and Jews throughout the Persian empire tear their garments, don sackcloth and ash, and wail bitterly (Esther 4:1-3). It seems as though all is lost.

Thanks to the fortitude and skills of Esther and Mordechai, a plan is hatched to save the Jews from certain death. The turnaround is striking, and the tale ends with celebration and song. But to more deeply understand the story, we should ask: What happens that ultimately turns the tide and saves the people? Is it Esther's confrontation of Haman before King Ahasuerus? Is it Mordechai's encouragement of Esther to approach the king?

I think the most important moment of the story, in which everything turns around, occurs at the very moment before Mordechai begins to wail. In chapter four, which introduces us to Mordechai's wailing, the opening words are "*U'Mordechai yada*" – "And Mordechai knew." We might think that these words describe how Mordechai learns about the decree against the Jews. But early Hasidic teacher Dov Ber, the Maggid of Mezeritch, suggests that something very different took place. Knowing, the Hasidic master reminds us, is not simply a matter of grasping facts. Knowing is ultimately about connection. To know someone or something in the truest sense means that we seek to be connected on the deepest level. To have a facile grasp of facts about a person or of a topic doesn't mean that we know them. To really know means to be in a deeper

*What Mordechai did at the moment he learned about the decree was to make connections, and to help others to do that*

relationship and to seek to deepen that connection (Or HaEmet on Esther 2:5; translation and commentary in Arthur Green, et. al., *Speaking Torah*, vol. 2, pp. 203-4).

And so what Mordechai did at the moment he learned about the decree was to make connections, and to help others to do that. In the Megillah, the Jews are derisively described by Haman as "one nation, spread out and dispersed in the world." But according to an alternative way of reading the verse in Hebrew, with Mordechai's help the Jews are "a nation seeking oneness, who do it while spread out and dispersed in the world" (*Sfat Emet on Purim*, 1871). In other words, what Mordechai helps the Jews of his time to do is to seek connection. To break through the barriers to separate people and to find the underlying oneness that ties everyone together. That was the only way that they would be able to face the challenges of the day.

That certainly takes work and is by no means easy. But I think it is a powerful lesson for us: The message of Purim is that, especially in troubling times, our task is to seek connection with others and to elevate the unifying oneness that ties us all together. It is too easy to despair, to put on sackcloth and ash and wail about how terrible things are. But that is not the message of Purim. It is precisely at these times that we are called on, like Mordechai, to really know. Yes, we may ultimately begin to cry out. But first and throughout, we seek to know and to make connections to bring out the light.

Rabbi Seth Wax is Jewish chaplain at Williams College.

Berkshire

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The color photography in this issue of the *Berkshire Jewish Voice* is made possible through the generosity of **Steven and Renee Finn, honorary publishers**. The staff of the Federation and the BJV are deeply grateful.

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The BJV wishes to thank **Michael Albert and Susan Merrill** for an additional donation at the honorary publisher level that has enabled the *Berkshire Jewish Voice* to join the American Jewish Press Association (AJPA). AJPA membership consists of newspapers, magazines, websites, other electronic Jewish media organizations, individual journalists, and affiliated organizations throughout the United States and Canada.

Check out our website!

www.jewishberkshires.org

INCLUDES A CALENDAR OF PROGRAMS AND EVENTS  
SPONSORED BY THE BERKSHIRE JEWISH COMMUNITY

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

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

Berkshire

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

Published nine times a year by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

Dara Kaufman: Publisher and Managing Editor

Steven and Renee Finn: Honorary Publishers

Albert Stern: Editor

Rose Tannenbaum: Graphic Design and Layout

Jenny Greenfeld: Advertising Sales Representative and Assistant Editor

Editorial opinions expressed in the *Berkshire Jewish Voice* are those of the newspaper and not those of any individual. Signed editorials do not represent the view of the newspaper, but rather express the writer's view.

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To have the *BJV* mailed to your home, please send a minimum donation of \$18

Next issue publication date: **March 19-April 22, 2018**

Press deadline: **February 13, 2018** • Advertising deadline: **March 1, 2018**

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# In My View

## Sustaining a Connection with the Jewish Berkshires

New Federation development officer continues a family legacy of serving our Jewish community

By Leslie Voremberg Kozupsky



If someone had asked me two years ago if I would be living in the Berkshires full time, I might have said “maybe.” But if they told me I would be the new development officer at the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, I would have replied that would be highly unlikely. But life often changes when you least expect it, and to understand how I got here, you need to know where I came from.

My parents, Henry and Beate Voremberg, called the Berkshires their home for over 30 years. They were born in Germany, and both immigrated to the US when they were in their early twenties. They and their parents suffered terribly from the Holocaust, and their experiences had a lasting effect on both me and my family. I was raised with very strong Jewish values, as well as a strong connection to Israel and the communities where they lived.

I obtained a master’s degree in social work from Wurzweiler School of Social Work/Yeshiva University. I spent a few years working as a social worker, but then made a switch and joined the family cheese importing business. As a national sales manager, I spent my time developing and maintaining relationships with customers, overseeing sales, and opening up new accounts.

Along the way, I met my husband Roy; we were both on the Young Leadership board of Israel Tennis Centers. We had the privilege of raising two terrific daughters, Rachel and Jordana. Both my girls had a close relationship with their grandparents, who I believe instilled in all of us a sense of deep responsibility to our Jewish community. “Kol Yisrael aravim ze b’ze”- my parents believed that as Jews, we are all responsible for one another, whether you live down the street, in the former Soviet Union, or in Israel.

Our family’s connection to our synagogue, Bet Torah in Mt. Kisco, NY, had a large impact on our lives. I was privileged to serve on the board of directors for

many years. Roy, at the age of 55, had a bar mitzvah. Rachel had the wonderful experience at the Hadassah Year Course program in Israel. It was that deep connection to Israel that I believe propelled her to work at AIPAC and now for the Conference of Presidents of major Jewish organizations. Jordana met her fiancé, Greg, on her birthright trip to Israel.

I really do not want to be one of these parents who brag on and on about their family, but what I will say is that we all have a strong understanding as to the importance of community. Not only being a part of it, but contributing to it and helping to sustain and nurture it.

Once our daughters graduated from college, we moved from Chappaqua to New York City for a few years; however, I soon realized that city living was not really for me. Roy and I then decided that we would pack up and head north, and spend the next chapter in our lives in the Berkshires.

Like so many who find the Berkshires later in life, we came to enjoy the world-class culture and the natural beauty. We embraced the Berkshire lifestyle, but we really had no idea about what it meant to be Jewish in the Berkshires.

While I have had the pleasure of attending various events sponsored by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, I had no idea of the depth of its programs and services, or how many lives Federation touches and enriches. For years, my parents spoke about the Berkshire Jewish community and their involvement with the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. I was happy that they had felt so connected to a community. Now I look forward to being connected, too, and helping to make sure that our vital programs continue to connect and serve the needs of this community.

I also look forward to meeting our many generous community members and hearing what is important to them, what programs they may be interested in, and why they support this community. I hope to share with them how, through Federation, they can help make our community and our world a better place for all.

*Leslie Voremberg Kozupsky is development officer of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. You can reach her at (413) 442-4360, ext. 19, or by emailing lkozupsky@jewishberkshires.org.*

## Letters to the Editor, continued from page 2

### B’nai Mitzvah Students Reflect on Jewish Heritage Museum Visit

Dear Jewish Women’s Foundation and Federation:

I thought our trip to the Jewish Heritage Museum in NYC was a very educational experience and I learned a lot about my heritage and what the Holocaust was like in more detail than what I had learned in the past. I’m glad that we took this trip because without it I would not have been able to learn the things that I did that day. It was a sad experience for me and I’m sure it was for my peers as well, but I’m still glad that we got that information. Thank you for allowing us to visit the museum!

Thanks,  
Georgia Raser  
Dalton

Dear Jewish Women’s Foundation and Federation:

The trip to The Jewish Heritage Museum was memorable. I learned a lot about my heritage and more of what Jews had to go through during the Holocaust. Also, the Holocaust story that was told by the amazing and inspiring survivor really opened my eyes. Experiencing the museum opened my eyes and heart to the world, and really made me more aware of the people around me. Thank you for this amazing experience.

Rose Sutter  
Windsor

Dear Jewish Women’s Foundation and Federation:

During our trip to the Jewish Heritage Museum, I learned a lot about my heritage and the Holocaust. Most of it was sad and other parts were disturbing. It devastated me to learn that my ancestors had to go through that. Thank you to the Jewish Women’s Foundation for giving me and my peers the opportunity to go on this amazing and important trip.

Maya Kaufman  
Pittsfield

### A Parent’s Impressions of Our Day of Holocaust Education

Dear Jewish Women’s Foundation and Federation:

I’d like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for the Jewish Women’s Foundation’s sponsorship of “A Day of Holocaust Education, Meeting Hate with Humanity,” supported by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires.

During our trip, we listened to survivor Sally Frishberg, an 84-year-old woman who was barely 5 years old on September 1, 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. Her family lived in a small town where life was simple, and people of different religions went about their lives respecting and caring about their neighbors. But when the German Army arrived, life changed dramatically and forever. The German Army eventually made it to her small town, taking control of the villagers’ lives, homes, and security. Sally’s house would become the respite for three soldiers. Over the next few years, one of the three soldiers befriended Sally’s father, sharing tales of the horrors that were coming. One day the sirens rang, and the Jews were ordered to the square the following morning. Sally’s father knew they had one choice – to escape into the fields and pray they could survive until the Germans left.

Sally spoke about the horrors of survival and her gratitude toward the poor Polish farmer who put his own family’s life on the line to save her Jewish family. Many of the kids on the trip found the story to be the most important and meaningful part of the trip. When I asked my son Jay why, he said “because she was only a child, like me.”

This trip was indeed a gift for my son, providing a tangible resource for embracing his Jewish heritage while he is in the midst of his bar mitzvah experience. After his visit, Jay recognized the responsibility toward all humanity, and the importance of preserving the stories of survivors and the memories of the people who died, so as never to let the world forget!

Jay said he was grateful to live in the United States, but, and I quote, “living anywhere doesn’t mean we are truly safe.” We discussed how essential it is to speak up even when the anti-Semitism seems minor. Nothing is trivial when we talk about hatred, whether it is towards one’s beliefs, or one’s neighbor whether here, at home, or somewhere far away.

An example of Jay’s own experience we talked about was when he was in elementary school and faced anti-Semitism on the bus to and from school. Jay followed the bully protocol, and yet his requests for support were denied. When



*B’nai mitzvah students with parents and chaperones at the Museum of Jewish Heritage on December 3, 2017.*

his brother Michael experienced anti-Semitism, his reaction was to laugh and brush off the remarks, until the day he could no longer laugh and brush away the pain he was feeling inside.

In an open discussion with Jay and Michael, we realized that allowing small remarks, even laughing along, provides permission and sets a tone that it is okay. Because, one day, something will be said that crosses a line. Once Pandora’s Box is open it is hard to stop the inevitable – a joke is no longer just a joke, it is hatred and it is hurtful.

Thank you again for providing our family and our community with this opportunity to learn and grow.

Amy Glaser D’Alton  
Lenox



# 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 16.** Note that lunch menus are subject to change.

## Flexibility Training for Seniors, with Thea Basis

On Monday, February 26 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 Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation's Connecting With Community series.



Thea Basis

"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-

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.

## Current Affairs: Topics in Contemporary American and International Politics

On Monday, March 12 at 10:45 a.m., join Professor Steven J. Rubin for the second installment of "Current Affairs: Topics in Contemporary American and International Politics." This course will meet once a month to discuss and explore current issues that influence our lives and society at large. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires' Connecting With Community series.

Topics will be chosen by Professor Rubin in consultation with the class and in view of the issue's relevance. Members will be invited to participate in discussions, expressing their views and opinions

in a supportive and informal atmosphere.

Steven J. Rubin is professor emeritus of international studies and former dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Adelphi University, Garden City, NY. He is the author of numerous books and articles, and frequently lectures both here and abroad on such topics as international anti-Semitism, Jewish history, popular culture, and literature. His radio play "Dem Bums: The Rise and Demise of the Brooklyn Dodgers" was broadcast live on National Public Radio in December 2017 and can be currently heard online.

The class meets on the



Professor Steven J. Rubin

second Monday of each month (subject to change).

### IF YOU GO

**Sponsor:** Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community  
**Venue:** Knesset Israel  
**Date & Time:** Monday, March 12 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 16).

## "The Spirituality of Aging," with Wren Bernstein

"The Spirituality of Aging: A Conversation About Life and Depth," led by licensed social worker and spiritual guide Wren Bernstein, continues with sessions on March 1 and March 15, both Thursdays. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield, part of the Federation's Connecting With Community series.

What does it mean to embrace your elderhood and transform your expectations of aging? According to Wren Bernstein, this course offers an opportunity to explore the unique spiritual and psychological gifts of the third major stage of life in a relaxed group setting. Both one-hour sessions will include a brief mindfulness practice, inspirational readings with questions for introspection, and a facilitated group conversation. Topics include: aging consciously; retiring the inner critic; forgiveness; life review; facing mortality; and the mystery of transformation.



Wren Bernstein

Wren Bernstein, LICSW, has been a spiritual practitioner for 35 years and a clinical social worker for 25, working with clients both individually and in groups. As a lifelong seeker of truth and transcendence, she brings a spiritual and philosophical perspective to the psychological and social issues that confront us at various stages of life. Though she works with adults of all ages, she is most recently focusing on the unique challenges and opportunities that arise in the "third act" of life, when meaning-of-life questions seem to demand more attention and priorities and goals begin to shift. She believes in the power of contemplation, conversation, and community as essential to mental and spiritual health.

### IF YOU GO

**Sponsor:** Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community  
**Venue:** Knesset Israel  
**Date & Time:** Thursdays at 10:45 a.m.: March 1 and 15. Upcoming sessions: April 19. Lunch (see page 16) follows at noon.

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

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# Your Federation Presents

## HAFLA NIGHT, *continued from page 1*

Iraqi, Kurdish, and Tunisian heritage. Chef David Beutler of Gilboa's Kibbutz Yizreel will be on hand, as well, demonstrating how he keeps hungry kibbutzniks well fed and happy. Community members are invited to cook alongside our Israeli guests earlier in the day, and later share and enjoy the dishes they helped create. Between tastings and



stories, attendees will enjoy classic and ethnic Israeli songs performed by Liran Sela. Community members are encouraged to bring their musical instruments or grab one of the *doumbek* drums provided to join in and explore the Middle Eastern beats of Israel's diverse musical heritage – no rehearsal

necessary. As the evening winds up, everyone can join in "Shira b'Tzibur," a traditional Israeli sing-a-long of the early pioneer days and kibbutzim (song-books provided). As the evening unfolds, attendees will collect recipes, lyrics, photos, and short poems to take home as mementos of the culture, flavors, and sounds we shared together with our Israeli friends and partners.

### Volunteers needed!

To make this community celebration a success, helping hands are needed. Volunteers interested in cooking alongside our Israeli guests and/or

setting up and serving during the event should contact Ellen Heffan at [elhotis@aol.com](mailto:elhotis@aol.com), (413) 269-6590. Local hosts who can provide overnight hospitality for our Israeli visitors are also needed. Those interested should contact Josh Bloom at [joshuabloom1@gmail.com](mailto:joshuabloom1@gmail.com), (718) 683-2548. This celebration is free and open to the community but space is limited. Please reserve your spot by calling the Federation at (413) 442-4360, ext. 10, or by emailing [federation@jewishberkshires.org](mailto:federation@jewishberkshires.org). Hevreh of Southern Berkshire is located at 270 State Road in Great Barrington.

## Easy Yoga for Flexibility, Mobility, and Peace of Mind

On Thursday, February 22 at 10:45 a.m., join Linda Novick for "Chair Yoga: Easy Yoga for Flexibility, Mobility, and Peace of Mind." This free program at Kneset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires' Connecting With Community series. Linda Novick says: "Chair Yoga is appropriate for people of all levels of mobility. It is a series of breathing and stretching exercises done in a chair, which increases mobility of the joints, flexibility, strength and stamina. Some of the exercises are performed standing behind the chair, while holding on. Participants will learn breathing techniques to enhance lung capacity, as well as easy stretches and yoga postures. Yoga is good for *all bodies*. Beginners are welcome."

Linda Novick, MFA, is an

author, teacher, artist, and professional level Kripalu Yoga teacher. She currently teaches yoga at Berkshire West Fitness Center and Kimball Farms, and all over the Commonwealth with the Massachusetts Housing Authority. She explains that her approach to yoga encourages everyone to listen and love their body. Her yoga classes encourage gentle stretching, proper breathing, strength and balance. She attended Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and has a BFA in art education, and has taught art for 50 years. She's been teaching yoga since 1997, and lately has been focusing on easy yoga for elders. She taught on staff at Kripalu Center for 7 years, and is now a regular presenter, offering programs that combine painting and yoga. She's the author of the book, *The Painting Path: Embodying*



Linda Novick  
*Spiritual Discovery through Yoga, Brush and Color.*

**IF YOU GO**  
**Sponsor:** Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community  
**Venue:** Kneset Israel  
**Date & Time:** Thursday, February 22 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 16).

## Lecture Series Brings Pre-Recorded 92Y Talks to Lenox

**LENOX** – A new free program series presented by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshire, in collaboration with Kimball Farms, will screen four thought-provoking pre-recorded talks from the renowned 92nd Street Y in New York City. The series kicks off on Wednesday, March 7 at 2 p.m., with Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks joining *New York Times* columnist David Brooks for "Finding a Moral Compass in Challenging Times," an illuminating, intellectual, and amusing conversation on finding a just and honorable path in today's world. Brooks begins by asking Rabbi Sacks to expound on the meaning of a line from his book *Not in God's Name* that holds – we live in a time where there is "a maximum of choice and a minimum of meaning." Sacks answers by pointing out the ways that modern society has deconstructed institutions, like religion, that traditionally provided meaning for groups and individuals, his insights leading to a fascinating discussion between these two distinguished public intellectuals.

The series is free and open to the public, and last approximately one hour. Kimball Farms is located at 235 Walker Street in Lenox. Light refreshments will be served.

**Upcoming Programs**

On Wednesday, March 28 at 2 p.m., Alana Newhouse, editor-in-chief of *Tablet Magazine*, leads the panel discussion "The End of Europe." with James Kirchick, (author of *The End of Europe: Dictators, Demagogues and the Coming Dark Age*), Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Bret Stephens (*The New York Times*), and Julia Ioffe (*The Atlantic*).

On Wednesday, April 11 at 2 p.m., "The Nature of Faith" brings together world-renowned physicist and writer Marcelo Gleiser and his two distinguished guests, MacArthur Fellow and National Humanities Medalist, philosopher, and novelist Rebecca Goldstein, and astrophysicist and acclaimed novelist Alan Lightman.

On Wednesday, April 25 at 2 p.m., Dr. Ruth Westheimer joins Annette Insdorf for "Dr. Ruth: The Doctor is In."



David Brooks in conversation with Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

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## RSVP for Our Kosher Community Seder on March 30

**PITTSFIELD** – The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires will host a kosher community Passover Seder at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, March 30 at Kneset Israel, 16 Colt Road. Participants will enjoy a traditional kosher Seder experience with plenty of explanation, insight and song, while enjoying all the ritual foods, ceremonial wine, and a delicious four-course Passover meal. Catered by Crown Market of West Hartford, the Seder meal will feature a brisket entrée. A vegetarian option is available upon advance request. Attendees are invited to bring their own kosher for Passover table wine. Rabbi David Weiner of Kneset Israel will serve as Seder leader. Children of all ages, extended family, and community friends are welcome. Children will enjoy plague bags and be invited to hunt for the *afikomen*. Prizes will be awarded to all. The cost is \$40 for adults and \$20 for children ages 5 through 13. Children 4 years and under are free of charge. Advance reservations and payment are required by Monday, March 19. Financial assistance is available through the generosity of the Jewish Women's Foundation of Berkshire County. Reservations can be made by calling the Federation at (413) 442-4360, ext. 10 or online at [www.jewishberkshires.org](http://www.jewishberkshires.org).



Your Federation Presents

“Breaking the Silence in Gyumri, Armenia”

On Thursday, March 8 at 10:45 a.m., join Suzi Banks Baum, a writer and artist who will talk about her experiences in Armenia leading an art and writing workshop called New Illuminations, which works to empower local women through the creation of handbound books. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ Connecting With Community series.

This program is in honor of International Women’s Day.

“In a culture that silences women,” writes Suzi Banks Baum, “that neither values their work nor sees their stories as essential, we are reconnecting Armenian women artists with indigenous practices of handbound books. Building books with them redirects a cultural trend of silence, providing them with vessels for connection.”

With a slideshow of vibrant images that tell the story of her residencies in Armenia, she will discuss the power of

art in making social change and the ways of cultural diplomacy. Banks Baum will provide a vision for the future of New Illuminations, illustrated with brand new images from her recent residency.

Suzi Banks Baum is a writer, artist, actress, teacher, community organizer, and mom who lives in Great Barrington. Her first published book, *An Anthology of Babes*, celebrates the writing of women artists. “Deeply curious about the thresholds we cross in to creative practice, I write personal narrative with an ear for transformation through engagement with the ordinary,” she says. She has an ongoing artist residency in Gyumri, Armenia with New Illuminations, while also interviewing women artists there about their daily lives. She says she inspires women to live from the space of creative spirit and to value their contributions to the world and one another through workshops steeped in book arts, ritual, and writing. Find

her work in *Easy Street, The Mid, Literary Mama, Mother Writer Mentor, Rebelle Society, Mothers Always Write* and her blog, [www.suzibanksbaum.com](http://www.suzibanksbaum.com).

IF YOU GO

**Sponsor:** Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community  
**Venue:** Knesset Israel  
**Date & Time:** Thursday, March 8 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 16).



New Illuminations workshop in Gyumri, Armenia

PHOTO: SONA ANDREASIAN

Purim Spiel: The Whole Megillah!

On Monday, March 5 at 10:45 a.m., celebrate Purim through song, drama, masks, and merriment with the story of Esther interpreted by Leslie Elias, artistic director of Grumbling Gryphons Traveling Children’s Theater. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ Connecting With Community series.

Leslie Elias will lead us on a theatrical and fanciful journey re-enacting the powerful story of brave Esther, Mordechai, Haman, Vashti, and King Ahasuerus. We will welcome in the spirit of Purim and enjoy the art of improvisation and festivity!

Leslie Elias, actress, playwright, artistic director and co-founder of Grumbling Gryphons Traveling Children’s Theater in 1980 has been teaching drama for over 40 years. She has authored numerous plays based on environmental and multicultural themes. She has performed with her troupe at the National Yiddish Book Center, Jewish Centers and synagogues throughout New York and New England with her original theatrical productions, “The Magic Dreidel” and “Purim Spiel: The Whole Megillah!” From Lincoln Center to the Israel Festival in Jerusalem, Grumbling Gryphons is now celebrating 38 years and is the winner of the 2003 Connecticut Governor’s Arts Award.



Leslie Elias

IF YOU GO

**Sponsor:** Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community  
**Venue:** Knesset Israel  
**Date & Time:** Monday, March 5 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 16).

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This program is funded by the Jewish Women’s Foundation of Berkshire County and administered by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

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

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# Your Federation Presents

RACHEL KADISH, continued from page 1

documents and embarks on one last project: to determine the identity of the scribe 'Aleph.'

Says Kadish about re-searching the novel: "I started out knowing nothing about 17th Century London or about the Portuguese Inquisition refugees in Amsterdam, I was fascinated by the topics. So I read, and read. I listened to music of the time period, researched 17th century architecture, and clothing, and sewage systems, and how people did laundry... I interviewed document conservationists, who gave me an education in the politics between historians and conservationists.

"I visited London; consulted with experts in 17th century history and Judeo-Portuguese and Ladino dialects; learned how to write with a quill pen and a bottle of ink (my kids, then very into the Harry Potter books, were in heaven). And since I don't have any background in philosophy, I had to work very hard to learn enough about Spinoza and metaphysics to write the book."

Here's how Kristen Gibbons of the Jewish Book Council reviewed the novel.

In many ways a book about books, *The Weight of Ink* surprises with delights that are gradually revealed. At first it might seem almost necessary to take notes to follow the complex plot, but soon the reader will become absorbed in this

rich opus of impressive breadth.

The beauty of this story is in the variety of its milieus and sensibilities. As we follow our female protagonists of both the seventeenth and twenty-first centuries—Ester Velasquez and Helen Watt, respectively—we also witness the goings-on of a venerable and drafty house of a rabbi in 1660s London, and glimpse the modern life of a cheeky young American man with heartrending troubles of his own. Perhaps most pivotally, we see an English girl's time volunteering abroad on a kibbutz in Israel in the years after the war of independence. In spite of a gulf of over 300 years, these characters depend on each other, each for their own reasons, any of which we in the present day can find parallel in.

The images of these different times and places, brought to life at once through painstaking detail and accessible prose, are startlingly clear, even cinematic. Supporting roles, too, are far from dull. Much more than mere foils, even minor characters are fascinating in their own right. Mary, at first unlikable in her childlike coquettish snobbery, eventually finds her way into

one's heart. Rivka, a servant and survivor of Polish pogroms, is not simply loyal, but also intrigues with a timeless intellect and will. The men in Ester Velasquez's and Helen Watts' lives wholly determine the courses of their universes. Indeed, perhaps too much for comfort, but believable nevertheless.

Weighty explorations of what it is to be Jewish and to enter interfaith relationships in multiple time periods are integral to each of these stories. Is there merit to keeping within the tribe? Are there, regardless of time, place, or commitment, bridges that those who would willingly enter the Jewish community from the outside can never truly cross? Crucially, what does it mean to choose survival over martyrdom? These questions play out in the characters' personal lives concurrently with Ester's philosophical forays into



Rachel Kadish

the nature of God. No stone is left unturned in either study.

After her talk, Rachel Kadish will be on hand to answer your questions and to sign copies of her book.

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**IF YOU GO**

**Sponsor:** Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

**Date & Time:** Friday, March 23 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](mailto:federation@jewishberkshires.org), or call (413) 442-4360, ext. 10

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# Your Federation Presents

KENNETH MARKEL, continued from page 1

## From To Catch a Nazi

### I. Berlin, 1933

It was eight days since I last saw my mother. My teacher, Mrs. Preisinger, told me to report to the director's office after the bell. When the bell sounded, I swung my book-bag over my shoulder, ran down the hall.

Two tall blonde-haired men in black uniforms and shiny black boots stood in the director's room, caps in hand. Each had a pistol strapped to his belt. "These men want to have a few words with you, Wilhelm," Dr. Sternberg said.

"Do you know who we are?" one of the men asked.

"You're soldiers," I answered.

Not the hint of a smile creased their blank faces. I'd seen men like them from a window as they marched on *Unter den Linden*, torches held so high they burned holes in the night sky.

"Look mama," I said, "isn't it wonderful?" My mother didn't think it was wonderful, but the spectacle of the torchlight parade remained vivid in my mind: soldiers marching, jackboots, black helmets emblazoned with a symbol called a swastika. And, the loud thump...the steady cadence of drums as the goose-stepping soldiers approached the *Brandenburger Tor* where a reviewing stand was set up to honor the new chancellor.

"These men are investigating the whereabouts of your mother," the director, a man with close-cropped gray hair, said, "Be truthful in your answers to their questions." I had always been truthful and wondered why Dr. Sternberg felt the need to impress this on me. Dr. Sternberg made announcements in assembly, but seldom observed the students in our classroom studies. As the soldiers and I left his office the director clicked his heels, bowed.

Walking down the front steps of the school with the two soldiers on either side of me, I saw a black car parked outside, another man in uniform behind the wheel. Several boys from my level were watching. I thought myself special that soldiers came to my school to help me find my mother. I held my head erect and got in. I sat in the back-seat of the car between the soldiers. One offered me candy, which I politely declined.

They knew about my mother...that she was a journalist for the *Vossische Zeitung*, but now worked at Rieber's Tobacco Shop. "Where do you think she might be?" the friendlier one asked. I didn't answer. The soldier continued rhetorically, "She hasn't come for you in more

than a week, has she? What if she never comes home?"

I thought: She'll come home. Who will tell me stories about my father? I remembered the night the new chancellor was elected. I could still hear the sound of the drum in my ears. That night I watched from a window, glimpsed a man standing on a terrace saluting the crowd below who loudly cheered him. I ran to my bed, got under the covers. Once again, I asked my mother about my father. By not telling me very much, she made me want to know more. On this night, instead of reading me a story, she told me about my father.

"We know about your father," the less friendly soldier said.

"He was very brave," I replied. "I will also be brave when I'm twenty."

"Would you give up your life for the Fuehrer?"

"I'm only nine years old."

The car slowed. I turned my head. Mallard ducks paraded in single file, nibbled at the weeds along the River Spree before joining a row of swans.

The friendly one asked me if I'd like to visit the zoo. The *Tiergarten* was my favorite place in all Berlin.

"Can we see the big cats?"

"We'll see," the less friendly one said. When we got to the zoo, the friendly one took out a package of gumdrops from his pocket and asked, "Are you sure you don't want even one, Willy?" I had a red gumdrop. "Take more. Go on." I had another. Finally, the friendly one gave me the whole package. I put them in my pocket.

As we walked, I ate gumdrops. It was very casual, the way two uncles might walk in the park with a favored nephew. Before reaching the cages where they kept the 'big cats,' the less friendly one said, "We know a lot about your mother." I kept chewing. "Has she stayed away before?"

I shook my head. "She reads to me most every night."

"About *Karl der Grosse*?"

"My father...He's had many adventures."

It was ten years since Ernst Mannheim boarded a train to Munich and didn't return. "What does my father look like?" I asked.

My mother didn't answer. I pulled at her arm. "Careful, you'll tear my dress," she said, returning from her daydream.

"I'm sorry, mama."

"It isn't your fault, Willy." She looked at me and saw that

I was growing up. "Your father was a long-distance runner. He wanted to represent Germany in the 1924 Olympics in Paris. He was tall, blond, with blue eyes...like you."

Freda, my mother, didn't go any further. I wasn't sure why she stopped. Maybe, it was because it was getting late and I had school the next day. Later, I found out that she didn't know the whole story herself...where my father was captured or how he died. I once overheard her say to my grandmother: "Maybe, Anton could use me. I still have a good figure." I watched as her hands passed lightly over her breasts.

"Could you do us a big favor?" the friendly soldier asked.

I was beginning to think soldiers were like ordinary people...that their uniforms were for show...to make them look bigger and stronger than they really were. "Tell us, where does your mother go on her day off?"

"She goes shopping or she visits Grandpa Isaac and Grandma Sarah."

We had reached the place where the tigers were kept. One of the tigers yawned, stretched and got to his feet. He padded back and forth, snarling from time to time. I could not take my eyes off the tiger's lithe but powerful movements. I'd read or heard that Bengal tigers weighed over five hundred pounds and were ferocious.

As I drew closer to the cage, someone took my arm and twisted it.

"You're hurting my arm," I said.

"You were getting too close to the cage."

I looked up. It was the man who gave me candy, the friendly one. "We want to bring your mother home to you...Help us save her before it's too late."

"What do you want to know?"

"What was her explanation?"

"Her friend wasn't feeling well."

"Where does her friend live?"

"Can I go back to the tiger?"

"The tiger isn't going anywhere. The keeper will give him his dinner very soon."

I put my hand into my pocket. The package was empty. Furthermore, I sensed I was being observed. "We can watch the tiger eat his dinner if you'd like," the friendly one said, malevolently. I looked up at the sky. It was getting dark. Suddenly, I had more interest in my stomach than in the tiger.

"Can you take me to my grandparent's house?" I asked,

politely, "I wouldn't want to be late for dinner."

"A boy shouldn't miss his dinner. How would you like to go to a fine restaurant?"

"Grandma Sarah said not to talk to anyone about my mother."

"Why didn't you say so?"

"I didn't know you that well."

"Now that you know us better won't you bend one little rule?"

"I'm getting hungry."

"We understand," the friendly soldier said, "Don't we, Horst?"

The other man nodded. "Soldiers are human beings too. We get hungry like everybody else."

"Can I have anything I want on the menu?"

"We'll see."

"Her name is Heidi Bau-mann."

"Do you know her address?"

"No, but she lives in Pots-dam."

The soldiers drove me to my grandparent's house in the *Grunewald*. The friendly one opened the door and lifted me



from my seat and set me down on the stone walk. He sniffed the air and shouted: "Better hurry, your Jewish grandmother is cooking chicken soup."

As the car drove off, I turned away from the spray of diesel exhaust...and the sound of laughter.

I remembered the laughter, but more importantly I remembered the words: "*Soldiers are human beings too.*"

I didn't know if they found my mother...whether they arrested her. Perhaps, they only wanted to ask her a few questions.

Ken Markel is the former editor at Magazine Management. His short stories have been published in True, Adventure Life, Sportsman, and Mystery Tales, among others. He studied at The New School with Anatole Broyard, and his play The American Way was performed under the direction of Lee Strasberg. Markel holds a Master of Arts Degree from Queens College. His thesis Last Train to Munich is the story of a German family and their struggle to survive the 1923 inflation when paper money was less valuable than a bartered egg. White Perfume, a novel, was published in 2009.

To Catch a Nazi, published by Changing Lives Press, is available through Amazon in either paperback or Kindle edition, as well as the Bookstore in Lenox and Bookloft and Crystal Essence in Great Barrington.

### IF YOU GO

**Sponsor:** Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community  
**Venue:** Kneset Israel  
**Date & Time:** Monday, March 19 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 16).



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Yabba-Dabba Pooooooooorim at CBI



Fred Flintstone as King Achashverosh

NORTH ADAMS – On Wednesday, February 28 beginning at 5 p.m., Congregation Beth Israel hosts its annual Purim celebration, this year featuring a Flintstones theme that will turn the entire synagogue into a stone-age theme park. Along with a potluck dinner and Purim spiel, the night will feature Stone Age riddles, an elephant water feature, a car you “drive” with your feet, a mining site, archaeological dig, and the making of primitive clay pieces. The event is

appropriate for individuals of all ages, and open to everyone wishing to attend. There is no charge to attend, but RSVPs are requested to Jack Hockridge, cbinadams@gmail.com by February 24. For more information, please contact Rabbi Rachel Barenblat (rabbibarenblat@gmail.com) or Education Director David Arfa (maggiddavid@gmail.com). Congregation Beth Israel is located at 53 Lois Street in North Adams.

Hamantaschen and Haman Booing at “Purim Around the World”

PITTSFIELD – This year, Chabad of the Berkshires celebrates the saving of the Jewish People from Haman with “Purim Around the World.” Feast and masquerade in global style on Thursday, March 1 at 5 p.m. “The party is a community-wide program, and all are invited to join regardless of affiliation or background,” says Sara Volovik, co-director of Chabad of the Berkshires. “Participants will enjoy a multimedia reading of Megillat Esther, a Purim feast, hamantaschen, l’chaims galore, a Purim costume parade, and dancing. Everyone is sure to have a fantastic time.” In the spirit of Purim, participants are encouraged

to come in costume and be included in the competition that will award prizes to contestants with the most innovative or funny costumes. Admission fee for adults is \$10 in advance and \$20 at the door. Admission is free for children – all kids in costume will receive a \$10 Amazon gift certificate. The party begins with the megillah reading at 5 p.m., followed by dinner at 5:30 p.m. Please RSVP at www.jewishberkshires.com or by calling (413) 499-9899. Sponsorship opportunities are also available. Chabad also invites all to a megillah reading on Wednesday, February 28 at 6 p.m. Both Purim Around the World and the Wednesday night megillah reading will be at the Chabad House, 450 South Street in Pittsfield.

Temple Anshe Amunim Celebrates Purim with Worship, Study, and Fun!

PITTSFIELD – Temple Anshe Amunim invites one and all to join in their annual Purim celebrations. As Purim is one of Judaism’s most joyous holidays, the Temple community sees this as a highlight of their winter programming. Kneset Israel hosts a creative and animated reading of the megillah (the Book of Esther) on Wednesday, February 28 at 6:15 p.m., featuring Rabbi Josh Breindel, Esther Benari-Altmann (TAA’s Director of Education), and Rabbi David Weiner of KI, along with congregational members. Their dramatic interpretations enliven both the comedic and serious tones of the text. This event will be at KI, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield. On Friday, March 2 at 5:30 p.m., all are warmly welcomed to join in a musical, family-friendly Shabbat service and Purim experience at Temple Anshe Amunim. Rabbi Breindel will lead an energetic and uplifting service with music by Alan Gold. Following last year’s success, members of the Temple’s Religious

School will host TAA Jeopardy and judge our costume contest for fabulous prizes. A festive dinner will follow in the Temple’s social hall. While the service is free, dinner will be \$18 per person (members) or \$27 per person (general community). All children may attend for \$6 with a \$45 cap for families with children. Reservations for the dinner are required. RSVP by Thursday, February 22 to the Temple office at (413) 442-5910. The biblical Book of Esther, traditionally read at Purim, will be the topic of a special Torah Plus study session at the Temple on Saturday, March 3 at 9:30 a.m. Rabbi Breindel will lead a guided exploration of the text (in English), emphasizing its social, ethical and spiritual themes. “As the story of Esther draws to a close, the megillah describes it as a time of light and joy for the Jewish people,” says Rabbi Breindel. “We try to emphasize that our celebrations mirror the story. While it’s a very fun holiday, this is more than an experience for

children – it speaks to us all.” Temple Anshe Amunim is located at 26 Broad Street in Pittsfield.



Rejoice, it’s Adar! (Here’s How Kneset Israel Will Celebrate)

PITTSFIELD – Purim 5778 promises to be among the highlights of the year for all generations of Kneset Israel and their friends. A series of events, two of the four in conjunction with Temple Anshe Amunim, spaced over the Hebrew month of Adar, will celebrate this festive (and delicious) holiday.

Hamantaschen

Every year, volunteers of all ages bake thousands of hamantaschen and raise thousands of dollars for the KI congregation. It’s now past the deadline for ordering mishloach manot gift bags. However, you may still order hamantaschen by the dozen. There may also be a few more opportunities for baking and packing; please check with Diana in the synagogue office (413) 445-4872, ext. 10. If you would like to volunteer to help deliver hamantaschen to seniors who are homebound or live in retirement communities, please contact the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, (413) 442-4360, ext. 14.

Purim Carnival

On Wednesday, February 14, after arriving at the joint afterschool Hebrew school program held at Temple Anshe Amunim classrooms, KI and TAA students will be preparing for the 4:45 p.m. Purim carnival. Games of skill and chance, face-painting, prizes, etc. will be supervised by the teens on behalf of the younger students. Costumes are encouraged. Dismissal will be at 6 p.m. Fees collected will support the TAA youth group.

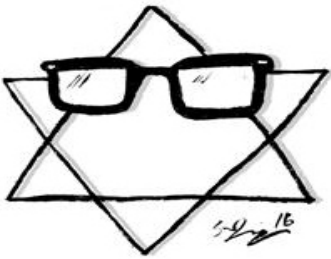
Purim Dinner, Service, and Megillah Reading

On Wednesday, February 28, Kneset Israel and Temple Anshe Amunim come together at KI for this ridiculously fun annual tradition. 5:30 p.m.: Dinner: Please RSVP through knesetisrael.org or by calling (413) 445-4872. There is no fee for the pre-service meal, but you must pre-register if you are eating to ensure that enough food is prepared. 6:15 p.m.: Maariv and Megillah Reading; costumes are not limited to

children during this hilarious interpretation of the Book of Esther. Hamantaschen and ice cream dessert will follow. Hebrew School hours are 5:30-7:30 p.m. that evening. Parents are encouraged to come and enjoy the fun with their children.

Purim Concert

On Saturday, March 3, Kneset Israel’s annual Purim concert will start at 7:30 p.m. This is the 10th anniversary of the Kneset Israel Purim Band – a very talented, creative and fun group of musicians. This year is their most ambitious yet – 20 songs of the band’s greatest hits, including an acoustic set and a rock and roll set. Always a lot of fun, with clever lyrics that are irreverent, joyfully telling the Purim story in “musical costume.” Be sure not to miss this fun and enjoyable evening. Cost is \$15/per person. For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact Diana at Kneset Israel, (413) 445-4872, ext. 10. Kneset Israel is located at 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield.



Join the Hevreh Hipsters

GREAT BARRINGTON – Hevreh of Southern Berkshire has launched a new program for Jews in their twenties and thirties who want to interact with other like-minded Jewish millennials in and around Berkshire County. The Hevreh Hipsters’ first event, Jews and Brews Chanukah L’Chaim at The Well in Great Barrington, was a smashing success. In the future, they are planning a number of exciting events including game night, trivia

night, Shabbat potlucks, bowling, and more. “We are open to other ideas and venues, as this initiative is meant to reach past the synagogue walls,” says founder Jodie Friedman. “Membership is not required to be considered a Hevreh Hipster and Hevreh’s doors are always open.” To sit down for coffee with Jodie Friedman, email her directly at jfriedman@hevreh.org or call the Hevreh office at (413) 528-6378.



The Kneset Israel Purim Band will play 10 years of its greatest hits!



Joe Weiner knows where to find the good stuff

Donate  
Volunteer  
Make a Difference



## LOCAL NEWS

## Everything is Coming Up Purim at Hevreh!

GREAT BARRINGTON – Hevreh of Southern Berkshire is excited to announce three programs to celebrate Purim. All programs are free and open to the community.

### A Totally Rad 1980s Purimspiel

On Wednesday, February 28 at 6 p.m., break out your scrunchies and your neon windbreaker – this year Hevreh's Confirmation class is, like, totally taking it back to the 1980s with bodacious Queen Esther. Celebrate Purim in Shushan with a musical stroll down memory lane, and party with the totally rad Confirmation class.

### Purim Carnival

Purim fun continues on Sunday, March 4 with "Green Eggs and Purim: A Dr. Seuss Themed Purim Carnival," brought to you by Thing 1 and Thing 2. There will be games, face painting, raffles, balloon animals, and lunch and baked goods available for purchase. This is an afternoon not to be missed!

Prizes for Best Thematic Costumes will be awarded, so start working on your best



*Leaning Tower of Scrunchies, circa 1987*

Dr. Seuss themed costumes now!

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire is at 270 State Road in Great Barrington.

### Adult Purim Celebration

Purim is not just for kids. Hevreh's adult-only costume party on Saturday, March 9 at 9 p.m. is for everyone over 21. So call the babysitter, put on your best Vashti or Mordechai costume, and come join the fun at Fuel Coffee Shop, 293 Main Street in Great Barrington. Music, games, costume contest, and more surprises await.

## Spirited to Host Pre-Passover Tastings of Kosher Wine, Matzoh Balls, and Gluten-free Desserts

LENEX – Thumbing through your Passover recipe file? Hoping to kick your humdrum Passover desserts up a notch or two? Have you ever tasted spinach matzoh balls, chicken matzoh balls, or carrot matzoh balls? Wondering if there's more to Passover wine than that syrupy-sweet stuff that usually ends up on your Seder table? Wishing you knew what Passover was all about, anyway?

Come to "Passover for Foodies: Wine, Desserts,

and Matzoh Ball Tasting," to celebrate the Season of Liberation with Chabad of the Berkshires. The program will be hosted by Spirited at 444 Pittsfield Road, in Lenox on Friday, March 23 from 1 to 3 p.m. The event is sponsored in part by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and the Wassermann-Streit Y'DIYAH Memorial Fund, along with Chabad of the Berkshires.

Sara Volovik will bring her culinary expertise to the table, discussing the many regional

differences in Passover cuisine. Free samples and recipes will be offered. Spirited will showcase its extensive selection of outstanding kosher for Passover wines.

The tasting is open to the public, and everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend, regardless of religious affiliation or level of knowledge. Please contact Sara Volovik at (413) 499-9899 or saravolovik@gmail.com for more information.

## A Chocolate Seder for All Ages

PITTSFIELD – All ages are warmly invited to participate in a fun-filled Passover Chocolate Seder at Temple Anshe Amunim on Saturday, March 24 at 4:00 p.m.

At Passover, the Seder commemorates the biblical experience of the Exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt. In this family-friendly event, explore the story of the Exodus using chocolate in place of the traditional Passover foods. Participants will learn about the deeper symbolism of the Exodus and will be given educational materials to enhance their own Seders.

The cost for this event is \$8/person with a maximum of \$30 per family. All chocolate will be nut-free and dairy-free. Sugar-free and gluten-free options will be available upon request.

For more information and to RSVP for this event please contact Esther Benari-Altmann, Director of Education at eba@ansheamunim.org or at (413) 442-5910.

Temple Anshe Amunim is located at 26 Broad Street in Pittsfield. The temple office can be reached at (413) 442-5910.



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

- **Help at the Federation Lunch Program.** Assist setting tables, welcoming attendees and light meal preparation as needed. Mon., Tues. or Thurs., 10:00 a.m. – noon.
- **Bake Hamantashen** in the K.I. kitchen on Sundays, 9:30 – noon and Tuesdays, 5:30 – 8 p.m. Beginning on Sunday, Jan. 7 and continuing into February. Contact Cindy Helitzer at [chelitzer2012@gmail.com](mailto:chelitzer2012@gmail.com) to volunteer.
- **Decorate Purim Gift Bags.** All children are invited to pick up and decorate gift bags at home and return to the Federation offices by Friday, Feb. 16.
- **Pack Purim Care Packages** on Tuesday, Feb. 20, 10:00 a.m. at the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires office.
- **Deliver Purim Care Packages to Seniors** in assisted living facilities, hospitals, and homebound at your leisure between Feb. 21 - 27.
- **Welcome Shabbat by Lighting candles and Reciting Blessings** on a Friday afternoon (once a month) with residents at area nursing homes or assisted living facilities. Provide a simple service based on your own experience.
- **Visit homebound Seniors and Residents** of senior living facilities before Shabbat and Jewish holidays.

SIGN UP TODAY! Contact  
Susan Frisch Lehrer at  
(413) 442-4360, ext. 14  
[Slehrer@jewishberkshires.org](mailto:Slehrer@jewishberkshires.org)



The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires' Tikkun Olam Volunteer (TOV) Network connects community members of all ages with Mitzvah opportunities to make a difference in our community.

## Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and Kimball Farms Presents

# 92Y LECTURE SERIES

Thought provoking **pre-recorded** talks from the renowned 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y

**Wednesdays at 2:00 PM**

**KIMBALL FARMS, 235 WALKER ST., LENOX**



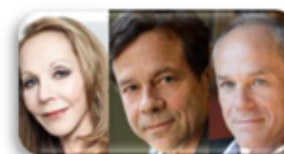
**Finding a Moral Compass in Challenging Times**  
**David Brooks with Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks**  
**Wednesday, March 7, 2 pm**

An illuminating, intellectual and sometimes amusing conversation on finding a just and honorable path in today's world.



**The End of Europe**  
**Bret Stephens, James Kirchick, Julia Ioffe, and Alana Newhouse**  
**Wednesday, March 28, 2 pm**

Once a bastion of liberal democratic values, Europe now has to confront demons it thought had been laid to rest.



**The Nature of Faith**  
**Rebecca Goldstein, Alan Lightman with Marcelo Gleiser**  
**Wednesday, April 11, 2 pm**

How can science, religion, the arts and philosophy jointly address some of our deepest questions about faith and belief?



**Dr. Ruth: The Doctor is In**  
**Dr. Ruth Westheimer with Annette Insdorf**  
**Wednesday, April 25, 2 pm**

A hilarious, inspiring, and profound look at life that will change the way you think at any age.

92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y screenings are a collaboration of:



**FREE and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.**



# Jewish Federation of the Berkshires – Distribution of Resources in 2017

## \$991,956

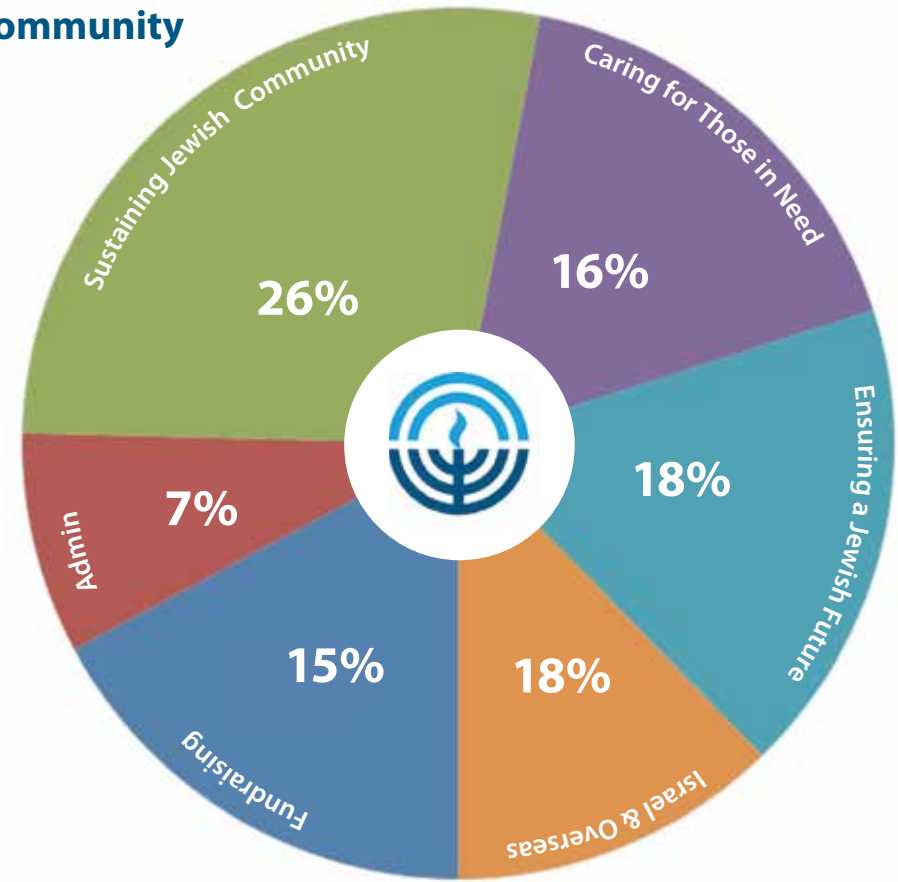
Includes Annual Campaign, endowment, grants and other income distributed as of December 31, 2017

### Sustaining Jewish Community

- Berkshire Jewish Summer Guide
- Berkshire Jewish Voice
- Community Calendar
- Community Relations & Advocacy
- Community Seder
- Connecting with Community Series
- Program Grants for local congregations
- Jewishberkshires.org and e-news
- Knosh & Knowledge Series
- Leadership Development
- Senior Programming
- Shabbat Across the Berkshires
- Sharing the Light Community Havdalah
- Middle East Update
- Yom Ha'Shoah Remembrance

### Fundraising

- Campaign Development
- Communications & Marketing
- Legacy Circle Program
- Major Donors Program
- Super Sunday
- Volunteer Coordination



### Israel & Overseas

- Jewish Agency for Israel
- Jewish Federations of North America
- Joint Distribution Committee
- World ORT
- Partnership2Gether- Afula Gilboa
- Ethiopian National Project
- Haifa Women's Crisis Shelter
- Israel Association for Child Protection (ELI)
- Meir Panim
- Neve Michael Children's Village
- Yad L'Kashish
- Yad Sarah

### Caring for Those in Need

- Emergency Assistance
- Food Security
- Hebrew Free Loans
- Hurricane Relief
- Jewish Family Service Social Worker
- Meals on Wheels Homebound Delivery
- Older Adult Kosher Meals
- Senior Care Visits & Holiday Packages
- Tikkun Olam Volunteer Network

### Ensuring a Jewish Future

- ADL Peer Mentor Program
- Federation Family Days
- Israel Travel/Study Scholarships
- Jewish Camp Scholarships
- Jewish Education Grants
- PJ Library Books and Programming
- Public School Advocacy
- Taglit Birthright
- UMASS Hillel



## Building Community | Strengthening Identity | Caring for those in Need

### Across the Berkshires

**Kosher Hot Meals & Care Visits**  
Provided over **4,000 nutritious meals**, companionship, and care visits for over **350 seniors and homebound**.

**Social Services**  
Provided case management and counseling, through a Jewish lens, by a licensed social worker to more than **35 members of our community**.

**Emergency & Specific Assistance**  
Provided small grants and interest-free loans to provide a **safety net** for community members.

**Jewish Education**  
Provided a high-quality Jewish education for **158 children and young adults** through Jewish education grants to five area religious schools.

**Family Programming**  
Engaged over **200 parents, grandparents, and children** in Jewish programming and tikkun olam, strengthening their connections to the Jewish community and helping them build supportive relationships with Jewish peers.

**The PJ Library**  
Distributed more than **1,500 books and CDs** to **125 children**, nurturing their Jewish identity and helping their families embrace Jewish values and traditions.

**Camp, Israel and Campus Life**  
Funded transformative Jewish camp and Israel experiences for **47 local teens** and enhanced Jewish life for over **2,500 college students** through UMASS Hillel in Amherst.

**Community Programming**  
Engaged more than **4,000 participants** in celebrating Jewish life and connecting as a community through more than **125 cultural, educational, and holiday programs**.

**Berkshire Jewish Voice**  
Primary resource for **over 5,000 readers**, engaging our community in Jewish life and broadening our spiritual, political, and cultural understanding.

**Community Relations & Advocacy**  
Provided a **proactive voice** addressing anti-Semitism, Israel and the Middle East, religion in the schools, justice legislation, and media relations.

**Tikkun Olam Volunteer (TOV) Network**  
Engaged over **300 volunteers** in more than **3,500 hours of service** to the Berkshire Jewish Community.

**Jewish Women's Foundation**  
Contributed **\$56,000 to tikkun olam** through programs such as subsidized taxi vouchers, camp scholarships, food security initiatives and medical transportation.

### In Times of Crisis

**In partnership with Jewish Federations across North America:** the Berkshires provided over **\$21,000 to support recovery efforts** for the communities of Houston and Puerto Rico, devastated by the recent hurricanes.

### In Israel & Overseas

**Through our partner, The American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), our Federation helped support:**

Food card, meals-on-wheels, homecare, winter relief and medicine to more than **120,000 of the worlds neediest Jews** in the former Soviet Union, many of them Holocaust survivors.

Food cards, medical treatment and activities for more than **21,000 at risk children** in desperate poverty, living with severe physical and intellectual disabilities.

**Through our partner, the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), our Federation helped support:**

Job training and resettlement services for more than **25,000 Jews fleeing anti-Semitism** in Europe, helping them create new lives in Israel.

Jewish education, camp experiences, and Israel experiences for more than **7,500 youths** and young adults from the former Soviet Union.

**In addition, we provided direct support in Israel to** after school programs for at risk students, shelter for abused women, a supportive home for disabled youth, counseling for sexually abused women, and assistance for the frail and elderly.

*This is just a sampling of how, together, we are making a difference in the lives of others.*



# The 2017 Community Campaign Raised \$802,369

## Together We Do Extraordinary Things!

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires acknowledges the tremendous effort of over 1,230 donors and more than 100 community volunteers who helped make the 2017 campaign a resounding success.

Together we surpassed our goal!

On behalf of those whose lives will be touched by your generosity,

----- Thank You! -----

\* denotes Lion of Judah: woman's individual gift of \$5,000 or more  
# denotes individual donations  
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Continued on next page



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Thank You!

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LOCAL NEWS

Staying Healthy with Hevreh

GREAT BARRINGTON – Hevreh of Southern Berkshire has expanded its lineup of mind/body classes. All classes are free and open to the public. Donations from non-members are accepted. Please call the office if you are new to our classes to check on any last minutes changes at (413) 528-6378.

Meditation

Tuesdays from noon to 1 p.m.  
“Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely, God is present in this place and I did not know!” Genesis 28:16. Join Hevreh member Larry Bronstein for a meditation class. No previous experience

required – “the only requirement is the willingness to be present and open with your heart and soul,” says Larry. “May our time together bring us closer to the feeling Jacob had after his dream of angels ascending and descending a ladder connecting heaven and earth.”

Pilates Mat Class

Thursdays from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
Join Janet Lee, certified Pilates Instructor, for a Pilates Mat class in the sanctuary. Pilates is an exercise program designed by Joseph Pilates to build core strength, elongate muscles and create stabili-

ty. Some prior knowledge of Pilates is helpful. Please bring your own mat.

Gentle Yoga

Every Wednesday (starting in March) from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
Join Hevreh member and certified yoga instructor Nina Lipkowitz for an hour of gentle yoga, stretching and breathing. The class can be done sitting in a chair if needed. Take time to find your inner yoga child and enjoy this class in the Hevreh sanctuary. Please bring your own mat.  
Hevreh of Southern Berkshire is at 270 State Road in Great Barrington.

JNF Tree Certificates through Berkshire Hills Hadassah

Hadassah and the Jewish National Fund (JNF), partners in green Zionism and land reclamation work, collaborate to sustain and build up Israel’s natural resources. This partnership includes reforestation, preparing the land for agriculture, creating inclusive parks, playgrounds and recreation sites, and providing urgently needed water conduits. Since 1901, JNF has planted more than 250 million trees in Israel; has built over 250 reservoirs and dams; developed

over 250,000 acres of land; created over 2,000 parks; and connected thousands of children and young adults to their heritage by providing programs in forestry and green innovations, research and development, and water solutions  
JNF tree certificates are available for \$18 through Berkshire Hills Hadassah Chapter. To purchase certificates in honor of or in memory of, please contact Marcia Tuler at: marcia.tuler@gmail.com.

Youth Group Celebration - PFTY Shabbat and Dinner

PITTSFIELD – On Friday, March 16 at 5:30 p.m., Temple Anshe Amunim’s youth group, PFTY, welcomes Shabbat with a service followed by a dinner. The youth group is renowned for its annual lasagna dinners, prepared at the Temple and served immediately following the service.  
This event is open to all members of the community. The evening will begin with a family-friendly Friday evening service to welcome Shabbat, featuring members of the youth group. The PFTY Lasagna Dinner following the service costs \$15 per person, \$6 for children under age 12, with

a maximum charge of \$35 for families with children.  
All proceeds from the dinner support the PFTY Scholarship Fund, which is used to help cover fees for regional and local youth events. These events offer teens the chance to immerse themselves in a 100 percent Jewish environment and meet with peers from across the region.  
Reservations are required by March 13. Please contact the Temple Office to register or for more details by calling (413) 442-5910 or emailing templeoffice@ansheamunim.org. Funding for this event is provided by the Harold Grin-

spoon Foundation.  
PFTY stands for Pittsfield Federation of Temple Youth. Through PFTY, youth are engaged in activities that support the Temple and also the community at large, such as the High Holiday food drive, the Memorial Day cemetery cleanup and flag placement, and a variety of cultural and spiritual events throughout the year. PFTY is open to all Jewish teens in Berkshire County, grades 6-12, regardless of affiliation.  
Temple Anshe Amunim is located at 26 Broad Street in Pittsfield.

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BERKSHIRE JEWISH CONGREGATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS



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

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

JEWISHBERKSHIRES.ORG

**Berkshire Minyan**  
Lay-led egalitarian minyan held at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Rd., Great Barrington, MA (413) 229-3618, berkshireminyan.org Services: Saturdays at 9:30 a.m.

**Berkshire Hills Hadassah**  
P.O. Box 187, Pittsfield, MA (413) 443-4386, Berkshirehillshadassah@gmail.com

**B’nai B’rith Lodge, No. 326**

**Chabad of the Berkshires**  
450 South St., Pittsfield, MA (413) 499-9899, jewishberkshires.com Check website for service times and locations.

**Congregation Ahavath Sholom Reconstructionist**  
North St., Great Barrington, MA (413) 528-4197, ahavathsholom.com Services: Fridays at 5:30 p.m., Saturdays at 10 a.m. Call to confirm services

**Congregation Beth Israel Reform**  
53 Lois St., North Adams, MA (413) 663-5830, cbiweb.org Services: Saturdays at 9:30 a.m.

**Hevreh of Southern Berkshire Reform**  
270 State Rd., Great Barrington, MA (413) 528-6378, hevreh.org Services: Fridays at 6 p.m., Oneg to follow.

Saturdays: Morning Study at 8:45 a.m. Shabbat Morning Service at 10 a.m.

**Israel Philatelist Society**  
c/o Rabbi Harold Salzmann 24 Ann Dr., Pittsfield, MA (413) 442-4312

**Jewish Federation of the Berkshires**  
196 South St., Pittsfield, MA (413) 442-4360 jewishberkshires.org

**Jewish War Veterans**  
Commander Robert Waldheim (413) 822-4546, sellit4@aol.com

**Knesset Israel Conservative**  
16 Colt Rd., Pittsfield, MA (413) 445-4872, knessetisrael.org Services: Fridays at 5:45 p.m., Saturdays at 9:30 a.m.

**RIMON – A Collaborative Community for Jewish Spirituality**  
PO Box 502, Great Barrington, MA rimonberkshires.org ellyns@gmail.com

**Temple Anshe Amunim Reform**  
26 Broad St., Pittsfield, MA (413) 442-5910, ansheamunim.org Services: Fridays at 5:30 p.m., Shabbat Morning Service: 11 a.m.

BEYOND THE BERKSHIRES

**Congregation Anshe Emeth Conservative**  
240 Joslen Blvd., Hudson, NY (518) 828-6848, congregationansheemeth.net Services: Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 9:30 a.m.

**Congregation Beth El**  
107 Adams St., Bennington, VT (802) 442-9645, cbevermont.org Services: Saturdays at 10 a.m.

**Nassau Jewish Community Center & Synagogue**  
Route 20, Box 670, Nassau, NY (518) 766-9831 nassausynagogue.org Services: Saturdays at 9:30 a.m.

**Temple Israel of Catskill Reform**  
220 Spring St., Catskill, NY (518) 943-5758, templeisraelofcatskill.org.

**The Chatham Synagogue**  
Route 28, Box 51, Chatham, NY (518) 392-0701, chathamsynagogue.org Services: Saturdays at 9:30 a.m.







OBITUARIES

Rosalind Phyllis Iberall Rothman, 93, family and marriage counselor

DELRAY BEACH, FL – Rosalind Phyllis Iberall Rothman, 93, died on Friday, December 22.

Born April 15, 1924, daughter of Ben and Anna Iberall, she lived in Amalgamated Housing, a co-op Yiddish settlement in the Bronx next to Van Cortlandt Park.

Rosalind graduated with a BBA from City College of New York and with a MEd from Bank Street College. She was certified in family and marriage counseling and taught at Kings Point in Delray Beach.

She spent her summers at Rolling Hills in Lenox. She lost her husband, Jack, in 2001. Rosalind leaves two daughters, Linda and Rona, 3 grandchildren, and 7 great-grandchildren. She spent the past 13 years with her partner, Bob Markowitz, her friend, buddy, partner, soulmate, and best friend. Bob was her caregiver for the last 6 years of her life.

Rosalind did volunteer work in the Berkshires at theatres and Tanglewood for over 25 years. A memorial gathering took place on January 17 in Delray Beach.

Saul Victor, 87, lifelong advocate for liberal and progressive causes

LENOX – Saul Victor, 87, passed away on Sunday, January 14 after complications of surgery, surrounded by his loving family.

Saul was the fourth of five children, born in the South Bronx during the Depression and raised by his beloved parents Sylvia and Benjamin to be self-reliant and to take care of his family. He began working before age 10, holding jobs ranging from curtain flogger to aerial installer.

He graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School,

night school at City College of New York, and Brooklyn Law School, which he attended on a full scholarship. After military service in counterintelligence, he built a successful commercial and real estate law practice, rapidly becoming a prominent figure in the New York hotel and restaurant industries. Saul could strike up a conversation with anyone he met.

He was a lifelong advocate for liberal and progressive causes, from his days as a sound-truck campaigner for Adlai Stevenson, through the civil rights and antiwar movements of the 1960s and 70s, to the present.

Saul is survived by his children Jonathan and Karen and their spouses Rosemarie and Bob; grandchildren Stefanie, Alexander, Adam, Rachel, and Aaron; and great-grandson Lucian, along with stepchildren Donald, Alison, and Pamela; grandchildren Hilary, Joshua, Max, and David; and great-grandchildren Beth, Noah, and Murray. He was predeceased by his first wife Joan Libson Victor and his second wife Sondra Bernstein Victor (nee Sarrow). His family and countless friends will forever remember Saul – his wit, generosity, ideals, and lust for life.

Donations may be made to Brooklyn Law School for scholarships or to the American Civil Liberties Union.

Lawrence H. Kronick, 61, husband, son, brother, uncle

PITTSFIELD – Lawrence H. Kronick passed away peacefully at his home with his immediate family by his side after a long, courageous fight with pancreatic cancer on Friday evening, December 22.

Born and raised in Pittsfield, where he attended local public schools, Larry worked

at the Pittsfield Rye Bakery which had been opened by his grandparents Charles and Tillie Robbins in 1929.

Larry was predeceased by his father Lewis Kronick, who passed away in 2015. He is survived by his devoted wife JoAnn of 33 years, whom he loved dearly, as well as his mother Lois Kronick and brother Stephen and wife Nancy.

Larry was also a loving uncle to his nephew Joshua Kronick and his wife Michal and their three sons of Baltimore, MD.

Larry will also be missed by his cousins, Rick and Renee Robbins, owners of Pittsfield Rye Bakery, and their children Randi and Ryan, as well as cousins James Robbins and Tammy Robbins Rovitz.

Funeral services were held Sunday, December 24 at Knesset Israel with Rabbi David Weiner officiating. Burial followed in Knesset Israel Cemetery. Donations may be made to HospiceCare in the Berkshires in care of Flynn & Dagnoli-Bencivenga Funeral Home, 5 Elm St. Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Joseph K. Handler, committed volunteer and patron of the arts

PITTSFIELD – Joseph K. Handler died Tuesday, January 9 at his home.

Born in Pittsfield, the son of Dr. Harry J. and Betty Handler and the brother of Karen Lent, Joe graduated from Pittsfield High School, and later received a BA from Union College and an MBA from University of Massachusetts. He was an officer in the United States Navy and served aboard aircraft carriers in the Atlantic and Pacific. He enjoyed a distinguished career as a Human Resources professional for General Electric's Ordnance division in Pittsfield

for 34 years.

Joe was a lifelong member, and also served as president, of Temple Anshe Amunim. He was a committed volunteer and patron of the arts, supporting many Berkshire cultural institutions as a donor and as a member of many boards, including the Berkshire Athenaeum, Kimball Farms, Berkshire Center for Families and Children, Pittsfield City Personnel Committee, Colonial Theater, and the Tanglewood volunteer association.

He loved and was proud of his hometown of Pittsfield and the Berkshires. He enjoyed attending events such as the annual Fourth of July Parade, concerts at Tanglewood, and theater events. He was a passionate fan of the Boston Red Sox and New York Giants. He took great pride in his military service and participated annually with the placing of a flag at veterans' graves every Memorial Day. He had a terrific wit and sense of humor throughout his life that never faded and loved spending time with friends and family.

Joe is survived by his beloved wife of 58 years, Mary Jane; children David and Terri Handler of Newton, MA and Susan and Cliff Monac of Medfield, MA; grandchildren Ali, Bekah, Sam, Ben, and Emily; sister Karen Lent; and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Funeral services were held Thursday, January 11 at Temple Anshe Amunim with Rabbi Josh Breindel, officiating. Burial followed in the Pittsfield Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the Elizabeth Freeman Center, the Berkshire Music School, or Temple Anshe Amunim, all of Pittsfield, in care of the Devanny-Condron Funeral Home.

Dr. Ellen Perlman Simon, 73, mentor to many throughout her career

NEW YORK, NY – Dr. Ellen Perlman Simon, 73, died on Monday, January 15 at home surrounded by her family. Born April 15, 1944 in Pittsfield, she was predeceased by her parents, Herman and Jeanne (Horelly) Perlman.

Dr. Simon was the former executive director of Union Settlement Association. Prior to Union, she was the director of Patient and Family Services at New York Presbyterian Hospital, Columbia Presbyterian Campus. Dr. Simon holds degrees from Simmons College, The University of Chicago, and Hunter College School of Social Work. She was a mentor to many, both formally and informally, throughout her career.

Survivors include Donald Simon, her husband of almost 48 years; daughters, Rebecca Simon of Portland, OR, and Hannah Simon (Daniel) Lauer of Columbus, OH; grandchildren, Nathan and Jeanne Lauer; her sister, Jane Perlman (Gerald Berthiaume); niece Rachel (Todd) Brugman; and nephew Josh Berthiaume.

Private services were held at Knesset Israel in Pittsfield.



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BERKSHIRE JEWISH VOICES

Traveling with Jewish Taste  
Swimming Upstream to the Perfect Purim Brunch

By Carol Goodman Kaufman



The holiday of Purim is all about turning the world topsy-turvy, its roots found in the Scroll of Esther, where we read in Chapter 9, Verse 1: "... when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have rule over

them; whereas *it was turned to the contrary* that the Jews had rule over them that hated them." The intended genocide victims were saved and victorious while the killers were condemned. In other words, things in ancient Shushan were overturned.

Part of our celebration of going "from sorrow to gladness, and from mourning into a holiday" (Esther 9:22) entails wearing disguises as we turn from our normal lives into something totally different. Children in particular love to dress up in costume. One year, my son Seth decided to dress as Haman in the nursery school parade. Why? Because just once he wanted to be the bad guy. Lucky for us, he re-

verted back to his regular self after the holiday.

But it's not just children who like to conceal their real identities; on Purim we witness normally sober and serious Jews wearing costumes. And drinking. An adult Jew is, according to the Talmudic sage Rava, "obligated to drink on Purim until he does not know the difference between 'cursed be Haman' and 'blessed be Mordechai.'" Again, the normal world is turned upside down – and probably spinning as well if the imbibing is taken to extremes.

Which brings me to the food portion of this Purim column. I present the salmon.

The salmon, rather than taking the easy way to procreation with

a river's downstream flow, the salmon must think it's Purim as it heads upstream when it's time to spawn. So, in honor of this holiday and the theme of *ve'nahfoch hu* ("and it was turned to the contrary"), we're going to make this salmon do an about-face and make your

holiday brunch preparation super easy and stress free – at least for us if not for the fish. We're going to make home-made lox. Three ingredients and you've got the basis of a wonderful holiday brunch. And bragging rights for having made your own lox.



Real do-it-yourselfers may also wish to catch their own King Salmon



"Are you serious – you make your own lox?"

Make Your Own Lox

- Ingredients:**
- 1 lb. salmon filet (King Salmon if possible)
  - ½ cup kosher salt
  - ½ cup white sugar

- Directions:**
- Rinse the salmon with water; pat dry with paper towels.
  - Check carefully for pin bones, removing any you find with tweezers.
  - Mix salt and sugar in a bowl.
  - Lay out a large sheet of plastic wrap.
  - Pour half the salt mixture onto the wrap and lay the fish on top.
  - Cover the salmon with the remaining salt mixture.
  - Fold the plastic wrap around the salmon, then wrap again with another sheet.
  - Place a wire rack inside a large pan, and place the wrapped fish on top.
  - Cut off both ends of the plastic in order to allow drainage.
  - Cover the fish with another, smaller pan and add a heavy object to weigh it down.
  - Put the pans into the refrigerator for 24 hours.
  - Drain the juice and unwrap the fish. If the salt mixture is gone, add more and rewrap.
  - After 48 hours, unwrap the lox and rinse well. Peel off the skin. It should come off easily with a sharp knife.
  - Cut into thin slices, against the grain of the fish.
  - You're done! Serve your lox with bagels and your favorite add-ons: red onion, tomato, cream cheese, capers. Or, stir into your scrambled eggs or top a salad, or ...
  - Your imagination is the only limit.



Leftover lox can be repurposed for Purim costumes

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



## BERKSHIRE JEWISH VOICES

# Memories of Macedonia, Past and Present

By Sarah Aroeste

I always found it strange, growing up in suburban New Jersey, that pictures hanging on the walls of my childhood home featured ancestors in fez hats and full Balkan regalia. I heard stories of my grandfather's life in the Ottoman Empire, but words like "Macedonia" and "Sephardic" seemed very foreign to my young ears. I knew I liked eating familial specialties like *spanikopita* and *tadlikos* (biscuits), and singing songs in a funny Spanish, but my family history did not fully resonate with me until I developed a love of Sephardic music.

My grandfather grew up in a town called Monastir, at the time part of the Ottoman Empire in upper Greece/lower Yugoslavia. Today it is known as Bitola, Macedonia. Rather than convert to Christianity, my family settled there as a result of the Jewish expulsion from Spain during the Inquisition in 1492. They lived relatively peacefully in the region, with religious autonomy, until the Empire began to crumble at the start of the 20th century.

My family's story of immigration to the United States is similar to many others. My grandfather and his relatives were escaping war, in their case the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913. My family decided that the United States would provide them with security – religious and economic – and they settled in Rochester, NY, where there was a large community of Monastirli, and where they were able to continue their Sephardic traditions. But before long, they yearned to assimilate and start a new life in their new country. Sadly, this meant that many of the traditions from the old country were gradually left behind.

The pride in our family's hometown, however, remained. This mysterious Monastir lived in my consciousness throughout my upbringing. My grandfather had a glint in his eye when he told stories of his youth, and yet, also heaviness

when acknowledging the extended family that stayed behind after he left and perished in World War II. The story of Sephardim in the Holocaust is not well known. In Macedonia, 98% of the Jewish population died in the Treblinka extermination camp. Armed with this knowledge, I felt a certain draw to my family's history and always wanted to know more about what was lost.

At the same time, I grew up studying classical music, and for many years dreamed of becoming an opera singer. I jumped when I had the chance, at age 20, to study and perform at the Israel Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv, where I knew I would be surrounded by some

had been written about me by enthusiasts there. When I was invited to perform in nearby Bulgaria last year, I knew, after looking at a map, that I would have to find a way to make it to neighboring Macedonia. I casually mentioned my idea to a few contacts I had in Bitola, and within a month, my entire itinerary—including transportation, lodging, sightseeing and a performance venue – had been planned for me. Non-Jewish citizens of the Republic of Macedonia were responsible for this.

To say that I received a homecoming welcome would be an understatement. The moment I arrived in Macedonia, I was followed by a camera crew and feted with flowers, cakes, and gifts for both my children and me. In all my years of performing around the globe, I have never felt as appreciated as I

did when I was in Macedonia. The people there are in love with their Jewish history. Not because they hold a collective guilt for past wrongs, but because they miss Jewish life and believe it added so much to their history. They want it to return.

There are currently about 225 Jews living in Macedonia, primarily in the country's capital of Skopje. Bitola has none. Everywhere I went, citizens greeted me by telling stories of Jewish friends from their childhood, or eagerly showing me a street corner where a Jewish family lived. I was overwhelmed by the sensitivity, and historical knowledge, of the people with whom I met.

And then I got to perform for a standing-room only concert at the Bitola Cultural Center. Many of the songs I write in Ladino are informed by historical memory. My song "Chika Morena" is about a dark-haired girl who has been kicked out of her homeland, and, guided by the voice of her ancestors, wanders the earth to try to find her way home. When I have sung this song in the past, I would stream black

*In all my years of performing around the globe, I have never felt as appreciated as I did when I was in Macedonia*

of the best in classical music. I did not know, however, that a chance pairing with the great opera singer and coach, Nico Castel, would change the course of my life.

Besides being a beloved singer and diction coach at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, Nico Castel was also one of the world's leading experts on Ladino, otherwise known as Judeo-Spanish. The moment I learned I shared a common heritage with Nico Castel, I knew I wanted to learn everything I could about the Ladino music of my family. I quickly fell in love with Ladino and its music. It was the way I could truly connect deepest with my Sephardic heritage. Not long after working with Castel (now over twenty years ago), I made the switch from studying opera, to exploring Ladino full time.

Since then, I have performed and spoken all over the world. But I had never been to Monastir, my family's hometown, until September 2017.

I was aware that I had fans in Macedonia, as evidenced by interview requests and a smattering of articles that



Sarah Aroeste in Macedonia

and white footage of my family in the Balkans from before World War II. That point in a concert has always been a poignant convergence of music, identity and Jewishness for me. Singing this song, however, with the same video behind me, for a non-Jewish audience in my family's ancestral town, took on a whole new meaning for me. It was a dream fulfilled on many levels.

Over a Shabbat dinner upon my return home to the Berkshires, I started swapping Macedonian travel adventure stories with Josh Bloom, husband of Rabbi Jodie Gordon from Hevreh. He did peace building and human rights work in Macedonia from 2001-2004, and was heading back a month after my trip as an international elections monitor. We became inspired by our shared passion for Macedonia and its Jewish heritage. Together we decided we wanted to introduce more people to

this special place – a country rich with natural beauty, ethnic diversity, and dynamic history: The land of Alexander the Great, birthplace of Mother Theresa, and home to a once-great Jewish community.

This August 19-26, Josh and I will co-lead an exclusive Jewish Heritage Tour to Macedonia (<http://bit.ly/jewishmacedonia>) and we invite members of the Berkshires Jewish community to join us. Together, we'll visit remains of a 2nd century synagogue in Stobi, volunteer in the clean-up of Bitola's Jewish cemetery, learn at Skopje's Holocaust Memorial Center, spend Shabbat with the Skopje Jewish community and so much more.

By returning this summer, I will continue cherishing my family's unique, Sephardic memories of Macedonia, and I will be ready to create more of my own.

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BERKSHIRE JEWISH VOICES

Yentl, Yenta, and Match.com

By Marty Stransky

I know what you're thinking – "How can there be any connection among those three words in the headline?" But there is, and you'll see as we go on.

While my wife Isabelle and I were in Florida, our local library had a 3-week film festival of Barbra Streisand films. We went to see the wonderful movie *Yentl*, the story of a young Jewish girl in a small village in Poland in the 1900s who wanted to study in a yeshiva, and who disguised herself as a young Jewish boy with all the problems of her identity. On our way out of the library with my singing "Papa, Can You Hear Me?" with tears in my eyes, I said to Isabelle that the movie "Yenta"

was really terrific.

After having been told that the name of the movie was *Yentl* not "Yenta," I began to think about it. I knew that a "yenta" referred to a female busybody or gossipmonger, and began to wonder if there was a similar word for a man. So, I went on line to research it, but couldn't find a word for a male equivalent. So I guess that a male busybody would also be referred to as a yenta.

But "yenta" in Yiddish really means



Other women enjoy complaining. Not Yente (right).

you, and Eve, you didn't have to hear what a good cook Adam's mother was."

Today, in addition to a *shadchan*, we now have the dating websites Match.com, JDate, eharmony, and many more.

Isabelle and I met on Match.com when we were in our seventies. After you have registered with the dating service, you are given a listing where you can tell all about yourself. You don't

use your real name, only a pseudonym. Isabelle was "Puccini Lover," and I was "Easy Going."

It was Isabelle's description of her interests that really made her attractive to me. She wrote: "That when I see a stone wall, a meadow behind, with trees and a blue sky, my inner being quivers like an aria from a Puccini opera." She also wrote: "I see the two of us sitting in a room quietly reading, an occasional chime of a clock, and somehow feeling connected."

How could you resist that? So we started to date and in a few months were married, with our grandchildren walking us down the aisle.

Years later, while sitting in the kitchen, Isabelle said to me: "You know, I really lied a little in my description of myself. I was really two years older than I said. But you really lied when you said you were 'Easy Going.'"

Marty Stransky is treasurer at Congregation Ahavath Sholom in Great Barrington. You can find more stories by Marty on Congregation Ahavath Sholom's website ([www.ahavathsholom.com](http://www.ahavathsholom.com)) under "Milchidka with Marty."



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# 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](http://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](mailto: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 Helitzer, (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 in September and October.* 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, ext. 12, or [eba@ansheamumim.org](mailto:eba@ansheamumim.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 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, ext. 12 or email [eba@ansheamunim.org](mailto:eba@ansheamunim.org).

**Thursdays (fourth of each month)** – Hadassah Book Club. For times, locations of meetings, and further information about the books: Roz Kolodny at (413) 243-2077 or [rozlk@yahoo.com](mailto:rozlk@yahoo.com).

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

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

**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](mailto:templeoffice@ansheamunim.org).

**Saturdays at 9 a.m.** – “Walking with *Mitzvot*,” with Judith Weiner. Classes following the schedule of the Kneset Israel Hebrew School. Judith Weiner leads an exploration of the purpose, development

and form of *mitzvot*. This curriculum, developed 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.

**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, February 23	.....5:18 p.m.
Friday, March 2	.....5:26 p.m.
Friday, March 9	.....5:35 p.m.
Friday, March 16	.....6:43 p.m.

## MAZEL TOV

### Mazel Tov to...

**Hazzan Randall Miller** of Congregation Beth Israel upon becoming an ordained cantor.

\*

**Richard Michelson**, who was awarded the Jewish Book Council’s 2017 National Jewish Book Award for children’s literature for *The Language of Angels: A Story About the Reinvention of Hebrew* (which was enthusiastically reviewed in the February 2017 *Berkshire Jewish Voice*).

*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  
Betty Braun\*  
Cipora Brown  
Barbara Cohen  
Mark Cohen\*  
Mimi Cohen  
C. Jeffrey & Judith Cook  
Gerry & Lynn Denmark  
Jonathan & Lara Denmark  
Sheila K. Donath  
Melva Eidelberg  
Monroe England, *in memory of*  
*Monroe B. & Isabel England*  
Dr. Armand V. Feigenbaum\*  
Dr. Donald S. Feigenbaum\*  
Steven Feiner  
Diana & Stanley Feld  
Stuart M. Fischman  
Lynn & William Foggie

Elaine Freidman  
Eiran Gazit  
Jeffrey Goldwasser &  
Jonquil Wolfson  
Jordan & Laura Green  
Harold Grinspoon  
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Ed Jaffe\*  
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Marilyn Katzman  
Dara Kaufman  
Howard & Nancy\* Kaufman  
Lawrence Klein  
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Erna Lindner-Gilbert  
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Estelle Miller  
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Sylvia Silverberg, *in memory of*  
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Lisa Fletcher-Udel  
Edward Udel  
Michael & Joan Ury  
Mark & Judy Usow  
Henry\* & Beate\* Voremborg  
Alexandra Warshaw  
Florence Wineberg\*  
Rabbi Deborah Zecher &  
Rabbi Dennis Ross

*\*Of blessed memory*





MY ISRAEL

In an unknown empty desert in a rickety bus with strange assorted people talking in a language she didn't understand going to who knows where

By Linda Morgenlander

My first trip to Israel was in 1964. Israel seemed largely uninhabited, mostly farmland. Jerusalem was a divided city. I remember ropes in Jerusalem preventing us to entering forbidden Palestine streets. And the rusted cars on the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem Road reminded everyone of the still unresolved conflict. In spite of this, one could feel excitement in the air! Full of ambition and hope and new adventures!

I had been invited to stay with a friend in Kibbutz Merhaviah in the Negev Desert. To get to the kibbutz I had to take a long public bus ride to Beersheba. Beersheba struck me, back then, as an old style Hollywood western town. Stores and saloons lined Main Street. However, instead of tying up horses to the rail outside the local saloons, camels were tied up!

In Beersheba, I switched to a local bus to get to the kibbutz. The bus ride in itself was interesting – all kinds of

diverse people! Soldiers carrying knives and guns; local farmers going to and from markets; mustached Arabs carrying crates of live chickens. (Noisy creatures, those chickens!) Great adventure – riding through an unknown empty desert in a rickety bus with strange assorted people talking in a language I didn't understand going to who knows where.

Kibbutz Merhaviah in the middle of nowhere. It was famous for being the home of Golda Meir, and her son still lived there. As kibbutzim go, this was a big one, but in the middle of the desert. It had to be protected, especially at night from roaming Arab bandits and local wildlife. However, I was never scared. I felt protected.

The couple I visited consisted of Miriam, who was once, a nice Jewish girl from Brooklyn, and her husband Schlomo, a Sabra. They had three kids, but the kids didn't live with them. Each child was

sent to live with his peer group. The babies had a nursery and a day care. Each older child had his age-appropriate school. And at night each child slept in a dorm room. However, the parents could visit anytime. Read a bedtime story, play with them, talk with them, or do whatever they wanted.

I was curious what effect this had on the children. They were undoubtedly peer oriented. Was it better to live with your family? With parents and siblings? Or better with your age group?

Miriam and Schlomo each had jobs to perform. Everyone in the kibbutz had duties and had to act responsibly. Miriam was a cook and worked in the laundry. Schlomo was a farmer and a security guard, day and/or night. It was not an easy life.



Linda in Jerusalem with her husband, the late Lee Morgenlander

I thought about that a lot. What if a person didn't pull his own weight? Could he be expelled from the kibbutz? I never got a good answer. But I did find out that most of the children did not return to kibbutz. After serving in the army, the change was too abrupt and they moved to a big city.

That was my first, and best, trip to Israel. When I returned from that first trip and was

asked what did you think of Israel? I said, (mimicking a 1964 advertisement "You don't have to be Jewish to love Levy's Rye Bread!") "You don't have to be Jewish to love Israel!"

Linda Morgenlander, a longtime second homeowner in Hinsdale, now splits her time between the Berkshires and Sarasota, FL.

A Dry and Barren Land, So Unlike the Berkshires

By Malka Evan

I was born in Pittsfield toward the end of 1937 and moved to Israel the summer of 1950. My parents, Leon and Sonia Mohill, were ardent and active Zionists from the early 1940s. My father was a member of the delegation that was sent to the Displaced Persons' camps in Europe after World War II to evaluate the needs of the survivors of the camps and the Holocaust. He returned from that awesome and emotional experience convinced that the moment had come to establish a Jewish State on the historic land of Israel.

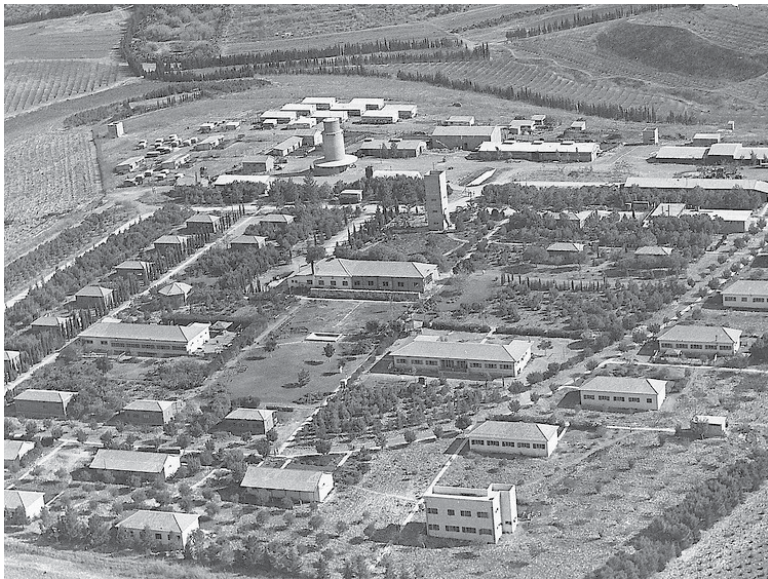
From that moment on until we lifted off on our flight to Israel in August 1950, all my parents' energies were devoted

to working toward the future of the Jewish people in Israel.

When we landed in Israel and walked off the plane, we saw dry and barren land with little vegetation, so unlike the Berkshires. We were taken to our hotel and soon after my two younger sisters and I went out to explore the surroundings. Walking distance from the hotel was a cluster of small huts that had been an Arab village before Israel's War of Independence. Lo and behold, every structure was packed with immigrant families, survivors of the Holocaust. Upon our return to the hotel all we could talk about was what we could give them and how we could help.

A few days later we left the hotel and traveled to Kibbutz Ein Hashofet (literally, "Judge's Spring"), the first American kibbutz, which was named in honor United States Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis. That was to be my home for the next ten years, through high school, military service, and marriage.

Pittsfield native Malka Evan lived in Israel for many years. Upon her return to the US with her family, she became involved in community affairs and held many leadership roles, and now resides in New York's Capital District and Florida.



Kibbutz Ein Hashofet in the late 1940s

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## MY ISRAEL

## Before There Was Birthright Israel...

By Elsie Feld

Elsie Feld, whose parents married and lived in Jerusalem before World War II, made her first trip to Israel in the summer of 1949. Her program was conducted by the International Zionist Federation of America, and was the first of its kind to bring American students over to the fledgling State of Israel, which welcomed them with the "royal treatment," Feld remembers. On that trip, the young, ardent Zionist met Moshe Dayan, Chaim Weizman, Golda Meir, and David Ben Gurion. Here are a few memories of her adventures.

When we arrived in Jerusalem, we were taken to the Gymnasia H'Ivrit, which served as our living quarters. Since the high school did not have bedrooms, our sleeping accommodations turned out to be the classrooms themselves. The benches and desks had been taken out and cots and tables put in their place. We hung our clothing on the hooks in back of the room, as a student would do for the day. It wasn't the lap of luxury but who cared? Since Hebrew University was on Mt. Scopus, then in Arab hands, we weren't able to go there for classes, so the professors came to us in the large lecture hall in the Gymnasia. The nice thing about that was that we could literally roll out of bed in the morning and attend classes.

The showers were temporarily installed in the garden a few weeks before our arrival. It consisted of a burlap wrap-around that could accommodate eight students of the same sex at one time. Whether there was hot water depended upon where the sun was and was only available for



Image of Herzl's reburial on August 17, 1949

a certain time during the day as it was rationed. Arabs had blown up the water pipes that supplied Jerusalem during the war, the same pipes my father helped lay under David Ben Gurion, who was in charge. One time I decided to take a shower at the end of the hour that it was available. Who ever thought that I'd end up covered with soap and have no water to wash it off while Yehudah, the gymnasium shamos, went around yelling, "Ein mayim b'shower achshav" ("no water in the shower now"). "Shower" was the only English word that he had mastered and was always using it with pride!

When Theodore Herzl's body was brought to Israel for reburial on top of Mt. Herzl, I once again stood with the blue and white box collecting money, as I had in the United States. He lay in state in the Suchnut (Jewish

Agency) courtyard across from where I lived in the Gymnasia, and was visited constantly until the day of his reburial.

That day was a sight to behold. With all sorts of banners flying and all of the armed services represented on top of Mt. Herzl, this was the first burial with every kibbutz, kvutza, moshav, moshava, town, city, hamlet, every inch of Israel being represented. To fill the open grave, each representative covering his bit of Israel walked by and emptied his bag of earth into the grave until it was full. Then we all stood and sang the Hatikvah, Israel's National Anthem. I just happened to look back at that time and saw, a few rows back a head of hair uncovered

as a sign of respect.... what a surprise to see David Ben Gurion sitting in the audience rather than with the dignitaries!



for the next seven weeks. We were housed in a building, #8 Strauss Street off of King George. I go back there every so often just to see and remember. My first memory was waking up to the sounds of Hebrew being spoken on the street. Windows were kept open; there definitely wasn't any air conditioning. When I did venture out, I was struck by the fact everyone was Jewish and spoke He-

brew – the street cleaners, the policemen, the bus drivers. I was so much at home and so comfortable even though my Hebrew was minimal at best.

The city of Jerusalem was much smaller then... it was referred to as "the New City" or West Jerusalem. Ben Yehuda Street at that time was not the Midrachov (pedestrian mall – a Hebrew neologism formed from the words "midracha" [sidewalk] and "rechov" [street]) we know it to be now, but a very small street. That was where we shopped for our trinkets and for necklaces with our Hebrew names. We viewed the "other part" – the Old City and the Kotel – from various rooftops. I never dreamed then, that one day the barbed wire would be taken away and that I'd be able to walk comfortably in all of Jerusalem.

We went south and slept on the beach in Eilat. There weren't any hotels there at that time, but we were told it would one day be a wonderful resort. A stand-out memory I have of that first trip was when we went to Ashdod, a small, sandy area on the Med-

## Her "Tie Rack" was a hit – so Reuma has it

By Barbara Barron

My only trip to Israel was in 1994, when I joined other members of the American Guild of Judaic Artists to participate at an art show at the Jerusalem Convention Center. As a Judaic artist, I had received many commissions for torah covers, ark curtains, and wall hangings for sanctuaries. For me, the venture presented a great new audience for my work.

After setting up my booth at the convention center, I was very disappointed to discover that not many attendees were interested in my work. The Israelis were not that excited about adding to the art in their shuls. However, my mood certainly changed, for that evening the convention manager welcomed the American exhibitors with a generous buffet. It really was a surprise to me, for having been an exhibitor at many art shows in convention centers around the USA, nothing compared to it.

The next day, to my surprise, the manager approached my booth with a woman I did not recognize. It was Reuma Weizman, wife of Ezer Weizman, the seventh president of Israel.

Mrs. Weizman looked through my photo album and was particularly struck by a piece I call "Tie Rack." The wall hanging was created



"Tie Rack," by Barbara Barron

using men's neckties. It was a play on words, for the rack used in billiards was used. When asked if she would be happy to receive a piece made with her husband's ties, she gratefully accepted. A few weeks after I returned home to my studio in Huntington, Long Island, I received a box filled with her husband's ties. Many of them were souvenirs of when President Weizman was commander of the Israeli Air Force. "Tie Rack" was a joy to create and it was thrilling to realize that the piece would hang in such a distinguished home. Soon after, my creation was delivered to the president's residence by a friend. I still have very fond memories of my trip to Israel and the wonderful opportunity to make a piece for the presidential home.

Barbara Barron, who summers in Lenox, is a member of Congregation Ahavath Shalom in Great Barrington. View her artwork at [www.Barronjudaicart.com](http://www.Barronjudaicart.com).



Reuma Weizman (left) with Barbara in 1994

iterranean. We were told that "one day" Ashdod would house an important port for Israel. At that time Haifa was the only port. I have visited Ashdod several times since 1959, at first to see if the predictions would happen. Well, they did. Ashdod is now the largest port in Israel. The little sandy area has turned into a major city, with malls and suburbs.

A major part of the experience I had was feeling the optimism and positive convictions that permeated that summer. I try to keep that in mind with all the present day problems we all hear and read about.

I am glad I thanked my

parents a long time ago for this beautiful experience. My husband, Ed, and I have been so very fortunate to have had "too many to count" trips to Israel. We began with our first trip together in 1969 when we were able to see much of what I didn't see 10 years earlier. We joined a couple of missions over the years and have shared trips with our children and grandchildren. We now have family living and working and starting their own families in Israel. For all this and so much more, I am very grateful.



School children dancing on Jerusalem's Jaffa Road at the 1960 Yom HaAtzma'ut (Israel Independence Day) parade



CULTURE AND ARTS

# You Can Thank Jews for That Orange You're Eating

Jews played a crucial role in the cultivation of citrus

By Emily Paster / The Nosh

Winter is citrus season. The sweetest and juiciest oranges, lemons and grapefruits appear in stores just when we seem to need them the most. What could be more welcome on a gray January day than a sunny burst of vitamin C from your favorite citrus fruit?

Not only are citrus fruits delicious and healthy, but they also have a long association with the Jewish people. Humans have cultivated citrus fruits, which originally came from south and east Asia, for thousands of years. Indeed, we Jews are aware, if perhaps unconsciously, of the ancient connection between humans and citrus fruits because of how we celebrate the festival of Sukkot. An etrog — which in botanical terms is an ancient citrus variety known as a citron — is an essential part of that holiday observance. While the Bible does not mention the etrog by name, the citron was identified as the required “fruit of the goodly tree” as early as the second century B.C.E.

As Jews began to spread out into the Diaspora during the late Roman Empire, they had to ensure that, come autumn, they could still find a

perfect etrog to use for this important religious observance. Thus, one of the many agricultural activities these settlers engaged in was cultivating citrons. (Interestingly, these early centers of Jewish population coincide with continued areas of citrus production in the Mediterranean today: southern Spain, Sicily and Calabria in Italy, the Nile Delta, the Levant and Algeria.) Many scholars attribute the continued cultivation of citrus fruits in Europe following the collapse of the Roman empire, and the ensuing chaos, to Jewish horticulturists whose need for the fruit was undiminished.

The cultivation of other citrus species was a byproduct of these early Jewish settlers’ need for citron. Almost all citrus varieties are sexually compatible with one another, and they are highly prone to mutation. Such traits allowed their genes to mix naturally for thousands of years and made it feasible for humans to cross-breed the different varieties. Indeed, just about every citrus fruit you have ever seen comes from just three ancestors: the citron, the pomelo, and the mandarin.

From the 10th century onward, citron trees served as grafting stock for other kinds of citrus. By the end of the 13th century, fruits that we would recognize as oranges and lemons were widely grown in the land of Israel and by the next century Jewish merchants, through their contacts in the Levant began importing them to Italy.

Thus began the long association between Jews and the citrus trade in the eyes of Europeans. Starting in the Middle Ages, Jewish merchants traveled from the Mediterranean to northern and eastern Europe with citrons to sell to their brothers and sisters living in colder climes. This led to a thriving trade in all kinds of citrus, not merely etrogs, and not only to Jewish customers. Italian Jewish traders who settled in Germany used their contacts to import citrus from the Mediterranean to sell to any customers who could afford the high price. In 18th-century England, Jewish peddlers were known to specialize in citrus fruits.

Beginning in the 19th century, Zionist rabbis and other Jewish leaders began encour-



aging their followers to seek out citrons grown in Palestine instead of those grown around the Mediterranean. This was due in part to anti-Jewish riots on the Greek island of Corfu where many of the citrons destined for northern Europe were grown. Today, of course, Israeli farmers continue to grow and export citrus — more to Europe than to the United States, which has its own robust citrus industry — especially the famous Jaffa orange, which in the 1950s

and '60s was a symbol of pride for the young nation. So, when you peel a perfect round orange or squeeze some lemon into your tea this winter, know that it is in large part due to the efforts of Jewish farmers and merchants from centuries ago that today we enjoy such a wide variety of citrus fruits.

*This article originally appeared in the Nosh column of My Jewish Learning, which is part of 70 Faces Media.*

## Where Are They Now?

See him in the funny pages – Lawrence Klein’s new cartoon doppelganger

In the July 2015 BJV, we told the story of Pittsfield’s Lawrence Klein – the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles’ first

the disabled creator of *Guardians of the Galaxy* character Rocket Raccoon received his fair share of movie revenues, Director of Institutional Advancement and General Counsel at The Darrow School in New Lebanon, and inspiration for the villainous germophobe shyster “Larry Kleen” in the *Dick Tracy* comic strip written by Mike Curtis and illustrated by Joe Staton. Now, Klein has reappeared in the funny pages as hard-

nosed attorney-at-law “Lawrence Klein” in the *Lum and Abner* comic written and drawn by Donald Pitchford ([www.lumandabnersociety.org/](http://www.lumandabnersociety.org/)).

*Lum and Abner* is Pitchford’s cartoon homage to a popular radio program of the same name that ran from the early 1930s through the mid-1950s. The show was set in the Jot ‘em Down Store in rural Arkansas, and featured cornpone hijinks and hilarity with the pair “constantly stumbling upon moneymaking ideas only to find themselves fleeced by nemesis [city slicker] Squire Skimp, before finally finding a way to redeem them-



“Larry Kleen”

fan, founder of New York’s Museum of Comic and Cartoon Art (MoCCA), pro bono attorney who ensured that



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