Federation’s Annual Summer Concert Returns on August 22
Celebrated Jewish musician Rick Recht will be backed by the Berkshire Jewish Musicians Collective to benefit local ADL anti-bias training

PITTSFIELD – On Monday, August 22 at 7 p.m., join the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires for our annual concert, this year featuring Rick Recht – one of the most influential and celebrated Jewish artists and leaders of our time. His innovations in Jewish music, media, and leadership training have had a profound impact on the fabric of Jewish life.

Recht will be joined by the Berkshire Jewish Musicians Collective for an evening of joyful, soulful, and powerful music. Concert proceeds to benefit the ADL’s A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® anti-bias peer training program in Berkshire County schools. The concert will take place at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield. This event is funded in part by PJ Library, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, and generous underwriters.

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Rick Recht, continued on page 6

“Birds of a Feather: Anti-Semitism on the Far Right and the Far Left”
Attorney and Boston Herald columnist Jeffrey Robbins at Knosh & Knowledge on July 22


He’ll talk about anti-Semitic narratives emanating from both sides of the political spectrum, as well as the corrosive influence of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement nationally and in Massachusetts.

Knosh & Knowledge programs take place at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road in Great Barrington. For more on this free program and other Federation events, visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org. Masking at indoor Federation events is optional, but encouraged.

About Our Speaker

Jeff Robbins handles high-stakes litigation for companies and individuals who are entangled in corporate, shareholder, employment, and a variety of other disputes. During his more than 35 years as a litigator and trial lawyer, he has represented parties in high-profile First Amendment, corporate takeover, employment, breach of fiduciary duty and fraud-based cases, and has guided numerous companies, non-profits and individuals through matters involving intense media scrutiny. His notable cases include his successful defense of newspapers and other companies sued for defamation, resulting in two seminal defamation decisions issued by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court upholding summary judgment for prominent defendants.

Robbins was appointed Assistant US Attorney for the District of Massachusetts, where he focused on civil fraud cases and money laundering investigations, as well as investigations involving hospitals, physicians and pharmacies. In 1999 and then again in 2000 he was appointed by President Clinton as a US Delegate to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, Switzerland.

Beyond his legal practice, Robbins is a weekly columnist for the Boston Herald, writing about politics, foreign

BIRDS OF A FEATHER, continued on page 6

We are getting there, but we need your help!
If you have not yet made your gift to the 2022 Annual Campaign there is still time to do so!
Your gift will help us engage the next generation, support the elderly and vulnerable, and sustain Jewish life all year round!

Donate online at jewishberkshires.org
THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
2022 Annual Campaign
GOAL $1,100,000

DOING EXTRAORDINARY THINGS
YOUR IMPACT IS REAL
ANNUAL CAMPAIGN 2022

$100,000
$200,000
$300,000
$400,000
$500,000
$600,000
$700,000
$800,000
$900,000
$1,000,000

THINGS EXTRAORDINARY DOING
RAPII REFLECTION
A Return to Home From Home
Enjoying a Shabbat Shabbaton and living family life as “Jewish civilians” in Israel
By Rabbi Jodie Gordon

"Welcome home."
That’s what the guy at passport control said to us when we landed at JFK Airport after nearly three months away during my sabbatical – “welcome home.” As a born and bred New Yorker, it almost didn’t faze me, until my older daughter Lola looked up and said, “That’s funny. He said welcome home, and so did the guy who stamped our passports when we landed in Israel!” As a newly seasoned traveler, it’s possible she thinks this is just the customary greeting for arriving anywhere – which is a very hopeful and generous view of the world we live in. But in reality – our return to the US was a return to home from home.

I feel fortunate that during this Shmitta year, I could take my sabbatical from my work here at Hevreh as a rabbi and spend that time living in Tel Aviv in an apartment that, coincidentally, was on JL Gordon Street. My husband Josh worked remotely while our daughters were with Amit, an amazing Israeli woman who was their tuteur/nanny/music teacher/personal tour guide to life in Tel Aviv. On those days when my family members were all spoken for, I would lace up my sneakers, grab my Kindle and just start walking.

Walk a bit, stop for a coffee and a few chapters.
Walk a bit more, find a beautiful park, or maybe a bench on the top遏制 in front of the ocean, and a few more chapters, or sometimes a whole book, before walking a bit more and finding something to eat or look at or, sometimes, something beautiful to buy. Two nights a week, I would leave our little apartment on Gordon Street to go to my Hebrew class, where I was surrounded by young olim from South Africa and France who had never met a Reform rabbi before.

On the days when we didn’t have childcare, Josh and I would invent family itineraries for the day, making our way around Tel Aviv, taking day trips around the meroz, balancing between what we jokingly called “Birthright Gordon-Bloom” days when we visited historical sites and museums, and days that were just plain fun.

Since we’ve been back, lots of people have asked, “So, how was it?” And I’ve been thinking about how to answer – how to put into words the experience of total relocation and what that time and place meant to our family and to me. My answer to that question orbits around two core truths. First, as Mother Theresa said, “if you want to change the world, go home and love your family.” And secondly, one way or another, my family’s life is organized around the people of Israel. Hevreh is our organizing principle, and without Hevreh, it literally took the land, state, and people of Israel to fill that space with something equally enriching. The Jewish people and the rhythm of the Jewish year make our lives brighter, richer, and more vibrant.

Before leaving on this Sabbatical, we were asked by friends and family, “So, what’s your plan? What are you going to do on your sabbatical?”

My real answer, the deep-down heart truth, was that beyond the reading and writing I wanted to do and the Hebrew class I took – my real goal for my sabbatical was to live as a Jewish civilian. I wanted to soak up and live on Jewish time – and I wanted to do it next to my family, not from the distance that my professional life often necessitates. Our time in Israel followed one of my favorite arcs on the Jewish calendar: just ten days after we arrived, it was Purim. One month later, Pesach. And then, like blasts of the ram’s horn, the siren for Yom HaShoah, and then Yom HaZikaron. And then, the exuberance of Yom HaAtzmaut.

Perhaps even more remarkable were the twelve blissful Shabbosot spent with Josh and our girls – many weeks with his sister and her family in Jerusalem, sometimes with the next-door neighbors on Gordon Street who became our friends, and, a few times, just the four of us around the wobbly IKEA table in our rental apartment with tea candles and juice, and the challah that eventually won the neighborhood taste test as the best one around. After dinner, the favorite of the new family Shabbat traditions: Shabbat Sha’brownies.

It wasn’t long after we arrived that I began to encounter the question: “So, how long are you here for? You’re just visiting?” Taxi drivers especially love to ask this question – and usually follow up with some version of “What are you waiting for? Make aliyah!” I swear, the State of Israel should pay taxi drivers to do their hashbara outreach work. I quickly learned the word for sabbatical – “Anti ber Shabbaton mi nedidah shel.” I’m here on a Shabbaton, a sabbatical from my work, I would answer.

And truly, the last three months were a Shabbat Shabbaton – a grand cessation from the routines and the work that shape my life and the life of my family. For three months, the people and the land of Israel became the organizing principle for our time – the weekend began after the girls’ afterschool programs on Motzei Shabbat.

Perhaps the biggest thrill for me was to see all of this joyful Jewish living unfold through the eyes of my two daughters . . . to see Jewish life everywhere, all around you, every day.

RABI REFLECTION, continued on page 4

Rick Recht
Live in concert with the Berkshire Jewish Musicians Collective
Monday, August 22 | 7 p.m.
Knesset Israel
16 Colt Road, Pittsfield, MA

General Admission: $20
Young adults under 30 are $15
Kids 18 and under are free

Proceeds to benefit the ADL’s WORLD OF DIFFERENCE
Anti-bias Peer Training program in Berkshire County schools

PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE AT JEWISHBERKSHIRES.ORG OR (413) 442-4360, ext. 10
First, I want to thank you all for being an inter-
esting community to write about and a rewarding audience to write for. For covering the
Jewish Berkshires for several years, I am constantly
surprised by the tremendous accomplishment of this
community, by its creativity, if its generosity, and by its engagement with Jewish life locally and in
the wider Jewish world.
I’m writing this one week after the Federation’s
Jewish Community Day and the Shabbat Across
the Berkshires we co-hosted with our affiliates. The
events brought together hundreds of people to cele-
brate what this community is and what we want it
to become.

Last year, my appeal for voluntary subscribers to the Berkshire Jewish Voice
focused on the changing character of the Berkshires in the wake of the pandemic.
At our two recent events, we saw how many people, both newcomers and long-
timers, are seeking Jewish connection through Federation. We saw how much
opportunity exists to create an even richer Jewish life and engagement in the
Berkshires. We all felt an energy that seems fresh, vital, and new.
Federation publishes this newspaper to enhance Jewish connection in a region
that remains spread out geographically and diverse in its approach to Jewish
life. We want you to know what members of the Jewish community are up to and
share all the opportunities available to meet, enjoy, and do good work here in the
Jewish Berkshires. So here’s the deal:

This publication’s revenues do not cover all its costs. Your financial
help as voluntary subscribers is essential in our efforts to bring you
meaningful, positive, and entertaining stories both by and about your
neighbors, as well as about Jews around the world. Your generosity as
voluntary subscribers last year was unprecedented, but your support
remains vital to sustaining this publication. Please see the insert in this
paper for more on how you can support the Berkshire Jewish Voice.

In my estimation, it was a topsy-turvy 12 months for us in the Berkshires –
though I’d hoped otherwise. In addition to the local stories in each issue about
Jewish foods and how they tie into the Tribe’s history, this year, we also contrib-
uted interviews with bestselling authors Mara Goodman-Davies and
Mary Herrmann of RB Design Co., who have ably taken over the job.
Other writers shared excerpts from their recently published books. Rabbi
Dennis J. Ross on Martin Buber made the Jewish philosopher’s abstruse work
more accessible, while Rabbi Pamela Wiz’s poems explored the grieving process.

Richard Slutzky, who filled us in on the
Jews and booze; Rick Reiss, who wrote a two-part history of
(whisky) correspondent bronfin
roman rozenblyum. of RB Design Co., have ably taken over the job.

Published nine times a year by the
Israel Lutsky, “The Jewish Philosopher,” from his award-winning
Berkshire Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, serving the Berkshires and surrounding NY, CT and VT
Yiddish Radio
Wax
Dennis J. Ross
Yiddishe momma
being a
Mara Goodman-Davies
Muir Trail became a (partly) Jewish journey; and
Professor Michael Hoberman
on how hiking California’s John
Erik Erikson;
Leo Goldberger
on his Berkshires acquaintance with world-famous psycholo-
Greta Thunberg would be proud of – made me understand that our clergy does not
approach the column as a chore, but as messages they put much of their hearts
and minds into crafting.

Thank you volunteers Ellen Rosenblatt and the BJV delivery team, Michael Albert and
Roman Rozenblum.

Thank you to our supporters!
The Berkshire Jewish Voice extends a very special “thank you” to our voluntary subscribers

Anonymous – 2
Elaine and Charlie Brenner
Estelle Miller

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By Albert Stern / BJV Editor

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Roman Rozenblum.
And on Sunday morning, Amit would arrive to get the girls going on their weekday adventures. Josh would catch up on work or check on the kids. And Elijah, they decided that the store brand chocolate-covered matzah was the best because it had sprinkles.

They sat quietly next to their cousin, Sammy, who was in full IDF uniform and counted to shemoneh (8) for Lola. They got lifted in chairs on their birthdays as we sang “Happy Birthday” and “Hava Nagila.” And for my birthday, my 60th, we danced in Safra Square in Jerusalem until way past their bedtime.

They wore headbands with Stars of David and blinking lights and dressed in blue and white danced in Safra Square in Jerusalem until way past their bedtime on Yom Haatzmaut.

They learned that cumberc is the best vegetable in Israel both because it’s tasty and fun to eat whole without cutting it up and also because its name in Hebrew is very fun to say – meloncylon.

They tried all foods, and Asaf agreed that falafel is better as a side dish without all that tahini making it soggy.

They figured out how to be friends with kids in the ocean and at the playground with their moments with their dad unfolded through the eyes of my two daughters, who are both old enough to notice the details she recounted.

So, when the man at passport control at JFK Airport said, “Welcome to the United States,” she replied, “Yes, I certainly am Nick’s mother.” And as we talked, I thought back to the time that I had entered into this world of the Berkshires shared their complex history.

Rabbi Jodie Gordon is a rabbi and director of education at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire in Great Barrington. She co-hosts the OMPI Podcast: Jewish Wisdom for Unprecedented Times with Rabbi Jen Gubitz – find it on Spotify and other podcast hosting platforms.

As Stephanie and I wrapped up our interview, I shared that anecdotes, telling her that though we didn’t know each other, she and I had a connection – some life wisdom voiced by her son has been making its way to my son’s ears. Might it mean something to my teenager down the line? Time will tell. All I know is that it felt important to satisfy the curiosity in time post-sabbatical, my personal spiritual work is to hold on to the holiness in time that it gave me. My family and I take great joy in having this Hevreh – these people and this place as the beating heart of our Jewish community – each of you, and the way we move together through the rhythm of the Jewish year, makes our lives brighter, richer, and more vibrant.

As I re-enter this time and space post-sabbatical, my personal spiritual work is to hold to the holiness in time that it gave me. My family and I take great joy in having this Hevreh – these people and this place as the beating heart of our Jewish lives, and I am so grateful to serve in this community.
Picking up for The People’s Pantry

letters to the editor

Our Dignity Drive Helped Our Neighbors

Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires,

On behalf of The People’s Pantry in Great Barrington, I am offering a very belated thank you for the personal hygiene products we received from your donors. Although we are primarily a food pantry, our shoppers very much appreciate these personal hygiene products that are so difficult to afford. In particular, when we get incontinence products, they immediately disappear off the shelves. We thank you for all the work you do in the community, helping our neighbors.

Peace,
Diane Piraino
Board of Directors, The People’s Pantry
Great Barrington

GUEST EDITORIAL

The Mapping Project: A Clarifying Moment Regarding BDS in Boston

By Jeremy Burton / Executive Director, Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston

In June, activists affiliated with the group “BDS Boston” released a so-called “Mapping Project” – an offensive and inflammatory list of Jewish communal organizations across Greater Boston and Massachusetts that blames our community’s existence for Israel and for all sorts of ills in our society. The purpose is publishing this list of community organizations “so that we can dismantle them.”

BDS Boston is the same group that JCRC called out last October when, in an explicit display of antisemitism, they attacked then-candidate Michelle Wu for taking donations from “sinister” “Zionists” – i.e., Jews in Boston.

To be clear, in June they didn’t just name “pro-Israel” advisors or groups like JCRC or criticize ADL and JCRC for our study tours for civic leaders. Nor did they single out those who make statements defending certain actions by Israel’s government. They named day schools, cultural centers, disability service organizations, and synagogue networks. They targeted groups that explicitly oppose the occupation, such as J Street, and support grassroots Israelis and Palestinian human rights activists, like New Israel Fund (NIF).

[In the Berkshires, the group single out Lenco Armored Vehicles and various local police forces, and noted that Michael Wynn, Chief of Police of the Pittsfield Police Department, in 2013 participated in counterterrorism training in Israel sponsored by the ADL.] I want to make it clear how baseless this project is by quoting their descriptions of two of our community’s most progressive organizations. It targets NIF because they “stop short of challenging the fundamentally racist and settler colonial character of the state.” The project also frames J Street as attempting to “relegitimize Palestinians to the position of a minority group” that can at best aspire toward increased integration into Israel’s colonial political framework.

As Rabbi Jill Jacobs, CEO of T’ruah (the progressive Jewish human rights group, framed it this week: “You can protest Jewish organizational policies/positions via-a-via Israel all you want (or even boycott Israel), but once you call for dismantling the basic Jewish communal infrastructure, you’ve crossed the line into antisemitism.”

Amy Spitalnick, executive director of Integrity First for America (the folks who successfully sued the white supremacists behind the 2017 violence in Charlottesville) tweeted: “There are some who argue in bad faith that any criticism or boycott of Israel or the settlement enterprise is antisemitic. That is false. But this? This is antisemitism. Conflating Jews with Israel, seeking to ‘dismantle’ Jewish community, age-old tropes about Jewish control...it’s classic.”

We are grateful to the political leaders who have already made strong statements in opposition to the map. Congressman Seth Moulton called it “dangerous,” “irresponsible,” and “an antisemitic enemies list.” Congressman Ritchie Torres tweeted that “Scraping off is a common symptom of Antisemitism, which at its core is a conspiracy theory.” Congresswoman Katherine Clark called it “alarming and reminiscent of a dangerous history of identifying and tracking Jewish people.”

[Both US senators from Massachusetts, Elizabeth Warren and Edward Markey, have denounced this effort.]

And I want to draw your attention to this extended interview with Congressman Jake Auchincloss (in which I am also quoted), where he strongly condemns the map and the mappers:

This is just chilling to me. It is tapping into millennial antisemitic tropes across Jewish wealth, control, conspiracy, media connections and political string-pulling. For those who had any doubt, this is a clarifying moment regarding the BDS agenda in Boston. The movement indisputably seeks the elimination of the State of Israel and for all time that they seek. Though I understand that concern, by the time our community came back online after the chaos caused by our city’s leaders being covered by some major media outlets and had been condemned by Israel’s foreign ministry. More importantly, JCRC and our organizations were hearing from many members of the community who had been named individually as staff and board members of these organizations — and by those who worried about the safety of their own spaces and the places their children gathered. We couldn’t ignore it. But there’s another reason why it would be dangerous to ignore the project. BDS Boston may be a fringe group here in Boston. However, and (not for the first time) groups with more credibility amplified the message and endorsed it. Mass Peace Action (MPA), which also rushed BDS Boston’s defense in October, retweeted support for it. MPA sits in certain alliances of progressives in our Commonwealth. They are public officials who amplify them and lend them credibility.

As I told Jewish Insider, there need to be “consequences” in the relationships that mainstream progressive leaders hold with those like MPA, who are actively in the business of defending and amplifying antisemitism. We cannot ignore extremist behavior on the left and tell ourselves it is only the marginal voices. When we do so, we allow the Overton Window to shift in regard to what is acceptable in our discourse. Six months ago, it was Jewish donors to local Democratic politicians who were attacked; and that was ignored by most civic leaders (except for us and ADL). Now it’s the broad fabric of our community.

As Jeremy Burton, the Executive Director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston (JCRC), defining and advancing the values, interests and priorities of the organized Jewish community in Boston in the public square. This article is reprinted, with the author’s permission, from his Times of Israel blog.
BIRDS OF A FEATHER, continued from page 1

policy and national security issues. His columns have also appeared in the Wall Street Journal, Boston Globe, New York Observer, Christian Science Monitor, and The Times of Israel. He has lectured widely throughout the United States and Canada on issues relating to the Middleeast, and is a Visiting Professor of the Practice of Political Science at Brown University. Jeff is also the former chairman of the New England Board of the United Jewish Communities and the former president of the World Affairs Council of Boston.

A Few Questions for Jeff Robbins

The Berkshire Jewish Voice caught up with Jeff in early June. Here’s an excerpt of our conversation, which has been edited for length and clarity.

When you look at the current political situation, specifically regarding anti-Semitic issues, what keeps you up at night?

I think that the threats posed by anti-Semitism on the left at the moment are greater in America than they are in Israel. There's no question that we have to combat the bad actors from the right, but at the same time, I think there is a genuine fear of anti-Semitic attacks on Israeli civilians, something that during the 2014 war, with the Katyusha rockets, was an issue. In the 2014 war, there were thousands being fired at Israeli civilian communities. The Jerusalem Post had rockets by the hundreds and thousands being fired at Israeli civilian centers by people who were absolutely determined to kill, or if not kill, maim civilians using Palestinians as human shields. And when Israeli leaders try to stop that, it's Israel that is labeled the egregious human rights violator. I mean, that is well beyond Alice in Wonderland. And when I see delegations of students getting attacked and the marchers of Israeli students against Jews in the wake of that, those attacks are coming from the left. They're not coming from the right, but on the other hand, those who are calling for war are not necessarily for the belittling of Israel, the diminution of Jewish identity, hardly qualify as progressives. I mean, what a phony attempt to wrap themselves in a progressive flag.

Bar-Ilan University professor Shaul Babai and Bar-Ilan University professor Shahar Moro are two wonderful young writers who are pushing back against those narratives. Is there, in your estimation, in the younger Jewish consciousness, a counterbalancing force that is becoming more assertive in giving voice to pro-Israel, pro-Jewish attitudes? Is it just a small number of your students?

I think that the students who are anti-Israel do not necessarily speak for the student body. I think that there are plenty of students who, at least intellectually, are pro-Israel. I think that there is an initial unwillingness to talk about Israel, particularly because of the fear of being ostracized, because the orthodoxy is so gung-ho about those who are involved in do so by a professor – which I do - you find that there are plenty of students who are not necessarily pro-Israel. That's the biggest challenge.

But on the other hand, I fear that the very purpose of the BDS movement is to drive people, especially Jewish students, underground, to intimidate them into silence, to normalize a one-sided narrative, to make it socially repugnant to speak up in support of Israel. And what are the students who are 17, 18, 20, or 21 going to do?

Well, more times than not they're going to moderate their voices, they're going to stand down, they're going to give up, they're going to go under-ground. That's what BDS really is about. It's based on the presupposition that if you apply enough pressure and make it socially repugnant, people are going to stand up for Israel.

Upcoming Knosh & Knowledge Programs

Friday, August 19, at 10:45 a.m.: Mark Liebtag, “Our Will To Live: Art and Music in Terezin.”


Friday, October 14, at 10:45 a.m.: New York Times journalist Linda Greenhouse on Does the Supreme Court Have A Future?

RICK RECHT,
continued from page 1

“Patience & Repentance: The Time Healing Takes

MONTEREY – On Sunday, August 28 at 10 a.m., join Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld, president of Hebrew College, where she speaks on the topic, “Patience & Repentance: The Time Healing Takes.”

This Sunday Learning in the Berkshires program will be presented by Hebrew College and the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. It is being graciously hosted in private home in Monterey for the location, please register at hebrewcollege.edu/camp-for-our-august-gathering-in-the-berkshires. Space is limited.

A kosher-style brunch will be served!

President Anisfeld, an internationally-known teacher and scholar, became president of Hebrew College in July 2018 after serving as the rabbi of the Reform Synagogue (2006-2017) and dean of students (2005-2006). She graduated from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in 1990, and subsequently spent 15 years working in pluralistic settings, including as Hillel rabbi at Tufts, Yale, and Harvard universities.

She writes and teaches widely, weaving together Torah, rabbinic commentary, and contemporary poetry and literature in her wise and compassionate approach to the complexities of the human experience and the search for healing and hope in a beautiful but fractured world.

For questions about this event, contact Mua Tavan at mtavan@hebrewcollege.edu.

RICK RECHT

RICK RECHT is the national celebrity spokesman for PJ Library and the founder and executive director of Seeders Boot Camp (SLF). He is a past recipient of the AJC合作共赢 Award for community leadership. He is the founder and executive director of Jewish Rock Radio (JRR) and JKids Radio, the first high-caliber, 24/7 international Jewish music radio networks. Additionally, Recht serves as artist in residence at University of the Hebrew Congregation in St. Louis, Missouri.

For the last 20 summers, Recht has played at hundreds of URJ, Rallam, JCC, and private camps around the country. He has been featured in concert and as a scholar in residence at the NFTY, B'Nai Or, and USY International conventions, the URJ Biennial, the American Conference of Cantors, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and Jewish communal organizations across the U.S. Recht has 13 top-selling Jewish albums including his most recent release, Here I Am. "From the beginning, my mission has always been to strengthen Jewish identity and engagement for Jewish youth, teens, and families. I see myself as a connector and elevator of community,” says Recht. “My greatest inspiration is to identify, support, and train new Jewish artists, educators, and leaders who will provide inspiration and connection for generations to come.”

Born and raised in St. Louis, Recht studied a strong Jewish identity, attending Traditional Congregation, a conservative synagogue. In high school, Recht joined NFTY, where he was deeply influenced by Jewish music. After graduating from University of Southern California (Los Angeles, CA) and Music Institute (Hollywood, CA), Recht hit the road, playing national college campuses, clubs, and amphitheaters. Recht started the share with national acts such as Chris Rock, Gaby Dunn, and The Guess Who. America, Supertemp, Three Dog Night, The Samples, Vertical Horizon, Government Mule (Allman Brothers), and many more. Recht returned to his Jewish roots with his debut Jewish album, Too, in the summer of 1999. His shift to Jewish music marked the birth of a unique blend of pop, radio-friendly music with Hebrew, Jewish text, and social responsibility. After touring heavily for several years in the Jewish world, Recht realized he was needed in the wider culture to make an impact. “I believed that the Jewish world needed more leadership training opportunities and communication channels for thought-leaders and artists to share their messages and music,” he says. This was his inspiration to launch Jewish Rock Radio and Songleader Boot Camp Leadership training programs in 2009. Recht is the founder of the Berkshires Rocking-Jewish communities from coast to coast, hosting the Jewish Dunbar, with his wife, Elisa, and sons, Kobi and Tal.

A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

The A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE Institute Peer Training Program empowers students and their peers with the knowledge, courage, and commitment to stand up and speak out against bullying, prejudice and discrimination – providing the tools and perspective respect for racial, cultural, and other human differences in their schools and in their communities.

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires partnered with the AWH, the Berkshire County Superintendents’ Roundtable, and local donors to underwrite this program in Berkshire County during the 2018-2019 school year, offering it to middle and high school students attending several schools in the next school year, the program will be offered at eight additional schools. For more information, please call the Federation at (413) 442-4360, ext. 10.
Your Federation Presents

Current Events Seminar with Professor Steven Rubin

PITTSFIELD – On Thursday, July 28 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Professor Steven Rubin for another in his series of current events seminars. The current events seminar gives participants an opportunity to examine and discuss topical and newsworthy national and international issues. For each session, the moderator will suggest readings, introduce topics, and offer discussion questions. The seminar will be conducted in a collaborative and collegial manner, with all participants encouraged to voice their opinions.

This free program will be presented in person as part of the Federation’s Connecting with Community Series presented at Knesset Israel (16 Colt Road in Pittsfield) and will be followed by a kosher hot lunch. Lunch is a $3 suggested donation for adults over 60 years of age or $7 for all others. Reservations are required for lunch and can be made by calling (413) 442-2200 before 9 a.m. on the day of the program. See page 8 for the lunch menu.

Professor Steve Rubin
Ph.D. (moderator) is professor emeritus and former dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Adelphi University, Garden City, NY. His op-eds and opinion essays have appeared in The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Berkshire Eagle, Tampa Bay Times, The South Florida Sun-Sentinel, Palm Beach Post, and The Hartford Courant, among others. He is the editor of several anthologies, including Celebrating the Jewish Holidays: Poems, Stories, Essays (Brandeis University Press), Telling and Remembering: A Century of American Jewish Poets (Beacon Press), and Writing Our Lives: Autobiographies of American Jews (Jewish Publication Society). He lives in Tarrytown and can be reached at sjr@adelphi.edu.

For more on this program and other Federation events, visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

Dr. Joel Friedman

“The Tao of Judaism,” with Dr. Joel Friedman

PITTSFIELD – On Tuesday, August 2, at 10:45 a.m., Dr. Joel Friedman, MD and Ph.D. for an evening of Eastern and Western religious thought in his two-part presentation, “The Tao of Judaism.” The program will combine lecture, discussion, and some Tai Chi movement.

This free program will be presented in person as part of the Federation’s Connecting with Community Series presented at Knesset Israel (16 Colt Road in Pittsfield) and will be followed by a kosher hot lunch. Lunch is a $3 suggested donation for adults over 60 years of age or $7 for all others. Reservations are required for lunch and can be made by calling (413) 442-2200 before 9 a.m. on the day of the program. See page 8 for the lunch menu.

Dr. Joel M. Friedman is an MD, PhD research scientist at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He is a Professor and the former chairman of the Department of Physiology and Biophysics, where he holds Young Men’s Division Chair in Cardiovascular Physiology. Dr. Friedman has deep expertise in an extensive range of biomolecular and translational medicine modalities including protein dynamics, hemoglobin, transfusion medicine, anti-inflammatory strategies, wound healing, anti-inflammatory strategies, and topical, transdermal, and IV drug delivery platforms.

Dr. Friedman has also been pursuing research into the theological and mystical underpinnings of Judaism. He has given multiple participatory workshops at synagogues and Limmud on these and related topics. His lens is uniquely influenced by the synergy of his scientific/medical background, his 40 years of training and teaching Taoist based Chinese internal martial/healing arts, and a passion for Jewish learning.

For more on this program and other Federation events, visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

Filmed in the Berkshires: A Conversation with Diane Pearlman

PITTSFIELD – On Thursday, July 21, at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Diane Pearlman, the executive director of the Berkshires Film and Media Arts Collaborative (www.berkshirefilm.org) and film producer. She’ll share her perspective on “Filmed in the Berkshires.”

This free program will be presented in person as part of the Federation’s Connecting with Community Series presented at Knesset Israel (16 Colt Road in Pittsfield) and will be followed by a kosher hot lunch. Lunch is a $3 suggested donation for adults over 60 years of age or $7 for all others. Reservations are required for lunch and can be made by calling (413) 442-2200 before 9 a.m. on the day of the program. See page 8 for the lunch menu.

The Berkshires Film and Media Collaborative (BFMC) creates educational, workforce and production opportunities in the film and media industry as an economic initiative for the western Massachusetts region. Executive director of BFMC, Diane Pearlman, will discuss the Berkshires as a destination for film and media production and highlight films produced in the area. She will also discuss the building of a new international film and education center that’s in the planning stages now.

Diane Pearlman is also an independent entertainment producer with 30 years of experience in media creation and production. Her specialty is digital film production, animation, and feature film visual effects. Among many other projects, she produced the award-winning short film, A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud, based on the short story by Carson McCullers. She is currently partnering with Great Barrington Public Theatrical to direct/produce a series of original short films about nature by local Berkshire playwrights.

For more on this program and other Federation events, visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

In the Room Where It Happened

What if you missed? If you weren’t at the return of Knosh & Knowledge turned out to this Federation program at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire. Jewish background presented by Professor Andrew Porwancher. Dozens of age or $7 for all others. Reservations are required for lunch and can be made by calling (413) 442-2200 before 9 a.m. on the day of the program. See page 8 for the lunch menu.

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For more on this program and other Federation events, visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

Dr. Joel Friedman

Welcome to Federation, Liz Irwin!

Visitors to the Federation office in Pittsfield will encounter a new face behind our front desk – Liz Irwin, who joined our staff in June.

Liz spent most of her life in the Huntington area of Long Island, working in the non-profit field as a fundraiser who wrote grants and helped boards with their development plans. When her youngest child went to university in North Carolina, Liz followed, landing in the Chapel Hill area pivoting to a new career direction in massage therapy. After working in the Chapel Hill area for a few months, Liz moved to Wilmington, NC, to work and play at the beach for three years. In 2018, she headed north to the Berkshires. This area has long been one of her favorites at any time of year. Tanglewood and any other form of live music will capture her attention. She lives with two cats and a beagle. For fun, Liz spends her time between her garden and her studio. Sewing, quilting, and painting all keep her out of trouble.

“Most of the time,” she explains.

Liz’s number at the front desk is (413) 442-4360, ext. 10. Her email is the general Federation mailbox: federation@jewishberkshires.org.
Connecting with Community

Nourish Your Body, Mind, and Soul!

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

Kosher lunch will be prepared on Mondays and Thursdays. Tuesday lunches resume in the autumn. Meals to go will be ready by noon for pickup at the Knesset Israel kitchen door, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield. All meals-on-wheels will be delivered by Federation volunteers in the early afternoon.

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

The menus listed below are planned, but may be modified depending on availability of ingredients. When making a reservation, please inform us if a person in your party has a food allergy. Adults 60 and over: $3 suggested donation. Adults under 60: $7 per person.

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

What’s for Lunch?

Gluten-Free Main Entrée ** and Dairy-Free Main Entrée #

JULY

Monday, 18 .......... Roasted chicken **#, mixed greens with pecans and cranberries, rice pilaf, mixed vegetables, Challah, and apricots.

Thursday, 21 .......... Fresh fish ***, borscht and potato, coleslaw, potato chips, zucchini medley, oat bread, and mixed berry shortcake.

Monday, 25 .......... Summer un stuffed pepper cas-serole **#, brown rice, salad, baby carrots, multi-grain bread, and tropical fruit salad.

Thursday, 28 .......... Greek salad platters **, pita bread, and baklava.

AUGUST

Monday, 1 .......... Meat loaf **, gazpacho, green beans, mashed potatoes, rye bread, and applesauce.

Thursday, 4 .......... Spanakopita (spinach feta pie), mini Greek salad, rice salad, Italian bread, and cookies.

Monday, 8 .......... Tarragon egg salad platter **#, three bean salad, Challah, and melon.

Saturday, 11 .......... Pomegranate glazed chicken **#, rice pilaf, mixed vegetables, salad, Farmer’s loaf, and grapes.

Monday, 15 .......... Summer sloppy Joes, French fries, salad, hamburger bun, and peaches.

PLEASE NOTE: The Elder Services Senior Nutrition Program, under which the Federation operates its kosher lunch program, raised the suggested donation to $3 a meal. The suggested donation is completely voluntary. Seniors who cannot pay a voluntary donation will continue to receive a meal; no questions asked. We appreciate your understanding.

Your Federation Presents

PJ Library Celebrates the Arts at Tanglewood and Jacob’s Pillow

Join PJ Library this summer for two very special get-togethers at two of the Berkshires’ premier cultural venues. Visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org for registration and more information.

Musical Family Shabbat at Tanglewood

LENOX – On Saturday, July 23 at 1:30 p.m. join PJ Library for a musical family Shabbat experience led by Rabbi Jurah Greenfield outside, followed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra Family Concert in The Shed. This will be a Shabbat celebration for all ages! Bring an empty plastic container to make your own rhythm instrument! After we celebrate Shabbat on the lawn, make your way to the Shed to enjoy the concert, or stay on the lawn and listen with space to spread out. Registration is required. Cost is $10 for adults, children under 18 free – general admission seating in The Shed. This special group rate has been made possible through generous underwriting by PJ Library and the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires.

For more information, please visit pjlibrary.org or call 413-442-2200.

Beat Ya Feet at Jacob’s Pillow

On Sunday August 21, join PJ Library and Jacob’s Pillow for a musical family Shabbat experience led by Rabbi Jurah Greenfield outside, followed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra Family Concert in The Shed. This special group rate has been made possible through generous underwriting by PJ Library and the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires.

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Homebound or recovering from an illness or injury?

Let us help you arrange for a kosher lunch to be delivered through our Kosher Meals on Wheels Program. Call (413) 442-2200.

* DONATE. * VOLUNTEER. * MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
Edith Hope Talbert, 95, pioneer, trailblazer, successful female art gallery owner, LEXINGTON - Edith Hope Talbert, 95, of Highland Beach, FL, Lexon, MA, and Rockville Centre, NY, where she had a warm, loving home for 45 years. Born March 4, 1927, in New York City, the daughter of Sonia Rosenblatt Jackson and Harry Hoffman Jackson, Edith grew up in Lawrence, NY, and Miami Beach, FL. After graduating from Lawrence High School, she attended Pratt Institute, where she studied Industrial Design and Art History at Columbia University. She taught dance at Arthur Murray Dance Studios while also attending The Art Students League Of New York and Hans Hofmann’s “Friday Critique” at his school in Provincetown, MA. Edith and her future husband Alfred A. Talbert met skiing in the Berkshires. They enjoyed many trips as a couple to Gloucester and Rockport, where Edith painted “Motif Number 1” her beloved natural scenery. Edith was a pioneer and trailblazer and was one of the first successful female art gallery owners in New York City on Madison Avenue and 93rd Street. She started Emerging Arts Gallery in the 1960s and Colorma Art Galleries in the 1970s. Known as a great businesswoman and a businesswoman, she was a ferocious reader and a gifted artist in her own right. She enjoyed traveling throughout the world and purchasing art for her galleries. Edith is survived by her daughter Hope Candace Talbert of Lenox; son Richard Harrison Talbert of New York City; granddaughter Courtney Paige Smith and husband, Sergeant Michael Smith of Lenox; and great-granddaughter Avela Hope Smith. The family truly thanks HospiceCare in the Berkshires for helping Edith manage her pain in the last nine days of her life. Donations may be made to Gumbo Limbo Nature Center in memory of Edith Hope Talbert to Gumbo Limbo Coastal Stewards, 5301 South Federal Highway, Suite 245, Boca Raton, FL 33434, Attention Lara.

Howard Norman Gorham, a brilliant legal mind, kind, generous, and accomplished CHARLOTTEVILLE, VA - It is with great sadness that we mark the passing of Howard Gorham. Howard was a kind, generous, and accomplished man who was loved by his family and the many friends he made in his life. He was born in 1927 to Pincus and Rose Goldstein in Brooklyn, NY, just before the onset of the Great Depression. After a stint in the military toward the end of World War II, Howard graduated from the School of Accounting and Finance at New York University with a Bachelor of Science in 1949. Working as an accountant during the war, Howard attended law at NYU at night, attaining his D/LII in 1953 and his LLM (Tax Law) in 1958. A brilliant legal mind, he was a central part of numerous real estate developments in the New York City region and, later, across the country. One of his greatest professional accomplishments was as a lead attorney in the development of the iconic Pan American (later Metropolitan) Life building behind Grand Central Station. His leisure passions included literature, history, archaeology, traveling, and opera.

Howard was a full-time resident of Lenox from 1994 to 2017 but spent many summers there throughout his life before that. He was active in the community, serving as president of the Bishop Estate Homeowners Association, organizing the Berkshire Boys Club, and helping to establish the Berkshire Institute for Lifetime Learning. His greatest accomplishment was as a husband and father, where he was a tower of strength for his family. His even temperament and care and concern for his family were evident every day, and all cherished the gifts that Howard brought. He will be missed by his wife of almost 61 years, three sons and daughters-in-law, Eric and Luce, Jim and Bev, and Roger and Lucie. He has five grandchildren, Sam, Eleanor, Jeffrey, Andrew, and Edward; and by numerous extended family members and friends. A Celebration of Life was scheduled at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Charlotteville, VA on Sunday, June 5. Donations may be made to Howard’s favorite cause, Americans United for Separation of Church and State. https://secure.au.org/a/tribute.

Steven S. Rosenberg, 70, deeply beloved son, brother, uncle, and friend PITTSFIELD - Steven S. Rosenberg, 70, of Pittsfield, died last Saturday, June 11, at Hillcrest Commons Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. Born December 10, 1951 at Beth Israel Hospital in New York, NY, Steven was the son of the late Hyman and Renee (Schwartz) Rosenberg. He graduated from John Brown High School in Rochester and earned a teaching degree from the City University of New York. Early in his career, he worked as a freelance auto and body mechanic and then became a teacher of automotive services for 14 years at Boys & Girls High School in Brooklyn, NY. He later worked as a counselor for the Eagleton School in Great Barrington and the Desioto School in West Stockbridge until his retirement. He moved from Flushing, NY, to Torrington, CT, then to Otis and Lee before settling in Pittsfield, where he spent his final years. Steven was a deeply beloved son, brother, uncle, and friend. His parents and most important people in Steven's world were his family, where he selflessly shared his genuine and true natural talent for spontaneous playfulness. He was extremely generous, kind, funny, forgiving, loyal, and devoted to the people he cared about. If anyone needed help with anything, he would never hesitate to be there, and always extended his love and his home to many people, especially in their time of need.

Steven very proudly celebrated 30 years of sobriety in 2021. Besides enjoying and appreciating the company of his family and friends, he was a car and motorcycle enthusiast and an active member of the 12-step community. Steven enjoyed cooking and baking, and he was everybody’s “go-to” guy for advice on home improvement projects. Throughout his life, he spent so much time working on other people’s projects that he often neglected his own. Steven’s handwork can be found in the many homes of his family and friends. He would never accept payment for all the work he did. To Steven, money was far less important than helping other people. Steven is survived by his sisters, Rona (Daniel) Goldstein, of Delmar, NY, and Lori Ann Rosenberg, of Storrs, CT; brother, Joel (Brian) Rosenberg, of Naples, FL; niece and nephews: Adam (Peg) Goldstein, Jonathan Goldstein, David (Marcy) Goldstein, and Benjamin Goldstein; all of Albany, NY; Sara (Alex) Jablonski, of Milton, VT; Mark (Lauren) Rosenberg of Los Angeles, CA and Ethan Rosenberg of Washington, D.C. He will be deeply missed by all who were lucky enough to be part of his life.

A funeral service was held on Monday, June 20 at Levine Memorial Chapel, Albany, NY. Interment followed at Temple Israel Cemetery, Albany. 

OBITUARIES
JEWISH EDUCATION IN THE BERKSHIRES 2022-2023

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires has a strong commitment to Jewish youth, helping to provide a high-quality Jewish education for more than 126 children and young adults through 846,000 in grants to congregational religious schools across the Berkshires.

Berkshire County is fortunate to have a diverse Jewish community that offers educational opportunities encompassing a wide range of approaches and family preferences. This section offers an overview of local Jewish schools.

Please note that owing to the BJV’s publishing schedule, some key dates and events for local religious schools may not have been finalized at press time. Please contact the congregations for complete details.

Knesset Israel
Pittsfield

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

Primary School
Children preschool age and below are invited to attend the Tot Shabbat program, offered monthly. This exciting opportunity will incorporate music, games, stories, and an introduction to the Jewish worship experience.

Preschool and Kindergarten students enjoy programming on Shabbat mornings. A one-hour class with a highly qualified teacher features song, movement and Shabbat-friendly crafts. Students in first grade also enjoy Shabbat mornings for a two-hour session, beginning their study of Hebrew, prayer, mitzvot, and Jewish holidays. Afterwards, these students join together for Purposeful Play, a program for Knesset Israel that gives the youngest pupils a chance to learn creatively and expressively.

A team of experienced primary school educators is working together to infuse this program with best practices and joy.

Elementary School
Grades 3-6 meet twice a week, on Shabbat mornings and on Wednesday afternoons. Over the course of their elementary school years, students study stories from the Torah, lifecycle, holidays and Jewish values. Grades 3-5 offer enhanced opportunities to help students learn to read Hebrew fluently and accurately. The school is looking forward to continuing to grow its arts program, featuring the participation of local Judaica artists.

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

High School
Students convene weekly to study with expert educators. High school students also have the opportunity to serve as teaching assistants in our Hebrew School, especially in Junior Congregation. The bar/bat mitzvah program and Purposeful Play programs.

Family Programming

Exciting programs for the whole family linking themes of the Torah, lifecycle and contemporary social issues take place on select Sundays, Wednesdays evenings and Shabbat afternoons throughout the year. Open to non-members as well as members, these programs are a great way for families to experience the Knesset Israel community. Please check the Knesset Israel calendar (at https://knessetisrael.org) or Facebook page for further details.

Registration for Knesset Israel's Hebrew School will take place during the summer months. Members and non-members are welcome, and Hebrew School can be an excellent gateway to becoming more involved in the community. Interested families are invited to contact Rabbi David Weiner at (413) 445-4872 or rabbiw@outlook.com. Please check the Knesset Israel calendar (at knessetisrael.org) or the RI Facebook page for further details.

Congregation Beth Israel
North Adams

Congregation Beth Israel’s Community Hebrew School, a vibrant afterschool Jewish learning program for children in kindergarten through 7th grade. This Reform congregation welcomes students of all family backgrounds, including those who are new to Jewish education.

Hebrew School
The school features multi-grade classrooms where students of different ages learn from and with each other, exploring together what it means to be Jewish in a welcoming, supportive, and creative environment.

The primary goals are Jewish joy and empowering students to make Judaism their own. During class time, students and teachers delve into Hebrew, Torah learning, Jewish values and practices, and more.

Fun in the garden at CBI
Classes begin September 12 and meet on Mondays from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Each week starts with the whole Hebrew school gathering together for ‘Tefillah Time’, shifting gears from secular school-day to Hebrew school time, singing songs, learning prayers, and praying together.

Students then split into three groups:
- Aleph-Yaa (A to Z) students (grades K-2) act out Torah stories, learn Hebrew letters and vowels through hands-on experimentation (making Hebrew letters out of Playdough or Twizzlers!), and (pandemic permitting) celebrate holidays by presenting plays at a special nursing home performance.
- Ne’arim (“Youths”) students (grades 3-5) continue with their studies of Hebrew, as well as learning Tikkun Olam and deepening their understanding of the world as a whole, beginning with their families.
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah prep class for students in grades 6-7 is taught by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat. Together students explore Jewish values and communal decisions; write their own prayers, psalms, and pages of Talmud; engage body and mind through learning to tie tzitzit; write midrash in response to Torah; learn Jewish ethics via graphic novels; and practice a variety of mitzvot, both ritualistic and interpersonal.

In 5783 (the 2022-2023 school year), all three of these classes will use Shalom Learning’s Jewish Values curriculum, which is designed for maximum flexibility (a student or teacher falls ill, we can pivot from onsite to online learning smoothly). Shalom Learning’s curriculum is together expertly-crafted and newly-created materials, opening up Jewish values (e.g. teshuvah / repentance, gemara / Halakhic discussion) such as Purim is always a blast at Knesset Israel.

Purim will be taught by Emily Axelrod, an enthusiastic young Jewish educator majoring in religion at nearby Williams College.

Bar Mitzvah prep class for students in grades 6-7 is taught by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat. Together students explore Jewish values and communal decisions; write their own prayers, psalms, and pages of Talmud; engage body and mind through learning to tie tzitzit; write midrash in response to Torah; learn Jewish ethics via graphic novels; and practice a variety of mitzvot, both ritualistic and interpersonal.

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Family Programs

Knesset Israel also offers monthly Family Programs (sponsored by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation) geared towards families with children ages 1-8 as well as monthly Family Services, led by Rabbi J paraphrase that children and non-members are welcome, and Hebrew School will take place during the summer months. Members

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JEWISH EDUCATION IN THE BERKSHIRE 2022-2023

are newbies through 5th grade. Parent engagement includes the Jewish Parenting Book Club and other social events. All offerings occur at the Temple, with a hybrid option available, or in the community (i.e., on the hiking trail), observing current COVID policies.

Religious School K-12
The religious school meets for students grades K-12 on Saturdays at 10:45 a.m. The Shabbat-focused religious school integrates students into the broader Shabbat life of the extended Jewish community. This is a day for communal engagement and relationship-building. Students seeking Hebrew education or b’nai mitzvah tutoring schedules can work independently and virtually on a schedule that works for the student and family.

Young Families
The Tot Shabbat programs for our young families take place on Fridays, generally once per month, at 5 p.m., with family-friendly services for the whole congregation immediately following at 5:45 p.m. Other teen engagement programs and special events will be shared throughout the year.

Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch, the rabbi and director of education, would be happy to speak with you and explore the educational programs we have to offer.

Pre-School Age Children
Our young families can choose to have their children explore the Jewish calendar through move-ment, music, cooking, and crafts related to Jewish holidays and Jewish values. These are the words that will greet you and your family each Sunday morning when you arrive at the Temple, with a hybrid option available, or in the community (i.e., on the hiking trail), observing current COVID policies.

Religious School
“Baker Too, Hevreh!”
These are the words that will greet you and your family each Sunday morning when you arrive at Hevreh, a Reform congregation. With the “Baker Too, Hevreh Band”, rabbis, and songleader, the Religious School day begins together in community singing and prayer together. Hevreh’s religious education program is built on the value of Jewish joy, and moving through the Jewish calendar as part of an engaged and inclusive community. The faculty is experienced, creative, and dedicated to sparking a love of Jewish learning in each student.

The curriculum highlights Jewish holidays, ethics and values, text, lifecycle ritual and includes developmentally appropriate methods for learning for each child.

This year, Hevreh looks forward to welcoming new and returning students in kindergarten through 7th grade to Religious School on Sunday, September 18 at 10:30 a.m.

Programs
Kindergarten-7th grade: Religious School meets weekly on Sunday mornings from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Hebrew Skills meets weekly on Wednesdays from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. for grades 3 through 7. Limited options are available for 1st remote Hebrew instruction, as well. Hevreh welcomes interfaith families, GLBTQ families, new members, first timers, neighbors, and friends to explore all the education programs we have to offer.

Pre-School Age Children: Tot Shabbat offers multiple points of entry for our post-B’Mitzvah students. Students in 8th-12th grade will have the chance to study with the rabbis, travel together, and take on new leadership roles in the community as part of the Madrichim program. An important leadership role is the role of a madrichim who leads a team of students in their own classrooms. Together, caregivers and their pre-school aged children explore the Jewish calendar through movement, music, cooking, and crafts related to Jewish holidays and values.

Teen Programs: Hevreh offers multiple points of entry for our post-B’Mitzvah students. Students in 8th-12th grade have the chance to study with the rabbis, travel together, and take on new leadership roles in the community as part of the Madrichim program. Where teens assist in religious school classrooms. Students in 8th grade participate in a twice-monthly Pre-Confirmation Class with a focus on Tefilah and a special Israel curriculum. Students in 9th-12th grade participate in a twice-monthly Confirmation Class, which this year will pilot a new curriculum from The Mussar Institute called “Challenges and Choices: A Jewish Teen’s Guide to a Balanced Life”.

To learn more or to schedule a one-on-one appointment and tour, please contact Joan Goldberg Munch at jgoldbergmunch@hevreh.org. To register, visit hevreh.org/religiousschool.

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire
Great Barrington

Religious School

Young Families

MAZEL TOV!

Miriam Udel on her new role as director of the Tam Institute for Jewish Studies (TIJS) at Emory University in Atlanta. Her proud father is Federation board member Ed Udel and Lisa Udel is her proud stepmother. And more good wishes to Miriam, who is completing a study of modern Jewish culture through the lens of Yiddish children’s literature in an upcoming volume titled Umbrellas Sky. Children’s Literature and Modern Jewish Worldbuilding.

Our own, travelling with Jew-in-Style columnist Carol Goodman Kaufman on being signed by TouchPoint Press for her first novel, which will be a mystery story.

Joseph Weinberg on winning this year’s Daniel Pearl Berkshires Scholarship awarded to a local student who excelled in journals or music. The graduating senior from Pittsfield High School will attend The Juilliard School in New York to major in music with a focus on double bass performance. Proud parents are Amy Brentano and Adam Weinberg.

Jacob Lezberg for the acceptance of his research paper to the 34th Canadian Conference on Computational Geometry. He and his co-authors studied the computational complexity of box-pushing games that involve gravity and will present their work at the Toronto conference in August.

Avi Dressner, who won two Simon Rockower Awards presented by the American Jewish Press Association for his hugely popular and deeply moving essay, “I’ll Have What He’s Having: Told he had little time left, my rabbi-dad wanted a last meal at Katz’s deli,” which appeared in The Forward. He received first place awards in two categories, “Award for Excellence in Writing About Seniors” and “Award for Excellence in Personal Essay.” Congrats on the “Jewlitzers!”

Knesset Israel 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield

ONGOING MINYANS

Shabbat Candle Lighting Times

Sunday 8:45 a.m. and 7 p.m.
Saturday 9:30 a.m.

Monday 7 p.m.
Saturday 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday 7 p.m.
Saturday approximately 10 minutes before sunset

Wednesday 7 a.m. and 5:45 p.m.
Saturday 9:30 a.m.

Thursday 7 p.m.
Friday, September 2 7:07 p.m.

Friday, August 26 7:19 p.m.
Sunday, September 4 7:04 p.m.

Friday, September 2 7:07 p.m.
Friday, August 1 7:50 p.m.

Friday, August 26 7:19 p.m.
Friday, August 12 7:49 p.m.

Friday, August 26 7:19 p.m.
Friday, August 12 7:49 p.m.

Friday, August 1 7:50 p.m.
Friday, July 29 7:58 p.m.

Friday, August 12 7:49 p.m.
Friday, August 19 7:38 p.m.

Friday, August 5 7:50 p.m.
Friday, August 19 7:38 p.m.

Friday, July 29 7:58 p.m.
Friday, August 12 7:49 p.m.

Friday, August 19 7:38 p.m.

Friday, August 12 7:49 ppm.

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Jewish Women’s Foundation Annual Meeting and Luncheon Raised Funds for Ukraine

PITTSFIELD – The Jewish Women’s Foundation of the Berkshires (JWF), under the auspices of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, held its annual meeting and luncheon on June 24 at The Country Club of Pittsfield.

A silent auction raised $7,100 for the World Central Kitchen, providing humanitarian relief to Ukraine. Three JWF grantees presented their work: Berkshire Bounty, Berkshire Grown, and the Guthrie Center. Attendees at the event helped address food insecurity in the Berkshires by bringing packaged/canned food items to support the mission of these grantees. The Guthrie Family provided the entertainment.

JWF memberships support the Foundation’s Grants Program. In 2021, JWF awarded $59,270 to 18 local organizations. Guided by the Jewish value of tikkun olam (Hebrew for repairing the world), the Jewish Women’s Foundation is dedicated to sharing its Jewish values by meeting unmet needs in the community and supporting social action. Further information about JWF can be found on our website JWFB.org.
On June 28, nearly 100 members of our community gathered together at The Mount in Lenox for a review of the important work of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires over the last 12 months.

Starting things off with a dear Torah was Rabbi Doreen Litwin, who joined Federation last winter as our director of community engagement and programming. She had to tiptoe a bit around some of the issues raised in the weekly parshah—the story of Korach’s rebellion. She said, “While a challenging parshah, korah, is very much concerned with issues of leadership, community, and continuity which are all deeply relevant, meaningful, and timely topics.”

Our president, Elisa Schindler Frankel, marveled at how our in-person events this spring—our Yom HaShoah commemoration, Anita Diamant’s talk, Shabbat Across the Berkshires, Jewish Community Day, Connecting With Community, and Roosh & Knowledge—attracted so many attendees seeking Jewish connection after two long years of separation. “We were hundreds strong in just a few short months,” she said. “A staggering and uplifting number!”

She added: “And it is with great excitement that I share that the Federation’s 2022 Annual Campaign is off to an amazing start. Out of the gate, we have raised $600,000, bringing us slightly over the 50-yardline towards reaching our $1,100,000 goal.”

Elisa left the gathering with an exhortation: “My Call to Action this evening is this: I ask each of you to leave here tonight with a renewed sense of hope for our future. In that hope, I ask you to serve as ambassadors on behalf of our Federation. It’s as simple as this—Share the impact we have on our community with your family and friends who are not necessarily involved. When you attend one of our programs or events, invite someone who has not attended before to join you. If you know of people who are Jewish or Jewish in our community and not aware of all that we have to offer, please provide us with their names so that we can send them a welcome to our Jewish community packet.

Federation’s treasurer Judy Uscow conducted the installation of new and returning board members and thanked Josh Bloom and Ariel Pink, whose terms have expired, for their work on behalf of Federation. Judy spoke for the entire community in voicing a special thanks to Ellen Heffen for her more than 20 years of service in various leadership roles—as well as in sharing everyone’s suspicion that Ellen will be back with us in some way before too long. A hearty thank you to all who volunteer for this community!”

Executive Director Dana Kaufman reminded the gathered of the Federation’s vital work during these last two years of crisis and uncertainty. “We are very proud that throughout the pandemic, Federation’s vital programs and services never stopped,” she said. “Despite the overwhelming uncertainty and the ever-changing challenges our community has faced, Federation was always there supporting the needs of our community. We never stopped.”

Dana pointed to the programs that brought thousands of people together over this time, to the religious school and camp scholarships Federation funded, to the $600,000 provided for our most vulnerable, to security upgrades and trainings for our Jewish communal institutions, and to the anti-bias outreach that this organization has provided to the wider Berkshires community without interruption. She also shared details about the implementation of our strategic plan and the benefits already accruing.

Our Overseas Partners

Much of the evening’s focus was on the work of the Federation system and its overseas partners in Ukraine. Since the invasion began in February, our generous donors have contributed more than $100,000 in emergency funding to aid Jews caught up in the conflict. Our guest speakers, both of whom were recently on the ground in Eastern Europe, shared vivid stories of what the needs have been and what our help has actually accomplished.

Alexandra Shklar, a director of strategic partnerships at The Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) who has visited refugee camps in the region, said that “the reason we could be there on February 24,” the day Russia invaded Ukraine, “was because we were there on February 23.” She shared the nature of JDC’s ongoing work in Ukraine before the war, which prepared a network of contacts and resources that the organization could quickly mobilize. Shklar described the way that holifes manned by Russian-speaking operators are maintained around the clock to receive calls from Ukrainian Jews in need and oftentimes in imminent danger.

In a recorded conversation with Dara Kaufman, Roman Polonsky of the Jewish Agency For Israel (JAFI) spoke from Hungary about the massive logistical challenges they are facing since the onset of hostilities, and how his organization rose to the challenge to bring Jews to Israel and other safe havens. He shared a particularly harrowing story of how only four Jewish staffs in Hungary scrambled to transport more than 30,000 persons out of Ukraine in the war’s early stages, many of them massed behind border crossings in bitter winter weather. He talked about the future of the evacuation and challenges for the refugees who have made it to Israel: “This has been no ordinary Aliyah,” he asserted. “These people are refugees. They fled.” Complicating things has been the lack of air travel between Israel and both Ukraine and Russia, making it necessary for refugees to go through other countries rather than being airlifted out directly. Still, he shared hopeful developments, such a streamlined documentation process that allows Jews in need to get to Israel more quickly.

Both Shklar and Polonsky gratefully acknowledged the contributions of American Jewish communities like ours for our assistance.

Star Student – Emma Adelson

Also at the meeting, Federation board member Judith Cook presented the Henry Simkin, Frances Simkin Schiller, and Dr. Stanley and Faye Simkin Scholarship to Emma Adelson of Lee. Emma, who attended Miss Hall’s School and will enroll at University of Vermont in the fall, is this year’s outstanding scholar. Emma expressed how her Jewish identity began to develop at Hevreh’s Tiny Talmidim classroom and grew as she attended URJ Camp Eisner during the summers—both supported by Federation. She writes that visiting Israel in 2018 with Hevreh’s b’nai mitzvah program “firmly rooted my deep connection with the Jewish religion. Every aspect of this experience became a core memory.” She has also engaged in activism and social change, and cites attending the March For Our Lives against gun violence in Boston with Hevreh as being a transformative experience.

Emma has worked as an intern and surgery assistant at Berkshire Veterinary Hospital. She will major in Animal Sciences at University of Vermont, where she has already started to make connections with the Jewish student community.
Community Day Kicked Off Annual Campaign 2022 in Rousing Style

What a special Jewish Community Day we had at High Lawn Farm on June 12. More than 350 happy revelers showed up to celebrate our Jewish community and enjoy being together with old and new friends. Thank you so much to all the volunteers – they’re the folks in the ice cream cone aprons – who helped.

Gathering together was the perfect way to celebrate the kickoff of Federation’s Annual Campaign 2022! It’s summer in the Jewish Berkshires – there is so much going on and we hope to be seeing much more of you!
Experience Our Newly Renovated Community!

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- Scenic mountain view dining
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Service and Oneg Brought Us Together at Shabbat Across the Berkshires

Our congregations came together on June 10 for Shabbat Across the Berkshires. This special Kabbalat Shabbat service marked one of the first times we all joined together at a communal worship service since the start of the pandemic – it was amazing to be together!

Thanks so much to Hevreh of Southern Berkshire in Great Barrington for hosting the service and oneg under the tent.

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

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
AT HEVREH
Visit www.hevreh.org/religiousschool for more information about our educational programs for families and children ages 3-18.

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

Proof of vaccination required. Masking protocols will be shared closer to the event.

For a safer experience, we have adjusted our format to include schmoozing and breakfast hors d’oeuvres on the covered porch followed by a theater style program indoors. There will be no assigned seating.

重大捐赠人

庆祝

7月24日，2022年
上午9:30 - 11:30

乡村俱乐部，匹茨菲尔德，MA

在jewishberkshires.org/celebration注册

嘉宾演讲
Frederic L. Bloch
高级副总裁和首席成长官，ADL

特别表演
Paul Green and Two Worlds Ensemble

7月24日
9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

国家俱乐部，匹茨菲尔德
639南街，匹茨菲尔德，MA

那里有更多信息关于我们的教育项目为家庭和儿童3-18。

项目的选择包括：
• 每周课程针对幼儿园-7年级，专注于节日、仪式、伦理和犹太生活的节奏
• 月度看护者和儿童课程适合学龄前儿童
• 小组和1:1的希伯来文教学
• 为青少年项目包括领导力培训和社交机会

接种疫苗证明要求。接近活动时将共享遮罩协议。

为了更安全的体验，我们调整了我们的格式，包括在覆盖的露台上进行闲聊和早餐开胃菜，然后在室内进行剧院式节目。将没有指定的座位。

活动主席：Elisa Spungen Bildner and Robert Bildner

场地委员会
Marjorie and Barry Berg
Helene Berger
Terry and Mel Drucker
Elisa Schindler Frankel and Larry Frankel
Jane Glaser
Rabbits Rachel Hertzman and Rex Perlmeter
Liz and Alan Jaffe
Jane Katlin
Marilyn and Elihu Katsman
Leslie and Roy Kozupsky
Nancy and Norman Lipoff

Nan and Allan Lipton
Ellen and Stuart Masters
Natalie and Roger Matus
Daryl Messinger and Jim Heeger
Helice and Steven Picheny
Penny and Claudio Pincus
Elaine and Bernard Roberts
Anne Schnesel
Zelda Schwebel
Hope and Gene Silverman
Diane Troderman and Harold Grinspoon
Judy and Mark Usow

RSVP by July 11

最低捐款
如果您捐款$1,000或更多，将获得2022年度活动礼品。
Celebrate Shabbat Outdoors at the Foothills of Mount Greylock with CBI

Plus a special service to mark Tisha B’Av

NORTH ADAMS — As the summer heats up, Congregation Beth Israel invites everyone to regular Shabbat services held outdoors in their glorious yard at the foothills of Mount Greylock under the willow tree. If weather doesn’t permit, then join CBI for a service in the beautiful sanctuary looking out through a wall of glass at the mountains. Either way, it will be a moving experience combining prayer and nature. The congregation will join together with prayer, song, and poetry on Saturday mornings, July 23, July 30, August 5, August 13, August 20, August 27 and September 3 at 9:30 a.m. Rabbi Rachel Barrenholz, known as the Velvetan Rabbi, will share some words of Torah and some words about Torah as all bask in Shabbat’s sweetness. Services include traditional liturgy, contemporary poetry, chant, and song.

Tisha B’Av

CBI will hold a special, meaningful service for Tisha b’Av on Sunday, August 7. In this year when so much feels broken, harness Tisha b’Av (observed) to experience the spiritual uplift of rebuilding and repair. (The day itself falls on August 6, which is Shabbat, so is observed the following day.) “Learn in” to the fact that it’s the day after Tisha b’Av, which means it’s the first day of the 49-day journey of Tisha b’Av to Rosh Hashanah. Details of this program were evolving at press time, but will be shared on the website, cbi berkshires.org. RSVP at https://cbiberkshires.com/calendar-services/.

Friday Night Lights: Music, Food, and Friendship to Welcome Shabbat

PITTSFIELD – This summer, Knesset Israel is pleased to have a few different Kabbalat Shabbat experiences planned. They will welcome Shabbat with traditional and music, and step into the Kabbalat Shabbat service under the big tent (weather permitting). And once each month, participants will sit together to share a community dinner with old and new friends.

Shirei Shabbat with Community Dinner: Friday, July 22, 5:45 p.m.

Join the Knesset Israel Band for an upbeat musical service including many contemporary melodies. Register in advance for the community dinner following the service: knessetsrael.org/rsvp. Dinner is $20 for adults. Free for those younger than 18.

Traditional Kabbalat Shabbat: Fridays, July 29 and August 5 and 12 at 5:45 p.m.

A variety of lay shlihei tzibbur — sometimes one, sometimes two — lead the congregation in the traditional Kabbalat Shabbat service.

Musical Minyan with Community Dinner: Friday, August 19 at 5:45 p.m.

A small acoustic ensemble provides the backdrop for the Kabbalat Shabbat service at RD’s Musical Minyan. At times meditative, at times spirited, this service embraces beloved traditional, modern, and global melodies to welcome the Sabbath Bride.

Knesset Israel Welcomes the Community to Observe Tisha B’Av

PITTSFIELD - Knesset Israel marks the solemn holiday of Tisha B’Av with two services.

On Saturday, August 6 at 9 p.m., an evocative late-night service marks the anniversary of the destruction of the Temple. Hear the chanting of the Book of Lamentations and recite ancient and contemporary elegies in remembrance. Visitors are welcome to attend and participate, whether it's their first time at Tisha b’Av services or they attend every year. Those who may wish to chant part of Eicha should contact the synagogue office in advance.

On Sunday, August 7, at 8:45 a.m., the somber, observed Tisha b’Av morning service will include a Torah reading and a homily for the fast day, which marks the destruction of the Temple.

Knesset Israel is at 16 Cold Road in Pittsfield.

Rambin’ with the Rav: Kibitzing and Talking Torah on the Trail

PITTSFIELD AND BEYOND – By now it’s no secret that Knesset Israel’s Rabbi David Weiner loves to get out on the trails. This summer, he’s sharing his love of the outdoors with the whole community on his weekly morning hikes. Several times this summer, Rabbi Weiner will lead a friendly group into the woods to schmooze, enjoy the views, and maybe talk a little Torah among the trees.

Hollow Fields / Perry’s Peak

On Wednesday, August 3, head out to Perry’s Peak in Richmond for a sweet loop hike in the woods and meadows above a bucolic pasture. Hikers will walk the 4 miles at a relaxed pace to enjoy the spectacular views of the Lennox Valley, Richmond, and Yokun Ridge.

Mt. Greylock’s Hopper Trail

The hike on Wednesday, August 3, is one of the Berkshires’ premier hikes, along the rim of Mt. Greylock’s unique Hopper. The route is along the dramatic Stony Ledges via the Hopper and Hayley Farm trails. Hikers will catch their breath and the unbeatable view before making the steep descent back to the parking lot. This hike is only for the strong of knee and heart, as there’s some strenuous terrain and the occasional bear in the area.

Keystone Arch Bridges

On Wednesday, August 17, we’ll take our last group Ramble of the season through the Keystone Arch Bridges of Chester and Middlefield. This lovely out-and-back trail takes us alongside the first railroad to cross the Berkshires. The river bubbles, the cascades impress, and the handmade rock cuts and ingenious keystone bridges are models of not-quite-modern engineering. This will be a low intensity hike, with a stop along the way to wander in the cool river.

Group size is limited and advance registration is required. Please come prepared for hiking, with appropriate footwear, hat, water, snacks, bug spray, poles if you use them, etc. Rain or heat delays are possible. Most trails have no bathroom facilities. Hikers will convene at the K.I. parking lot at 8:30 a.m. www.knessetsrael.org/rsvp.

“The State of Two States,” with Israel Policy Forum CEO David Halperin

GREAT BARRINGTON - On Wednesday, August 3, at 4 p.m., join Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, in partnership with Israel Policy Forum, “The State of Two States,” a discussion on the current flashpoints of the Israel / Palestinian conflict, and how the current climate is affecting a future two-state outcome.

Israel Policy Forum CEO David Halperin, recently returned from Israel and the West Bank shares his expertise on where the conflict stands from the Israeli perspective. Hevreh is at 270 State Road in Great Barrington.

Shabbat Indoors and Outdoors with Temple Anshe Amunim

PITTSFIELD - This summer, Temple Anshe Amunim offers different opportunities to celebrate Shabbat.

Kabbalat Shabbat

Join Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch at 5:30 p.m., every Friday night for Shabbat services. All are welcome to join in person or via livestream. Please reach out to the Temple office for the link to the livestream.

Torah Study

At 9:30 a.m. every Saturday, Rabbi Hirsch leads a Torah study session. All are welcome to join in person or via zoom. Please reach out to the Temple office for the link to Zoom.

TAA Shabbat Hikes

TAA shabbat hikes in August will be at Olivia’s Overlook (August 6), Wild Acres off South Mountain Road in Pittsfield (August 13) and at the Old Mill Trail in Hinsdale (August 20). To register, go to: tinyurl.com/AugustTAAshabbatHikes.

Shabbat hikes in August will be at Olivia’s Overlook (August 6), Wild Acres off South Mountain Road in Pittsfield (August 13) and at the Old Mill Trail in Hinsdale (August 20). To register, go to: tinyurl.com/AugustTAAshabbatHikes.

TAA, continued on page 18

Interested in Volunteering Locally?

Our tutors love what they do!

- Work 1:1 with a local immigrant or US-born adults in learning or improving English language and literacy skills.
- Training and support provided.
- Work remotely in person.
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Contact Leigh Doherty
ldoherty@tinetub.org or 413-243-0471

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LOCAL NEWS

Tamuz/Av/Elul 5782

Berkshire Jewish Voice • jewishberkshires.org

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Temple Anshe Amunim is a Reform Jewish Congregation that promotes engaging and widespread participation in services, education, and cultural and social action programs. The Temple, located at 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield is an accessible building. For more information, contact the Temple Anshe Amunim office at (413) 442-5910, email templeoffice@ansheamunim.org or visit www.ansheamunim.org.

Get Out and Enjoy Our Summer Cultural Season with Temple Anshe Amunim

Celebrate the rich opportunities to enjoy music and art in the Berkshires this summer with Temple Anshe Amunim.

Tanglewood Hadvaldah
LENNOX – Please join Temple Anshe Amunim on Saturday, August 13 at 7 p.m. on the lawn at Tanglewood for a brief Hadvaldah service followed by a BSO concert at 8 p.m. Look for the blue and white balloons!

Sol LeWitt's Universal and Particular Artwork – A Mass MoCA Excursion
NORTH ADAMS – Please join Rabbi P.G. Hirsch and a Mass MoCA educator on Wednesday, July 27, at 10-45 a.m., for a guided tour of the extensive LeWitt exhibit and then spend the day at Mass MoCA. Meet at the museum. Pre-registration is required. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/TAAGuidedTour

Berkshire Jewish Film Festival Continues

This year, the Berkshire Jewish Film Festival marks its 36th season. Over the years, the BJFF has shown hundreds of films to thousands of people. The BJFF continues as a virtual festival this year, showing films online on Monday nights.

The six weeks of programming showcases 11 feature films – plus five shorts that will be screened on August 8. Information about tickets, season passes, and Zoom talkbacks are on the festival website berkshirejewishfilmfestival.org.

Summer Classes and Talks at Temple Anshe Amunim

PITTSFIELD – This summer, Temple Anshe Amunim for programs that will stimulate the mind and one that will prepare you for the congregation’s signature summer event – the Feigenbaum Lecture, this year featuring Julian Castro.

The Politics of Historical Memory

Please join TAA board trustee, Robyn Rosen, Ph.D, on Wednesday, July 20, at 11:45 a.m., to discuss Julian Castro’s memoir, Julian Castro, the former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and now a commentator for MSNBC, will be the guest speaker at the 55th Annual Feigenbaum Lecture on Thursday, August 21 at TAA – more on that in the next BJV. Pre-registration for the book talk is required. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/TAAAug10Book

Book Discussion: An Unlikely Journey, by Julian Castro

Please join Rabbi P.G. Hirsch on Wednesday, August 16 at 11:45 a.m., to discuss Julian Castro’s memoir, An Unlikely Journey, the former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and now a commentator for MSNBC, will be the guest speaker at the 55th Annual Feigenbaum Lecture on Thursday, August 21 at TAA – more on that in the next BJV. Pre-registration for the book talk is required. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/TAAAug10Book

Discussion. For more information about registering for the lecture, visit ansheamunim.org.

Welcome to the Jewish Berkshires

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

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

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

BERKSHIRE JEWISH CONGREGATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

Berkshire Minyan
Lay-led, Traditional, Egalitarian Minyan
South County
berkshireminyan.org

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

Chabad of the Berkshires
450 South St., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 499-9899,
judacitizens.com

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

Congregation Beth Israel
Reform
53 Lois St., North Adams, MA
(413) 663-5830, cbiberkshires.com

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

Israel Philatelist Society
c/o Dr. Ed Helitzer,
(413) 447-7622

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

Jewish War Veterans
Commander Robert Waldheim
(413) 822-4546, sellie4@aol.com

Knesset Israel
Conservative
16 Cole Rd., Pittsfield, MA
(413) 445-4872, knessetisrael.org

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

Create a Jewish Legacy Campaign
Please remember the Jewish Community in your will.
Reconstructionist Rabbinical College Honors Donald Shapiro of Lenox

PHILADELPHIA – On May 22, Donald L. Shapiro, a philanthropist and Reconstructionist movement leader, was honored at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College’s 50th graduation ceremony. Shapiro is the founder of Vector Realty Associates, the real estate development firm, and is a longtime member of Reconstructing Judaism’s board of directors and past president of the college.

Shapiro was born in Great Neck, NY, and was educated at Phillips Academy Andover and Harvard University. He proudly served in the U.S. Navy as a communications and top-secret control officer on a heavy cruiser in the U.S. Navy’s Sixth Fleet. He spent a decade working for Levi & Sons, the developers whose designs and structures were highly influential in post-war, suburban home construction, overseeing all land acquisitions for the company. He left to form Vector Realty Associates, which built condominiums and high-rises in the New York area.

Shapiro first encountered Reconstructionist Judaism in the late 1960s while living in Huntington, NY, with his first wife, Ann, and their children. The family was invited by friends to join a fledgling Reconstructionist community, Congregation Rehullah Shelom in Cold Spring Harbor. Within a few years, Shapiro was president of the congregation and a committed Reconstructionist. Later, when he moved to Manhattan, he served as president of a second Reconstructionist congregation, West End Synagogue. More recently, he also served as president of a third synagogue, Temple Sholom, a Reform community in his winter home of Naples, FL.

In the early 1980s, he was invited by friend Aaron Ziegelman – a longtime movement supporter – and Rabbi Arthur Green, then RRC’s president, to join the college’s board. Today, he sits on the board of Reconstructing Judaism and serves on several of its committees. Shapiro also sits on the Board of Advisors of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He is past president of the Harvard Club of New York City and the Harvard Club of Naples.

The Berkshire Jewish Voice caught up with Mr. Shapiro upon his return to the Berkshires in mid-June. We asked him to share some thoughts on Jewish involvement and how even the busiest executives might still find the time to work on their chosen philanthropic pursuits.

Let’s start with your interest in Reconstructing Judaism. Several years ago, I went to the General Assembly for the Jewish Federations of North America. The leadership – all very accomplished businessmen – all stressed, in different ways, how important it was for someone involved in Jewish communal life to make a point of connecting with Jewish practice of some sort – be it going to services, be it studying texts, studying Torah. And it seems that you found that in Reconstructing Judaism. So what was your connection to that that made you commit yourself over these many years?

Well, it may be a little different than you surmise. I was a 34-year-old, young married guy on Long Island with a six-year-old and a newborn baby. And my wife and I were invited to the inaugural meeting of a new congregation forming in Huntington, Long Island. We were not members of any synagogue at that point, although we had looked at a number of them and found them uninspiring, let’s put it that way. But good friends of ours were among people who were starting this congregation. So we went to the inaugural meeting in August of 1969, and that’s when I first heard the word ‘Reconstructionism.’ I’d never heard of Mordecai Kaplan, who had more or less created [the movement] by explaining that Judaism is an evolving civilization, meaning that we don’t practice Judaism the way they did in medieval times or in biblical times or even in pre-war Europe. We practice it in accordance with the beliefs and mores of the society in which we live. So it was an American way of looking at things – very, very practical, with many tenets that appealed to us.

That rabbi was also a Civil Rights figure and had marched with Martin Luther King. My wife and I decided to join. Now, I’m not a religious guy, but we wanted to be members of a synagogue because we had young children and we thought that was the thing to do. Four years later, I was asked to be president and then later on, years later, when I moved to New York, I became a member of a Reconstruction synagogue in New York called West End Synagogue. Maybe six or seven years after that, they asked me to be president of that. I got to know a lot of people, and I guess somebody thought that I could lead.

Once you become a charitable person or a philanthropic person, you support all kinds of causes. I think that comes from watching your family when you grow up and from them comes learning how these things work in society.

Do you think that there is a different emphasis nowadays than there was 50 years ago when you were first getting involved? Was there more of a, I don’t know, social impetus to be a joiner, to be a leader?

I don’t think so. I think it’s always been there for those who want to find it.

What I hear you saying is that if you have that commitment, you’ll find the time.

That’s right.

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Don Shapiro (center) with Seth Rosen, chair of Reconstructing Judaism’s Board of Governors, and Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D., president and CEO of Reconstructing Judaism, on May 22.
Traveling with Jewish Taste

Some Like it Hot

By Carol Goodman Kaufman

A few years ago, Joel and I accompanied a group of teens from Hadassah’s youth villages on their mission to Poland. The trip, similar to our March of the Living, was called a year’s study about pre-war Poland and the Holocaust. Like the population in our villages, the kids represented virtually every country in which Jews have lived. Students hailed from Ethiopia, Morocco, Russia, and Estonia, just to name a few.

The weather was beyond cold, at one point dipping – or should I say plunging – to 18 below zero. I noticed that Katya, one of the girls in our group, was standing with coat unbrought and open to the wind. She wore neither hat nor gloves. “Katya” I cried. “You’ll catch your death of cold. Button up!” Katya’s smile hovered somewhere between amusement and tolerance. “Carol,” she said, voice heavy with her Russian accent, “I am from Siberia. I am hot.” And the kids from the Mediterranean and Middle East? Bundled up top to bottom. But regardless of where these kids came from originally, they all liked their food fiery. As we Jews lived in cold climates, hot and spicy condiments warmed us. In hot ones, they’ve opened up our pores and allowed perspiration to cool us. So let’s take a look at a few of the piquant and potent elements of our cuisine. I’ll start with two Ashkenazi Old Country choices: horseradish and mustard. Known as chetin in Yiddish, horseradish is one of the stars of the Passover Seder in its role as mourer, but in ground form it is an absolute necessity for deli-loving fressers. Often made with beets to render its distinctive crimson hue, it also comes in unadulterated white. I personally prefer the latter because it camouflages itself on a piece of gefilte fish. I like the surprise I get when biting into my mustard, normally a fairly tame condiment, to spread onto a sandwich. My sinusues will never be the same.

Some Like it Hot

Traveling with Jewish Taste

The ingredients you’ll need for Solomonar’s take on schug

Harif

As with horseradish, I love every family has its own harif story. Mine takes place in 1990, when we traveled with another family to Israel. On one of our first days of touring, we stopped in Beit She’an to have lunch. Joel and I ordered the most expensive thing on the menu, which was a sandwich with harif. Thinking I’d be delighted, Joel decided to dress my falafel sandwich with the harif offered at this little kiosk. And he really poured the stuff on. As a result, when I took the first bite of my stuffed pita, flames shot out of my ears. Joel went into the doghouse, to which he returns whenever I think of harif. There’s a reason that kiosk had a photo of the Rebbe hanging on the wall. Anybody partaking of that much harif would need divine intervention. If I recall correctly, the harif at this place in Beit She’an was harissa. A very particular hot sauce comes from our extended family in North Africa. Sometimes sweet and other times smoky, it is a flavorful chili paste made from peppers, garlic, paprika, cumin, caraway seeds, olive oil, and lemon. Rather than blow your socks off immediately, some harissa will provide a slow build-up of heat. The stuff in Best She’an wasn’t that kind.

Harif

As much as I love mustard, like horseradish, it can be quite potent. While visiting our daughter and her family recently, I took a large spoonful of Dijon mustard, normally a fairly tame condiment, to spread onto a sandwich. My sinuses will never be the same.

Schug

As with any recipe, there are dozens, if not hundreds, of variations of this Yemenite hot sauce. This one is adapted from that of award-winning chef and restaurateur, Michael Solomonov, whose book Zahav I reviewed in this column a while back. Solomonov is a Sephardic Jew who grew up in Brooklyn and has been inspired by this Middle Eastern mandate for hospitality. And given the Middle Eastern mandate for hospitality, it was also fit for strangers coming to one’s tent. Calves are young and tender and, therefore, the best. And their tongues can be a preparation quickly.

Both Kabbalist Moshe Cordovero and the philosopher Nachmaniades (the Ramban) compared the universe to the size of a mustard seed.

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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 carolgodmankaufman.com and to follow her on Twitter, @goodmankaufman.

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Signed, Sealed, Delicious – What Makes for a “Signature Dish”?

By Albert Stern / BJV Editor

Editor’s Note: When Carol Goodman Raifman briefly wrote on hiatus from her Travelling With Jewish Taste column, I did not want to turn a page in her absence. Thank God she’s back.

Since you are a Berkshire-Jewish Voice reader, I suspect that your culinary consciousness holds a platonic ideal of what a bluesy would taste like in Gorn Eden, in Paradise. Moreover, I’d wager that you associate a particular home-cook with those perfect blintzes, a person whose version of the humble farfel-based crepe entails asides all others you ever tasted or ever expect to. Those blintzes might be so outstanding that they are, by consensus, regarded as that cook’s “signature dish” – so good, perhaps, that you might think and yourself unable to think of that person without also thinking about blintzes.

Say that home cook is Mrs. Magda Weiss. Put her in a kitchen with three other capable Jewish cooks, give them all the exact same ingredients, and ask them to make blintzes. Somehow, Mrs. Weiss’s signature blintzes inevitably turn out the most delicious, most acclaimed, acknowledged by all as the superior crepes. How does Mrs. Weiss do it? Nobody knows! Even Mrs. Weiss might be hard enough to share a “recipe” that leaves out nothing, those who follow it invariably return raving with a platter: “Magda, they were good, but not as good as yours. I don’t know how you do it!”

That’s what it was like. Fifteen or so of us sat around the table. When mine was set down in front of me, I whispered to my mother that there was no way I was going to eat it. “You will insult your father’s aunt very deeply if you don’t,” she said. “It’s warm milk with grapes in it.”

“I ate,” my mother commanded the tightly-lipped, “tightly lipped.”

It took just one spoonful for the dam to break. It wasn’t just one of those “rotten kid-spitting-out-something-so-his-mouth’s deals, but rather a full-on voila, the real thing. All over Tante Esther’s festive table. Mortified, my mother rushed to clean up my mess while I whimped on the ground like I’d been kicked in the stomach by a mule.

After all, that’s what a perfect signature dish was: a signature blintz. A signature blintz was a signature dish and was something you might force me to eat. Absolutely. Which was a good thing, because my mother made a lot of food I wouldn’t eat.

So I learned how to cook. I started out by throwing together rudimentary stews – say, tuna salad sandwiches to my liking – and then graduated to simple meals for the family by the time I was in high school. I kept cooking, not only as a means to an end, but as an end in itself. Of course, it tastes better the next day – add another can of tomato sauce, if needed, to your leftovers.

Understanding our family’s predicament, our next-door neighbor, Mrs. Weiss, over time, figured out something meaningful about herself.

This is a culinary and psychological journey all more-than-capable home cooks take with at least one dish. My own signature dish is chicken fricassee prepared in the Puerto Rican style – you can find the “recipe” to the right. On the way to mastering your signature dish, you make every mistake you can make; you create a nuanced understanding of the flavors, textures, and properties of each ingredient; you pay attention to every tweak or accident that even slightly improves its flavor; and you observe the response of each person you feed when they tuck in. Technique one acquires through ambition, necessity, and practice – the desire to please someone else, whether it’s your immediate family or the people you love. I learned how to roast chicken, make pot roasts and chicken soup, and how to prepare delicious vegetables not from a can. I was an eager student and adept – cooking not only satisfied my ravenous adolescent appetite but also my curious curiosity and was a means to an end, but as an end in itself. Of course, it tastes better the next day – add another can of tomato sauce, if needed, to your leftovers.

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Looking Forward While Also Looking Back

**Pianist Ted Rosenthal’s first opera grapples with his father’s immigrant experience and survivor’s guilt**

Ted Rosenthal composed the music for the opera, and the libretto was penned in collaboration with his mother, Herta Rosenthal, the chief operating officer of the Julliard School in New York City. You may have noticed that Ted and his trio have been playing in the Berkshires and environs this summer – one reason is that the Rosenthals are Berkshires second homeowners with a place in Otis. Lesley Rosenthal is also the president of Friends of ANIM, which supports the Afghanistan National Institute of Music (ANIM) in Kabul. She was instrumental in the evacuation of 273 school members (students, staff, and family) from Afghanistan to Portugal in the autumn of 2021.

The Berkshire Jewish Voice spoke with Ted Rosenthal about Dear Erich last May. Our conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

**Tell me a little bit about the development of Dear Erich**

In 2015, I was invited by the historical society of a small town called Bad Camburg, Germany, where my grandmother grew up. They invited back members of the Jewish community, and on the occasion of going to this event along with my wife, Lesley, I recognized that I had this box of letters that had been sitting in my attic. I’d never really thought much about them. My father never discussed them. They were letters written mainly by his mother to him after he had been able to escape or emigrate to America. He received a fellowship at the University of Chicago and got all the necessary paperwork and support to come to America. But he was unsuccessful in getting the rest of his family over. He rarely discussed any of that, which is, as you know, probably quite typical.

So in Bad Camburg, I asked the head of the historical society, Dr. Peter Schmidt, whether he’d be interested in having a look at the letters and maybe translating a few for me. And he did, translating the last six, which were the ones I’d scanned and sent him. The letters began in 1938, when my father left in March, and ended in November of 1941. My father, in fact, never knew what happened to his mother and family that was left behind. That was, I suppose (since he didn’t talk about it), one of the most painful things about the experience. [Editor’s Note: Herta Rosenthal died in Sobibor.]

In any case, when the letters came back translated, it opened up a well of emotion and interest, a world that I hadn’t thought or known about. I asked Dr. Schmidt whether he would consider translating the rest of the letters, which he did; there were more than 200. My father saved them very methodically, the rest of the letters, which he did; there were more than 200. My father saved them very methodically, in the German fashion as I like to say, and chronologically. And Dr. Schmidt translated them all very methodically. So within maybe six months or a little longer, I had all 200 of them translated. And going through them and reading them elicited such a strong emotional response that I knew I had to do something as a creative artist. I’m a jazz pianist and composer, and I decided to embark on writing a jazz opera based on all of these events.

**Your focus has been musical. How did you shift gears and start thinking like a storyteller?**

One of the all-encompassing aspects of how this project took over my life, in terms of the artistic part and the personal part, was that it is my first opera. The dramatic elements were a creative and learning process in terms of figuring out what the story I wanted to tell. I had lots of interesting conversations with people, some of whom were considered as possible collaborators, and others who were people willing to talk to me about their expertise in the field.

Because I’m a jazz musician, I felt an integral part of this story was about freedom and democracy and improvisation. The things that just stands for and represents are a lot of what America represents. I knew I wanted many of these jazz elements of Chicago to be a part of the story, but obviously there are also the horrible events of the Holocaust and the experience of immigrants. So it’s largely a story of an immigrant coming to the New World, struggling to look forward and live his new life with his new family, but being tormented by the losses and the unknowns of the past. How do you reconcile the two and live this new life in the New World while you have so much that is painful and unresolved about the life and the people

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**Erich Rosenthal**

GREAT BARRINGTON – Ted Rosenthal is one of the finest jazz pianists working these days, a stylish, lyrical interpreter of standards and a noted composer in his own right. On August 6, he brings his first opera to the stage of The Mahatta for a one-night performance featuring performers from the New York City Opera (which commissioned the piece) and his trio.

**Dear Erich** is a profoundly personal work. Rosenthal’s response to a cache of 200 letters to his emigre father from his grandmother. She, along with his grandfather and other family members, was left behind in Germany as World War II approached. All perished during the Holocaust, a tragedy that rest with his work in the demography of the Jews in America. Through his work on Jewish assimilation and acculturation. In particular, his reputation as an expert in income distribution and survivor’s guilt.

In 1938, my father left in March, and ended in November of 1941. My father, in fact, never knew what happened to his mother and family that was left behind. That was, I suppose (since he didn’t talk about it), one of the most painful things about the experience. [Editor’s Note: Herta Rosenthal died in Sobibor.]

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**Letter written to Erich Rosenthal by his Uncle Bernhard**

Featuring “Hilfe, Hilfe, Hilfe” – Help, Help, Help

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**Looking Forward, continued on page 23**

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that you’ve left behind? It’s a big story that covers decades with flashbacks and various events. For me, it was a very fulfilling creative endeavor to learn more about presenting a musical drama.

And were you able to use some of the actual direct quotes from the letters?

Oh, absolutely, yes. There’s one song we called “The First Letter,” which has a lot to do with my grandmother being very concerned about how my father is getting along in the New World, in Chicago. How is his health? Does he like the food? Did he get the typewriter that they sent him? Things like that. And there’s a letter preceding the immigration scene that deals with the absolute difficulties, if not impossibilities, of emigrating [from Germany]. And the most heart-wrenching letter was a combination of two or three letters that I referred to in the opera as “the Kristallnacht letter,” in which my grandmother is describing how the men of the town were taken away. When they finally returned, my grandfather was extremely weakened and shortly thereafter, he got sick and died. So yes, the letters are a big part, but not the only part of the libretto.

So let me ask you about the way it might have changed your perspective on your Jewishness. In my own life, I had a similar experience where a lot of my family’s history was kept under wraps, and then, as an adult, I learned the actual story. All of a sudden, things that always seemed strange now made sense. What kind of experience did you have reading these very personal family letters, and how did you relate to the experience as a Jewish person?

Well, I think one thing that’s abundantly clear almost immediately is how close my father was to his mother and how much she cared for him even long distance. So that relationship, which he spoke nothing about, clearly was cherished, but also painful in that he never learned what happened to her. So there were huge parts of his psyche and his life that he did not share; honestly, I don’t know how much he even shared with my mother because she didn’t, on her own, relate these things to me.

But again, the themes in the opera are of immigrants – how they look forward but also look back. I think my father was doing his best to look forward and not burden me with these things. For me, it’s been a process because being a musician has been such a focal point of my entire life. But you get to be a certain age, I have a wife and two stepsons now in their twenties. Finally, I have a little more time to think about things than I had back when I was thinking about music. It wasn’t a complete accident that I found the letters back around 2000, and it took until 2015 for me to say, ‘Oh, let’s get these letters translated. Let’s have more interest in this family history.’

So in learning about the story, the Jewishness part is tricky because my grandmother, clearly in some of the letters, was urging my father to visit the synagogue a little more often than I think he was inclined to. I think he was more interested in his academic world than in the religious world, and I was not given much of a religious upbringing. But of course, I feel very Jewish in every way – I just didn’t have that kind of religious training. One of the things that religion certainly does to you is connect you to the past. Not only to your own family but to your tribe, so to speak. So, I definitely have more of that feeling. And I guess it’s unfortunate that many people with this Holocaust background might get cut off from it because of the disconnect to what happened in one’s own family history.

Dear Erich: A Jazz Opera by Ted Rosenthal will be presented on Saturday, August 6 at 7:30 p.m., at The Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, 14 Castle Street in Great Barrington. For tickets and information, visit mahaiwe.org.

Ted Rosenthal will be performing with his trio on Saturday, August 13 at the White Church of Blandford Summer Concerts in Blandford, MA (thewhitechurch.org/concert-series). For more information on Rosenthal, visit tedrosenthal.com and dearerich.com.

LOOKING FORWARD, continued from page 22

Scene from Dear Erich

PHOTO © SARAH SHATZ

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The Feminist Revival of Tu B’Av, the Jewish Festival of Love

Celebrate this year on August 12
By Naomi Seidman / National Library of Israel

Do a quick Google search on Tu B’Av, and two sorts of material will appear. The first describes a festival dating back to late antiquity, in which, according to Mishnah Tuouit 4:8, “On these days [the 15th of Av] the daughters of Jerusalem would go out in borrowed white garments in order not to shame anyone who had none. The daughters of Jerusalem would come out and dance in the vineyard. What would they say? Young man, lift up your eyes and see what you choose for yourself.”

Along with this ancient matchmaking festival, we might also learn of the revival of Tu B’Av in modern Israel, as a Jewish Valentine’s Day, or festival of love. The Orthodox world, in Israel and beyond, has also taken this day as a “Global Day of Shidduchim,” in which great rabbis pray, without charge, for unmarried men and women to find their mates.

Yet Tu B’Av, it turns out, may have been first revived in the modern period neither by modern Zionists celebrating romance nor by Orthodox organizations praying for “shidduchim.”

Bais Yaakov

Now generally associated with perhaps less-than-progressive ultra-Orthodox educations for girls, the Bais Yaakov movement was actually quite radical in its early years.

In 1917, a dressmaker with an eighth-grade education named Sarah Schenirer opened a girls’ school in Krakow, hoping to stem the tide of Orthodox girls who were abandoning tradition. By the 1930s, the movement had branches on three continents and dozens of schools, not to mention vocational training institutes, a chain of colonies and summer camps, three teachers’ seminaries, a monthly literary journal and other periodicals, its own publishing houses, a youth movement and much more. The character of the movement changed dramatically after the Holocaust, yet recently the Bais Yaakov Project was founded to preserve and share this fascinating early history.

The Women’s Holiday

Online as part of the Bais Yaakov Project archives, a 1926 issue of The Bais Yaakov Journal reports local celebrations of Tu B’Av throughout Poland that year. The newspaper describes the numerous correspondents who wrote in to the office of the Bnos Bais Yaakov (the youth movement associated with the Agudah and Bais Yaakov) to report on how they had celebrated the day and to express “the outpouring of joy awakened by the revival of this traditional historical women’s holiday.”

The fact that this was not a one-time occurrence in 1926 but a regular feature of Bnos Bais Yaakov life is evident from other writings, including by Sarah Schenirer, detailing how this old-new holiday might be celebrated, and clarifying its meaning for the Bais Yaakov movement. One participant in Tu B’Av ritual led by Sarah Schenirer herself provided a rich description of the 1932 celebration in the woods of Skawa, a village thirty miles south of Krakow where the seminary students were spending the last summer before they left for their assigned teaching posts.

The celebration of Tu B’Av, in Hodo Moszowitch’s retelling, involved a moonlight hike to the woods with 15 students and teachers walking hand-in-hand behind their leader and guide, Sarah Schenirer. After some difficulties, a bonfire is lit, and a student gives a talk, followed by Sarah Schenirer, and then the girls and women rapturously and prayerfully sing and dance, an experience of great mystical meaning.

Tu B’Av was revived in Bais Yaakov as “a traditional historical women’s holiday”: the student who spoke to the group around the bonfire explained its meaning, according to the description, as “the holiday that belongs to us, to young Jewish women.” The ecstatic dancing was done not before the eyes of prospective mates, as in the Mishnah, but rather, Moszowicz stresses, with no one watching. Tu B’Av was celebrated in Poland by Orthodox Jewish girls and women, alone in the woods with their God, their guide, and each other.

A version of this article was previously published as part of The Bais Yaakov Project. It appears here as part of Gesher L’Europa, the National Library of Israel’s initiative to connect with people, institutions and communities across Europe and beyond, through storytelling, knowledge sharing and community engagement.

Girls dancing on Tu B’Av in Hudera, Eretz Yisrael, early 20th century. From the Khan Hudera Archive and Museum

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.

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Of blessed memory

*Of blessed memory

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

Page 24 Berkshire Jewish Voice • jewishberkshires.org July 17 to September 6, 2022
Rabbi Ayelet S. Cohen, JTS’s newly appointed dean of the Rabbinical School and Division of Religious Leadership, will share her vision for the future.

For a decade, Rabbi Cohen provided spiritual leadership at Congregation Beit Simchat Torah, the world’s largest LGBTQ+ synagogue. Most recently, Rabbi Cohen was the senior director for the New York/Tri-State Region at the New Israel Fund. Prior to that role, she was director of the Center for Jewish Living and the David H. Sonabend Center for Israel at the Marlene Meyerson Jewish Community Center in Manhattan. She is the author of Changing Lives, Making History and co-editor of Siddur Echad L’Yahad. She is also on the board of TriUah. The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights and Plaza Jewish Community Chapels.

SIGNATURE DISH, continued from page 21

 evenings, and so came together once a week at his home for a home-cooked meal that I would prepare. In the beginning, I leaned on Mrs. Weiss and some of the old Jewish cookbooks my mother kept, but soon started branching out. The recipe that would become my signature dish, “Chicken Fricassee in the Puerto Rican Style,” appeared in the Food section of The Miami Herald – “First You Must Know the Sofrito.” A sofrito is the vegetable base of Spanish-style sauces, and there are many different versions; in the Puerto Rican style, the sofrito is made of onions, cubanelle peppers, garlic, cilantro, ajíes dulces peppers, cilantro, culantro, tomatoes, red pepper, and bay leaves. The stew was an immediate hit – I’ll always remember my little niece’s “mmmmmmmmmmmmm” when she first put some in her mouth. But I knew it could taste better. After some fine-tuning over a period of months, I asked my brother-in-law, who was Puerto Rican, whether his mother made the same dish. Yes, she did, he answered, adding that it was good, “but not as good as yours. I don’t know how you do it.”

The secret ingredient, I would say, is love. Over the next seven years, our Shabbat dinners were joined by another child, my nephew, and then by my longtime girlfriend. The signature dish appeared on our dinner table at least once a month. Eventually, my girlfriend left to go to graduate school in New York, and a year later I followed her back to the big city. Soon, she made it clear she wanted to go places where I was not eager to follow. I settled into a protracted Gotham bachelorhood during which I made the signature dish when friends requested it or when I thought it might move along the process of a courtship or when I was feeling lonely and in need of comfort food - I made it quite a lot, actually.

Back in Miami Beach, my sister’s marriage broke up and she and the kids moved in with my father. When I came home to visit, they all asked for the signature dish. After my sister got involved in a new relationship, it became a staple of my visits to her new home (and a favorite of her second husband’s young daughter). Tom, my sister’s husband, asked for the recipe and started cooking the signature dish himself, but eventually gave up because, as he admitted, “It just doesn’t taste as good as when you make it.” Even if you add the secret ingredient?” “Yes.”

The last courtship in which the signature dish played a role was the one with the woman who would become my wife. It remained a much-requested family staple and a favorite of our son from the time he began to eat solid food, so much so that his favorite afternoon nosh comprised two of its prominent ingredients, olives and red peppers. He had this same snack for years until he finally outgrew the afternoon snack habit. My wife and I, alas, outgrew our marriage and I moved into a place without a kitchen – I tried making it in an Instant Pot a couple of times, but neither the slow or pressure cooker modes made the grade. Or maybe this had something to do with the secret ingredient being unavailable. Which wasn’t the case the last time I prepared my signature dish. I was house-sitting for a friend and invited my nephew and his fiancé over for Shabbat dinner, along with my son. As my nephew tucked in, he told him his fiancé, a lovely girl originally from Honduras, that this was the food he grew up eating. “Me too,” said my son. When we finished supper, my nephew’s fiancé asked me for the recipe. “Don’t bother,” said my nephew. “It won’t taste as good as his.”

He was right – not if she made it with love, not if she let it flow through her soul when preparing it. Because it is my signature dish and can be nobody else’s. Each person has to find their own. So here’s what I learned about myself and about chicken stew – the secret ingredient in your signature dish is not just love. The secret ingredient is your idea of how delicious life might taste, if only for a little while.
Throughout its existence, Terezín functioned as a ghetto-concentration camp: a place of alternating joy and despair, contrasted against the backdrop of the brutality and inhumanity of the Nazi regime. The Nazis stripped Terezín of its Jewish identity, forcing the Jews to live in a crowded space, lacking basic amenities and resources. Yet, the Jews of Terezín found ways to resist the conditions they were placed in, through music and art.

Ludwig first learned about Terezín when he read Rabbi Leo Baeck's book, *Our Will to Live: Art and Music In Terezín*. Ludwig was struck by the resilience of the Jews of Terezín and their determination to continue living despite the unimaginable conditions they were subjected to. He was especially moved by the story of Ullmann, a talented musician who was imprisoned at Terezín. Ludwig was inspired to learn more about the music of Terezín and decided to dedicate a book to the subject.

Ludwig's new book, *Our Will to Live: Art and Music In Terezín*, is a comprehensive exploration of the role that music played in the lives of the Jews of Terezín. The book includes interviews with survivors, rare photographs, and handwrought illustrations and posters of the performances that took place in Terezín. Ludwig also showcases a chorus of Ullmann's critiques, pieces of music, and stunning handcrafted illustrations and posters. The book presents a dignified but defiant display of how the human spirit triumphs over unspeakable evil.

In his book, *Our Will to Live: Art and Music In Terezín*, Ludwig explores the role that music played in the lives of the Jews of Terezín. He describes how music was a source of hope and distraction for the prisoners, allowing them to maintain their humanity and resist the inhumanity of their captors. Ludwig also highlights the contributions of the Terezín musicians to the Resistance, and how their music was a powerful beacon of inspiration to aspiring musicians today.
OUR WILL TO LIVE,
continued from page 26

Wolf, too, composed music and conducted and performed concerts. During its 15 months of existence, the ghetto orchestra performed 35 chamber and symphonic concerts. The last one took place on August 29, 1943, three-and-a-half weeks before the ghetto was liquidated. At this point, my family members were sent to concentration camps, my mother and her sister ultimately to Dachau-Kaufering, and my uncle to Lagedi, in Klooga, Estonia. He was killed in September 1944, hours before the Russians liberated the camp.

In our contemporary landscape, what place do these Jewish musicians occupy? What does their experience as Jews, artists, and hate targets teach us? What particular lessons do we learn from them that might enhance life for all of us?

For the Terezín musicians, for my uncle and family members, and for their audiences, music and art opened a portal of transcendence that took them far beyond the degradation and dehumanization they were forced to suffer. They created a higher, spiritual reality through their involvement with music. Mark Mast, the conductor of the Bavarian Philharmonic Orchestra, said this about my Uncle Wolf: “In the time that he was composing music, he was not a prisoner. He was… in Heaven.”

By sharing music with others, even with their oppressors and killers, the Terezín prisoner musicians elevated themselves and their audiences to levels of soulful nobility, to human and godly connection. In Russia, when Shostakovich’s Seventh Symphony, the Leningrad Symphony, was being performed for the first time during the siege, the imperiled audience responded with tears as bombs fell throughout their beloved city. In the words of Kellie Dubel Brown: “This music… imbued the people of Leningrad with a renewed sense of pride and with the undying belief that they would prevail and that their ideas, stories, music and works of art would not only survive, but stand triumphant in the face of time and their enemies.” In the reality they created, the Terezín musicians were victorious, triumphant over their diabolical destroyers, who presented themselves to the world, hypocritically and ironically, as a master race.

The answer for us does not lie in claiming superiority over others, as the Nazis did to the Jews. We cannot all be Viktor Ullmanns, but we can at the very least be appreciative audiences borne heavenward on the wings of creativity, music, and art. Mark Ludwig’s Our Will to Live is a vital guide on this journey.

Sonia Beker lives in Brooklyn, NY, and Lenox, where she shares a home with her husband, Steven Zucker.
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You help young families in the Berkshires embrace Jewish values and traditions while building a supportive community with Jewish peers through family programming, PJ Library, and volunteer opportunities.

RESOURCES TO FIGHT ANTI-SEMITISM
You help young people stand up against hate through anti-bias education in our public schools. You also combat anti-Semitism and the BDS movement through community programming, national advocacy, and security resources.

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

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

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Donate or pledge online at jewishberkshires.org Thank you for making a difference!