

» Dedication

# Jewish Observer

A publication of the Jewish Federation of Central New York

## of Central New York

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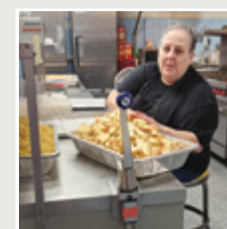
DECEMBER 2022 | KISLEV-TEVET 5783



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# December 2022

## From the Editor

The Chanukah story we have all been taught since childhood may soon suffer the fate of so many holidays which are based on myth. The “insufferably vacuous, anesthetized, consumerist celebration that American Jews have concocted to compete with Christmas,” as David Harsanyi described Chanukah in the *National Review*, could probably stand some revision. We are skeptical of miracles in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and we light candles, not oil, in our *chanukiyot*, so the impact of the phenomenon of long-lasting oil is significantly reduced.



Barbara Davis

So what can be the new, relevant Chanukah story? In the historical narrative, in the second century BCE, the Holy Land was ruled by the Seleucids (Syrian-Greeks), who tried to force the people of Israel to accept Greek culture and beliefs. Against all odds, a small band of faithful but poorly armed Jews, led by Judah the Maccabee, defeated one of the mightiest armies on earth, drove the Greeks from the land, reclaimed the Temple in Jerusalem and rededicated it. If we leave out the oil, the true miracle is that the Jews triumphed over their enemy. Perhaps an even bigger miracle is that they chose to fight this battle to preserve their faith. That really says something about dedication – and we know that the word “Chanukah” actually means “dedication.”

So perhaps in the age of science and technology, we should stop focusing on miracles and start focusing on dedication. We should teach our children to stand up for, perhaps even fight for, what they believe in. The miracle of Chanukah is really the miracle of Jewish survival against all odds, and it is a miracle that is ongoing today.

We live in an age when religion is not nearly as powerful in the social realm as it once was, at least in America. People have to make a deliberate choice to make religion a part of their lives today, and research indicates that they are not doing so. But is that truly the case, or are we dealing with another myth?

The underlying theme of this issue

of the *JO* is “engagement.” Maybe that is just another way of asking “What happened to dedication?” How did we arrive at the point where so many of our people just don’t care about Judaism, much less care enough to fight for it? Naturally, there is research to answer that question. A lengthy article, entitled “A New Approach to Understanding Contemporary Jewish Engagement,” reaches a striking and unexpected conclusion: “Formal affiliation with Jewish institutions, particularly synagogues, is not necessarily as strong a marker of Jewish identity as it is often considered. Although the Affiliated join and support Jewish organizations, this connection does not appear to translate into bringing Judaism into the home or developing emotional connections to the Jewish community. In contrast, those in the Cultural group, though less likely to be dues-paying members of synagogues, feel far more connected to the local and worldwide Jewish communities and to Israel than those in the Immersed group. Because these individuals are less affiliated with Jewish institutions, their strong Jewish connections and behaviors are frequently overlooked.”

Perhaps we have been looking for engagement in the wrong places. Perhaps we have defined engagement incorrectly. Perhaps dedication in the 21<sup>st</sup> century just looks different. Federation sought to explore this issue with another *Shema* Room, another listening opportunity. We queried a dozen members of our community. Originally, we were going to ask them WHY they were disengaged, but based upon the aforementioned article, decided to ask them instead IF they were disengaged and, if yes, why that was so. The results were very instructive and can be found in an article in this issue.

The *Observer* also looked at other types of engagement with our community. There are two personal essays and one profile that reveal the different ways engagement can be expressed, while sharing a common and deep commitment to Judaism. Also in this issue is an intriguing article about the results of a survey Temple Concord did of its membership as it plans for a future that will be very different from its past. All of these pieces make fascinating reading. If any of our readers are inspired to comment on this topic, we would like to hear from you.

But just as we know there is no such thing as the Tooth Fairy and that Elijah does not really take a sip of the wine we put out for him at our seders, but perpetuate those practices anyway because they are fun, the *JO* also looks at popular manifestations of Chanukah in this issue: *latkes*, *chanukiyot*, *gelt* and ugly Chanukah sweaters.

The Festival of Lights comes just as we enter the darkest time of the year. We need the joy and uplifting message of rededication that this holiday delivers. In 5783, we shall seek new ways to deliver the real message of Chanukah: No matter how many times you have done it before, once again when you face the dark, light a candle. And don’t let the light go out. *Chag urim sameach!* Happy Holiday of Lights!



# Jewish Observer

of Central New York

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# Michael Balanoff

President, Jewish Federation of Central New York

***“More and more Jews cannot access Judaism as a language of meaning, nor can they access Jewish community as their home and haven from the pressures of the broader world. There are many reasons for this: They lack Jewish educations, they feel that they don’t belong, they don’t have Jewish friends, or they think they are ‘not Jewish enough’ – that Jewish spaces are only for Jews with a certain observance level.” These words were written by Heather Paul, Jewish engagement lead at the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle.***

She goes on to say, “Federations are in the business of building Jewish life and Jewish community, and of mobilizing community resources to make Jewish life accessible. Before we build donors, we need to build Jewish community. Our communities thrive when Jews are engaged, and Federations can empower Jews to engage in the way that’s best for them. Through conversations, through relationships, and through engagement, we can help Jews today (and their non-Jewish partners) confront and cut through these feelings of alienation. We can empower Jews to own their Judaism and to become part of a thriving Jewish community.”

The Jewish Federation of Central New York has an abiding interest in engaging the members of our community in our community. Engagement means using conversations as a method to empower participants to build the Jewish life they are looking for. It means focusing on the depth of each relationship instead of the number of people at a program or the number of programs per week. We have been trying, with varying levels of success, to do this for the past few years and we will continue to do this in the future.

We had a very successful conversation with members of our community a couple of years ago about being Jews of Color in a session we called The *Shema* Room. It was all about listening to one another. We had another successful conversation with the presidents and executive directors and rabbis of our congregations and agencies when we asked them to think *Outside the Box*. We had successful conversations and programming with people committed to repairing the natural world and the damage we have done to our planet, and with people who wanted to do more to help minimum-wage workers, and with people who wanted to do something to help Ukraine and the refugees who come



to Central New York. We engage in animated conversations with community members about support for Israel and combatting antisemitism.

In this issue of the *Jewish Observer*, there is an article about another recent conversation,

held with people who seem to be disconnected and alienated from our Jewish community. They are people to whom we need to listen and from whom we have much to learn about engagement.

Jay Sanderson, the head of the Los Angeles Jewish Federation, has written that “Jewish community was based on two principles that have not translated forward. One is that every Jew needs to connect to an institution. And the second is that we, the organized Jewish community, define what engagement means. As Jews have assimilated as Americans and become successful, and as the world has simultaneously become more global, we have seen that those two premises are not successful strategies to build community.” He suggests that Federations “have to create a value proposition that encourages Jews of any age to feel that being Jewish and doing Jewish adds value to their lives and makes them feel fulfilled. To feel like they’re participating in something great — and not just going through the motions or doing what their parents or grandparents have done.”

Engagement goes beyond “a welcoming environment,” “inclusion” or even “pluralism.” It means Jewish professionals must ask the community what they’d like to see. These conversations get at the heart of what most people want and need: to seek connections wherever possible. Temple Concord has taken the lead on this in our community. Theirs is a model, described in this issue, that we should all review with intentionality.

As we begin to enjoy the Festival of Lights this year, Federation is rededicating itself to listening to and connecting with the members of our community. We want to know what you want, what you need, what you miss, what you like. There are as many ways to let us know as modern technology can provide: letters, emails, phone calls, comments on our Facebook and Instagram accounts or let’s have a cup of coffee together. The only thing we don’t do yet is tweet.

The Board and staff of the Jewish Federation join with me in wishing our community eight joyous days and a lifetime of light.

## “SIX UNDER 36” PROGRAM



The Marjorie Oberdorfer Bronner Pierson and Theodore Pierson Family Endowment for the Jewish Future “Six Under 36” program celebrates six noteworthy Jewish Central New Yorkers, all 36 years old or younger, who make Central New York and the larger community better by bringing remarkable energy and new ideas to religion, philanthropy, the arts, learning, social action and inclusion. These talented young adults are changing our community for good by building a more just society and creating community in innovative ways.

Six young Jewish Central New Yorkers, chosen by a panel of community members from nominations made by the community, will each be awarded a donor advised fund of \$1,000 at the Jewish Community Foundation of Central New York to be used to support an organization with which they have worked or a cause they support. The “Six Under 36 Program” is run under the auspices of the Jewish Federation of Central New York.

**The Central New York community is invited to nominate their favorite young Jewish movers, shakers, advocates, entrepreneurs, philanthropists and community organizers by emailing [bdavis@jewishfederationcny.org](mailto:bdavis@jewishfederationcny.org) no later than February 1, 2023.**

## » D'VAR TORAH

# Hannuka and Purim: 2 Sides of the Same Coin

by Rabbi Irvin Beigel

Purim celebrates the survival of the Jewish people despite threats to our lives that have arisen in every period of history. Hannuka celebrates the survival of Judaism despite religious persecution from without and the pull from within to assimilate and to be fully a part of the non-Jewish world. There is no doubt that readers will have different understandings of what “Judaism” is. I believe that Judaism is defined by values taught to us and the behavior required of us by the Torah, the Talmud, and the codes of Jewish law. These attitudes and mandated actions set Judaism apart from other faiths and other belief systems. When all is said and done, they are what make the Jewish people unique.

Is it possible for Judaism to survive without Jews? Is it possible for Jews to survive without



Judaism? I would suggest that the answer to both questions is a resounding no. Without Judaism, the label “Jew” lacks substance. That label, devoid of meaning, is likely to disappear in a generation or two. The calamity of the Shoah (the Holocaust) was two-fold. Six million Jews were brutally murdered by the Nazis, but an entire Jewish culture, including great centers of Jewish learning, was destroyed as well. Both Purim and Hannuka are important celebrations. Both challenge us, albeit in different ways.

Rabbi David Weiss Halivni, of blessed memory, was a child prodigy in the study of Talmud. As an adult, his groundbreaking approach to the study of Talmud opened doors of understanding by explaining texts that had previously been enigmatic. He saw no contradiction between using the tools of modern scholarship as a member of the faculty at Columbia University and being deeply committed to traditional Jewish faith and practice.

During the *Shoah*, Rav Halivni was sent to a labor camp. In his memoir, he tells a very moving story. One day, he saw a Nazi guard eating his lunch which was wrapped in a greasy piece of paper. He asked, indeed begged, the guard to give him that greasy piece of paper. What motivated Rav Halivni to risk his life for a greasy piece of paper in which a Nazi's lunch was wrapped? He saw that that piece of paper was a page from the *Shulchan Arukh*, a classic code of Jewish law. The guard gave him the scrap of paper. He studied it and shared it with his fellow prisoners. His love for Torah and dedication to preserving the core beliefs and practices of Judaism sustained him and helped him to persevere in the darkest moments of

his life. For him, the survival of Jews was inconceivable without the survival of Judaism.

Hannuka celebrates the survival of Torah, of Jewish values and of commitment to doing God's will, expressed through the 613 commandments found in the Torah. In the haftorah we read on Shabbat Hannuka, the prophet Zechariah says, “Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, said the Lord of Hosts.” (Zecharia 4:6, *JPS Tanakh*) The Jewish spirit has triumphed many times over adversity. Sadly, we still face antisemitism in our time. The Jewish spirit, the future of all that our Torah stands for, is also in grave danger. As Hannuka approaches, let's enjoy the latkes and the sufganiyot, but let's also be reminded by the lights we kindle that the survival of the Jewish people requires the survival of Judaism. *Hannuka Sameach!*

*Rabbi Irvin S. Beigel is retired as chaplain at Crouse Hospital, Upstate University Hospital, and Hutchings Psychiatric Center. He is currently the Jewish chaplain at Loretto.*

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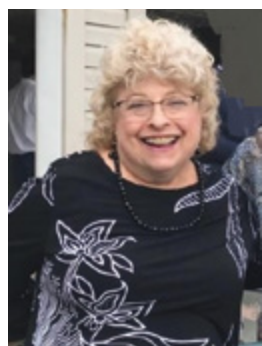
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## PORTRAIT OF DEDICATION: Cantor Francine Berg



“I love to come here! It's my passion!” exclaimed Cantor Fran Berg as she toted her guitar into Menorah Park one Shabbat morning. Fran is the cantor for Menorah Park. She officiates at Friday Shabbat services as well as all holiday religious services at Menorah Park's main building, which houses a skilled nursing facility, rehabilitation services and an assisted living community. She also officiates at the holiday services at The Oaks, Menorah Park's independent living community.

Fran comes to this position after full careers as a Syracuse School District music educator and cantor at Temple Concord. A Geneva native, she moved to Syracuse in the ninth grade. She was a member of the Temple Adath Yeshurun choir and taught Sunday school music classes. But she aspired to become a cantor, a position then not open to women. Cantor Harold Lerner taught her privately and she was eventually named Cantorial Soloist at Temple Concord. She was accorded the title of Cantor in 1995 and served in that position until she retired in 2014, after 33 years. After she was hired in 1980, her mother told

her that her great grandfather had been a *chazan*. “It was in my genes to be a cantor,” she exclaims.

In addition to her role as cantor, Berg continues her volunteer work there, directing musical programs and the Forget-Me-Nots Chorus, which featured residents with dementia or Alzheimer's disease. “I modelled this chorus after one in New York City,” she explains. “It was for the caregiver and their loved one with dementia. We met weekly, beginning with a social hour followed by a one-hour rehearsal. The Chorus served to connect the caregiver with their loved one with an activity that is fun and

exciting. Music will bring back memories and make new ones.” Unfortunately, COVID stopped the program.

Working with local musician Irwin Goldberg, Fran also leads the “Menorah Chorus.” “Returning to Menorah Park as a cantor is like a homecoming for me,” Fran says. “Leading music therapy programs for Menorah Park over the last ten years has given me the chance to connect on a professional and emotional level with the residents and their caregivers – we have become a little family. I love the Menorah Park community and am honored to be their cantor and connect with them spiritually.”



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# Shehecheyanu

by Michael Gordon

I can't remember ever making it through the *Shehecheyanu* without losing composure. Truth be told, I don't think I have made it more than three or four words into the blessing before tears start flowing and my voice falters. It happened again recently at the rehearsal dinner for our younger son's wedding. This time, I at least had the presence of mind to anticipate the inevitable and ask that everyone join me so I could break down without consequence.

Why does this short prayer trigger such emotion in me? For many reasons, I'm sure. The most obvious is that its chanting invokes memories of my grandfather, an iconic figure in my life and the lives of my siblings and cousins. At holiday gatherings, weddings, and bar mitzvahs he would never fail to lead us in the prayer, singing it out slowly, almost operatically, and with emphasis on each word. It was his way of marking the occasion by making sure we



all knew how good it was to be together. I'm sure he also wanted to envelop the moment in a Jewish tradition that was so much at the core of his being.

The blessing also brings alive the memories of all those who have not made it to the special occasion. Images of my parents, seated and smiling at festive dinners, dance through my head. So do the faces of my aunts, uncles and other extended family who passed away long ago or way too recently. I think it's the

flashing of those bittersweet memories that most reliably interferes with my equanimity.

Here is a translation of the Hebrew blessing: "*Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has given us life, sustained us and allowed us to reach this day.*"

I am no Jewish scholar and have little to offer regarding the blessing's origins or its place in our liturgy. Thanks to Wikipedia, I did learn that the prayer is at least 1500 years old (it's mentioned in the Talmud). I also know that it has long been intended to mark special and joyous occasions.

It's chanted at the beginning of most holidays (but not *Tisha B'av* because of the sadness it commemorates), the performance of various *mitzvot*, the birth of a child (although not at a circumcision due to the pain involved), upon arrival in Israel and even when you eat fruit for the first time after Rosh Hashanah. Whenever something exceptional transpires, a *Shehecheyanu* should follow. I'm thinking it might therefore be appropriate for those rare occasions I post a less-than-humiliating golf score.

For me the *Shehecheyanu* has become a kind of personal mantra. Sure, it's not in Sanskrit, and I don't consider it as a gateway to more expansive meditation. The fact is that I have no talent whatsoever for disciplined concentration. That requires far more *sitzfleisch* than I can manage.

But I do benefit from reminding myself that I'm lucky to be alive and should always act accordingly. It makes me focus on what makes life worth living, not what makes it burdensome or frightening. In that way, chanting it follows the current push from self-help books to be "present" and "in the moment." It's modern Stress Reduction 101 to strip regrets about the past and worries about the future from how you feel in the here and now.

Singing those eleven words reminds me that life is inherently unpredictable; that we should appreciate every day that unfolds before us; that we should focus on how to embrace opportunities for happiness, not cower in fear of inevitable sadness; that we should accept our mortality rather than strive for invincibility; that we should revel in the comfort that flows from being humble rather than falsely console ourselves by pretending we're the sole master of our fate; that acknowledging our good fortune is a way of instilling confidence that more might follow; that experiencing a sense of gratitude is far more productive than wallowing in resentment, remorse, and grievance; that life is indeed a gift that we should never take for granted; that faith is about the fervent hope we can sing a *Shehecheyanu* together on yet another day.

I'm aware that these *Shehecheyanu*-inspired sentiments are not the stuff of deep theological consideration or psychotherapeutic benefit. You'd be justified in dismissing them as kosher pablum, a Jewish way of saying, "There, but for the grace of God, go I." Obviously, it's good to appreciate what you've got and make sure you're not seeing all glasses as half full and about to break. It would also be fair to respond, "Sure, maintaining a sense of gratitude and humility is commendable and maybe even productive, but it's a whole lot easier said than done." No doubt that's true.

Yet I'm pretty sure that many of us could benefit from at least trying to focus more on our good fortune than our bad luck. In my case, the words of the *Shehecheyanu* spur those more positive thoughts. The older I get, the more I feel truly blessed that I was given a good and healthy life and that I have been allowed to reach this day.

Michael Gordon, a clinical psychologist, is professor emeritus of psychiatry at Upstate Medical University.

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# The Power of One

by Rabbi Vicki Lieberman

Forgetting that I am in a minority is a luxury that I no longer have and no longer lament. For decades I worked in, for and with a Jewish community. Surrounded by Jews, I could luxuriate in the feeling that I was part of a majority.

That changed 11 years ago.

For 11 years I have worked for a company of over 120 people and in which I believe I am the only employee who is Jewish.

The company is headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah. And yes, many but not all the people I work with are Mormon. Initially, I wanted to keep quiet about my being Jewish and being a rabbi. I was concerned that it would lead to endless questions about Judaism.

I am an outlier and, for some co-workers, an interesting one at that. For many, I am the one and only Jew they have ever known. Their questions about Judaism put me in a position of explaining my religion and my religious observances — exactly what I wanted to avoid. I wanted to do my job and not be singled out as the one Jew that they knew.

Every question reminded me that I was a minority.

Questions about my food choices — my job necessitates travel and I keep a “conservative” kashrut. Observant Mormons abstain from coffee and liquor. At restaurants, I’d be questioning the server about how the rice is prepared and they’d be questioning whether the mocktails had alcohol. It could take a while to get our orders placed.

Questions about genealogy. Many coworkers enjoy knowing their genealogy going back for a hundred or more years. They are shocked and saddened to learn that I will never have that knowledge. The Nazis saw to that. My maternal grandmother was 1 of 11 children. Four made it out of Poland. Only one of those four had a child and that was my mom. That’s it. That’s all I’ll ever know.

Questions about Israel, gay rights and abortion. Questions about *Seinfeld* and *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*.

Yet, over the past 11 years, something shifted. Now my coworkers express concern about Israel and the American Jewish communities. When Israel is attacked, they ask me if I know anyone in Israel and are they okay? When the Pittsburgh synagogue was attacked, my phone blew up with their texts of concern.



Now they ask if we can have a Zoom meeting on Hanukkah. They look up Jewish holidays! They text me Happy New Year in September! They ask if that is the appropriate greeting.

Over these 11 years, something else shifted. Now, I welcome their questions. I am proud to show them I live my life by Jewish choices. I take personal time off for Jewish holidays. I appreciate that they care enough to ask me about the menus before choosing a restaurant or bringing food in for a staff meeting.

For 11 years, I thought the best way to work in business was to compartmentalize my Judaism, to keep it private. I lament that that was my initial belief.

For 11 years, I worked in business and had the opportunity at every meeting, at every meal, to do so JEWISHLY. I now celebrate that.

For 11 years, I have been the only Jew some people have ever known, and it remains a tremendous responsibility to be that “Power of One.”

So now, I am heading into my *bat mitzvah* year, I can’t wait to tell them!

*Rabbi Vicki Lieberman retired from serving the Jewish community and currently works in the quilting industry.*

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# CHANUKAH 5783

You've done the Ugly Chanukah Sweater bit. You're tired of the Hanukkah Headbands and the dreidel ties and socks and the menorahs that run the gamut from traditional to sports to shoes.

So what's new for Chanukah 5783? Surprisingly, there are quite a few items you haven't seen before. For example:



## The Texting Menorah:

complete with Emojis, Texts and #Hashtags appropriate for the holiday.

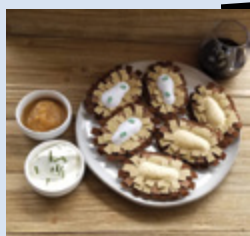
**The Fantastic Buzz Wire Menorah:** a game for one person or the whole family. Go through the electric menorah maze without touching the buzzing wire.



## Hanukkah Joke Book and Mad Libs:

adapted for the Festival of Lights and sure to be a hit with the younger set.

**Maccabean Manicures' Hanukkah Nail Decals:** the perfect accompaniment to your menorah eyeglasses and mustache. Sure to be the hit of your Chanukah party.



There's nothing new about Chanukah dog toys, but this is the first year we've seen **Catnip Latkes**. For cat lovers, this would be a great accompaniment to the Jewish Cat Calendar for 5783.

Chocolate gelt is so last year. **Marzipan sufganiyot** are much more trendy.



And while latkes will never go out of fashion, there's a new cookbook entitled **Latkes & Vodka** that will shake things up this year.



**B'tay Avon and Happy Hanukkah!!**



# Judaism is Green

by Melissa Klemperer

Students at the Syracuse Hebrew Day School have adopted the theme "Judaism is Green" this year, with an emphasis on the importance of water. They realized that their reliance on water bottles rather than water fountains since COVID had created a wasteful situation and decided to acquire four large green recycling bins (named Olive, Fred, Greeninja and Yarok) to collect all the empty bottles which they had been throwing away. They will now bring them to a recycling station and use the refunds for tzedakah projects. First graders posed with Yarok to show off the signs they made urging everyone to Re-use, Reduce and Recycle.

In order to demonstrate scientifically and graphically how dependent our planet is on water, students and teachers created a Pumpkin Project. Five pumpkins were cut in half, scooped out and filled with potting soil. The seeds were then planted into the pumpkin halves. Five of the pumpkin planters were watered, using water from the fountains the students used for their Tashlich ceremony. The other five were left unwatered. All the pumpkins were placed in a sunny location. The only variable was water.



After several weeks, the watered seeds sprouted but the unwatered seeds did not. It was clear that without water, nothing grows and we would have no plants and no food. Once the demonstration was complete, water was given to the unwatered pumpkin halves. The hope is to keep the seedlings alive indoors throughout the winter and plant them outside in the spring.





# The Luminary Society

by Anick Sinclair

**Lu-mi-nar-y** - /'lōōmə,nerē/ noun  
a person who inspires or influences others, especially one prominent in a particular sphere.

**Similar:** leading light, guiding light, inspiration, leader, VIP, star, superstar, megastar.

Philanthropy is the lifeblood of the Syracuse Jewish community.

The Jewish Federation's centralized annual campaign is concerned with the entire community – its continued viability and vibrancy – and the dignity of all of its members. This includes those who live in different parts of the world and Israel and who are no less precious to us than those who live next door.

Participation in the annual campaign is a statement about Jewish values. As Jews, we count on the ability of individuals to uplift the entire collective, and we continue our historic aspiration to be full participants in the community's welfare.

In the Torah, tzedakah means "righteous behavior" and is often paired with "justice." In Jewish thought and tradition, material support for those in need is not a matter of "charity" – a term that implies generosity beyond what may be expected – but a requirement.



As in most areas of life, here too, Jewish tradition makes practical demands and specifies expectations, mostly doing the right things by helping people or causes in need. There are several ways to do tzedakah, but the most common way is giving money.

Federation's annual campaign represents a

collective enterprise of the Jewish community to make sure that we fulfill our obligations of rescuing the imperiled, feed the hungry, cloth the naked, heal the sick and take care of the needs of our people. A donation to the Federation is an investment by the donor in his or her community. It is a statement by the donor that he or she belongs to the Jewish people.

The last year has seen dramatic events with far-reaching consequences for the Jewish community, from the pandemic to thousands of rockets falling across Israel to war in Ukraine. But we have shown, once again, that when we work together, we can tackle anything.

We know the coming year will bring new challenges, from the recent and drastic rise in physical and verbal acts of antisemitism to strengthening the connections, engagement and resilience of young Jews who are confronted daily with jarring attacks on social media and at school.

Major donors to the Federation's Annual Campaign are fundamental to its success. This important cohort is unswerving in their commitment to

supporting the needs of a thriving Jewish community. It recognizes that the Central New York Jewish community requires that those who can, must increase their pledges to assure continued financial stability.

This year, the Campaign Cabinet is proud to introduce The Luminary Society, named for those who inspire others. This new division of giving individuals, recognizes donors whose annual contribution to the Federation is \$6000 or more. These donors are luminaries in our communities.

The kick off for the 2023 annual campaign will honor The Luminary Society at a black-tie event at the Palace Theatre, on December 8th.

The Federation's investment in Jewish life locally, nationally and internationally is made possible by the donations of an extremely dedicated community of all backgrounds, and shouldn't be taken for granted. We are lucky, in Syracuse, to have such an accessible Federation, filled with people who care deeply about Jewish continuity and education.

They are essential to Jewish continuity. They are luminaries.

## Chanukah at the J

by Paul Michie-Derrick

Chanukah is closer than you think. The passing of Rosh Hashanah brings a new year with new opportunities. In the spirit of the new year, the JCC is looking forward to providing a sense of normalcy that has been missing these last few years. The pandemic gave everyone an appreciation for the feeling of fellowship and strengthened the bond within the community. Now that people are beginning to feel a semblance of safety, the JCC hopes to bring a party that is warm and familiar through ritual and celebration.

The JCC's annual Community Chanukah Party is making its return. The event will be

held on Sunday, December 18 from 12:30-3:00 pm and is being sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Central New York. Families will be invited and welcomed to join for a fun-filled afternoon. The eyes of the children will brighten as soon as they walk through the doors and see inflatables, crafts, face painting, balloon twisters, a photo booth and more. Refreshments will be provided and delicious food will be offered including latkes, bagels, fruit and everyone's favorite *sufganiyot*.

The After School Program will be hosting their Chanukah Party on Tuesday, December 20 during the program. Children will get to play dreidel, pin the fork on the latke, eat *sufganiyot* and more.



Each child will get a Chanukah goody bag to take home.

As usual, the Early Childhood Development Program will be celebrating Chanukah. All classrooms will celebrate the holiday at their own developmental level within the classroom. The wings of the classroom will be decorated for the holiday and will have special materials for the occasion. On Wednesday, December 21 the classrooms will have their own Chanukah Celebration all day with special activities, crafts, latkes and *sufganiyot*.

Chanukah for the Senior Department will be celebrated on Friday, December 16. A special lunch and *sufganiyot* will be served. We



will have entertainment for this celebration. Reservations are required.

Finally, the whole community is invited to join for nightly menorah lightings at the JCC. Children from Early Childhood and School Age programs come together to sing the blessings and watch as the lights are lit. Those without family to bring can find family within the comfort of the community. We will light the menorah at 4:30 pm each weeknight during Chanukah.

# Disengagement



**Sociologist Sergio DellaPergola has said that in generations past, being Jewish was mostly a binary designation: you either *were* Jewish or were *not* Jewish. Not anymore. Today people have many identities, and belonging to the Jewish people is complicated.**

*JewBelong.com* is a website for “when you feel you don’t.” It declares: “We exist for Jews, and for people who aren’t Jewish but are part of a Jewish community, for anyone who has felt like a Jewish outsider ... and especially for Disengaged Jews (DJs for short).”

DJs is a new term, but it is trending. An article in *Authority Magazine*, entitled “Female Disruptors: How Stacy Stuart and Archie Gottesman are aiming to put an end to ‘JewBarrassment,’” describes how the co-founders of *JewBelong* help Disengaged Jews “find or reconnect with the joy, meaning, relevance and connection that Judaism has to offer.” According to Stuart, “*JewBelong* is rebranding Judaism by focusing on joy and warmth and putting the rules that no one wants to follow anyway on the back burner. You won’t find much Hebrew on *JewBelong*, and we also don’t think you need to believe in God to have a vibrant Jewish practice. We’re focused on the big picture, which is to help Disengaged Jews find all the richness, joy and spirituality at the heart of the religion, even if that means doing it while driving in a car and eating a cheeseburger on a Friday night. One of our favorite words (we made it up) is JewBarrassment, that feeling Jewish people get when they think they should know something Jewish, but they don’t. We’re out to put an end to JewBarrassment.”

The latest Pew study of 4,700 Jews

nationwide shows a community that is increasingly multi-ethnic and not necessarily affiliated with any denomination or religion, yet one that still maintains an important connection to Israel. The Pew study identified around 7.5 million people (5.8 million adults and 1.8 million children) as Jewish. This figure is an increase from a previous study that put the Jewish population at 6.7 million with 5.3 million adults and 1.3 million children.

How did we suddenly find another 800,000 Jews? It all has to do with how you define Jewish. For the purposes of the latest study, people had to either identify as Jews by religion, say their religion is Jewish and not profess any other religion, or describe themselves as atheist, agnostic or nothing but have a Jewish parent, were raised Jewish or still consider themselves Jewish in any way. The survey definition of Jewish clearly does not coincide with halachic definitions of Jewishness, but may be a useful definition for the American Jewish community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The *Jewish Observer* is sent to some 2500 addresses in Central New York. If we assume three family members per household, we can estimate the size of our community at roughly 7500. This completely unscientific figure, however, only counts those people who belong to a synagogue or who have contributed to the Federation or *JO* campaigns. We KNOW there are more Jews out there. But how do we find them? How do we engage them? Do they even want to be engaged?

An article by Jared David Berezin, entitled “Judaism Without Walls,” makes the point that the organized Jewish community frequently pits “affiliation and unaffiliation against one another as

competitors, with blame often irrationally ascribed to young Jews, especially those who fall in love with someone of another faith.” He compares this to conversations he has had with members of older generations “in which being young, Jewish and unaffiliated was treated as a temporary illness that would cure itself once the patient got married (to another Jew) or had children.” In Berezin’s view, there is “spiritual value [in] being unaffiliated” and that “creating Jewish moments outside of a synagogue can be meaningful and fulfilling.” He asserts strongly that “being unaffiliated does not prevent someone from being Jewish.”

The *JO* decided to ask some members of our community who identified as Jewish but were not “affiliated” in the sense of being synagogue members or contributors to Federation, how they viewed themselves Jewishly. Again, the sample is random and unscientific, but revealing, nonetheless. For the purposes of this article, people in interfaith marriages were not included, because research has shown that the single factor most affecting affiliation is intermarriage. Engaging interfaith couples and families is another conversation altogether.

The dozen people we interviewed ranged in age from early 20s to 70s. All were born to Jewish parents and, if married, were married to Jewish spouses. Following are the results of our conversations.

Many of the unaffiliated fail to find something of interest in Jewish organizations. While many Jews affiliate out of a sense of duty to the past, for unaffiliated Jews this is not a compelling reason to affiliate. Many are unaffiliated because they do not see themselves as religious. “I’m not a believer” or “I’m an

atheist,” several told us. Many feel they already have a community and do not see a need to affiliate with the Jewish community because they already have close-knit social groups related to their employment, hobbies, children, friends and families. And there are those who were once affiliated and dropped out because they found the religious practices lacking in meaning and relevance or because they got tired of synagogue politics or because they felt they were mistreated at a Jewish event. There are even some who were so turned off by what they saw as the conflict between the way Jewish agencies acted and the Jewish values they espoused that, as one put it, “I practically became an antisemite.”

Yet many of the unaffiliated still see themselves as members of the Jewish community. “I know I’m Jewish,” one grandfather told us. “The kids in school knew I was Jewish. So I’m Jewish.” He does not feel the need to talk about it, but it is clearly a part of who he is. Others are most aware of their Jewishness when they meet other “members of the tribe.” “When I meet another Jewish person, we connect,” one person told us. “It’s a matter of shared values and moral leadership,” said another, describing how she felt connected to other Jews. A third said that affiliation was not necessary for connection, because “Jews look out for each other. No matter where in the world you are, Jews are connected and will take care of one another.” Another said, “I’m an atheist, but I still feel Jewish. I want my grandkids to feel Jewish. I represent Judaism in schools for the Jewish holidays. I support Israel.” Another respondent said, “I have, since childhood, been uncomfortable with the idea of a God who had a ‘chosen people.’” Nonetheless, he and his wife Zoomed into services at Central Synagogue for the High Holidays.

Interestingly, even though they did not feel a need to formally connect with the Jewish community, many of our interviewees wanted their children (if they had them) to be connected. PJLibrary® and celebrating Chanukah and Passover were the main vehicles for doing so. One grandmother, who was very vehement in her dislike of the gender distinctions in traditional Judaism and who claimed no religious feeling whatsoever, was nonetheless very sensitive to issues of antisemitism and quick to speak out against it. Another also cited his growing apprehension about antisemitism which led him to ask, despite his dislike of many Israeli government policies, “if the worst happens here, where the heck would we



go, if not Israel?"

It is clear that there are many ways for people to feel an affiliation with the Jewish community that go far beyond synagogue affiliation and Federation donations. What are the things that make a contemporary American Jew "engaged"? Following is the list of the actions that the Pew Research Center used in its definition of "Jewish." It is clear that some of these (being intellectually curious, leading an ethical and moral life) are not restricted to Jews and some are more stringent than even most affiliated Jews would subscribe to (refrain from handling money on Shabbat, going to services twice a month).

- Remembering Holocaust
- Leading ethical and moral life
- Observing Jewish law
- Working for justice and equality
- Being intellectually curious
- Caring about Israel
- Being part of a Jewish community
- Strong sense of belonging to Jewish people
- Being Jewish is important in life
- Responsibility to take on Jews in need
- Emotionally attached to Israel
- Kosher in home
- Refrain from handling money on Shabbat
- Held a seder
- Usually light Shabbat candles
- Fast on Yom Kippur
- No Christmas tree
- Went to Israel two times
- Went to services once or twice a month
- Member of a synagogue
- Member of a Jewish organization
- Financial donation to Jewish cause

So we are left with an enigma. There are many ways to be engaged Jewishly, but there are also many ways to be Jewish without being engaged.

# The MOMENTS Engagement Program

**Rabbi David Katz, interim rabbi at Temple Concord, is the creator and developer of a unique program called MOMENTS. MOMENTS is a sophisticated volunteer management strategy that harnesses the talents, skills and hopes of synagogue members along with their free-will offerings of time to increase their devotion. It transforms a culture of consumerism into a culture of commitment. The goal of the MOMENTS engagement strategy is two-fold: to strengthen the synagogue by engaging congregants in programs, services and events and to set congregants on their own personal Jewish journeys.**



The MOMENTS program starts with an in-depth, computerized survey tailored to a congregation. Congregants fill out an extensive survey outlining their skills, desires, interests, religious background, personality traits and weekly schedule. They are then asked to donate a certain number of times, called "moments," that the synagogue can engage them in any way, often matching their interests to the moments they've donated, perhaps to attend a worship service, study session or event or to donate a can of food to the hungry.

This donation of moments is a blank check of time which the MOMENTS Committee defines and is based on the congregant's interests and/or the congregation's needs. Because attendance at every event is now predetermined, the definition of success changes from how many attended to how creatively the synagogue can use its wealth of donated moments to increase the commitment of its congregants and strengthen the congregation.

Rabbi Katz explains, "Each and every congregant can be shepherded along a spiritual journey. Current congregational programming can be strengthened and new programs can easily be jumpstarted. The same people who always show up are now joined by new participants and identifiable cohorts of like-minded congregants can gather to generate their own programming. A vertical organizational structure is now overlaid by a horizontal structure forming a lattice of energy and action. The synagogue can transform itself into a modern-day *shtetl* through social networking, with neighbors supporting and encouraging each other. Metrics can be utilized to measure success and plot new strategies of engagement."

Congregation Dor Tamid of Johns Creek, Georgia implemented the MOMENTS strategy, and the response was overwhelming. Two hundred and fifty members donated close to 2,400 "moments." Result? The Congregation was able to bolster attendance at existing programs, initiate new programs, fill Atlanta's kosher food

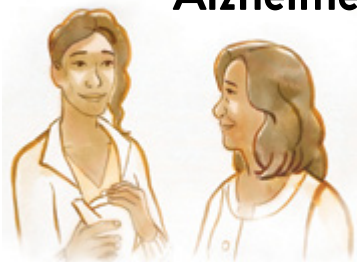
pantry in three days, create an army of shofar blowers for Rosh Hashanah and miraculously bring out a crowd for a Passover morning service. Congregants were introduced to parts of synagogue life they had never experienced, many starting on their own Jewish journeys.

Asked if he was surprised by the results, Rabbi Katz responded, "I was surprised that it worked! When congregants are asked to fulfill a discreet task that relates to their own interests and can help the Temple, they readily come forward. Of the 2,400 moments donated at Congregation Dor Tamid, only 500 could be used in the first year. The response was so overwhelming congregants were asked to scale back their donation in the second year. It was like powering a light bulb using a nuclear plant."

At Temple Concord in Syracuse, over 100 congregants have completed the surveys and many more are expected. Questions asked include such things as how you see yourself (e.g., open to new ideas, adaptable, calm, a leader, tech-savvy, worker bee, spiritual), what Jewish values you espouse (repairing the world, love of learning, charity, prayer, community) and what activities you feel most comfortable doing (donating blood, providing transportation, welcoming new members, participating in small group discussions, sharing personal Jewish learning).

The results of the surveys will be tallied this month. "When the skills and talents of every congregant are perceived as assets, just as the financial resources are, a synagogue can come alive," explains Rabbi Katz. "The MOMENTS strategy will be the wave of the future. It may not be the magic bullet, but it is certainly the opening shot."

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# Kosher Catering in Central New York



Most caterers agree that the main difference between kosher and non-kosher caterers, besides the kind of food they can serve, is that kosher caterers charge higher prices. The reason is straightforward: "Strict kosher supervision is required in all facets, from purchasing, preparation, delivery and serving of all food items," says Jon Surasky, a kosher caterer in Boca Raton. "The cost of goods runs higher for kosher products, so the cost to you reflects that." Economists

in the United Kingdom conducted a study that found that kosher meat was on average double the cost of supermarket meat and that prices at kosher restaurants were 70 per cent higher than at equivalent non-kosher restaurants, reflecting the price of kosher meat and the cost of supervision.

Kosher catering in Central New York is no exception to these factors. Kosher catering is a niche market with limited appeal beyond a certain demographic and is generally limited to certain special occasions. Nevertheless, there are several options available to the local Jewish community when kosher catering is desired.

## The Bakergirl Dessert Company

"We offer highly personalized, made-from-scratch food and dessert catering services in the Syracuse area," says the Bakergirl Facebook page, which is filled with photos of delectable desserts and beautiful presentations.

Rosanne David has been the owner and operator of Bakergirl Desserts for 15 years. Although she has a master's degree in counseling psychology, she fulfilled a dream of preparing desserts by accepting a position as baker at The Oaks at Menorah Park. From there, she went on to start her own business, specializing at first in pareve desserts. She got a lot of requests from the community to expand, and began to prepare *kiddushim* for bat and bar mitzvah celebrations, cater wedding showers and provide dinners for special events.

Rosanne also offers corporate catering. Companies she has provided food for include Raymour & Flanigan, Malara Eyecare and Theatre du Jour.

Rosanne's motto is simple: capture the vision of the client and make it happen. No set menus, no preconceived notions, only suggestions and ideas. Ultimately each event is different and a personal expression of the client/family. "I treat every event as if it's for a member of my family," says Rosanne. "When I stop feeling this way, I'll do something else."

Her Facebook page, The Bakergirl Dessert Co., Inc., shows photos of just



about every event Rosanne has done and is a great jumping off point when speaking with clients for the first time. "Presentation is of the utmost importance to me. We really do eat with our eyes!" she says. "Even before COVID, I always liked to present things in individual portions. Not only is it more sanitary, but it looks more appealing than something cut from a large pan." Specialties include peach apple kugel, French toast cups, crustless quiche, Israeli couscous salad, and, of course, desserts made fresh by Rosanne. If she ever gets a minute, she may change the company name to "The Bakergirl Dessert Company and More!" All her business comes from word of mouth, and that's just fine with her.

**Rosanne can be reached at (315) 415-6328, or at [baker.girl.dessert.co@gmail.com](mailto:baker.girl.dessert.co@gmail.com).**

## Catering By David



"I have been cooking since I was a little boy," say Chef David Stroka, head of Catering by David, which is located in Binghamton. "My main inspiration for cooking came from my grandmother and the Galloping Gourmet, Graham Kerr. After high school, I attended Bucknell University but my passion for cooking never left me. After college, I pursued a few different jobs, but they were just that, jobs. It was then I realized that I must do what I was passionate about, and that was cooking."

David held many cooking positions in his early years, listening, watching and learning from very talented chefs. They saw something in him that could not be taught, an innate ability. He has since held many chef positions in New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland which shaped him into the quality chef he is today. "Unlike other caterers, I do not present you with a menu of things I provide," David explains. "It is your party; you should eat what you want. I work with your budget and food preferences to create a menu unique to you. I am battle-tested, fully insured and ready to give you the very best culinary experience."

David's kosher menus are mouth-watering. For brunch or kiddush, for example, he offers the following: assorted fresh juices, seasonal fruit display, assorted bagels, danish and muffins with fruit preserves, smoked salmon with lemon and dill, herring in wine sauce, seaweed salad, potato salad with whole grain mustard and honey, Waldorf salad, assorted knishes, tuna salad, egg salad, poached salmon, tomato, cucumber and onion salad, mixed field greens with choice of vinaigrettes, marinated fresh

mozzarella, olive salad, assorted frittata, roasted button mushrooms, blintzes with cream cheese and cinnamon, assorted desserts and petit fours. As if that were not enough, he can also provide an omelet station, waffle station, soup station, crepe station or carvery.

If your event is scheduled for later in the day, David offers the following array of choices: stationary hors d'oeuvres, California torte, stuffed cabbage, Swedish meatballs, Italian meatballs

penne with broccoli, garlic and oil, farfalle pomodoro, tortellini with sauteed vegetables and tomato basil sauce, Hawaiian chicken with white rice, penne with vodka sauce, red and black caviar with accompaniments, whitefish salad with mini bagelettes, tropical fruit display, vegetable crudites with dips, chopped liver display with garlic crostini, assorted grilled marinated vegetables, passed hors d'oeuvres, mediterranean vegetable tart, Tuscan pizza with tomatoes, onion, fennel and olives, stuffed mushroom crowns Florentine, spanakopita, sesame chicken, grilled eggplant with sun dried tomato on garlic round, curried chicken wraps, sweet potato pancakes with maple syrup, potato pancakes with sour cream and applesauce, baby spring lamb chops, artichoke and scallion beignets with jalapeno aioli, duck and dried cherry pancakes, wild mushroom risotto cake, sweet butternut squash and pinenuts in phyllo cups, roulade of smoked salmon on crostini, teriyaki beef or chicken kabobs, chicken eggrolls with duck sauce, melon wrapped with smoked turkey, chicken or beef sate with Thai peanut sauce, Asian beef wonton, stuffed grape leaves and tomato basil bruschetta.

"It is my mission to provide the highest quality food, using only the finest ingredients, presented in an aesthetically pleasing manner, and served with the utmost class at a reasonable price," declares David. "I want you and your guests to remember the outstanding food and service you received for years to come."

**Catering by David can be reached at 607-727-5615 or [cateringbydavid@echoes.net](mailto:cateringbydavid@echoes.net).**



## Catering By The Oaks



Under the supervision the Vaad Ha'ir of Syracuse, Catering by The Oaks proclaims, "Chef Keith LeBlanc always puts his heart and soul into your event, ensuring the smallest details are beautifully executed perfectly. Using his flair for plating, your event will have a beautiful look as well as delicious flavors."

Executive Chef LeBlanc has over 20 years combined experience in both kosher and non-kosher catering, "so whether you are planning a celebration of a bar or bat mitzvah, a wedding, a corporate event or a social function, Catering by The Oaks will exceed your expectations with high-quality menu options and a professional service staff."

Catering by The Oaks descriptive brochure lists many sample menus, including an extended reception which includes vegetable crudites with hummus, bruschetta, stuffed

grape leaves, spinach bourekas, potato knishes, wrapped pastry franks with spicy mustard, poached salmon, teriyaki chicken satay, black and white cookies, French pastries, chocolate mousse, lemonade, iced tea and red and white wine sangria. Their sample buffet dinner offers quinoa roasted vegetable salad, house salad, steamed broccoli, vegetable medley, roasted fingerling potatoes, brown rice pilaf, roasted honey chicken, pulled brisket, peach melba and assorted cookies. The sample menus are just that—samples. Catering by the Oaks works with each client to customize menus to their expectations but also provides sample menus for those who want the ease of picking from options.

Catering by The Oaks specializes in bar and bat mitzvahs, shabbat dinners, kiddush seders, celebration of life banquets and small and large events. They do onsite and offsite events and take out. Whatever the occasion, "Chef Keith always puts his heart and soul into the event, ensuring that the smallest details are beautifully executed perfectly."

Catering by The Oaks' reputation for quality is growing and they have recently done large events at Turning Stone, at Innovation Square for Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester, at various temples and synagogues and are now providing kosher food at the cafeteria at Upstate Medical University.

**Catering by The Oaks' general manager Pamela Whitmore can be reached at (315) 446-9111 ext. 160 or [Pamela.Whitmore@sodexo.com](mailto:Pamela.Whitmore@sodexo.com).**



their special events to ensure the best outcome. The result is always a dining experience, made with love, that is truly mouthwatering.

## Upstate University Hospital Cafeteria

by David Lubin MD/PhD

The University Hospital cafeteria is pleased to announce kosher food is now available for patients, their families, visitors and staff. Together with Morrison Foods, these food items include breakfast as well as lunch/dinner options and are being trial-offered at the downtown University Hospital on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor above the main entrance and lobby at Café 750 beginning Oct. 11. The items are prepared daily by Syracuse's own kosher catering service at the Oaks. The menu and an example of an item is shown below, along with where to find the items in the dedicated refrigerator also shown below. A printed kashrus certificate will be available for viewing as well.

**For any questions regarding kashrus, supervision or food allergens please contact Pamela Whitmore at 315-446-9111 X 160 or email [Pamela.Whitmore@sodexo.com](mailto:Pamela.Whitmore@sodexo.com).**

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## Jewish Community Center

The Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center offers a boutique specialty catering service for small life cycle events such as a bris, shabbat dinners, and shiva meals.

Chef Donna Carullo is a graduate of the Culinary Institute with over 38 years of experience in French, Italian, Asian, American and Jewish Cuisine. Donna works her magic in the JCC kitchen, which is one of the only kosher-certified meal sites outside of New York City that serves meals five days per week.

Chef Donna goes the extra mile to provide delicious kosher meals prepared fresh in both traditional and innovative ways. She enjoys working with families to create the best options for

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## » Book Review

## Sufganiyot, Latkes and More Hanukkah Traditional Foods

Reviewed by Ashley Lavine



Finding new recipes online can be daunting. A simple search for “latkes” will result in thousands of “the best you will ever try!” Personally, there is something comforting about attempting a new recipe from a cookbook. That’s because a lot of time has gone into selection and publication. The dish has some clout, a resume. Miriam Gurov succeeds in her presentation of the holiday favorites. With twenty recipes, this kosher cookbook allows for experimentation without overwhelming the cook with options.



When she’s not at the Syracuse Hebrew Day School, Ashley Lavine enjoys the company of her family and congregation.

True to its cover, the collection leads with *sufganiyot*, a holiday treat. The yeasted dough is a multi-step process that Miriam estimates will take you 90 minutes from start to finish, but promises a sweet-smelling house as a reward. The author continues with a modern twist on the jam-filled classic by suggesting khalva and chocolate cream instead. And, of course, there is no Hanukkah dinner without latkes. Ashkenazi tradition calls for boiled potatoes, while Sephardic flapjacks use shredded potatoes. No matter which way you prefer to sizzle your spuds, there is a recipe to try.

Now that we covered the classics, we can highlight a couple of recipes that can take your Hanukkah festivities to the next level. I love that Miriam includes both meat and dairy options in this collection. Savory, “Golden-Fried Schnitzel” honors the miracle of Hanukkah, while adding variety to the eight-night holiday. This kid-friendly dish pairs well with “Crown Prince’s Potatoes,” a salad and applesauce. Miriam assures us that her recipe for “Hanukkah Mulled Wine” is a perfect substitute for dessert and will certainly warm your tuchus on a cold night.

I am most excited to make the “Jerusalem Asparagus Cream Soup”, but the “Fried Kubba” is a close second. This culinary tribute to all that is Hanukkah is finished off by a sweet and simple explanation of the dreidel game and offers templates to cut out and construct your own. This fun detail makes her book the perfect gift for those new to Hanukkah, but the recipes will also satisfy the experienced Jewish cook. Chag Sameach!

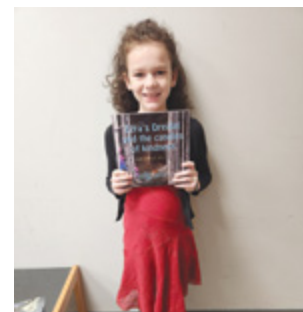
## » Kids Book Reviews

## Ezra’s Dreidel and the Candles of Kindness: A Hanukkah Story

Reviewed by Lucy Spevak

This story is about two kids who need to learn kindness. These kids go into their attic to get Hanukkah decorations. They come across a dreidel. When they give it a spin, they end up in a magical forest. To get home, they have to help animals along the way. After the kids helped the animals and have shown kindness, they meet Ezra, a bear, who helps them get home.

I liked this book because it teaches us more of what Hanukkah is about. It’s not about the toys or presents. It’s about the miracles of Hanukkah.



## Tia Fortuna’s New Home: A Jewish Cuban Journey

Reviewed by Soren Gaskin Bennett

I like this book because it’s in English and there are a lot of different languages in the book. It is about a Jewish woman and her grandchild. The grandmother makes good food and is very kind. Also she moves houses three times and comes from a family that can find hope in any situation or place.



## Book Talks at Temple Concord

by Chana Meir

**The winter season of Temple Concord’s Regina F. Goldenberg Series offers something for many readers. There will be discussions by the authors of a fantasy tale on Jewish themes, a fictional take on a local incident of antisemitism and a new unifying vision for the diaspora in America.**

Genna Rose Nethercott, the author of *Thistlefoot*, will speak on December 12th at 7 pm. *Thistlefoot* is the tale of siblings who receive a mysterious inheritance, a sentient house on chicken legs, from their twice-great grandmother in Russia. Along with the house comes a mysterious presence, the Longshadow Man, who follows in destructive pursuit until time, magic and legacy inevitably collide.

Liza Weimer, the author of *The Assignment*, will speak on January 17th at 7 pm. Weimer’s talk is presented in conjunction with the Epstein School. *The Assignment* is a novel based on an incident in Oswego County in which high school students were instructed to argue for the Final Solution, the Nazi plan to exterminate the Jews. When two students object to the assignment, the student body, parents, and administrators find themselves in their own



heated debate, raising issues of discrimination and antisemitism and their dangerous impacts.

Rabbi Joshua Stanton and Rabbi Benjamin Spratt, authors of *Awakenings: American Jewish Transformations in Identity, Leadership, and Belonging*, describe their book as an outline for “a Jewish awakening, inspired by Jewish practice but open to all.” They propose the expansion of leadership to include more Jewish professionals and lay leaders, the innovative use of technology, efforts for pluralism to overtake denominationalism, and a recasting of the American diaspora as a peer of Israel rather than its dependent. Their hopeful vision for the future, they say, may be brought about by “continual self-improvement through intentional practice, community, and belief in our higher purpose.” The rabbis will speak on January 23rd at 7 pm.

**All the events are free. To receive the Zoom link, register by clicking on the link on the Events Calendar at templeconcord.org. For more information, email [info@templeconcord.org](mailto:info@templeconcord.org).**



# New Head of Syracuse Hebrew Day School



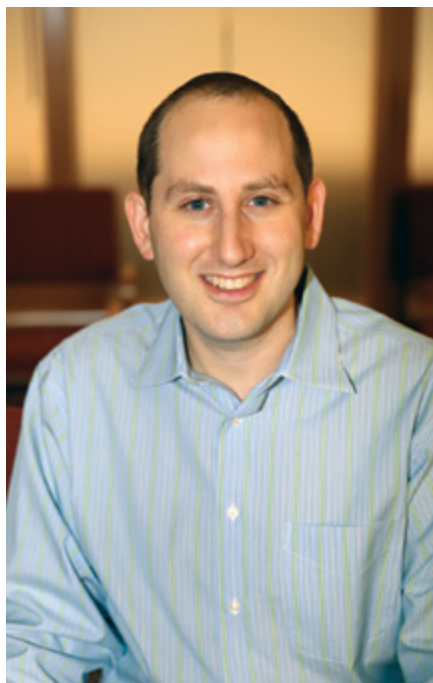
“As a Jewish day school graduate, I recognize first-hand the meaningful and formative impact Jewish education can have on students and their families,” says Michael Ferman, the new head of the 62-year old Syracuse Hebrew Day School. “My family and I are extremely excited about joining the Syracuse Jewish community, and we are grateful for everyone’s kindness in welcoming us so warmly.”

Ferman comes to the Day School from Toronto, where he studied at York University, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree in religious studies, a graduate diploma in advanced Hebrew and Jewish studies and a Master of Education degree, as well as human resources management certificate. He has had experience in both supplementary and day school education, having served as Director of Youth and Family Activities at Beth David B’nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue, Director of Programming at Adath Israel Congregation and Director of Admissions and Alumni at Robbins Hebrew Academy, a progressive Jewish learning academy with 400+ students.

“Michael has excellent interpersonal qualities and is operationally innovative. He is a skilled communicator and savvy planner,” says Rebecca Resig, board chair of SHDS. “He is a strategic thinker and a driven leader, with exceptional ability to think creatively. He is experienced in strengthening the Jewish community through building meaningful relationships.”

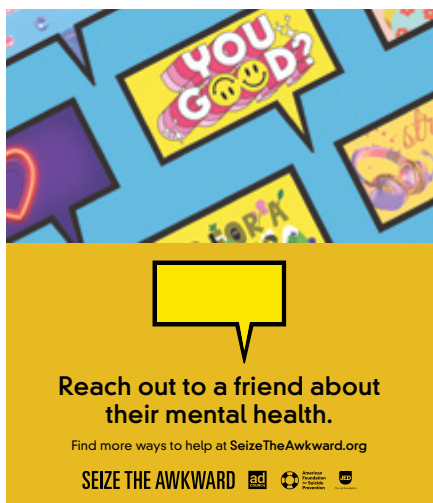
“We have worked hard to ensure the right person was hired for this important and significant role and we know Michael is it!” said Leah Goldberg, who headed the search committee, adding “The future of SHDS is in great hands!” Michael and his wife Jenn and three children are so excited to make Syracuse their new home. Two of the children will attend SHDS, as will their younger brother when he is old enough.

At Robbins, Ferman served on the leadership team, oversaw curricular reform, delivered a personalized learning experience, supported and collaborated with staff, implemented an evolving pandemic response, and represented the school in the Jewish and independent school communities. He directed the admissions process from inquiry to enrollment with year over year increases in admissions through having built connections with families, promoted the value of a Jewish Day School education and



developed a robust marketing strategy.

“The Day School family is eagerly awaiting the arrival of its new leader,” said Resig. Added Ferman, “I am thrilled to be leading the Syracuse Hebrew Day School and beginning this new journey. It is my vision that we strive to create boundless opportunities for students to learn and grow academically, socially and as menches.”



# Day School’s Fun-Filled Fall

by Melissa Klemperer

The fall holidays are always joyous at the Syracuse Hebrew Day School. From blowing shofarot and doing tashlich with Rabbi Shore, making lulavim with Rabbi Rapoport, decorating and eating in the sukkah and dancing with the Torah with Magiddah Kerr-Whitt, fall was a whirlwind of fun and celebration.



# JCC Receives Matthews Children’s Foundation Support

The Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center of Syracuse received a \$1,000 grant from the Matthews Children’s Foundation to enhance their children’s programming. The Matthews Children’s Foundation awards grants to nonprofit organizations whose primary purpose is to support children. Over the years, the JCC of Syracuse has received a substantial amount in grant funds from the Matthews Children’s Foundation.





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# MaryEllen Bloodgood Retires As Menorah Park CEO

by Ellen Weinstein

MaryEllen Bloodgood will be stepping down as chief executive officer of Menorah Park at the end of 2022, but Menorah Park is thrilled to announce that she will remain in service to the organization which she has faithfully served these past 35 years. As of January 1, Bloodgood will assume the role of chief development officer of the Menorah Park Foundation.

Bloodgood began her career at what was then known as the Jewish Home for the Aged of Central New York, first as its Director of Finance (1/87-2/89), then as Assistant Executive Director/Chief Financial Officer (2/89-6/96) and assumed the role of CEO in June of 2003. Under her leadership and vision, and that of her dedicated board officers and directors, the Jewish Home expanded its role in our



community from that of a home for the aged to a full service campus providing health care, housing, social services, research and community services to over 750 people per year through its skilled nursing facility, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation centers, moderate

income senior housing, retirement community housing, home health care services, medical adult day programs, group home residence, institute for applied research on aging, historical museum, specialized dementia care, emergency shelter, community-based social services agency and even kosher catering and a restaurant.

Bloodgood is proud of the Menorah Park organization and its mission “to assure maximum independence and dignity with a broad range of the highest quality health, residential and community services. Menorah Park is committed to maintaining Jewish values and traditions.” When asked how she, as a non-Jew, has been able to fulfill this mission, she acknowledged that it was hard at first. Her education, training and experience gave her the confidence she needed with respect to the nuts-and-bolts aspects of the job, but it was the faith-based aspect that was the most challenging. She credits the mentorship by her predecessor, Harvey Finkelstein, and Rabbis Shore and Jezer and the relationships she

developed with Menorah Park residents in this regard. She particularly recalled one gentleman, a Holocaust survivor from France residing at the Home when she first began as CEO. He spoke little English, French being his native language. At first MaryEllen saw this as an opportunity for her to brush up on her French language skills, but it turned out to be so much more for her. During their conversations, as he shared what he went through because of his faith, she came to understand the depth and meaning of Jewish values and traditions, and his need for and appreciation of celebrating Shabbat and the Jewish holidays and rituals. Through this experience and others, and with Rabbi Jezer’s and Rabbi Shore’s accessibility and teachings, Bloodgood, has been able to faithfully fulfill Menorah Park’s commitment to maintaining Jewish values and traditions. Those who know MaryEllen will attest that, in the process, she has developed a *Yiddishe neshome* (a Jewish soul) of her own.

Bloodgood has been awarded many honors over the years for her community service and professional accomplishments including Temple Adath Yeshurun’s Citizen of the Year and the Dr. Herbert Shore Award of Honor from the Association of Jewish Aging Services. The latter is “the highest single honor within the not-for-profit senior care industry in North America...[it] is given to the outstanding executive professional, nominated by their peers, who, by his/her performance and contributions, best exemplifies the goals and ideals of Jewish Aging Services to Jewish older adults.”

When asked to what she attributes her success, MaryEllen responded that early in her career, she was given good advice: always listen, never make promises you cannot keep and always learn from your mistakes. Relationship building with residents, their families and with staff is key and can only be achieved through open, honest and transparent communication. When asked what advice she would pass on to her successor, she said she is very much looking forward to being a mentor, is thankful that she will be remaining on campus in her new role so she will be available to him and strongly urges him to “have a copy of the Jewish calendar available at all times.”

As we say goodbye to MaryEllen as Menorah Park’s CEO, we are thrilled to say hello to her as she begins the next chapter as chief development officer of the Menorah Park Foundation. *Shalom, Shalom!*

## Menorah Park Opens New Palliative Care Suite



Menorah Park continually seeks to consider the needs of its residents and families and has recently opened a palliative care suite. Palliative care is an interdisciplinary medical specialty that focuses on preventing and relieving suffering and on supporting the best possible quality of life for patients facing serious illness and their families.

Menorah Park’s Comfort Care Room was created in a former double room and offers comfortable seating for up to three family members and a resident. Screening curtains, a television, a private bath for family members, additional

rollaway beds, children’s toys and snack carts are all designed for the resident’s family to spend quality time with their loved one.

“We’ve hosted one resident and their family since we opened a month ago,” said Toni Cole, Director of Admissions, “and they told us that our new area allowed them the quality time they needed.”

MaryEllen Bloodgood, Menorah Park CEO, said, “This new living arrangement has long been planned, as our families had told us that a feature of this type would be beneficial.”



# Encapsulating Memories

by Sonali McIntyre

Temple Adath Yeshurun is seeking items to include in a time capsule which will be enshrined in honor of TAY's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

"With each generation, there are changes that bring us greater and richer ways to enhance our customs, while still honoring those traditions that began before 1872. It is these traditions and customs, and the very people living in these times, that we want to capture and send into the future" said Mark Levy, TAY co-president on Rosh Hashanah.

Levy's speech artfully tied together the lives of two of TAY's members – Rosalind Bodow (age 102) and Lincoln McIntyre (born in March 2022). Friends and family helped put together pieces of a puzzle during Levy's speech, which came into focus as a photo of Roz holding Lincoln.

Levy said, "We are blessed to have book ends to an incredible chapter of our community. It is the very point in time in our Temple when the most senior member was holding up its newest member. It represents a beautiful, long tradition of family and Jewish values holding up our future. It's a beautiful and complex moment, representing, God-willing, two hundred years of our Temple family. It's my hope that in the year 2122, Lincoln



will be here holding up his next hundred years of our future. And I know we are blessed to be written in the chapter, all of us, connecting Roz and Lincoln, our past, present, and future. *L'dor v'dor*, from generation to generation. I hope you will each take an active role in our efforts to build a time capsule with all of your stories, pictures, and memories, so that we each can ensure our legacy for the generations to come."

**To donate items for possible placement in the time capsule, please contact [info@adath.org](mailto:info@adath.org).**

# Community Hebrew School Spreads Light through Better Together Program

by Emily Chelnitsky

In the dark winter nights, Jewish families light the menorah and recite one of the blessings, "who performed miracles for our forefathers in those days, at this time." Chabad Rabbi Shaul Yosef Leiter interprets this to mean that the miraculous nature of Chanukah is not limited to its historical setting. By taking part in our holiday rituals, we bring spirituality and awareness of our own miracles into our lives today.

The ability to live a Jewish life is not something to take for granted. It's a miracle to live in a country where we have the freedom to educate our children according to our traditions without fear of persecution. Just as the lights from our Chanukah menorahs extend past our homes and into the darkness, the influence from our students extends far past the classroom.

The Syracuse Community Hebrew School has been selected to participate in the Better Together Program, a four-year program designed to encourage meaningful interaction between young and old. Grades 5-7, under the direction of Head of School Ora Jezer, are participating in the program with Menorah Park. Over the past couple

of months, students have engaged in leadership lessons, workshops on active listening, and simulations to increase awareness on how elders may experience the world. As students Rachel Pettiford and Cara Engel said, upon reflecting on their previous visits, "we got to bond with a different generation and learned how to see the world through other eyes."

As we light the Chanukah menorah this season, let's not forget how lucky we are to openly share our Jewish lives with one another. SCHS is grateful for being chosen to participate in the Better Together Program and looks forward to sharing the positive influences on our students.

# Epstein and Hillel Partner to Excite Students about Collegiate Jewish Life

by Aaron Spitzer

"I learned that I want to choose a college with a large Jewish population," said Arielle Eglash, a sophomore at the Epstein School, in response to Syracuse University Hillel Rabbi Ethan Bair's question, "What is one thing you learned today?"

The first Epstein/Hillel Exploration program, sponsored by a Philip L. Holstein Community Program Fund grant from the Jewish Federation, took place on Sunday, October 16 at the Winnick Hillel Center for Jewish Life on the Syracuse University campus. The goal of the program is to generate excitement in high school students about living independent adult Jewish lives. For the vast majority of students, the next step is college. With this in mind, the Epstein School and three



regional Hillel chapters are partnering to offer a series of campus visits for 10th-12th grade high school students. "The goal is to expose high school students to the rich programming and social communities that Hillel chapters offer students so that

they enter college excited about Jewish life on campus," remarked Hillel program chair and Epstein School vice-president, Hannah Salomon.

The students spent an hour in an interactive panel discussion with four

upperclass SU students, each of whom shared their background, what they love about Hillel at SU and great advice about choosing a college and a major. They then toured the Winnick Hillel Center with Rabbi Bair and engaged in an hour of *chevruta* learning, partnering up to study Jewish texts.

Students will visit two other campuses in upstate New York as part of the program: SUNY Binghamton on November 11 and SUNY Buffalo on April 16. Participation is capped at 18 students for each campus visit, and students do not need to be enrolled in the Epstein School to participate. The campus visits to SUNY Binghamton and SUNY Buffalo include time with current Hillel community members, a campus tour, a kosher lunch on campus and round trip transportation from Congregation Beth Shalom - Chevra Shas in Jamesville. There is limited space available for the third and final campus visit to SUNY Buffalo. **If interested, please contact Aaron Spitzer, Epstein Head of School, at [epsteincny@gmail.com](mailto:epsteincny@gmail.com).**



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**A SUPPLEMENT WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE FEBRUARY ISSUE LISTING DONORS WHO GIVE BY DECEMBER 31<sup>ST</sup>.**

[Every effort has been made to ensure the correctness of this list. If there are omissions, please contact [bdavis@jewishfederationcny.org](mailto:bdavis@jewishfederationcny.org).  
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# 2022 YEAR-END TAX PLANNING

**As we approach the end of the year, it is helpful to reflect on steps that can be taken to reduce taxes through charitable giving.**

## Key Considerations for Year-End Tax Planning

- Use appreciated assets to make a charitable gift. Gifts of appreciated assets (stock) remain a best practice. Such gifts not only provide a deduction to the donor but also avoid the capital gains tax.
- Create a PACE (Perpetual Annual Campaign Endowment) Fund at the Jewish Community Foundation of Central New York. Your gift to the Federation's annual campaign can live forever when you create a PACE fund at the Foundation.
- Consider opening or donating to a Donor Advised Fund (DAF) this year for maximum flexibility. If you are considering making a significant donation to charity over time but want a deduction today, consider adding funds to an existing Donor Advised Fund or opening a new DAF at the Jewish Community Foundation of Central New York. It can be especially beneficial to donate appreciated property, because by doing so capital gains taxation with respect to the contributed assets is eliminated.
- Look into an IRA charitable rollover. The IRA charitable rollover is an attractive option because it can help satisfy the minimum distribution requirement without incurring income tax, even if you don't itemize your deductions.

**For more information or assistance, please contact Michael Balanoff, Executive Director, Jewish Community Foundation of Central New York at [mbalanoff@jewishfoundationcny.org](mailto:mbalanoff@jewishfoundationcny.org) or 315-445-0270.**

***Please note:** The Jewish Community Foundation of Central New York does not provide tax advice. Consult with your professional advisor before taking any action.*



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**Hanukkah Sameah!**

# Happy Chanukah!

 <p><b>3<sup>69</sup> lb.</b>  <b>Empire Kosher Frozen Whole Turkey</b>                  Empire Frozen Turkey Breast \$5.99 Lb.</p>	 <p><b>3<sup>99</sup> lb.</b>  <b>Empire Kosher Fresh Turkey</b></p>
 <p><b>8<sup>99</sup></b>                  with AdvantEdge Card  <b>Meal Mart Ground Beef 16 oz.</b>                  Meal Mart Beef For Stew 16 oz. \$9.99</p>	 <p><b>2/\$7</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card  <b>Martinelli's Sparkling Juice</b>                  25.4 oz. Select Varieties</p>
 <p><b>6<sup>99</sup></b>                  with AdvantEdge Card  <b>PICS Cold Smoked Atlantic Salmon</b>                  4 oz. All Varieties</p>	 <p><b>14<sup>99</sup> lb.</b>  <b>Meal Mart 1st Cut Beef Brisket</b>                  Kosher</p>
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 <p><b>4/\$5</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card  <b>Streit's Egg Noodles</b>                  12 oz. • Select Varieties or Bows 8 oz.</p>	 <p><b>3<sup>99</sup></b>  <b>Golden Blintzes 6 Pack</b>                  13 oz. • Select Varieties</p>
 <p><b>3<sup>29</sup></b>                  with AdvantEdge Card  <b>Breakstone's Whipped Butter</b>                  8 oz. Tub • Salted</p>	 <p><b>1<sup>99</sup></b>                  with AdvantEdge Card  <b>Farmers Horseradish</b>                  8.5 oz. • White</p>
<p><b>Carmit Chanukah Coins</b>                  42 oz. Bag • Dark or Milk Chocolate  <b>5/\$2</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>	<p><b>Streit's Chanukah Candles</b>                  44 Ct.  <b>89¢</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>
<p><b>Gefen Whole Roasted Chestnuts</b>                  5.2 oz. • Peeled  <b>2<sup>99</sup></b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>	<p><b>Osem Toasted Couscous</b>                  8.8 oz.  <b>2/\$5</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>
<p><b>Kedem Tea Biscuits</b>                  4.2 oz. • Select Varieties  <b>5/\$3</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>	<p><b>Osem Mini Mandel</b>                  14.1 oz. Canister  <b>3<sup>99</sup></b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>
<p><b>Manischewitz Broth</b>                  17 oz. • All Varieties  <b>2/\$5</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>	<p><b>Osem Chicken Consomme</b>                  14.1 oz.  <b>4<sup>99</sup></b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>
<p><b>Manischewitz Potato Pancake Mix</b>                  6 oz. • Select Varieties  <b>2/\$5</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>	<p><b>Lipton Kosher Recipe Secrets Soup &amp; Dip Mix</b>                  1.9-2.4 oz. or Soup Secrets Noodle Soup Mix 4.87 oz.  <b>2/\$5</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>
<p><b>Golden Pancakes</b>                  10.5 oz. • Select Varieties  <b>2/\$7</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>	<p><b>PICS Apple Sauce</b>                  23-24 oz. Jar • All Varieties  <b>2/\$4</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>
<p><b>Streit's Potato Pancake Mix</b>                  6 oz. • Select Varieties  <b>2/\$3</b>                  with AdvantEdge Card</p>	<p><b>Market 32 Apples</b>                  U.S. #1 • 2 1/4" Minimum  <b>1<sup>49</sup> lb.</b>                  SOLD IN 10 LB. BASKETS ONLY</p>



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**BARBARA  
FINLEY**  
**October 5, 2022**



Barbara Finley, 87, passed away on October 5 in Vero Beach, FL. Born in Syracuse on February 12, 1935 to Harold and Shirley Abelson Finley, she spent most of her life in Syracuse until moving to Vero Beach about five years ago.

Barbara was a devoted sister who enjoyed golf and mahjong and spending time with her friends. She was a member of Temple Concord and maintained her connections with Syracuse and the Temple even after moving to Florida.

Her family includes her beloved sister Fay Finley Rudolph, also of Vero Beach.

Contributions to perpetuate her memory may be made to Temple Concord.

[www.sisskindfuneralservice.com](http://www.sisskindfuneralservice.com)

**DEBORAH  
ROSEN SHORE**  
**October 21, 2022**



Deborah Lee Shore, beloved wife of Rabbi Evan Shore, died on October 21. Born on August 12, 1956, to Robert and Sylvia Rosen Deborah studied at Yeshiva University Stern College for Women. She married Rabbi Shore in 1978 and moved to Syracuse in 1989 where Rabbi served Shaarei Torah Orthodox Congregation of Syracuse.

Deborah was predeceased by their daughter Jessica in 2019. She is survived by her husband and their twin sons, Ari and Dov, their daughters-in-law, Devorah and Rivka, grandchildren Nechuma, Shimmy, Yisroel Meir, Meira, Chava, Tali, Avigayil, Ayelet, Channa Leah and Akiva Yosef, her sister Helene Grossman, brother David Rosen, father Robert Rosen and many nieces and nephews. Loved by all, she was a true Eshes Chayil.

Donations in Deborah's memory may be made to The Deborah Shore Mikvah Fund or The Deborah Shore Kitchen Fund at STOCs, 4313 E. Genesee Street, DeWitt, NY 13214 or <https://www.stocsyracuse.org/donate>.

**GLORIA GOULD**  
**October 22, 2022**

Gloria Gould, 89, passed away on Saturday at Menorah Park. She was born in Brooklyn, NY on October 4, 1933 to Jack and Ruth Hochberg. A graduate of Queens College with a degree in elementary education, she later received her master's degree in education as well as certification in library science. While she began her teaching career in Great Neck, NY, she spent many years teaching in the Morris School District in NJ until her retirement. She loved children and teaching and was never without books to give to friends' children and grandchildren.

Gloria and Stanley Gould were married in 1956 and had a loving relationship until his death in 2004. They enjoyed traveling together, being active in the local Jewish community, and socializing with friends and family. Gloria especially enjoyed spending summers at the Chautauqua Institution where she made many friends and was active in several groups. She served as co-president of the Hebrew Congregation and oversaw the Jewish lecture series. She was a lifelong learner who loved attending the daily lectures at Chautauqua.

After Stanley's death, Gloria moved to Cedar Crest retirement community where she enjoyed a full and active life. She made many new friends, as well as reconnecting with friends from Morristown. At Cedar Crest she served on the Resident Advisory Council and the Jewish Council. She especially enjoyed playing mahjong and dining with her group of friends.

Family was so important to Gloria. She maintained close relationships with her brothers and her grandchildren, to whom she wrote weekly letters throughout her life.

She is predeceased by her parents and her husband, as well as by her brothers in law, Warren Gould and David Windsor. Left to cherish her memory are her children, Lenore (Tom) Griffiths, and Andrew (Stacey) Silpe as well as her grandchildren, Erika, Jonah and Samara Gould and Sara and Samuel Griffiths. She is also survived by her brothers Larry (Linda) Hochberg, and Alan Hochberg and her sister-in-law, Susan Gould.

Donations to perpetuate her memory may be made to the Hebrew Congregation of Chautauqua [www.hebrewcongregationchautauqua.org](http://www.hebrewcongregationchautauqua.org).

**PEARL ROSENBERG  
LIPTON**  
**October 23, 2022**



Pearl Rosenberg Lipton of Monroe Township, New Jersey, passed away peacefully on October 23 with her family by her side.

Pearl was born in Brooklyn in 1928, to Joseph and Fay (née Cohen) Rosenberg, where she resided until moving to New Hyde Park where she raised her family. She settled in Monroe Township, New Jersey in 2017. She was predeceased by her daughter, Carole Lipton Weiner, son, David A. Lipton, brother, Jerome Rosenberg, and beloved husband and love of her life, Alan Lipton, to whom she was married for 64 years.

Pearl served as a private duty registered nurse for over 50 years at Long Island Jewish Hospital in Lake Success, New York. She enjoyed nothing more than caring for others. She was active for many years in her temple, the Lake Success Jewish Center and was a dedicated lifetime member of Hadassah, an organization working towards advancing women's healthcare. She loved connecting with others, created conversation groups at her local library in New Hyde Park and generously supported a number of charities over the years.

Pearl was a talented cook, homemaker, piano player and painter. She created many beautiful paintings and art pieces that she shared with her grandchildren. She enjoyed traveling around the world with her family, most especially to Israel, reading, playing her friends

in mahjong and Words with Friends, eating sushi, watching football and a good swig of Baileys. Her favorite thing of all—spending time with her family. Her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren were her pride and joy.

Pearl had an impeccable memory and never failed to have a special story to share, leading to conversations that could flow for hours. Her grandchildren loved her dearly and will forever cherish their special talks and time spent together.

Pearl never complained a day in her life. She always had a smile on her face even during the darkest of times. Her strength, courage and positivity were inspiring to many. She will be fondly remembered for her gentle caring nature and most especially for her unique knowledge (just like her late husband, Alan) that she loved to share with all of her grandchildren. She will be dearly missed by all.

She is survived by her daughters, Joanne Maloff (Dr. Jeffrey) of Jamesville, Susan Goldberg (Norman) of East Brunswick, NJ; son-in-law, Paul Weiner, eight grandchildren, Michelle (Chris) Burke of Fayetteville, Juliet Maloff of Dewitt, Sophia Maloff of Jamesville, Marisa (Michael) Lieberman of Katona, NY, Jillian (Jarod) Lojeck of Stamford, CT, Adam (Melanie) Goldberg of Fanwood, NJ, Sima (Jarret) Slepian of Manhattan, Molly (Scott) Goodman of Roslyn, NY and eight great-grandchildren, Jacob and Jaya Lieberman, Caia and Teddie Slepian, Chloe and Brooke Goodman, Madeline Goldberg and Cohen Lojeck.

Memorial donations may be made to the Jewish National Fund.

[www.sisskindfuneralservice.com](http://www.sisskindfuneralservice.com)



**JEANETTE  
"SHANKY" SOHL  
BUFF  
October 24, 2022**



Jeanette "Shanky" Sohl Buff, 101, died October 24 in the comfort of her home in Coconut Creek, FL. Born in Syracuse on August 7, 1921 to Clement and Ida Shulman, she was the last surviving sibling of seven children.

She is survived by her children, Martin Sohl and the late Maxine Sohl of Syracuse, Gerald Sohl and Genia Fromm of Toronto, as well as her many devoted grandchildren, great-grandchildren and Ellison nieces and nephews. She will be lovingly remembered for her competitive edge, her colorful cupcakes and cheese latkes and the genuine love she showered upon all who were lucky enough to know her.

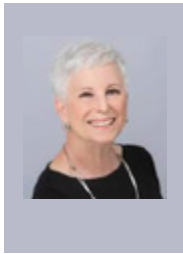
Special thanks to Sharon Harriott and Semone Burgess for their exceptional care and devotion, without which she wouldn't have made it to 101.

Donations to perpetuate her memory may be made to Brain Cancer Foundation of Canada, 519-642-7755 or Autism Speaks 646-385-8500.

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**LOIS JOAN  
(MENTER)  
ZACHARY  
October 26, 2022**



Lois Joan (Menter) Zachary, 78, of Phoenix, Arizona, passed away with dignity and grace of heart disease on October 26, 2022. She is survived by her husband Edward, her son Bruce Zachary of Phoenix, AZ, and her daughter Lisa Fain (David) of Mercer Island, WA. She is also survived by her two beloved granddaughters Talia Fain and Emily Fain, her sister Joyce Baron (Wayne Nyberg) of Palm Coast FL, her brother-in-law Seth Zachary (Nancy) of Greenwich, CT, her sister-in-law Carol Levine of Corvallis, OR, and many loving nieces and nephews. A third generation native Syracusan, Lois moved to Phoenix in 1995 and maintained many warm and loving friendships in the Syracuse area. Among her many contributions to the Jewish community in Syracuse and nationwide, Lois was the first female president of Temple Adath Yeshurun, and she served as Vice President of the Jewish Education Service of North America and Chair of the Editorial Board for the Journal of Jewish Education. Lois received her doctorate in adult and continuing education from Columbia University. She holds a Master of Arts degree from Columbia and a Master of Science degree in education from Southern Illinois University. A pioneer in the field of mentoring, Lois wrote seven books on mentoring, and published an anthology of poetry. Contributions can be made to The Arthritis Foundation [www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org), the Neighborhood at Central Synagogue [www.centralsynagogue.org](http://www.centralsynagogue.org) or WISH at Banner Health Foundation [give.bannerhealth.com/WISH](http://give.bannerhealth.com/WISH).

**MURRAY  
GROSSMAN  
October 27, 2022**



Dr. Murray Alan Grossman passed away on October 27 in Syracuse, three days shy of his 100th birthday.

Murray was born in Syracuse, New York on October 30, 1922 to Lionel and Clara (Fitzer) Grossman. He graduated from Nottingham Highschool in 1939 and went on to attend both Syracuse University and the Syracuse University College of Medicine, graduating as Medical Doctor in June 1945 at the age of 22. He spent two years as a U.S. Naval Medical Officer before continuing his medical training at the Cornell division at Bellevue Hospital in New York City. He returned to Syracuse for his residency and then entered private practice in 1951. While he loved treating patients, his true passion was teaching which ultimately led to Murray joining the clinical faculty as a full professor at Syracuse University College of Medicine (now SUNY Health Science Center) where he specialized in cardiology up until his retirement in 1992 as Professor Emeritus.

His medical career included two separate American Heart research fellowships at the University of Utah, the first in 1970, followed by a second in 1986. He also was the driving force behind setting up the first cardiac care unit in the Syracuse area, which led to a stunning 50% drop in mortality from cardiac arrhythmias. Murray went on to serve as president of the medical staff at Crouse Irving Hospital where he led the creation of the new combined Crouse Memorial Hospital, now known as Crouse Hospital. During that period, he worked with the president of the Upstate Medical Center to develop a working agreement between the two institutions so that the new hospital became a primary teaching facility for the Upstate Medical Faculty. He also served as a lecturer and cardiac consultant to the Federal Aviation Administration from 1973 to 2001 helping the agency establish cardiac safety standards for licensed pilots.

Murray's passion for teaching extended well past his official retirement, and he remained active in the medical school throughout his retired years. Even as a 99-year-old patient, he insisted on reading his own electrocardiogram, pronouncing himself "fit as a fiddle" to the attending physician on duty. Physical activity was an important part of Murray's life, from playing basketball as a youth at

Nottingham high school to activities such as tennis, golf and skiing later in life. It was Murray's love of skiing in particular that led to a twenty-year period from 1993 to 2013 where the family lived in Park City, Utah.

Murray was an active philanthropist in the local Syracuse community where from 1964 to 1971 he served on the Board of Directors for the United Cerebral Palsy Association, serving as its president the last two years of his service. It was during his presidency that the organization changed its name to Enable and greatly expanded its scope of services beyond those afflicted with cerebral palsy to assist a broader group of disabled individuals. He also served as a director of the United Way of Central New York from 1971 to 1979. More recently, he and his wife partnered with his son on a donation to provide year-round supplemental legal services to individuals with physical handicaps, which is a service offered as part of the Syracuse University College of Law. He also was the inspiration for a named scholarship at Syracuse University dedicated to supporting graduate education and social work. Lastly Murray was a long-time financial supporter of the Lionel Grossman Moot Court at the Syracuse University College of Law.

His lifelong association with Syracuse University included a 25-year period where he served as a medical consultant to the Syracuse University Athletic Department and in 2016, he received the Letterman of Distinction award for his years of service to the Athletics department.

Murray leaves behind his wife of 48 years Kathy (O'Leary) Grossman, children Elizabeth (Marnell) Grossman of Stuart, FL, Jacqueline Kelly of Scotia, NY, Sarah (Patrick) Leonard of Arlington, VA, and Brian (Beth) Grossman of Hillsborough, CA and six grandchildren Shannon Kelly, Brady, Zoe and Sylvie Grossman, Claire and Kate Leonard and his sister Suzy Grossman.

The family would like to give special thanks to his care givers over the past few months, Ann Marie Borkowski, Amy Morris and Mariya Belov.

In lieu of flowers contributions can be made to the Faith Linda Grossman Endowed Summer Disability Law Internship Fund at Syracuse University College of Law c/o Advancement Services 640 Skytop Road, 2nd floor, Syracuse, NY 13244, (315) 443-1964.

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**SHIRLEY BETTY LIBERMAN ASHKIN**  
**October 30, 2022**

Shirley Betty Liberman Ashkin passed away at home peacefully on October 30 at age 94, after a rapid decline in health. She was predeceased by the love of her life, Sidney Ashkin, after 72 years of marriage, having been friends since age 8. Shirley was also predeceased by her sister Yetta Toffler and brother Marty Liberman.

Shirley was born and raised in Utica and moved to Syracuse following her and Sid's 1948 marriage. Shirley loved being a mother, homemaker and wife, hosting Jewish holidays and family celebrations. While she worked with Sid and Joe on occasional Saturdays at Salina Shoes, her true dedication was raising and loving her family. Shirley had a passion for golf with the girls and nightlife at Lafayette Country Club with Sid.

Shirley will be missed and lovingly remembered by sons Sheldon (Mary Hunter) and Howard (Jacki), granddaughters Mikel (Josh) Suna, Jesse (Joris Cretien) Ashkin, and Cari (Luis Bernardo) Ashkin, daughter-in-law Barbara Ashkin and many caring nephews, nieces, cousins and friends.

The family thanks Marsha Disque and her many compassionate caregivers who helped Shirley live her best life at home.

Funeral services will be at 11 am on Wednesday, November 2 at Sisskind Funeral Chapel. Friends may visit with the family immediately prior to the service on Wednesday from 10 to 11 am at the funeral chapel, 3175 E. Genesee Street. Burial will be in Adath Yeshurun Cemetery. A live stream of the service will begin at 11 am on Wednesday on the Sisskind Funeral Service Facebook page.

Donations, if desired, may be made to Temple Adath Yeshurun, or a charity of your choice.

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**JAY M. LAND**  
**November 1, 2022**

Jay M. Land, 83, died on November 1 in the comfort of his home surrounded by his loving family. He was born on February 19, 1939 in Washington DC to Louis and Shirley Land. He was a graduate of the University of Maryland and received his PhD in clinical psychology from Syracuse University. His first academic job was at University of Ohio, and he returned to Syracuse one year later in 1968 to join the faculty in the Department of Psychiatry at Upstate University Hospital. He later established his private psychotherapy practice and remained on the clinical faculty. He served several terms on the Board of the New York State Psychological Association.

Jay was passionate about human rights and served as President of the Board of our local Planned Parenthood. He was a "card carrying" member of the ACLU and wore an American flag pin on his lapel, firmly believing liberals should reclaim the flag.

Brilliant and articulate, Jay touched (and changed) thousands of people's lives through his work.

His family includes his wife of 45 years, Linda and their blended family including his daughters Elizabeth and Rebecca, Linda's sons Matthew (Susan) and Steven (Erin), grandchildren Sabina, Jonah, Zachary, Rubin, Ellis, Cassia, Shay, Jacob, Ethan, Sophie, and Audrey, his sister Nona and sisters-in-law Muriel and Arlene.

Contributions in his memory may be made to Planned Parenthood Federation of America, [Plannedparenthood.org](http://Plannedparenthood.org).

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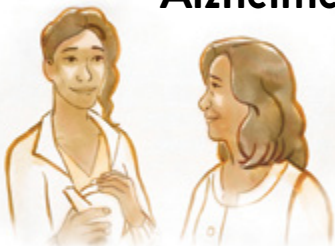
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