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# Jewish Observer

A publication of the Jewish Federation of Central New York

## of Central New York

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## *Violins of Hope*

(7)



**LOOK:**  
STORIES FROM  
OUR COMMUNITY  
(4)



**DON'T MISS:**  
COOKING WITH  
HANANEL  
(9)



**INSIDE:**  
BE A LIGHT IN  
THE DARKNESS  
(14)

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## From the Editor



Barbara Davis

*Lag b'Omer*, the 33rd day of the counting of the *Omer*, has many traditions associated with it. The holiday commemorates a break in a plague that is said to have occurred during the days of Rabbi Akiva. If ever there was a year in which we needed a break in a plague, this is it.

So *Lag b'Omer* has particular resonance in 2021.

Other practices associated with *Lag b'Omer* include the building of bonfires to celebrate the extension of daylight that was said to have occurred so that Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai could complete his deathbed dictation of the *Zohar* and its mystical secrets. Some couples get married on *Lag b'Omer*, because mourning practices during the *Omer* period are lifted on this day. Some Jewish boys who wait until they are three years old to get a haircut have it done on *Lag b'Omer* in a ceremony known as *upsherin*. Some people eat carob on *Lag b'Omer* to recall the story of the carob tree that miraculously grew to provide sustenance for Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai, whose teacher was Rabbi Akiba. Rabbi ben Yochai was forced to seek refuge from the Roman emperor Hadrian in a cave, in front of which a carob tree grew and a spring issued forth, nourishing him for 13 years until Hadrian's death. This connection to the bounties of nature is another reason why outdoor activities are part of the holiday.

In modern times, *Lag b'Omer* has come to symbolize the resilience of the Jewish spirit, a resilience of which we are all in great need in 2021. As we contemplate the horrendous loss of life from our contemporary plague, we cannot help but also consider what our rabbis have said is the cause of the plague that occurred in ancient times: unbridled hatred.

This issue of the *Jewish Observer*, with its focus on *Yom HaShoah*, is a reminder of how hatred can destroy a society. It is all too obvious that our world has once again become divisive, partisan, politicized and hate-filled. The theme of this year's Holocaust remembrance, *Be the Light in the Darkness*, is a potent reminder that we need to work harder than ever to combat disunity, prejudice, discrimination, injustice and brutality in whatever forms they take.

We take hope from the beautiful expressions in words and pictures that our young people offered for this year's Holocaust commemoration and which are included in this month's pages. We take hope that the State of Israel, whose Independence Day we also celebrate this month in this issue, will be a light unto the nations, and that its pioneering work in combatting the coronavirus will bring benefits to the entire world.

Lastly, we hope that our readers will join with Federation in the important work of supporting and sustaining our community through gifts to the annual campaign. Jewish community matters. It helps us feel part of something bigger than just ourselves. Community can bring out the best in us and help us recognize, unquestionably, that we belong. As we sit isolated in our homes and our pods and bubbles, awaiting vaccinations and herd immunity to end our contemporary plague, many of us have come to realize, as never before, how important community is and how much we need to support ours.



## D'var Torah The World Needs Israel

by Rabbi Irvin Beigel

*Hatikva*, Israel's national anthem, gives voice to the yearning of the Jewish heart and soul for the Land of Israel and Jerusalem. For 2000 years, the desire to recreate a Jewish state in

the Land of Israel was prominent in the thoughts of Jews wherever they lived. For some, that meant the messianic hope of rebuilding the Temple and restoring King David's descendants as sovereign rulers. For others, that meant a secular vision of freedom for the Jewish people in our own land and the dignity of working on that land.

Now that the hope of a Jewish state has come to fruition, do we still have that yearning for Israel? Do we understand what that yearning meant to previous generations? Do we understand why Israel should be important to us?

Some of the most dramatic moments in the history of the modern State of Israel are now in the rearview mirror. The joy and pride that Jews felt in 1948 when the state was proclaimed, the palpable fear of annihilation preceding the Six Day War in 1967, the miraculous and speedy victory which reunited the city of Jerusalem under Jewish sovereignty and the Yom Kippur War in 1973 have all become dim memories. To those born after 1973, they are known only from history books.

Several years ago, I had a conversation about Israel with a young man. His priority was to make the world better. That is, of course, a commendable goal encouraged by our tradition. What struck me is that Jewish concerns and Israel, in particular, did not seem to have much priority in his thinking. Neither did he express any strong emotional connection to Israel. I fear that the way this young man thought and felt is not uncommon today, especially among our youth. Being concerned with the world need not and should not prevent us from supporting Israel's right to live in peace among her neighbors as a Jewish state.

Often, discussions of Israel revolve around the politics of the moment. What do we think about a particular policy of Israel's government? Whom do we want to be the next prime minister? The connection of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel and to the State of Israel is far deeper than concern about the latest headline. The longing for Israel is expressed in our daily prayers. Our messianic hopes for peace and redemption are reflected in our hopes for the city of Jerusalem. Our preoccupation with Israel and Jerusalem has sustained us through 2000 years of exile and persecution.

Israel has been a beacon of light for us and for the world. It has frequently been the first nation to respond when other nations suffer a natural disaster. It has provided aid to refugees in Arab countries, even when it was impossible to identify Israel as the source of the help. Israel has always sought peaceful relations with her neighbors, even when it meant giving up land and forcibly evicting Israelis.

Today, Israel is a victim of lies and slander by those who deny the undeniable connection that Jews have had to the Land of Israel and to Jerusalem. Now, as always, Israel deserves our support. We need Israel to connect us to our history. We need Israel where Jewish life and culture flourish. We need Israel as a refuge.

Israel celebrates its 73rd birthday this year. Celebrate Israel, learn more about Israel and defend Israel when she is maligned, whether on college campuses or in white supremacist rants. As much as Israel needs us, we need Israel.

Rabbi Irvin S. Beigel, a member of Shaarei Torah Orthodox Congregation of Syracuse, is Jewish Chaplain at Crouse Hospital, Hutchings Psychiatric Center and Loretto and associate chaplain at Upstate University Hospital.



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## From the Federation Board Chair and President/CEO

Neil Rosenbaum and Michael Balanoff



Neil Rosenbaum



Michael Balanoff

This year, we celebrate the 73rd anniversary of Israel's independence. While the coronavirus pandemic has made our celebration virtual, our feelings of joy and pride are undiminished by the fact that we have to celebrate on little screens.

Federation's support for Israel is unflagging. It is exhilarating to see the list of countries in the Middle East and beyond that are changing their stance and engaging with Israel: the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco. Israel is still a miracle and still a cause for celebration. Israel's leadership in the fields of medicine, science, cyber-security, farming, sustainability, defense, education and computer technology have drawn ever-increasing investment and trade opportunities to this small nation from around the globe.

Advocating for the support and security of the State of Israel is one of the pillars of Federation's mission. Historically, American Jews identified with Israel's internal democracy, progressive social institutions and existential role as a sanctuary for people who spent centuries in diaspora and were systematically slaughtered in the Shoah. Due to strong identification with Israel and a corresponding fear of encouraging antisemitism by criticizing Israel, there has been enormous reluctance to acknowledge any flaws in Israeli policies or actions. Recent research reveals, however, that some of today's younger generations, both Jewish and non-Jewish, see Israel differently.

They diminish the importance of its heroism, growth and contributions while focusing on its relationship with Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

The Federation's position on Israel is clear: unconditional support for Israel's right to live in peace and security. In the Ketuvim, we read that all heroes have feet of clay, flaws that render them vulnerable. Israel is no exception. Like any nation, any society, it is imperfect. But that does not and will not change our position. Israel today faces increasing assaults on its right to exist as a sovereign, democratic Jewish state. Sophisticated tactics, such as those employed by the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, are used to spread anti-Israel messages.

While we recognize the rights of individuals to hold and share their own beliefs, Federation will continue to fight against any attacks which are dangerous and threatening to the Jewish people. Whether acting independently locally, or in partnership with the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, Federation's role is to educate, organize and mobilize the Jewish community to counter acts of delegitimization and to positively shape and lead the conversation about Israel.

**Neil Rosenbaum**  
Board Chair

**Michael Balanoff**  
President/CEO

## Reading the Names of Those Lost in the Holocaust

The memory of the Holocaust grows more distant for each new generation. Only by remembering can the repetition of history be prevented. On Sunday, April 11 from 2 to 4 pm, the annual community Yom Hashoah Memorial Observance will be held via Zoom.

Federation's Community Book of Remembrance contains the names of those who were lost during the Shoah, submitted by their families and friends in Central New York. These names are read by our community's rabbis during the program.

*If anyone in the Central New York Jewish community wants the names of family members who were lost during the Holocaust recorded in the Book of Remembrance and read each year, please send them to [bdavis@jewishfederationcny.org](mailto:bdavis@jewishfederationcny.org).*

## Celebrating Israel on Yom HaAtzmaut in Central New York

Our usual Yom HaAtzmaut festivities are again curtailed by the coronavirus, but our joy in Israel's existence is undiminished. Our Yom HaAtzmaut coordinators, Orit Antosh and Linda Chait Davis, have arranged for a wonderful cooking lesson with Israeli chef Hananel on April 15th. Hananel was part of the Israeli Scout contingent that visited Syracuse in 2010 and the ties have remained strong. Hananel will teach us how to prepare Grandma Hannah's Moroccan Harira (silk) soup. [See story on page 9.]

Our local program will be filled with songs from Israel led by local cantors as well as a display of photos about Israel. **COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO SEND PHOTOS OF THEIR VISITS TO ISRAEL, THEIR PHOTOS OF THEMSELVES, THEIR CHILDREN, FAMILY AND FRIENDS CELEBRATING ISRAEL OR WEARING BLUE AND WHITE to [jo@jewishfederationcny.org](mailto:jo@jewishfederationcny.org) to be included in the slide show. Photos must be received no later than April 1.**



Our local celebration will be linked to the Jewish Federations of North America's virtual celebration of Israeli Independence Day. Exact timing is not available at press time, but information will be sent out via Constant Contact and Community Happenings.



## ABECEDARIUM of FEDERATION SUPPORT

Each month, the *Observer* will highlight the agencies and organizations that are supported by Federation's donors through their gifts to the annual campaign.



*Because of you*, Federation can offer summer CAMPERSHIPS so our children can know the immense joy of summer Jewish camp. Application forms and more information can be found on the Federation website:

<https://jewishfederationcny.org/jewish-summer-camperships/>

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*During the war, the Germans plundered Jewish homes, schools and synagogues in Salonika, Greece. In 1943, Nazis transported 37,000 Salonika Jews to Auschwitz. 90% were gassed and cremated on arrival. Most of the Salonika Jews who stayed behind or lived in the Balkans were eventually annihilated. Of the 65,000 Sephardic Salonika Jews prior to WW II, fewer than 1,000 returned home after the war. Alberto Torres was one of them. His credo of doing whatever was necessary to get through a day was significant to his survival. His vow to stay alive and be a witness fueled his strength and determination. He never succumbed. Here is his story, as told by his son.*

# Alberto's Story

by Morris Torres

**It was in his family's spacious kitchen that Alberto found his calling. The air dripped with cinnamon and cloves. You could inhale scents of brown sugar, freshly picked apples, and lemon. Large bowls of almonds, walnuts and pistachios surrounded these ingredients. "He see recipe only one time. He take recipe and change one or two thing. Sometime he add spice, sometime he remove spice. Always taste better when he finish," said Ester Arama Torres of her youngest son. "Cooking not hard, only need practice. Baking is art. My son Alberto has gift. He make pastries and cake like I never see before."**

Alberto befriended a baker named Gus, who ran a concession store near Alberto's home. Gus recalled: "Alberto stop and look store almost every day. He ask many questions. We talk long time. Then I ask questions. I find he can make lots of recipes. He tell to me he try different ways to make pastries. I ask him to come back tomorrow and bake for me." Gus was delighted with the result. "My boy, my boy, everything you bake, I enjoy. You have talent. I bake all life and you just as good as me." Gus was awed by Alberto's aptitude for baking. "It like he born to do this. He not only baker, he like painter. I am very proud of this young man. He always work hard. We never say bad things to each other. I love him with whole heart, like son."

When Alberto was 21, Gus came down with pneumonia. Without antibiotics to treat his disease, after six agonizing weeks, Gus passed. His sisters met with Alberto and told him, "Gus's wish was to give you store with both big ovens. He love you, Alberto. You make last five years happy ones. Our brother never happy to work until you come. He like teaching you very much. We never see him smiling all the time before."

By the time he turned 22, Alberto owned two concession stands offering homemade pasties such as baklava, kataefi, melomakarena, risogalo, koulourachia, along with cookies and cakes. He did special orders for parties and weddings. Everything was homemade. At home there



was always enough to eat and music in the house. Life was good.

*In 1942 the Nazis invaded Greece. Their invasion was brutal. The German occupation met with little resistance. Salonika had Greece's largest group of Sephardic Jews.*

"One day, three German soldiers come to store. One was officer. They look at merchandise and order sweets and coffees. They sit, eat food, make jokes with laughing. After one hour the officer come to me. I thought he pay bill.

"Who own store?" he asked.

"I do," Alberto said.

"Records say you are Jew. Tomorrow, this store and the other one you own will be closed."

Alberto approached the officer. "Why?" he asked.

The officer carefully studied our father. "Because Jews don't deserve business. If make trouble, Judah, you will be sorry. Be sure you closed tomorrow."

*All Jewish businesses were forced to close. Stars of David were sewn on shirt sleeves to distinguish Jews from non-Jews. Constant harassment, rocks and broken windows were the order of the day. All Jewish families were given a strict curfew. If you were caught out of your home during the curfew, you were imprisoned or taken to a labor camp in one of the Greek ghettos, or worse. The entire Sephardic Jewish community of Salonika, Greece, all 65,000 strong, was essentially captive in their homes.*

"We have little food. We share with Jewish neighbors. During day, my brother Ova, my brother-in-law Mazleah and I go look food. Sometime, we get half day work

with family friends. Sometime we steal. Family hungry. Some Gentiles sneak us food. Very dangerous for them. If caught, they sent to prison, or worse. Soon that food stop coming. We pray. We can't believe it get worse. How can peoples be so bad? I remember dairy where Papa got milk for route. I take chance and go there. Owner always kind with me. He say to come very early in morning, between four and five in morning. Take as much milk and cheese as need. No money. If catch you, you forget my name. Older sister Aida have two very small children. Papa lose job. Milk important for young."

*All Jewish men between eighteen and forty-five years old were told to gather in Liberty Square in the very center of Salonika.*

"We told if work in Greek labor camps for Germans, our families treated good. Ova, Mazleah and me talk about what to do. Our parents older. Mazleah and Aida have young children. Important for family to stay in Greece. We all volunteer for the work. During day, we get little rest, little food and water, work hard. We beaten and treated badly. Because Baron Hirsch Ghetto three hours away, we not go home. At least we know family is safe."

"When return after three months, house empty," Ova said. "Where are parents, sisters, babies? Furniture gone, clothes thrown on floor. House is big mess. It look like somebody leave in hurry. Germans promise keep family safe. They lie to us. We talk with neighbors. They say whole family moved almost one month ago. Lots of people in and out from house. All furniture taken. This happening all over Salonika to Jewish families."

*The Germans had deceived them. This ruse served two purposes. It resulted in free hard labor, and it eliminated interference from the younger, stronger, Jewish men. Alberto, Ova and Mazleah were all that remained. They went to the German authorities and were told the rationale for transporting the family was the need for more labor in Germany. They were assured the elders would have easy jobs and women or children would be used for cooking and cleaning. The three were told they would be transported to Germany to rejoin their family in two days.*

"Maybe they lie again," Alberto said. "So far they lie on everything."

"We must think about parents. Papa and Mama are older. Maybe we can help. Sisters there too." Ova said.

"My children there. We must go to them. I miss them so much!" said Mazleah, and he began to weep.

*Alberto, Ova and Mazleah decided to be transported in hopes of rejoining their family. The Germans used the ploy of reuniting families in order to transport Jewish men to Germany. All the men who showed up that fateful morning were herded into cattle cars. There was no room to sit. They stood the entire trip from Salonika to the Birkenau-Auschwitz complex. Some of the older prisoners and those with health problems did not survive the trip.*

"When we get to train station, Germans give us bread only for breakfast. Very little water. I hear people in cars moaning with sounds of death. They suffering. How can this be? We treated like beasts. We not ready for horror that's waiting for us. When we get to Birkenau-Auschwitz, it be night. Maybe ten to twenty percent of people die on trip. They empty cars with bodies. Throw bodies on ground like garbage. Wagons come and take bodies away. Very bright lights and lots of shouting. We not know where we are. We see doctor quickly. He examine you for one minute and tell you left line or right line. Ova and me in left line, Mazleah in right line."

*Alberto and Ova saw smoke coming from several large industrial-type chimneys about a quarter mile away. The air was filled with unknown smells, and many tiny particles danced around the smoke. One prisoner who had been there for six months told them, "The particles could be your family. They burn the dead. They kill first with poison gas, then burn body, so no grave. This way, no work for them. My parents gone. I ask lots of questions. They beat me badly. I learn to shut mouth. Be careful what say. They shoot you if want."*

"We sure whole family dead." Alberto said. "Ova and me only ones left from big family. Ova get sick with bad cough and fever. He not get up one morning. I tell Ova you must get up, they kill you if you sick. Germans beat and shoot peoples when angry. Nobody tell you why. They hurt you for no reason. I was lucky. They ask for cook and baker for kitchen. I tell I do both. They put me in kitchen where I bake bread and make soup for prisoners. I use vegetables for soup when I have. Mostly use potatoes. I do what is necessary to stay alive."

"I wake one morning and find Ova is gone. Ova's whole barracks not here. Nothing I can do. This suffering too much. Sometime wish I was dead. I tell myself over and over every day to stay alive. Stay alive one more day. Just one more day. Do

what they say. Sneak food from kitchen. You cannot die. Nobody to tell story.”

“Soon the Germans know they not win war. They take all prisoners on march up mountain. If can’t walk anymore, they shoot you and leave body. Lots of peoples too weak, they give up and drop to ground. They shot. It like suicide. I in line with five Greek friends. We know what’s happening. They kill us all. We tell to each other, when soldiers move to front of line, we run for forest. We see chance and go. Germans not see right away. They shoot. They miss. We had good start. Forest thick. They not follow. We hide in forest three days. We very cold. We eat snow. On third night see barn. Farmer see us. He scared to help. He say, ‘I bring few blankets and food. You stay one night, then leave in morning. Too dangerous for my family.’

“We thank farmer and leave next day. Then we hear tanks. See Russian flag on tanks. We yell and jump. Never so happy. We are free! From small group of six Greeks, only three live. Other three die from starvation and illness.”

“Nobody from family left when return to Salonika. Three months later, Jewish agency tell me Ova alive in France. Next

day, I talk with him on phone. We can’t stop crying. We each think other one was dead. I never give up hope. Salonika like cemetery now. People walk around like dead. Everyone avoid me when see tattoo on arm. They know I live through hell. They ashamed they do nothing to help”

*After the war, Alberto married Eva, a Hungarian survivor who also lost her family. They had a son and a daughter, three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.*

“We start over with nothing. But we still alive. We make new family.”

*He tells his story for three reasons:*

“First, we must never forget what happening. I still see hate in news. Second, you can’t turn away. If see any kind of hate, to any person, you must speak up. Not caring is as bad as hate. I tell stories to be witness to what occur. Everything I tell you is truth. I was there. Open da brain, carry stories with you. Third, we must learn to treat others with kindness. All peoples.”

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# The Picture on the Wall

by Howard Weinberger, M.D.

My wife's maternal grandfather came to America alone from Miedzyrzecz, Poland in the early 20th century. His name was Moshe Noziczki. He was known as Morris Nositzer when he landed in the Lower East Side. He married Eva Biederman, a young woman from his home town in Poland, and they settled in Brooklyn, where they raised three children: Bessie (my wife's mother), Sadie and Sammy.



When I first met Grandpa Morris, he was in his 70s, suffering from a variety of ailments. Both Morris and Eva spoke broken English and worked in a variety of occupations. Eva successfully navigated bus and subway rides to work in a “bristle factory” for many years. Grandpa Morris had a number of enterprises, including repairing umbrellas and bicycles. At family gatherings, they were warm and pleasant people who seemed quite content. I was told that Grandpa Morris' family in the “old country” had been in “the fur business.”

I was also told that when Grandpa Morris came to America, he left behind ten brothers and sisters, all of whom perished in the Holocaust. It was made clear that we were not to ask him questions about them, because it would be too painful.

The only evidence of his family was a faded black and white photo which hung in the hallway of my in-laws' apartment. The picture was taken in a cemetery and it showed five middle-aged men and five women and an older, bearded man, who was their father, Chaim Noziczki.

Grandpa Morris died in 1963 and Grandma Eva lived another twelve years. I don't think we thought much about the photo until they passed away and then, in the course of reviewing the remains of a long marriage, we recalled the photo and searched for it, without success.

I belong to the Yivo Center, a repository of Yiddish literature and Yizkor books. I decided to see if there was one from Miedzyrzecz and, to my surprise, there was. In it, I found a copy of the photo

that had been in my in-laws' hallway. The caption read “The Noziczki Family, Well Known Mezeritch Fur Traders.”

Here was the photo of Grandpa Morris' family, but still with no way to identify the family members. Then, in the summer of 2019, I received an email from a retired attorney in Connecticut who was researching her husband's family. She had linked him to a man named Louis Norman, who had emigrated from Poland to the US in the late 1800s, changed his name from Noziczki and was from Miedzyrzecz. She identified his older brother as Chaim and listed the names of Morris' five brothers and five sisters, their spouses' names and their children's names. She reported their birth dates and the dates of their murders – some in the Treblinka concentration camp, some in the Warsaw ghetto, some even in Miedzyrzecz.

Part of the mystery of the picture on the wall has been solved. Grandpa Morris had ten brothers and sisters; now we know their names and that they had families. And we know that all were killed in the Holocaust. Well, almost all were killed. Incredibly, the records show that one child, Leah Fittermann, daughter of Grandpa Morris' sister, survived and emigrated sometime after the war to Israel. She died there in 2009. We do not have any further information about her. That part of the story is still to be uncovered.

After 75 years, we now know much more about Grandpa Morris' family and can say Kaddish for each of them.

# My Mother's Story

by Ruth Friedeman Federman Stein

“You wanted to know how I got out of Germany?” I suddenly heard my mother say. “Very simple, though as I look back upon it, I wonder how I had the courage to do it. One night, I got on my bicycle, met a small group of people, and the leader took us to the border. Then we crossed secretly into Holland, avoiding armed patrols.

“This was before the Nazi invasion, so I was able to work and to move around freely. Because it was wartime, foreigners were supposed to carry their passports with them at all times. If they were caught without them, they were immediately deported. Since I had entered the country illegally, I had no passport and had to be especially careful.

“I was quite fortunate. I stayed at the home of a wonderful woman. I had a job. But one spring day almost destroyed me.

“It was a lovely day. Amstelveense Paark was showing off its colors. I was strolling with a young man, Arthur Halswald, who had also escaped from Germany. We were enjoying the lovely plants growing in the park—such a contrast to the war news and our own fears.

“I said to Arthur, ‘Let's go see the pussy willows. They're so pretty. We must pick a few to take home with us!’ Arthur became nervous and said he didn't think we were allowed to pick anything. ‘Isn't it forbidden to pick flowers in a public park?’

“Just as he said that, I saw two youngsters with pussy willow branches tied to their bikes. ‘Look, Arthur,’ I said. ‘Those little girls have picked pussy willows.’ ‘Yeah,’ he said, ‘and look, here comes a policeman on his bicycle. He's going to scold them. We'd better not pick anything.’ ‘I guess you're right,’ I said regretfully.

“We continued our walk, looking at the budding tulips. Suddenly we heard squealing brakes behind us. We jerked around and saw a policeman about to confront us. We froze. I tried desperately to keep from showing fear in case it would betray me.

“*Wat haat U da in de Bos gedaan?*” asked the officer in Dutch.

“Sir, we were only looking at the pussy willows.”

“Did you pick any?”

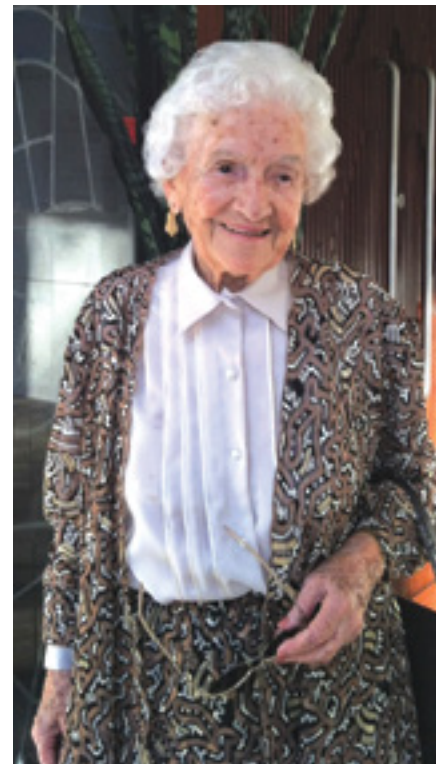
“Oh, no, sir. We were just admiring them.”

“Are you foreigners?”

“Y-yes, sir.”

“Let me see your passports.”

“Y-yes, sir.” Arthur fumbled in his coat pocket, picked out his passport and thrust it into the hand of the policeman. After a cursory inspection, the policeman nodded



and said, ‘Very good, and now the young lady’s.’

“There was a moment of strangling silence. Finally, taking a deep breath, I said, ‘Sir, when boys go for a walk, they stick their passports into their pockets, but with girls, it's different. We can't take our purses with us, so we leave our passports at home.’

‘Aj. I see,’ said the officer. ‘I notice you come from Germany. Are your parents still in that country?’

‘Well, yes, sir. They're trying desperately to get out, but it's becoming nearly impossible.’

‘According to the law, I have to take you, young lady, to the police station and send you back to Germany immediately. The SS men would take care of you at the border — probably send you to the nearest concentration camp. You know that, don't you?’

“My pale face nodded silently.

‘However.’ I brightened perceptibly. ‘I wouldn't want to spoil your walk. Next time, though, don't leave your passport at home.’

With a quick wink, the officer strode to his bicycle and quietly rode away. “



# The Story of the Violins of Hope

**Even amidst the unimaginable evils of the Nazi ghettos and concentration camps of the Shoah, music offered Jews a haven and solace, a way to preserve and assert their humanity, sometimes even an escape from death.**

Half a century ago, Amnon Weinstein, an Israeli violinmaker, met a man who brought his instrument to his shop for repair. The man had survived Auschwitz because his job was to play the violin while Nazi soldiers marched Jews to their death. When Weinstein opened the violin, he saw ashes.

Weinstein's parents had immigrated to Palestine in 1938, where his father Moshe opened a violin shop. After the war, Moshe learned the fate of his family and suffered his first heart attack. He never spoke of his family again. When Amnon asked his mother about their relatives, she showed



him a book about the Holocaust with horrifying photos of the dead and said, "This is our family." Then she broke down in tears, unable to say more.

Weinstein became one of the most respected violin makers in the world and determined to reclaim his lost heritage. He started locating violins that were played by Jews in the camps and ghettos, painstakingly repairing them so that they could be played again on the concert stage. Although most of the musicians who originally played the instruments were silenced by the Holocaust, their voices and spirits live on through the violins that Amnon and his son Avshalom have lovingly restored. They call these instruments the "Violins of Hope."

At the Federation's community commemoration of *Yom HaShoah* on Sunday April 11, 2 to 4 pm, musicologist James A. Grymes, author of *Violins of Hope: Instruments of Hope and Liberation in Mankind's Darkest Hour*, will tell the

inspiring story of the strength of the human spirit and the power of music played by Jewish musicians during the Holocaust. Symphoria violinist Susan Jacobs will perform traditional pieces that might have been played on their violins. "Even while suffering, Jews in the ghettos found ways to express their humanity in music that enabled them to escape from reality and give voice to their yearning for freedom, and to find comfort and hope. This year when we hear their music, we celebrate their courage," noted Alan Goldberg, coordinator of the community memorial.

The names of family members of Central New Yorkers who perished in the Holocaust will be read by the members of the Rabbinical Council. Psalms will be sung by Cantors Eglash and Jaffe.

***The program will be on Zoom. Registration information will be sent out one week before the program.***



## The Yellow Candle Project

Central New York children and teens enrolled in the Day School, Community Hebrew School and Epstein School will be able to join with others around the world this year in participating in the Yellow Candle Project, a project of Maccabi GB. The project is designed to help young people remember Jewish Holocaust victims on *Yom HaShoah* and broaden their understanding of the Holocaust in the safe space of their homes.

Federation will distribute yellow remembrance candles to the students and teachers in each of the schools it sponsors. Each Yellow Candle comes with a card with the name, age, date and place of death of someone who perished in the Holocaust. Participants are invited to light their candles on the eve of *Yom HaShoah* on April 7<sup>th</sup> and to post an image of their lit yellow candle on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> April at #YellowCandle, thereby creating a world-wide collective communal memorial. If they prefer, they may light their candles during the Central New York virtual community commemoration on April 11<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm and post their pictures at #jewishfederationcny.

"The Yellow Candle Project is a simple



but vital tool in the education of the next generation of Jews to ensure that we continue to remember and amplify that remembrance far and wide," noted Anick Sinclair, who is spearheading the project locally. "The innovation in this initiative is the detail about the individual victim. This is an incomparable way to bring each story to life, to be remembered always."

***There will be a limited number of candles available for purchase locally. The candles cost \$5 apiece and pickup will be at 6 pm on April 5th; location TBA. To purchase a candle, please email yellowcandleproject@jewishfederationcny.org.***



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## » Book Review

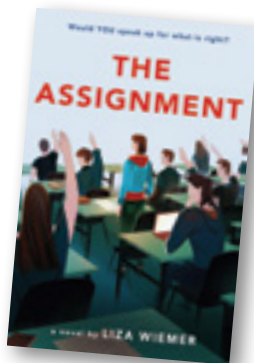
## The Assignment by Liza Wiemer

Reviewed by Henia Zames

Liza Wiemer's novel, *The Assignment*, is a work of realistic fiction based upon an incident that happened in Oswego in 2017. The storyline follows the experience of two high school seniors who take a stand against an immoral assignment, given by their favorite teacher, to take the Nazis' point of view during the Holocaust and justify the Final Solution as a valid option. Half the class is told to argue in favor of exterminating Jews, and half the class is to debate the merits of sterilizing Jews and putting them in work camps and ghettos in order to implement the Final Solution.

The two students who object and stand up for what is right, Cade Crawford and Logan March, speak first to their teacher about why they are very uncomfortable with the assignment. When their initial concerns are ignored, they take the issue to the principal. He, however, only offers an alternate assignment, allowing no further discussion about the original assignment. This angers the two students because they know that the antisemitic assignment should not be given at all. The book describes the difficult experiences that Logan and Cade endure so they can prove that no one can ever offer a justification for the killing of six million Jews.

The novel also educates readers about the Wannsee Conference and how horrendous the Holocaust was. It also raises questions about antisemitism and how hateful and



ignorant it can be.

The *Assignment* is a YA (young adult) book but is written using language that allows even younger readers to learn that it is not just okay, but encouraged to do the right thing, even if you are worried about what people may think of you because of it. Overall, this book has the ability to make incredibly positive impacts within schools throughout the nation by allowing students to learn about what it means to stand up for what is right.

*Henia Zames is a graduate of the Syracuse Hebrew Day School and a junior at Christian Brothers Academy.*



**Historical note:** At the *Yom HaShoah* memorial observance of 2017, Federation recognized Jordan April and Archer Shurtliff, the two Oswego High School seniors who spoke up because they felt it was inappropriate to have students formulate an argument in defense of the extermination of Jewish people. They were given a standing ovation by those in attendance.

## » Movie Review

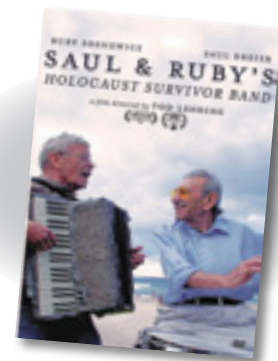
## Saul & Ruby's Holocaust Survivor Band

by Phyllis Zames

*Saul & Ruby's Holocaust Survivor Band* opens with title screens accompanied by the noise of a train moving along tracks, a sound which can evoke a variety of emotions—from excitement about a journey about to be undertaken to fear that we are headed to a concentration camp. As the viewer considers which to focus on, the audio changes to a merry tune, and we are introduced for the first time to the members of the Holocaust Survivor Band. Soon, Saul Dreier, the founder of the band, explains his motivation for creating it: "I went to my wife Clara. I told her what I wanna do. So she told me, 'You're crazy.' Then I went to my Rabbi, told him the same story. He told me also I'm crazy. So my instinct told me, that just on the contrary, because they told me I'm crazy, I'm gonna do it."

Saul, age 91 at the time of the filming, and Ruby Sosnowicz, age 87, the two stars of this documentary, both grew up in Poland during World War II. The stories of how they escaped the fate of so many of their family members and fellow Jews are woven throughout the film, as we are invited to look on at intimate details of their lives today as well as their personal histories. Saul and Ruby, along with Ruby's daughter Chana Sosnowicz, who is a singer with the band, share a common goal: to return to Poland with the entire band and give performances in memory of the six million Jews who were killed in the Holocaust. As Tod Lending

tells their story, he maintains a brilliant balance between the traumatic history of the survivors and the intense love they experience that propels them to achieve their goal.



Through their love of family and music, Saul and Ruby teach us about bravery, while suffering from past pain and new grief. Admiration for the Holocaust Survivor Band is nurtured through the sharing of rehearsals. The arguments and kvetching are a delight to witness, as are the adoring faces of their enraptured audiences in community centers, synagogues, even shopping malls. We hear Ruby's deep devotion for his wife as he plays the keyboard and sings Elvis love songs in his scratchy, Polish accent. We get to know Saul and Ruby as they banter with each other, as they describe their marriages and as they sort through memories of suffering the trauma of the Holocaust.

We see them as remarkable individuals, but through the photographs and videos of ghettos and concentration camps that are delicately placed throughout the film, we realize that they are not unusual. It's just that we are incredibly fortunate that they are still alive. These gentle musicians are so easy to love. They connect us to those who were lost in the Holocaust and to those who survived but are no longer with us. At one large concert, Ruby remarks, "I don't believe it that I'm here. Music, music make me alive when I was in the Holocaust time, because music—when you play music, you forgot that you have to eat." These men, now ages 95 and 90, are still defying evil by making music and sharing their story. They remind us that no matter what obstacles are placed around us, we have the power to choose how we will overcome them. For Jewish Holocaust survivors, Saul says, Jewish music "brings everything back to life."

## Jews and Coffee and Passover

This is the beginning of a two-part article and a fascinating story. Since time is short and the story is long, we will begin with a Passover coffee question: Why does Maxwell House Coffee produce the most widely used haggadah in America? Here's the answer: As coffee became popular among American Jews, some consumers were under the mistaken impression that the drink was derived from a bean, not a berry. If coffee were derived from beans, any drink derived from them would be *kitniot* and thus off-limits on Passover. However, coffee is actually derived from berries, which *are* kosher for Passover. To spread this word, Maxwell House hired one of New York's first Jewish advertising agencies to develop and print Passover haggadahs, which were given out free with the purchase of kosher-for-Passover Maxwell House coffee.



Over 50 million Maxwell House *haggadot* have been distributed since 1923. In the next issue of the *JO*, you will learn more about the connection between Jews and coffee, around the world and here at home.



## Cooking with Hananel: A Special Treat for Central New York for *Yom HaAtzmaut*

Hananel Edri was a working singer and artist until the coronavirus pandemic canceled live concerts. He then embarked on a unique journey, becoming an Israeli Master Chef and creating his own culinary-musical web series called *Levashel Im Hananel* or *Cooking with Hananel*.

Born in Kiryat Shmona near the northern border of Israel to a warm Moroccan family, Hananel spent much of his childhood hiding in bomb shelters. The noise of Katyusha rockets firing from Lebanon and Syria sounded more frequently to him than the school bell. Amid the horror of terrorism, he discovered a refuge that saved his soul: the stage and music. He started dancing, acting, singing and performing at age seven and was considered a child prodigy. At 13, he starred in a Canadian production of "Fiddler on the Roof," and at 16, he went on a three-month tour in the United States and Canada with the Israeli Scouts Friendship Caravan, which included a never-forgotten stop in Syracuse.

After completing military service in the IDF Entertainment Unit as commander of the Navy Band, Hananel became the lead



singer for the hip hop band 845 Express. He then moved to New York City to attend the Circle in the Square Theater School, while still flying regularly back to Israel to perform. After six years in the Big Apple, he returned to Israel and eventually embarked on a solo career as a creator, singer and artistic director of HolyBand, an ensemble that performs for Jewish communities around the world.

Then came COVID-19. During lockdown in Tel Aviv, Hananel found a new passion in the kitchen. In the past, he led culinary trips for Birthright Israel and hosted conceptual musical dinners, but the new reality provided time to explore and create food. He started baking and cooking on Instagram and Facebook, which led to his appearance

on Israeli Master Chef. At his unforgettable audition, he presented his first dish to the judges with a song, plating a show for them. He received the coveted apron and cooked some fantastic dishes on TV.

His main focus now is combining his two passions, which led him to create the web series "*Levashel Im Hananel*," in which he hosts Israeli artists, friends and guests in his kitchen, where they sing together and prepare his culinary creations. Every episode is a celebration of music, food and love.

For *Yom HaAtzmaut*, Hananel has given Central New York access to one of his most special episodes in which he and his Moroccan grandmother make traditional *harira* soup and display their unique bond.

### Grandma Hannah's Moroccan Harira (silk) soup

Chopped herbs: parsley, coriander, dill and celery

- 2 large chopped onions
- 4 large crushed tomatoes
- 1 cup soaked chickpeas
- 1 cup soaked lentils
- 1 pound cubed beef ribs
- 1 can tomato paste
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 tablespoon dry yeast
- 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper
- Turmeric
- 3 tablespoons oil

Sear the meat on both sides in an oiled pot.

Add the chopped onions, tomatoes and turmeric and stir for about a minute.

Add the chopped herbs, chickpeas and lentils and stir all the ingredients.

Add water to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the pot and cook for about an hour, making sure the chickpeas and lentils are softened. Then add salt and pepper to taste.

Add the roux: in a separate bowl mix 1 cup water + 2 tablespoons flour + tomato paste + juice of 1 lemon + dry yeast. Mix well, pour into the boiling pot and stir until the soup is fully thickened.

## An Extra Special Israeli Treat for *Yom HaAtzmaut*

In honor of Israel Independence Day, which starts on the evening of April 14, 2021, *Yom HaAtzmaut* Celebration co-chairs Linda Chait Davis and Orit Antosh are excited to share a recipe for a unique Israeli treat: *krembos*. *Krembos* are chocolate-coated domes of whipped marshmallow on a biscuit base. They are Israel's favorite confection. Fifty million of them (nine per person) are eaten each year. The name *krembo* is derived from *krem* meaning "cream" and *bo* meaning "in it." *Krembos* are deeply nostalgic (think Proust's *madeleines*) and also seasonal, available only October to February because they melt when exposed to heat. *Btay avon!*

### Homemade Krembos of Honey, Chocolate and Halva

Recipe courtesy of



Makes 20 Krembos

#### For the bottom of rice crackers, chocolate and halva:

- 3.5 oz dark, chopped chocolate
- 2 T raw tahini
- A pinch of salt
- 1 cup rice crackers (possible also from whole rice)

#### For Swiss honey meringue:

- 2 large egg whites, at room temperature
- 1/4 cup plus 1T sugar
- 2.5 T honey.
- A pinch of salt

#### For the dark chocolate coating:

- 9 oz 70% dark chocolate, chopped
- 2 T sunflower or canola oil
- Sesame seeds for garnish

#### For the bottom:

Melt the dark chocolate in the microwave or in a double boiler for a smooth liquid.

Heat the tahini in a separate small bowl so that it becomes completely liquid and mix into the chocolate. Add the salt and mix. Add the rice crackers and mix well so that they are completely coated in chocolate.

Transfer the mixture to a pan lined with baking paper, cover with additional baking paper and roll with a rolling pin into a sheet 3-5 mm thick. Transfer to the refrigerator or freezer to stabilize.

Cut circles from the bottom about 1.5 inches in diameter with the help of a cutter, transfer to the refrigerator until assembly.

#### For Swiss honey meringue:

Transfer all the meringue ingredients to a bowl of a heat-resistant electric mixer, beat lightly with a whisk and place the bowl over double boiler placed on a medium-low flame. Make sure that the bottom of the bowl does not touch the water directly so that the

proteins are cooked gently by the steam only.

Cook the meringue for about 3-4 minutes, whisking lightly with a whisk occasionally, until the sugar is completely dissolved and the mixture becomes slightly light and quite warm to the touch

Transfer the bowl to the electric mixer and beat for 8-10 minutes for a firm and shiny meringue.

Sprinkle the creme brulee bottoms at intervals on a baking sheet lined with baking paper.

When the meringue is ready, transfer it to a pastry bag and put large mounds of meringue on each bottom.

Freeze the krembos for an hour or more until fully set. (Do not shorten the freezing process; it is critical to success.)

#### For dark chocolate coating:

Have a pan lined with baking paper.

Melt the chocolate in a double boiler. Add oil and mix. Pour into a glass, cool until it is not too hot but still very liquid.

Dip each krembo in a quick motion in the coating, lifting it immediately and tilting slightly so that excess coating drips back into the glass.

Arrange the krembos on a baking sheet lined with baking paper. Sprinkle sesame seeds over each krembo. Transfer the krembos to the refrigerator to stabilize the coating. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator or in the freezer.



# A Time to Reconnect with Our World, Our Community and Ourselves

by Joanne Villegas

It has been over a year since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. For many, it has been a time of unanticipated disconnectedness. As a hopeful spring season approaches, it gives us time to reconnect. Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevre Chas will present a five-course virtual series titled *Master Class: A Time to Reconnect with Our World, Our Community, and Ourselves*.

The CBS-CS spring fundraiser event includes programs on the general theme of reconnecting to ourselves and to each other and covers the topics of art/music, food/cooking, environment/science and social justice. "As we anticipate being able to get together in person again to celebrate, to mourn, or just to enjoy close human contact, we are pleased to use our Zoom series to renew our connections with each other and the community," says Jonathan Adler, co-creator of the program.

Each class, an hour in length and starting at 7 pm, will be taught by local masters of their field including:

Rhea Jezer: *Are You Ready for the Climate Change?* [Earth Day, April 22]. Explore advances in green technology and how each of us can work toward containing and reducing the effects of climate change.

Al-Amin Muhammad: *We Rise Above The Streets* [April 29]. Build new connections and stay interconnected

through volunteering and giving.

Dr. Kathleen Roland-Silverstein: *The Healing Power of Song* [May 6]. Learn how creativity through singing can have a positive effect on mental and physical health and be a tool for wellness.

Don & Bette Siegel: [May 13 and June 3]. A two-part Cooking & Food series *Master Dishes from CBS-CS Catering*. Attendees will learn to prepare catering's heirloom recipes for savory "shul chicken" and roast potatoes, challah, sweet kugel and vegetarian Chinese dumplings.

Maggid Jim Brulé: *Using Stories to Build Connections – and Community* [June 8]. Using a blend of traditional stories and easy storytelling exercises, participants will have to opportunity to understand why stories mean so much to us in ways we don't always consciously appreciate.

"We are excited to coordinate this innovative programming series and welcome everyone to sign up and learn from our Master Class presenters," said program co-creator, Jarrod Bagatell. Registration will be \$36 per household per program or \$180 for the whole series. Those who complete the series will receive special certificates. There will be a "door prize" awarded at random to one of those who register for entire series. **For details and registration go to: [cbcs.shulcloud.com/form/master-class21](https://cbcs.shulcloud.com/form/master-class21)**

## Local Teen Elected to International Executive Board of USY

by Sonali McIntyre

**Connection. Friendship. Confidence.** Those are the three keywords Sophie Scheer used to describe USY. A senior at Fayetteville-Manlius High School, Sophie is the daughter of Abby and Jeffrey Scheer. Sophie comes from a family of USYers. Her parents met in USY and her father served as the region's president from 1988 to 1989. Additionally, all her parents' siblings were involved in USY. Sophie herself is an extremely involved teen -- volunteering as a *madrikha* at TAY's religious school, sitting on the campaign cabinet for the Jewish Federation, planning and volunteering for the Dance Marathon benefitting Camp Good Days and designing and selling her bead lizards on Instagram and donating all the proceeds to Camp Good Days.

"Sophie is enthusiastic about Jewish life and is dedicated to sharing her enthusiasm with other teens and young adults," said Cantor Esa Jaffe of Temple Adath Yeshurun.

Sophie's first USY convention was in the spring of 2017. "A couple of my friends and I went together. I had always heard so much about USY because most people around me were members and had told me so many great things about it," she said.

Most recently, Sophie was elected to the International Executive Board of USY. She is the Communications Vice-President, a position that charges her with creating social media initiatives, promoting USY and overseeing the communications of the International General Board.

"USY has given me many things. It has given me a stronger connection to Judaism and Israel in a way I love. I have made connections to Jewish teens from all around North America and the leadership positions



have built my confidence up so much. I have learned so many skills that will help me in the future. Overall, USY has helped me grow, learn and make so many awesome connections," Sophie commented.

As we have all come to know, the pandemic has changed the way we share experiences and connect with one another. Sophie said, "The pandemic has affected my experience of USY in a major way – both good and bad. I have missed my senior year of conventions and experiences, which is really upsetting, but I have also learned so many new things. The pandemic encouraged me to work even harder by thinking of new ways to make online programs engaging and think up new social media initiatives to keep everyone connected in this crazy time. If the pandemic didn't happen, I might not have run for International Board!"

Why should Jewish teens join USY? Sophie says, "USY is such a special group that has the ability to be awesome for everyone. It's such a welcoming and social environment that even after one event, you're bound to walk away making a new friend. There are so many opportunities to make connections, dive deeper into your Jewish identity and take part in social action projects. USY brings confidence to everyone who is involved."

Following high school, Sophie plans to major in communications and is considering a gap year through USCJ. She would spend nine months in Israel, studying at Hebrew University and volunteering around Israel.

**To support Sophie's fundraising efforts for Camp Good Days, follow her on Instagram @SophieLizardDotCom. To learn more about USY, visit [usy.org](https://usy.org). For more information about Temple Adath Yeshurun, visit [www.adath.org](https://www.adath.org).**

The Board of Directors,  
Rabbi Zehavi & Cantor Jaffe,  
and the Administrative Staff  
of Temple Adath Yeshurun  
wish the entire Jewish Community  
of Central New York a joyous Pesah,  
filled with light and memory.

*!lag kasher v'sameah!*





# JCC Summer Camp Registration Now Open

Who's ready for summer? After a smaller summer camp last year due to the pandemic, the Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center is excited and ready for this summer!

Registration for the JCC of Syracuse's 2021 Camp Joe & Lynne Romano is happening now. The JCC's summer day camp will run weekdays for eight weeks from June 28 through August 20. Like last year, this year's summer camp will serve both preschool and school-age children only. The JCC's SyraCruisin' teen travel camp and other teen programs are currently not scheduled to run this summer because of continued coronavirus health and safety guidelines.

"Last year's camp went extremely well and was a huge success," said the JCC's Pamela Ranieri, director of children's programming. "We had zero cases of COVID-19 among our campers. Everyone did a great job of following the many health and safety protocols we put in place. Now more than ever children need social interaction with peers for their continued wellbeing and development."

Once again, the JCC's top priority this year will be to ensure everyone's health and safety while allowing "kids to be kids" so they can enjoy all the fun that summer camp brings. As of right now, the JCC's 2021 summer camp will again feature limited capacity and enhanced health and safety measures due to current regulations. The JCC follows all CDC and state/local coronavirus guidelines in order to run camp in the safest way possible.

Like last year, the JCC's Camp Romano will again feature curbside drop-off and pick-up of campers, small group sizes and no commingling of camp groups. Campers aged two and older must wear a mask or cloth face covering while indoors, although accommodations will be made based on each child's abilities. Easily-accessible outdoor



School-age camper Xander Maines showing off the model rocket that he made and launched during last summer's Rocketry specialty camp for school-age children.



Journey Stitt shows off her painting during the JCC's Painting specialty camp for school-age children last summer.

and indoor handwashing stations will again be available this summer. Campers will also be provided individual baskets to use onsite to keep their belongings together yet separate from others.

"We're delighted to offer more offsite specialty camps for school-age children this summer as well as limited field trips



From left, JCC camper Naveen Memula washes his hands at a portable outdoor handwashing station with help from camp counselor Lily O'Bryan after getting dropped off at Camp Romano last summer.



JCC early childhood camper Naomi Rosenberg takes a ride on the see-saw on the playground last summer.

to public places," said Marci Erlebacher, JCC executive director. "We also hope to utilize a large outdoor tent again to accommodate multiple groups and social distancing. Should guidelines loosen up before or during summer camp, we will look to update our protocols accordingly and we may even be able to offer additional camp programming options such as programs for teens."

Camp Romano offers a variety of adventurous

and enriching programs so campers can establish lasting friendships, gain experience "by doing" and have loads of fun all summer long. All camps are held at the JCC in DeWitt except for scheduled off-site field trips and certain off-site specialty camps. In all cases, though, the camp day begins and ends at the JCC.

Current JCC membership or program enrollment is not necessary for a child to attend Camp Romano. Early registration is recommended as sessions can closeout quickly. A limited number of scholarships in the form of financial aid are available. The scholarship application deadline is May 28.

**For more information about the JCC's Camp Romano summer day camp, and to request the camp program guide, call 315-445-2360 or visit [www.jccsyr.org](http://www.jccsyr.org).**

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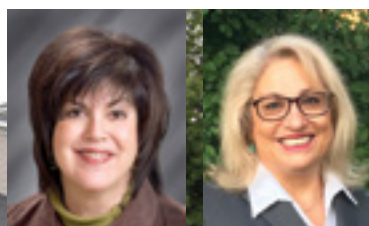
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## Syracuse Community Hebrew School Makes It Work

We have heard often over this past year that so many in the community are making lemonade from the lemons that the COVID-19 pandemic has given us. The Syracuse Community Hebrew School started the year looking to make new, different and exciting lemonade. The school approached the school year looking for ways to embrace online learning and have had tremendous success in meeting these lofty goals. SCHS attributes its success to the efforts of their families and teachers. The school has had an excellent attendance record of close to 90 percent. Its interactive one-to-one or semi-private model of tutoring has resulted in the creation of amazingly close bonds between teachers and students.



In addition to *t'filah* [prayer] and engaging classroom time while on Zoom, the school's other major success this year was the development, working with clergy, of a new *siddur*. The new prayer book provides a more interactive/discussion-based text, especially appropriate for younger students. Students are encouraged to lead parts of the service while on Zoom. School education director Ora Jezer commented, "It warms my heart to see these young, precious kids volunteer to be 'solo' on Zoom for close to 80 screens. This is a testament to the close bond and great support our Jewish community has for our youth."

The school has also participated in JCC's holiday drive-thrus for Chanukah and Purim and has a weekly newsletter which features its student leaders. Running a supplementary school is never easy and the pandemic only made it more difficult. SCHS has risen to the challenge through innovation and working together. "When I talk with parents," says Jezer, "I am blown away by the positivity. We are very proud of our successes."

## Temple Concord Programming



Clifford Sobin is an attorney who is passionate about Israel. He says that this commitment "originated with stories about my mother's experience as a Holocaust survivor. She was born in Austria, forced to move first to France and then Belgium, in an attempt, along with her parents, to avoid the Nazi onslaught. Her searing experience taught me to appreciate courage and determination and has had a significant impact on my worldview." Sobin is the author of *Living in Heaven, Coping with Hell: Israel's Northern Borders—Where Zionism Triumphed, the Kibbutz is Evolving, and the Pioneering Spirit Prevails*. He says that his book "chronicles how Jews settled Israel's northern borders, illuminates the challenges they face and explores why they remain despite the danger." He says that along Israel's northern borders, "I found the soul of a nation. It is where I rediscovered the Israel I grew up loving, and an Israel that binds rather than divides."

**Sobin will speak live via Zoom on Monday, April 12, at 7:30 pm as part of Temple Concord's Regina F. Goldenberg Series. For more information, please call Temple Concord at 315-475-9952 or email [office@templeconcord.org](mailto:office@templeconcord.org).**

The Sisterhood and Brotherhood of Temple Concord will hold a joint meeting on Wednesday, April 28, 2021 at 7:00 pm featuring multi-instrumentalist Joe Eglash, who will do a presentation on "Jewish Music." Joe has been songwriter, musical director and arranger and lead guitarist in many successful live bands. As editor of some of the most popular and widely-used publications, songbooks, series, and anthologies in the Jewish world, Joe's name is synonymous with quality and excellence. With hundreds of publications to his credit, he is a recognized authority in the Jewish music industry. All are welcome at Sisterhood and Brotherhood meetings. **For more information, call the Temple office at 315-475-9952 or email [office@templeconcord.org](mailto:office@templeconcord.org).**



# Jewish News from Around the World

The Jewish Observer is pleased to bring readers a page of stories about Israel and the global Jewish community. For those who wish more information than can be provided on this page, links to articles that provide greater depth are included where possible.



**Katko and Perlman honored by JFNA.** Central New York congressman John Katko and world-renowned violinist Itzhak Perlman were recently honored by the Jewish Federations of North America for their work as disability rights champions. Katko was honored for his leadership in expanding federal funding for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and for introducing the Marriage Access to People with Special Abilities Act, a bill that protects vital federal benefits for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities who wish to marry. In making the award, JFNA stated, "We are gratified to be able to partner with you to help ensure that our laws, our norms and our society enable those with disabilities to lead their best lives."

**Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh stands up to antisemitism.** Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh is one of 250+ U.S. mayors to a sign a statement declaring unequivocally that antisemitism is incompatible with the democratic values that are at the very bedrock of our society. Jointly sponsored by the



American Jewish Committee and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the declaration condemns "antisemitism in all its forms, including hatred and prejudice directed toward Jews, stereotypes or conspiracy theories about Jews, Holocaust denial or distortion, and denying the Jewish people's right to self-determination and/or the Jewish state's right to exist."

**New homes for Guatemalan volcano victims.** Israel's embassy in Guatemala has just finished its Guatelinda project in the town of Escuintla. It has built new homes for 39 families that lost their properties in the 2018 Fuego volcano eruption. The Guatemalan government named the street "Jerusalem Capital of Israel." <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-builds-houses-for-39-families-that-lost-homes-in-guatemala-volcano-blast/>

**Israeli AI machine is a mathematical genius.** Professor Ido Kaminer of Israel's Technion Institute has developed the Ramanujan Machine, an Artificial Intelligent device and program to generate new mathematical formulae. He has just published the 19 hardest-to-prove hypotheses it has generated over the last two years. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-021-03229-4.epdf>

**Higher steaks (animal-free).** Israel's Aleph Farms has announced that it has 3D-printed the world's first laboratory cultivated rib-eye steak, complete with all the flavor and texture of regular meat, minus the harm to animals. Previously, Aleph Farms only 3D-printed thin cuts of meat. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/higher-steaks-as-israeli-company-makes->

**first-lab-cultivated-rib-eye-cut/**

**Treatment for deadly bacteria approved.** Following successful Phase 3 trials, the FDA has approved Reltecimod from Israel's Atox Bio for the treatment of necrotizing soft tissue infections, commonly referred to as flesh-eating bacteria. <https://www.atoxbio.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Atox-Bio-Reltecimod-NDA-Filing-PR-Dec-10-2020-FINAL.pdf>

**Food security conference to help UAE.** Twenty Israeli food-security and agri-tech companies attracted an audience of 1,000 to an Israeli-UAE online investment conference. The speakers addressed issues challenging the UAE in agriculture and food security, such as precision agriculture, desert farming, resilient species and food storage. <https://www.jns.org/israelis-partner-with-emiratis-to-address-their-critical-needs-in-food-security-and-agriculture/>

**An end in sight to medical biopsies.** Hebrew University scientists have developed a blood test that they say could replace nearly all cancer screenings within a decade. It detects cancer cells and identifies the exact location of the tumor in the body. Israeli startup Senseera will now perform clinical trials. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41587-020-00775-6>

**Safe testing for healthy babies.** Israel's AIVF has devised a method to test embryos in vitro in a noninvasive manner to detect possible genetic abnormalities. Its scanning device and an AI algorithm avoids the current riskier preimplantation genetic testing biopsies which remove cells from the embryo. <https://www.calcalistech.com/ctech/articles/0,7340,L-3892195,00.html>

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# Be A Light in the Darkness

The *Talmud* tells us “If the world will ever be redeemed, it will be through the virtues of children.” When we look at the beautiful works of art, poetry and dance that the children of our community created to illustrate the theme “Be A Light in the Darkness,” the truth of the words of *Nedarim* is made clear.



**Jacob Fellman**  
Grade 6  
Syracuse Hebrew  
Day School

## Be a Light in the Darkness by Jacob Fellman

There are problems in our world and many people want change.

We have to be the ones to make change in our world.

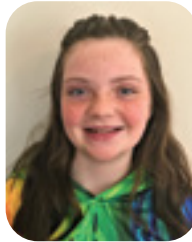
If we desire change, then we can't just say others can do that.

We have to rise up when others fall down.

We have to be the light in the darkness.

The voice for those who are quiet.

The one to stand up for what's right and demand justice and equality for all.



**Anya Reckess**  
Grade 5  
Manlius Pebble Hill School

We ran away from the camp. Where will we go? I can't help thinking the Nazis will find us. I am cold, wet, and tired. We have been walking the forest for 2 days. The woods aren't comfortable, as you can imagine. Mom says we are trying to find our friends, but I think she just isn't sure where to go. We keep walking and then mom smiles at least as much as you can when you are being hunted by soldiers. Then I see the person who will help us. Mom was right. We were looking for our friends, the Wolfsonsoos. We knock on the door and Mrs. Wolfsonsoo answers it. She says hello, rushed, but kind. We walk into the house, a little cottage. The only thing I can think of is that this person will save our lives. Mrs. Wolfsonsoo tells us we have to stay in the garage. It is dark, but it is way better than the woods. Every day, Mrs. Wolfsonsoo brings us eggs for breakfast and bread for lunch, and potatoes stew for supper. Every time she comes to feed us in my mind she glows in the darkness. She is the light. The hope she has in my life. One day she came in and told us she wasn't safe anymore. The Nazis had told her that if she helped a Jew and didn't bring them to the Jews she would be shot. I thought Mrs. Wolfsonsoo would say we had to leave, but she said we just had to be quieter. We stayed there for three years until the war was over. She was the reason my life went on.

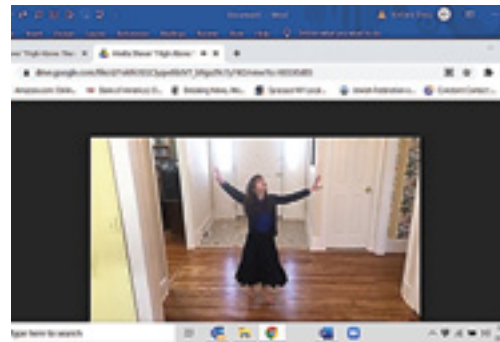


**Owen Reckess**  
Grade 7  
Manlius Pebble Hill  
School

## High Above There's a Swallow

A dance about sadness and hope

by Ariella Shever



**Ariella Shever**  
Grade 6  
Manlius Pebble Hill  
School

Ariella's dance may be seen at

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vk1fr3EGClyqw6lbtV7\\_b9ga39c7y740/view?ts=60330d03](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vk1fr3EGClyqw6lbtV7_b9ga39c7y740/view?ts=60330d03)



**Adeline C**  
Grade 6  
Wellwood Middle  
School

## Light in the Darkness by Adeline C

The light in the darkness is a beacon of hope, a signal of peace, love and joy, a call for change.

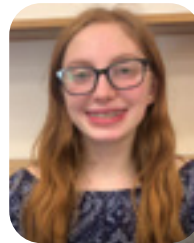
Change starts with us. We must fight for change for our grandchildren just as those before us did.

We have to focus on the good, the light in the darkness. We must speak for those and fight for those who can't.

Focus on good but don't forget the past, the past where people suffered and struggled.

We also have to remember how far we have come but keep in mind how much we must continue to fight for and change.

The world is not perfect but it can be changed and we are the light in the darkness changing and fighting for the better.

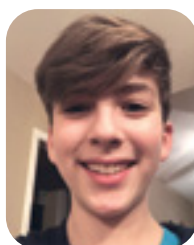


**Makayla Seidman**  
"Passing Hope to Another"  
Grade 6  
Syracuse Hebrew Day School





**Julia Zames**  
**"Light in the  
 Darkness"**  
 Acrylic  
 Grade 6  
 Syracuse Hebrew Day  
 School



**Judah Eglash**  
 Grade 6  
 Syracuse Hebrew Day  
 School

## A Light in the Darkness

*by Judah Eglash*

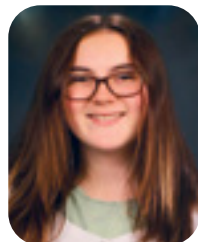
They said we're "Half-Human," but look at us now,  
 Look at how the Jews always are together,  
 Look at us at any time and see that we will always have unity.

They said we're "Half-Human," but look at us now,  
 Look at how we took what happened in the Holocaust, and instead of forgetting it we taught it to  
 the new generations,  
 Look at us at any time and see that we've always had hope.

They said we're "Half-Human," but how "Human" were they then?  
 "Humans" shouldn't kill each other for no reason.  
 "Humans" shouldn't treat each other horribly because of what they believe in.

They said we're "Half-Human," but how "Human" were they then?  
 "Humans" should treat each other the same, and not think that anyone is lesser than them.  
 "Humans" should fight for what they believe in, and make a good change in the world.

The Jews have always been a light in the darkness.



**Sadye Gitner**  
 Digital Art  
 Grade 7  
 Eagle Hill Middle School

## A Light in the Darkness

*by Rose Scheer*

Scared, sad, disappointed,  
 Life has changed,  
 A virus has affected us.

School, plans and activities all canceled,  
 People getting sick and losing jobs,  
 Many people have died.

Quarantined, isolated and stuck in our homes,  
 Apart from friends and family,  
 When will it end?

Doctors, nurses and scientists all help,  
 Saving lives and creating vaccines,  
 To keep us healthy.

Lights guide us through the darkness,  
 People guide us through hard times,  
 Giving us hope.

Early 1940's  
 Scared, uncertain, sorrowful,  
 Life has changed,  
 Hatred has affected them.

Johan van Hulst,  
 Saved Jewish children from Nazis,  
 Giving them a chance.

Many others helped during the Holocaust,  
 Giving Jews places to hide,  
 Making them feel safe.

Their actions helped save people,  
 Made it possible for Jews to have lives,  
 Pass down traditions from generation to generation.

These people were lights in the darkness of the Holocaust,  
 Helped save Jews,  
 Giving them hope.

Over history we have had many lights in the darkness,  
 Trying to help and save others,  
 During hard times we should all strive to be lights in the darkness.



**Rose Scheer**  
 Grade 6  
 Syracuse Hebrew  
 Day School



**Issy Weinberg**  
 Grade 6  
 Syracuse  
 Hebrew Day  
 School

## Light in the Darkness

*by Issy Weinberg*

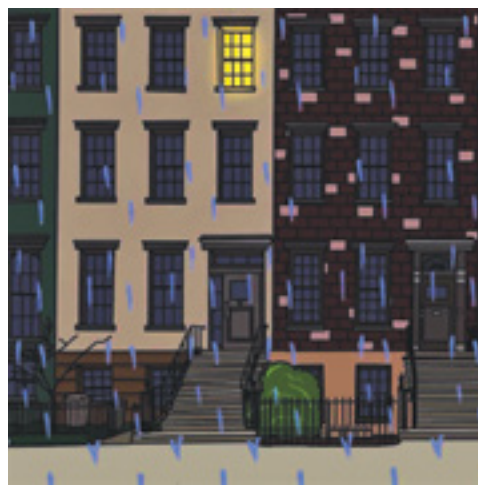
When I look around today,  
 At the world,  
 It seems so different  
 So much going on.

Like disease, and other bad things.  
 So much violence.  
 Our world  
 Does not feel the same.

I close my eyes,  
 And I dream, I dream big  
 But this dream was different,  
 It was something good.

I saw people coming together,  
 To help one another  
 Everyone was caring,  
 And there was no violence.

Then, I open my eyes  
 I see a whole new world.  
 A world where people come together,  
 And make peace.



**Leora Zames**  
 Ceramic  
 Grade 8  
 Christian Brothers  
 Academy





**LILITH OTTO  
BUDMAN**

February 3, 2021

Lilith Otto Budman, 71, of Yonkers, passed away at Menorah Park in Syracuse on February 3. Lili, as she liked to be called, was born in Eschwege, Germany. She was the daughter of Holocaust survivors Sophie and Chaim Otto. They moved to Pelham Parkway in The Bronx in 1950. Lili was a 1966 graduate of Christopher Columbus High School, as seen in the photograph.



Lili graduated from Lehman College (now known as Hunter College) in 1971, where she majored in English literature and minored in education. She went on to receive two master's degrees in English literature, one from Lehman, the other from NYU. Lili was an English teacher at Alfred E. Smith High School in The Bronx. She left teaching to help her husband Michael run their family business, Gramatan Pharmacy, in Mount Vernon, NY until they sold it in 1984. She went on to be a recruiter for mechanical engineers at Acme Inc. in Elmsford, NY. She then spent the next 20 years as a vice president at an executive search firm, RJ Associates in White Plains, NY.

Lili loved being from New York City. She loved everything about NYC, from Broadway shows to the restaurants and especially the shopping. She was a devoted wife and loved spending time with all four of her grandchildren. She was married to her beloved husband Michael for 49 years until his passing in March of 2019.

Lili's family includes her daughter Gillian Kanter and Gillian's husband David, their two daughters, Sydney and Ava; her son Zachary and his wife Cassie and their two children Tovah and Ari; her sister Mimi Arlequin and her closest friend Paulette Dinnerstein.

Graveside services for the immediate family were in Memorial Park, Avon, CT. Donations in Lili's memory may be made to Menorah Park.

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**MILTON "MICKEY" PELLMAN**

February 18, 2021

Milton "Mickey" Pellman, 88, died peacefully on February 18 at the VA Hospital, Syracuse, NY. Born August 10, 1932 in Syracuse to Maurice and Ada (Volansky) Pellman, he was a lifelong resident of Syracuse.

Mickey was a graduate of Central High School, a proud veteran of the US Army, a member of Jewish War Veterans Post 131 and a member of Temple Adath Yeshurun. During his working career, he was affectionately known as a "huckster," a wholesaler of fresh fruits and vegetables in the Syracuse area and also drove taxi for City Taxi/Century Transportation for more than 40 years.

Mickey was an avid SU sports fan. He loved his weekly card games. The men played cards at one house, and their wives played Mah Jongg at another. It was the secret to a happy marriage. Mickey always referred to his family as "his wealth." His love for them will endure forever.

Mickey was predeceased by his beloved wife Linda of 31 years, who passed in 1996. His family includes their children Mark (Mary), Amy and Scott; grandchildren Brittany, Kayla, Alexandra (Tyler), Nikki (Ryan) and Sydney and several nieces and nephews.

Due to COVID restrictions, a private graveside service was held at Adath Yeshurun Cemetery. Contributions in his memory may be made to a cause to benefit veterans.

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**ALAN W. ROTHSCHILD**

February 17, 2021

Alan W. Rothschild, 79, died February 17 in Syracuse. Alan was a business leader, inventor, collector, author, craftsman and philanthropist. He died following a fierce battle with COVID-19. He was a true Renaissance man.

Alan was born on December 12, 1941, the youngest of three sons born to Gustave and Rose (Wellin) Rothschild. He graduated from Nottingham High School in 1959 and Union University, Albany College of Pharmacy in 1965. After working in the family pharmacy for several years, Alan established medical supply and home health care businesses. He then developed several real estate projects, including Madison-Irving Medical Center in Syracuse, Central New York's first condominium medical office building. Alan also worked to help establish the East Genesee Regent Association (EGRA) to encourage the redevelopment of the University Hill area and was president of the EGRA for nearly thirty years. He served as a member of the board of directors of several non-profit agencies, including the University Hill Corporation, the Rescue Mission Advisory Board and Syracuse Stage. Alan also served as the secretary of the Upstate Medical University Foundation.

Throughout his life, Alan was also a collector of artifacts that were significant to business and industry. He was a collector of antique cars. He collected apothecary artifacts, patent medicines and related items in order to create a reproduction of a complete 1900s apothecary shop, which he donated to the Milton J Rubenstein Museum of Science and Technology (MOST) in 1989. In 1998, Alan created the Rothschild-Petersen Patent



Model Museum at his home in Cazenovia. The museum housed the largest privately-owned collection of United States patent models in the world, containing 4,000 patent models and related documents. Models from the collection were on display at

Euro Disney in Paris, The Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. and in a traveling exhibit that visited museums throughout the United States. In 2015, Alan and his wife Ann authored the book *Inventing a Better Mousetrap: 200 Years of American History in the Amazing World of Patent Models*. The patent model collection is currently part of the world-renowned Hagley Museum and Library in Wilmington, Delaware.

Combining his love of automobiles and technology, Alan was also the co-inventor of two U.S. patents for an intelligent label and a motor vehicle inspection sticker. Most recently, Alan developed his expertise in woodworking, creating fine writing instruments from exotic woods that he shared as gifts and were sold in local stores. He especially enjoyed spending time with his beloved grandchildren, Thomas and M.J., who knew him as "Gampsy."

Alan and his family were long-time benefactors of many Syracuse area organizations including the Rothschild Early Childhood Center at Temple Adath Yeshurun, Rothschild Adult Day Services at Menorah Park and the Rothschild Endowment in Family Medicine at Upstate Medical University.

Alan was predeceased by his parents and brother, Lee Rothschild. He is survived by his wife Ann (Silverman) Rothschild, son David (Marissa) Rothschild, grandchildren Thomas and M.J. Rothschild, brother Gerald (Carol) Rothschild, sister-in-law Marcia Rothschild, brother-in-law David (Lisa) Silverman and several nieces and nephews. Alan also leaves behind countless lifelong and newly-made friends, business associates, museum folks and fishing buddies.

Alan was a member of Temple Adath Yeshurun and was buried at Temple Adath Yeshurun cemetery in a private ceremony. Contributions in Alan's memory may be made to Upstate Medical University Foundation ([upstatefoundation.org](http://upstatefoundation.org)), Rothschild Early Childhood Center ([rothschildearlychildhoodcenter.org](http://rothschildearlychildhoodcenter.org)) or to the charity of your choice.

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**ZACH LORENZ**  
February 19, 2021



Zach Lorenz, 29, passed away in Florida on Friday, February 19. He was way too young and had so much more life to live.

He was a 2009 graduate of MPH and attended Northeastern University in Boston. Zach had lived in Los Angeles for seven years and then moved to Florida in 2018. At MPH, Zach was one of the leads in the production of “Hair,” played on the soccer and basketball teams and was always playing his guitar.

What was the most amazing and memorable thing about Zach was that he was such a giving soul. He thought of others before himself. He always had everyone’s back. When you spoke with Zach, he was focused on you and you alone.

His family includes his parents Mike and Mindy, his sister Lexi, his maternal grandparents Phyllis and Jack Ehrlich and several aunts, uncles and cousins.

Contributions in his memory may be made to Shatter-Proof, [www.shatterproof.org](http://www.shatterproof.org), a national non-profit organization dedicated to transforming addiction treatment, ending stigma and supporting communities.

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**GORDON SCLAR**  
March 9, 2021



Gordon Sclar, 74, died peacefully on March 9, 2021 at his home with his family by his side. Born on July 25, 1946 in Syracuse to Helen and Max Sclar, he lived primarily for most of life in Syracuse.

He was a graduate of Nottingham High School and earned his BS from Syracuse University and his Master’s from the Newhouse School at SU as well.

Gordon was a veteran of the US Army. He was a PFC during the Vietnam era. Most recently Gordon was the media relations director at the Syracuse VA Hospital. Prior to his position at the VA, Gordon had worked as the promotion director for many television stations including WORK in Rochester, WIXT in Syracuse, WXYZ in Detroit and WNED in Buffalo. He was fondly known as “Gordo

**RICHARD F. SEIDNER, M.D.**  
February 13, 2021

Richard F. Seidner, M.D., 82, died February 13 in Syracuse. Born in Brooklyn to Jacob Joseph and Helen Seidner, he had been a resident of Syracuse since 1959 when he came to Syracuse to attend medical school. Dr. Seidner was a family medical specialist practicing in the Syracuse area for almost 50 years. He was the first graduate of St. Joseph’s Hospital’s Internship and Residency Program.

Richard was a member of Alpha Phi Omega fraternity, the US Army Reserves and a previous member of Temple Beth El and Temple Adath Yeshurun.

He was an Eagle Scout at age 16, through troop 16 of Brooklyn.

Dr. Seidner was a resident of Kimry Moor, Fayetteville, and East Pointe CC, Palm Beach Gardens.

He was a loving husband, father and grandfather and was truly loved by his many patients who entrusted their care to him over many years. His devotion to his family and patients will be forever cherished.

His family includes his wife Bette Linda Tuch Seidner of more than 61 years; their children Adam Seidner (Mary Varisco), Jacob Seidner (Jodi Parker), and Andrea Seidner; and grandchildren Anna (fiance Neb Osman), Libby (Jamie Bastian), Joshua and Mollie.

Graveside services were at Beth Moses Cemetery on Long Island.

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Promo.” Gordon taught a course at OASIS titled “Rabbit Ears.” He collected movie and TV memorabilia, old books and magazines. He was a member of Temple Concord, and a former member of Temple Adath Yeshurun.

He brought a sense of joy and comfort to everyone. His illness never defined him. He always maintained his warm and loving personality and his sense of humor. He loved with his whole heart.

He was pre-deceased by his parents, and his sister Diane, and brother-in-law Norman Jerry. His family includes his wife Anita of 41 years, their children Jennifer, and Emily (Mitchell Ost) Sclar-Ost and his brother-in-law Peter (Margaret) Kristall.

Private burial services for the immediate family were in Beth El Cemetery. Contributions in Gordon’s memory may be made to Patient Advocate Foundation, [www.patientadvocate.org](http://www.patientadvocate.org) or the Lewy Body Dementia Association, [www.lbda.org](http://www.lbda.org).

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Steven L. Sisskind

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Thank You

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