

Shalom 06|20

The Journal of the Reading Jewish Community published by the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks

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Executive Committee thankful for work by Federation staff

Federation Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Reading, Pennsylvania, on behalf of the entire Board of Directors wishes to publicly recognize and express its gratitude to the entire professional staff of the Federation for their

exemplary level of dedicated service and continuously highly innovative programming provided to the Reading/Berks Jewish Community during these difficult times due to the current virus environment.

The Executive Board does not take lightly the benefits provided by the entire

staff to the overall community.

Thank you.

Robert M. Caster, Chair
Sheila Bornstein, First VP
Traci Rossi, Second VP
Radene Gordon Beck, Treasurer
Debbie Goldberg, Secretary

Summer FUN for kids

By Amanda J. Hornberger

Virtual learning is over, and now it's time to enjoy summer! While this summer may look different than past summers, something that will remain is fun, engaging connection for Jewish youth in Reading.

The JCC in collaboration with our synagogues and Chabad is offering a wide variety of options for children in Berks this summer.

5 and under

• Join us on Fridays at 10 a.m. LIVE on Zoom (or watch recording later at a time that works for you) for a musical, fun kickoff to Shabbat. We will sing songs with teachers from Lakin Preschool and our local

rabbis. Dates are June 12 and 26, July 10 and 24 and Aug, 7 and 21. FREE and open to entire community.

Ages 6-12

• Summer FUN hosted by JCC — Join us on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. LIVE on Zoom with your friends from across Berks. Adi and Amanda will lead interactive, age-appropriate activities to engage youth this summer. In addition, every other week, Camp in a Box materials will be delivered to participants. In these five boxes will be supplies for special projects, crafts and cooking classes held during the live sessions. Starts June 17 and runs through Aug.

19. FREE and open to entire community.

• Chabad Summer Camp— see Centerpiece for more details on this daily camp offered by Chabad.

• Harlam at Home— resources from the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) Camp Harlam will be posted and distributed to families throughout the summer.

Teens

• Adi is working on creating a youth group and opportunities for connection for teens this summer.

Our goal is to work together as a community to provide opportunities for Jewish engagement for

youth of all ages during this unique summer.

We know this period of social distancing is a challenge for both kids and parents, and we hope to provide some ideas and projects to make the summer more fun and enjoyable for everyone!

JCC programs are free, but donations are appreciated.

We welcome any ideas or suggestions you may have for programs for our youth this summer.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please reach out to Amanda at amandah@jfreading.org or Adi at adis@jfreading.org

Community joins in effort to mark Memorial Day



Members of the Jewish community join with members of Immanuel UCC in Shillington to lay flags on 260 graves at Shomrei Habrith and Keshet Zion cemeteries in preparation for Memorial Day. From left are Andrew Huesgen; the Rev. Megan Huesgen, pastor of Immanuel UCC ; Melissa, Jonathan, Stella and Jack Belinski, members of Immanuel; Dr. Neil Hoffman; Sen. Judy Schwank and Amanda Hornberger

Great generosity during a pandemic

By Richard Nassau
Development Director

Your generosity and the generosity of the Jewish community is something incredible. It is heartfelt and is never taken for granted. No one should be surprised by the generosity of the Jewish community.



We know, as a community, that this pandemic has changed things. No one is sure when things will return to “normal.” There are people out of work. People who are not used to needing help.

One constant is the outpouring of help. We are finding our way together as a community. People have stepped up and given of their time, dollars and resources. Federation continues to provide services, all due to your generosity. Thank you.

If you wish to make a gift, you can do so at ReadingJewishCommunity.org, or you can mail it in — we’re still open.

Still, things are different. I think I’ve

heard from more members of my extended family in the last two months than I did over the last two years. I expect you, like mine, have extended family who disagree about many things.

I have family members who wipe down their mail every day and members who have been to the beach and are ready to go back. The issues of going to the beach or opening mail are not why I’ve heard from so many family members. My family, much like yours and our community, understand the importance of checking in and taking care of each other.

We are a communal people. Rabbi Harold Kushner has taught, “Jews don’t pray for, Jews pray with.” More than ever, these last few months have shown the truth in that statement. How taking care of each other and being part of a community is a value fundamental to who we are as a Jewish community.

Here in Berks County we, as a Federation and a people, have worked hard to create a culture of belonging. Federation is a facilitator. Our work continues to

create bonds and strengthen relationships, between people and between organizations. We work to make a difference, for each other and in new ways. We act together. Our values, as a Federation and a community, are rooted in protecting our community’s most vulnerable and taking care of people in need.

We don’t wait. We take action. We look at where there are gaps and needs and ways to join together.

Every dollar Federation receives makes a difference. Your support added to the contributions of others funds our response to this crisis. Food, transportation and outreach. Virtual gatherings, games and community connections.

We’re all ready to get back to normal. I’m looking forward to connecting in person. Till then, your support and the work of Federation have kept us all connected.

Please if you can, consider making a gift at ReadingJewishCommunity.org. If you or someone you know needs help, call Federation – 610-921-0624. Stay connected.

Be remembered forever in our Jewish community

By Rebecca Robinson
Life & Legacy Program

I am a millennial, and despite any sweeping generalizations you may have heard about my generation, I care. My energy, my time and yes, even my money go to support issues that are directly meaningful to me.

While it is easier to give back via my time (especially as I’m living through my second “once in a lifetime recession”), I still try to find ways to financially support causes I care about. One of those causes is the Reading Jewish Community.

We are all living through history as we figure out our new normal in the era of COVID-19. No one knows what our future will look like, and that is terrifying. Why am I — a young woman living in an uncertain time — still finding ways to give back?

During this pandemic, I have been given the gift of extra down time and have used this opportunity to reflect on the things that are important to me. I was lucky enough to grow up in this small but vibrant Reading Jewish community, and that helped shape who I am as an adult. I have “survived” attending Hebrew school and was Bat Mitzvahed.

Candidly (and despite an overall positive

outcome), not all those memories are heartwarming as I can still feel the anxiety of attending those Monday and Wednesday classes. (My teachers could attest that I wasn’t the best student.) That feeling of anxiousness is similar to what I feel now as I think about the shifting Jewish future. There is so much uncertainty within the Jewish community right now, especially as we all try to muddle our way through this unplannable future.

The generations that came before me had the insight to build a safe place for Jews to learn, grow, and connect that allowed my generation to flourish, inspiring me to give back to the community. My generation is learning the hard way that no one will bail us out and we need to take care of ourselves and our communities.

No matter how fragile we are at the current moment, it is critical that we find ways to financially secure our Jewish community’s future. By building strong community endowment funds, we are providing our Jewish future and generations to come opportunities to explore their connection to Judaism in this ever changing world.

Deciding to leave my legacy to my Jewish community was a no-brainer,

especially during this current financial tsunami. I am more comfortable leaving a legacy gift than making a sizable monetary donation today. Not needing to give any money today to be part of this legacy society has taken away my financial constraints, especially given the instability of our present. I know that when my legacy comes to fruition, I am leaving a meaningful gift to my community. My commitment ensures that there will continue to be a strong Jewish community. Even small legacy gifts are important because every “drop” in the tzedakah bucket leads to a more financially secure Jewish future.

We all need to work together to build a strong community, ensuring that the next generations will have opportunities to connect to their Jewish community. Please consider joining me and leave your Jewish legacy too!

For information about Creating Your Jewish Legacy, contact Richard Nassau, Jewish Federation Reading/Berks. RichardN@JFReading.org 610 921 0624.

Rebecca Robinson is director of Community Relations for the Jewish Community Foundation of Central Pennsylvania’s Life & Legacy Program.

Development

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**Israeli cooking
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Rugelach

Thursday, June 18th, at 8pm
Zoom & Facebook live

Email Adis@JFReading.org for zoom registration

From the President's Desk

Making the most of our interesting times

By William D. Franklin
President

I used to think "May you live in interesting times" was a blessing. I have been corrected. Yet, I still believe interesting times, as we are surely in, can lead to new ways of shaping our future.



And that may be a blessing.

This time has given me the opportunity to reflect more deeply on the importance of Jewish community. I realized that working for its continuity is paramount. This is noted in our mission statement — "To cultivate a vibrant, healthy Jewish community, inspire greater Jewish identity, and promote deeper understanding and stronger connections." And Kehilah' — Building Community — is one of our four key values.

One of the problems we had been wrestling with was our inability to engage all of the many segments of our community with interesting, relevant programs. Logistics and costs were hindrances. Going virtual has expanded inclusiveness and reduced costs, allowing us to meet increased pressing needs. For example, with respect to summer camp, many children are uncomfortable leaving home, and some families found it financially difficult. We recently had a meeting with our community's rabbis and Jewish educators to plan virtual summer camp programs. And we have developed a robust and exciting summer for our children.

Along-term problem we faced was that without a complete community calendar we had many scheduling conflicts and ineffective program communications. Amanda and Adi have worked to develop our community calendar to make it easier

for you to see and connect with the many programs our community is offering.

All our seniors are now homebound. We have learned that there are many who are mobility challenged and therefore always homebound. Sari and Carole are delivering meals to our seniors, allowing us to connect to and include, in some way, all of those who couldn't enjoy the togetherness of Friendship Circle. This allows us to reach seniors who were unable to attend due to mobility or other issues.

Richard is working with our board members to reach out, thank our community and to discuss the work of the Federation to learn of everyone's interests and concerns. We are working to maintain our current level of community services, programs and engagement and to find new ways to reach out and include new people. Weaving together the widespread and diverse members of

our community is how we move into the future with strength and vitality.

To support an enduring community, we need to improve and sustain our environment. To this end, we are including a column with steps you can take to protect you and our environment. Since disinfecting is currently a high priority, the first article provides suggestions and products to minimize environmental damage while disinfecting your homes.

Rabbi Jonathan Sachs writes: "The secret of Jewish continuity is that no people has ever devoted more of its energies to continuity. The focal point of Jewish life is the transmission of a heritage across the generations." Thus, despite the tsuris of COVID-19, it is rewarding to be in a position of supporting, sustaining, and continuing our Reading Jewish community. May we live in a less interesting but more rewarding time.

Contact information requested from community members

By Amanda J. Hornberger

This unique situation has emphasized the importance of connecting to one another during social distancing. Jewish Family Service has been trying to contact community members to check in and have found

some disconnected phone numbers. In addition, we know many community members are not receiving any emails from Federation.

We'd like to keep everyone connected, so if your number has changed or you no longer have a land line, please call us

at 610-921-0624 to provide us with the new number.

In addition, given the fast changes during this time, the best way to stay connected is to join our email list. Please email info@jfreading.org to be added to the list.

Our goal is to create connections during this unprecedented time.

If you are struggling please do not hesitate to reach out to Jewish Family Service at 610-921-0624 or email Sari (sari@jfreading.org) or Carole (caroler@jfreading.org).

Time away from regular routine offers us an opportunity

By Rabbi David Sislen
Keshet Zion Synagogue

Three months ago, who could have predicted how our lives would have been turned upside down by a microorganism none of us can even see.



As I write this (over a month before publication), I pray that there is a little bit of "normal" creeping back into our lives.

I hope that we've been able to see each other in person instead of in those little Zoom boxes. I hope that we are starting to talk to the Almighty — and listening to what we hear back — in person as a community rather than in the confines of our homes. I hope that we are starting to study our sacred texts together, around a table, and no longer virtually.

There was a joke that circulated around the beginning of this pandemic. The Hebrew word for honor or respect is kavod. The line was: there is no KAVOD in COVID.

But I beg to differ. With all of the inconveniences, difficulties and adjustments we've had to make, this time out from real life has given us an opportunity to refocus and reassess where and who we are.

To varying degrees, synagogues and Jewish institutions have moved their operations online. What a blessing for those who would have found it challenging to attend an in-person event to be able to participate as fully as possible.

We've all been forced to accept and master new technologies and new procedures, all of which will enable us to be better connected, more fluent, and certainly healthier, in the future.

And the time spent focusing on the fundamentals can only serve to better direct and inform us for years to come.

I must confess. There are some things about these past weeks and months that I greatly enjoyed and that taught me a lot, as I'm sure they have for you, as well. I have reconnected with Shabbat and the holidays, rediscovered the joy of reading and studying for its own sake rather than to complete an overdue project, gotten into the habit of opening the blinds to look at the trees and the sky instead of a computer screen, and I've added some really good recipes to my arsenal (especially for Pesach), without putting on too much extra weight.

My daughter got a letter today, an actual written letter, from her college roommate, just to say "hi" and that she missed her. Our vacation from normal has certainly given us the opportunity to reaffirm our connection to reality.

But here's the ironic part: our tradition constantly gives us the ability to make that connection on a regular basis. Shabbat and holidays all involve a furious flurry of activity which ends abruptly at the moment we light the candles. From that minute on, it's all about rest, enjoyment, family, and tradition. Why should we let the stress of the week intrude on the holy "oasis in time?"

For a Jew, study is an imperative. How can we let our daily distractions keep us from delving into the wisdom and insight of our tradition?

And how can we forget that our responsibility to recite 100 blessings daily doesn't mean that we can't recite 101, or 200, or however many we need to truly appreciate the world around us, its beauty, and even its mere existence.

We will heal. We will continue. We will persevere. But let's also grow. Let's remember that our roots give us nourishment, as much as our leaves reach to the sky. Since our air is far cleaner than it was a few months ago, let's remember to breathe. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we all emerged from this most unique time with our spirituality and connection to G-d and our tradition not only restored, but renewed?

I hope to see you in the shul of your choice as soon as we can. I pray that this extended Shabbos will give you the energy and resolve to make your normal weekday be more meaningful and special going forward. I hope that our new normal will be a better normal for us, our community, and our world.

And if you do make it better, tell me about it in a letter. A real letter.

Shalom

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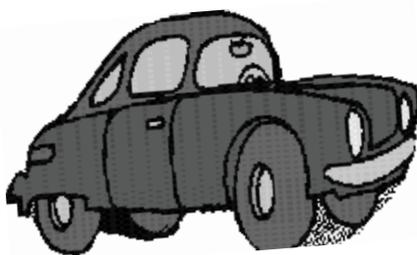
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or go to
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Our graduates



Alexa Chronister graduated from the University of Delaware's honors program with a major in Public Policy and a minor in Social Entrepreneurship. While in college, Alexa founded Fight Like a Warrior, a nonprofit that works to unite, empower and advocate for those battling a chronic health condition. Alexa is completing an internship with United States of Care and plans to attend law school focusing on health policy.



Rachel Eidson, daughter of Kurt and Diane Hollis, Douglassville, graduated from East Stroudsburg University with a degree in biology and a minor in chemistry. She plans to work as a microbiologist and attend medical school to pursue a career as a dermatologist. She was a competitive runner in college.



Scott Goldberg, son of Debbie and David Goldberg of Wyomissing, graduated with a Master's Degree in Marine Biology from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in Honolulu, Hawai'i on May 16. He plans to attend the University of Delaware, where he will begin his Ph.D. in Marine Studies with a concentration in Marine Biosciences.



Perry Levine, daughter of Lisa and Alan Levine, is graduating from Gov. Mifflin High School. She plans to attend Penn State Berks to major in environmental science or horticulture.



Megan McIntosh of Mount Penn, daughter of Mindy McIntosh and Dwight McIntosh, recently graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y. with a Bachelor of Professional Studies in Culinary Science. Megan also holds an Associate Degree from the CIA. She plans to pursue a career in food research and development.



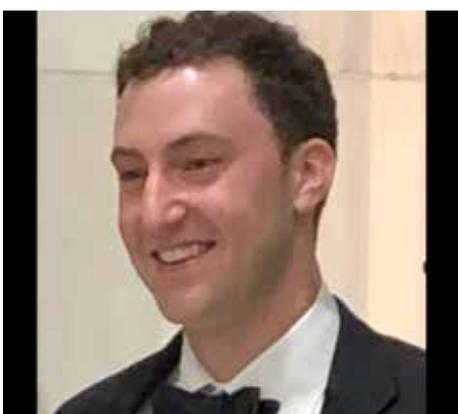
Rachel Pleet, daughter of Jesse Pleet and Elaine Mendelsohn, graduated from Designlab's online "UX Academy" certificate program in Fall 2019. She's currently working as a "UX/UI" Designer (specializing in website/mobile design) at a Performance Marketing company called Seperia in Herzliya, Israel. Rachel made Aliyah in 2017 and lives in Tel Aviv.



Rachel Radosh, daughter of Jodi and Lee Radosh, is graduating from Wilson High School. Rachel was president of National Honor Society and Clean Teens, served as a leader in student government and Mini-THON and was a West Reading-Wyomissing Rotary Club Student of the Month. She will be attending Penn State Main Campus in the fall, majoring in elementary education.



Eli Rotenberg, son of David Rotenberg and Stephanie Rotenberg and grandson of Larry Rotenberg and the late Alison Rotenberg, is graduating from Wilson High School. He played on the Bulldogs football team. He plans to attend West Chester University this fall.



Zach Simon, son of Jonathan and Jan Simon, is graduating in June with honors from the University of Chicago Law School. He was a participant in Law Review and will begin his law career in September at Kirkland & Ellis LLC in the Mergers & Acquisitions department in their Chicago headquarters. Zach and his wife, Katherine, live in Chicago.



Ari Benjamin Spillerman, son of David and Ruth Spillerman and grandson of Cheryl Spillerman and Nelly Massuda, has completed the required courses to earn a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Pittsburgh. This fall, Ari will begin attending the University of Pittsburgh School of Law.



Talia Nadine Spillerman, daughter of David and Ruth Spillerman and granddaughter of Cheryl Spillerman and Nelly Massuda, is graduating from Wilson High School. She was vice president of Student Council and National Honor Society, a Mini-Thon captain and captain of the cross-country team. She will attend the University of Pittsburgh, where she will run competitively for the Panthers.



Bryce Gregory Weizer, son of Ilene and Jeffrey Weizer of Orwisburg, is graduating from Drew University with a Bachelor's in Psychology. He was a member of the tennis team all four years. He plans to pursue a Master's degree in Institutional and Organizational Psychology.



Easton Scott Weizer, son of Ilene and Jeffrey Weizer of Orwisburg, is graduating from Blue Mountain High School with high honors as class Salutatorian. Easton was captain of the varsity tennis team and member of all honor societies. He spent last summer studying language in China. He will be attending the George Washington University in the Honors program in International Business.

B'nai Mitzvot



Mia and Marissa Jacobs, daughters of Matthew and Samara Jacobs and Jennifer Jacobs Hornberger, celebrated their Bat Mitzvah on June 22, 2019, at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. They are in eighth grade at the Lancaster Country Day School. In August Mia will be a boarding student at The Hill School in Pottstown while Marissa enters ninth grade at Lancaster Country Day School. Mia plays basketball and lacrosse and loves Snapchat. Marissa plays tennis, lacrosse, field hockey and squash.



Kayla Kraft, daughter of Jason and Wendy Kraft, celebrated her Bat Mitzvah Nov. 16 at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. Kayla is finishing seventh grade at Gov. Mifflin Middle School. Her passion for animals inspired her Mitzvah Project of collecting donations for a cat rescue. She also enjoys volunteering at Meals on Wheels as well as at St. Francis House, a hospice center. She plays clarinet in school band and Woodwind Choir. Kayla also loves playing tennis.



Ari Benjamin Levin, son of Margo and Adam Levin, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Sept. 5 at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. The family had intended to celebrate his Bar Mitzvah in May but it had to be rescheduled due to the COVID-19 situation. Ari is finishing seventh grade at Wyomissing Junior High School, where he is a member of the cross-country and basketball teams. He plays lacrosse year-round for Team Mesa and the Wyomissing Lacrosse Club.



Sam Schneider, son of Boris and Tatiana Schneider, had his Bar Mitzvah Nov. 23 at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. Sam is finishing seventh grade at Gov. Mifflin Middle School. He enjoys playing soccer, chess, reading and spending time with his sister and grandfather Moisey. Sam loves helping people in need. For his Mitzvah Project he is helping elderly families around the neighborhood with yard work and home errands.



Andi Wallach of Exeter Township celebrated her Bat Mitzvah while touring Israel in 2017. Growing up in a mostly secular family, she did not have a Bat Mitzvah ceremony before. While in Israel, her tour leader organized a group Bat Mitzvah at Masada for women hadn't experienced this rite of passage. She cherished the experience, saying, "Here we were, at Masada, a historic site of Jewish identity, resistance, and rebirth affirming our own place as part of the Jewish family."



Maxwell Walker Weiss, son of Mark and Tracy Weiss and grandson of Jack and Teri Lefkowitz, celebrated his Bar Mitzvah on March 21. Max is finishing seventh grade at Wyomissing Junior High School. He loves soccer, tennis and playing video games with his friends. Due to the global pandemic, the day looked a lot different than expected, but Max is grateful for the friends and family who were able to attend online and cheer him on virtually.

S'mores for Lag B'Omer



Federation and its Jewish community partners distributed s'mores kits to the area's children to celebrate Lag B'Omer in May.

'A light unto the nations'

From Federation staff

Victor and Dena Hammel have funded a \$100,000 challenge match for the United Way of Berks County's COVID-19 Response Fund.

The fund provides immediate assistance to county residents impacted by the coronavirus crisis. It supports basic and other needs such as food, emergency housing and shelter, infant/family supplies, child care for essential workers and more.

Tammy White, president of the United Way, said, "This challenge match provides individual donors with an amazing opportunity to double their gift and help our most vulnerable citizens."

The Hammels' generous philanthropy supports our Jewish Federation of Reading and many local, national and international non-profits' efforts. Your Federation also benefits from United Way's support of our Jewish Family

services.

For more information about the Berks COVID-19 Response Fund and grant recipients or to donate, visit uwberks.org or text UWBCGIVE to 85511.

All donations, minus any credit card fees, are directed to the fund.

We hope you will help the Hammels and the United Way meet their worthy goal by contributing.

Thank you.



Victor and Dena Hammel. Photo courtesy of Reading Eagle

Remember that not everything must be live

By Adi Shalev

Shalom Kolam,

First of all, I would like to share with you that I miss you all, miss being part of this amazing community, and I'm looking forward to coming back and hopefully even seeing you in person!

While I was in Israel, I did a variety of programs and created interactive games and activities for you and your kids! You can

find a matching game, true & false questions, escape rooms, finding the character and two interactive ways for you to see and learn about Israel! One is a game in which you can earn a coin for every correct answer, and in the other you can watch videos from different beautiful places in Israel (and if you want, you can also create VR glasses for that).

Besides the online and interactive games, you can enjoy recordings of online

lectures we had, games and crafts you can do at home, different Israeli recipes and videos of how to make them, Israeli playlists and recommendations on Israeli movies & TV shows.

All these programs are on the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks website (Home page -> virtual community -> Adi's events and programs) and on my social media (FB: Adi Shalev Shlich, IG:

adi_Shlich).

I've provided some other activities that can be found on Page 15 of this *Shalom*.

I'll be happy to hear from you what other things you wish me to do that will interest you and make this time more fun and interesting.

Miss you all. Stay safe and healthy,

Adi, your Shlich

AdiS@JFReading.org

Israel Book Club: 'Right to Exist' by Yaacov Lozowick

By Moisey Schneider and Andi Franklin

For more than 70 years Israel has been forced to defend her existence and her citizens against terrorist violence and international disapproval. Nations have always had to defend their moral, political, and economic actions. Israel, however, is in the unique position of having to defend her very right to exist. Yaacov Lozowick is a lifelong liberal and peace activist. In this book, he explores Israel's national and regional, social and moral obligations as well as her right to defend herself.

He begins with the sad fact that the war against Jews continues. Jewish children are blown up and the mothers of their murderers exult and are financially rewarded. Elderly Jews are burned to death and their killers gloat on websites across the Arab world. If there is one thing to be learned from the 20th century's record of anti-Semitism, it is when people say and act as if they want Jews dead, they mean it. And, when the rest of the world looks away, the murderers take the world's silence for support.

On Dec. 1, 2001, two suicide murderers with a car bomb killed 11 Israeli teenagers at a discotheque. The international press was muted. The author's 17-year-old son was standing around the corner. He was not injured, but many of his friends were. When the author finally reached him, his son said that he had held up a boy with a torn leg until a medic arrived. "My son had encountered evil, in its pure form ... and saw things that one should live an entire life without seeing. His contemporaries in the West, their parents and politicians, the journalists and academics never have and never will understand what my son saw and understood at the age of 17."

In March 2002, a suicide murderer killed 29 Israelis in Netanya as they sat down to their Passover Seder. To minimize Arab civilian deaths in Jenin, which sponsored the Netanya murderer and other terrorists, Israel went door-to-door rather than annihilating the Jenin terrorist cell from the air. In the process of finding and killing 52 terrorists, Israel lost 32 of its soldiers. This restrained act of self-defense started a tidal wave of hatred directed at Israel by most of the world, which conveniently forgot the real massacre in Netanya. The world's refusal to listen to the Israeli side indicates an irrational depth of animosity that has been a hallmark of anti-Semitism for centuries.

The author uses most of the book to carefully analyze all of Israel's wars.

Through this he determined that Zionism has tried to be moral and with a few exceptions has succeeded. To date, the American-sponsored peace negotiations have centered on the need for Israel to return land won in defensive wars, even though the Arab total rejection of Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state continues. Furthermore, he writes that the frightening truth may be that while a large majority of the Arabs have reconciled themselves to their inability to destroy Israel militarily, they intend to submerge her demographically with millions of Palestinians. This strategy is cheered on by many Europeans, some Americans, and even some Jews. The author notes that Europeans hatred of Jews (enough to periodically murder them until the 20th century) only went underground after most of the Jews were dead or gone. Returning to negotiations, so as to put an end to violence, willfully ignores the fact that there is nothing left to offer that has not already been offered ... and rejected.

Lozowick writes that the Israeli demand that Palestinians recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state and agree on rules of conflict resolution is not the arrogant dictate of a colonial power trying to control its weaker neighbor, but a commonsense requirement for living alongside each other in peace. Peace will not be possible until the Palestinians decide to work for it and Israel must remain open-minded to the possibility that this might happen.

Unfortunately, the centrality of anti-Semitism in the Muslim world is growing and spreading. Lozowick argues that the belief that the anti-Semitic non-acceptance of Israel as a Jewish state will somehow vanish on the day a Palestinian state is established is not morally or intellectually rational. If peace between Israel and Palestinians would result in the end of the world's anti-Semitism, Israel would not have experienced a tremendous rise in terrorist attacks against its citizens during the seven years of the Oslo peace process.

Lozowick posits that given the volume of hatred toward Israel, one would think that Israel threatens world peace and stability. To argue against that view, he focuses on the consistency of anti-Israel bias in Western media today. Journalists and political leaders are comfortable publicly taking anti-Semitic positions against Israel. This is one of the consequences of the longevity, potency and centrality of anti-Semitism in Western

European culture. The crucial question today is whether the conflict in the Middle East is a long war that will have an end or is a permanent hatred.

The failure of the Oslo Accords destroyed the naiveté of Israelis. The peace camp knows that the true enemies are those who celebrate the deaths of Israeli children, not Israelis who disagree with them about having a Jewish state. The collapse of Oslo focused many on the fundamental facts. This is not a war for settlements or an attempt to deprive Palestinians of their own state. It is a war for the right of Jews to self-determination

in a world that is quite willing to live without them. The author writes, "Zionism is not a plot against the Arabs but the most recent chapter in an ancient story, an attempt by the Jews to define their place in the modern world and a refusal of the Jews to cease being, to die out, to fade away. Zionism has succeeded far beyond the dreams of its inventors and ... there has been less murder than in most other nation-building projects. Imperfect as it is, is Zionism worth fighting and dying for unto our children's children's children?" Yaacov Lokowitz concludes, "Of course it is."

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Lishmor Al HaOlam: Guarding the planet

By Solange Israel-Mintz
& Andi Franklin

Not too long ago we read the Torah portion Metzora. That's the one NOBODY wants for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah because it talks about leprosy. We know you don't have leprosy, but cleaning, disinfecting and quarantining are at least as old as the Torah. You can check out our ancient protocol at Leviticus 14:1 – 15:33. Spoiler alert, it wasn't really leprosy.

We need and have something better. This is a new monthly column to give you suggestions and ideas (and sometimes free gifts) to keep you safe while protecting and healing our world.

With our current pandemic — COVID 19 — cleaning and disinfecting is our new norm. Since disinfecting is a priority, we have some great suggestions for

sustainable ways to disinfect.

Disinfecting is really a two-step process. First, clean. There is no sense in disinfecting schmutz — the technical term for dust, dirt and grime. Then disinfect. Both of these steps can be dangerous and damaging to you and our environment. Cleaning products are packaged in non-reusable plastic that is building up and choking our land, waters, and animals. Transporting these products, which are often 90% water, is economically costly and a carbon emissions nightmare. We haven't even touched the toxicity of the product itself. Most are just bad news.

So, our first suggestion is a Blueland Starter Kit — <https://www.blueland.com/products/the-clean-up-kit>.

In it there are:

- Three 'forever' acrylic bottles,

which will reduce plastic waste.

- Three dissolvable cleaning tablets (multi-surface, bath, and glass) in biodegradable packaging. This will further reduce waste and save transportation costs.

These products are made with ingredients that are nontoxic, non-allergenic and child- and pet-friendly. AND, we are giving away a Blueland Starter Kit to the first 10 people who agree to test and provide a review of these products. Email Solange Israel-Mintz at solangeim20@yahoo.com or call Andi Franklin at 610-927-6224. We will deliver.

Step two is disinfecting. Things get a little dicier here. Because of the matzav, Hebrew for situation, people have been using chlorine bleach and ammonia a lot. Given the corrosive fumes these give off, there has been a small uptick in respiratory problems, and we don't need that.

Unfortunately, for disinfecting a 10% sodium hypochlorite solution is the gold standard. It is strong and effective at killing bacteria, fungi, and viruses. It is the disinfecting ingredient, at 5-6%, in supermarket chlorine bleach. To disinfect, make a solution of one part chlorine bleach to nine parts water. Do not use the

splashless variety. Leave on surfaces 8-10 minutes, then rinse. Wear gloves and make sure there is good ventilation.

Better news is that a 70-80% (neither less nor more) ethanol or isopropyl rubbing alcohol is as good at disinfecting. This is a safer option, but it may be harder to find. Make sure the surface stays wet for about five minutes. There is no need to rinse. Vodka, at 140-160 proof, works too but we don't recommend wasting it on a doorknob.

In all cases, test a small area to make sure you are not going to damage the surface. More good news is that ammonia won't do the job, so shelve that bottle for another day.

If you have any questions or want more of the gritty (and we do mean gritty) details you can call Andi at 610-927-6224 or email Solange at solangeim20@yahoo.com.

Special thanks to: Tally Kossovsky Ph.D. Manager of E.M. Lab Dept. of Pathology Hadassah Medical Center-Jerusalem, for her expertise and guidance on effective disinfecting; and to Adi Shalev, our wonderful Shlichah, for helping us sneak in a few Hebrew words.

Stay safe, wash your hands, and thank the Eternal that this isn't leprosy.

All Around the Town

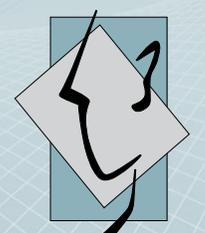
Mazel tov to **Jonathan and Jan Simon** on the birth of their first grandson, Maxwell Levi Brown, to Sarah Simon Brown and Adam Brown of Rockville, Md.

We love good news about members of our community! Please share it by emailing Marknem@aol.com or calling the JCC office at 610-921-0624.

Obituary

Jeraldine "Jeri" D. Kozloff, 77 of Wyomissing. Jeri was a graduate of Wellesley College and received a J.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. After working in the legal field in a number of capacities, she began a career in education, teaching at Wilson and then Wyomissing High School. She was a member of the board of directors for the Berks Opera Company and a member of Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom, where she was a trustee, sang in the choir and was active in many congregation activities. Jeri is survived by her husband, David, her son Louis Kozloff and his wife, Jeannette; and her daughter Deborah and her husband, Raymond Hearey. There are also six grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her son Samuel.

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A new Chabad House is taking shape

From Federation staff

With all the bad news, it is a pleasure to bring good news. An essential Chabad value is Ahavat Yisrael — “love for the children of Israel.” The obligation to love all Jews extends to everyone irrespective of their personal status. Since 1999, Rabbi Yosef Lipsker has been working with Caron Treatment Centers’ Jewish and other patients and their families to support their recovery.

Although the Lipsker family regularly hosted many of them for Shabbat dinners and services, the lack of space limited the number of participants and the Lipskers’ ability to host for the entire Shabbat. The lack of space and cooking quarters also hindered the engagement of children.

They envisioned a Chabad House where people can come into a home rather than an institutional building. Here new doors

would open, and new relationships would develop expanding camaraderie, which in turn helps people grow spiritually.

The project got off the ground (pun intended) at a dinner meeting in 2017 where the important role of Chabad and Caron was recognized by several significant local Jewish and non-Jewish donors. Subsequent financial support came from local, national and international donors.

Despite the COVID-19 delays, the building is scheduled to be complete in mid- to late June. When social distancing requirements ease, a grand opening celebration will be held. The building will have a wonderful impact on our local Jewish community as a gathering place on Shabbat and a home away from home for locals and out-of-town visitors.

Stay tuned for the celebration!



Rabbi Yosef and Chana Lipsker at the new Chabad House, which is nearing completion.

Jewish Family Service director moving to part-time role

By Bill Franklin

It is with some sadness that we announce the semi-retirement of Sari Incedon. She will be switching roles with Carole Robinson to continue in a part-time supporting position.

Sari joined our Federation’s Jewish Family Service in 1994 and six years later became the JFS director of social services. Our community has benefited greatly from the many programs she has managed. She oversaw our taxi transportation service, which allows seniors and disabled to maintain their independence. She provided counseling, information and referral services for many in our Jewish community. And she arranged emergency financial assistance for individuals and families in need.

In addition, she helped develop Friendship Circle, which is a weekly program of lunches and events for seniors. Friendship Circle serves the further benefit of acclimating seniors

who move to our community to be near their adult children. It helps them meet and make friends and quickly make Reading their new home.

She has been instrumental in developing our JFS Food Pantry. It began in 1994, serving about 20 Jewish community families a month. The program has grown to now serving 120-170 families of diverse ethnicity each month at the Olivet/Pendora Boys and Girls Club.

Her many services to our community also include teaching at the JCC preschool and Keshar Zion’s religious school, being active as a member of the JCC Board, the B’Nai Brith Apartment Board, and a member of the KZ sisterhood and KZ choir and Hadassah.

With her newfound time, she and her husband, John are looking forward to spending more time with their three grandchildren, family and friends. They are also looking forward to attending theater and concerts, visiting museums,



cooking, traveling and going to the gym. Please join us in recognizing Sari Incedon for her 26 years of valuable work and wonderful contributions

working to our Jewish Family Services and community. You can thank her at sarii@jfreading.org or 610-921-0624.

2 teachers retiring from Lakin Preschool

From Federation staff

Good luck to Beth Caster and Carole Robinson. They will both be retiring from Lakin Preschool in June.

Both have worked at the school for 30 years. Each started when their children started preschool and never left.

Beth will be spending her time at home with her husband, Bob, and will serve as a substitute in the preschool.

Carole has been offered and accepted a full-time Social Work position at the Jewish Federation of Reading’s Jewish Family Service, where she had been



Beth Caster and Carole Robinson

working part-time. Beth and Carole will both be missed by the children and staff at Lakin Preschool.

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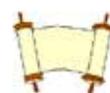
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June 26
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June 6/14 Sivan
Nasso (Numbers 4:21-7:89)

June 7/21 Sivan
Beha’alotcha (Numbers 8:1-12:15)

June 20/28 Sivan
Shelach (Numbers 13:1-15:41)

June 27/5 Tammuz
Korach (Numbers 16:1-18:32)

Join us for virtual Federation annual meeting and a treat!

By Amanda J. Hornberger

The community is invited to join Jewish Federation of Reading for its annual meeting on Sunday, June 14, at 11:30 a.m. LIVE on Zoom.

The meeting provides a chance to learn about all the various programs and services offered by Federation and the great things occurring right here in Berks!

Guests at the annual meeting will learn about a special ice cream treat for the community available for free after the meeting. You won't want to miss it!

We hope community members of all ages will join us for this annual gathering.

To register please email info@jfreeding.org

Literatour Berks concludes with Torah examination

By Amanda J. Hornberger

Literatour Berks inaugural season will conclude in June with author Joy Ladin. Similar to our May Literatour Berks event with Elyssa Friedland, Ladin will be joining us virtually from Boston.

Participants are asked to preregister for the Zoom discussion, which is scheduled for Tuesday, June 23 at 7 p.m. Online registration is available in

our weekly email, website and Facebook.

Dr. Joy Ladin is a professor of English and holds the David and Ruth Gottesman Chair in English at Stern College. A nationally recognized speaker on gender and Jewish identity, she has spoken around the country.

Reading some of the best-known Torah stories through the lens of transgender experience, in "The Soul of A Stranger: Reading God and Torah

from A Transgender Perspective," Ladin explores fundamental questions about how religious texts, traditions, and the understanding of God can be enriched by transgender perspectives, and how the Torah and trans lives can illuminate one another.

Copies of Ladin's book can be purchased from Reads & Company, the official book vendor of Literatour Berks. During this time, we are proud to

continue to support our local independent bookstore.

Ladin's appearance in Literatour Berks is presented by Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks in partnership with Exeter Community Library, Sinking Spring Public Library and the LGBT Center of Reading.

Thank you to the sponsors and patrons of Literatour Berks for making this event possible.

Learning goes on at Chabad



CHS - Chabad Hebrew School just finished a virtual lesson that centered around the Jewish people's historical and spiritual connection to Israel. The students virtually visited places and people in our history, beginning with Abraham and Sarah. The stories from the Torah came alive through a variety of mediums, including animation, sand art storytelling and video. They baked Pita with Sarah (Abraham's wife) and crafted a beautiful watercolor of the Kotel, using coffee!

Meet the first woman to win Israel Prize for Talmud

Israel21c.com

When Professor Vered Noam, 59, was in high school in Jerusalem, her school did not teach girls Talmud. So twice a week, she sneaked out of school and went to the newly opened Pelech school for girls in Jerusalem to study Talmud. Today she is the first woman to win the Israel Prize for Talmud. She heads the Chaim Rosenberg School of Jewish Studies and Archaeology at Tel Aviv University. When she talks about Talmud, her face lights up.

"I can't remember a time I wasn't interested in Talmud," she said. "I grew up in a house filled with Torah conversations at the table. As a child I felt that Talmud is a conversation that links people and creates joy and also has something different from everyday life, something higher and beautiful, so it was very clear to me that I wanted to be part of that."

Tell me about your family growing up.

I grew up in Jerusalem. My father was a Bible scholar at Bar Ilan University — Professor Yehuda Elitzur, and my mother, Rivka Elitzur, was a children's book author. She wrote several books that went on to become iconic, at least within the religious community.

I grew up with four siblings. I have an older sister and three brothers; one of my brothers, Uri Elitzur, a shrewd thinker and journalist and the founder of the *Makor Rishon* newspaper, passed away five years ago. I was the youngest, by far, so maybe part of my desire to study was to join in, to be part of the conversation. It was really a beautiful, happy religious-Zionist home with an emphasis on the importance of life in Israel and in Jerusalem and being thankful we have a state of our own.

Passover Seder was a very formative experience for me. I think part of my love for the world of the Talmud was born there, at the Seder table, which, as I intuitively felt as a child, connected me to my parents and siblings on one hand and back to the

sages and Jewish history on the other.

What is your research focused on?

I'm most curious about the world of the sages (of the Mishnah and Talmud), because it's such a different world than the biblical world which preceded it. The sages make major changes that seem so far from the literal interpretation of the text. The central Jewish values of studying Torah, the creation of a huge multifaceted halachic edifice and a new, fascinating hermeneutical system are among the rabbinic phenomena that don't exist in the actual Bible. In many ways, the sages constructed a whole new religious culture which molded Jewish practice, values and unique identity to this very day.

Does your research influence your own religious practice?

I really try to keep it purely academic. It is impossible to sever one's intellectual interest from one's biography and social circumstances. Still, I think it's crucial that when you deal with research you do it for research's sake, as pure as possible.

Do you define yourself as Orthodox?

I grew up in an Orthodox world and I consider myself committed to halacha. On the other hand, I think the labels "Orthodox," "Conservative" [and] "Reform" are anachronistic. They aren't intra-Jewish definitions, but rather arose in the 19th century, based on changes in the Christian world. So, I think it would be best if we abandoned them entirely, and instead looked at halachic challenges on a case-by-case basis, according to the intrinsic rules of halacha. For example, if a woman wears a tallit (prayer shawl), we shouldn't react with alarm simply because it reminds us of Reform politics, but we should debate the question on its own halachic merits. I'm very interested in the questions of the extent of freedom the halachic framework enables. I believe we have a lot more options of change and renewal than what is granted by the religious establishment today.

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'Unorthodox' in conversation

By Nancy Russo

After reading Deborah Feldman's 2012 memoir, "Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of My Hasidic Roots," which tells the story of fleeing her Satmar community in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, I was eager to watch the Netflix series "Unorthodox," which is based on that book. The star, the luminous Shira Haas, is well-known to most of us from the Netflix hit "Shtisel." Recently I joined "AJFF in Conversation," a Zoom program run by the Atlanta Jewish Film Festival. Although Haas was not part of the panel, the featured speakers were Jeff Wilbusch, who plays Moishe Lefkovitch; and co-creator and writer Alexa Korolinski. Judy Marx, the founding director of AJFF, was the moderator.

Korolinski discussed how the book ended up in her hands. Her friend (and ultimately, co-creator of "Unorthodox") knew Feldman from their children's school in Berlin, and when they read the book they knew they had to bring the story to the screen in some way.

The series is almost entirely female-driven. This was important to Korolinski and Anna Winger, the other series creator. They also were committed to using Jewish actors since most of the series takes place in Berlin, as Esty, played by Ms. Haas, flees there from her unhappy marriage.

Ms. Korolinski noted that there was a tradition in Germany of making shows about Jews casting non-Jewish actors. This seemed very wrong to them.

Fortunately Wilbusch, a native Yiddish speaker, auditioned and they were so impressed with him that they created the role of Moishe, which was inspired by his real-life story. He left his Satmar community the day after his Bar Mitzvah and lost all contact with his family. Indeed, the actor said that when he started filming the show, it had been 19 years since he wore tefillin, and he did not remember how to put it on. The trauma of his upbringing, realization that he could not live in that community anymore and abrupt exit at such a young age is still with him today.

The Satmar world works for a lot of people, he and Korolinski maintain, but for those who cannot find their place or who question their identity, their only option is to leave. Wilbusch said that although members of the ultra-Orthodox sect seem happier than others, they are taught no skills, have little education and therefore have few alternatives once they leave the community. Sadly, some former members commit suicide because of this.

Ultimately, to me, what makes the book and series work is that the need for community is universal. We all



want to find our place. The message is that you can leave one community and find another whether it is over a love of art, or books, or learning, or a shared experience.

"Unorthodox," the series, is streaming on Netflix and the book by Deborah Feldman is available through our preferred bookseller, Reads & Company on its website.

Israeli researchers reveal secrets of 'world's oldest temple'

From online news sources

For the last quarter of a century, the Neolithic site of Göbekli Tepe in southeast Turkey has been intriguing researchers for the size and complexity of its structure, which dates back about 11,500 years, and has been called the "world's oldest temple." Two archaeologists from Tel Aviv University, PhD candidate Gil Haklay and his supervisor, Professor Avi Gopher, have unveiled new secrets of its sophisticated architecture, highlighting an intricate geometrical pattern that was conceived before humans had even discovered agriculture or pottery.

"It might be surprising but architectural planning started to develop already 15,000 years ago," Haklay told *The Jerusalem Post*. "In the early Neolithic they were already able to plan and accurately build very large and complex projects."

Göbekli Tepe, however, is different and unparalleled compared with any other site of the period because of its colossal size, he highlighted.

"We actually have another example of a large scale construction from this period and it is located in Jericho where a large tower is preserved in its full height with an internal staircase, but is not as monumental as Göbekli Tepe and required much less effort," the archaeologist pointed out.

Discovered for the first time in the 1960s, forgotten and rediscovered in the 1990s, Göbekli Tepe features dozens of monolithic pillars 4 to 5 meters tall placed along at least 20 concentric rings, which archaeologists refer to as "enclosures." The pillars are decorated with remarkable reliefs depicting animals including gazelles, jaguars, Asiatic wild donkeys and wild sheep. It was a place of worship where many people, likely belonging to different communities, would convene and perform rituals.

The structure and size of the site also help shed light about the life of those who built it and used it. "We are talking about hunter-gatherers, but at the same time we see signs of a very complex social structure," Haklay said, adding that it is not clear how long its construction took but it might have been centuries if not more, with different people initiating it and adding to it.

"The findings that we have suggest that the construction started at some point in the Pre-Pottery-Neolithic-A, about 11,500 years ago, but a second layer dates back to Pre-Pottery-Neolithic-B which probably lasted until 9,000 years ago," he explained. "However, we are talking about the very



initial phase of the planning and the construction. From there, there is a very long history of enclosures that continued to develop and change through time."

As explained in a paper recently published by the *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, the Israeli researchers manage to unveil a specific geometrical pattern between several enclosures.

"We found that there is a center point in each enclosure, which we identified not only in the three in the main excavation area, but also in others located outside it," Haklay explained. "We also found out that the center of these enclosures was always located between the two large central pillars aligned with the front side. These pillars also presented an anthropomorphic structure and they have a front side. In each enclosure based on the surrounding peripheral pillars was found an alignment with the narrow front side. This was our first observation: an abstract design rule. "We later noticed that the role of those center points extended beyond an individual enclosure, because the three center points of enclosures B, C and D form an almost perfect equilateral triangle," he added.

Haklay highlighted that they went on to verify whether the geometric pattern was confirmed by further observations, for example the orientation of the central pillars. They found many other elements supporting it. Among others, the main access to the structure was located between the only two pillars carrying anthropomorphic as opposed to animal reliefs.

This discovery also overcame a previous theory common among researchers that the enclosures were conceived and built in unrelated stages.

But how could such a complex design be envisioned by people who did not even know how to create a simple pottery vessel? The archaeologist explained that while hundreds of people contributed to the building of Göbekli Tepe, the planning was probably carried out by a single person or a small group. "In order to do it, they had to conceptualize architectural planning tools like the formulation of a floor plan, basic geometry and measurements," he concluded. These measurements were not standardized but allowed them to build the exact form that they had previously planned.

Webinar on managing COVID-19 stress available

By Sari Incedon, M.Ed.

I recently viewed “Mindfulness and Stress Reduction during Covid-19,” a webinar sponsored by Jewish Family Service of the Lehigh Valley, and I want to recommend it to you. It offers information on



about how to better handle the stress brought on by living through a pandemic. It can be viewed at jfslv.org/coronavirushelp.

The webinar was led by social worker Stuart Horowitz, who led seminars on post-traumatic stress disorder after 9/11, and has decades of practice with clients of all ages. Horowitz emphasized throughout his talk that it is important to take care of ourselves during this time, and then in turn we can care for our communities.

Horowitz listed many symptoms that people may be experiencing right now, from feeling on edge, anxious, angry, numb, helpless or re-experiencing earlier traumatic events to changes in sleeping or eating patterns, difficulty sleeping or concentrating, worsening of mental health conditions and increased use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. It is common in an abnormal situation to have these symptoms and behaviors.

Horowitz recommends using mindfulness techniques to combat these feelings. He led the viewers in a short mindfulness practice and encouraged the use of positive imagery. He also addressed issues for parents of all ages to help families reassure their children and teens.

This seminar was slow in starting, with music playing as participants joining, and with an intro from the JFS Executive Director. However it was well organized with helpful slides and I recommend it.

JFS staff change

In July it will be my 26th anniversary at Jewish Family Service. I have been fortunate to have a job that has been enjoyable and rewarding, and I am grateful for having the pleasure of working with supportive colleagues, board and community. This July my role will be changing. I will be moving from director of social services to part-time social worker. I am excited to make the change to have more time to spend with my family and pursue leisure activities. I am pleased to continue to work with Carole Robinson, who will assume the role of director. Carole, a Reading native, will be a committed and enthusiastic leader. Many of you already know Carole from her years teaching at the Lakin Preschool and the Keshet Zion religious school, and as an active member of our Jewish community. I wish her all the best in this new role and am delighted that we will continue to work together at Jewish Family Service.

Jewish Family Service

JFS News: Donation of masks gets great response

By Carole Robinson

JFS received a generous donation of 300 sterile disposable face masks from Marc Goldstein, Founder and President of Blankets of Hope. We distributed packages of masks to community members on Friday, May 1, handing out five masks per individual and 10 masks per family in a curbside delivery. We had a great response from the Jewish community and were able to help more than 40 households.

JFS plans to hold another Face Mask Distribution in a few weeks when we receive more masks. Please check your email for details or call the JCC at 610-921-0624. Many thanks to Marc Goldstein and Blankets of Hope for enabling us to help others!

JFS would also like to thank Sharon Berman, Sue Farrara, Karen Kabakoff, Judith Kraines and Solange Mintz for donating time and materials to make reusable cloth face masks for use at JFS Food Pantry and other occasions. There are a limited number of cloth masks available to the community. Please contact the JCC at 610-921-0624 if you need one. Don't forget to give us your email address so you can be advised of our ongoing activities.

JFS Food Pantry continues to operate during the COVID19 pandemic as we have for over 25 years. In April, we switched our monthly operation to a drive-up Food Pantry outside the Olivet Boys and Girls Club, Pendera Unit. We ordered



The generosity of donors and volunteers makes possible JFS work distributing food and face masks.

boxes of prepacked canned goods and nonperishables, bags of produce, and bags of frozen items. People drove to the front of the building, where we loaded their trunks or back seats. The clients were not able to select what food they wanted, as they normally do. Helping Harvest also waived the need for signatures. All staff and volunteers wore masks and gloves. These measures eliminated extra contact with recipients to keep everyone safer.

In May, we distributed 5,400 pounds of food to 161 households consisting of 550 people. We anticipate another drive-up Food Pantry in June. Thank you to volunteers Raymond Gehring, Aidan and John Incedon, Victor Lugo, Mike Robinson, Ellen and Paul Schwartz and Oleg Umanov for your dedication and hard work. We

would not be able to assist the community without your help!

I am pleased to announce that I will be assuming a new role in July as director of social services. I have worked closely with Sari as the part-time social worker for the past 15 years and have benefited greatly from her knowledge of the Jewish community and her guidance. We are fortunate that she will continue her work for Jewish Family Service in a part-time capacity.

I am eager to take on my new responsibilities and meet those of you whom I have not yet encountered. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns, suggestions or would like to volunteer. CaroleR@JFReading.org or 610-921-0624.

Meals for Friendship Circle



Mae Levy and Tootie Moyer receive lunch deliveries courtesy of Jewish Family Service. Kosher-style meals were delivered to 25 Friendship Circle participants.

- Food Pantry
- Friendship Circle
- Counseling Services
- Transportation
- Financial Assistance
- Hospital and
- Home Visitations
- Living with Loss
- Information and
- Referral
- Case Management
- Holiday Programs

Anti-Semitism is the root of ignorance

By Howard Blanck

With the coronavirus, if nothing else, I at least thought this is one thing Jews cannot be blamed for. That quickly changed when I came across another "Jewish conspiracy plot" that claimed the Jews were behind this one too.

We have all seen and heard the violent acts of hatred against Jews, and of course this is nothing new. In fact, it has been happening all over the world for centuries. The causes and circumstances are far beyond the scope of this article.

Watching all this, I was reminded of a personal incident that happened right here at the age of 9. It is necessary to set the stage. Growing up in the 1960s, it was a different world than today and much more innocent (some of you oldtimers may remember). There were no cellphones, no internet and no instant cable news, etc. Nearly everyone had a black and white TV that you had to turn the dial on the set to

change it to one of the three channels you could get. Unless, of course, there was inclement weather, in which case it would likely be one channel with some "snow" in it.

My friends were a mix of Christians and Jews, and we were too busy playing sports or army to pay much attention to the changing world going on around us, much less anti-Semitism, which frankly at the time I had not heard of.

During one football game in the neighborhood, I caught a pass and was running for the end zone but could not hold the ball. This infuriated one of my older teammates, whom I will call Timmy. He yelled out "You dumb Jew!" I had not heard the expression before, but the next thing I knew one of my other teammates, whom I will call Larry, called him a "dumb Catholic". Timmy told him to come closer and say it again, but by some miracle, a fight was avoided as others on both teams intervened.

As the game ended, Larry told me to

make sure if it happened again to beat the guy up if I could and ask questions later. In those more innocent times a fight usually settled it instead of guns.

Not long after I started to hear racial slurs about African-Americans who were struggling for civil rights at the time.

Reflecting on my history teaching career, I can't even count the number of times I was asked questions like how come the Germans didn't stop Hitler and how come our founders owned slaves and some even worse than that.

With all the persecutions Jews have endured through the centuries, a strong case can be made that their experience in America has overall been quite good. For sure there has anti-Semitism: There were real anti-Semitic acts and real anti-Semites such as Henry Ford, Charles Lindbergh and others, but the key is in our founding documents.

Most people throughout world history

have lived under an all powerful ruler such as a king, dictator, caesar or group of rulers, etc. in which freedoms, if they existed at all, were limited or dictated by the ruler or ruling class.

This country, however, was founded with guaranteed freedoms that cannot be taken away. In other words, the individual is the center of attention instead of the government which had its power and reach limited in our Constitution. One of those guaranteed freedoms was the right to worship freely (or not worship at all) and this was, and this is a huge attraction to persecution-weary Jews the world over.

If only our real and balanced history was taught in our schools, I can't help but wonder how much less anti-Semitism would exist.

Howard Blanck is a community member who writes periodic opinion pieces in Shalom, often focused on history.



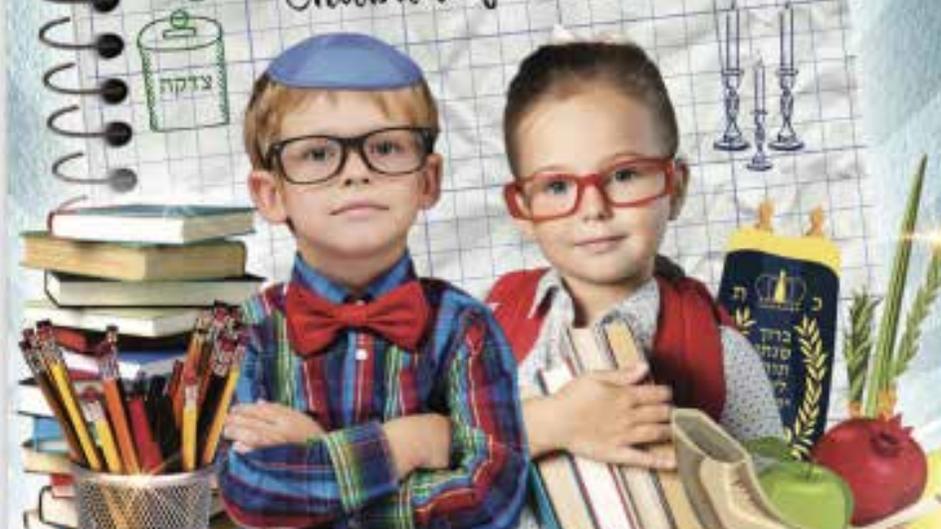
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Using Israeli technology to live in a water-stressed world

Israel21c

How does Israel, with its extremely limited water resources, arid climate, and largely desert landmass, maintain a water surplus? The answer can be explained in one word — innovation, according to David Balsar, general manager of innovation and ventures at Mekorot, Israel's national water company.

Israel's innovative water management techniques have reduced its dependence on the climate. Five water desalination plants that dot the Mediterranean coast provide almost 80% of the country's drinking water. In addition, almost 90% of the treated wastewater in Israel is used for agriculture. Further illustrating its creative abilities, Mekorot has recently completed the largest water tunnel in Israel — almost 14 kilometers — from Sorek to Jerusalem, that brings desalinated drinking water to Jerusalem.

Mekorot is undergoing a digital transformation, centralizing its operations to one main command and control center, using machine learning and deploying smart meters that measure data and information. Establishing a unified national command and control center will enable coordination and synchronization of all of the regional control rooms and strengthen the stability of the water economy. Moti Shiri, Mekorot's vice president of technology, explains that the constantly changing nature of water handling today requires a national center to coordinate the supply. Construction on the national water command and control center will begin this year in Rosh Ha'ayin, and is expected to be completed in the next year and a half.

As the result of a recent government resolution, Mekorot is now permitted to

invest in Israeli startup companies and is working to position itself as the world's "go-to" water technology company, both in terms of its own internal development, and its work with other companies.

Today, Mekorot is increasing its innovation beyond water management in numerous ways that will make it more efficient — saving both money and water — and enabling consumers to have a greater understanding of the water quality that flows into their homes.

One result of these changes is greater energy efficiency. Mekorot is the biggest energy consumer in Israel, spending almost NIS 1 billion per year, and "any efficiency in the usage of energy has a dramatic effect," says Balsar.

In addition, the company's digital operations are important in its protection of the country's critical water supply.

Further expanding its reach into the digital and high-tech world, Mekorot is partnering with Microsoft for Startups Israel to identify new technology ventures that can be utilized in water technology. The Microsoft and Mekorot startup program will help ventures in Israel promote their solutions to revolutionize the water ecosystem.

One of the main philosophies of Mekorot's water management strategy is what Balsar calls the "circular water economy," in which water is consumed, recycled and used yet again. Sea water is first desalinated at one of Mekorot's desalination plants on the coast, before arriving at the customer's home water tap.

"After you drink the water," explains Balsar, "the waste that is produced is flushed down the toilet. We take the sewage, treat it in a wastewater facility and while treating it, make energy out of it from the sludge, producing biogas which then



Shafdan Wastewater Treatment Plant

activates the wastewater plant. We then deconstruct the sludge, which means that we are entering a zero-waste economy."

Almost 100% of the sewage is treated, of which close to 90% is reclaimed and used for agriculture. Israel is today the leading country in the world in terms of usage of recycled or treated reclaimed water. "Mekorot is responsible for transmitting the treated water to the Negev," adds Balsar, "which then produces billions of dollars in fruits and vegetables that are exported around the world."

Balsar notes that Mekorot, which has a very low percentage of water leakage, manages to get the most out of its water supply. Mekorot's leakage rate is just 2.5%, which is one of the lowest rates in the world today. Many countries lose as much as 30% or 40% of their water.

Beyond savings and water quality, Mekorot is also turning its attention to the customer, with innovative solutions designed to provide important information about water quality. Mekorot is currently developing a smart "lab-on-a-chip" that can be installed on water taps, that will monitor, track and assess the water quality that comes to private homes. The chip will notify users if the water is of sufficient quality, or if there are impurities that need to be removed. When customers know that their water is of sufficient quality, they will not need to purchase bottled water, which will then reduce the amount of plastics in the environment.

Balsar calls the "lab-on-a-chip" a type of "disruptive technology," adding, "There is no other existing technology in the world that can predict and analyze the water quality of your tap at a reasonable price."

Overseas students prefer to be in Israel during pandemic

Israel21c

Joanna Pluta of Poznan, Poland, arrived at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan on March 8 — her 24th birthday — for a semester of graduate studies in chemical technology. She was excited to experience a different landscape and culture. Instead, Pluta and thousands of other international students at Israel's nine public universities spent spring semester on lockdown, courtesy of the coronavirus pandemic.

"After just one class, everything went to Zoom. I said, 'Oh no, I can't go to a lab!' Everything is formal lectures online," says the future scientist.

Her first reaction was to try to go home. But she and other Polish students were told they'd have to leave immediately as the borders were closing.

"We didn't want to do that," she said. "So we calmed down and saw it could be very nice to stay here on our beautiful campus together."

The staff of Bar-Ilan's International School kept in constant touch with the overseas students.

"I was shocked that they gave us free food before Easter," Pluta said. "It was really helpful. We managed an Easter celebration with friends in the International School from Latvia, Lithuania, Germany and Poland, and even one from New York. We each made loads of dishes from our

countries. It was amazing."

Now, with restrictions relaxing in Israel, Pluta can finally get to the lab and do some weekend sightseeing.

"I will always remember diving on the coral reef in Eilat and floating on the Dead Sea," she says. "That was my dream."

As of October 2019, 11,853 international students were studying in Israel, primarily from the U.S., Canada, Germany, France, China, India and South Korea.

Though many North American and semester-abroad students were recalled by their home universities, many decided to stay — particularly those among the 5,000 enrolled in full degree programs.

Hebrew University of Jerusalem, for instance, reported that 80% of current students in the Rothberg International School stayed in Israel during the outbreak. At Ben-Gurion University in Beersheva, 700 overseas students chose to wait the virus out in Israel.

At Tel Aviv University, or TAU, about 700 of its roughly 1,300 international students remained on campus during the lockdown.

While international summer programs and student exchange programs in the fall are off the agenda at Israel's universities, many of the institutions are reporting a rise in overseas demand.

At Bar-Ilan's International School there has been a 50% increase in

enrollment of overseas students. And registration for some TAU international degree programs increased more than 50% over last year.

"The discourse here in Israel is much more positive," said Marissa Gross Yarm, head of international student affairs at the Council for Higher Education in Israel. "Israelis are good at crisis management and therefore understood how to put support systems in place. People will see Israel as a good place to study because we were able to tackle the pandemic and support our international students."

"People have a craving to travel," said Prof. Limor Aharonson-Daniel, vice president for global engagement at Ben-Gurion University. "There is a perception that Israel has been handling the pandemic well, that the curve stayed flatter than in other countries. It is possible that we'll have a second wave, or the skies won't open completely. For now, we're behaving as if the fall semester will be normal."

Also appealing is that because Israeli higher education always starts in October after the Jewish holidays, a regular fall semester is planned. Many college campuses in other countries won't reopen until spring.

"We are working with different government ministries about how to proceed for the fall semester and bring back international students who were

stuck abroad when borders closed during semester break," Yarm said.

"Hopefully, the [coronavirus] situation will continue to remain stable or even get better. For now, the universities are preparing to welcome international students and conduct courses."

As founding director of BGU's Prepared Center for Emergency Response Research, Aharonson-Daniel was responsible for establishing a hotline and a COVID-19 research taskforce.

In her global engagement capacity, she stayed in contact with the international students on campus, updating them on the government's frequently changing coronavirus restrictions.

Her staff organized online movie and discussion nights, Kahoot games, cooking demos and virtual tours of Israeli sites.

Cornell University PhD student Alap Kshirsagar, 27, came to BGU in October as a visiting researcher in robotics. When the pandemic began spreading, he could have gone back to the New York campus or home to India. He chose to stay.

He led an online yoga session joined by BGU students from half a dozen countries.

Now he's back in the lab and enjoying weekend trips again before returning to Cornell — whenever travel to New York will be possible.

NEW ONLINE COMMUNITY CALENDAR



See entire community's events in one place! Filter and search by synagogue, date or event type.

ReadingJewishCommunity.org/home/community-calendar

Community event at Chabad gets Shavuot off to a sweet start

A crowd of 130 people from across the community took part in a pre-Shavuot celebration at Chabad. The event offered an opportunity for an event that brought people together for dairy treats while adhering to social distancing guidelines. The community's three spiritual leaders — Rabbi Yosef Lipsker, Rabbi Brian Michelson and Rabbi-Hazzan David Sisen — gave out pizza. Guests also got to enjoy a visit to an ice cream truck and some cheese danish.



Poetry corner

“The Majestic Mikey”

Amidst all the terrible tumultuous times,
We lose all perception how to deviate our thought
processes,
And wonder how can we conquer this sudden and
grave situation?

A bird!! Yes, Mikey, a handsome little fellow of
great distinction
As well as distraction, above all!
When in flight, he majestically thwarts sorrow
And illuminates a ray of sunshine.

You see, he has magic powers to bring strength to
all,
To feel a new day is coming,
Bringing about a myriad of greatness again!

Yes! Birds can perform wondrous magic.
Mikey, we love you.

By Ethel Engel

“Inferno”

This terrible scourge of this disease
It has altered people’s lives in so many ways!

It doesn’t matter who you are.
This horrific Beast hits everyone, both near and far.
It has no prejudice.
We’re here in an insidious dilemma
Turned deadly beyond comprehension!

We’ve become truant with our destination.
It’s taken everyone’s dreams.
Will we ever get to see another Rainbow?
Yes! Because if we follow the rules to abandon our
actions,
We might get to see its exit, sooner than later!!

Let’s bond together as one to win
This hideous intolerable scourge of unknown ori-
gins!!

By Ethel Engel

COVID-19 20

Noah was a serious, quiet man
Which is probably why
God chose him to build an ark
from gopher wood before
the flood

When the waters were dried up
Noah, with his family
walked out of the ark onto
the dry land, and Noah said,
“We tred on the graves of those
who had been our neighbors,
tred gently ...

“We must make an altar to offer
thanks and praise and to remember
them, as we are yet alive.”

By Nancy J. Knoblauch

Stay-at-home activities with Adi

Israeli game to play outside: 5 Rocks

Things you need: a flat surface and 5 small rocks

Rules: The first player holds all five 5 rocks in his hand and throws them on the floor

- **First level:** throw one rock up and while its up you have to collect 1 rock from the floor and catch the rock that you throw before it hits the floor, then you throw a rock up again and collect the second rock, and so on until you managed to collect all 5 rocks.
- **Second level:** throw the 5 rocks on the floor, take a rock and throw it up, this time collect 2 rocks at a time.
- **Third level:** do the same and collect 3 rocks at a time and then one rock
- **Fourth level:** this time collect all 4 rocks at the same time.
- **Fifth level:** hold the 5 rocks in your hand, throw a rock up, put all the 4 rocks on the floor, catch your thrown rock, throw it again, and pick up all the 4 rocks on the floor
- **Sixth level:** throw all the rocks up and try to catch the, on your hands palm (the up side), the amount of rocks you caught are the amount of points you get

Who Wins? the one who reach the highest level!



Israeli game to play outside 3 Sticks

Things you need: 3 sticks

Rules:

- Place the sticks a step away from each other
- The participants stand in line and hop over each stick. The last in line sets the distance for the next round by moving the last stick behind his heel and the second stick is moved forward, placed an equal distance between the front and back stick;
- Each participant needs to pass the sticks with only one step between each of the sticks. When the last in line passes the 3rd stick, we move the stick to where his foot landed. the second stick we adjust to the middle.
- A person who touched one on the stick's with their foot is out
- The winner is the one who stays last and manages to jump the farthest.



Word search - Israel

W V P D X L L A W N R E T S E W W Z S B Y H W U
R X V W X K Y P S N U U K F W R E C J P G P S D
U M P D D D J Z Q A R G P L G L A Y Z M G K Y O
G E V F C R W M J E U L B E R M A T Q Q F L L R
E L U S M X N I C O U T U F T N D G I V Y V C W
L A O E J R Y D D S H E R A M A N D W G K S Z E
A S R Y L V T A M O A L E L A E H I T U N J D G
C U I Q F O N L R G M A K A H G T V E T D C Q S
H R A R X H C E I L X V Q F H V E A T E G D E Z
L E P F G O P Y N M S I W X C Q H D I S X Q X M
E J Q X F B J V H A W V R J S E P F H S U Q G A
C C G H E B R E W V L X Y X L C E O W E M S C S
L N G S N Y C F F Y U D L T E U N R D N P T I A
B K L U C P W G J O N X I F M P U A P K K W V D
P A K W N L U T H T H E O X W X R T E V F T W A
I F P P N E G E V C O C E I L A T S F Y M V E G
T I I X J A J W N H F Z Z T U B B I K Y Z J Q J
A A V H O E F I W A R P Y N S A W M Z T A G L T
B H D S M S D U O L B F I D C O A J K B G I X E
R Q O V O D G F V L R D Z B R T V R L X S Y F N
E G X B O A M B T A L Y X R P K J V Y Z T Z R F
A R T G N E M S P H S D Z Q C R A P A A V T O H
D V C V U D F Z M J I F O G H M E Y S U M M U H
O M O P J B N S M V B L K A B W Q T N K C Y F G

Kibbutz yeladim Knesset rugelach Hebrew Haifa Negev Eilat Tel Aviv pita bread
challah Western Wall Masada Jerusalem Dead sea white blue Star of David Falafel
Hummus

ADL finds U.S. anti-Semitic incidents at an all-time high

From online news sources

Anti-Semitism hit a new all-time high in the U.S. in 2019, according to the Anti-Defamation League's annual report and continued an upward trajectory for a sixth straight year.

In total, there were 2,107 incidents of anti-Semitism in 2019, a 12% rise over 2018 figures, which themselves were the second highest on record this century after the 1,986 recorded in 2017.

The number of anti-Semitic incidents in 2019 has now eclipsed figures for both those years.

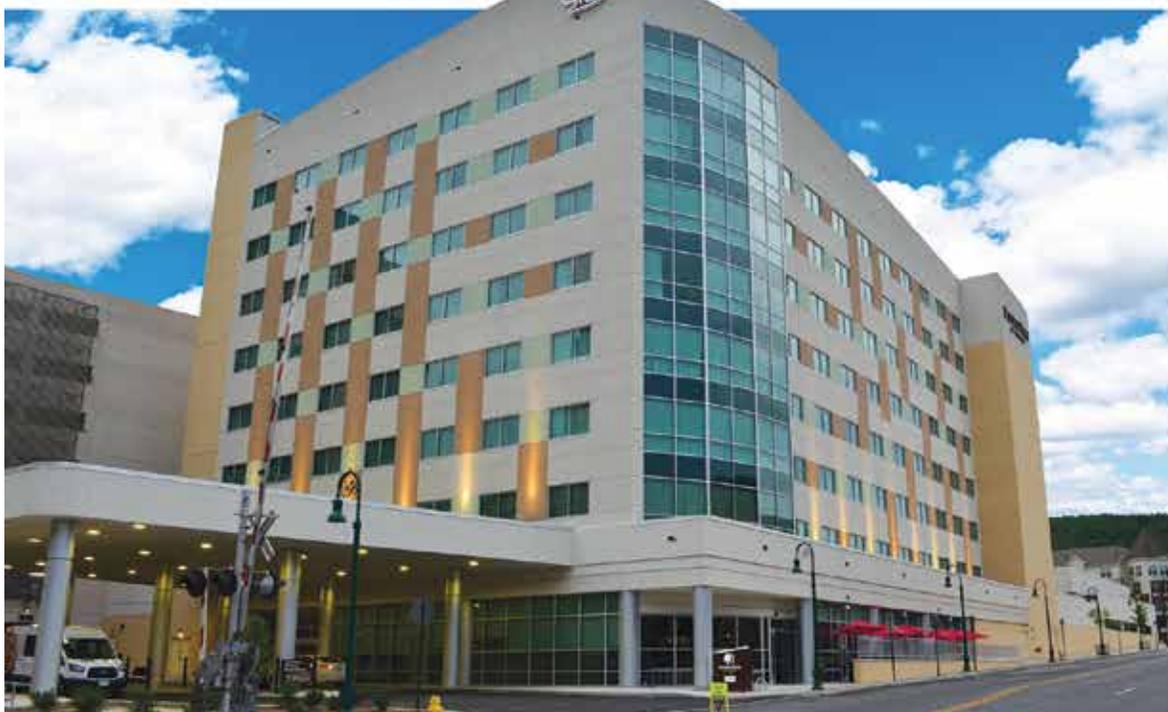
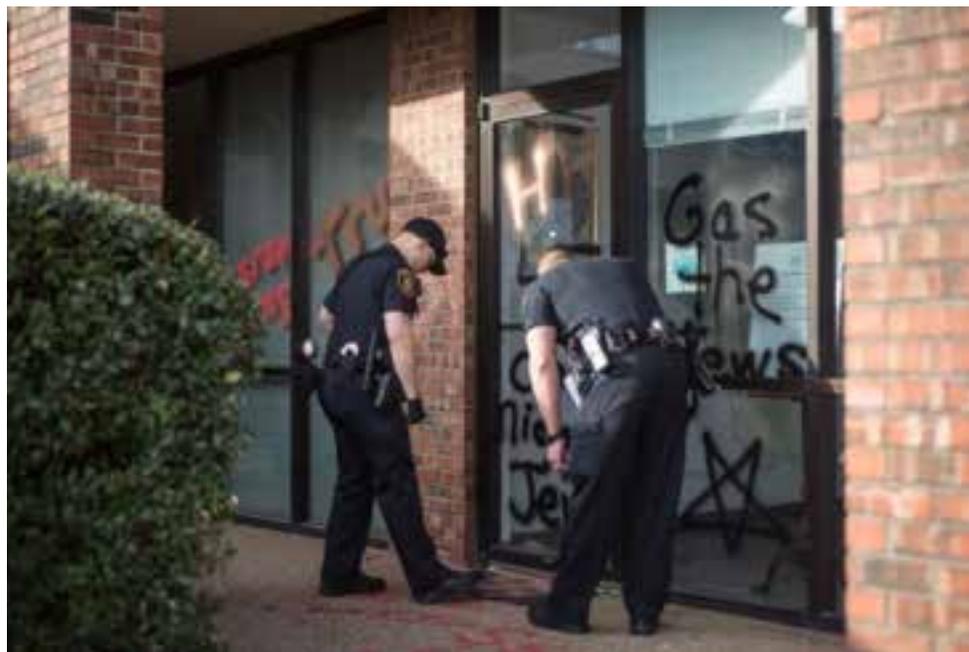
The year witnessed several hate-inspired murders of U.S. Jews, including the shooting attack on ultra-Orthodox Jews in Jersey City,

N.J., in December in which four people were killed, and a brutal stabbing attack in Monsey, N.Y., in the same month in which one man eventually died from his wounds and four were injured.

In April 2019, one woman was killed in a shooting attack at Poway Synagogue in San Diego.

The spate of anti-Semitic harassment and assault continued in Jewish neighborhoods of New York City, including Borough Park, Crown Heights and Williamsburg.

New York state alone recorded 430 antisemitic incidents in 2019, the highest in any state, followed by New Jersey with 345 incidents, California with 330, and Pennsylvania with 109.



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Fran Mendelsohn – Esther and Sid Bratt

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Douglas Lockhart (Kim Yashek's husband) – Rob and Yvonne Oppenheimer
Jeri Kozloff – Rob and Yvonne Oppenheimer

Jewish Family Service

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In memory of:
Fran Mendelsohn – Ruth Isenberg, Sharon and Julian Syret
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Mildred Blask (Wendy Neuhs' mother) – Barbara Nazimov
Jeri Kozloff – Ellen and Don Abramson

JFS Food Pantry

In honor of:
Birth of Jan and Jonathan Simon's grandson – Sue Schlanger

In memory of:
Fran Mendelsohn – Rosalye Yashek
Jeri Kozloff – Annette and Sean Peppard, Sue Schlanger

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- Contributions may be made to the following Funds:
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 - JFS Food Bank
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 - Holocaust Library & Resource Center
 - Doris Levin Fund
 - PJ Library Fund
 - Harry & Rose Sack Fund
 - Evelyn Thompson Fund

Sue B. Viener Memorial Fund (PJ Library)

In honor of:
Ruby Viener's college graduation – Sue Wachs
Birth of Jan and Jonathan Simon's grandson – Carol Greenberg
Birth of Arlene and Irv Ehrlich's grandson – Carol Greenberg

In memory of:
Jeffrey Frank – George Viener

Friendship Circle Fund

In honor of:
Birth of Sylvia Wenger's great-granddaughter – Louise Zeidman

In memory of:
Hedy Miller (Lynn Driben's mother) – Glenn and Gaye Corbin
Mildred Blask (Jessica Neuhs-Endy's grandmother) – Uncle Jay, Uncle Stan, Uncle Les & Aunt Roxy and Bubbe (Tootie Moyer and family)

Evelyn Thompson Nursery School Fund

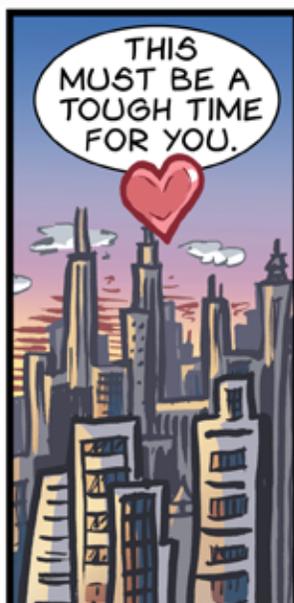
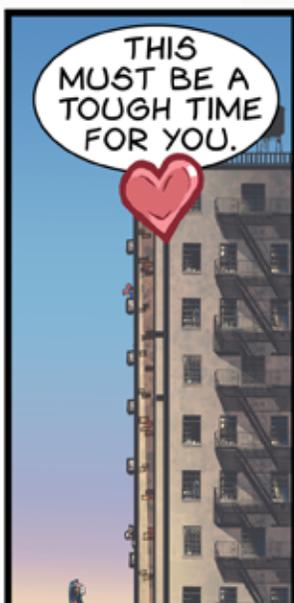
In honor of:
Birth of Debbie Cieplinski's grandson – Beth and Bob Caster
Birth of Irv and Arlene Ehlich's grandson – Beth and Bob Caster
Birth of Sylvia Wenger's great-granddaughter – Beth and Bob Caster
Birth of Jan and Jonathan Simon's first grandson – Beth and Bob Caster

In memory of:
Fran Mendelsohn – Beth and Bob Caster
Jeri Kozloff – Beth and Bob Caster



EVERYTHING'S RELATIVE

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A Zoom conversation with 'Fauda' cast members

By Nancy Russo

Israeli television series on Netflix are all the rage, and recently I watched a Zoom conversation with three stars of "Fauda" Season 3: Boaz Konforty, who plays Avichay; Yaakov Zada Daniel, who plays Eli; and Marina Maximilian Blumin, who plays Hila. Many of you are also fans of this hit show, which tells the story of an elite undercover unit in the Israeli Defense Forces.

The show is presented in Hebrew and Arabic with subtitles. Boaz mentioned that he believes many more Israelis are showing an interest in learning Arabic because of the show, saying, "Most Arabs living in Israel know Hebrew, but most Israelis don't know Arabic." The cast members are happy to see this interest among Israeli fans as well as an interest in the Hebrew language among the countless "Fauda" fans around the world.

Fauda is a very gritty show co-created by Lior Raz, who plays Doron Kavillio. The cast joked that the show started out filming on a shoestring budget, and even though it is one of the top shows on Netflix and a commercial success, the budget hasn't increased! Yaakov praised Lior for still being a down-to-earth guy despite his success in Western films such as "Operation Finale." There are no fancy sets or wardrobes. While the first two seasons took place primarily in the West Bank, the third season is focused on Gaza. The show is filmed in mostly Israeli-Arab villages



in Israel and in some IDF training zones.

The newest member of the cast is Marina, who is well-known in Israel as a singer-songwriter. She noted how welcoming the cast has

been and embraced their tradition of gathering at an actor's home each week to watch the premiere of the episodes in real time.

Each actor wished blessings to Israel on its 72nd birthday and to

everyone around the world as we face the COVID-19 crisis. They look forward to hearing about Season 4 (as do I!).

All three seasons of "Fauda" are streaming on Netflix.

We can't gather for our picnic but we can still enjoy ice cream after the meeting!

2020 Annual Meeting

Save the Date for Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks annual meeting

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Time: 11:30 a.m.

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