

»» We Are Family!

Jewish Observer

A publication of the Jewish Federation of Central New York

of Central New York

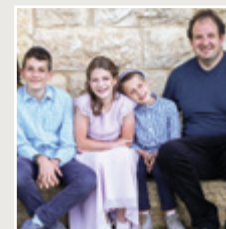
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May 2022

From the Editor



Barbara Davis

Yom haAtzmaut falls on Cinco de mayo this year. Both holidays celebrate culture. *Yom haAtzmaut* commemorates the founding of the State of Israel. *Cinco de mayo*, observed more in the United States by those of Mexican ancestry than in Mexico, is a regional holiday,

unrelated to independence. But both days celebrate national identity, a construct defined as a person's sense of belonging to one or more nations and characterized by national pride and love. For *chicanos*, as for American Jews, love for the United States coexists with love for another country. There is nothing unusual about this: love can extend infinitely in many directions.

The terrible situation in Ukraine has been on the minds of most of us of late. This is another case in which cultural and ethnic identity play major roles. We are devoting our Jewish News from Around the World page this month to information about the Jews in Ukraine, both in the past and in the present. Because we go to press almost a full month before publication, our goal is not to present fast-breaking (and therefore out-of-date) news, but background to help *JO* readers be better-informed.

As the world deals with the horrors of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, issues of national identity have come to the forefront here also. Ukrainian ethnicity, identity, citizenship and self-definition are extremely multifaceted and shifting realities. For Jews in Ukraine, the situation is even more complicated. When Volodymyr Zelensky was elected to office, Ukraine became the only other country besides Israel to have both a Jewish president and Jewish prime minister. Yet Zelensky did not initially identify as a Jew. Ukraine had 1.5 million Jews before the Holocaust. It had only half a million after. 80% of the survivors left the country when the USSR collapsed. Yet there are still Jews in Ukraine.

Love for country is a complex phenomenon, especially for Jews. That is why this issue of the *Jewish Observer* presents Israel from several different perspectives in several different formats: book reviews, interviews and personal narratives. There is a unique and captivating collection of Israeli and American takes on how the two peoples differ. There is a review of a book entitled *Letters to my Palestinian Neighbor*. There are first-hand reports from local teens who travelled to the Jewish state. We hope *JO* readers will find this issue a worthy supplement to the community's virtual celebration of Israel's 74th birthday on *Cinco de mayo*.

In the United States, May is also the month in which Mother's Day has traditionally been celebrated. The holiday, created by Anna Jarvis in 1908, became an official US holiday in 1914. Ironically, the holiday quickly became commercialized, and Jarvis spent the rest of her life trying to remove it from the calendar. Going still further back, mothers were celebrated in Greek and Roman times and then in a Christian holiday known as Mothering Sunday. So it is clear that holidays can evolve. In the 21st century, Israel has taken a step to further the evolution of Mother's

Day, turning it into Family Day, *Yom haMishpacha*. The *JO* finds this a very appropriate and delightful development and has chosen to make "family" one of the themes of this issue. Family also has many permutations. Our People of the Book section thus has a review of a book by a local author about raising a child with diabetes, a review of a novel about an Orthodox woman who marries a widower with five children and a third about a book entitled *The Art of the Jewish Family*.

Family is the theme of several other stories this month. Helping Jewish Family Service deliver kosher meals on wheels led to an astonishing family connection for one volunteer. Family trees and Jewish genealogy are the subjects of two other articles. And two of our community members tell the story of their Ukrainian ancestry. Federation's president and CEO addresses the issue of family in his column.

COVID forced the cancellation or postponement of several major community events over the past two years. The Syracuse Hebrew Day School's 60th anniversary reunion in 2020 never happened, and the JCC's annual Gala had to be put on hold. Now that things have improved, we are happy to report that the Day School will be holding a Homecoming event for the fifty alumni who live or have come back to live in Central New York. And the JCC is celebrating the commitment and service of eight wonderful community members whose impressive biographies appear in this issue at its annual meeting and Gala this month.

Our Cook of the Month page this year honors a mother and also invites the community to join together in a unique collaborative project. The JCC and the Federation are hoping that community members will submit recipes and photographs. Food is an essential part of identity, and eating falafel, hummus, borscht or *varenyky* is a way to celebrate one's identity, as much as waving a blue and white or yellow and blue flag. We can keep alive some of the most meaningful aspects of our culture and history by preserving and sharing recipes.

Finally, we are pleased to report on a new and exciting Federation initiative. At its last meeting, the Federation Board passed a motion to create an ad hoc committee to deal with the climate crisis. A description of the purpose and intention of this committee appears on our RAV Properties page, which also salutes one of our community's local businesses which not only supports our community and Federation but operates in an award-winning sustainable way.

As we consider the climate crisis affecting our planet and watch with horror the war in Europe, and as we rush to provide as much aid and relief as we can through our work and our philanthropy, we cannot help but think of the saying, *Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh Bazeh, all Jews are responsible, one for the other*. We pray that we can provide for our brethren in Ukraine and throughout the world, because we are all family and must look out for one another.

ERRATA Super Sunday solicitor Sharon Slosberg was not correctly identified in last month's issue. The *JO* regrets the error.

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of Central New York

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President/CEO.....**Michael Balanoff**
Board Chair.....**Neil Rosenbaum**
Editor.....**Barbara Davis**



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PUBLISHING & DESIGN

Publisher.....**Barbara E. Macks**
Creative Director.....**Jean-Pierre Thimot**
jpthimot@buffalospree.com
Lead Designer.....**Kimberly Miers**
kmiers@buffalospree.com
Senior Graphic Designers.....**Josh Flanigan, Nicholas Vitello**
Graphic Designers.....**Rachel Kaznica, Taramarie Mitrovich**
Director of Advertising.....**Barbara E. Macks**
Sales Director.....**Cynthia Oppenheimer**
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From the Federation President/CEO Michael Balanoff

What is Family?

“You are like family to me, Michael,” said a good friend a few years ago. My retort was, “But you hate your family, Dan.” I knew he was being complimentary, and I was being snarky, because I knew he felt a strong bond with me.

After my bar mitzvah many years ago, my aunt Anna called my mother to express outrage that she wasn’t seated with her sister (my grandmother) at the affair. “But Aunt Anna, you and my mother aren’t speaking to each other,” my mother explained. “I didn’t want you to be uncomfortable.” “What business is that of yours, Helen?” my aunt responded, reducing my mother to tears. When my mother recounted this to my grandmother, who again expressed her anger at her sister, I decided to chime in. “You know, Grandma,” I said, “I don’t like Aunt Anna either.” For the first and only time in my life, my grandmother shouted at me, “Don’t you ever say anything bad about my sister!” Lesson learned. Family matters. No matter what.

We see that today as we contemplate the horrors of the bombing of Ukraine. Regardless of our political beliefs, our positions on Israel, our affiliation or lack thereof, our views about ritual, equality or kashrut, when our people are in need, we respond. Powerfully, quickly, generously. JFNA has raised and donated over 40 million dollars to provide housing, clothing, medication, cash assistance, mental health services, security and transportation for refugees fleeing the war to ensure the secure evacuation of affected individuals from areas under immediate threat and to expedite the rapid aliyah of those who wish to move to Israel. In addition, JFNA is working with partners on the ground to provide trauma-focused therapy and emotional first-aid training for those helping refugees outside of Ukraine, as well as mental health professionals treating patients inside Ukraine and supporting delegations of medical professionals on the ground in Poland and Moldova to treat incoming refugees.

Our local community members have already donated over \$100,000 in direct aid to help Ukrainians in need, in addition to the \$20,000 that Federation allocated from its reserves. ALL OF THIS MONEY GOES TO THE UKRAINIAN EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND. **Nothing** is deducted for overhead. When family needs you, you respond.

I frequently ask people the question, when we put the word “Jewish” in front of our name (Jewish Federation, Jewish Community Foundation, Jewish Family Service, Jewish Community Center), what do we mean by it? We talk a lot about Jewish peoplehood, but I think what we are really talking about is Jewish family. What is it about family that makes the relationship so different from other relationships? Expectations? Obligations? Human



Michael Balanoff

nature? Tribalism? Tradition? Biology? Jews have maintained a sense of joint responsibility towards their people and its members for over 2,000 years. Isn’t that what family really means?

We Jews need to be a family, even if we don’t speak to one another, even if we hate each other sometimes. As Jews, we are all members of a *mishpacha*, albeit sometimes one that does not function all that well. We have only to consider Cain and Abel, Esau and Isaac and Joseph and his brothers to understand that family discord is a basic part of being related to one another. The important thing is to surmount the dysfunction.

In the 21st century, perhaps we are redefining the Jewish family, making it more inclusive, more accepting of divergence, more forgiving of differences of opinion, practice and lifestyle. Socio-psychologist Bethamie Horowitz, who has conducted research about major issues and problems facing the Jewish people, suggests that we should no longer ask one another, “How Jewish are you?” and instead ask, “How are you Jewish?”

The answers to the latter question would be infinitely more expansive and inclusive and would permit our family trees to prosper and flourish with greater abundance.

Cheryl Schotz to Receive Roth Award for Community Service

Cheryl Schotz has assumed a variety of roles and responsibilities in both the Central New York and Jewish communities and has excelled in them all. A native of Shreveport, Louisiana, Schotz spent most of her childhood in Maryland before attending the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Hygiene. Returning to Maryland after graduating, she met her husband, Irv, married and moved to Syracuse. She became active in the community, joining the National Council of Jewish Women and Women’s American ORT and becoming ORT President. In that capacity, she travelled to Israel and had tea with Golda Meir, one of the highlights of her life.

Schotz learned about the Syracuse area and got her real estate license. She is a licensed associate broker with Howard Hanna Real Estate Services. Her tag line is “I am the Manlius Specialist Making All The Best Things Happen.” “Making the best things happen” is an apt description of all that Cheryl does, both professionally and in her volunteer life. She serves on the boards of the Jewish Federation, the Jewish Community Foundation of Central New York and Menorah Park. “Cheryl’s long-time commitment to enhancing Jewish life in our community makes her so deserving of this award,” noted Michael Balanoff, Federation president/CEO and the Foundation’s executive director.



Cheryl is also a member of the Greater Manlius Chamber of Commerce, an organization of which she is a past president. In 2015, she was named a Distinguished Citizen of Manlius and, in 2016, she was given the Hannah Solomon award by the National Council of Jewish Women’s Syracuse Section. Cheryl and her family established a tutoring support system, The Michelle Schotz Memorial Endowment, for elementary school children in the JCC Afterschool program, in memory of daughter, Michelle. The Esther and Joseph Roth Award for Outstanding Jewish Community Leadership is given annually at the Federation’s annual meeting, to be held this year on June 2.



104TH ANNUAL MEETING Jewish Federation of Central New York

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“The work of community is never done.”

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**FEDERATION RECOGNITION
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**INTRODUCTION OF
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**PRESENTATION OF
ROTH AWARD
TO CHERYL SCHOTZ**
Irv Schotz

CONCLUDING PRAYER
Rabbi David Katz

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» Book Review

Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor

by Yossi Klein Halevi

Reviewed by Philip Miller



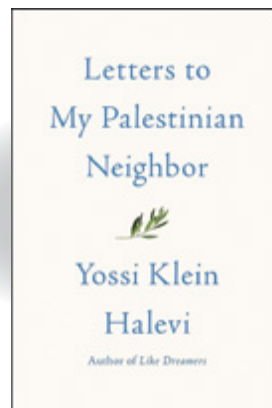
Letters to my Palestinian Neighbor is a *New York Times* bestseller of ten letters from the author to an anonymous Palestinian neighbor, including a selection of actual written responses from Palestinians. The author, Yossi Klein Halevi, is an American-born writer who has lived in Jerusalem since 1982. He and his wife have three children. His initial purpose in writing was to begin a process of getting to know the names, faces and stories of some of his Palestinian neighbors. His hope was “that this book would offer a new language for Palestinians and

Israelis to navigate their competing and perhaps irreconcilable narratives... to allow each side to understand how the other understands and experiences the conflict.”

In Letter 1, “The Wall between Us,” Halevi sets the time frame with the launching of the Oslo peace process on September 13, 1993 and the second Intifada in September 2000. He refers to his wife Sarah and the raising of two teenagers during those years, saying “Every morning I made sure to kiss them goodbye, wondering if I would see them again.” This statement is the primary reason I am emotionally interested in this very creative and easy read. I never dreamed that one of my daughters and my grandchildren would be currently living in Israel, nor that my daughter would have to hang up the phone with me and find a bomb shelter when the sirens went off. This is now my new normal. Consequently, I greatly appreciate Halevi’s effort to begin this public conversation in an attempt to reach an accord with some Palestinians.

Halevi states in Letter 1 that “I could

no longer ignore your counter story of invasion, occupation, and expulsion.” After the first intifada in the late 1980s, he states that “the price for implementing our historic claim to all of the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, we realized was too high.” However, he does go on to state that “when Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005, uprooting all of its settlements and army bases, thousands of rockets were fired afterward into Israeli neighborhoods along the border.” He further notes that “Palestinian leaders never stop telling their people that Israel has no historic legitimacy as a state. Those leaders have convinced us that this isn’t a conflict, ultimately about borders and settlements and Jerusalem and holy places. It is about our right to be here, in any borders. Our right to be considered a people. An indigenous people.”



In Letter 2, “Need and Longing,” Halevi begins with the destruction of both ancient temples in Jerusalem leading to the exile of the Jews. He states that “the Roman-initiated exile lasted nearly two thousand years until the creation of the state of Israel in 1948.... We have returned to our place of origin, just as Jews always believed would happen, to reconstruct ourselves from disparate communities back into a people.” Of particular credibility to me to substantiate this conclusion was this example: “Ethiopian Jews believed they were the last Jews in the world. Their Christian neighbors feared them as black magicians.” He states that, in 1983, Israeli rabbis determined they were Jews, “a status in dispute because of the community’s millennia-long severance from the rest of the Jewish people.” He adds that when Prime Minister Menachem Begin let it be known that they were welcome, “thousands of Ethiopian Jews... walked for weeks through jungle and desert; old people died from exhaustion, children from hunger” to get to Israel.

There are a total of ten letters written by Halevi, and an extensive epilogue of Palestinian responses. Each letter sets forth the Jewish story as Yossi Klein Halevi has lived it and understands it. In Letter 3, he asks and discusses Who are the Jews? A religion? A people? An ethnicity? A race? In Letter 4, he discusses Jewish immigration and the UN vote to establish an independent Arab and Jewish state. In Letter 5, he discusses the map of Israel and how its borders expanded in three stages. In Letter 6, he discusses borders and settlements, the two-state solution, partition and Israel’s right to exist. In

Letter 7, he discusses the Temple Mount, Al-Aqsa Mosque, Isaac and Ishmael and the sharing of holy land. In Letter 8, he discusses relevant and important issues that need to be publicly addressed such as religious vs civil marriages, violations of the Sabbath, recognition of Conservative and Reform Judaism and inclusion of Arabs in a democratic state. In Letter 9, he discusses the peculiarity of antisemitism during the Holocaust and the same pattern being played out today with the denial of Israel’s right to exist and the Jewish state being accused of racism and violating human rights. In Letter 10, Halevi discusses Sukkot, nuclear war and environmental devastation and asks, “What is our responsibility as custodians of one of humanity’s most intractable conflicts, in the most dangerous moment in history?”

As stated by Halevi in Letter 4, “We need to respect each other’s right to tell our own stories. That’s why I am writing to you, neighbor: to tell you my story, not yours. If you choose to write in response, as I hope you will, you’ll tell me your understanding of your history. I respect your right to define yourself, and I insist on the same right. That is the way to peace.”

In the epilogue, Halevi includes eleven written responses he received from Palestinians and others in the Middle East, which are hate messages and others challenging his interpretation of historical events. The most significant reply for me was what the Palestinians have been taught about their history and the wall created by “their authorized education, media coverage, religious sermons and political speeches.” Of particular interest, from my legal perspective, is the criticism of Zionism and its alleged position that “the land of Israel belongs to the people of Israel, which *ipso facto*, excludes the people who may be already living on the land that Zionism claims as its own. It is a position that implies that ownership of the land by other people, no matter how long, no matter what has been done with the land, no matter their attachment to it, is transient at best and has no historical, practical or legal validity.”

I found the book informative and an important read for every Jew.

Philip Miller is a former Deputy County Attorney, Assistant Public Defender, Onondaga Town judge, founding board member and incorporator of Neighborhood Watch of Central New York Inc, and former board member of Temple Beth El, Temple Concord and the Syracuse Hebrew Day School.

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» Book Review

Sweet Genes: Finding a Balance, Living with Diabetes

by Susan Sloane

Reviewed by Jeffrey Lee Drimer



Let me begin by saying that taking on the task of reviewing a book written by a dear friend is a daunting endeavor. As a reviewer, my responsibility is to fairly and accurately assess the book at hand. I also have to balance that with the effect that a “bad” review might have on a lifelong friendship. With that in mind, (and with much relief) I can tell you that Susan Sloane’s book, *Sweet Genes* is a tenderly and beautifully written guide to coping with juvenile onset diabetes when it arrives on one’s doorstep.

Susan writes this book from two different personal perspectives. She was the mother of two young sons when her boys became diabetic and has since become a diabetes educator. She shares her immense knowledge of the subject from study and experience when she writes as a teacher. As a mother, she writes an emotional and touching story of a family facing adversity. She creates this book by combining her intellect and her heart.

Throughout the book, Susan writes with two voices. First, she is the loving wife and mother learning that her sons have diabetes and learning how to deal with it and then she writes as the teacher who wants to share what she’s learned. She moves in and out of the two voices gracefully and efficiently.

When Susan directs her writing to the technical aspect of the disease, testing blood sugar levels, diet and treatment, she writes



as a scholar. The text is well organized, thorough and readable. For people who want to learn about the disease, causes, treatment and current developments, Susan’s book is readable and educating without being condescending.

When Susan writes as a mother, she puts her heart on the page and you feel her “mother lion” emerge as she goes from “victim” to “warrior”. She educates herself, she stands her ground over her boys, she teaches and encourages them so that when they become responsible for themselves, they are ready. How she does this is the heart of the book and the reason to read it.

Susan also shares her manuscript with her sons Jason and Mark whose voices

also touch the readers with their love of family and their courage in dealing with their disease. Jason, a physician, and Mark, a pharmacist, share their experiences with Diabetes and cannot fail to inspire and educate those in similar circumstances. Their chapters are dominated with the love they have for family and how they have dealt with diabetes personally and together, brothers in the fight.

Ernest Hemingway is purported to have defined courage as “grace under pressure.” We all would like to think that, in the face of inconceivable danger or infinite difficulties in facing life’s problems, we would stand our ground, cope and fight back. We would be ready to protect and inspire our family and friends to deal with life’s problems. My only conclusion at the end of this review is that Susan Sloane’s book makes it clear that she has achieved this “grace” and has shared it with us in her book. I like to think that if Hemingway were in a room with Susan Sloane, he would nod in her direction.

Jeffrey Drimer is a practicing local attorney and frustrated English teacher who loves to share his enthusiasm for books with his family and friends.

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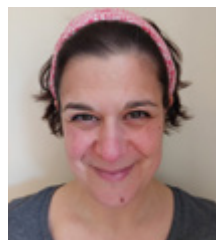
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» Book Review

An Observant Wife by Naomi Ragen

Reviewed by Jodi Bloom

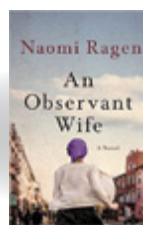


A disclaimer: Naomi Ragen is one of my favorite modern Jewish authors. I have read many of her books and enjoy both her style of writing and the way in which she addresses subjects not often discussed in Jewish literature (two perfect examples would be *The Ghost of Hannah Mendes* and *The Devil in Jerusalem*). However, I attempted to read her newly-released novel, *An Observant Wife*, as if I were reading her work for the first time in order to try to remain as objective as possible.

An Observant Wife is the continuation of the story from Ragen's book, *An Unorthodox Match*. Ragen admits that this was the first time in her writing career that she felt compelled to continue the story of Leah Howard, a *ba'alat t'shuvah* (a woman who that becomes more Jewishly observant) who moves to Borough Park, Brooklyn seeking a more spiritually meaningful life after experiencing several tragedies in her life. The beginning of *An Observant Wife* is a direct continuation of where the reader ends *An Unorthodox Match*. I believe it would be difficult to read *An Observant Wife* as a stand-alone book. The first book is a

great read and really sets the direction for the story's continuation.

An Observant Wife begins with Leah's marriage to Yaakov, a widower with five children. Soon, Leah realizes that, although she has married a prestigious Talmud scholar, she is still viewed with suspicion by the community. Leah has put a tremendous amount of effort into stepping into the role of loving and supportive mother for her husband's five children. Quite a bit of the book focuses on Shaindele, the eldest of Yaakov's girls, who is struggling with some of the common issues all teenagers face but also with the shame of what happened



to her mother, Yaakov's first wife, and the "guilt by association" of Leah as her stepmother.

Leah struggles daily to find her footing in a community that continues to see her as an outsider. She has to constantly remind everyone that it is an *aveira* (sin) to treat the *ba'alat teshuvah* as an outsider. Interestingly, Leah has to often prove this to herself. She fully believes that she has chosen the correct path by becoming more observant. However, the reader finds Leah in a struggle between her fervent belief that she is on the correct path of more stringent observance but questions whether many of the things she does in her day-to-day life are actually halachically based or are strictures meted out to maintain purity in her adopted, close-knit community of Borough Park. One occurrence in the book is a perfect example of Leah's struggle: she is tired of listening to the same Yeshiva

Boys' choir music with her stepchildren and decides to plug in her Ipod and play some of the music she used to listen to before becoming more observant. Despite having a wonderful time having a huge dance party, her head covering falls off and the shades of the apartment are open. Numerous neighbors see this "treif" behavior, are completely appalled by it and call Leah's mother-in-law, a deeply observant woman who happens to be a strong advocate of Leah and is quick to reprimand those in the community who seek to besmirch her because of her "BT" status.

An Observant Wife is another excellent work by Naomi Ragen that not only offers the reader a glimpse into a religious enclave like Borough Park but delves into the same daily challenges that all people face. I highly recommend both *An Unorthodox Match* and *An Observant Wife*.

Jodi Bloom has a master's in Jewish History from Southampton University in the UK and has worked in the non-profit Jewish community sector for most of her professional life. She loves spending time with her family, cooking and karate (sometimes doing all three at once).

» Book Review

The Art of the Jewish Family: A History of Women in Early New York in Five Objects

Reviewed by Gwen Kay

When you walk into someone's house, you can tell a lot about them. When you walk into a Jewish house, you can often tell about them even before you enter their home: from the mezuzah on the doorpost to the Judaica around the house – seder plates, shabbat candles, chanukiyot – we have artifacts, or material culture, in abundance.

The written histories of Jews in the Americas often focus on men, Ashkenazim and post-1800 United States. This makes anyone not in this category invisible and does them a disservice. Given that many men traveled with their families (including women), that the first Jews in most of the Americas were in fact Sephardim and that Jews were early settlers in the New World, ignoring these people presents a false narrative and sense of Jewish self in the United States.

This extremely readable book aims to correct the problem by focusing on women in early New York. How early is "early New York?" New Amsterdam, in fact. The challenge, and reason for the obscurity of women (and others) in history, is often a lack of information by or about them in the historical record. Using physical objects, rather than relying only on letters, diaries

and other written records, author Laura Arnold Leibman writes women back into history. The women who inhabit this book are not well known, like Rebecca Gratz, but are instead ordinary women.

Leibman chooses five objects owned by five different women who lived between 1750 and 1850. The objects examined are those found in a home, not necessarily in a synagogue, or in domestic versus formal religious spaces, the places in which women were more likely to be found. The biographies that arise from these objects give us a sense of what life was like for a Jewish woman, who may have been Ashkenazi or Sephardi, born a slave owner or born enslaved.

Jewish life changed over these 100 years, from most Jews living in the Caribbean to fleeing to places like New York. Marriage changed from kinship and contractual

(benefitting merchants) to more romantic. The rates of intermarriage were very high—one-quarter to one-third of all Jews married out.

The women, their objects and their lessons are as follows: Hannah Louzada's world is revealed through a letter asking Congregation Shearith Israel for help. Six silver beakers gifted to Reyna Levy Moses speak to the role of marriage in securing trade and mercantile relationships, using the domestic sphere to foster commercial success. An ivory miniature of Sarah Brandon Moses, born into slavery in Barbados, emphasizes her marital and social success in New York. The commonplace book of Sarah Ann Hays Mordecai reveals the hopes and challenges of a woman who was able to marry for love but also faced many challenges. Finally, silhouettes made of Jane Symons Isaacs and her family emphasize both the family's wealth and women's roles in fostering Jewish life in the community.

We are more than the items and objects in our houses, but what we choose to keep and display can reveal a lot about us and may help future historians create our biographies.

Gwen Kay is a professor of history and director of the honors program at the State University of New York at Oswego



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Discussions in synagogues today

Rabbi Daniel Jezer, Rabbi Emeritus, Congregation Beth Shalom-Chevre Shas

*Should we zoom services?
Should we livestream services?
Should we be in-person only?
Should we be hybrid?
Should we be on-line only?*

Safety, as a result of the COVID pandemic, has given our synagogues the impetus to use new tools of communication. Prior to COVID, some synagogues were already streaming services using a livestreaming platform, that is broadcasting to whoever wanted to tune in. Since COVID, many have used the zoom platform which permits those who tune in to participate from a distance, being seen and heard.

During the height of COVID, most non-Orthodox synagogues were using these platforms on Shabbat and weekdays, and many Orthodox synagogues were using these platforms on weekdays. Almost all streamed educational programs. Now that COVID has waned and is not the paramount threat it was, having used these platforms for two years, conversations are now ensuing regarding the continuing use of these streaming platforms now and for the future. One of the major roles of the synagogue is to create a community. In a synagogue, there are two relationships that are formed: first, between a person and God, and second, among members of the congregation. The synagogue building has always been considered the focal point for developing these relationships. As a sacred space, God's presence is felt more intensely in the synagogue, and meeting other congregants fosters a sense of community. Community is so important in Judaism that in order to have an "official" public prayer service, a minyan, a quorum of at least 10, is needed. Ten people (in Orthodoxy ten men) over the age of 13 constitute a community, a minyan (literally a quorum).

The question that synagogues are now facing with the electronic communication platforms, of livestream and zoom, is what effect this will have on our Jewish life. Does livestream or zoom make for a more inclusive community or do they further separate people from one another? Do they detract from the experience of holiness?

The problem of maintaining a cohesive community is not new. Even before the past two years, we have all experienced

the ongoing diminution of participation in communal life. COVID has accelerated the process of separation as have other electronic means of communication. For example, now it is very common for people to text each other rather than speaking with each other on the phone. Texting is more efficient, but risks lessening the somewhat personal connection of the human and ability to form a relationship.

Creating a place to enhance sacredness, to foster relationships, is the goal of every synagogue. Therefore In many synagogues, rabbis, lay leaders and members are actively discussing the appropriate use of electronic communication, its benefits and risks. What are the effects of livestream and zoom on the abilities of synagogue to help foster the person-to-person relationship which is so much part of the role of the synagogue? Will the sense of Kedusha, of sacredness, be compromised, and if so, how severely? Will the abilities of the synagogue to reach out to more people be enhanced? In typical



Jewish tradition, there is not a single answer to these and other questions. We are embarking on a new era and do not have the benefit of hindsight.

The electronic platforms certainly enable those who are unable to come to the synagogue to participate and experience a synagogue service even if missing the immediacy that can be experienced only by being physically present with others. They enable those who have moved to different cities to maintain a relationship with their synagogue and friends. And yet, at the same time, they give permission to some who would otherwise come to the synagogue, to sit in their homes listening and participating remotely, denying them and those present in the synagogue the opportunity to form the bonds needed for a community.

Tens of thousands ignore the services at their local synagogues having tuned into the broadcast of holiday and Shabbat services at a few high-profile synagogues. What is the cost to local synagogues? These are some of the questions that are being faced as we wind down the need for COVID-related limitations on personal attendance.

The world of communication is changing very rapidly and will continue to change. Within the next short period of time, we will be attempting to cope with the issue of virtual reality as it becomes more prevalent. We do not have satisfactory answers to these questions. We can surmise that the nature of communities will change, that relationships will be different. Our challenge is to confront these technological innovations and shape their use, as best we can, to accomplish our goals of fostering relationships between ourselves and God, among people, strengthening community and enhancing the Kedusha, the sense of sacredness that we need to experience. Our Judaism has always adapted to new circumstances and has been the better for it, so I am confident that we will again adapt using streaming and whatever else comes our way wisely and creatively continuing to build a strong vibrant Judaism.



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Jewish Cook of the Month

Mincha Arkin

by Mark Savad

Mincha (Mary) Arkin, Bubby, was my mother's mother. The eldest of six children, she was born in Orel, Russia, in the Pale of Settlement, in 1898, and was the last member of her family to come across to the United States in 1913.

She lived in Borough Park with her husband Nathan, my mother Libby and her younger sister and brother in a two-bedroom apartment they shared with boarders over the years. Nathan was a hardworking tailor. He died of a heart attack when he was 48. Bubby remained in close contact with him, however, and it was as if his life continued through the rest of the family -- especially the grandchildren.



Bubby had a large kitchen, a tiny stove and full bathtub that would occasionally be home to a carp on its way to becoming gefilte fish. We knew her as Bubby or Little Bubby, because her mother Sarah, who was clearly smaller, was Big Bubby.



Bubby was totally devoted to caring for her mother, all of her siblings, her many nieces and nephews and her grandchildren.

I did not realize that she was a foreigner. When I grew up in Brooklyn, I simply assumed that all grandmothers spoke English with a strong Yiddish accent. It was a lively neighborhood with many immigrants. Bubby had a close friend who came from Greece, Mrs. K. They would speak to each other, sitting in their kitchens, through the open windows. Bubby tutored Mrs. K and helped her to learn English. Mrs. K might have been the only Greek immigrant who learned to speak English with a flawless Yiddish accent.

Bubby cooked with passion and intensity, love and skill. Her overdeveloped sense of responsibility was a perfect source for inspiration in the kitchen. She hosted many seders and holiday meals and more. She took joy in feeding us and did not let the tiny stove or numerous burns diminish her joy in making chicken soup, homemade noodles, blintzes, kreplach, amazing

rugelach, stuffed cabbage, chopped liver, borscht, schav (sour grass soup), kishka, chicken fricassee, honey cake, apple cake and teiglach. But my fondest memories are of a particular delicacy: knishes. To this day, it is not possible to prepare a meal or put on an apron without sensing her presence and her love. Traditionally religious, she maintained kashruth, and the kindling of Shabbat candles was transformative for her. You could see and feel the emotional shift she experienced ushering in Shabbat. My mother, also an eldest, inherited a lot of Bubby's traits, including an overly developed sense of responsibility and obsession with feeding people with great skill and fearlessness in the kitchen.

I do not have her knish recipe to share. I have her recipe for black raisin cake which has been translated from Yiddish. She passed away in 1973, when I was twenty-two. Our daughter, Miriam, was named in her memory. Bubby was laid to her eternal rest at Mt. Hebron cemetery in Flushing, Queens. While she never lived more than a few minutes from her children, siblings and nieces and nephews, the rest of us have spread out across the country. But we still gather together for family reunions, "cousins clubs" and simchas to cook and eat together.



A Cookbook By and For Our Jewish Community

Some of our favorite recipes, the ones we share with friends and family, the ones we make for holidays and special occasions, the ones that nourish us spiritually as well as physically, were learned from our mothers and grandmothers, women who knew that cooking is an expression of who we are and who we love.

We invite you to share *your* favorite recipe, inherited from your mother or grandmother, with others in our community. The collected results will be published as an e-cookbook, *From My Mother's Kitchen*, by the Jewish Community Center in partnership with the Federation. We further invite you to share the memories your recipe brings to mind, whether of the dish's cook or the occasions on which it was served.

Please follow the format below to provide consistency in the submissions. We look forward to hearing from as many of our community members as possible so that we can produce a cookbook that will be a treasure trove of cherished food preparation and recollections of happy and meaningful eating experiences **Please send your recipes with the following information to jo@jewishfederationcny.org.**

- **Name of Dish**
- **Dish Type:**
(entrée, dessert, appetizer)
- **Prep Time**
- **Cook Time**
- **Oven Temperature**
- **Ingredients**
- **Directions**
- **Your Name**
- **Recipe Source:**
(grandmother, mother, etc.)
(Please do not submit recipes from a cookbook which are copyrighted.)
- **Memories the recipe evokes**

BUBBY'S BLACK RAISIN CAKE

- ½ box of black raisins
- ½ box of yellow raisins
- ¼ lb butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups flour, sifted
- 1 cup raisin water*
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ¼ lemon
- ¼ orange
- 1 apple grated
- small jar of maraschino cherries
- 1 cup nuts
- 1 tsp vanilla



Soak ½ box of black raisins overnight in one glass of lukewarm water. Cream butter, sugar and eggs. Add black raisins with a little juice and alternate adding flour and raisin water. Add baking powder, grated orange and lemon including juice, vanilla, yellow raisins, apple, cherries and nuts and mix well. Bake in greased 5x7 loaf pan at 350 degrees for one hour or until toothpick comes out dry. Bring 2 cups of water to a boil, remove from heat, add 1 cup raisins to the water and soak overnight. Strain out fruit.

Israelis and Americans

A friend recounted the following story recently. “My 14-year-old Israeli-born granddaughter, now living in America, told her mother that she was nervous about getting lost walking by herself to a friend’s house. ‘You’re Israeli,’ her mother told her. ‘You won’t get lost.’” The woman was amazed. “I cannot imagine that my American grandchildren would ever be told this!” she remarked. Her comment was not a criticism. It was an observation and most probably a true one.

While generalizations and stereotypes can be dangerous, they can also be valid and revealing. There is a difference between the way Israeli and American children are raised and the way Israelis and Americans see the world and interact with it. Despite shared values and ideals, Israelis and Americans are very different. The *JO* asked several members of our community who are Israeli, have family in Israel or who have lived in or visited Israeli extensively to share their views on the differences between Israelis and Americans.

From a Syracusan who made aliyah and now lives in Israel: “Israeli children have more freedom than American children. In Israel, it’s totally normal to ask someone how much they pay in rent/paid for their house/paid for their car.” **From her kids:** “Israelis eat healthier than Americans.”

From an Israeli living in Syracuse: “Everyday life – facing security issues, survival, terrorist attacks, stabbings, rockets, intifadas, wars, building the country after the Holocaust and much more – makes Israelis who they are. Israelis are spontaneous, family-oriented and hardworking. They love nature, hiking and biking in Israel. They love exploring the world and coffee-drinking. They are friendly and welcome you to their home. They love to sing, and they love Israeli cuisine and world cuisine. They are blunt. They don’t stand in line. They love talking politics and are vocal in their opinions.”

From an Israeli with lots of American family: “Israel is a small country. Everyone knows everyone or knows someone who knows someone. The cities are small. From a young age children go to a *Gan* with the same group of kids that they go all through school with, and eventually they graduate high school



together. If the kids are on different academic tracks through high school, they still live in the same neighborhood with the kids that they had been with all along, and they play outside and go to clubs and activities after school together. The temperate weather allows the children to play outside together most days of the year. In Israel most people buy apartments, and therefore they live with the same neighbors for many, many years. Because Israel is so small, it is very easy to get together. Family connections are strong. It is traditional for families to meet up on Friday night for dinner every week. Often, as on holidays and birthdays, the extended family also gets together. There is a strong push to succeed in life, maybe because of the family (parents push, arrange, accompany and encourage).

The Army unifies the soldiers into larger social groups. These groups provide a social network and long-term relationships even after discharge. The soldiers are relatively mature and independent for their age. They learn to cope with challenges, to endure a lot of emotional pressure and physical exercise. After three years, the soldier learns to be mature and to lead, which strengthens their self-confidence. They begin by leading small groups, continue by guiding soldiers who are just a bit younger and newer to the army than they are and, after that, they graduate to leading larger groups.

Israelis are creative and full of self-confidence -- sometimes too much. They sometimes display chutzpah, will always try to find a solution to a challenge and don’t give up until they succeed. Therefore they ‘cut corners’ and don’t

always follow the rules due to their ambition to succeed. It’s no wonder or accident that so many new, high-tech and creative ventures are developed in Israel.”

From a Syracusan who lived and worked in Israel for ten years: “Americans plan farther in advance; Israelis are more spontaneous. Things in America are more orderly, organized and intuitive. In Israel, it’s more of a *balagan*, a jungle. You have to be assertive, and it really helps to know some insider to help you navigate. Americans are more independent and standoffish. Israelis are more tightly connected, in your face and in your business.”

From a Syracusan married to an Israeli: “There is a huge divide in perceptions that involve formality. You can be completely straightforward with an Israeli and they not only won’t take offense, but they will expect nothing else. But to an American, their blunt and brutally honest statements can seem downright rude and even offensive. The Israeli, in the meantime, is thinking that the American is distant and fake because they won’t express themselves honestly.

There is no such thing in Israeli culture as ‘We have to get together sometime.’ If you like and want to spend time with someone, you go over to their house for coffee and cake, with or without an invitation. You can also invite people over to your house, or you can arrange to meet at a cafe. But vague statements about ‘sometime’ would be perceived as another insincerity. Israelis are not known for being conventional in any way, and therefore they don’t tend to follow rules. If they don’t see a good reason to do or not do something, they

will play by their own rules. They argue with police officers, teachers and other figures of authority (although less so in the army) because they demand that person’s rationale. Respect is earned and doesn’t come with the job, so everyone feels entitled to question authority.”

From an Israeli who has lived in Syracuse for four years:

“The first difference is the perception of laws: while Americans will perceive the laws and regulations as indisputable facts, the average Israeli will perceive the same laws as ones that can sometimes be negotiated and changeable if you try hard enough. For example, in Israel it is quite common to ask a traffic cop to “give up” on a ticket he is giving you, just as if he were your friend. It’s hard for me to imagine a similar situation here in the United States. Lack of compliance with laws or conventions, and the attempt to constantly negotiate with them among Israelis, leads to a deeper level of thinking “out of the box” typical of Israelis (and can be positive, for example in the high-tech field). On the other hand, it causes great tension in the average Israeli: if s/he fights enough s/he will be able to get what s/he wants.

In general, the Israeli is in a constant struggle for his place in the world and many times the behavior of a certain person, perceived in America by society as “rude,” is perceived in Israeli society as “assertiveness” or insisting on yours. Driving in Israel thus cannot be easy or pleasant, since the “struggle for your place” takes place constantly on the roads. If you allow another vehicle to precede you after a stop sign, this is seen by Americans as “generosity,” but among Israelis it can be perceived as “laxity” or “indulgence.”

Another difference is related to the perception of sincerity, or telling the truth. While telling the truth is almost a sacred value for Americans, for Israelis ‘white lies’ are not taken seriously and are sometimes even appreciated if they are meant to serve a purpose that is perceived as important. In contrast, the average Israeli will tell you directly and clearly what he thinks of you, while the American will try to moderate the way he communicates with you. Israelis are more emotionally open people than Americans and will not be afraid to tell you about their troubles or joys, even if you just politely asked, ‘How are you?’”

Contributors to this article are Moshe Alfasi, Orit Antosh, Nomi Brahms, John Davis, Sharon Hochstein, and Simone Liss.

Jewish News From Around The World: Ukraine

Ukraine has the fourth largest Jewish community in Europe following France, Great Britain and Russia but ahead or equal to Germany. Included in the Ukrainian Jewish population are Bratslaver Hasidim who have returned to Uman, south of Kyiv, to be near the grave of their late Rebbe, Reb Nachman.

One and a half million Ukrainian Jews died in the Holocaust. Babyn Yar, a ravine near Kyiv, was the site of one of the largest mass murders during the Holocaust — 34,000 Jews killed in less than 48 hours. The killing continued at the site for the next two years and “Babyn Yar” or “Babi Yar” looms large in Jewish communal memory. Between 1941 and 1943, the Nazis shot between 70,000 and 100,000 people at Babyn Yar, including almost the entire Jewish population of Kyiv.

The Ukrainian Jewish experience is the basis for the novel on which the musical “Fiddler on the Roof” is based. Tevye the Dairyman is modeled on shtetlach in Ukraine where Tevye’s creator, Sholem Aleichem, grew up. At the end of the 19th century, Ukraine was in the Pale of Settlement, the vast area established by the czars to quarantine Jews along the western border of the Russian Empire. The Pale included Ukraine, Poland and other large centers of Jewish population and was the site of the largest Jewish population in the world until the Shoah.

Ukraine has a rich legacy of Yiddish culture. The father of the Yiddish theater, Avrom Goldfaden, was born in Starokostyantyniv and the poet and songwriter Itzik Manger was born in Czernowitz. Czernowitz was the site of the first international Yiddish language conference, held in 1908 and attended by the Yiddish writers Y. L. Peretz, Sholem Asch, Avrom Reisin and Hersch Dovid Nomberg.

Ukraine’s Jewish population suffered terribly during the pogroms of the late 19th century, leading to massive Jewish emigration, principally to the United States. Odessa was a leading port city for early Zionist pioneers on their way to Palestine, some of whom trained in



Jewish agricultural schools in the region and went on to create some of the original kibbutzim. A number of Zionist leaders including Ze’ev Jabotinsky, Golda Meir and Natan Sharansky were born in Ukraine.

The number of Ukrainian Jews is estimated to be between 50,000 and 200,000 depending on the definition of “Jewish.” President Volodymyr Zelensky is Jewish as is the prime minister, Volodymyr Groysman. Ukraine is the only country outside of Israel where the heads of state and government are Jewish.

Some Ukrainian Descendants Tell Their Stories

James Goldstein: Both sides of my family originated from the Ukraine and made their way to America by way of Baltimore, Washington DC and the first Jewish homeland attempted in the Black Hills of the Dakotas, where my great-great-grandfather Jacob Samuel Ettinger lived. When he died, his family had to move to Chicago, where my great-grandmother met Mayer P. Dodek who had emigrated from Turkey by way of Palestine to Chicago.

Mayer Dodek rode with Teddy Roosevelt during the Spanish-American War and they were friends. My great-uncle Sam, an obstetrician who delivered me, remembers as a small boy entering the White House on Thanksgiving, as President Roosevelt would open it up then to the public. He recalls my great-grandfather saying, “Hello TR,” and the president replying, “Mayer, how are you? Good to see you.”

My grandfather Morris Goldstein told me stories of hiding out from the Cossacks in the fields during pogroms. Non-Jewish neighbors would alert them when the Cossacks had left, and he always used that story to remind me that there were good people everywhere. My other grandfather, Oscar Dodek, ran a successful retail clothing store chain, served on the Human Rights Commission and was one of the first people to hire a black store manager in DC. His store was the place to go for that suit no matter who you were. Celebrities and regular folks shopped there. He sold the building at 10th and Pennsylvania just blocks from the White House, and it is now the FBI J. Edgar

Hoover building. I used to work in the stock room and would walk all the way from 17th Street and K Street past the White House to my grandfather’s store every morning in the summer. I was always struck by the the stunning contrast between the homeless alcoholics sleeping on all the benches and areas near K Street and the White House where the powerful dwelled.

My family escaped from Ukraine before it became part of the Soviet Union due to the pogroms and oppression, but there is one compelling story that I heard from another Goldstein, to whom I am not related. His name was Sheldon Goldstein and he ran a sauerkraut factory in Norwich, NY. When I was doing a story on their remarkable sauerkraut and the patented blades they used, he mentioned to me that Goldstein was not his real name. The story goes that, after a pogrom, one of his ancestors got a passport off a dead body that had the name Goldstein on it. He used it to get to America. It might well have been one of my relatives as it was in the Ukraine, but I have no way to know.

Jim Goldstein, LMFT is a NYS Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice via teletherapy who lives in the Town of Lebanon.

Joshua Daniel Hershfield: Last month, the Free World woke up to find that someone was fighting our battles for us. A country on the far side of Europe, not officially a part of the EU, not officially a part of NATO, was fighting for its life against a tyrant intent on destroying it. And where were the rest of us? Wringing our hands over economic sanctions.

Ukraine is a country that emerged from the ashes of Nazism, the Holocaust and Soviet occupation to choose democracy over totalitarianism. Ukraine is a country that, despite a history of vicious antisemitism and a present that still grapples with it, elected a Jewish man as president. That president is now in battle fatigues fighting beside his

people as Putin’s army wages a war of aggression.

Ukraine is fighting for the values that the rest of us swore to protect. In the aftermath of World War II, under the dark shadow of the Holocaust, the democratic world swore to stand united in the face of tyranny. We swore to fight beside one another when freedom was threatened, that an injury to one was an injury to all, that we would face our foes together. We don’t get to draw back on that now. We don’t get to waver when tyranny takes one of our own. No one gets sacrificed on the altar.

I stand with Ukraine because I am a Jew of Ukrainian descent and I feel in my bones what it is to know that an army is coming to kill you. I stand with Ukraine because I recognize that there is a global war going on between totalitarianism and democracy, and I know which side of that line I fall. I stand with Ukraine because I know my history. I know what it meant when the world let Germany take Czechoslovakia, and I know what might have been prevented if the world had stood up to tyranny right then and there.

I stand with Ukraine because I believe in Europe, a collection of cooperating and coexisting sovereign states united in their effort to maintain cohesion and the model that provides to the rest of the world. I stand with Ukraine because I know that the threat of tyrants knows no borders, that today it is Ukraine and tomorrow it will be another, and an attack on one is an attack on all. I stand with Ukraine because if there is one thing in this world I hate, it is a bully, and if there is a second thing I hate, it is the cowards who turn their backs and let the bully do his worst. The democratic world must unite, stand up and act. Ukraine is one of us. We must not turn our backs.

Joshua Daniel Hershfield is a musician, actor and composer. He has a master’s degree in Holocaust Studies from Haifa University, in Israel, where he was an Azrieli Foundation Scholar.

Shabbat in Israel

By Sophie Scheer

Shabbat has always been a time when I have dinner with my family on Friday night and go to synagogue on Saturday morning and then go on with the rest of my day. In Syracuse, Shabbat means time to spend time with family and go to shul, eat good soup and have good conversations. At Camp Ramah in Palmer, Massachusetts, Shabbat was about *ruach* (spirit), talking for hours with friends, reading, naps and having free time. In USY, Shabbat was about board games, *limmudim* (learning sessions) and tradition. Now, in Israel, on the Nativ College Leadership Program through the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Shabbat entails a lot of different things. Most of our Shabbats are free, which means we can go anywhere we want. That means we can explore new places, rent Airbnbs or stay with a relative or friend. My parents look forward to hearing where I'm going each week and the stories afterwards. I have gone to relatives of friends in places around Israel. Walking in the door before Shabbat starts, being a stranger but nevertheless washing dishes, setting the table or chopping vegetables for salad is a feeling I love. I know I don't know these people, but I know that by the end of the meal, I will become someone they know, and I will understand their Shabbat traditions and their family and feel comfortable in their house. It may be different in every house, but the energy and warm feeling of Shabbat and family always seem to be there from the lighting of the candles to *Havdalah*.

Another opportunity that comes with free *Shabbatot* is going away with friends to a new place. It feels independent, new and exciting, and it is a Shabbat experience we love. My friends and I have traveled to many different places including Tel Aviv, Netanya, Haifa, and Eilat – places with different observance levels. During the past five months, I feel like I've seen a lot of diverse places in Israel, but we always find a way to make it a meaningful Shabbat experience. On Friday, we explore the new place, go to the *shuk* and get food, vegetables and other necessities to prepare Shabbat dinner. All of my friends and I cook together, bake *challot*, set the table, call our families and prepare for Shabbat.



It feels like home. We all bring our traditions, different ways to make food and observe Shabbat. But it all seems like it comes together and feels comfortable to all of us.

One week, my friends and I went to Netanya. We heard about a Masorti (Conservative) shul, but after we all got ready and walked there, we weren't able to find it. A friendly person told us there was a shul nearby and walked us there. However, to our dismay, it was not egalitarian, something my friends and I prefer in a service. Still wanting to celebrate Shabbat, and there being ten of us, we headed to the beach to do our own *Kabbalat Shabbat*. The next day, we packed lunch and sat at the beach where we swam, built sandcastles and watched the sunset together. One Shabbat, I was in quarantine with three of my friends, and all of our friends came together to do *Kabbalat Shabbat* for us, so we could participate and hear from outside our window.

All of these free weekends come with amazing memories, but it's always comforting to come back together as a Nativ program, have a Shabbat together, lead services and feel the spiritual energy of our group. *Kabbalat Shabbats* with Nativ have an energy I have never felt before. It's exciting and it's the feeling that everyone wants to be there and is grateful for Shabbat. Shabbat is truly a special time in Israel, and I am so happy to be here and celebrate it, whether it is at a family's house or on the beach with my friends. Shabbat now has a new meaning to me.



Sophie Scheer, a graduate of F-M high school and the Syracuse Hebrew Day school, recently ended her term as USY's International Communications Vice President. She is now on a gap year program in Israel called Nativ, in which



half the year is spent studying at Hebrew University's international school, and the other half is spent volunteering at a village for immigrant youths. She will be attending Drexel University in the fall and studying communications.

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Israel Impressions

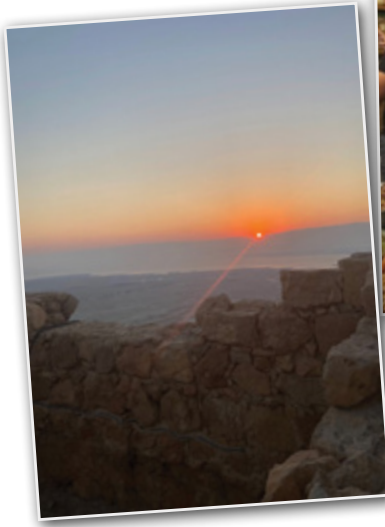
by JoJo Cooper

Israelis are much more social than Americans. I sat next to an older Israeli couple. They asked me about myself and asked what I was doing in Israel. They taught me about the geography of Israel and taught me a few Hebrew words and offered me snacks.

The airport was the biggest I've ever seen. The lines were even worse than in America. Waiting to get COVID tested took hours. Eventually I left on a bus to Tel Aviv.

Driving in Israel: Stop signs are circles with a hand in the middle. There are more roundabouts than there are stoplights. Middle double lines are white not yellow. Lots of scooters and electric bikes.

Emotional parts: Western wall. Watched a bar mitzvah from over the wall. The mother had to be separated from her son. Watching people pray for hours at the wall. Hundreds of thousands of



notes in the wall. Getting to add my own note. Yad Vashem. Children's section with candles and mirrors, names and ages read over speakers. Real German board game: the goal is to be the first to remove the Jew from the city. Shabbat: a group of us were singing Oseh Shalom

outside our hotel, and a non-English speaking family was walking by. Without saying a word, they joined in with our singing. Adults, kids, elders, everyone. Only in Israel.

Overall: The greatest concept I took from my time in Israel was the sense of community. There just isn't unity like that in America. I felt safe, loved and welcome.

JoJo Cooper is a junior at Jamesville DeWitt High School, a member of Temple Concord and a student at the Epstein School. She travelled to Israel with NFTY's Mitzvah Corps.

An American Teaching in Israel

by Leah Eve Jezer-Nelson

The longer I stay in Israel, the more I fall in love with her people, her beauty and my history and the more I come to the realization that peace in my lifetime is likely a naive dream. It's a bitter pill to swallow, especially when I've always fought for the idea that there are no no-win scenarios.

The Palestinian right to exist is a fundamental human right. Their claim to an independent state is not one of historical presence, but of need. How can I, a Jewish girl whose great-grandparents came to America in search of freedom and safety, not sympathize with that?

The Jewish right to exist is as much a fundamental right as the Palestinian claim. Our claim to an independent state is historically and culturally backed. We not only have a right to our own state, but in truth we may need it. Antisemitism, disguised under the neat title of "Anti-Zionism," is rising once again. Four years spent in a college where my existence as a Jew was seen as a threat taught me that lesson well.

Who belongs here? The deep American soul in my heart cries out that everyone



belongs here. Everyone should have a place in the Jewish state, where freedom and love and joy in bettering the world should be paramount. Increasingly, though, the dominant Israeli culture is militarism. There is a grim certainty that at least some of the kids I'm teaching now will be irrevocably traumatized in just a few years, when they are sent to the military to defend a country they still know very little about. Israeli kids are tough, like the spiked avocado trees that grow near my school, but underneath that hard layer is warmth. I hate to think of those sparks growing dim under the horrors of war. It's not a problem I had to face as a child.

Peace is the only way out. As Lin-

Manuel Miranda wrote in *Hamilton*, peace often comes at a cost. He asks us, "Will the blood we shed begin an endless cycle of vengeance, of death with no defendants?" (This is, admittedly, a bit of a cheesy reference, but sue me, I'm a 23-year-old idealist).

It's a serious question, though. The United States at two hundred + years old is still a baby on the global field, albeit one with nuclear warheads. Israel is only 74 years old, practically a zygote, and has never been able to come to terms with the methods of its beginnings.

What chance do we have of ensuring peace in Israel when we cannot even find peace in our own hearts? Now, more than ever before, I feel a constant thrumming, a feeling that the future is now, that we have to act now. I'm sure I'm not the only young person to be afflicted with the need to learn everything about the world, to change history, to be instrumental in bringing about the world to come.

It's hard to look at the faces of these sweet children, see in their eyes trust and affection, then see them replaced by hardened soldiers. I said to my coworker

recently that it's not that I disagree with or judge mandatory military service. It's that I detest the fact that it's necessary. War changes people, any type of war, whether it be addiction, abuse or struggles with mental health, but especially this kind of war, learning to kill. It damages people. It's unfair and deeply unsettling to know at least a few of my kids (and they are mine, even if only for a few months) will go on to face nightmares I can't change for them.

Peace shouldn't require bloodshed, but more and more it looks like the peace we will hold will be snatched in bloody hands, kept precious and not enjoyed. How am I meant to prepare these children for war? I don't know how Israeli teachers do it. There is no way for me to protect these kids, and yet I am tasked with guiding them to a future I cannot see.

This, incidentally, is also why I have such a deep-seated respect for our teachers. They are the ones molding and shaping the next generation of leaders and warriors. They are the crafters of tomorrow. It's a job I don't have the guts to do for long. How do we prepare these children for a future we should have been able to prevent? What can we do as individual people to change the world? These are questions that have haunted me these past few months.

A Miraculous Coincidence

by Jay Sinclair

Albert Einstein said, "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle."

Having reached the age of 39 without having sat on a Jewish charity/agency board, I believe you could call me "privileged." This all changed once I moved my family to Syracuse from the UK, nearly eight years ago. Here in the US, the adage, "You have to be in it to influence it," rings true.

Today, my wife and I sit on a wide array of boards, but this story isn't about board life. It's about being aware of amazing Jewish services, one of the most important being Kosher Meals On Wheels. I became a delivery man for KMOW, delivering meals once a week to people who are homebound. My kids affectionately refer to me as the "Uber-Eats" driver.

I started delivering meals in early November, slowly building up relationships with clients and their pets. As they began to trust me, I was invited to leave the food in the kitchen rather than on the doorstep.

In early December, I was asked if I could take on a few more deliveries, which is how I first met Muriel. Muriel, like many of my KMOW clients, is fiercely independent, lives alone, is in her 90s, has family who live out-of-town and has some amazingly friends and neighbors – the unofficial care team, as I like to call them. It was obvious, after speaking to Muriel, that she was originally from the UK. Although her accent had faded, it came roaring back roaring after only a few minutes.

On my return to Jewish Family Services, I jokingly said that the two Brits had to be together. I mean, what are the chances?

Back to Muriel, and as with all relationships, there's a watershed moment. Shortly after people meet me, they usually ask me if I know their friend, relative or work colleague who's also British. I've grown to enjoy these interactions, sometimes wishing I had a witty retort, but in reality there are just over 68 million souls in the United Kingdom, and the idea that I would know your friend, family member or neighbor is just preposterous. At least that is what I thought.



Muriel asked me if I knew the Lawson family. Actually, she said the Levy/Lawson family, as they had changed their name from Levy. My jaw dropped. Muriel had just mentioned my Mum's maiden name. Her family had changed their name from Levy to Lawson because my grandfather, who was a physician, wasn't able to get work with such a Jewish name.

Muriel invited me into her home to see a framed picture on her mantelpiece, a picture of my great uncle, in all his finery as a High Court Judge, wig and all. It's the same framed picture, originally published in *The Times of London*, found in all the Lawson/Levy family homes. Muriel is my grandfather Dr. Sam Lawson's first cousin.

And there we go. I have somehow reconnected with a long-lost branch of the family tree all the way here in Syracuse, New York by way of London, England - plus a few decades and a lot of other miracles along the way.

Muriel and I have become fast friends. I see her at least once a week with KMOW. She's met my family. I meet hers when they come into Syracuse. The whole family has gotten involved. We are planning a Zoom call with the family in England and Israel. Family trees and old photos have been shared with glee and amazement. I guarantee that this story

will continue to be discussed at Miller, Kodish, Lawson and Sinclair family tables for many years to come.

How strange that my connection to Muriel only happened after nearly eight years of my living in Syracuse. Is it because of KMOW? Is it because volunteering has become part of my routine? Is it a miracle? Maybe. Is it amazing? Absolutely!

Nowadays, I consider myself "privileged" to be helping out, to be meeting amazing and inspiring people whom I would never have ordinarily met. So I say, reach out. Say hello to a stranger. Ask if you can help...because you never know what beautiful story might unfold.

I choose to live my life as though everything is a miracle. It makes the journey so much more enjoyable.

Jay Sinclair works Advanced Oncotherapy, developer of a breakthrough proton therapy system. Originally from London, he has lived in Syracuse for the last seven years with his wife and three sons and is passionate about the continuity of Judaism in the community.



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Mishpacha from Israel

Youchi Holstein and Orit Antosh are two Israelis living in Syracuse. These are their stories:

Youchi: “My family came from Iraq to Israel about two years after the establishment of the state. My family and almost 100,000 Iraqi Jews left behind their homes, businesses and all their possessions for the promise of a Jewish homeland. They left behind a country where they were considered second-class citizens with a history that oscillated from treating the Jews well to treating them badly, especially with the rise of Nazism. The Iraqi Jews and Jews of other Arab countries became refugees in Israel since they were stripped of their homeland citizenship. They are the Forgotten Refugees. They lived in tents. Toilets were behind a mound. Running water was available only in public areas. Life was tough, especially for families with young kids. After ten years and extremely hard work they moved into a two-bedroom house with five children. But they were happy. They were finally in their own home.”

Orit: “My grandparents Nathaniel and Miriam Neiman, from my mom’s side, survived the Holocaust. After the Nazis took over Hungary in 1944, they were forced to leave everything that they had and move to the ghetto, where they were assigned one bedroom in an apartment shared with other families, with no warm water. How they survived is a heroic story for another time. Most of the family were murdered by the Nazis. My grandparents, my mom and her sister came to Israel after World War II ended without anything, only the clothes that they wore during their voyage. My grandparents Isaac and Leah



Magen, from my dad’s side, came to Israel in 1925 and 1914 respectively. They were Zionists and escaping religious persecution.”

Youchi: “Throughout our years living here, and especially over the past two decades, we have been on the sidelines watching as antisemitism and anti-Israel feeling are gaining momentum. We have witnessed lies and misinformation circulating among all segments of society and being accepted as truth, without verifying the sources. We want to present facts and truths to help dispel some of the biggest accusations against Israel.

“Israel is not perfect, and like any other country in the world, it has made many mistakes since its birth in 1948. First, let us assure you: It’s okay to criticize Israel. However, if you are criticizing Israel but turning a blind eye to what is happening in other countries, you need to examine your knowledge and beliefs. Our hope is to provide tools and resources to help people understand this country. First and foremost, we would like to shed light on the simple yet glaring truth that Israel is the only state for the Jewish people. Don’t get us wrong. We do care about the plight of the Arabs living in Gaza and refugee camps. It is

a very disturbing problem that is perpetuated by the United Nations and Arab leaders and countries that are using them as pawns.”

Orit: “There has been a continuous Jewish presence in Israel for more than 3,000 years. The rise of anti-Jewish feeling should raise the alarm in our Jewish communities, yet many are either oblivious or mistakenly believe that these are isolated instances. The increased call for boycotting Israel, the rise of antisemitism in the USA and around the world made us think and become proactive. We would like to explore together the essentials of being an advocate of Israel. The State of Israel is facing security challenges daily. Social media is hopping with false narratives and anti-Israel myths which have become the false knowledge of many. We decided that in order to fully understand Israel and the Israel conflict, one must understand the history of the land and of the Jewish people. In order to fully understand Israel, one must understand the complex history of Israel and the Middle East. Our hope is to present a series of short seminars and articles to help create a better understanding of the current situation and

to provide a useful list of resources about the conflict. We feel that it is our duty to empower and inspire all individuals in our community to learn more about Israel, the only democratic country in the Middle East.

Orit and Youchi applied for a Holstein Community Program Fund to an informational program for young Jewish adults. Their first guest speaker will be **Ronald Wasserman**, a Central New York native who is the founder and chief executive of **Fuel for Truth**, an organization dedicated to Israel education and advocacy training. **Fuel for Truth** offers lectures and talks on a variety of subjects for synagogue gatherings, community meetings, as well as high school and college students seeking empowerment on campus. They are not afraid to address hot button issues such as the origins and meaning of Zionism, reconciling Israeli and Palestinian narratives, how antisemitism functions, Palestine refugee issue and the right of return, Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria and the BDS campaign against Israel.

Fuel for Truth wants to provide “Israel Education For A New Generation” and declares, “We break down the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict so you can feel confident discussing it in the real world.” Believing that mainstream Jewish organizations were not adequately responding to the new problems facing young Jews or offering meaningful ways for a new generation to engage with Israel and Jewish identity, they created a new movement to educate young Jews about Israel, the Middle East, and how to effectively combat misinformation surrounding the Jewish state. If funded, the program will take place early in the fall.

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A Jewish Observer

by Cantor Robert Lieberman

A shaliach is an emissary or agent, a representative or a proxy. A shaliach creates a living bridge between communities. Cantor Robert Lieberman just returned from Kyiv where he served as a shaliach from the Central New York Jewish community to the Jewish community of Ukraine. Carrying almost one hundred pounds of over-the-counter medications for the adults and Passover toys for the children, Cantor Lieberman undertook to serve as an emissary on our behalf on a JFNA-organized trip to Warsaw and Medyka, a border town near Lviv, Ukraine. The role of shaliach is one for which the cantor is well-suited. Before his retirement, he served as the shaliach tzibbur or messenger of the congregation for Temple Adath Yeshurun and Congregation Beth Shalom-Chevre Shas locally and Congregation Ahavath Achim in Atlanta, Georgia. But Cantor Lieberman defined his role differently. He was, he said, a “Jewish Observer” for the **Jewish Observer**. Here is his report:

On this mission, organized by the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), I will be joining approximately 25 fellow Jewish leaders from across the US. Travelers representing NY, NJ, CT, MI, LA, NE, UT, VA include Federation execs, board members, businesspeople, a rabbi and this retired cantor. It is an honor and a privilege for me to represent the Jewish Federation of Central New York. I left Syracuse on Monday, April 4, flying to JFK airport to later board a direct flight to Warsaw, on LOT, the Polish airlines.



Before my departure, my wife Vicki and I stopped by the JCC and the Syracuse Hebrew Day School to fully stuff two large duffel bags with loads of generously donated supplies: over-the-counter medications, band aids, health-related items as well as many timely toys and ephemera to share Pesach with the children of Jewish refugees. The donations from the members of our community had been sorted by the SHDS 6th graders and more than filled two large duffels which will be handed off to the organizers for distribution. Michael Balanoff, CEO of the Federation, which helped support my trip, helped with the packing.



Thoughts as I depart: Prayers for peace may make us feel better; providing physical sustenance, shelter and embracing the pained is where we rise to our potential as compassionate humans, made in the image of God.



I got good at shlepping the almost 100 pounds of supplies, which were added to the pile of the most duffels brought by any group organized by the JFNA.

The program began on Tuesday with orientation and guest speakers, followed by dinner and more speakers. Israel's Ambassador to Poland, Yacov Livne, spoke about the tenuous balance of Israel, Ukraine, Syria and Russia.

Early Wednesday morning, we board a bus to drive for six hours down to Medyka, the border-crossing area in south Poland closest to Lviv, Ukraine. There we will meet, see, record and bear witness to humanitarian distributions to salve people's needs for refuge, sustenance, care and love. I anticipate this experience to be an emotional rollercoaster.



The first thing refugees see when they leave Ukraine walking into Medyka is the Israeli flag. Israel was developing emergency evacuation plans back in January. They took the intel seriously. As a result, Israel was ready, the first and only nation to welcome refugees at the border. Refugees are transported to a humanitarian aid center in an abandoned mall. The stores were converted into centers for various types of goods, services and medicines. We were not allowed to photograph inside the mall, but we saw collections of strollers, wheelchairs and crutches and green sleeping cots packed side by side, end to end, in paired rows. The numbers change, but the center can accommodate up to 1,500 people per day.



There is just a lot of sadness. It is overwhelming. Adults are forlorn. They've lost everything. Dozens of children are just running around the aid center. Some people are carrying their dogs. There is a profound sense of despair. We dropped off about 25 of our bags of supplies, having left the rest in the synagogue in Warsaw.

This should never be a scene in 2022. How could this happen?

Because the JO had to go to press, we were unable to include more of Cantor Lieberman's observations. They will appear in our next issue.

Why You Should Write A Family History Book

By Robin A. Meltzer

Family historians answer all sorts of questions, like “Where did we come from?” or “How did we get here?” or “Is it true that Aunt Charlotte sewed robes for the tsar?” But it’s rare that our relatives get to see the big picture, how all those facts and stories fit together and connect to their own lives. You need to build a narrative, the context for all those wonderful facts you have found, and a way to deliver that narrative to your family. You need to write a book.

“But wait –” you may say, “I don’t need to write a book. I have an online family tree, and I gave out thumb drives of the big chart at my niece’s wedding. And I’m not a writer.” Unfortunately, thumb drives (and hard drives) die, genealogy websites go out of business and passwords get lost. Even if you print out a copy of your work, unless you assemble it in some sort of order and



share it widely among your relatives, it too is likely to be lost. Most importantly, yes, you can write a book. You just need to reframe a bit. Think of it as a letter, a letter to your family, present and future.

The first paragraph of your letter is your personal introduction. Explain who you are in the family tree. Include pictures of yourself with the older generations, even if you hate your haircut. Plead with Future Reader to keep the book and to share it with family. (It’s hard to throw out a book that’s begging you to save it.) Next, set out your personal reasons for tracing the family, the “why” that motivates you. Tell your readers what you have learned in the process, and what you want them to take away. After you finish those paragraphs, write “Foreword” up at the top. Congratulations! Your book is begun!

Next, sketch out a table of contents. Consider who the main subjects of your book will be. Whose story inspires you? If you are enthusiastic about the lives you chronicle, you will write a compelling book. This matters for your present-day audience, but even more so to future generations, whose only experience with your subjects may be through your words.

One caution: when your book is done, it will become an authoritative resource for your family. They will believe what you have written. You need to get it right the first time. So choose main subjects whose lives you can document with reliable sources, and cite those sources in your work.

If you have interviewed your older relatives and recorded those conversations (or at least taken very good notes) prioritize that material. Let people speak for themselves. Avoid the temptation to over edit when transcribing the stories. If Aunt Minnie always referred to the Osterizer blender she used to make guggle muggle as “the Ostracizer,” then “Ostracizer” it is. You can put an explanatory note at the end of the story.

Future readers will appreciate historical context. You know where Cleveland is, but put in a map anyway. Obvious and unnecessary? Well, how long did you spend trying to figure out where “Bluchow not too far from Vilna” is, which was perfectly obvious a generation or two ago?

Including lists or tables can greatly increase the usefulness of your book, and therefore, the likelihood your relatives will keep it. Consider a table for Hebrew names, birth locations,

immigration dates or *yahrtzeit* dates.

Family photographs are central to the saga, but if you don’t have portraits of key ancestors, there are alternatives. A collage of personal items, like a few spools and fabric scraps from a sewing basket, or pencil stubs and a handwriting sample, can help bring that person to life. A map with towns of origin, immigration routes and the places where relatives settled in their new country can illustrate that part of the story. Before using any published image, check references on copyright law to assure you can use them and if there are required attributions. Family snapshots should have “courtesy of” or “from the collection of” as part of the caption.

Once you have several sections completed, it’s time to get some feedback. Ask a cousin or two to read a few pages. Involving relatives in the editing process can also help turn up additional photos or stories. (Better now than after you’re done, right?) Also ask a non-relative to review a chapter. Someone unfamiliar with your family history will be able to spot references that make sense only to you or your generation.

Toward the end of the editing process, choose a publishing method. There are online platforms that allow you to upload text and images into customizable templates. You can also e-mail or bring finished work to a local copy center or short run press for reproduction and binding. Cost varies widely. You want your book to last, so acid free paper and sturdy binding are well worth it. Print enough copies to distribute widely throughout your family.

So what comes next? Document the present. Start a family newsletter, blog or social media group. Revive the cousins club. Maybe plan a family reunion. Take lots of pictures of happy people gathered around Volume One. They will make a great frontispiece for Volume Two.

The author’s 10-part course on writing a family history book is available at “Tracing the Tribe: Jewish Genealogy on Facebook,” in the “Guides” section https://www.facebook.com/groups/tracingthretribe/learning_content.



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Interview With Mike Fixler

JO: How did the Syracuse Jewish Genealogy group come into being?

We started back in the fall of 2017. Nolan Altman, a board member for the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) contacted a number of us. We invited him to come up here and give a talk at Temple Concord. He was very willing, as his two daughters both went to SU. He also walked us through all we needed to do to start a chapter. We set up by-laws and planned bi-monthly meetings with our steering committee. The JCC has also been very helpful, and we are actually part of the JCC now.

JO: Why do Jews do genealogy?

I personally feel that we are interested in how we came to be who we are in general. We're interested in our family history and family background. It is sometimes a bit harder for us in that many of us had family members born outside the United States, going back two or three generations. This does sometimes make genealogical research more of a challenge and maybe therefore more satisfying when we make a discovery. Of course, the *Shoah* also makes it harder and even more important that we try to make some of the family connections from the past.

JO: How is Jewish genealogical research different from other kinds of genealogical research?

There are some specific pieces of information that we need to work on, as Jews, knowing maps and histories of various countries through Europe, Asia and Africa (depending on where one's family came from). This also leads to issues with language and knowing Hebrew or finding someone who does helps. There also have been some specific Jewish customs over the years that impact on our own research. Of course, there are many aspects of the research that we share with others and therefore can learn from general genealogists.

JO: What role does genetics play in Jewish genealogical research?

The science of tracing one's ancestry through their DNA is a very new field. It's opened up some amazing possibilities, but also given us some unexpected discoveries. A couple of our speakers were DNA experts. They talked about how, when we do DNA tracing, we have

to be prepared for surprises. I feel that we also have to be aware that even with the science of DNA, we just may not solve some of the mysteries that exist. DNA tracing can help us to find relatives and ancestors, where we might not have found them a very short number of years ago.

JO: What kinds of people do genealogy?

This is a great question. I can only speculate, of course. People interested and willing to solve family mysteries. People open to that. People who want to provide the information to future generations. People who are willing to accept the uncertainties that come with these mysteries. I personally have been able to connect with a number of relatives, whom I did not know growing up and probably never would have met if it weren't for my genealogical research. We do have fun making these discoveries.

JO: Who are the speakers who have appeared before the group?

We've had a wide variety of speakers over the four or so years of our existence. We've had authors who wrote books both on their families and others. We've had experts in DNA studies, including a physicist from MIT who has been on the IAJGS Board. We've had local people including Dr. Sam Gruber, world renowned art and architecture historian at SU and an SU fashion professor who analyzed photographs. We have had a number of our own members present their personal genealogical research. We had a professor from the Czech Republic who is helping to preserve Jewish gravesites. We have had a number of programs with local librarians, helping us with using the Onondaga County Library System for our research. Our meeting in April focused on local Jewish genealogy with Robin Meltzer, an expert in that field.

JO: What are your plans for the future?

We'll have one more meeting in June, and at this point we are not sure who we'll have as a speaker. We are constantly getting inquiries about people who have lived in Central New York and questions about their families. We are the only Jewish genealogical society between Albany and Buffalo. COVID has helped us, in a way, as we have had meetings on Zoom and sometimes had over 80 people

from all of the US and even other parts of the world, particularly Israel. The present committee, on which everyone does a tremendous amount, has been myself, Sharon Sherman, Marilyn Zaleon and Yonat Klein. We work well together and enjoy each other's company. When we can, we meet at Wegman's for coffee and to work things out. A key to this very successful endeavor, which certainly greatly benefits the Jewish community, has been a small group that efficiently works to keep it humming.

JO: Do you want new members? How can other people participate?

We definitely are open to anyone who wants to explore their Jewish genealogy (and end up providing general genealogy information, too.) If one is interested in joining or learning more, send an email to jgscny@gmail.com. We do advertise our bi-monthly meetings on Community Happenings and in various other places. Please join us!






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Syracuse City School District Hosts Grandchildren of Holocaust Survivors in 25 History Classrooms

The Syracuse City School District welcomed grandchildren of Holocaust survivors into middle and high school classrooms on March 23 for a unique educational experience. In partnership with 3GNY, an education nonprofit made up of third generation descendants of Holocaust survivors, a special one-day program will utilize Microsoft Teams to bring special guests into 8th and 10th grade classrooms throughout the district to tell their personal family stories of survival. The program is entitled “Living Links for Syracuse Schools.”

“With hate crimes and antisemitism on the rise and schools around the country questioning how or even if they can teach this history, 3GNY is thrilled to bring our program at such a scale to Syracuse schools,” said David Wachs, President of 3GNY. “As the last living link to firsthand accounts of the Holocaust, we are committed to keeping the stories alive and leveraging them to prepare the next generation for a better, peaceful and more tolerant future.”

Syracuse City School District Supervisor of Social Studies Nick Stamoulacatos noted that “Studies show that students who receive Holocaust education are more tolerant and comfortable with people of different races



and backgrounds. They’re more willing to challenge incorrect or biased information and are more likely to be upstanders.” 3GNY is committed to educating diverse audiences on the perils of intolerance. Its hallmark We Educate (WEDU) program provides training for 3Gs to compellingly share their grandparents’ stories of survival in school settings, to connect the lessons that can be taken from the Holocaust to the challenges of the modern day.

3GNY Executive Director David Reckess said, “I am grateful to the teachers and administrators in the Syracuse City School District for partnering with us for this important day of testimony. It was so powerful to hear and see students’ responses to the personal stories of survival. As one 8th grade student reflected, ‘It’s interesting to me how you can speak about your family’s feelings, and what they went through, and still be so strong.’ As a longtime member of the Syracuse community, I am honored and grateful for this opportunity to share an important part of our Jewish identity and history with the students and staff in Syracuse schools.”

SHDS Asks: Is Your Preschooler Ready For Kindergarten?

by Laura Lavine

Do you have questions about your preschooler’s readiness for Kindergarten? Has someone suggested that your child wait a year before starting school?

It is actually more than likely that your child is right on track for entering Kindergarten and will be successful starting when age-eligible. In fact, “redshirting” can have disadvantages that are often overlooked when parents are making the decision. Children

facing puberty at a younger grade, the social impact of always being older than their peers all the way through school, and starting college or career a year late are several.

In their article “The Lengthening of Childhood,” David Deming and Susan Dynarski explained that “There is little evidence that being older than your classmates has any long-term, positive effect on adult outcomes such as IQ, earnings, or educational attainment. By contrast,

there is substantial evidence that entering school later reduces educational attainment (by increasing high school dropout rates) and depresses lifetime earnings (by delaying entry into the labor market).”

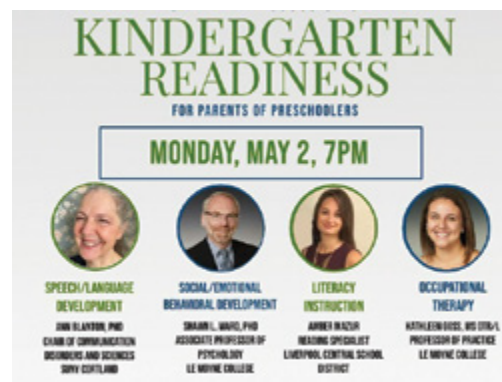
In “The Effect of Academic Redshirting on Math and Reading Achievement: An Analysis of Short-term and Long-term Impacts”, Kara Bixby wrote, “Considering policy implications and unintended consequences, redshirting is not an effective policy intervention to increase student achievement.”

What does increase student achievement is a Kindergarten year of developmentally-appropriate instruction that is geared to each student’s ability level, and is grounded in scientifically-backed pedagogical practices.

Nevertheless, there might be a rare instance in which a child might benefit from waiting a year. If you question whether or not your child’s development is progressing as expected or you just want to learn more about it, mark your calendars for this important event hosted by the Syracuse Hebrew Day School.

Back by popular demand, the program provides an opportunity for parents to learn about developmental milestones in the areas of speech/language, social/emotional, early literacy, and fine motor skills. It will be led by Dr. Christian DuComb, an SHDS parent, with time for questions and answers. The program is open to all parents of children ages three and four to explore school readiness in depth with some of our area’s top experts in their fields.

To register for the program, email mrsklempere@shds.org.



NexGen Enjoys Winter to the Max

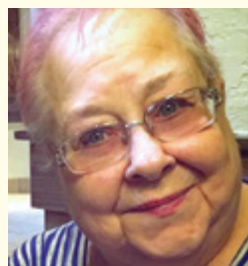
Federation’s NexGen group took full advantage of Central New York’s wintery weather to enjoy skating and tubing, with hot chocolate to take off the chill. As the weather warms, the group plans some fun spring activities, including a Pre-Passover Happy Hour and a Post-Passover Pizza Party. All young adults are welcome to attend. **For details, contact emmaspector@gmail.com.**



JCC Gala 2022

The Wladis Family presents The Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center of Syracuse's 161st annual meeting and gala. On Sunday, May 22, at 11 am, the JCC's biggest annual fundraiser will feature an awards ceremony to honor outstanding members of the local Jewish community.

In addition to the Federation and the JCC, **Judith Stander z"l** worked for Syracuse University's Center for Business Information Technologies. She supported the Jewish community through her work on the annual Yom Hashoah commemoration, Yom HaAtzmaut celebration and Jewish



Music and Cultural Festival. She served as vice president and secretary of the board of Temple Concord and

vice chair and member of the board of education. She volunteered as a vocational counselor and sang with the Knesseth Shalom Singers. Additionally, she was a member of the Cortland County Youth Commission, Cortland Chamber of Commerce board, Village of Manlius Zoning Board of Appeals and WCNY TelAuc volunteer coordinator. Judith passed away on November 4, 2020.

Steven and Sondra Goldberg have a rich history as friends and advocates



of the Jewish Community Center. "We believe the JCC promotes a culture of equality and trust. The JCC is near and dear to our hearts because of the strong Jewish foundation it has fostered both inside and outside our home" said Sondra.

Steven is a past Vice President of the JCC Board of Directors and an active leader of the yearly JCC Super Bowl Fundraiser. He is a former board member of The Make-A-Wish Foundation and the National Home Furnishing Association. He is a City of Hope Spirit of Life Award recipient and Greater New York Home Furnishing Association (GNYHFA) Jerry Gans Memorial Award recipient. Both Steven and Sondra served as Honorary Chairs of the Vera House "New Beginnings" Gala. Sondra was a former Vera House Foundation Board of Trustees member,

serving as Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. She initiated the Foundation of Hope Campaign, raising endowments from 1.5 million to 3 million for agency programming and support services. Sondra received the distinction of being presented the Outstanding Philanthropist Award from The Association of Fundraising Professionals of CNY for her philanthropic and unwavering commitment in the community. Formerly of the Syracuse Hebrew Day School Board of Directors, she presently affiliates with Temple Adath Sisterhood, National Council of Jewish Women and is a proud Lion of Judah.

Steven is Executive Vice Chairman of the locally based furniture company Raymour & Flanigan. Sondra is the owner and sole proprietor of Home Styling Solutions. Her passion for enhancing special features within one's living environment has given her the privilege of fulfilling young children's dreams through the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The couple are Major Gift contributors to the Jewish Federation of CNY's Annual Campaign.

They raised their daughters, Dana, Rebecca and Kara in Fayetteville. All three are proud graduates of the Syracuse Hebrew Day School. Their expanded family includes two wonderful sons-in-law and grandchildren Sophia, Devon, Charlie and Noa.

Barry Shulman is a graduate of both the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and Cornell Law School and a partner in the Mackenzie Hughes Law Firm, representing governmental and major business clients. Recognizing his passion for both mentoring and tap, Onondaga County Executive Joanie Mahoney named May 25, 2017



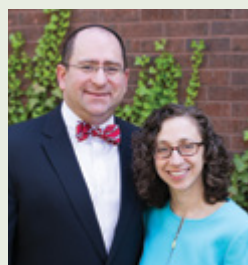
as "Barry M. Shulman Day". Shulman's time and talents have been shared throughout the community as Chair of

WCNY's Tel Auc, President of Temple Adath Yeshurun, Director of the Onondaga County Bar Association, Counsel to the Jewish Home of CNY, Campaign Chair of the Syracuse Jewish Federation, Chair of the United Way's Lawyers' Fund, and Board Member of both the Syracuse Hebrew Day School and Hiscock Legal Aid Society. As Counsel to State Senator John H. Hughes and the NYS Senate Judiciary Committee, Barry wrote many laws and changed the CNY landscape with the creation of the CNY Regional Transportation Authority and its many CENTRO subsidiary corporations.

Debbie Shulman is a former chapter president, state program chair, and national board member of Women's American ORT (Organization for Rehabilitation through Training). She was appointed by four NY Governors to the Board of Visitors of Hutchings Psychiatric Center. As a school psychologist and alcohol and drug abuse prevention education counselor, she originated several programs, garnering state and national recognition. The best known program, The Drug Quiz Show, taught 10 to 14-year-olds about substance abuse, bullying, conflict resolution, gambling, and grief. She received the U.S. Department of Human Services' highest honor, the Secretary's Award for Excellence in Community Health Promotions. Debbie was named a Daily Points of Light honoree in the national volunteer recognition program created by President George W. Bush.

They are the proud parents and grandparents of Marc-David z"l, Jenifer, and Zac Shulman, Jennifer Shulman, and Allison, Larry, Cecilia and Evan Schwartz.

Abby Kasowitz Scheer grew up in Central New York. She received her bachelor's degree from Brandeis University and master's degrees in library science and instructional design, development and evaluation from Syracuse University. Abby



has been a librarian at Syracuse University for over twenty years. She served as board President of the Syracuse Hebrew Day School. She is currently on the board of the Epstein School of Jewish Studies and served on the board of the JCC. Abby was a board member and President of Syracuse University's chapter of Beta Phi Mu (International Library and Information Studies Honor Society) and is an active member of the American Library Association. She coordinates a support group for children with inflammatory

bowel disease and their parents through Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital.

Jeffrey Scheer, originally from Buffalo, is a partner at Bond, Schoeneck and King. He received his bachelor's degree at the University of Rochester and graduated with his juris doctorate from SUNY Buffalo School of Law. Jeffrey served on, and later chaired, the Board of Directors of Hillel at Syracuse University. Since then, Jeffrey has served on the boards of Syracuse Jewish Family Service, Jewish Federation of CNY, Menorah Park, Jewish Community Foundation of CNY, Public Broadcasting Council of CNY - WCNY, Camp Ramah in New England and the Green Family Foundation. At the Jewish Community Foundation, Jeffrey works with the young adults in the Linda Alexander Teen Funders Program. In 2016, Jeffrey received the Not-For-Profit Award from the *CNY Business Journal* for his work with WCNY.

The Scheers were members of the Jewish Federation's Young Leadership Class in the late 1990s. They are the proud parents of Sophie, Rachel and Rose, who all attended the Syracuse Hebrew Day School.

Davia Moss graduated from Syracuse University in 2007 with a bachelor's degree in biology and a minor in psychology. She



worked as an EMT while attending Crouse College of Nursing and went on to become a Pediatric ICU/Emergency Department nurse for five

years before ultimately completing her nurse practitioner master's degree. She is now the adolescent nurse practitioner at Upstate University Hospital and an adjunct faculty member for both St. John Fisher College and Le Moyne College. Davia is a JCC Board Member. She is co-chair of the ECDP parent committee, serving on the JCC executive committee and gala committee. She and her family are members of Temple Adath Yeshurun. Davia and her husband Patrick live in Syracuse with their children, Eliana, Cason and Asher.

Federation Task Force Addresses Climate Crisis

At its March board meeting, the Federation passed a motion to create an ad hoc committee of the Federation, composed of board members and others, to organize itself, create a mission and start taking action and also to work to form coalitions with other umbrella organizations in efforts that are underway to combat the climate crisis.

The motion derived from the work of a Task Force on Climate Change which was created in February by Federation board chair Neil Rosenbaum and spearheaded by board member Mark Field. Other members include SHDS representative Linda Friedman and SJFS representative Alise Gemmel and community members Rhea Jezer and Cornelius Murphy, both active leaders in the environmental movement.

"The Jewish community is a small piece of Central New York, but we can have impact by joining with other entities, raising awareness within the Jewish community as well as impact the climate crisis," said Linda Friedman, in discussing why the Federation should take a leadership role in addressing climate change.

Neil Murphy told the task force that "we are blessed to live in an area that, while it will still be affected by climate change, is better protected than most other areas of the country, and we should remember that and protect it and other areas that are less fortunate. We have a reason to give thanks and have a personal responsibility to take care of those things with which we are blessed."

Mark Field presented five priorities to be addressed by a climate change committee: "1) Informing our members, leaders and clients of the serious dangers climate change will bring to our community, country and the world. 2) Advising our agencies of actions they can take to mitigate greenhouse gas creation. 3) Advocating for local and state government and local industries to formulate policies to encourage renewable and smart energy consumption. 4) Educating individuals as to how they can reduce ecological and greenhouse risks. 5) Focusing on the climate crisis until we approach the climate metrics that show we are winning this battle."

At its meeting on March 30, the task force developed a mission statement which reads: "Concern for the risks climate change poses for future generations, this committee will be a voice that will consistently speak to the dangers of insufficient action. The committee will inform institutions and individuals on ways to mitigate greenhouse gasses as we transition to more renewable and less carbon-based energy. The committee will encourage government, business and individuals to do all that is necessary to meet this serious challenge with the urgency it requires." The mission statement will be presented to the Federation board at its May 12 meeting.

The Local Community column is generously sponsored by RAV Properties.

SkyTop Coffee Reaches the Top

Locally-owned SkyTop Coffee, featured in the JO's RAV column in November 2020 and a Zoo-per Sunday corporate sponsor, has just won a 2022 Good Food Award for their Organic Finca Santa Maria coffee. With over 2,000 entries each year, the competition is fierce for a Good Food Award. From the 2,000 entries, there were only 15 winners. To qualify for the competition, a company needed to have a superior product and demonstrate that they are a values-based business. SkyTop certainly meets those qualifications. In addition to their support of their local community, they had to prove that they adhere to specific business practices that honor social and environmental responsibility. SkyTop checks that box also.

The Organic Finca Santa Maria coffee which won the award is an experimental natural coffee from Santander, Colombia, produced by women on Mildred Muñoz's Finca Santa María. It carries Organic, Rainforest Alliance and Smithsonian Migratory Bird Council certifications. The flavor profile is full of tropical fruits and berries with hints of rose, pineapple, dark chocolate and vanilla. SkyTop's roasters found the coffee fairly easy to work with. The coffee may be a little later than average to reach first crack and will accelerate afterwards (as is common for natural coffees). They brewed this coffee as a light roast in pour-overs and as a dark roast using a batch brewer. SkyTop baristas found the coffee to brew quickly, retaining its fruit-forward nature while showcasing remarkable versatility on different drip methods.

The coffee's origin story is also values-based. Mildred Muñoz has dedicated Santa María, a 75-acre family farm, to be run entirely by women. The group of 22 women control everything from leadership decisions through quality control. The project is new, but the women have support from Mildred and her husband Oscar Daza who have another farm nearby called La Pradera. The alliance gives the women



at Santa Maria access to award-winning processing protocols developed at La Pradera. The cherries for this particular lot were meticulously selected and fermented in an anaerobic and aerobic environment before being placed on raised beds for drying.

The Good Food Foundation encourages people to think about where their food comes from, how it is produced and its effect on the environment. The Foundation recognizes foods that not only have a remarkable taste but are produced in a sustainable and socially responsible way. It thus helps people with a commitment to seasonality, tradition, land stewardship, social good and outstanding flavor succeed in their work to create better food – and society – for all. Sky Top was honored at a ceremony featuring renowned chef Alice Waters at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco in March.

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Epstein Student Winner at Jewish Lens International 2022 Competition

By Aaron Spitzer

For the third consecutive year, a photograph submitted by a Rabbi Jacob H. Epstein School of Jewish Studies student received special mention at “The Jewish Lens International Competition” in Tel Aviv, Israel. Tenth-grade student Emily Greenblatt’s photograph, “Fibonacci Dreidel,” is among the 2022 winning photos. Her image was displayed at the competition award ceremony on March 28, and will be exhibited for the thousands of people visiting ANU — Museum of the Jewish People, the world’s largest Jewish museum, this year. Additionally, “Fibonacci Dreidel” will be featured at the websites and social media of The Jewish Lens and ANU.

Each year, ANU sponsors the competition for students in grades 8-12 worldwide. More than 500 teens from over twenty countries submitted photographs focused on the theme of nature and the environment this year. The selection committee in Israel, directed by renowned photographer, Zion Ozeri, chose outstanding images for exhibition, giving strong consideration to the “Photographer’s Note,” a brief narrative of no more than 50 words that reveals “the inner world of the photographer.”

Greenblatt’s work was one of three images submitted by the Epstein School to the competition. Students took photos as part of a course taught by Ora Jezer in fall 2021 where they explored Jewish values and community by studying and taking pictures, and by examining the relationship between image and text to discover what it means to look through a “Jewish lens.” “Fibonacci Dreidel” is a compelling image: an iridescent spinning circle in the center, encompassed by a subtle swirl created by the light’s reflection on the bowl’s surface. Greenblatt’s photographer’s note reminds us that nature is everywhere: “The Fibonacci Sequence is a fundamental mathematical sequence that governs life. It is in everything—it dictates the shape and swirl of blossoms on the vine, of that seashell you picked up on the beach, even of branches growing on a tree. It’s as natural to our universe as us breathing air is. Judaism has an inherent connection to the world and the natural order. We are taught and expected to respect and protect this gift of life. Much as our universe spirals and brings forth life for us, creating endless diversity in infinite, beautiful combinations, so too does Judaism build upon the work of our past to bring us to a brighter tomorrow.”

Previous Epstein winners are Jonah Jaffe (“Flame,” 2021) and Sam Allen (“Menorah from Heaven,” 2020).



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to the 2022 campaign today at
<https://jewishfederationcny.org/campaign-pledge/>.
*[No payment is due until 12/22.]***

**Our ability to support others depends on
the campaign’s success.
Can we count on your generosity this year?**

Thank you!

FRANK B. GOLDBERG
March 6, 2022



Frank B. Goldberg passed away on March 6 at his home in Boynton Beach, FL.

He was 92 years old. Frank is survived by his daughter, Joan Picone, his son and his daughter-in-law, Andrew and Beth Low Goldberg, his grandchildren, Benjamin, Julie, and Gregory (Camilla) Goldberg and the great-grandchild due to be born to Greg and Camilla. He is also survived by his nephew Richard Levin, his niece Donna Hodis, their respective families and his sister-in-law Dorothy Pemstein and her family. He was predeceased by his wife Beverly, his sister Roz Levin and his brother Leonard "Skippy" Goldberg.

Frank was born in Syracuse on May 2, 1929 to Benjamin and Dora Goldberg. He was raised on Scottholm Boulevard in Syracuse and attended Syracuse University where he met his wife, Beverly. Shortly after graduating in 1951, Frank and Beverly married and settled down in Syracuse with Frank working in the family business, Goldberg's Furniture. Soon after, Frank and Beverly were joined by Joan, and then Andrew. In concert with his brother, Frank ran Goldberg's Furniture for over fifty years, twenty of those as the sole president, taking pride in operating and continuing his family's business.

As a lifelong resident of Syracuse, Frank loved the area, especially the Jewish community in which he grew up. Frank and Beverly were longtime members of Temple Adath Yeshurun. Both believed in acting out of the concept of tzedakah by giving generously to local organizations and donating their time by participating in different groups. Frank served on the

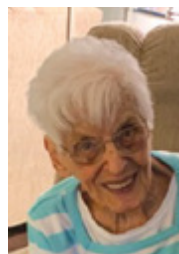
boards of Temple Adath Yeshurun, Menorah Park, the Syracuse Jewish Welfare Federation and the Jewish Federation of Central New York. In 2013 Frank and Beverly were proud to establish a Perpetual Annual Campaign Endowment Fund (PACE) to help benefit the Jewish Community Foundation of Central New York.

Frank loved to golf and play tennis. For many years he could be found doing both at Lafayette Country Club in Syracuse or down at Hunter's Run in Florida. When not working, Frank loved to socialize with his many friends. In more recent years, after having to give up golf and tennis, he could often be found at Ruston's Diner with a group of friends for the "old man lunch."

His generous and sympathetic nature will live forever in the minds of his family. The tremendous love and affection he held for his family will be cherished. His family is grateful for every second they were able to spend with this wonderful man. His presence was like a crackling fire on a winter's day, casting light and warmth on all of us around him. Finally, his grandchildren can't believe they won't get to tease him anymore for putting on a sweater whenever the temperature fell below 75 degrees.

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IDA GROSSMAN
March 12, 2022



Ida Grossman passed away in Delray Beach, FL on March 12, seven days from her 100th birthday.

Ida is survived by her daughters, Pattye Grossman and Rebecca Grossman; her son, Steven (Cindy) Grossman, her grandchildren Brian Murphy, Hilary (Scott) Ferris, Seth (Michelle Lawrence) Grossman, Amy Lapoint, Michael (Meagen) Grossman, Gregory (Jessica) Grossman, seven great-grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild and many nieces, nephews and their respective families. She was predeceased by Leonard, her husband of 65 years, her brothers, her sisters and many in-laws.

ARTHUR LEVINE
March 13, 2022

Arthur Levine died on March 13. He was born in the Bronx on June 28, 1931. The funeral service was held at Stanetsky Memorial Chapels in Brookline, MA with burial in Konstantinov Cemetery (Baker Street), Roxbury, MA. Arthur most recently was living in the Boston area with his second wife Lois. He was formerly married to Sherine Medjuck. They lived in Syracuse where their children Ruth, Steven and Daniel were born and raised. Besides his three children, Arthur had seven grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, three stepchildren and four step grandchildren.

JOANNE R. LANDY
March 16, 2022



Joanne R. Landy of Falmouth, MA, formerly of Manlius, NY and Needham, MA, passed away on March 16. She was born on May 19, 1960.

Joanne met her cherished husband of over 38 years, David Steinberg, at the age of 12 when David asked her to dance at an overnight camp social. Joanne and David met for the second time when they matriculated as freshmen at the University of Rochester, and the two have been in love and inseparable ever since. She was the devoted mother of two sets of twins and their spouses and partners: Matthew Steinberg and Alyssa Steinberg of Sharon, MA, Michael Steinberg and Jake Pitochelli of Sharon, MA, Danielle Kalette and Zachary Kalette of Roslindale, MA and Nicole Steinberg and Troy Sorrento of Boston. She was a proud and doting grandmother (or, as Joanne preferred to be called, "zsa

Ida was born in Ontario, Canada on March 19, 1922 to Benjamin and Rebecca Weiner. She grew up and lived most of her life in Syracuse, where she met Leonard. They were married in 1940. Soon after, Leonard became a photographer/manager with Varden Studios, where Ida worked alongside him for many years.

The most important thing to her was her family and extended family. When needed, Ida was always the first to help. Leonard and Ida retired to Delray Beach, FL in 1992. They had a wonderful group of family and friends and a life full of joy. Their condo was always filled with visiting children, grand-children, nieces, nephews and old friends.

Donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, which she always supported.

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zsa") of Matthew and Alyssa's daughter, Brooke. She was a dear sister to Fred and Fran Landy of West Hartford, CT, and Alex Landy and Alice Radin of North Caldwell, NJ.

She is survived by her mother, Estelle Landy of Dedham, MA. She is also survived by her nieces and nephews, whom she adored: Cara and Robert Leichter; Brian and Melissa Landy; Cynthia Landy; Alan Landy and Vivienne Decker; Daniel and Alexandra Landy; Joshua Gensler-Steinberg and Marcie Kamerow; Micah Gensler; Annabel Banks; and Benjamin Banks. She was the loving grandaunt of Teddy, Morgan, Sloane, Reid, Arthur, Annabelle, Piper, Hunter and Adira.

Joanne was born and raised in Newton, MA, the daughter of Chester and Estelle Landy. She spent many summers as a camper at Camp Pembroke and graduated from Newton South High School in 1978. After earning her undergraduate degree from the University of Rochester, she obtained a J.D. from Suffolk University Law School. Then, often studying with the toddlers Matthew and Michael in her lap, she completed a master of laws in taxation from Boston University. Her charismatic personality and infectious sense of humor won over legions of friends over the years, and she enjoyed many lifelong friendships forged at camp, high school, university, law school and beyond. She went on to develop a successful legal career in the Boston area, where she practiced for more than 15 years with specialties in divorce litigation and estate planning matters. Later on, she switched paths to pursue her passions for exercise and fitness. After gaining extensive training and experience as a fitness instructor in New York and on Cape Cod, Joanne started her own Pilates studio in Falmouth, MA. Her business garnered a large, diverse and loyal clientele.

Although she was voted by her high school class as "least likely to have children," Joanne's four children were the center of her world. Her love for her children, family and friends was unconditional, her laughter was loud, she adhered steadfastly to her principles and her warmth enveloped all who encountered her.

Remembrances in honor of Joanne may be made to Brain Trauma Foundation, www.braintrauma.org, or to the Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts, www.biama.org.

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MORRIS R. KAUFMAN
March 15, 2022



Morris R. Kaufman, 88, passed away peacefully on March 15 at Crouse Hospital with his family by his side.

Morris was born on August 2, 1933 to Abraham and Martha Kaufman in Syracuse. He was raised in Syracuse along with his brother Max and sisters Mary Waltuck and Annabelle Kaufman.

He was a graduate of Central High School and attended Syracuse University. During his professional career, he and his brother established Maxmor Development Company, which was a builder of homes in Central New York, and later transitioned to a wholesale importer of general merchandise.

In 1970, he and Jacalyn were married and settled in Syracuse where they

raised their family. Morris was a member of Temple Beth El, Temple Concord and the men's clubs of the congregations. He also served as a member of the board of the Syracuse JCC. He was a skilled gin rummy and blackjack player, a championship-caliber ping-pong player and had a passion and love of cars.

Morris's family includes his wife Jacalyn of 52 years; their son Matthew (Marie O'Connor), their daughter Rachael; grandchildren Morgan Rose and Olivia Annabelle, nieces Randi (Al), Jennifer (David), and Sherri, nephews Bruce (Susie) and Leonard (Erika), brother-in-law Ben (Susan) Levine and sister-in-law Dianne (Fred) Katz.

Contributions to perpetuate his memory may be made to Jowonio, the Fayetteville Fire Department or the US Holocaust Museum (www.ushmm.org)

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EDWARD Z. MENKIN
March 31, 2022



Edward Z. Menkin, 78, passed away on March 31 in Naples, FL after a two week battle with acute leukemia. Edward was born on September 6, 1943 in the Bronx and lived with his brother and parents, Herman and Mary. He graduated from City College of New York and taught elementary and middle school children in New York City.

Edward came to Syracuse in the 1960s and enrolled in the graduate program in the English department where he received his PhD. After several years of teaching as an associate professor of English at SUNY Upstate, where he met his wife Laurie, of 45 years; he then pursued his law degree at Syracuse University and was admitted to the New York State Bar Association in 1978. Edward worked as an assistant district attorney for two years before deciding to open his private practice in 1980 as a criminal defense and personal injury attorney.

Edward excelled in his profession, receiving the recognition of his peers and ensuring all of his clients always received due process under the law. Edward was passionate about the pro bono work he did for his community and during the later years of his practice, he was honored to have served as a chair and member of the Onondaga County

Bar Association Grievance Committee. Edward was also recognized for his many charitable contributions to his community.

He was known for his storytelling, his sense of humor, his kind heart and his great love for his family and the precious summers on Fourth Lake in Old Forge.

Edward is survived by his wife Laurie, his brother Victor (Norma), daughter Sara (Dan)Edsall, sons David and Jesse and his three grandchildren Aiden Edward, Michael and Noah.

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"We feel a deep gratitude for the experience of belonging to this community and a responsibility for seeing that it is there for future generations. Our hope is that our gift will contribute to an enduring and rich Jewish presence in Syracuse for years to come. Our community needs our support now, more than ever."

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