

» HAPPY NEW YEAR!

# Jewish Observer

A publication of the Jewish Federation of Central New York

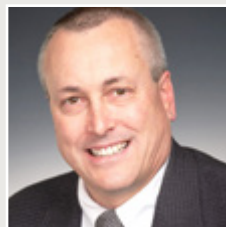
## of Central New York

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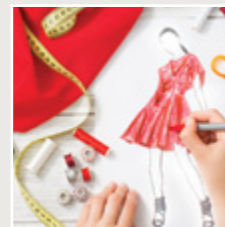
*New Year! New Leaders! New Clothes!*



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# September 2023

## From the Editor



Barbara Davis

I've always liked it that the head (*rosh*) of the Jewish year (*haShanah*) comes in the fall. Maybe that's because school also starts in the fall and I have spent so much of my life in schools – as a student, as a teacher and as a principal. Starting the year in January doesn't make sense to me. January is a bleak month and is considered two-faced, looking back to winter and ahead to spring. The fall, harvest season, is redolent with abundance, success, happiness, prosperity and the fruits of hard work. It's an auspicious time to start a year.

Apparently, long ago, the secular year started in March. This makes sense because spring starts in March, but in 153 BCE, the Roman king Numa Pompilius switched the calendar so the year began on January 1 because January was named for Janus, the Roman god of new beginnings. The origins of *Rosh haShanah* are likewise somewhat convoluted. The Hebrew calendar begins with the month of Nisan, but *Rosh haShanah* occurs at the start of Tishrei, when God is said to have created the world. Thus, *Rosh haShanah* is really the birthday of the world rather than a new year in the secular sense. Yet it is on *Rosh haShanah* that we change the number of the year (5783 to 5784). The *Mishna* described three other new years in the Jewish calendar: Nisan 1 was used to resume the cycle of months and measure the duration of kings' reigns; Elul 1 determined the tithing of animals for charity or sacrifice; Shevat 15 calculated the age of fruit-bearing trees (and is now celebrated as the holiday of *Tu b'Shevat*).

While hearing the shofar is a universal component of *Rosh haShanah* observance, other customs differ around the world. Here are some unique ones:

On the island of Djerba off Tunisia, children collect as many fallen olives as they can, which are then pickled in salt. On the morning before *Rosh haShanah*, they carry the olives through the streets calling, *zeitun yehi ratzon*, announcing that they have olives with which people can recite the traditional *yehi ratzon* blessing, asking that our merits multiply like olive saplings.

In Iraq, on the night before *Rosh haShanah*, every Jewish home was visited by the *shochet* who would slaughter the ram they had cared for at home for the past few weeks. (If the ram was found to be unkosher, the family would see this as an ill omen and reason to increase their repentance.) The ram would be prepared in melon rinds and its head served separately. Before partaking of the head, the diners would express the wish "that we be a head and not a tail."

In Morocco, on *Rosh haShanah* eve, many Moroccan Jews enjoy seven cooked vegetables. The menu selection varies, but the number seven is consistent. It is said that the number seven recalls that *Rosh haShanah* ushers in the seventh month on the Jewish calendar and also symbolizes the Midrashic tradition that "all sevenths are beloved."



In Turkey, Jews eat matza saved from their Passover seder. The purpose of this is to demonstrate a wish that we be saved from all evil decrees, as was done during the Exodus from Egypt.

Another custom that is observed at the new year is the wearing of new clothes. This allows the purchaser or wearer of the new attire to recite the *Shehecheyanu* blessing, expressing gratitude and appreciation of something new, particularly á propos at the new year. That is why there are several articles about clothes in this issue, which we hope you will find of interest.

Another cause for celebration of the new, another reason to say *Shehecheyanu*, is the number of new leaders in our community. In addition to welcoming two new rabbis, we celebrate two new synagogue presidents, new presidents of the JCC and SHDS boards and several other new leaders. It is always wonderful to learn about the people who are willing to step up and assume the tremendous responsibilities that leadership entails, and we wish them all the very best in the new year.

Finally, we include in this issue descriptions of two impactful new community initiatives that will be taking place in 5784: the Butterfly Project and LiveSecure. Both address serious concerns in a positive and proactive way and will help our community to be stronger.

The *Jewish Observer* wishes all of our readers a happy, healthful, safe and prosperous 5784. May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year.

# Jewish Observer

of Central New York

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## FROM THE FEDERATION BOARD CHAIR

### Neil Rosenbaum



**The mission of the Jewish Federation of Central New York is to build a strong Jewish future in Central New York, Israel and worldwide through philanthropy, engagement, education and advocacy. We are proud to sustain fundamental Jewish values: Torah, Tzedakah, Tikkun Olam and L'dor v'dor. It is in that spirit that I send you greetings as we begin the year 5784.**

The Central New York Jewish community has one of almost everything. We are just like the Three Bears. We are not too big, and we are not too small. We are just right. What I have seen in this community over recent decades is an amazing example of the coming together of a community. The positive effects of our continually increasing collaboration are evident and growing.

Working together, we will add many more accomplishments to our unending communal history. All of our Jewish organizations need to be allied in a great communal effort, each contributing something unique and important to the achievement of our collective vibrancy.

Once we complete the Days of Awe, we will begin the cycle of developing strategies and actions that will continue to evolve and strengthen our Jewish community. Each organization, agency and synagogue is critical to this effort.

As I look ahead to 5784, with deep pride in the community we're continuing to build together, I want to thank each of you — our community's leaders and supporters — for your commitment, generosity, passion and energy. Despite the challenges we face as a people, we've come together as a Jewish community to meet local, national and global needs while deepening our connections with one another.

I hope you are as inspired as I am by the breadth and depth of our shared accomplishments and just as encouraged by the opportunities that lie ahead. As always, I welcome your feedback and ideas on how Federation and our community can continue to pursue our vision and invite you to share them with me.

At Rosh haShanah, in typical Jewish fashion, we debate important points: which is the better - challah with raisins or plain? Which fish should we put on the holiday table - gefilte or a fish head? Is the shofar blast a wake up cry or a call to action? But no matter which way you slice (or tear) your challah, I think we can all agree that the Federation is here to assure that there is a strong and vibrant Jewish future in a safe and supported Central New York Jewish community.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Federation, I wish you all a wonderful and sweet new year. May 5784 be a year of blessing, joy, peace, good health and safety.

*Shana tova u metukah.*



## Michael Balanoff to be Honored by InterFaith Works at Leadership Award Dinner



Federation President/CEO Michael Balanoff is being honored by InterFaith Works this month at its annual Leadership Award dinner. "Faith in Our Future" is the theme of the 2023 program. InterFaith works explains, "There is a sense of optimism in our community as well as a revitalization of Onondaga County that coincides with InterFaith Works' programmatic growth and expanding community outreach. Our community is on the cusp of revitalization and rebirth. Federal and state funds as well as private individuals and corporations are making investments that will have an immediate and long-term impact in ensuring a strong, vibrant future for Syracuse. Examples include: Micron chip plant, JMA Wireless headquarters on the city's Southwest side; revamping of the inner harbor; Route 81 Project; investment in education of health care workers and health care infrastructure (OCC hospital simulation training center, Crouse ED renovation, SUNY Health Science Center suicide prevention center); investment in education/training (Micron clean room and training programs at OCC, training and hiring of vets in collaboration with SU); organizations tackling social issues (Tiny Homes for Good, Rise Above Poverty, Good Life Foundation...), etc. We believe this is a time to recognize those who are investing in our

community to help ensure its vitality, prosperity and promise--now and for future generations."

Balanoff is being honored with Sharon Brangman, MD, Distinguished Service Professor of Geriatric Medicine and Department Chief Geriatrics, Upstate Medical University; Dominic Cambareri, Esq., Executive Director, Syracuse Challenger Baseball, and Founder, Carrier Park Field of Dreams; Anthony Davis, Superintendent, Syracuse City School District; Sharon Owens, Deputy Mayor, City of Syracuse; Tim Saka, Board President, CNY RISE Center; Kent Syverud, Esq., Chancellor, Syracuse University; Dr. Ruth Chen, Professor of Practice at Syracuse University's College of Engineering and Computer Science.

The criteria for honoring state that honorees should involve others in their work and not work singularly and that honorees' work should center on improving the future of our community, with the committee focusing on prospective honorees' current efforts, not past accomplishments.

The ILAD dinner will be held on Thursday, September 7 at the SRC Arena at Onondaga Community College. There will be a reception at 5:30 pm followed by a dinner and program at 6:30 pm. Tickets may be purchased on the InterFaith Works website.



# Is There A Future for Artificial Intelligence Within the Framework of Judaism?

By Rabbi Evan Shore, Shaarei Torah Orthodox Congregation of Syracuse

The Scarecrow from the film “The Wizard of Oz” sings the now-famous refrain, “If I only had a brain!” Since the Scarecrow was non-sentient, the “brain” he was awarded by the Wizard may be construed as artificial intelligence. Does that make the Scarecrow human?

As human beings, we are born with a brain that enables us to think, understand and discern. Three times daily we ask Hashem to endow us with wisdom, insight and discernment. Why is a functioning and deductive brain so crucial?

Human beings are a singularity within God’s universe. To the exclusion of all animals, humans alone possess freedom of choice. There is no question that freedom of choice involves awareness of consequences, fact and past experiences. However, humans must make decisions based



upon their own conscience and not through artificial means.

Rabbi Zev Rimon, in an article in *Jewish Action*, was asked whether our future would find artificial intelligence comparable to human beings or able to be counted as part of a minyan? He answered: “The Torah requires a Jewish person with *da’at* (understanding).

Even if a robot had *sechel* (intellect/brainpower), it would be lacking *da’at*. A robot can never attain the status of a human being and therefore it cannot perform religious functions.”

This is a crucial notion. I believe *da’at* also implies empathy. A computer cannot sympathize or exhibit tenderness. If you remember the Star Trek series, The Next Generation, the most beloved character was Data. He reached the limit of artificial intelligence potential but lacked “touchy feely” emotions and had limitations that human beings did not.

With *Rosh Hashanah* quickly approaching, the issue of artificial intelligence and its impact is quite timely. The first of Tishrei marks the creation of the human being. The unique common thread that binds all humans is the concept of *Betzelem Elokim*: We were created in the image of God. Rabbi

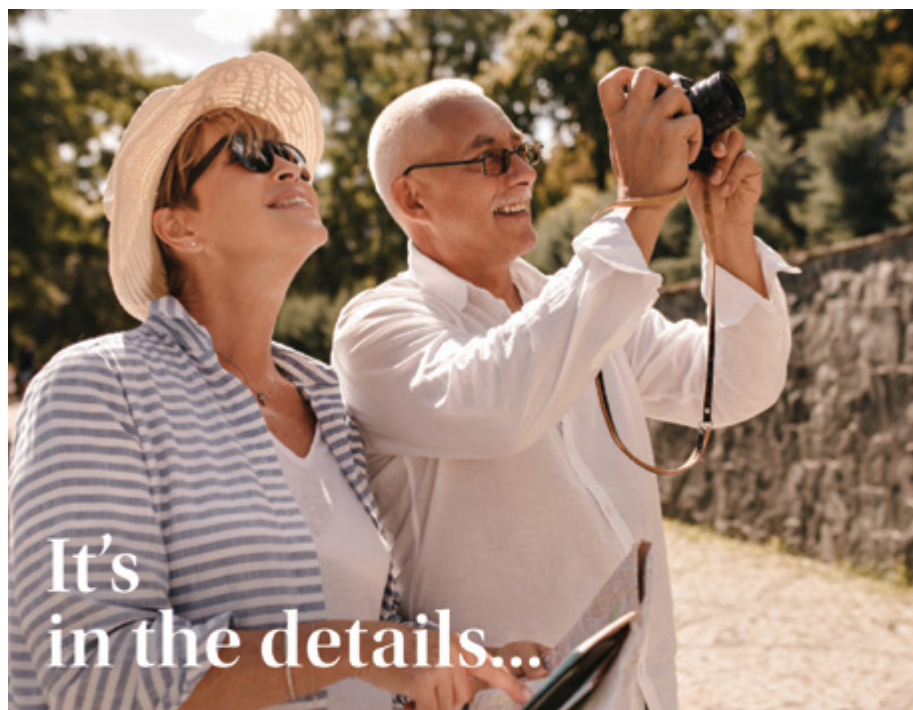
Jonathan Sacks once wrote that “every human is in God’s image regardless of color, culture or class—that must take precedence in human economies, societies and states.”

I therefore feel that artificial intelligence, robots and computers pose an existential threat to humanity. King David in the Book of Psalms (115:4) writes: “Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands.” The classical biblical commentator Ibn Ezra explains: “It is shameful that human beings worship their handiwork. (Idols made from gold and silver.)” Is it possible that one day artificial intelligence will be elevated to a level of the divine?

The answer is found in the same chapter in the Book of Psalms: “Israel, trust in Hashem! He is their help and their shield!” Jews must not fall into the historical trap of venerating our handiwork. The Talmud teaches us that three beings are involved in the birth of every baby, God Almighty, the mother and father. This makes clear the necessity of a loving, living God. To place our trust in a sterile unemotional icon would be tantamount to giving up on our status as free-willed human beings.

On Rosh Hashanah, we proclaim Hashem, as our Lord and King. Hashem has reigned, He does reign and will reign for all eternity. I look forward to the day when the prophecy of Zachariah rings true and all humanity comes to the realization that Hashem is King. On that day, Hashem will be One and His Name will be One.

I wish the entire Syracuse Jewish community a Happy and Healthy New Year. May we all be written and sealed for life, health and happiness for 5784.



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# Unetaneh Tokef

by Michael Gordon, Ph.D.



When I was maybe ten years old, I was sitting in Rosh haShanah services with my parents when the rabbi began reading a prayer that listed the many ways we could all die a painful death over the coming year. He talked about how we might perish by fire, water or other gruesome circumstances – like strangulation, earthquake, famine and plague. I was most concerned about what it would be like to perish at the paws of wild beasts.



Although I thought this was supposed to be the happier of the high holy days, all we were talking about here was making sure you prayed so you wouldn't suffer massively prior to ending up dead. At that young age, I hadn't really expected that the Almighty would ask us to predict not only who would die, but what would kill them. I had been under the impression that we'd keep living, if not forever, at least for a very long time. Now come to find out that G-d might have other near-term plans.

The prayer ended by telling me that my best hope for avoiding brutal consequences like stoning was to pray, say I was sorry if I did something wrong and be well-behaved. That remedy left me uneasy, because I didn't know if I had all those bases covered. We only went to synagogue maybe weekly, I wasn't especially adept at fessing up to misdeeds and, while I was reasonably compliant, I had my moments.

I also noticed that the prayer didn't offer up much hope for good times. It did mention serenity, but only as a counterpoint to being pursued. I didn't read anything like "Who shall get a good toy for Hanukah?" or "Who might actually catch a fly ball in Little League?"

I got the puerile impression that life was going to be a bumpy ride. I also wasn't sure that we were praying to an especially forgiving or comforting G-d, particularly in the context of murderous angels, cataclysmic floods and people suddenly turning into salt.

The thrust of the prayer did remind me of my paternal grandmother. She was the consummate tough cookie, one of eleven children born to parents who had immigrated from Belorussia. I might have seen her smile over the years, but that could well have been the misinterpretation of a grimace.

Her conversation always seemed to have that *Unetaneh Tokef* vibe. If I said, "Grandma, how're you doing?" she'd typically respond, "Still living." If I mentioned that a family member was sick or had passed, she'd comfort me by saying, "Born to die." She had that reverse *joie de vivre* the poet who wrote the high holiday prayer might have appreciated. She had received the prayer's message that life sucks and then you perish (unless you were super religious, in which case you might not die quite so quickly or painfully).

My father wasn't terribly reassuring when I leaned over to ask him what the deal was with this prayer. He said something like, "Don't worry, it's just a prayer." He was a chemist by training, occupation and mentality. He was certainly a good dad, just one better at engaging me in various science and home projects than in extended conversations.

Fortunately, I was an easy-going kid who tended to float along in blissful ignorance, largely unperturbed by what should have been unsettling thoughts. I figured things would work out and, besides, the rabbi told us to move onto the next page.

But I have never lost my fascination with this prayer. It's by far my favorite part of the high holy day services. I love its repetitions, its cadence and how heartily it elaborates on various ways you might buy the farm. As soon as I open the high holiday *machzor*, I search for the *Unetaneh Tokef*.

I must admit to invoking the prayer on other than Days of Awe, most commonly on Days of Golf. At the first tee, usually at the outset of a tournament, I often say to myself, "Who shall live and who shall die. Who by slice and would by hook. Who shall flail at the ball in a bunker and who from behind a tree. Who shall shank and who shall miss a two-foot putt." And so on, depending on which golf woes I've most frequently endured over the past rounds. Like the prayer, I do end on a more positive note: "But proper alignment, a good tempo and prayer (as in, 'Lord, please don't let the ball end up in the pond') will avert an embarrassing score."

I imagine that *Unetaneh Tokef* has had a profound impact on many others through the centuries. It certainly did Leonard Cohen, who put it to music in "Who by Fire" (a

version of which is the theme song for the streaming show "Bad Sisters"). Rosanne Rosanna Dana must have had the prayer in mind when she famously intoned: "It just goes to show you. It's always something. If it's not one thing, it's another."

The poem does capture the fatalism and paranoia that is so much a part of the Jewish psyche – wholly understandable given our history. We have had especially good reason to wonder whether we'll make it to another year. If you're so inclined, you might decide you had better pray darn hard to fend off

destruction. I choose to see the *Unetaneh Tokef* as a kind of liturgical *carpe diem* that further encourages me down the road of responsible hedonism. I've decided to add it to my list of ceremonial reminders that life is short, so you might as well make the most of it.

And there I've done it. I just admitted that I haven't evolved much in the six decades that followed that Rosh haShanah service when I was about ten. Then again, at least I've been inscribed in the book of life for a very long time. So far, so good.

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# NEW LEADERS FOR A NEW YEAR



**Rabbi Oren Steinitz**  
**Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas**

Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas's new rabbi, Oren Steinitz, was born in Israel to a secular family. His father grew up in New York City and made *aliyah* following the 1967 War. His mother is a *sabra*. Rabbi Steinitz's interest in Judaism grew after he spent two summers as a counselor in an American Reform summer camp following his IDF service. Coming back to Israel, he undertook Middle East Studies at the Ben Gurion University in Be'er Sheva and completed a master's degree, researching Jewish-Muslim relations. At that time, he worked for the Israeli Masorti Movement, teaching in their "Bar/Bat Mitzvah for the Special Child" program. In 2007 the rabbi and his wife Adar moved to Calgary, Alberta to pursue their PhD studies. The rabbi also served as the Jewish chaplain at the University of Calgary. He received rabbinic ordination and his doctorate in 2014. In 2015 the Steinitzes moved once again, this time with their two children, Eytan and Eliana, to Elmira where the rabbi had accepted a position at Congregation Kol Ami.

Even though he had never lived in Central New York, the rabbi's family had ties to the area. His great-uncle Ralph Baum, z"l and his wife, Rose, lived here since the 1960s and were members of Temple Adath Yeshurun. The family story, perhaps apocryphal, is that the rabbi's grandmother, Lore, was the first woman to receive an *aliyah* at Temple Adath during his cousin Ed's bar mitzvah.

Rabbi Steinitz was also acquainted with CBS-CS, having met Rabbi Andrew Pepperstone in 2012 while they were taking a class on prayer leadership practices through the Jewish Renewal movement. They remained good friends, stayed in touch, and in 2017, he invited the Steinitz family to come for a Shabbaton. "We were immediately impressed by the warmth and friendliness of the community," he recalls. "I particularly loved the fact that the synagogue encourages lay participation and leadership, as well as the congregation's staunch commitment to a Judaism that is accessible to all, regardless of financial ability."

Now that he is the rabbi of CBS-CS, Rabbi Steinitz sees his role "first and foremost as a community builder - someone who models a committed Jewish life while remaining approachable and down to earth." He says his rabbinate "is centered on empowering people to make Jewish choices and increase their Jewish knowledge and skills, rather than 'being the kind of Jew you do not have the time to be' (in the words of fictional rabbi Jacob Schram)." He adds, "My belief is that for too many American Jews, Judaism is something that only happens for three hours on a Saturday morning (or six hours on Yom Kippur), and I believe that the rabbi's job is to show that there is so much more to Judaism than that. Judaism can be a source of ethics, values and community, well beyond the four walls of a synagogue."

In the coming year, Rabbi Steinitz hopes "to engage personally with as many congregants as I can, to hear what they love about CBS-CS and what they think needs work." His goal is "to infuse religious services with even more *ruach* and enthusiasm, and to foster a community that is excited about being Jewish."



**Rabbi Ilan Emanuel**  
**Temple Concord**

Temple Concord's new rabbi was born in the United States and raised in the United Kingdom, the child of an American Reform rabbi father (who grew up on Long Island) and an Orthodox French Moroccan mother. He spent a lot of time with family in both the United States and France. "In addition to learning from and experiencing the Jewish perspectives of both sides of my family," the rabbi says, "I also spent time as a student and in my 20s learning with Jewish groups of all streams."

Once he had made the decision to enter the rabbinate, Rabbi Emanuel experienced a wide array of Jewish and general culture in Israel and throughout North America (Cincinnati, OH; Lincoln, NE; Toronto, ON, and Corpus Christi, TX). "I have learned from all of these varied experiences," he explains, "appreciating how they have opened my mind and how I have had a unique opportunity to experience so many different perspectives. That opportunity has influenced my rabbinate, teaching me that there are many paths to God and community. I appreciate being present for people on all these paths as they find meaning and purpose in life."

Rabbi Emanuel's family includes his wife Randi, his daughter Mira, who is a student at the University of Texas at Dallas and their dog Indiana Jones. "I am very excited to be serving Temple Concord at such an exciting time for the community," the rabbi says. "Becoming the rabbi of Temple Concord is a great honor. I am humbled that I will be only the seventh rabbi in just over 180 years and excited to have the chance to help guide the congregation at a time of such great opportunity. As a rabbi, I strive to work in partnership with the congregation to balance and prioritize the many varied needs of the community. Together we create a core vision of vibrant and meaningful Judaism around which to gather, an authentic Jewish home into which all are welcomed. And I work through teaching, prayer, pastoral care and life-cycle events to be a comforting and supportive presence for people in times of sadness and suffering and a friend and confidante in times of joy."



**Ross Greenky, President**  
**Syracuse Hebrew Day School**  
**Board of Directors**

The new president of the Syracuse Hebrew Day School board of directors is attorney Ross Greenky, who is an alumnus of the school. In taking on the presidency, Ross says, "The school set me up for success in academics, in life and in facilitating my Jewish identity. I want SHDS to grow and thrive for the next generation of children to have the same experience as so many others like myself. I am extremely confident that this will occur under the guidance of Michael Ferman."

An attorney in Barclay Damon LLP's Labor & Employment Practice Area Group, Ross primarily concentrates on labor and employment matters, assisting employers with issues such as workplace discrimination, harassment and retaliation and FMLA compliance. He was named a Rising Star Attorney by Super Lawyers from 2017 through 2021 and is a 2023 Federation 6 Under 36 award winner. His nominator for the Federation award said, "Central New York is very fortunate to have someone of Ross's background and caliber. He is a true leader in our Jewish community."

Ross serves as a member of Barclay Damon's Next Generation Committee and participates in the firm's pro bono program which provides free legal assistance to low-income individuals and organizations that assist them, helping to navigate issues related to immigration, housing, women's rights, prisoners' rights, community building and economic development. Ross has been a member of the Syracuse Hebrew Day School's board of directors since 2017 and now serves as vice president. Ross recently won a case against Swiss Village for discriminating against people whose native language was not English. He is quoted on the Barclay Damon website as saying, "It's that every now and then when you get to be a part of justice being done—that really is quite a thrill."

In the year 5784, Ross hopes to see the Day School "continue on a path towards growth and modernization, while continuing to emphasize development of - and excellence in - morals, academics and Jewish values."

**Annual  
Memorial  
Service**  
**Congregation  
Ahavath Achim Cemetery**

**Sunday, September 24  
11:15 a.m.**  
**Rabbi Evan Shore  
Officiating**





**Lauren Thirer**  
Co-President, Temple Adath  
Yeshurun

Lauren Thirer, Temple Adath Yeshurun's new co-president, grew up in the Binghamton area. She attended Temple Israel, spent summers at Camp Seneca Lake and was active in the JCC Youth Group. As a young adult, she taught Hebrew school in the Boston area and led a summer-long Jewish teen tour to Poland and Israel.

Lauren attended Cornell University for her bachelor's degree and her MBA. She lived in Boston and Albany before moving to Central New York where her husband David Weinbaum is a professor at SU. The couple have two daughters, Zoe (age 8) and Ellie (age 3). Lauren has spent the past 14 years in the renewable energy industry and currently works as a marketing executive in wind energy.

When the Thirer-Weinbaum family moved to the Syracuse area in 2018, their oldest daughter was 3 years old. They wanted to find a synagogue and chose Temple Adath Yeshurun to "try out" for their first high holiday season. They attended the tot service and were delighted to find so many families with young children there. That week, a neighbor from their new neighborhood stopped by and invited them to join her family to break the fast on Yom Kippur. It turned out that they had moved down the road from Rita and Allan Kanter (Cantor Jaffe's parents). They felt so warmly welcomed into the Adath congregation and community that they decided to join the synagogue and make it their home.

Thirer's parents were both active leaders in the Jewish community, serving on and/or leading boards of local Jewish organizations, teaching Hebrew school, chairing fundraisers and programs, etc. She grew up in an environment where Jewish service was just part of what you did as an adult in the Jewish community. "Now that I have my own family," Lauren says, "I've realized that I can't take our community and our institutions for granted. I want to live in a thriving Jewish environment – with engaging programs to attend, with an active religious school and youth group where my children can learn and make friends, with a caring community to mark our important life events, with inspiring and fulfilling services to nourish our souls – and so it's my responsibility to help make that happen."

In the year 5784, Lauren wants to "see our congregation and our Jewish community continue to flourish and grow. I want to continue to grow our membership engagement – to have more of our members take part in more services, activities and events more frequently. Engagement is self-perpetuating: the more everybody engages in Jewish life, the more meaningful and enjoyable our experiences are, and so we are inspired to continue to participate, creating a virtuous circle.

Second, I hope to help our congregation continue to deepen our ties with the community – to partner with the other synagogues for services, events and programs. Each congregation has attributes that make it unique from one another, and yet there are so many more things that we have in common. I look forward to helping our congregations become more connected across shuls, to build an even stronger Central New York Jewish community."



**Kelly Klapper**  
Director of Youth and Education,  
Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra  
Shas

"Almost every job I have ever had has been in the field of education," notes Kelly Klapper, the new Director of Youth and Education at Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas, "whether that was tutoring when I was in middle and high school, working as a camp counselor, summer camp director or more traditionally as a classroom teacher." Kelly graduated *cum laude* from Wake Forest University with a BA in English and religion and then found a teaching job outside of Orlando, which is where she met Louis Klapper.

"Even though my dad graduated from Syracuse University, I had never been to the Syracuse area until Louis found a job up here," Kelly says. "Now we have a house in Liverpool with our three-year-old son Calder." Louis found CBS-CS when he first moved up to Syracuse. On his first visit, Rabbi Pepperstone mentioned his board game group "The Chosen Meeple," and Louis knew he had found his place. "When I moved up to be with him, the congregation was incredibly warm and welcoming," recalls Kelly. "Rabbi Pepperstone performed our marriage and Calder's bris. Being pregnant and giving birth during the height of the pandemic in 2020 was incredibly difficult, and I am so thankful for the support that I found at CBS-CS. It was a challenging time, but Sisterhood, as well as many of our friends in the congregation, made sure that we were taken care of, since we didn't have any family locally."

Kelly worked last year as principal of the CBS-CS Shul School. But she found it difficult "to balance my full-time job as a classroom teacher with my duties and responsibilities as principal, while making sure that I still had time with my family. Even so, I loved getting to know all of the students and families and working with our amazing team of teachers and *madrichim*. We have such talent and creativity in our congregation's youth. I was frequently astounded by the work that they put into their projects and the insightful questions and discussions that we had." That is what led her to accepting the director's position and leaving her classroom job. "This coming year, I am looking forward to dedicating all of my attention to CBS-CS, in both the traditional Sunday Shul School and also the extracurricular non-traditional youth and family activities. With Rabbi Steinitz joining us, and with the Strategic Planning Committee working hard to update our short-term and long-term goals, we're really at a nexus of change, and I'm thrilled to be serving as director of youth and education during this time," she says.

Asked what her hopes and expectations are for 5784, Kelly responded, "As a parent, I have a vested interest in the success of our youth and education programs at CBS-CS. Next year, once Calder is four, he will be old enough to be enrolled in Shul School. In the meantime, I want to plan engaging activities for youth and families that will ensure that everyone feels welcomed and included. I want all of our members to forge friendships like the ones that Louis and Calder and I have been able to find. I hope that the students in our Shul School continue to ask questions and find joy in their learning. I know that we will be undergoing changes, now that we are (mostly) post-pandemic and with a new rabbi, but I am certain that we will continue to be a warm and welcoming place for the young and the young-at-heart."

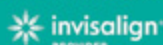


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## Mark Levy to Serve as Co-President of Temple Adath Yeshurun

Mark Levy, co- president of Temple Adath Yeshurun, is the real estate partner at the law firm of Scolaro, Fetter, Grizanti & McGough, PC. He graduated from the Syracuse University College of Law where he met his wife, Jill, who is also a lawyer. After graduation, they lived and worked in



New York City for a number of years, but after having children decided to move back to the Syracuse area to be closer

to family. Jill is originally from the area and Mark grew up in Canada, so his family is not too far away. Mark and Jill

are blessed with two beautiful daughters who keep them busy, between sports, activities and bat mitzvah lessons.

When they moved back to the Syracuse area, about ten years ago, Jill met a member of TAY who invited the Levys to a Tot Shabbat service. Mark recalls, “We felt so welcomed and engaged that we joined the TAY family, and we have never looked back – and incidentally the member that invited us to services has become a very close friend.”

Mark is serving as president because of his children. “I remember feeling a strong sense of community growing up in my childhood temple – a small but active Jewish community. My parents were involved in temple leadership, participated in services and taught in the Sunday School. Being Jewish was a real sense of pride and brought us together as a family. Both my brother and I have tried to follow in my parent’s footsteps – building close families in a loving Jewish home.” He says that it is his hope “that I can have a positive impact on strengthening the Syracuse Jewish community as a whole and impressing upon my daughters a strong sense of Jewish identity and community.”

Looking toward the future, Mark notes that “these past few years have been extremely difficult for the entire community.” His goal is to “reignite and re-engage the congregation so that members and families can connect more easily with each other and strengthen our sense of community.” He hopes “that we can continue to develop a loving and supportive community for members of all ages – bringing a level of excitement and fun to our children with a Jewish education and connecting them with friends.” He adds, “My expectation is that we will continue to develop strong programming and broadly appeal to members and families of all ages.”

Mark is honored to take on the role as president “because it provides me with the opportunity to work with so many dedicated and talented people, from staff, religious leaders, board and committee members, general members and volunteers, who make the temple run smoothly and make it such a special place – a home away from home.” He looks forward to working with everyone “to honor our past, engage with our current traditions and look to the future as we evolve as a congregation for future generations.”



## Phillip Rubenstein President, Board of Directors, Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center

Phillip Rubenstein is the president of United Radio, Inc. He is the third generation of Rubensteins to lead United Radio, having assumed the presidency from his father, Arnie, in 2005. Phillip was a recording engineer at the Eastman School of Music after graduating with a degree in psychology from the University of Rochester before returning to Syracuse. He is a member of Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas. He has served on several boards, including the Jewish Community Foundation of CNY, the Boy Scouts of America, Leadership Greater Syracuse and The Jewish Home. He is a past president of Jewish Family Service.

Phil’s connection to the JCC began when he learned to swim at the Center when it was still on Genesee Street. Later, after it moved to DeWitt, he was a boy scout, and weekly meetings were held in the auditorium of the JCC. When his children were enrolled in the EDCP, he joined the Center’s board and has been involved ever since.

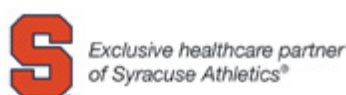
Having been a vice president of the board for several years, as well as chairing the Security Committee for some time, moving into the president’s role seemed like a natural progression. “Building a better community is very important to me,” he says, “and I can’t think of a better way than serving in a leadership capacity and helping to shape the future for our children.”

Phil believes that the Jewish Community Center should be “just that, the center of Jewish life for our community, no matter your denomination.” He explains, “It needs to be a place where all can feel welcome. The past three years have seen all sorts of difficulties and changes for every organization due to the pandemic. It is time to move forward and learn how to live post-pandemic, all the while preparing for the next upheaval. We are in a great position, thanks to Marci and Steve’s leadership to move forward, strengthen relationships, grow and be ready for the future.”

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### Howard Port

Howard Port is the newly elected chair of the board of the Jewish Community Foundation of Central New York. A native of Syracuse, Howard engaged for over 50 years in dual practice as a lawyer and a certified public accountant. He has an undergraduate accounting degree from Syracuse University, an MBA in taxation from Bernard Baruch School of Business and a law degree from Syracuse University College of Law. He and his wife Ann just celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. They have two sons, Andrew and Stephen, and two grandchildren, Logan and Amelia. As a family, they enjoy tent camping in Canada, travel, golf, living on Cazenovia Lake and at their Florida condo in Pompano Beach.

Howard's list of community and professional service is extensive. He served as treasurer and director of Temple Adath Yeshurun for 12 years, treasurer and director of Menorah Park for five years, treasurer and director of the Jewish Community Foundation of Central New York since its founding, director of the Jewish Community Center for six years and president of the Judaic Heritage Center of Central New York for 12 years. Professionally, he has been a director of the American Academy of Attorney-Certified Public Accountants (AAA-CPA) for 40 years as well as a trustee of the AAA-CPA Foundation for 15 years. He has also served as a director of the Estate Planning Council of Central New York for 12 years. He is also a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants (NYSSCPA), the Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants (FICPA), the American Bar Association (ABA), the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA) and the Onondaga County Bar Association.

As he assumes the position of chair of the Foundation board, Howard says, "I do so as another way of giving back to, and helping perpetuate, our Jewish community here in Central New York. It is essential for the Foundation to keep reaching out and encouraging people to set up a PACE Fund, which endows a donor's annual Federation contribution and a donor-advised fund, which enables a person to engage in philanthropic giving while participating personally in the grant-making process. We must continue carrying forward the work and vision of the Foundation's founders, Alexander Holstein and Linda Alexander, and ensuring a strong Jewish community for generations to come."

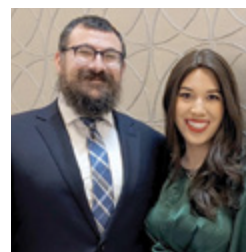


### Anick Sinclair Federation Campaign Associate

Federation's new campaign associate, Anick Sinclair, is from London and moved to Syracuse nine years ago. In the United Kingdom, she worked in marketing and copywriting and had her own baking company. Anick, her husband Jay and their three sons are members of Shaarei Torah Orthodox Congregation of Syracuse and have been actively involved in many aspects of the local community since they arrived. Anick is chair of the board of the Rabbi Jacob Epstein School of Jewish Studies and sits on the JCC board of directors. She was a member of the Federation board, served as chair of the 2023 campaign, created the Luminary Society and, as a member of the Federation's *Yom haShoah* committee, brought the Yellow Candle program to Central New York.

Michael Balanoff, Federation president/CEO, said, "I am delighted to welcome Anick Sinclair to the Federation staff as our campaign associate. Anick brings a world of experience in Jewish life developed over a rich and varied lifetime outside and inside our local Jewish community. She has a love of Judaism and a spirit that is infectious. I know the community will find her engaging, sensitive and effective."

Anick moved from a volunteer to a professional position because she realized that raising money within the Jewish community is becoming more challenging and more arduous than ever before and therefore has slowly morphed into quite a substantial volunteer role. "Changing to a professional role will allow me to dedicate more hours to generate new methods and initiatives to continue raising much-needed funds for the Federation's annual campaign." In the new year, Anick hopes "to grow our donor pool, encourage younger people onto the giving roster and create a platform for consistent donors to inspire the next generation of philanthropists to give WITHIN the Jewish community."



### CHABAD SU Mendy and Lakey Rapoport

The latest Pew Report showed two very different trends in American Jewish life. It noted that the number of Jews who don't identify with religion is rising, but also that Orthodox Judaism is continuing to grow and successfully retain its youth. With large families being the norm in the Orthodox world, it will become a larger segment of the community in the future. This is coupled with the rise of Chabad, which is now equal in size to either the Reform or Conservative movements.

An article in the Jerusalem Post reported that "the Chabad emergence is a game changer for American Jewish life. The numbers are startling: 38% of all US Jews have engaged in some way with Chabad programs. 40% of those are active on a regular or semi-regular basis. 75% of those who are involved with Chabad do not self-identify as Orthodox. The younger the segment, the more connected they are with Chabad."

This is the foundation for Mendy's and Lakey's coming to Syracuse to join Rabbi Yaacov and Chanie Rapoport as part of Chabad-Lubavitch of CNY as the new shluchim at Chabad SU. "We hope to continue to grow Chabad SU as every Jewish student's home away from home and have as many students as possible involved in its social, religious and educational programs," they say.

Mendy Rapoport was born in Syracuse and attended the Syracuse Hebrew Day School and then yeshivas around

America and in Israel. He worked for Mayanot Birthright in Jerusalem, was a paratrooper in the IDF and interned at Chabads in Hebron, Atlanta, Mexico, Vietnam and Dubai. Lakey grew up in Hartford, CT, where her family runs Chabad of the University of Hartford. She attended Lubavitch Yeshiva Academy in Longmeadow, MA and went to high school in Chicago. After a year studying at a teaching seminary in Tzfat, she worked for Chabads on the east coast, teaching in Hebrew schools and running camps. After Mendy and Lakey were married, they moved to Crown Heights. He worked in the adult education department at Chabad of the Upper East Side in Manhattan, and she worked as an ABA behavioral analyst, working with special needs children.

Explaining why he took this position, Mendy says, "I was born into this life of giving and caring for my fellow Jews and when I matured that gave me the insight and appreciation for it to want to heed the Lubavitcher Rebbe's call to assist as many Jews as possible in expressing themselves Jewishly by doing as many mitzvahs as possible. So Lakey and I decided that we would like to continue the 42+ years of activities that Chabad SU has been operating at Syracuse University." Lakey concurs. "Growing up on and around the campus at the University of Hartford, and then subsequently working in an official capacity for Chabad, led me to want to continue to devote myself to making a Jewish home away from home and welcome environment for college students in whatever way I could, following the mission statement of the Lubavitcher Rebbe." Mendy and Lakey invite the community to follow them on Instagram @chabadsu.

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# The Butterfly Project

In Judaism, butterflies are seen as symbols of change for the better and of hope for the future. The butterfly's metamorphosis represents what author Eytan Kobre described as "a singular message of unlimited possibility and potential. Everything is possible in Hashem's world."

The CNY Butterfly Project is a collaboration between Menorah Park and the Syracuse Hebrew Day School, with participation by the Syracuse Community Hebrew School, the Epstein School, The Oaks, the JCC, the synagogues and any other community organization that wishes to partner and participate, including the Federation's Climate Committee and NexGen group.

The Butterfly Project is designed to fulfill two goals: The first is to create and maintain a milkweed garden on the Menorah Park campus to provide the essential host plant for monarch butterflies. The caterpillars of this iconic species feed exclusively on the leaves

of milkweed and as such, milkweed is critical for the survival of monarchs. Without it, they cannot complete their life cycle, and their populations decline. Eradication of milkweed both in agricultural areas as well as in urban and suburban landscapes is one of the primary reasons that monarchs are in trouble today. But planting the local species of milkweed is one of the easiest ways that we can make a difference for monarchs. The second is to memorialize the 1.5 million Jewish children killed in the Holocaust through working with The Butterfly Project, a California-based program that teaches the complex history of the Holocaust and its relevance to current day issues of equity, inclusion, and systemic racism through age-appropriate hands-on programming.

The Butterfly Project's lessons are based on oral histories, film,



literature and the expressive arts designed to cultivate empathy and resilience. Using a reference to "The Last Butterfly," a poignant and lovely poem written by a young child on a wall in the Terezin concentration camp before he was killed, the Butterfly Project includes a film entitled "NOT the last Butterfly" and a hands-on project of ceramic butterflies, each accompanied by a card memorializing a child victim. The ceramic butterflies are sent to be painted by people in the community, are fired again and are then used in an installation that will be placed outdoors at Menorah Park in an area that will be set aside for contemplation and remembrance. The powerful symbolism of each painted butterfly fired in a kiln with the other butterflies to emerge renewed, glazed and shiny, ready for display is a remarkably impactful experience.

A steering committee has been established to coordinate the effort with participation from Menorah Park (which has the grounds and space), the Day School (which has the kiln) and the Federation (which will provide communication and administrative support). The next tier of coordination will be school and synagogue directors and chairs of various Jewish (and non-Jewish) organizations in the community. Their hope is to raise enough money to provide the ceramic butterflies at no cost to participants and to make the painting of the butterflies a community project with intergenerational and family involvement. They plan to hold a contest for the design of an installation of the finished butterflies at an appropriate setting at Menorah Park and to involve local artists in doing so. The Butterfly Project is being sponsored by a grant from the Philip L. Holstein Community Program Fund.



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## Children of Eden

Theater J Children's Theater Program is an exciting and innovative program which will help to extend the Federation's commitment to building a thriving, inclusive and engaged Jewish community based upon Jewish values. The program is funded by a grant from the Phillip L. Holstein Community Program Fund.

Mookey Van Orden, project originator, explains that "the program's goal is to offer equitable theatre programming for children in the Jewish community and in the city of Syracuse. We want to create an environment for children to sing, dance and act at no cost to them, a safe place to be kids, make friends and tell stories. We want to offer a completely free experience to both the children of the Jewish community and the underserved children of Syracuse. This is not a program with fees; the families will not be expected to pay for participation, costumes or anything else. We will keep ticket prices low



(\$10) so that the community can enjoy the product."

The inaugural production will be the musical *Children of Eden, Jr.* based on the Book of Genesis. Act I tells the story of Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel and Act II deals with Noah and the flood. The theme of the play is the age-old conflict between parents and children. The show ultimately delivers a bittersweet, but inspiring, message: "the hardest part of love is letting go."

There will be six weeks of rehearsal at Temple Adath Yeshurun followed by performances open to the entire community in two different venues. The cast will rehearse in the evenings. Auditions will be announced widely to students in the Syracuse City School District, the Syracuse Hebrew Day School, Syracuse Community Hebrew School and the Epstein School.





It gives us great pleasure to announce the winners of the 42nd Annual Simon Rockower Awards for Excellence in Jewish Journalism. These prestigious awards honor achievements in Jewish media published in 2022.

## Category 37:

### Award for General Excellence — Best Newspaper

*Jewish Observer of Central New York, DeWitt, NY*



**Comment:** *The Jewish Observer* is a publication of the Jewish Federation of Central New York and does what a federation-sponsored organization should do — it covers the community from the perspective of Jewish organizational life. But it punches above its weight when it publishes cover stories like “What Color Are Jews?” With the headline superimposed on a rainbow flag, the piece addresses a contemporary issue deeply and sensitively. Impressive for a publication required to draw readers from all segments of the political spectrum.

## New Clothes for the New Year

It has been said that Rosh haShanah is the Jewish holiday version of the September issue of *Vogue*. Tradition dictated that a new outfit had to be worn on each day of Rosh haShanah, with one being recycled for Yom Kippur. The buying of the outfits was a tradition in itself. Many people have happy memories of shopping for new clothes for the holidays. “I grew up with my mother buying us something new, whether it be a new shirt, a new tie or, if we were really lucky, a new suit,” said Rabbi Ari Kievman of Chabad Sandton Central. “My parents weren’t wealthy, but they certainly made an effort that before *yom tov*, we should feel our very best.”



The Torah says little about clothing, either descriptively or prescriptively, except for the raiments of the priests. It prohibits blending wool and linen in a garment (*shatnez*) in the same verse as it forbids mixing different seeds and species of cattle and forbids men from wearing women’s clothes and vice versa. But that’s about it. Over the ages, rabbinic authorities spoke out on two issues relating to clothes, cautioning against extreme or gaudy styles and in favor of keeping clothing, particularly for women, modest.

Attitudes toward Rosh haShanah clothing also have contrasting perspectives. On the one hand, special festive clothing is worn because Rosh haShanah is a holy day. Jewish legal writers went so far as to require men to buy new holiday clothing or jewelry for their wives. One commentator wrote, “On Rosh haShanah, the tradition of dressing up in new clothes moves into the spiritual realm.”

Colors play a role in Rosh haShanah clothing selection. Because white is a symbol of purity, cleanliness and new beginnings, many Jews wear white clothing for Rosh haShanah. Another explanation for wearing white is that it emulates the ministering angels that surround us during this time. Still others see white as symbolic of purity, milk, sustenance, love and mercy. Some people wear a *kittel*, a white robe that is similar to a shroud and reminds us of our mortality. In some communities, the *kittel* is worn on Rosh haShanah by all congregants. This custom has its source in a *midrash* which describes how the Jewish people wear

white on Rosh haShanah, confident that their sins will be forgiven.

But while white can, for some, symbolize confidence that a favorable judgement will be meted out, there are others who are leery of this thinking. Some Sephardic Jews will not wear brand- new clothing on Rosh Hashanah lest they appear overly certain of their righteousness before the Judge. Likewise, the wearing of red is discouraged because red is linked to severity and blood. Rabbinic commentator Rabbi Joel Sirkes, in glosses on the *Shulchan Aruch* (Code of Jewish Law), wrote that if one wore colored clothing, it might appear that the individual had absolutely no fear or worry on the judgement day. However, by wearing fine white clothes, one showed an awareness of what could be the end – death. The white clothing, reminiscent of the burial shroud, serves as a reminder of the fear one must have while simultaneously being confident of God’s mercy.

“Normally,” the Talmud says, “when a person is being judged, they wear black clothing, they appear unkempt, as their sole concern is their fate: will the decision be favorable? However, the nation of Israel on Rosh haShanah is different. They wear white clothes, they are finely groomed, and they feast and drink and rejoice. Why? Because they know that haShem can perform wonders for them.”

## Jews and Fashion

Anne Klein, Judith Leiber, Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, Diane von Furstenberg, Donna Karan, Kenneth Cole, Michael Kors, Marc Jacobs, Isaac Mizrahi and Zac Posen. What do all these famous fashion designers have in common? They’re Jewish, of course. The connection between Jews and couture, whether haute or not, is long and deep.

Clothes for ordinary people were originally made at home, but by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most Americans were buying their clothing ready-made in stores. The garment industry was the employer of 60% of the Jews in New York City. Malcolm Gladwell said that Jewish immigrants had the skills to match the clothing market’s needs. “To come to New York City in the 1890s with a background in dressmaking or sewing or *schwittwaren handlung* (piece goods) was a stroke of extraordinary good fortune,” he wrote in *Outliers: The Story of Success*. “It was like showing up in Silicon Valley in 1986 with ten thousand hours of computer programming already under your belt.”

The Jewish Virtual Library reports that “Jews were involved in every aspect of clothing – from the supply end to the retail world, from the sweatshops and manufacturing to the department stores and the advertising. Corporate America still maintained a strong glass ceiling, but in the *schmatte* business, the only ceiling was creativity and sweat equity, savvy and timing.” Gimbel’s, Macy’s, Filene’s, I Magnin, Neiman-Marcus, Bloomingdale’s, Bergdorf Goodman, Rich’s of Atlanta, Kaufmann’s of Pittsburgh, Lazarus of Columbus and Levi Strauss were all founded by Jews and run by Jews. Even Sears Roebuck, not founded by Jews, was run by Julius Rosenwald, who was one.

The Library explains the connection between Jews and the clothing and fashion industry in an interesting article entitled “From Ghetto to Glamour.” It states that “generations of czars and emperors in Europe over the centuries had stripped Jews of their connection to the land, restricting them to work as tailors or peddlers or bankers. Their very existence depended on their acumen at reading the needs and desires of the larger culture. That antenna for what would play, an accident of historic discrimination, was the distinct advantage that smoothed their journey in fashion from worker bee to trendsetter.”

“Based in urban centers and pushed by history toward entrepreneurship, Jews found fashion one of the fields open to them,” explains Valerie Steele, historian at the Fashion Institute of Technology. “Every bar mitzvah became a garment industry convention,” noted Gabriel Goldstein,



curator of a Yeshiva University exhibit called “A Perfect Fit: The Garment Industry and American Jewry, 1860-1960.” He added that the Jewish calendar “was marked by the High Holidays and Fashion Week.”

And then, of course, there are jeans. The quintessential American fashion staple “are a Jewish invention,” wrote Arunansh Goswami in *The Times of Israel*. “Though Levi Strauss is typically credited with the ‘invention’ of blue jeans, [it was] Jacob Davis, who added reinforcing copper rivets to the pants. But one thing they both had in common were that they were Jewish.” Today, jeans are a ubiquitous fashion worldwide, whether one is rich or poor. A pair of jeans from Gucci recently sold for over \$3,000 in Milan, earning a place in the Guinness World Records as the world’s most expensive jeans. And it all started because Levi Strauss paid a dollar to patent Jacob Davis’ design.

Clothes, of course, are more than something to wear. This was very apparent to the many famous Jewish designers who made it big in the fashion industry. While most did not attribute their success to their religious background, their thoughts on fashion often display a common thread, linking clothing to achievement in a larger context.

“People ask how can a Jewish kid from the Bronx do preppy clothes? Does it have to do with class and money? It has to do with dreams. I don’t design clothes. I design dreams.” —*Ralph Lauren*

“You can have anything you want in life if you dress for it.” —*Edith Head*

“Clothes aren’t going to change the world. The women who wear them are.” —*Anne Klein*

“Clothes mean nothing until someone lives in them.” —*Marc Jacobs*

“Use your brains, your common sense, and do not become an object. The way you look is important, but who you are and how you project it is eventually who you will become and how you will appear.” —*Diane Von Furstenberg*



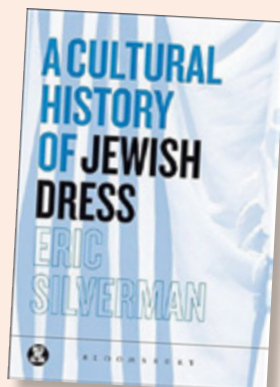
## » Book Reviews

# Books about Jews and Clothes



***The Jewish Wardrobe: From the Collection of the Israel Museum*** weighs five pounds and carries a hefty price tag as well. Its many authors (Alia Ben-Ami, Esther Juhasz, No'am Bar'am-Ben Yossef and Ester Muchawsky-Schnapper) trace the fashion, history and development of Jewish dress around the world and across many cultures. Photos and illustrations describe family and religious traditions in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, with a special section dedicated to jewelry worn by brides and grooms.

A less weighty tome is Eric Silverman's ***A Cultural History of Jewish Dress***, the first comprehensive account of how Jews have been distinguished by their attire from ancient Israel to today. According to Silverman, Jewish clothes have served as historical markers, symbolic signposts and indicators of gender, ethnicity, power, resistance, status and religious observance. Jewish clothing has often been a response to the dictates of the non-Jewish world, including the marking of Jews as a pariah people. Silverman, an anthropologist, examines how Jews and non-Jews alike debated and legislated Jewish attire and describes the debates on dress that continue within the Jewish community today.



The fashion industry is not immune to antisemitism, and one of the most tragic stories is told in Roberta S. Kremer's ***Broken Threads: The Destruction of the Jewish Fashion Industry in Germany and Austria***, which recounts the obliteration of the Jewish fashion industry under the Nazis. Jewish designers were very prominent in fashion in 1930s Germany and Austria. The emergence of *Konfektion*, or ready-to-wear, and the development of the modern department store, with its innovative merchandising and lavish interior design, only emphasized this prominence. The Nazis came

to see German high fashion as too heavily influenced by Jewish designers, manufacturers and merchandisers and targeted these groups with a campaign of propaganda, boycotts, humiliation and Aryanization. It is a sad and little-known aspect of Holocaust history.

Diane von Furstenberg describes ***A Girl Named Carrie: The Visionary Who Created Neiman Marcus and Set the Standard for Fashion*** by Jerrie Marcus Smith as a "captivating portrait of a strong and elegant woman which takes you through fashion into the journey of a changing America and the birth of its most prestigious store, Neiman Marcus." Carrie Marcus Neiman, her brother, Herbert Marcus Sr. and her husband A.L. Neiman, founded the famed Neiman Marcus department store in Dallas, Texas. Carrie played an integral role in the store's success, despite having three strikes against her: she was a woman, she was Jewish and (after her husband's affair with a salesgirl) she was divorced.



The just-published ***Jews in Suits: Men's Dress in Vienna, 1890-1938***, by Jonathan C. Kaplan-Wajselbaum, traces the adoption of the tailored suit and its function in the formation of modern Jewish identities. Using a variety of written and visual sources, including literary fiction and satire, "ego-documents," photography, trade catalogues, invoices and department store culture, this book proposes a new narrative of men, fashion and their Jewish identities. It reveals that dressing in a modern manner was not simply a matter of assimilation, but rather a way of developing new models of Jewish subjectivity beyond the externally prescribed notion of "the Jew."

We live in an age of body positivity, a social movement focused on the acceptance of all bodies, regardless of size, shape, skin tone, gender and physical abilities, designed to combat body shaming and challenge contemporary beauty standards as undesirable social constructs. Lena Himmelstein Bryant, a Lithuanian Jewish immigrant, was a pioneer in this field, being the first to design and manufacture plus size and maternity clothing. Her story is told in a recent picture book for children entitled ***A Perfect Fit: How Lena "Lane" Bryant Changed the Shape of Fashion*** by Mara Rockliff, illustrated by Juana Martinez-Neal. A review appears below.



## ***A Perfect Fit: How Lena "Lane" Bryant Changed the Shape of Fashion* by Mara Rockliff**



**Reviewed by Leora Zames**

*A Perfect Fit: How Lena "Lane" Bryant Changed the Shape of Fashion* by Mara Rockliff, with illustrations by Juana Martinez-Neal, is the story of Lena Bryant, the founder of the fashion company Lane Bryant.

Lena was a Jewish girl from Lithuania who did not have opportunities where she lived and decided as a teenager to emigrate to America. In the United States, she pursued her dream of making dresses and helping others. Lena made it known that clothes should be made to fit people, not that people should have to fit into clothes.

The beautiful illustrations well depict the emotions of the story. The dreamlike pictures complement the story of Lena's life, which was full of tragedy and triumph. Lena's Jewish values of hard work, family and caring for others, coupled with the simple language and gorgeous illustrations, make this a perfect story for children.

*Leora Zames is a graduate of SHDS, a junior at CBA and a fashionista.*

LIVESECURE

The Jewish Federation  
of Central New York

# LIVESECURE: New Central and Western New York Regional Jewish Communal Security Initiative

**Antisemitism is not historical. It is not theoretical. It is not distant. It is here. It is now. In Pittsburgh, in Poway, in Monsey, in Colleyville and more recently even locally, antisemitism has rocked the world in which we live. It is our right and our sacred obligation to do what is needed so that the Jewish community can live secure.**

To do so, the Jewish Federation of Central New York will be joining the Central and Western New York Regional Security Partnership, which includes the cities of Buffalo, Rochester, Utica, Ithaca, Binghamton, Niagara Falls and Chautauqua. In each one of these cities, Jewish community members have experienced antisemitic activity. In Buffalo, a racially motivated shooter entered a supermarket and killed ten people. In the shooter's manifesto, he wrote about surveilling a synagogue and looking for a racially target-rich environment. In Herkimer (near Utica), a noose was found screwed to a tree outside of a synagogue on the eve of the High Holidays. White supremacist flyers were found in an area between Binghamton and Syracuse and extended into Madison County. Goyim Defense League (GDL) flyers were distributed in a Rochester neighborhood. Swastika graffiti was found at Ithaca College. At Colgate University, a menorah outside a Chabad House was intentionally damaged. Hateful antisemitic graffiti has been found in Brighton, Fairport and Geneva.

The Regional Security Partnership will

be run through the Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester and managed by a regional security director, assisted by a deputy director. The partnership will work in collaboration with the Secure Community Network (SCN) in its role as the official liaison with the Department of Homeland Security and Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The partnership will be governed and funded by the partner communities, initially as a three-year initiative. Matching grants from the Jewish Federations of North America's LiveSecure program will support the program at its outset. JFNA's LiveSecure is a \$62 million security initiative designed to ensure the security and resiliency of Jewish communities. LiveSecure grant funding will enable local federations to provide the training, tools and resources needed to protect synagogues, JCCs, schools, senior centers, summer camps and other centers of Jewish life. LiveSecure has allocated \$35,000 in funds each year for the next three years to the Jewish Federation of Central New York to help offset security costs, contingent upon the Federation's ability to match the

grants with new dollars.

The program will continue to provide all of the services that are now available to the Central New York Jewish community through its security liaison and there will be additional services provided in the coming years, including support for federal grant applications, additional trainings, security for smaller communities and incident response and management on an as-needed basis. These enhancements will increase costs, but it is anticipated that the new funds that are raised each year will be available to offset costs after the three-year initiative is completed.

According to Debra Barton Grant, Associate Vice President of LiveSecure at JFNA, "This is one of the first collaborative regional security plans that we are rolling out, and it will be a model for other communities to replicate. We are supporting local communities in their efforts to raise funds locally to receive the national LiveSecure grants with the goal that every Jewish community across North America build local Community Security Initiatives that grow toward meeting the national standards."

Ted Merwin, a senior writer with JFNA, explained in an article that "what will help ensure the success of this plan is the leadership of highly-skilled security professionals upon whom we are able to draw. Susan DeMari, our own intrepid Community Security Coordinator, is becoming a full-time deputy director to Mark Henderson, the security director for Western and Central New York. They are jointly developing a comprehensive regional security plan, with guidance from the Secure Community Network (SCN), the organization that was founded by JFNA, in the wake of the 9-11 terrorist attacks, to cope with the mushrooming threat of domestic terrorism to the Jewish community."

Merwin went on to note that "Mark is a retired police chief from Brighton, a suburb of Rochester. He has led Rochester's RocStrong Initiative for several years and knows the Jewish community well. He and Susan will

take the lead in assessing the security needs of every Jewish organization in the region. They will work with Jewish community leaders across the region to put measures in place—from physical, 'target-hardening' enhancements like bulletproof window films and metal doors, to better lighting, to more technologically-sophisticated security cameras and alert systems, to augmented arrangements for armed security guards. As part of this initiative, they are also hiring a grant writer who will be available to help our organizations to apply for both state and national nonprofit security grants.

"Just as—if not more—importantly, Mark and Susan will conduct regular, intensive, standardized trainings at summer camps, schools, synagogues, JCCs and other places where Jews gather. 'Preparation is paramount,' Susan said. 'The more people are trained to react effectively in the case of an emergency, the more lives will be saved—whether through neutralizing the threat, escaping the danger, stopping the bleed, or otherwise acting to protect themselves and each other.' The closer ties that exist among security experts in the different communities, the more they will be able to share information, resources, and best practices. According to Henderson, 'We actively partner with both SCN and with UJA-NY's Community Security Initiative (CSI) on feeding and receiving incident reports from their command centers. They have FBI-like multiscreen monitoring systems that track events of concern in real time across the country.' There is 'no substitute,' Mark said, 'for the connections that we are making with national, state, and local law enforcement agencies that make it possible for every incident to get the immediate attention that it deserves.'"

**Anyone who is interested in contributing to the matching fund drive for LiveSecure is urged to contact Federation president/CEO Michael Balanoff at [mbalanoff@jewishfederationcny.org](mailto:mbalanoff@jewishfederationcny.org).**

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# Federation Believes in Jewish Camps

Jewish camps are places where being Jewish is easy and fun, offering opportunities to create and experience a joyful Jewish life that is personal and intense, regardless of observance or affiliation. The Jewish Federation of Central New York believes in the value of a variety of Jewish camping experiences and this year continued its support of Jewish overnight summer camp for kids and inaugurated a family camp experience through JFAM at Camp Zeke. Federation's goal is to help strengthen Jewish identity and build a strong and thriving Jewish community for our future.

Federation knows that the costs of Jewish camp can be significant which is why it offers grants of \$1,000 to Jewish children who reside in Central New York who enroll in a Jewish overnight summer camp sponsored by the Conservative, Reform, Orthodox or Reconstructionist movements or by Jewish organizations such as the JCCA, BBYO, NFTY, USY or Young Judea/Hadassah. Judging by the photos shared with the *JO*, the campers had a wonderful time.

The fifteen families who attended the first ever JFAM camp at Camp Zeke at the beginning of the summer also enjoyed their weekend together. Camp Zeke's motto is "You bring the fam. We bring the fun!" The Federation-sponsored Central New York JFAM at Camp Zeke was an all-inclusive camp family weekend for fifteen families and 95 parents and children. The goal was to help families build ties with each other and the greater Jewish community.

Judging by responses to the June *shabbaton*, that goal was met. "A JFAM Shabbat at camp means a chance to



celebrate Shabbat with other Jewish families, enjoy healthy meals and relaxation without overwhelming pressures," said one participant. "We were thrilled to sit with people we don't know or don't know well and get to know them better, and we did, making good friends with two new families." Another parent explained, "The best things from my perspective were that my eight-year-old daughter was able to run around freely with other kids in a safe environment. She had a really wonderful

time, and I appreciated that she had that freedom. I think the most important thing was that we were able to connect with a couple of families that we know and wanted to know better. I think that an environment like that gets you like a year's worth of regular interactions in one weekend and is very profitable in moving those relationships forward."

Getting to know other families was highly valued. "It was a worthwhile

experience to be away from home with other Jewish families and have programming for the whole crew," said another participant, "We met other Jewish families but most importantly, got to spend time together. The activities were fun and just long enough to keep kids' attention but not too long, complicated or involved." "It was really great to socialize with other Jewish families from our community," said another participant. "That was the best part of the whole weekend, those great conversations."

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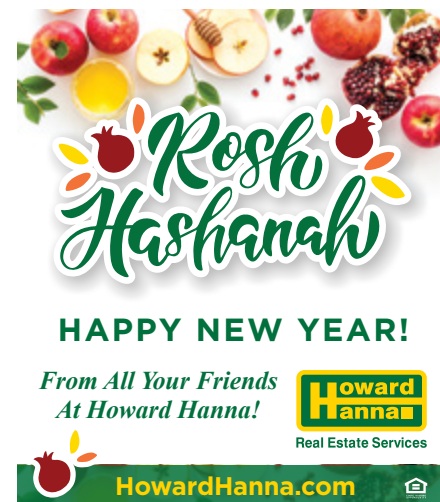


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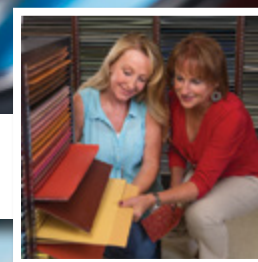
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# Celebrate KlezFest 2023 on September 10 at the JCC

For over two decades, KlezFest has been Central New York's annual celebration of Jewish music, culture and community. Performers, kosher food and dancing create a family-friendly festival. It started out in Armory Square and then moved "home" to the JCC front lawn, where it has been a fixture of early fall fun for many years.

Klezmer is a Hebrew word, a combination of the words "kley" (vessel) and "zemer" (melody) that referred to musical instruments in ancient times. It became colloquially attached to Jewish folk musicians sometime in the Middle Ages. Jewish musicians (klezmerim) developed their own unique style out of a variety of local musical styles, including Russian dances, Chassidic drinking songs and Hungarian Roma bravado. Because of this, a klezmer concert is a true variety show.

KlezFest 2023 will be held on September 10 from noon to 4 pm at the Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center of Syracuse. Open to the public

at no charge, it will feature three sterling acts. Opening will be the Keyna Hora Klezmer Band, Central New York's own klezmerim. The band has been in existence for over a quarter of a century, and most of its current members have played together for a decade. They love what they do, they love klezmer music and they love KlezFest. That love shines through every performance.

Second on the program is Joanie Leeds. Leeds won first place in the USA Songwriting Competition, an Independent Music Award, a GOLD Parents' Choice Award, NAPPA GOLD Award, Family Choice Award and is a John Lennon Songwriting Competition



finalist and International Songwriting Competition finalist. She has performed at venues nationwide including Lollapalooza, Clearwater Festival, The Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Wolftrap and Levitt Pavilion. She has been featured in The New York Times, People Magazine, Parents Magazine, Billboard and The Washington Post.

Leeds is an SU graduate and is delighted to be returning to Central New York. Her music has been played on many radio stations and rose to #1 on Sirius XM's Kids Place Live. Her album, "All the Ladies," was a Grammy® award winner. The songs that Leeds performs reflect the sense that life is a joyful adventure. Joanie believes that when she performs for children, they transform themselves into amazing creatures of joy, forgetting how to hold back. Seeing the kids get in touch with their true selves gives Joanie a sense of fulfillment that far surpasses playing for adults on the club circuit.

Third on the program is Brooklyn clarinetist Michael Winograd who has been called the top klezmer clarinetist of his generation. Winograd has recorded and performed with SoCalled, Budowitz, Frank London, and the Klezmer Conservatory Band. He has led workshops and performed near and far, with highlighted performances in Reunion Island, the Dawson City Music Festival (Yukon), the Winnipeg and Calgary Folk Festivals, the Klezmore Festival in Vienna and Carnegie Hall in New York City. He has taught klezmer music at the Paris Klezmer Week, KlezKanada and Living Traditions KlezKamp. In his spare time, he produces records, composes music and plays synthesizer in the Brooklyn-based metal band Yiddish Princess.

While it's mostly about the music, Klez Fest is also a celebration of the Jewish community. All of Central New York's Jewish organizations will have booths at the event to share their offerings. There will be artist and artisan vendor booths and a Kids Tent with arts and crafts. Dancing is certain to erupt spontaneously. And, of course, there is the food. Kosher corned beef sandwiches and knishes are the big draw.

KlezFest is a collaboration between the Jewish Federation of Central New York, the Sam Pomeranz Jewish Community Center and CNY Arts. Additional support comes from Price Chopper, the Pomeranz, Shankman, Martin Charitable Trust and the Slutzger Foundation. But it would not be possible without the additional support of dozens of Very Important Program Sponsors (VIPS) whose donations keep the festival solvent. Anyone who wishes to be one of the VIPS is welcome to make a donation of at least \$118 on the Federation website, [www.jewishfederationcny.org/donate](http://www.jewishfederationcny.org/donate). (VIPS get a free sandwich, and drinks and dessert in the VIPS tent.)



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This project is made possible with funds from the Statewide Community Programs Program, a grant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature and administered by CNY Arts.



# Gillibrand Pushes to Commemorate Fort Ontario as National Monument

U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand visited the Safe Haven Holocaust Refugee Shelter Museum at Fort Ontario to announce her push to designate Fort Ontario as a national monument. The Fort Ontario military complex dates back to the early 1840s and was the only emergency refugee camp in the United States for those fleeing the Holocaust. Designating Fort Ontario as a national monument would give the important historical site permanent protection and help ensure that it is preserved for generations to come. Senator Gillibrand was joined by Oswego mayor William Barlow, Oswego county administrator Phil Church, Assemblymember William Barclay, Dr. Alan Goldberg, Safe Haven Museum board member, President of Friends of Fort Ontario Daniel Laird and Paloma Sarkar, board member of both Friends of Fort Ontario and the Safe Haven Museum.

“Fort Ontario was a place of refuge during a dark moment in history,” said Senator Gillibrand. “Giving the site federal recognition would commemorate its important role in New York’s history and honor the plight and perseverance of Jewish refugees fleeing the horrors of the Holocaust, keeping their stories alive for years to come. I am proud to be leading this push, and I look forward to visiting again once Fort Ontario is finally a national monument.” Former Congressman John Katko said, “I am thrilled that Senator Gillibrand has



continued to demonstrate her support for Fort Ontario. She has been a great partner in our effort to give this truly historic site all the

Michael Balanoff, President/CEO of the Jewish Federation of Central New York said, “The Jewish Federation of Central New York is grateful for congressional support for the establishment of Safe Haven at Fort Ontario as a national monument to keep alive the memory of those who perished during the Holocaust and to thank those who helped take care of the refugees who came to Oswego.”

A national monument can be established in one of two ways: either by Congress through legislation or by the president through the use of the Antiquities Act. Senator Gillibrand is appealing directly to President Biden to designate Fort Ontario as a national monument and is also introducing new legislation, the Fort Ontario National Monument Establishment Act, to make sure the site gets the recognition it deserves.

# NCJW 50th Annual Hannah G. Solomon Award to Abby Kasowitz Scheer

by Vicki Feldman

The National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Syracuse Section At-Large, will present the 2023 Hannah G. Solomon Award to Abby Kasowitz Scheer at a luncheon on Monday, October 9, 2023, at Drumlins.

The Hannah G. Solomon Award is a national award presented by individual sections of NCJW. This is the 50th year of the Syracuse Hannah G. Solomon Award. The award is named for the founder of NCJW and is given to women who have demonstrated exceptional service to both the Jewish community and the community-at-large.

Abby Kasowitz Scheer has been actively involved in the Syracuse Jewish community and the greater Central New York community for most of her life. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of Temple Adath Yeshurun and was a board member of the Syracuse Hebrew Day School for over ten years, including serving as president from 2017-2019. She has served on other boards in the Jewish community including the Epstein School of Jewish Studies and the Jewish Community Center as well as various committees at Temple Adath, including the Youth Commission.

Scheer is head of the Department of Learning and Academic Engagement at Syracuse University Libraries. She was a board member and president of Syracuse University’s chapter of Beta Phi Mu (International Library and Information Studies Honor Society) and is an active



member of the American Library Association. Abby also coordinated a support group for parents of children with inflammatory bowel disease through the Upstate Golisano Children’s Hospital for several years.

Abby grew up attending Congregation Beth Shalom-Chevra Shas and Temple Adath Yeshurun and was actively involved in United Synagogue Youth, where she met her husband, Jeffrey Scheer. She received her bachelor’s degree from Brandeis University and master’s degrees in library science and instructional design, development and evaluation from Syracuse University.

Abby and Jeffrey are the proud parents of three daughters, Sophie, Rachel and Rose, who all attended the Syracuse Hebrew Day School, attended/attend the Epstein School of Jewish Studies, spend their summers at Camp Ramah in New England and are actively involved in their Jewish communities.

At the Hannah G. Solomon luncheon, the Greater Syracuse Section At-Large of National Council of Jewish Women will continue its efforts on behalf of youngsters in Central New York. Registration will start at 11:30 am, with the luncheon and program beginning at noon and ending by 1:30 pm. Reservations are \$45 per person. **For more information or to make a reservation and/or send a tribute card honoring Abby, contact Marlene Holstein at 315-446-7648 by October 2.**

# Music Makers Wanted

A singer and a drummer! A drummer and a singer! The Keyna Hora Klezmer Band, currently at 16 members, is looking to expand. They hope to encourage some new people; however, don’t apply if you are eager to make money. It’s more about enjoying camaraderie and the exhilaration of playing Klezmer music. They meet Tuesday nights at The Oaks at 7 pm The singer does not have to speak Yiddish. Everything is in transliteration. Please contact Mimi Weiner at 315-446-7810 (mimiweiner@gmail.com) or Michelle Rosenberg at 248-255-6169 (mravitsk@gmail.com).



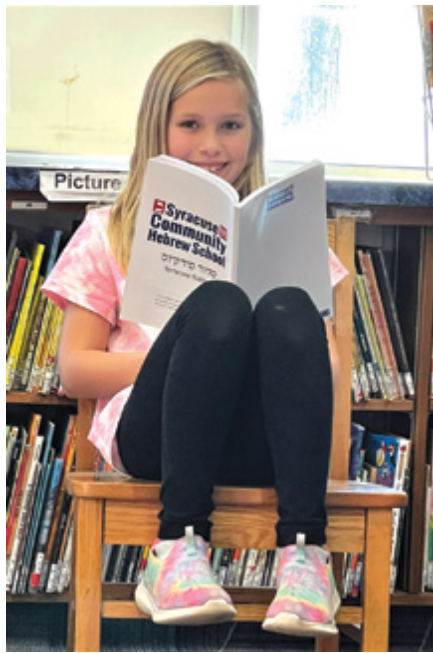


## Syracuse Community Hebrew School Welcomes New Year

by Leah Eve Jezer-Nelson

The Syracuse Community Hebrew School offers an innovative, engaging and explorative program. Inclusivity is a major focus of its teaching style, with students offered the chance to learn at their own pace and level. Individual specialized attention is given to each child, and this has translated to higher success rates for the students. Meeting students at their level and needs ensures that they take home the values, ideologies and messages of the Syracuse Jewish community. The school teaches them to be a part of a broader community as well as what that might look like in their lives.

Last year, the school's curriculum was a source of inspiration to other community schools across the nation. SCHS starts each week with half an hour of highly interactive tfillah with clergy, where students discuss and determine



the relevance of tfillah in today's world. Next is 25 minutes of semi-private Hebrew tutoring, where each student works through their lessons at their own pace, ensuring higher success and lower frustration. After that comes 30 minutes of class time, where the focus is on particular prayers. Students think through the meanings and shorashim (roots) of the prayers, while learning to understand their placement in the service. Students are encouraged to think about the relevance of the prayers to their own lives. Finally, in the final 25 minutes, students head to their kvusot (choice) class: micrography, digital art, drama, "talking across the world," programs with seniors (such as Lego-building and journaling) and a poetry and haiku class. All of these choice classes are specialized to provide unique pathways into perceiving tfillah as they apply to each individual's life, as well as community life.

The SCHS is looking forward to the coming year. Its kickoff event was Bring the Fair to The Park on August 27. Registration for this dynamic, understanding and community-oriented Hebrew school is available on its website, schsschool.org.

## CBS-CS Back to Shul BBQ: A Time-Honored Tradition Resumes

by Joanne Villegas

As the echoes of summer start to fade, Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas (CBS-CS) is gearing up for its well-loved tradition, the Back to Shul BBQ. To be held on Labor Day, September 4, this community event celebrates the conclusion of the summer season and the welcoming of a fresh academic year.

Between 4 and 6 pm, CBS-CS becomes a hub of community engagement and shared experiences. The Back to Shul BBQ has always been a crowd-puller, drawing community members across generations. After a hiatus during the pandemic, we successfully resumed this event last year and are excited to host it for the second consecutive year.

The return of the BBQ means more than just grilling and eating together. This year, we're planning an even larger array of fun activities for all attendees. The blend of old and new faces, the joy of children participating in various activities and the enticing aroma of the BBQ contribute to a lively atmosphere.

Organizing such an event requires an army of dedicated volunteers who tirelessly work behind the scenes. They ensure a variety of delectable food and an array of engaging activities for everyone to enjoy.

Though not the central focus, the Back to Shul BBQ also carries a spirit of philanthropy. It has supported



organizations such as We Rise Above the Streets which helps feed the hungry and assists those in need. Attendees are encouraged to bring a donation to continue this tradition of giving.

***The Back to Shul BBQ is an open event, and warmly welcomes anyone who wishes to join. There is a suggested donation of \$10 per person, with a \$30 cap per household, to support the event. To be a part of this memorable gathering, please register at: <https://cbcs.shulcloud.com/event/bbq23>.***

## The High Holidays at Temple Concord

by Lily Dana

The High Holidays are a time for contemplation, renewal and connection. To start 5784 in a meaningful direction, all are welcome to join in prayer and song at Temple Concord as the congregation comes together to seek inspiration and strength for the year ahead. Temple Concord is thrilled to introduce Rabbi Ilan Emanuel, the congregation's dynamic and compassionate new rabbi, who brings a fresh perspective and a passion for building a strong, inclusive community.

Spiritual growth, community connection and joyous celebrations await individuals and families alike. Rabbi Emanuel and Cantor Kari Siegel Eglash will lead everyone in prayer, reflection and communal unity. Whether one is well-versed in Jewish traditions or just beginning their Jewish journey, the services will have something inspirational.

For families, there will be children's programming throughout the High Holidays. Youngsters will engage in age-appropriate activities, such as interactive storytelling and creative arts and crafts. The children's services are designed to make the holidays come alive for little ones, instilling in them a love for Jewish heritage and values.

This High Holiday season, Temple Concord looks forward to welcoming one and all to its services. ***To learn more about the entire schedule of events, check the Temple calendar at [www.templeconcord.org](http://www.templeconcord.org). L'Shanah Tovah!***

## Be a helper

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The Federation has made a *shidduch* with ChaiFlicks to obtain yearlong licenses for people (families) so that we can legally watch a movie together, simultaneously or asynchronously, and then discuss it. There are HUNDREDS of movies to choose from. <https://www.chaiflicks.com/new-movies>. Following is a list of the eleven movies we will view and discuss in 5784. The sessions are moderated (very well) by Sam Young and the discussions are fascinating. *If you would like to participate in the 5784 Sunday Cinema Series, please email [bdavis@jewishfederationcny.org](mailto:bdavis@jewishfederationcny.org).*

**OCTOBER 22: In Search of Memory:** a compelling blend of autobiography and history that recounts the life of one of the most important neuroscientists of the 20th century and illuminates scientific developments in our understanding of the brain's role in recording and preserving memory.

**NOVEMBER 12: Diplomacy:** A historical drama that depicts the relationship between Dietrich von Choltitz, the German military governor of occupied Paris, and Swedish consul-general Raoul Nordling.

**DECEMBER 3: Sophie Scholl:** A dramatization of the final days of Sophie Scholl, one of the most famous members of the German World War II anti-Nazi resistance movement, The White Rose.

**JANUARY 7: Harmonia:** A contemporary variation in a classical music setting of the biblical story of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar.

**FEBRUARY 4: A Tramway in Jerusalem:** On a tramway that connects several of Jerusalem's neighborhoods from East to West, a mosaic of people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds are brought together.

**MARCH 10: The Keeper:** Bert Trautmann, a German soldier and prisoner of war, secures the position of goalkeeper for Manchester City- thanks to the support of a local rabbi and the love of an Englishwoman and in doing so becomes a legendary footballing icon.

**APRIL 14: The Women's Balcony:** When the women's balcony in an Orthodox synagogue collapses, leaving the rabbi's wife in a coma and the rabbi in shock, the congregation falls into crisis.

**MAY 5: Kapo in Jerusalem:** An exploration of the moral and survival dilemmas in Auschwitz from the point of view of a deputy head of a block and a few of the prisoners from his block who survived the horrors of the camp and emigrated to Israel in the 40s.

**JUNE 9: 1945:** On a summer day in 1945, an Orthodox man and his grown son return to a village in Hungary while the villagers prepare for the wedding of the town clerk's son. The townspeople – suspicious, remorseful, fearful and cunning – expect the worst and behave accordingly.

**JULY 14: Alone Together:** Ravit spends all of her time spreading her love wherever it is needed. During the day, she cooks for hundreds of Tel Aviv's homeless. In the evenings, she hugs abandoned babies in the birthing ward. Ravit always wanted children of her own, but life dictated otherwise. As she turns 50, she decides that she too wants to be on love's receiving end, but that may prove to be a lot harder to find.

**AUGUST 11: Nora's Will:** This tale of a man's fight against his dead ex-wife's final wishes, set in Mexico's Jewish community, has universal appeal.

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## SHDS Head of School for the Day Contest Winner



**Asher Moodie**, a rising fifth grader student, was the Head of School for the Day at the end of the school year. Asher delivered a kick-off message to students in the school's production studio, participated in a virtual discussion about the school's mission and values, and had a lunch meeting at Menorah Park of Central New York. Sporting a safety vest for dismissal at the end of the day, Asher noted that it was the "best school day ever!" A family friend won the raffle at the SHDS Casino Night in the spring.

## Epstein School to Offer Project Advance Course in Hebrew

Students in grades 11 and 12 at the Rabbi Jacob H. Epstein School of Jewish Studies will have the opportunity to earn four college credits this year as part of the school's partnership with Syracuse University Project Advance (SUPA). Hebrew 101 will be taught by experienced educator, Youchi Holstein, and will run for the full year during both class periods. "I am so excited to be part of this pilot program," said Holstein. "Teaching Hebrew is a labor of love." Holstein participated in an intensive summer program at Syracuse University for SUPA teachers, led by SU faculty member, Michal Downie, who teamed up with Kennia Delafe, SUPA assistant director, and Aaron Spitzer to establish this pilot program. "College Hebrew classes are usually more intimate, enhancing students' Jewish identity, building a close and unique relationship with the professor and creating opportunities to bond with the Jewish community on campus," said Downie. In contrast to traditional high schools



where students learn five days a week, classes at the Epstein School are held once per week, which makes adapting a college course to the high school setting that much more challenging.

Students will meet for both class sessions at Epstein on Tuesdays, as well

as outside of class once a month in person and once a month on Zoom. There will be weekly homework and three exams over the course of the year. The tuition for the course is \$460 and students will earn four college credits through the Syracuse University Project Advance program. (The fee is in addition to the \$395 tuition at the Epstein School.) Syracuse University Project Advance credits are transferable to many colleges and universities and this course will count towards the satisfaction of foreign language requirements. There is financial aid available as well.

Epstein Head of School Aaron Spitzer noted that "SUPA Hebrew 101 is a great opportunity for our students to be able to earn college credit and definitely elevates the Epstein curriculum. We are very proud to be the first non-traditional high school to offer a SUPA course and look forward to building this program in years to come."

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# JCC Back to School Offerings

by Carlett Spike

The end of summer signifies the start of another school year. It's a time when families settle into new routines, children meet their new teachers and the JCC provides a variety of programs and activities for the fall.

Children ages six weeks to five years can embark on their first year of pre-school or enter a new classroom through the Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP). In addition to meeting new teachers and friends, children are given the opportunity to explore their interests while they learn new skills — allowing them a safe and supportive environment to flourish.

Each classroom caters to the needs of the group to develop hands-on and interactive activities to support each child's development. At the start of each year, the teachers get to know their students and their interests to create engaging units of study and help expand their learning. All children 18 months and older attend physical education class each week to continue to develop their gross motor skills.

"September is one of our favorite times of year when children are all starting new adventures in their new classrooms," said Pam Ranieri, director of children's programming at the JCC. "We spend time in the beginning of the school year getting to know the new children in our classrooms and helping them to learn routines and rules and make new friends."

For children older than five who are enrolled in kindergarten through 6th grade, the JCC also offers Before and After Care, which begins on September 6. Children enrolled in Jamesville-DeWitt elementary schools can be dropped off as



early as 7 am for Before School Care. The JCC primarily serves children from the Syracuse Hebrew Day School, Jamesville-

DeWitt and Fayetteville-Manlius school districts for After School but is also looking into adding other schools. The After School

program runs from 3 pm to 6 pm Monday through Friday. The JCC's bus provides transportation for all Fayetteville-Manlius students, while Jamesville-DeWitt buses bring After School participants directly to the JCC from each elementary school.

Snacks are provided, and children are offered choices for afternoon activities. There are activity areas for all ages and interests, including the gym, playground, lounge for games, the children's room for crafts and a homework room for those eager to complete homework assignments or who may need some extra help. Both programs offer a great opportunity for children to learn new skills and socialize with others in the community.

Enrichment classes will also be available for children ages 3-14, beginning on September 11. The goal is for children to get active, meet new people and get all the benefits sports have to offer. Classes include gymnastics, dance, rookie sports and school age karate.

**For more information and to register, visit the JCC's website [jccsy.org](http://jccsy.org) or reach out to Pam Ranieri at 315-445-2360 or [pranieri@jccsy.org](mailto:pranieri@jccsy.org).**

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## EZKERA / REMEMBERING

**CINDY GOLDSTEIN**  
July 12, 2023

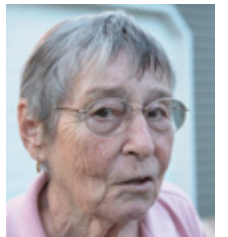
Cindy Goldstein, 70, of Fayetteville, died at home on July 12. Cindy was an active member of Temple Concord, the Fayetteville Senior Center and Hazak seniors group.

Cindy was pre-deceased by her parents Charles and Minnie and is survived by her brothers Steven, Richard, David and Howard and nieces, nephews and cousins.

Contributions may be made to Temple Concord.

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**ZELDA M. FREEMAN**  
July 18, 2023



Zelda M. Freeman, 88, of DeWitt, died Tuesday July 18, at Vitas Healthcare Hospice Unit, Coral Springs, FL. She was predeceased by her husband Herbert Freeman. She is the daughter of the late William and Pauline Tucker, sister of the late Harvey Tucker.

Zelda attended Nottingham High School and Syracuse University. She was one of the founding members of Congregation Beth Sholom -Chevra Shas.

There was no greater love in Zelda's life than her family. She is survived by sons Wayne (Kathleen) Freeman, Dr. Gary (Deborah) Freeman and Steven Freeman, grandchildren Alexandra, Morgan (Reardon) Baker, Max, Lydia and Matthew, great-grandchildren Renley and Paxton, older sister Fraydelle Leekoff and nieces and nephews.

Contributions may be made to Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas or the ASPCA.

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**MARTIN HAFTER****July 21, 2023**

Martin "Marty" Hafter died on July 21. Born on September 16, 1932 in Elizabeth, NJ to Jesse and Annabelle Hafter, he had been a resident of Syracuse since he and his late wife Lee married in 1959.

After graduating from Central High School, he began his career with Hafter Shoe Company of Syracuse. He was a veteran of the US Army having served during the Korean War.

Marty was a life member of Temple Adath Yeshurun and the Men's Club of the Temple. Most important to him was his family and friends who were like family. The Hafter home was always warm and welcoming. Everyone lingered at the kitchen table enjoying great food and company.

Lee, Marty's cherished wife, passed away this past January. He was also pre-deceased by his sister Lenore Koster. His family includes his children Nancy (Michael) Gross; Andrew (Mary) and Jeff (Liz), grandchildren Heidi (Lee), Adam (Erin), Liam, Kyle, Sophie and Genevieve; four great-grandsons, his brother David (Margaret) Hafter and nieces, nephews and cousins.

Contributions in his memory may be made to Temple Adath Yeshurun  
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**PHILLIP GORDON****July 23, 2023**

Phillip Gordon, 89, passed away in the comfort of his home on July 23 with his family



by his side. Born on November 6, 1933 in Syracuse to Abe and Gertrude Gordon, he was a life resident of Syracuse and Chittenango.

"Coach Gordon" was a graduate of Nottingham High School and in 1951 was named athlete of the year for the city of Syracuse. He went on to graduate from The Dean Academy and Cortland State where he earned his master's degree in athletic administration. Phil was honored to be installed in the Hall of Fame at Nottingham High School.

He taught physical education at Chittenango High School from 1958 to 1995 and coached just about every sport. He was the varsity basketball coach at Chittenango High School for 38 years. "Coach" was the head coach of Golden Valley Sports Camp, Dolph Schayes All Star Camp, The State Fair East-West All Star Games and the Scholastic Central Empire State Basketball Team.

During his career he was awarded every

**VERA STEIN****July 29, 2023**

Vera Stein, 91, of Phoenix, AZ and formerly of Germantown, TN and DeWitt, passed away peacefully on July 29.

Born to Harry and Dora (Ashkenas) Weiner in the Sheepshead section of Brooklyn, NY on Dec. 19, 1931, Vera lived in the New York City borough, where she married Leonard Stein in 1952. After living on an Army base for several years, they moved to Pittsfield, MA. A corporate transfer took them to the Syracuse area, settling in DeWitt, where she lived for more than 50 years.

A long-time administrative assistant in the neurology department at the Veterans Hospital in Syracuse, she held a similar position for many years with The American Cancer Society of CNY. Always one to strike up a conversation, Vera was a "Welcome Wagon Lady," greeting new residents to DeWitt. She had a close circle of friends and took great enjoyment in going to dinner and events with them. For many years, she also had a home in Saratoga where she spent many evenings attending the symphony and ballet at the performing arts center. Being a patron of Syracuse Stage brought her great pleasure.

award possible, but the highlight was when he was inducted into the New York State Basketball Hall of Fame and the greater Syracuse Sports Hall of Fame.

Phil was a life-long #1 fan of the NY Yankees. His dream had always been to play shortstop for his beloved team.

"Pop" was not only a beloved coach to generations of students but the beloved husband to Elna, his wife of 49 years, father to Eve (Harold), Steven (Jennifer), Samuel (Julia), J.J. (Shanyyn) and John Wayne (Jessica) who passed away in August 2021, grandfather to Colby, Chase, Devin, Brayden, Neve, Mira, Lucas, Alia, Isaac, Liam, Mason, Zavi and Clayton and brother-in-law to Dee Ann, Karen and Leslie (Jack). Besides his son John Wayne Gordon, he was pre-deceased by his sisters Ruthie Berchin and Shirley Jacobs.

Phil will always be remembered for his favorite quote, "God Bless The Big Fella, the Duke, John Wayne!" Winning was always great, but winning wasn't what "Coach" was all about. It was how you played the game. In the game of life, he was an all-star.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory may be made to a scholarship to be established at Chittenango High School for a scholar athlete.

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Vera was very interested in the financial markets and was always eager to have a discussion about stocks. She was an active member of Temple Beth El and many organizations within the Jewish community. In 2008, she moved to Germantown, TN where she lived with her daughter, Carolyn, for more than a decade. From Tennessee, she moved to Arizona.

Vera was predeceased by her husbands, Leonard Stein, in 1980, and Jerome Hyde, in 2007. She was predeceased by her daughter, Carolyn, in 2021. In addition, she was predeceased by her parents and her brother, Arnold Weiner of Brooklyn.

She is survived by her sons Jeffrey of Phoenix, AZ and Kenneth (Eileen Byrnes) of Sandy Hook, CT and grandsons Patrick (Bekah) Stein of Cornelius, NC and Nathan (Brittany) Stein of Waynesboro, VA.

Donations in Vera's memory can be made to Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevre Shas, PO Box 271, DeWitt, NY 13214.

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**BETTY G. CRAVETZ****July 31, 2023**

Betty G. Cravetz, 99 1/2 years young, of Delray Beach, FL, formerly of Fulton, NY, passed away peacefully on July 31 after a long illness. She was the widow of David Cravetz, who passed in 2014. Betty was born December 24, 1923 in Syracuse, the seventh daughter of the late Max Gordon and Eva Hayman Gordon. She moved to Fulton after her marriage in 1947 and she and David lived there until retiring to Florida in 1991. Betty was devoted to her family and loved visiting and entertaining her large family and her friends. She loved music, reading, games and sports, especially tennis. Betty played tennis into her 80's and she was good.

Betty is survived by her son Paul "PJ" (Michelle) Cravetz of Huntersville, NC, daughter Amy (Phil) Mrazik of Delray Beach, FL, granddaughters Alexis Cravetz and Jordan (Jeff) Speanburg of Huntersville, NC and great-granddaughter Marin Speanburg of Huntersville, NC. Betty is also survived by her sister-in-law Roberta Gordon of Boynton Beach, FL and numerous nieces and nephews. Betty was pre-deceased by her six older sisters and her younger brother.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made, in Betty's name, to Safe Haven Museum, PO Box 846, Oswego, NY 13126.

*L'Shana Tovah 5784**Steven L. Sisskind*

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