

Jewish Observer

A publication of the Jewish Federation of Central New York

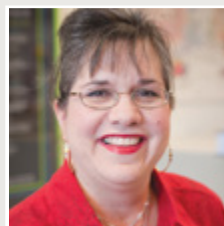
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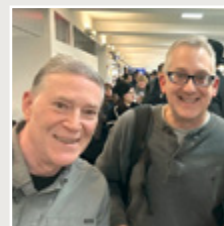
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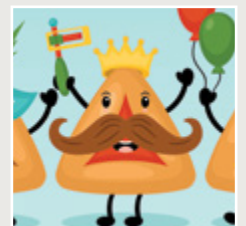
PURIM 2024



INSIDE:
FIGHTING
ANITSEMITISM IN
OUR COMMUNITY
(3)



LOOK:
VOLUNTEERING
IN ISRAEL
(6)



DON'T MISS:
THE PURIM
PROJECT
(8)

March 2024

From the Editor



Barbara Davis

Purim celebrates the remarkable series of events that culminated in averting the genocide of the Jewish people 2,500 years ago in Shushan, capital city of the ancient Persian empire. Genocide is on the minds of many this year as we think about the ongoing war in the Middle East.

A group of local educators and clergy met a few months ago to develop materials useful to middle and high school administrators, teachers, parents and students in the fight against antisemitism. During the course of the meeting, one of the participants looked over the New York State Holocaust curriculum, a document that one would be reasonably certain would contain significant material about genocide and the slaughter of six million Jews.

The New York State document, entitled HOLOCAUST INSTRUCTION IN NYS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS, is 16 pages long and schools are mandated to teach about the Holocaust. Additionally, in 2022, New York Governor Kathy Hochul signed a law mandating that school superintendents attest that their districts were teaching about the Holocaust in line with NYS Social Studies Learning Standards. The survey results indicated that “all districts that must instruct students about the Holocaust are doing so. In fact, a large majority of schools go beyond the New York State Learning Standards to create instructional programming about the Holocaust in courses and grade levels where it is not required content.”

Sounds good, no? Sounds like students in New York State should know what genocide is, what the Holocaust was and that six million Jews lost their lives during this disaster. **But the fact is that NOWHERE in the 16-page curriculum does the word “Jews” appear. Nowhere does the word “genocide” appear.** The closest reference to the killing of six million Jews and six million Roma, Catholics, people with disabilities, gay people and others is the grade 10 key idea: “Human atrocities and mass murders occurred in this time period. Students will examine the atrocities against the Armenians; examine the Ukrainian Holodomor, and examine the Holocaust.” **Still no Jews.** Seems like everyone loves dead Jews except the New York State Education Department, which has cancelled them.

Is it any wonder then that in a 2020 survey of U.S. adults aged 18-39, 23% said they believed the Holocaust was a myth, had been exaggerated or weren’t sure. And a 2023 survey by the American Jewish Committee found that only 26% of those questioned could correctly answer four questions about the magnitude of the Holocaust. 47%

did not know that 6 million Jews were killed and 34% said Hitler came to power by violently overthrowing the German government.

It’s hard to fight antisemitism if you don’t know what it is or what it leads to. It’s hard to understand what Israel means to the Jewish people if you don’t know its history or what happened to Jews during the Shoah. It’s hard to believe that New York State can have a Holocaust curriculum that leaves out the horrifying slaughter of six million Jews.

Perhaps some of the fault is ours. How do we celebrate Purim, a holiday that rejoices in the avoidance of a genocide? We dress in costumes, we drink to excess, we make a lot of noise. But do we consider what this holiday really represents? Do we remember that this is only one Purim celebrating an escape from genocide and that there are many others? Do we remember that while the Holocaust was the worst fate ever to befall our people, this past October we saw a slaughter of 1200 Jews in the worst day in our history since the Holocaust?

We must do better. Perhaps this year, we should take Purim more seriously, focusing less on the hamantaschen and more on the need to educate not only ourselves but our neighbors about the evils of antisemitism and hate of all kinds. There are good people in our community who have taken up this challenge; we write about some of them in this issue. But this is a job for everyone. We cannot rely on Esther to save us. We need to do more to ensure that our schools are teaching history in a meaningful way, particularly in an age of AI, when people’s belief in what they see and hear is fast eroding. We need to make sure that people know that Hitler was elected through a democratic process. We need to teach our children that the hate that begins with Jews does not end with Jews.

Tel Aviv University and the Anti-Defamation League’s 2024 *Annual Report* put it unequivocally:

“Criticizing Israel, even harshly, is legitimate, just as it is in the case of any other country. Denying the right of Israel to exist is illegitimate, just as it is in the case of any other country. This, and this only, is the principle that should guide politicians, law enforcers and civil rights activists from now on. The recurring phenomenon of escalations in the Middle East leading to massive waves of antisemitic attacks in the West should not be regarded and tolerated as a manifestation of nature. There is a name for targeting people based on their ethnicity or religion. It’s called racism. There is a name for targeting Jews merely because they are Jews. It’s called antisemitism. There are sanctions and penalties prescribed for those who do so. There are governments and law enforcement agencies whose job is to ensure these are applied. It is time they do just that far more rigorously.”

It’s a big job, but Purim 5784 is a good place to start.

ERRATA: Writing from Los Angeles, Judie Cynkus Rice corrected a factual error in an article in the December issue about the first Jewish high school club in Central New York. She wrote: “When I was at Nottingham, 1952 - 1956, there were ‘Jewish Clubs’....AZA for the boys (Aleph Zadek Aleph), BBG (Bnai Brith Girls) for girls...it was pretty much an open organization, joining with initiation at the JCC on E. Genesee Street, doing meetings, dances, holidays, area conclaves, conventions, etc., open to Nottingham and Central girls. There were Jewish sororities/fraternities: ULP and KAT for the boys; Iota Phi and Phi Gam for girls; there was a social difference between each, based seemingly upon financial status in Syr./which Temple/Synagogue family attended, etc....very obvious.”

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From the Jewish Federation of CNY President/CEO



Michael Balanoff

The recent prodigious and rapid rise in antisemitism in America and Europe can be directly attributed to the Israeli-Hamas conflict although, as many have pointed out, antisemitism is nowhere near a new experience. Another sad but intriguing phenomenon is that university campuses that accepted money from Middle Eastern donors had, on average, significantly more antisemitic incidents than those institutions that did not." A study, *The Corruption of the American Mind*, surveyed 1,760 students at 215 colleges and universities across the country and found that students at universities that accepted undocumented funding from Arab countries "were more likely to report hearing antisemitic and antizionist tropes."

America is slowly waking up to the poison of antisemitism. The shocking failure of major university presidents to stand up against hate can be balanced against the positions of other leaders, academic and political, who showed moral courage in taking strong positions against hate speech. Central New York is fortunate to count many of these leaders and others as allies. The presidents of SUNY, Binghamton, Brockport, Canton, Cortland, Geneseo and Plattsburgh were among the 100 signatories to the following statement: "We are horrified and sickened by the brutality and inhumanity of Hamas. Murdering innocent civilians including babies and children, raping women, and taking the elderly as hostages are not the actions of political disagreement but the actions of hate and terrorism. The basis of all universities is a pursuit of truth, and it is times like these that require moral clarity. Like the fight against ISIS, the fight against Hamas is a fight against evil. We, the presidents and chancellors of universities and colleges across the United States of America and the world, stand with Israel, with the Palestinians who suffer under Hamas's cruel rule in Gaza, and with all people of moral conscience."

When antisemitic statements were scrawled last year in Skaneateles, the mayor issued the following declaration: "I hear a lot of messages about the divisiveness in our country but we as a board and as a community are united in our stand against anti-Semitism and any other acts of hate. This is an inclusive community and the actions of a few will not change that." The town's trustees issued the following statement: "Racism and prejudice have no place here and we emphatically denounce these messages in the strongest possible terms. They are wrong and will not be tolerated by us or by our residents."

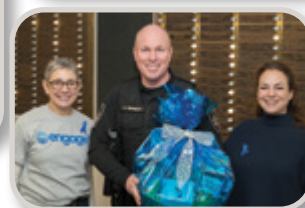
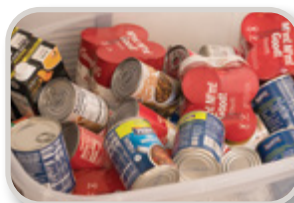
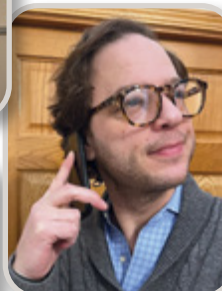
At Chanukah this year, Reverend Anna Gheen of The First Presbyterian Church of Cazenovia announced that she is displaying a menorah this year in the window of the Presbyterian Manse. She asked others to join her. Her reason: "Earlier this year, antisemitic literature was distributed throughout our village community. While local law enforcement acted quickly in the matter, this combined with the spike in antisemitism since the October 7th Hamas attack in Israel has left many of the Jewish members of our community on edge. While I celebrate Christmas freely without fear of becoming the target of violence, they simply don't. By displaying a menorah, I want to send a clear and poignant message: Hate has no home here. I want my Jewish friends and neighbors to know that they are safe with me and, more importantly that they are safe in the community they call home.... Let's let our Jewish neighbors know that they are loved and wanted here, that they aren't in this by themselves."

More recently, when a road sign with antisemitism images was placed in nearby Lebanon, Town Supervisor Ronda Winn was forthright in her condemnation: "The Township of Lebanon has no tolerance for this type of activity nor should it be tolerated anywhere."

We Jews are only 2% of the American population. We cannot fight antisemitism alone. We need allies and support from all fair-minded and compassionate people. Eradicating antisemitism is a necessary step to the achievement of the pluralistic and inclusive society envisioned by the founders both of America and of Israel. We are exceedingly grateful to those who have the moral rectitude and courage to stand up for others and to speak out against antisemitism. We need more people to join them. Federation is reaching out to the community at large, to engage with them, educate them and encourage them to work with us to combat hate in all its forms. Only in this way can we assure that our country will be the land envisioned in our Pledge of Allegiance: one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Super-Duper Snowy Souper Sunday

Half a foot of snow couldn't stop the Central New York Jewish community from holding a super Souper Sunday. Hot soup and grilled cheese sandwiches were the perfect antidote to the weather and when all the calls were made and the pledges tallied up, Campaign 2024 was off to a rousing start and the food pantry was stocked with potage, broth, consommé and bisque.



Miracles

by Rabbi Ilan Emanuel,
Temple Concord

Over three hundred years ago King Louis XIV of France reportedly asked Blaise Pascal, the great French philosopher of his day, to give him proof of the existence of miracles. Without a moment's hesitation, Pascal answered: "Why, the Jews, your Majesty - the Jews."

On Purim, we recite a special prayer in the Amidah called *Al Hanissim*, relating to the miracles of the festival. But a simple reading of the story of Purim in the book of Esther reveals no obvious miracles. No seas were parted, no mountains were moved, and no ground opened up to swallow our enemies. The rabbis even debated whether or not to include the story of



Esther in the Hebrew Bible at all because not only does it not include obvious miracles, it also includes no obvious mention of G-d. So what miracles are we praising G-d for?

The simple answer is that our tradition doesn't have only one definition of a miracle. Miracles aren't just spectacular intrusions into nature of the sort we see in the Exodus. Indeed, we don't see such miracles today. But the Book of Esther is perhaps the most "modern" book of the bible because it reflects the reality that miracles can be more subtle, the workings of the divine within nature and the everyday.

The primary miracle of Purim is not one of great signs and wonders but of the reversal of fortune, the overturning of expectation that comes from the Jews of Babylonia defeating their enemies and thriving despite all the odds being stacked against them. In the words of Rabbi David Hartman, "What appears as fate, the necessity of a small people subject to an invulnerable empire, is revealed as an illusion. The language of the biblical miracle is the Bible's way of undermining the acquiescence of humans to the 'way things have to be.' In a world today in which antisemitism is rising and so much of the world seems to be set against Israel and Jews wherever we are, this is a powerful message of hope, now as much as it was then."

And in the Book of Esther, we did not just wait for G-d to save us and send an obvious miracle. Rather, Esther had to go to the king, facing potential danger for approaching the throne without

permission. She had to take the first step. To make miracles real today means to see ourselves as partners with G-d and take action to make miracles manifest in our lives and in the world around us through words and action. We do that when we march for Israel and the hostages held by Hamas, when we stand against antisemitism in our community and on the world stage and when we remind ourselves and the world of our purpose and mission as Jews to fix the world one act kindness and justice at a time.

In a world filled with darkness, hate and war, Purim reminds of us of the miracle of Jewish survival, perseverance and continued hope and joy against all odds. As David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, noted, "In Israel, in order to be a realist, you must believe in miracles."

» BOOK REVIEW

Conspiracy U: A Case Study by Scott Shay



Reviewed by Dr. Joseph Goldberg

While the equivocating responses that the erstwhile presidents of Harvard University and the University of Pennsylvania gave during recent Congressional testimony when asked whether calls for the genocide of the Jews violate their schools' codes of conduct stunned many, readers of Scott Shay's now-prescient 2021 *Conspiracy U* would have been little surprised.

Utilizing his alma mater, Northwestern University, as a case study, Shay exposes how ideological professors with antisemitic and anti-Zionist prejudices, and the imprimatur of their educational institutions, increasingly promulgate conspiracy theories that falsely demonize Jews and Zionists as colonizers, oppressors, racists, and genocidal murderers by using, abusing, and selectively applying concepts from critical and decolonization theoretical fields, and festooning them with the trappings of legitimate scholarship—often with Qatari and Saudi funding.

No matter that Jews are multi-racial and indigenous to Israel. Or that Israel was colonized seriatim by Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek, Roman and multiple Muslim empires; is the only country in modern history to return land captured in a defensive war in exchange for peace; five times accepted the two-state solution Palestinians every time rejected; ensures equal rights for its Arab, multi-ethnic and LGBTQ citizens, unlike all its neighbors;



or that nearly one million Jews were ethnically cleansed from Muslim lands, not vice versa, as Shay reminds. Why let facts get in the way of theory?

While criminal conspiracies are quite real (e.g. the tobacco industry's coordinated obfuscation of the dangers of their product to chase higher profits), conspiracy theories—which Shay concretely distinguishes by their dubious and improbable hypotheses, absence or distortion of evidence, imagined secret cabals and machinations, simplistic explanations

for complex situations, impossible levels of secrecy and coordination, logical fallacies, mendacity, and lack of falsifiability (since countervailing evidence is merely proof of a cover-up)—can be just as deadly.

Conspiracy theories are standard pretexts to scapegoat (e.g. Chinese smears of Uyghurs as terrorists), precursors to genocide (e.g. Rwandan Hutu fabrications of Tutsi malevolence), and perfidies to deny atrocities (e.g. the CIA faked Khmer Rouge mass murder). Jews are history's most frequent target and the locus of all three: from ancient blood libels to far-right Nazi calumnies of Jewish aims for world-control, far-left Soviet canards of Zionist fifth column fascists and racists, Arafat's apocryphal slander that Zionists conspire to stunt Black national liberation movements and destroy Islam, and neo-Nazi and Palestinian Holocaust denial.

Shay thereby illustrates that the antisemitic and anti-Zionist conspiracy theories that are *de rigueur* on college campuses today are old wine in new bottles. Lumping entire groups of people into binary categories of victim and perpetrator, especially when based solely on race, has previously positioned Jews as worthy of genocide for not being White/Aryan enough for Nazis, and presently reduces Jews to a melanin monolith (despite the majority of Israelis being people of color), as a pretense to paint Jews as racist White oppressors worthy of genocide—all while Jews once again defend themselves from genocide.

Indeed, a recent Harvard/Harris survey revealed a whopping 67% of 18–24-year-olds believed Jews to be "oppressors," and a bone-chilling 53% believed college students should be allowed to advocate for the genocide of the Jews. This age group may be disproportionately exposed to and shaped by the hurricane of online Jew-hatred, but Shay demonstrates that many are doubtless aping their professors' intellectual legerdemain, which has created the fecund conditions for such fetid antisemitism to flourish. This has fueled harassment, physical violence and even credible threats of mass shootings against Jewish students on campus. Conspiracy theories now trend online that these incidents, and Oct 7, are Jewish/Israeli hoaxes.

Timely, soberly, and refreshingly absent ad-hominem attacks, *Conspiracy U* assiduously exposes the academy's mission failure of fostering critical thinking, ensuring academic integrity in pursuit of knowledge and truth, and enforcing their own codes of conduct to safeguard all students. The disinfecting sunlight from congressional questioning, the power of alumni purse strings, and litigation are the requisite remediations, and Shay's *Conspiracy U* is a prerequisite primer.

Dr. Goldberg is a nationally board certified secondary English teacher, adjunct professor and instructional designer, whose research can be found in the *English Journal*, the *Journal of Media Education*, the *Film Education Journal* and elsewhere.

Fighting Antisemitism in Our Community

There are many initiatives and many committed people working very hard to combat antisemitism in our community. The Federation's 150-page manual of resources for middle and high school administrators, teachers, parents and students has been sent to all 18 local school districts and to local private schools, and additional copies are available at the Federation office. The document was the work of a panel of local Jewish clergy and educators.



Lawn signs urging an end to antisemitism and all forms of hate, created by Michelle Maloff, printed by Neil Rosenbaum and organized by Orit Antosh are available to those who wish to display them and can be obtained by emailing RSVP@jewishfederationcny.org. The organizers particularly hope that non-Jewish allies will want to display the signs.

Brian Raphael is the president of the new local non-profit organization End Antisemitism Now. Explaining the origin of the group, Raphael said, "As we all know, since October 7th antisemitism has been on the rise around the world. Unfortunately our community is not immune. In response, a group of us have created the nonprofit End Antisemitism Now to help our community address and fight misinformation, false accusations and antisemitism." The group's mission, which appears on its website, endantisemitismnow.org, reads: "Through education, advocacy, and collaboration, we strive to raise awareness about the historical significance of Jewish culture, traditions, and contributions. We aim to challenge stereotypes, dispel myths, and confront the roots of antisemitism, fostering a local environment that acknowledges, understands and celebrates the richness of our Jewish culture."

End Antisemitism Now's board has decided to use the organization to educate, inform and strengthen the Jewish community through specific programming. Members look forward to discussing their mission and agenda with members of the board of the Jewish Federation and with members of the community interested in fighting together in solving this major issue. They plan to assist schools and educate them about antisemitism. "We will meet with leaders in the community to inform them of antisemitism. And we will strengthen a Jewish community through specific programming. The programming will involve a variety of lecture series as well as activities that will embrace and improve the networking in our Jewish community. Some of these programs involve self-defense classes. Our first, *krav maga*, basic self-defense classes, started in January," said Raphael, adding, "We are working on programming to bring lectures and speakers to the community to talk about antisemitism and Jewish life."

He urged others to "Unite against antisemitism: educate, advocate, celebrate diversity for a hate-free future. Join us."

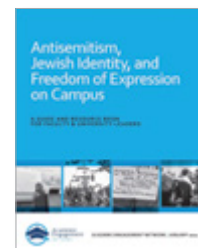
At the 2024 Souper Sunday, bookmarks created by Amira Kipnis were available for attendees. The bookmarks contain information about what schools can do RIGHT NOW to combat antisemitism and how YOU can get involved in schools; information for parents about talking to children about antisemitism; information about moderating social media content during war and resources about what constitutes a hate crime and recognizing and confronting hate graffiti.

Miriam Elman is the Executive Director of the Academic Engagement Network. She is a thought leader on the pernicious impacts of the BDS movement and other forms of hostility to Israel on college campuses and within academia. She has written about issues such as the "stealth boycott" of Israeli scholars, the relationship between on- and off-campus BDS organizations and the growing influence of groups such as Jewish Voice for Peace and IfNotNow. She frequently speaks about these issues to a wide variety of media and community

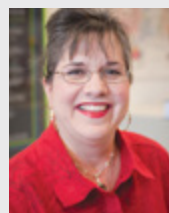


organizations and has published articles and reports in many publications and blogs. She is the editor of *Antisemitism, Jewish Identity, and Freedom of Expression on Campus*, a guide and resource book is comprised of five parts. The first part covers the anti-Israel movement on U.S. campuses, antisemitism and anti-Zionism, and intersectionality, social justice, and antisemitism.

The second discusses campus free expression and the anti-Israel movement, including the first amendment on campus, combatting anti-Jewish discrimination by applying Title VI, and the movement's disruption of events. The third explains the anti-Israel movement's faculty dimensions, including anti-Zionism in professional associations and attacks on study abroad/exchange programs in Israel. Part 4 details the importance of college and university antisemitism awareness education and anticipates future trends in the anti-Israel movement and antisemitism and Israel delegitimization on campus. The final part includes appendices with model statements from university leaders, faculty letters and additional resources. The guide is available for download at <https://academicengagement.org/2022-guide/>.



Miriam Elman



The Central New York Jewish community is home to one of the nation's most prominent scholars of antisemitism. She has presented programs for the community through the Federation and, more recently, under the sponsorship of Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevre Shas. Elman is particularly committed to combatting antisemitism on college and university campuses. When dealing with current situations, Elman says, "we encourage administrators to acknowledge that an anti-Jewish protest or instance of discrimination was hateful and hurtful and do something about it, to develop an action plan for educational remediation. Just being silent in the face of that when you wouldn't be silent if any other community faced that kind of action is wrong."

At the same time, she is very cognizant of free speech issues. "We are seriously committed to campus free expression," she says. "A lot of the very hostile and hateful rhetoric against Zionists and Zionism is constitutionally protected at public universities. That doesn't mean that university leaders or faculty shouldn't say anything. You can criticize hateful speech; you're supposed to do that. It's about bringing better speech to bad speech." She points out that "current DEI models and frameworks...are part of the problem. There's some really worrying models where Jews are being stereotyped as powerful, privileged, and white. The way that animates anti-Semitic conspiracy thinking is

something we are underscoring and showcasing."

She also notes that "Israel can be criticized without resorting to antisemitism and without resorting to vicious tropes that have sustained the hatred of Jews across the millennia. Criticism of Israel can be intemperate, it can be impolite, it can be biting, it can be uncomfortable to hear, it can be plausible, it can be justified, it can also be plain out wrong." She further says that under the "new antisemitism," Israel is accused of "cardinal sins" and Jews are targeted as a proxy for Israel with prejudice against them that has both a "high and a low status." Jews are depicted as both unclean and parasitic but also diabolical, wealthy and controlling.

"Zionism is treated like an evil that must be dissociated from in order to belong to progressive groups on campus. It's also become painfully clear this past year that we are no longer in the realm of just Divestment and Sanctions resolutions by student governments," Elman said. "The landscape of so many campuses is changing dramatically and there is something much more insidious going on." In looking for a solution, Elman asserts, "I think it's important we find allies and partners. Because what starts with the Jews never ends with the Jews."

Connecting with the IDF in Gaza



Connections Israel is an organization dedicated to fostering meaningful connections with Israel through personal connections with soldiers from the IDF. The Jewish Federation is adopting a unit of soldiers currently on duty in Gaza to whom *mishloach manot* will be given during the Purim holiday on behalf of our community. Individuals can support this project in two ways: by contributing \$18 for each Purim package AND/OR by sending a letter BY EMAIL from a family, a child or children or an adult which will be included with the packages. The letters MUST be received by bdavis@jewishfederationcny.org NO LATER THAN MARCH 12. If the letters are handwritten, they should be scanned and emailed to the same address.

RISE in Israel

RISE, the rock musical by local composer Josh Hershfield, has been having great success in Israel. Josh sent an email saying, "In the past three months, thanks to a growing team of passionate and courageous artists around the world, we were able to perform readings of RISE in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, to create new videos, to originate and expand collaborations, and to release new music." In addition, the groundwork is being laid for readings and performances in London, New York and Los Angeles and a return to Israel with a full production. Josh concluded, "The growing team of brave artists involved in this show are an inspiration. We will continue moving forward with courage and resilience while standing our ground and staying true to the messages in RISE."

Here are some details of RISE's journey:

The music video for "Blame the



Jews," recorded at Keoss Studios in Tel Aviv with an incredible team of Israeli musicians, actors, singers, and videographers, is now live. Acappellaviv in Tel Aviv shot a teaser video of their version of "You Can Do This."

A Tel Aviv reading featured a powerhouse cast and team of Israeli actors, singers, and directors. Their performances were heartfelt and true, and brought a sobering dose of reality to this historical story. A staged reading in Jerusalem included an incredible cast and team who sold out an improvised venue and whose passion for this show in the middle of a war zone was astonishing to witness.

Studio recordings featuring the cast and band from Rochester and Syracuse have been released on all major digital outlets, as well as the RISE website. **All of the videos can be seen at www.risetherockmusical.com**

Single-Port Robotic Surgery: EXPERIENCE MATTERS

As the region's leader in robotic-assisted surgery Crouse Health is the only area hospital to offer the latest, minimally invasive technique for prostate surgery using a single, small incision. The da Vinci SP system uses advanced technology designed for access to tissue in the body with greater precision and enhanced mobility.



A pioneer in robotic-assisted surgery, urologist **Po Lam, MD**, is the first and only surgeon in the region to utilize the da Vinci Single Port robotic system for prostate removal. His experience with the SP system places him in the top tier* of robotic surgeons in the U.S. using this innovative technology.

*Intuitive Surgical



See interview with Po Lam, MD, and SP patient Dan Cannucciari:
crouse.org/RoboticsSinglePort

Ask your physician if Single Port robotic surgery is appropriate for you.

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Local Students Confront Antisemitism On Campus

by Eli Goldstein

A federal complaint filed in January by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights alleged rampant and pervasive antisemitism at American University. The Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law and Jewish on Campus alleged that American University was not only fully aware of the pervasive and hostile environment for Jewish students on its campus but ignored it and, in some cases, chose to subject Jewish whistleblowers to harassment and disciplinary proceedings. Several Central New York students currently attend American University. One of them wrote this article.



Antisemitism has always been an issue in the world and on college campuses. But since October 7th, there has been a steep rise of antisemitism specifically on American University's campus. Like many colleges, they promote DEI. This stands for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. I have no problem with this, but I DO have a problem that it seems not to apply to Jewish students and staff. We have faced many issues over the last several month: swastikas on doors, writing "Hitler was right" on posters, tearing down hostage posters and professors singling out Jewish students in class.

There have been many protests on the quad that have been using antisemitic rhetoric and language we have heard people use to attack Israel. There was one protest that blocked off the main entrance to the dining hall on campus. Jewish students who videoed people tearing down posters have faced disciplinary hearings and were threatened with revocation of their study abroad programs. I have personally faced people who do not want Israel to exist and use a lot of antisemitic rhetoric to back up their points. I know many Jewish students on the campus feel the administration has failed in protecting them. Some decided to file a lower case federal claim with the help of the Brandeis Center and Jewish On Campus claiming the administration violated their civil rights.

While the administration has recently enacted some changes to school policy, it is not enough to protect us. It is also too late. Three hours after American University President Sylvia Burwell sent out policy changes, a walkout was scheduled for the next day. American's Students for Justice in Palestine, Palestine Coalition, Jewish Voice For Peace and Students Voice for Peace scheduled a walkout to "End the Genocide" and called on "ALL STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF: WALKOUT, PROTEST, STRIKE!"

At the rally I heard "We need more anti-Zionist safe spaces!" Many Jewish students do not feel safe on this campus, but when we do, it is not because of American University, but rather because of our community Hillel, Chabad and our various friends supporting us when we need them.



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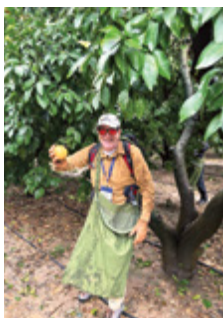
On January 13, Central New Yorkers Marc Beckman and Joe DeMari left for Israel on a Jewish National Fund-USA volunteer mission. “When I received an email from Rabbi David Levy about the JNF USA trip to Israel, I immediately felt in my heart and soul the need to be hands on and show support on the ground in Israel,” said DeMari. “I wanted to personally meet with Israelis and tell them they are loved and supported by many Americans. I felt that it was important to witness for myself

the devastation and toll October 7th and the war is taking on them so I could understand the depth of loss.” Marc Beckman said, “I went on the trip because it presented the opportunity to ‘do something’ for Israel in person. To show up and be present. To demonstrate that we recognize what they are dealing with on behalf of the western civilization and of course to bear witness for myself to their experiences.”

Over the course of four days, the 160 volunteers split into two groups to cover rehabilitation, repair and renewal activities. On their first day, they picked clementines

and grapefruit at Tlamin, a farm a few kilometers from the Gaza border. Had they not done so, the crops would have rotted and gone to waste in the fields due to a shortage of workers. They harvested for hours, surrounded by the fragrant scent of the citrus, as the sounds of war thundered in the distance.

On subsequent days, they cooked at a Druze-owned restaurant in northern Israel, chopping, grilling, mixing and packing 450 meals with personalized hand-written notes for the soldiers guarding the communities bordering Lebanon. Other volunteers



others painted playgrounds and repaired fences in badly harmed Kibbutz Erez. Others stood for nearly an entire day on an assembly line on the Hatzetim army base, packing food for the IDF.

The volunteers also spent a day playing games and singing with displaced young children from Sderot who have been living in a hotel for more than 100 days—each family crammed in one room. Many of these families lost loved ones on October 7

or were worrying about family members serving in the IDF. Many had lost their jobs and no one could tell them when they could safely return home.

“Our last day was also quite full and fulfilling,” said Beckman. “Joe and I chose to do more farming, so this morning we helped a farmer plant broccoli seedlings. It was several hours of real work. It was unseasonably hot and dry, but there is a real food security issue in Israel, and our help was greatly appreciated. We then went to a luxury hotel near Jerusalem to which an entire community had been evacuated. It was the religious community of Shlomit, and they brought a great many



children. The first responders of this community of 70 families divided their forces on October 7 to protect a nearby secular community (Pri Gan) that had no first responders. In three waves, the first responders of Shlomit were able to repel the terrorists, despite being significantly outnumbered. Not without a serious cost, however. Four fathers and husbands of the community were murdered, and four more were injured, two critically, but they saved many lives. Now, with four widows and 35 fathers gone for the reserves, they raise their families together as one. They have a very difficult choice to make soon - is it time to go back to Shlomit? They must come to consensus one way or the other. They are fully optimistic about their community's future. The message of the day was full of hope and love. Israel isn't going anywhere.”

The volunteers visited Hostage Square in Tel Aviv with its empty Shabbat table, each seat reserved for a hostage. They went to the site of the Nova festival where nearly 400 were killed, kidnapped or wounded on October 7. They chanted Yizkor and placed candles on the memorials. They also visited the Kotel and danced with Israeli soldiers while a Jewish National Fund-USA-supported band of young Israelis with disabilities beat drums, played keyboard and used their beautiful voices to sing for peace. “It was a huge



emotional swing,” said Beckman. “We went from the depths of despair while paying our respects to those murdered by Hamas at the Supernova festival to the height of Israeli ingenuity and patriotic spirit. We visited a spontaneous pit stop near the Gaza border, created from nothing, to give much needed respite to soldiers being forced to do terrible things by Hamas. There is food, music, games, showers, a place to pray and rest, all provided for free by volunteers. We



spoke to soldiers who were so appreciative of us just being there. By putting our lives on a short hold, we give them a huge lift.”

“We also had a show put on by a special unit of the army. Soldiers with special abilities - the army uses their special abilities and doesn't worry about what they are unable to do. It's an incredible way to help these women/men feel equally part of a society where everyone is needed to serve their country. Sad and happy tears were certainly shed.”

The trip had a tremendous impact on participants. DeMari said “It was meaningful beyond my expectations to be able to help in some small way, whether listening to the stories of events from evacuees and soldiers, building picnic tables, picking produce or sorting soldier's gear. I returned with a stronger Zionist spirit and a resolve to speak with our Jewish friends and educate my non-Jewish friends about Israel, anxious to share the details of what I experienced and how the Israelis had come together despite their recent political divide, with love for each other and a resolve to preserve the State of Israel.” Beckman added, “The trip reconfirmed all that I thought I knew about the Israeli spirit and maybe how Jews in the diaspora might better unify themselves against the forces of antisemitism, particularly those most perniciously masked as anti-Zionism.”





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**On March 24th at the JCC,
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You can participate in several ways:

1 Bring packaged foods from the list below* to the JCC on Sunday afternoon at 12:30 to decorate and pack bags. Volunteer at RSVP@jewishfederationcny.org.

*canned tuna, mayo, spaghetti, toilet paper, brownie mix, canned vegetables, canned fruit, soup mixes, canned tomato sauce

2 Donate bulk goods from the Amazon Purim Project wish list. <https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls?isYourLists=true>

3 Donate funds to be used to purchase foods here .

4 Help deliver the bags to the food pantry at Swiss Village on Wednesday, March 27th at 1 pm.

To volunteer, email bdavis@jewishfederationcny.org.

**THANK YOU and
CHAG PURIM SAMEACH!!**

Friends of the Central Library Bring Two Famous Jewish Writers to Town

International bestselling author Neil Gaiman and celebrated Pulitzer Prizewinning cartoonist Art Spiegelman will talk about cartooning and writing, working across artistic mediums, friendship, identity and more on Tuesday, May 7 at the Oncenter Crouse-Hinds Theater. The unique duo are respected friends and will be in conversation to close out the Friends of the Central Library's 29th season.



Pulitzer Prize-winning artist/illustrator and author **Art Spiegelman** has almost single-handedly brought comic books out of the toy closet and onto the literature shelves. In 1992, he won the Pulitzer Prize for his masterful Holocaust narrative *Maus*— which portrayed Jews as mice and Nazis as cats. *Maus II* continued the remarkable story of his parents' survival of the Nazi regime and their lives later in America. *Maus*, called "the first masterpiece in comic book history" by *The New Yorker*, received the Pulitzer Prize, the Angoulême International Comics Festival Best Foreign Album Award, the Eisner Award, and the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize for Fiction. The New York Public Library voted *Maus* one of the 125 most important books of the last 125

years. Spiegelman's *Meta Maus*, about why he wrote *Maus*, won the 2011 National Jewish Book Award.

Spiegelman believes that, in our post-literate culture, the importance of the comic is on the rise, for "comics echo the way the brain works. People think in iconographic images, not in holograms, and people think in bursts of language, not in paragraphs." Having rejected his parents' aspirations for him to become a dentist, Spiegelman studied cartooning in high school and began drawing professionally at 16. He studied art and philosophy at Harpur College before becoming part of the underground comix subculture of the 60s and 70s. As creative consultant for Topps Bubble Gum Co. Spiegelman created Wacky Packages, Garbage Pail Kids, and other novelty items, and taught history and aesthetics of comics at the School for Visual Arts in New York. His anthology, *Breakdowns*, includes an autobiographical introduction almost as long as the book itself, entitled "Portrait of the Artist as a Young %@&*!."

Neil Gaiman is one of the most celebrated writers of our time. In 2023, *Time* magazine named him one of the 100 most influential people in the world. "I make things up and write them down" is the way Gaiman describes his varied art. His groundbreaking *Sandman* comics was described by Stephen King as having turned graphic novels into "art." The *Los Angeles Times* called it the greatest epic in the history of the form. An issue of *Sandman* was the first comic book to receive the World Fantasy Award for Best Short Story.

Gaiman is the bestselling author of *Neverwhere*, *Anansi Boys*, *Good Omens*, *Smoke and Mirrors*, *Fragile Things*, *Trigger Warning*, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, *The Sleeper & the Spindle*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Norse Mythology*, and *The View from the Cheap Seats*. He is also the author of *American Gods*, winner of the Hugo, Nebula, Bram Stoker and Locus awards and proclaimed one of the 125 most important books of the last 125 years by the New York Public Library.

In 2020 Gaiman published *The Annotated American Gods*, *The Neil Gaiman Reader: Selected Fiction* and, for children, *Pirate Stew*. His works for younger readers include *The Day I Swapped My Dad for Two Goldfish*, *Odd and the Frost Giants*, *The Dangerous Alphabet*, *Cinnamon* and *Fortunately the Milk*. His young adult story, *Coraline*, won the Hugo, Nebula, Bram Stoker, and Locus awards and was adapted as a musical and opera. His children's novel, *The Graveyard Book*, is the only work to win both the Newberry and Carnegie Medals.



“Julian Plays Tchaikovsky” Symphoria Concert to Honor Local Benefactor



Award-winning cellist Julian Schwarz will present Tchaikovsky’s “Variations on a Roco Theme” at a Symphoria concert on March 9 sponsored by and in celebration of Cantor Robert Lieberman’s 65th birthday. Symphoria’s executive director Pamela Murchison explained that “Robert and Vicki Lieberman are wonderful supporters of Symphoria’s mission, and this is the second time they’ve chosen to celebrate a family milestone through Symphoria’s work. After a special string quartet performance in honor of Vicki’s birthday in 2021, Robert has chosen to mark his 65th birthday by supporting Julian’s appearance on March 9. To be a part of a family’s joys is a tremendous privilege for us, and we hope that many of Robert’s friends and family will join us to share music and friendship on this special evening.”

Heralded from a young age as a cellist destined to rank among the greatest of the 21st century, born to a multigenerational musical family in 1991, Julian made his concert debut at the age of 11 with the Seattle Symphony, with his father Gerard Schwarz on the podium. He made his U.S. touring debut with the Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra in 2010. Since being awarded first prize at the inaugural Schoenfeld International String Competition in 2013, he has led an active career as soloist performing with orchestras both in the United States and globally.

Julian has always had a particularly musical relationship with Judaism. His

first public performance was of Bruch’s “Kol Nidrei” at age nine, as part of the High Holy Days services at his family’s Seattle synagogue, and he continued to do so for eleven years. He is also particularly fond of the Jewish works of Ernest Bloch, which he recorded for the Milken Archive. Schwarz’s ongoing commitment to the music of Jewish experience includes projects with the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research such as the opening concert of the *Yiddish Folksong Today* festival last year. The concert included a world premiere by Annie Gosfield and Jewish classical music inspired by Yiddish folk song, including works by Prokofiev, Copland, Levi, Weiser, Ravel, Bresnick, Engel and Veprik.

Schwarz is a favorite returning artist with Symphoria. For the March concert, he will perform a piece that reflects Tchaikovsky’s admiration for what he called the “sunny genius” of Mozart and it is believed that Mozart’s work provided peace and serenity at difficult times in Tchaikovsky’s personal life. The “Variations” is, in some ways, an homage to Mozart. The second piece on the program, Mahler’s Symphony No. 5, is his only symphony without a chorus and was written during the period in which Mahler met and proposed to his wife, Alma. The famous *Adagietto* movement is much beloved and was conducted by the great Leonard Bernstein at the funeral for Robert Kennedy.

Tickets for the 7:30 pm performance on March 9 are available at www.experiencesymphoria.com or by calling (315) 299-5598. Children under 18 are admitted free of charge.





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CAMP ZEKE REUNION AND RECRUITMENT!



Families who attended Camp Zeke last June are cordially invited to a mini-reunion at Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas (18 Patsy Lane) on Sunday March 10 at 4 pm to reminisce and help plan the 2024 JFAM camp experience.

Anyone who is interested in attending the Shabbaton at Camp Zeke this year (June 28-30) is also cordially invited to attend to learn more about the experience.

Knishes, kisses, drinks and arts & crafts for the kids will be available.

Please register at
RSVP@jewishfederationcny.org



4 UNDER 40



Pierson "Four Under 40" Award Program

To enable the recognition of more of the amazing young adults in our community who are working to make it a better place, the Marjorie Oberdorfer Bronner Pierson and Theodore Pierson Family Endowment for the Jewish Future is rebranding its award program as "Four Under 40." The program will celebrate four noteworthy Jewish Central New Yorkers, all 40 years old or younger, who make Central New York and the larger community better by bringing energy and new ideas to religion, philanthropy, the arts, learning, social action and inclusion. These talented young adults are changing our community for good by building a more just society and creating community in innovative ways.

Four Jewish Central New Yorkers, chosen by a panel of community members from nominations made by the community, will each be awarded a donor advised fund of \$1,000 at the Jewish Community Foundation of Central New York to be used to support an organization with which they have worked or a cause they support. The "4 Under 40" program is run under the auspices of the Jewish Federation of Central New York.

The Central New York community is invited to nominate their favorite Jewish movers and shakers, advocates, entrepreneurs, philanthropists and community organizers using the outline below no later than 4 pm on March 22, 2024. *Self-nominations are accepted.*

- 1) Name of nominee:
- 2) Nominee's date of birth:
- 3) Where does nominee live and/or work?
- 4) Please describe nominee's current occupation:
- 5) In a few sentences, please describe the nominee's accomplishments and contributions to the local Jewish community and beyond. How is he/she changing the world? Why is he/she/they worthy of being one of 4 Under 40?
- 6) Email address to contact nominee:
- 7) Phone number to contact nominee:
- 8) Mailing address for nominee:
- 9) Email address to contact you (nominator)
- 10) Phone number to contact you (nominator)

Nominations should be submitted to bdavis@jewishfederationcny.org no later than 4 pm on March 22.

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Purim Murder Mystery Dinner and Mishloach Manot at Temple Concord

by Chana Meir

Inspired by Syracuse Stage's upcoming production of Agatha Christie's "Murder on the Orient Express," Temple Concord is adding a Murder Mystery Dinner to its Purim celebration this year. The dinner will take place at the Temple on March 23 at 7 pm, preceded by Havdalah. Tickets are \$75 for adults and \$36 for teens and each ticket includes dinner, dessert and one age-appropriate drink at the cash bar, which will be open throughout the evening.

Diners will circulate among different food stations at which characters from the Book of Esther will answer questions about the crime. After putting their heads together over a good meal, diners will offer guesses as to "who done it," and the table with the right answer will win a prize.

"At a time of stress and worry for the Jewish community, it's nice to be able to provide an evening of fun and celebration," Executive Director Diane Sacks said.

Childcare will be provided, with pizza, popcorn and a movie for children aged eight to twelve and crafting and snacks for children aged three to seven. To register for the dinner, go to templeconcord.org and click on the events calendar.

Temple Concord is also continuing its tradition of offering *Mishloach Manot* Dessert Boxes. Each \$10 box will include an assortment of festive baked goods, some homemade, including hamantaschen, brownies and cheesecake. Boxes can be picked up at the Temple during the Mystery Dinner or on Sunday March 24. **To order, please follow the link in our weekly e-bulletin or call the office at 315-475-9952. Orders must be placed by March 15.**

Temple Concord Goldenberg Cultural Series Presents Two Authors

by Chana Meir

Temple Concord will host two virtual book talks this spring as part of its Regina F. Goldenberg Cultural Series. On Thursday, March 14, at 7:30 pm, Andrew Lawler will discuss his book *Under Jerusalem: The Buried History of the World's Most Contested City*. This true story begins in 1863, when a French senator digging in Jerusalem discovered a stone casket filled with human bones, thought to belong to a queen mentioned in the Bible. As the news spread around the world, Jerusalem drew a global cast of missionaries, archeologists, treasure hunters and religious zealots eager to uncover the city's biblical past. "Their efforts transformed our understanding of Jerusalem's history," Lawler writes, "and sparked bloody riots, thwarted international peace agreements, and helped turn it into the world's most contested city." However, Lawler also sees this ongoing conflict as one that could "ultimately provide a map for two peoples and three faiths to coexist." Lawler is an award-winning journalist who has written for *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *National Geographic* and other publications.

On Thursday, April 4, at 7:30 pm, Adam Mansbach will discuss his novel *The Golem of Brooklyn*, a contemporary reimagining of the myth of a giant man-made being who protects the Jewish community in times of dire trouble. The Golem's creator is Len, a Brooklyn art teacher, who looks at the mountain of clay he's brought home from school and decides, while high, to form a Golem. Once his nine-foot-six, four-hundred-pound creation comes to life, Len – unable to communicate with the Golem in Yiddish – enlists the help of bodega clerk Miri, who understands the Golem's role and sends the three of them on a hero's journey. *The Golem of Brooklyn* is a highly original, darkly funny and poignant commentary on antisemitism and the dream of its eradication. Mansbach is the author of more than a dozen books, including the #1 *New York Times* bestseller *Go the F*ck to Sleep*, the California Book Award-winning *The End of the Jews* and the bestselling *A Guide to the Jewish People* with Dave Barry and Alan Zweibel.

Both events are free. To receive the Zoom link, register by clicking the link on the Events Calendar at templeconcord.org.

12 jewishfederationcnny.org | March 2024

Sarah Hurwitz Comes to Syracuse

by Yolanda Febles

Sarah Hurwitz, best-selling Jewish author, former chief speechwriter for Michelle Obama and scholar-in-residence visits CBS-CS and Syracuse Hillel April 5-7. Known for her dynamic ability to connect with diverse audiences, Hurwitz is set to engage various demographics within the Jewish community with special attention to youth and their parents.

In her acclaimed book, *Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and Deeper Connection to Life – in Judaism*, Hurwitz eloquently chronicles her journey from a Hebrew school dropout to a reflective commentator on Jewish heritage. Her work sheds light on the enduring relevance of ancient Jewish thought in contemporary life. Offering more than a typical how-to guide, her book serves as a compelling WHY-TO guide, illustrating why Judaism is significant and how its timeless wisdom can profoundly transform individuals across all ages and backgrounds. It invites readers to uncover the hidden aspects of Judaism that have always been integral to the faith.

CBS-CS and Syracuse Hillel are excited to offer various events over the weekend, allowing the community to engage with Hurwitz's uniquely pragmatic insights on the essence of being Jewish:



Friday Evening, April 5, at Syracuse Hillel with Epstein School: Services and dinner for 11th and 12th graders and their parents, with Hurwitz discussing the spiritual journey pertinent to late high school and young adult years.

Saturday Morning, April 6, at CBS-CS: A Shabbat service and luncheon featuring Hurwitz, delving into themes from her book and blending ancient wisdom with modern quests for meaning.

Sunday Morning, April 7, at CBS-CS: A session for parents of young children, addressing contemporary spirituality and parenting challenges.

The weekend promises an inspiring exploration into the heart of Judaism, guided by Hurwitz's fresh perspectives and impactful insights. It highlights the vibrancy and relevance of Jewish tradition for all community members beyond mere nostalgia and obligation. Special thanks to the Jewish Federation of Central New York Philip L. Holstein Community Program Fund and the Leonard and Irwin Kamp Foundation for their support.

CBS-CS Purim Extravaganza

By Yolanda Febles

Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevre Shas is planning an incredible Purim celebration featuring not just one, but two exciting programs. A unique Purim experience is being offered at the Seneca Street Brew Pub at 8:00 pm on Saturday night, March 23, for an abridged and unconventional Megillah reading. For parents in need of a night out, childcare will be available at CBS-CS. On Sunday, March 24, Purim 5784: Viva "Lots" Vegas will begin with a morning minyan and a Megillah reading, followed by an unforgettable Vegas-themed Purim Party in the social hall. The event pays homage to the Purim tradition of savoring tricky foods that might appear treif but are, in reality, kosher. Participants can challenge their luck with games like bingo, with a chance to win fantastic prizes and all proceeds going to charity. The highlight of the day will be a heist-themed Purim Shpiel, "Esther's 11," open to actors of all ages.

JCC Summer Camp Registration Now Open

by Erin Hart

Warmer weather is approaching, which means it's time to register for Summer Camp at the JCC. Registration begins on March 1.

"We are very excited to get ready for Summer Camp this year," said Amy Bisnett, associate director of children's programming at the JCC. "It's always a special time of year, and this summer we have some exciting new camps, weekly themes, activities and field trips." The entire Camp from early childhood, school age and tween/teen follow the weekly theme with age-appropriate activities for everyone!

New this year for school-age children: Zoo Explorers Camp and Wizardry School Camp. Wizardry campers will experience the fun and magic of the fictional school brought to life. Students will create their own wands, compete in quidditch and learn magical new tricks. Zoo Explorers was made for children who are animal enthusiasts. Campers will deepen their knowledge of animal species, create their own zoo and visit local ones.

These new camps are offered through the JCC's School-Age Camp (for children in grades 1-6). For this age group families can choose between traditional Nitzanim Day Camp which follows a weekly theme of activities, and weekly field trips, or Specialty Camps to explore a particular area of interest. From gaming to horseback riding, karate to gymnastics, the Jcc truly has a camp for every child. All school-age camps include daily Red Cross swim lessons with additional free swim time each day.

The JCC also offers Early Childhood Camp (for children 6 weeks to 5-years old), which runs for eight weeks and offers both indoor and outdoor activities as well as daily Red Cross swim lessons for children 18 months and older. This is a great



introduction for young children to what summer camp can offer with special activities, swimming, new friendships and more. This allows children of all ages to experience the true magic of camp.

The JCC is proud that it is one of the only camps in Central New York that offers a day camp for 7 – 10 grades. SyraCrusin' Teen Travel Camp runs for five weeks each summer. Campers can choose to attend one week or all five. The groups form a connection as they travel to different destinations each day, with no two days the same. The types of field trips are endless and can include area parks, bowling, laser tag, swimming, museums, putt putt and more. Each week they will travel to an amusement park as well. One thing that really makes SyraCrusin' special is that the group spends



time volunteering and giving back to the community each week.

Making its highly anticipated return this year will be the Israeli Scouts *shaliach*. The *shluchim*, also known as Israeli Scouts, are two teen ambassadors from Israel who will come and spend the summer here at the JCC. This is a unique opportunity to connect children to Israel as the scouts lead many activities throughout the summer. They will offer daily culture-based activities for the entire Nitzanim Camp program. "We are looking forward to hosting the *shluchim* once again this summer at the JCC" says Pam Ranieri, director of Children's Programming. "This will be the first year since 2019 that we have been able to bring them back to the JCC of Syracuse. They bring such energy to the daily camp program, and we can't wait to meet our scouts for this year!" During their time at the JCC, the *shluchim* will spend each week with a different host family. The JCC is looking for families for the Scouts. **For more information, please contact Amy Bisnett, abisnett@jccsy.org.**

The Israeli Friendship Caravan will also be visiting again this summer. The Israeli Friendship Caravan is teens from Israel, Israeli Scouts,



who travel across the US and Canada visiting different camps. They put on a full singing and dancing performance for the campers and another in the evening open to the community. This is one of the most anticipated days in camp and all of our campers enjoy the show. The show is expected to be in the beginning of August.

The camp day runs from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm with both early and late care available, expanding the hours to 7:00am – 6:00pm for those that need the extra time. Camp runs from July 1 – August 23. Camps are open to both members and non-members of the JCC, although members receive a large discount. Depending on the number of children and number of weeks enrolled, the entire membership fee can be saved on camp tuition. It really pays to become a member. For more information on how to become a member and all the benefits included please contact membership director Nick Finlayson.

To register and learn more about the JCC's camp offerings, visit jccsy.org/summer-camp/ or reach out to Amy Bisnett at 315-445-2360 or abisnett@jccsy.org.

JCC Purim Carnival March 17

by Erin Hart

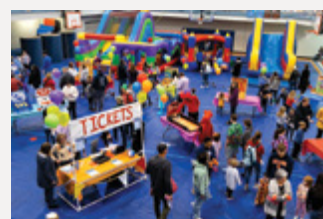
The JCC Purim Carnival will be held on Sunday, March 17 from 12-4pm. The entire JCC will be transformed into a fun and exciting carnival complete with games, inflatables, face painting, prizes and more.

"Purim is a day of fun and excitement for the community," says Marci Erlebacher, executive director of the JCC. "It is our way to say thank you to the community that has supported us all year long. Come join us for the most anticipated family event of the year!"

Esther's Cafe will also be open to serve up a kosher menu including corned beef, knishes and hamantaschen as well as a concession stand with popcorn, cotton candy and warm pretzels.

Each year the JCC also hosts information tables for invited local community organizations. To enhance the experience this year, "Passports" will be provided for all participants to be stamped at each table. Once individuals fill out their "Passports," they can take them to the prize room for a free prize.

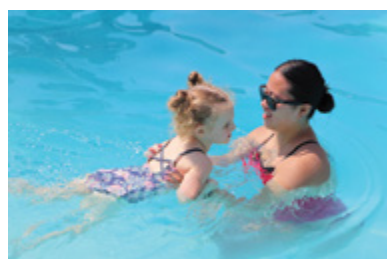
For more information about the Purim Carnival please reach out to Alana Raphael at araphael@jccsy.org.



TAY Reading Between the Wines for Purim

by Sonali McIntyre

TAY is pleased to present Reading Between the Wines, an evening of Megillah and wine tasting on Saturday evening, March 23 beginning at 8 pm. This program is for adults only. Both alcoholic and non-alcoholic options will be available with nosh and dessert. The program is sponsored by the Barbara and David Simon Holiday Celebration Fund. On Sunday, March 24, TAY will host a Family Purim Celebration with in-person *Shaharit* at 9:30 am led by Rabbi Moshe Saks, followed by the Megillah reading beginning at 10:30 am. Costumes are encouraged. **Email info@adath.org for more information.**



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Report from a Former Syracusan in Israel



Originally from Syracuse, NY, Meir Patel [formerly Seth Poltenson] received his BA in American history and political science from Tulane University and his MS in resource management from SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry. He moved to Israel in 1992, served in the IDF Infantry, grew dates and fish on Kibbutz Sde Eliyahu, managed the Livnot U'Lehibanot program in Tzfat and currently lives in the Golan Heights with his wife Nechama and their six children. Here is his firsthand report on the Miluimnikim [Reservists] in Israel in the beginning of February.

Since Oct. 7th, there is a lot going on in this country, besides the actual fighting taking place in Gaza, Lebanon and other hot spots. Thousands of people have been volunteering with farmers, making up for lost labor, fundraising and supplying equipment to soldiers and others to fill gaps or just upgrade existing equipment, making food for soldiers and the families of soldiers to make life a bit easier, volunteering with the kids displaced from the northern border and areas around Gaza. Not to mention the thousands that have been active supporting the families and friends of the hostages.

Then there are the Miluimnikim or Reservists who were called up on Oct. 7th. There is a group of them that have set up tents in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and near the Gaza border, who have refused to go home after being released from duty. They are disturbed by what they see as potential failure to achieve the aims of the war. They do not want this to be just another round of fighting between Israel and Hamas and are willing to remain on reserve duty for as long as it takes. They are demanding complete

victory, with the following goals:

Territorial Control: Because it is the most painful loss to the enemy and it is the only way to provide real security. If Israel does not control the territory, terror will rise again, be it Hamas or some other organization.

Emigration: Plans should be considered to encourage Gazans to emigrate to other countries and support them if they choose to do so. In just about every conflict that has created such issues around the globe, emigration has always been part of the solution, as it should be now.

Renewal of Regional Deterrence: Destruction of Hamas militarily and politically in Gaza and the loss of territory as a result of their actions is the only way to restore Israel's deterrence in the region. Failing to do so will only bring more violence, kidnappings, displacements around the borders and death upon Israel's citizens.

The government has stated the war goals as destroying Hamas militarily and politically in Gaza and returning the hostages. At least the reservists have defined what part of that might look

NEWS FROM ISRAEL



- *Done but not completed* is the title of a very emotional film from Israel's Schneider Children's Hospital, where many (but not all) young hostages released from Gaza have been reunited with their families. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNRFnNvoipc>
- Some 6,000 Tel Aviv University students are serving in the IDF reserves. At least 1,000 more are volunteering to help patients at hospitals; make food for serving soldiers, harvest fields and transport people to the Gaza border; help run factories at evacuated kibbutzim, and more.
- In the middle of fighting a war, IDF reservists discovered a 4-year-old Gazan girl who got lost, stumbled barefoot into an IDF camp and fell asleep. They bandaged her injured feet and then arranged for an ambulance to take her to the safe civilian area of Southern Gaza.
- Many of the IDF's heroic efforts go unnoticed, such as the rescue of abandoned animals from Gaza. They include cats, dogs, parrots, owls and even a neglected, malnourished lion from the Gaza Zoo. Israel's Nature and Parks Authority is working with the IDF to bring the lion to safety.
- Students and professors at Israel's Technion created Rhetoric AI to report social media posts that violate terms of service and produces counterarguments in Arabic, Hebrew or English for volunteers to utilize in their responses.
- Volcani Partners International has launched a \$50 million emergency fund to rebuild farming communities near the Gaza border badly damaged on October 7. The "ReGrow Israel" initiative will help fund replacement of vital equipment and infrastructure needed to rehabilitate soil and replant crops.
- Organic Israel was improving food quality in Israel and getting organic produce to low-income families. But after October 7, the NGO switched its efforts to help struggling farmers on the Gaza border. It created "First Aid for Wounded Farms" to replace or repair equipment damaged by Hamas.
- Israeli spirits company Negave Estates aims to help rebuild and resuscitate the Negev communities devastated in the October 7 attack. They plan to bring blue agave from Mexico and grow it in the Negev.

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RICHARD KAMP

January 3, 2023

Richard Kamp, 64, passed away at his home in Alpharetta, GA on January 3. Born on December 3, 1959 in Syracuse to Donald and Gertrude Hoffman Kamp, he lived most of his life in Syracuse until moving to Alpharetta to be closer to family.

He was a graduate of Jamesville-Dewitt High School and earned his bachelor's degree from RIT. He worked for the family business, Fulton Iron and Steel Company of Fulton, NY and was a principal in Fulton Scrap Processors LLC of Alpharetta, GA. Richard was a championship winning skeet shooter and an avid "car guy."

He was a devoted son to his father Donald, brother to Gary and sister-in-law Fran, doting uncle to Nathaniel (Kate), Matthew (Brandi), and Gregory (Kate), and great uncle to Barrett, and Liam, and Phoebe. He was predeceased by his beloved mother Gertrude.

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ROSE REBECCA BAUM

January 6, 2024

Rose Rebecca Baum, 94, passed away at home on January 6. Rose was born on April 30, 1929 to Morris and Lena Reich Mesches in Buffalo.

Rose met her future husband on a double date with Marty and Beth Lewin in Buffalo. There was a spark that led to their marriage of 50 years. They settled in Syracuse where they raised their four boys. Having her four sons in a period of five years was the delight of her life.

During her professional career, Rose worked at the Syracuse University Student Union where she was responsible for working with many student organizations arranging special events. She also worked side by side with her husband in their family business, Ralph Baum Associates, always enjoying traveling with Ralph to the national conventions around the country.

Rose was always an active volunteer in her sons' schools at the PTA, where she was a past president and treasurer, and in their Cub Scout and Boy Scout

troops. She was a den mother for all of her boys. She enjoyed her weekly bridge games, lunches at the Jewish Community Center, doing jigsaw puzzles and watching lifetime movies. She and Ralph attended OASIS classes and were loyal fans of SU Basketball.

She was a member of Temple Adath Yeshurun and B'nai Brith.

Her family includes her sons Edward (Karen), Laurence, Ronald and Andrew (Clint), grandchildren Loren (Yaffa), Jordan, Leah, Lindi and great-grandchildren Leah, Lizette, Charlie and Miriam. She was predeceased by her husband Ralph in 2006, grandson Aaron in 2013 and her beloved "sister" Doris Rudolph in 2020. The family would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the loving care given by Kathy, Lisa, Ariana, Liz and especially Heather.

Contributions to perpetuate Rose's memory may be made to Temple Adath Yeshurun, the Senior Lunch Program at the JCC or Cancerconnects, Inc., HOACNY, 500 Brittonfield Parkway, Suite 8106, PO Box 2010, Syracuse, NY 13057

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raising their own families and becoming a strong part of a wonderful community.

Arlene was a member of Temple Adath Yeshurun.

Her family includes her children Robin (Jeff) Smith, Bruce (Stacie) Berkowitz and Cindy (Jeff) Stein, grandchildren Brianna and Alea Smith, Evan, Corey and Emma Stein, her brother Stan (Andrea) Knoller, niece Bari, great-nieces Mia and Hannah, nephew Eric (Ting) and great-nephews Joshua, Jeremy and Samuel.

Contributions to perpetuate her memory may be made to the Senior Meal Program at the Jewish Community Center: jccsyr.org or Magen David Adom, the Israeli Red Cross: mdais.org

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**ARLENE KNOLLER**

January 16, 2024

Arlene Knoller, 81, passed away on Tuesday at Menorah Park with her family by her side. Born in Philadelphia on November 19, 1942 to Bertram and Bessie Knoller, she had been a resident of Syracuse since 1991 when she moved to Syracuse to be closer to family.

During her professional career in Syracuse, Arlene was a sales representative for the CNY Business Journal. She enjoyed her life in Syracuse, spending time with her brother Stan and his wife Andrea and what became a large and loving extended family. Both of her daughters settled in Syracuse as well,

16 jewishfederationcny.org | March 2024

MILDRED SIMINOFF

January 18, 2024

Mildred Siminoff passed away on January 18, 2024. She was born in the Bronx but moved to Syracuse, her beloved adopted city, in 1959, where she raised three daughters and was the president and founder of Career Guide since 1975. For almost 50 years, she assisted local businesses find "the right person for the right job" and aided thousands of Syracuse residents to make their way into and through a constantly-evolving job market. Career Guide was not just a business for her, it was a passion. She was predeceased by her devoted husband, Dr. Paul Siminoff, and a daughter, Julie. Surviving are two daughters, Drs. Laura and Faren Siminoff, two grandsons, and four great-grandchildren.

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JOAN JACOBS

January 23, 2024

With great sadness, the family of Joan Jacobs, 92, announces her passing. To know her was to love her, both for family and friends. And the sweetness of her memory, time can neither dim nor end.

A Brooklyn native, Joan lived in the Syracuse area for most of her life. She is remembered for her captivating smile, cheerful humor, keen sense of style and kindness she extended to others. Joan was first to make a meal or offer rides for those in need and never missed an occasion important to loved ones.

Joan was a graduate of Syracuse University School of Journalism and was a member of Phi Sigma Sigma. She cheered for all Syracuse sports and was a lifelong fan. Joan was a member of Hadassah and Temple Adath Yeshurun. She was active in many charitable organizations and was a member of Brockway Farms Garden Club. Her passion for nature led her to become an active bird watcher. She enjoyed playing and watching tennis. She was a former member of the Cavalry Golf Club.

Joan's greatest joy came from loving, hosting and caring for family and friends. She was predeceased by her beloved husband Bruce, her parents Rosalie and Hank Goldsmith, her sister Thelma and her brother Donald. She is survived by children Robin (Thomas) Doud, Caren Jacobs, Jonathan (Marianne) Jacobs, grandmother to Jenna (Bryan) Wise, Caley Fain, Beth (Rory) Tomashoff, Kara Doud, Andrew (Maddie) Jacobs and Michael Jacobs and by two great-grandsons, nieces and nephews.

Joan's family thanks the Shepherd Home in Penfield caregivers for their extraordinary care.

In lieu of flowers, please donate in Joan's memory to the charity of your choice

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**BARBARA LYNDA VURAL**

January 24, 2024

Barbara Lynda Vural passed away peacefully surrounded by her family at Crouse-Irving Memorial Hospital on January 24, 2024. She was born on November 3, 1937, to Irving and Hanna "Honey" Weiner, in Brooklyn NY.

Barbara was an accomplished artist and graduated with a BFA and MS in art education from Syracuse University and taught locally in the Jamesville-DeWitt and Westhill school districts for many years. A lifelong educator and artist, she touched countless individuals with her generosity and optimism.

She is survived by her sister Corinne Sherman of Sunnyvale, CA, her son Jonathan and daughter-in-law Jeanne Vural of Salem, MA, her son Adam Vural of Syracuse, NY, and her son Matthew Vural of DeWitt, NY. She leaves her loving grandchildren Maya, Isaac, Casper, and Bella.

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LARRY DAVID LOEB

January 27, 2024



Larry David Loeb, 72, passed away on January 27. He always approached life with such hope, as exemplified by navigating his health challenges like a warrior.

Being a graduate of Kent State University, he parlayed his business acumen into a variety of enterprises, lastly, being owner of Signage Systems. One of his greatest dreams was to have his children follow in his footsteps, as did Casi as a receptionist and ultimately Scott taking over the entire business.

Larry was an avid golfer, developing a wonderful camaraderie with the guys he played with. He even parlayed those skills into running a fundraising golf tournament for Saint Joe's for decades. Maintaining close relationships with childhood friends was another wonderful testament to Larry's character.

Larry loved his family dearly. They include his wife of 50 years, Margie, daughter Casi (Mike Watson) and son Scott Loeb. He was predeceased by his sister Marsha Greeson and his brother Jeff Loeb. Family also includes his brothers-in-law, Arnold Maloff, Stephen Maloff and Jeff Maloff, sister-in-law Joanne Maloff and many nieces and nephews.

Contributions to perpetuate Larry's memory may be made to the Jewish Community Center.

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KAYLA IRENE GOLDSTEIN

January 29, 2024

"The fairest garden in her looks, in her mind the wisest books." Alas, the final passage in the Book of Life has been written. Kayla Irene Goldstein, 90 years young, daughter of Benjamin and Rose Isaacs, passed peacefully with family at her bedside. She lived a fulfilled life with many wonderful years at the side of her late husband, Fred.

Kayla was born in Syracuse, the youngest daughter of Benjamin and Rose (Rutkoff), sister to Marvin Isaacs and Delores (Sachar) who predeceased her. She graduated with honors from Syracuse University with a degree in education. Married in 1954 to her beloved Fred, life took her to Miami, FL where her children, Gary and Wendy (Hallock) were born. She was subsequently uprooted to Indianapolis, IN, where many wonderful and memorable years were spent raising her family and enjoying dear friends. Eventually life returned her and her family back to her roots in Syracuse where she entered into business with Fred as proprietors of Mitzi's Place, a women's fashion boutique in Fayetteville. They were active members of Lafayette Country Club and Temple Adath Yeshurun and Temple Society of Concord, enjoying years in the company of friends, family and life passages. Following Fred's passing, Kayla went to work at Cohoe's and eventually Macy's where she remained until retiring at age 80. Life took her on one last journey to Tucson, AZ to enjoy her final years with her son and grandchildren.

She is survived by her son Gary (Jessica), Wendy (Joseph Hallock), grandchildren Rachael (Zachary Yaw), Benjamin, Tyler (Paulina), Brandon (Dorine), Adam, Madison and Luke, and great-granddaughter, Juliana.

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