

# THE REPORTER

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## BU Department of Judaic Studies and Center for Israel Studies announce fall programs

The Binghamton University Department of Judaic Studies and Center for Israel Studies will hold the following fall programs:

- ◆ On Wednesday-Thursday, October 3-4, Ruth Gavison campus visit and public lecture on the new nationality law. Ruth Gavison is an Israeli law professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Her areas of research include ethnic conflict, the protection of minorities, human rights, political theory, judiciary law, religion and politics, and Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. She is a

member of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities. On Wednesday, October 3, from 3-4:30 pm, in Admissions Center 189, there will be a public lecture on the New Nationality Law. On Thursday, October 4, from noon-1 pm, in Library Tower 1310, there will be a roundtable with students.

- ◆ On Sunday, October 16, from 7:30-9:30 pm, Ran Tal will screen his documentary film "The Museum," about the Israel Museum, in Admissions Center 189. After the public screening, there will

be a question-and-answer session with the director. "The Museum" (Israel 2017, 74 minutes) is in Hebrew with English subtitles. According to publicity material, "It is a film that observes, examines and ponders Israel's most important cultural institution, the Israel Museum. The film follows the visitors, observes the observers, listens to the speakers and descends to the storerooms, labs and conference rooms."

- ◆ On Tuesday, October 30, from 7:30-9:30 pm, in Admissions Center 189, there will

be a public screening of the recent Israeli horror film "Big Bad Wolves" (Israel 2013, 1 hour 50 minutes) directors/writers: Aharon Keshales, Navot Papushado). The film is in Hebrew with English subtitles. In the film, a series of brutal murders puts the lives of three men on a collision course: the father of the latest victim, now out for revenge; a vigilante police detective operating outside the boundaries of law; and the main suspect in the killings, a religious studies teacher arrested and released due to a police blunder.

## Holocaust memorial service on Sept. 16

By Arieh Ullmann

Area rabbis will lead a memorial service on Sunday, September 16, at 12:30 pm, at the Holocaust Memorial Monument in the Temple Israel Cemetery on Conklin Avenue in Conklin.

The memorial stone, which was originally dedicated on Sunday, November 9, 1952, is one of the earliest acknowledgments in the United States of the Holocaust. It is also one of the few memorial stones of its kind in the United States to contain the names of loved ones lost to Nazism.

The service will continue a tradition of holding a ceremony at the memorial on the Sunday between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. After the memorial's original dedication, the tradition lasted for about 20 years; it then resumed three years ago, following a long hiatus. It was the spontaneous reaction to Professor Rhonda Levine's talk about the Get Together Club at the Federation's

Super Sunday. The club was a social and philanthropic group formed in 1948 by 13 German speaking Jewish women – mainly rural women and wives of cattle dealers – who had resettled in the Southern Tier after fleeing Nazism.

The placement of a memorial stone was considered to be the "most ambitious" project of the Get Together Club. The project came about in response to a comment of a member's husband who bemoaned the fact that his parents, who perished in the Holocaust, had no grave and thus he had no place to say *Kaddish*. More than 250 names were inscribed and placed in a copper box that was buried at the foot of the monument. It listed the names of individuals who had perished without a marked grave. They were remembered by prayers recited at the unveiling of the monument by the rabbis, followed by one of the survivors reading the names written on the scrolls. A digital copy

of the original list of names buried in the copper box at the foot of the monument is available online on the Jewish Federation's website, [www.jfgeb.org/jfed743/](http://www.jfgeb.org/jfed743/).

Community members and Binghamton 3G students (third generation descendants of Holocaust survivors) have been invited

to submit names of loved ones who died during the Holocaust and who have no grave marker to be added to the list. Instructions are given on the Federation's website.

*Arieh Ullmann is chairman of the Federation Community Relations Committee.*

## JCC to hold Fall Festival fund-raiser on Sept. 30

By Paige Bartholomew

The Jewish Community Center of Binghamton will hold a Fall Festival family event on Sunday, September 30, from 11 am-2 pm. The festival will feature traditional fall-themed activities, with age-appropriate areas for toddlers, preschoolers and school-aged children. There will be a hayride, starting at the front circle of the building, with other activities spread throughout the property, such as yard games, sensory activities, and arts and crafts stations. The festival will also feature a face painting station for all ages and a concession stand.

A basket raffle will also take place throughout the festival. The ECC is currently taking donations of fully assembled baskets or singular items from area businesses and individuals; interested parties may contact Marley Vavra at the JCC by Sunday, September 23.

Admission to the festival is \$5 per person, with a \$20 maximum price per family. The entire community is welcome and encouraged to attend; those who come dressed in flannel will receive a free popcorn.

The festival is a fund-raiser for the JCC's Early Childhood Center. The event and all proceeds raised will directly benefit the JCC's Early Childhood Center. "The ECC is place that provides a warm and caring environment where children explore, experiment, play, grow and learn to ask questions," said ECC staff. Programming is offered for infants through age 5, including full day daycare and preschool, half day preschool, art and physical education classes, and Universal Pre-Kindergarten. Money raised will be put toward large motor and gym items to be used by daycare students.

For more information about the Fall Festival, the JCC's Early Childhood Center or the JCC, contact the JCC office at 724-2417.

*The JCC is a not-for-profit organization and partner agency of the United Way and the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton that serves the community at large regardless of age, race, religion and sexual orientation. Financial assistance is available to all who qualify as long as funds remain.*

## Piaker Memorial Lecture on Sept. 16

The annual Pauline and Philip Piaker Memorial Lecture will be held on Sunday, September 16, at 9:30 am, at the Chabad Center, 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal. The program will feature guest speaker Avi Jorisch, who will speak on the topic of his latest book, "Thou Shalt Innovate; How Israeli Ingenuity Repairs the World."

A brunch and desserts will be served. Jorisch will sign copies



Avi Jorisch

of this book, as well his four previous titles, after the lecture.

According to organizers, "'Thou Shalt Innovate' profiles wondrous Israeli innovations that are collectively changing the lives of billions of people around the world and explores why Israeli innovators of all faiths feel compelled to make the world better. This is the story of how Israelis are helping to feed the hungry, See "Lecture" on page 3

## Happy High Holidays



Observant Jews performed a Tashlich ceremony in Israel. (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

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## Opinion

# Social media and the hate-speech slippery slope

By Jonathan S. Tobin

(JNS) – Someone I know once told me that if his elderly mother ever wound up on Facebook, it would mean one of two possible things had happened: Either the social-media giant had become passé or literally everyone on the planet would have acquired a Facebook account. Several years later, it's clear that even if not every human being has an account, those who don't are clearly out of step with the rest of society.

With more than two billion users worldwide and the number growing daily, Facebook, and to a lesser extent, Twitter, aren't so much private social networks as they are what must be considered the moral equivalent of a public utility. Perhaps a majority of Americans appear to be now getting most of their news from their Facebook feeds – something that ought to scare us for a lot of reasons, but also demonstrates the site's ubiquitous nature. And, like it or not, the best way to find out what's on the mind of the president of the United States is via Twitter, not the filtered analysis provided by even the most reliable news outlets.

But the popularity of these sites brings with them some

unwanted responsibilities. We already know that bots and fraudulent campaigns were the attempts to influence the 2016 election with "fake news." While the impact of those efforts on the election was probably negligible, it still raised questions about whether social-media companies can or should police their sites.

Just as worrisome is the spread of hate speech on the Internet. That problem came into focus recently when Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg said that, while as a Jew he was personally deeply offended by Holocaust denial, he wasn't sure that censoring it was his job or even the right thing to do.

The massive pushback against that statement led to a cowed Zuckerberg issuing an apology. But the issue of what to do about hate speech is not as simple as the swift verdict of a social-media mob's kangaroo court. Moreover, it is one that Jews must think seriously about before jumping to the conclusion that Zuckerberg should ban Holocaust-deniers or other hateful antisemites.

The Internet has provided extremists with platforms that have given them the ability to insinuate themselves

into the national conversation in a way that would have once been impossible. That is something those of us who monitor the rising tide of antisemitism that has spread across the globe must view with alarm. A world in which both Holocaust denial and crude antisemitic libels that target Israel is prevalent is one in which violence against Jews is inevitable.

So it was hardly surprising that the organized Jewish world would react to Zuckerberg's reluctance to play the censor on Holocaust denial (which he improbably claimed might in some cases be "unintentional") with anger. The Anti-Defamation League made it clear that it felt that Zuckerberg had a "moral and ethical obligation" not to allow Holocaust denial to be spread on his website.

Outright Holocaust denial is indefensible. So, too, are the rants of a person like Alex Jones, who runs the Infowars conspiracy theory website. Facebook, YouTube and Apple all acted recently to shut down his social-media accounts. The public shunning of a repugnant figure like Jones, whose attacks on the families of the Sandy Hook shooting victims

See "Social" on page 4

## Too few Jews, Pew! Where are the "secular maximalists"? The Sunday brunchers?

By Andrew Silow-Carroll

(JTA) – The Pew Research Center's new typology of religion puts Americans into seven broad categories ranging from Sunday Stalwarts ("active in their faith and congregations") to Solidly Secular ("hold virtually no religious beliefs").

In between are the Relaxed Religious, who say religion is important, but don't hold much with traditional practices; the Diversely Devout, who believe in that old-time religion, but also psychic crystals and other new age enchantments; and the Spiritually Awake, who seem to believe in heaven and hell the way I believe in Marie Condo: I know I should declutter my house, but it ain't gonna happen.

What I found most interesting about the typology is the way Jews seem to blow up the whole thing.

According to Pew, "Jewish Americans are the only religious group with substantial contingents at each end of the typology." In other words, while most evangelicals are deeply religious, and Catholics and Mormons tend to cluster toward the believer side of things, about one in five U.S. Jews are, ahem, Shabbat Stalwarts, and 45 percent consider themselves nonreligious.

No surprise there: Every recent study shows that Jews are divided among the affiliated and the unaffiliated, the engaged and unengaged, the Alan Dershowitzes and the Adam Slanders. That's a quirk of Jewish identity itself, which allows a Jew to be defined by belief, biology, religious practice, peoplehood, nationality or whether or not he works as a lawyer for the Trump Organization.

It's why we call Judaism a family: There are people you'd really prefer weren't part of your family, but, you know, probate law makes it hard to disown them. I was told.

So Pew finds Jews on both ends of the religiosity spectrum. But the pollsters also miss a few key Jewish categories, under the laughable idea that there are only seven kinds of Jews. Hell, there are 10 kinds of Jews in any given minyan – and that's only 10 people to begin with.

Take, for example, the Shabbat Ironist. He or she is the kind of Jew who goes to synagogue every week, but does a lot of eye-rolling. The kind of Jew who doesn't believe in God, but will quit her synagogue board if it doesn't serve potato kugel at *kiddush*. The kind of Jew who shows up in a ton of jokes, including this one:

Cohen's son asks his atheist father why he goes to *shul*. "Because Goldberg goes to *shul*," his father says.

"What difference does that make?"

"Goldberg goes to *shul* to talk to God," his father says.

"I go to *shul* to talk to Goldberg!"

The late sociologist Charles Liebman even had a name for this: "secular Jewish maximalist."

Who else are we missing? Just like the SJMs deserve their own category, allow me to suggest a few more:

◆ Seder Perennials: Attend a seder every year, but insist on not enjoying it.

◆ Bagels and Lox-smiths: Fiercely traditional about choosing where they go for Sunday brunch.

◆ Media Resisters: Spiritual life is focused on finding fault with *The New York Times'* Israel coverage.

◆ Spiritually Woke: Retweet devastating takedowns of a political foe and call it *tikkun olam*.

◆ Un-Relaxed Religious: Follows along in the Torah portion just in case the reader makes a mistake and the rabbi, *gabbai*, cantor and eight other people don't yell out a correction.

See "Pew" on page 3

### In My Own Words

## Facing the new year

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

I know several people who find it difficult to attend High Holiday services, especially those on Yom Kippur. Not only doesn't the idea of a book of life resonate with them, they can't imagine a just judge deciding what will occur over the next year. They see too much pain – in their own lives and the world – to believe the imagery of the holiday has any meaning. Nor do they see any worth in asking for forgiveness for minor sins when the world is filled with evil people who reap rewards, rather than punishments.

None of the standard religious statements actually makes sense to them. What if we tell them, we can't understand the world or God, and therefore should just have faith? Then they may ask, "So, why are there laws that we are required to follow and promises made if there is no meaning to them? What is the purpose of saying repent and you shall live when that's not what happens? That makes a mockery of the idea of Torah." How about mentioning the idea that the wicked will be punished after they die while the good will be rewarded. "Fairy tales," they might say. "We've made up the idea to help us accept that life can be awful

and that there is no rhyme or reason to who lives well and who doesn't. And if there is no reason we can see, then why should we believe anything humans tell us about God?"

Actually, when someone says this to me, I sympathize because there is wisdom in their words. They are doing what the holiday asks us to do: look clearly at the world. I take a different tact, a different, less traditional approach to this time of year. While I love the image of a book of life, I don't think that one literally exists. For me, the holidays are a chance to look at my own life and see where I stand in regard to where I think I should be. My favorite High Holiday imagery is not found in the liturgy, but rather in the idea that we humans have a path we wish to follow, but during the year, we often stray from that path. Life takes over and we do what must be done, and far too often don't consider where that takes us. The High Holidays are a time to stop and look at our lives – to look at ourselves. Do we like the person we are? Have we become too negative? Or do we look on the bright side so much that we ignore the real pain others face? Are we taking care of our bodies –

that precious, fragile gift given to us? Do we remember to tell the people we love how much they mean to us? Are we brave when faced with difficulties? Are we fair in our dealings and make certain everyone is treated the same?

I know that the past year has not been filled with more illness and death than any other, but rather, as I and my friends age, more illness and death will occur. That is the nature of life; that is the nature of the world. As I look back at this last year and see who unexpectedly is no longer with us, I feel sorrow at the loss. As I look ahead to this next year, I can't help but wonder who may not be here at this time next year – even thinking that might include me. That reminds me of the need to find joy in what I have, something that is not always easy for me to do.

For me, it doesn't matter if you believe every word in the *machzor* (the High Holiday prayer book) or if you reject it completely. This time of year is for all of us – religious, secular and irreligious Jews – to take stock of our lives, for ourselves if not for anyone else, and grasp what beauty and love we can offer and find.



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#### OPINIONS

The views expressed in editorials and opinion pieces are those of each author and not necessarily the views of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton.

#### LETTERS

The Reporter welcomes letters on subjects of interest to the Jewish community. All letters must be signed and include a phone number; names may be withheld upon request.

#### ADS

The Reporter does not necessarily endorse any advertised products and services. In addition, the paper is not responsible for the *kashruth* of any advertiser's product or establishment.

#### DEADLINE

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# BD Shabbat luncheon series to kickoff on Sept. 15

Beth David's first luncheon event of the season will take place on Saturday, September 15. Rabbi Zev Silber's topic will be "Inspiration for Yom Kippur: What's Love Got to Do with It?" "This fascinating topic," organizers say, "is a very timely one, since it relates to Yom Kippur, which will begin on the eve of September 18, just a few days after the rabbi's talk." Silber's talk will focus on one of the most well-known prayers during the Yom Kippur service: the *Al Chet*, the confessional prayer that deals with sins committed during the past year. What is this prayer intended to accomplish? How does its recitation lead to the prayer's goal? In addition to addressing these questions, Silber will discuss the relation of



Rabbi Zev Silber

this prayer to love of God. "In my talk," Silber said, "I will discuss what this love can lead to with regard to mistakes we may have made along the way, and how love of God relates to other kinds of love, including love of other people and love of the stranger."

Silber has served as the rabbi of Beth David Synagogue since 2005. He earned his bachelor of arts degree in math and his master of science degree in Talmud at Yeshiva University. He received his *smicha* (rabbinic ordination) from Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University in 1970. In addition, he holds a master's degree in educational leadership from the University of Alabama in Birmingham.

Silber has been a teacher and principal in Jewish day schools in small and medium-sized Jewish communities for more than 40 years, including 13 years at Binghamton's

Hillel Academy, until his retirement in 2012. He continues serving in his position as rabbi at Beth David, and is now in his 14<sup>th</sup> year.

Beth David's luncheon speaker series usually takes place the second Saturday of the month after Shabbat morning services, and is open to the community. Because of Rosh Hashanah, it is taking place the third Saturday of the month in September. There is no charge for the luncheon. Since the monthly series' continuation depends on the generosity of contributors, Beth David welcomes donations to the Luncheon Fund in order to keep the program going. Donations can be made in honor of or in memory of someone, or to mark a special occasion. Those wishing an acknowledgment to be sent to the person being honored or to the family of someone being remembered can indicate that, along with the necessary information. Donations can be sent to Beth David Synagogue, 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905, Attention: Luncheon Fund.

## Beth David holiday preparation



L-r: Rabbi Zev Silber and Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu discussed the nature of the melodies that are part of the different holiday services, including those used during Selichot.

## TC Sisterhood paid-up program

Temple Concord Sisterhood will hold its annual paid-up program on Sunday, October 7, from 2-4 pm, at Temple Concord, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. The program will be Bunco. It is free and open to all Temple Concord Sisterhood members who have paid their Sisterhood dues for 2018-19 or who will pay them at the door.

In addition to playing Bunco, light refreshments will be provided. Reservations must be made by Sunday, September 23, by contacting Lani Dunthorn at [lani.dunthorn@yahoo.com](mailto:lani.dunthorn@yahoo.com), or 238-1102 or 348-4099. Programming chairwomen for this event are Dunthorn, Phyllis Kellenberger and Lisa McCarthy.

## Community Calendar

The Community Calendar can be found on the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's website, [www.jfgb.org](http://www.jfgb.org), by clicking on "calendar." Updates or additions of events for the calendar can be made by contacting the Federation through its website (click on "calendar") and then "click here to request a change to the calendar" or by calling 724-2332.

## Pew. . . . . Continued from page 2

- ◆ *Diversely frum*: Thinks he lives in a multicultural neighborhood because men can be seen in leather, velvet and knitted *kippot*.
- ◆ *Jewish-Adjacent*: Doesn't identify Jewishly, but enjoys suspension of alternate side of the street parking on Jewish holidays.

And where do I fit in? I call myself Professionally Jewish, which isn't one of the Pew categories, but really should be. I define it as "draws a paycheck for passing judgment on the lives of his co-religionists."

Andrew Silow-Carroll is the editor-in-chief of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

## Lecture. . . . . Continued from page 1

cure the sick, protect the defenseless and make the desert bloom. Israel is playing a disproportionate role in helping solve some of the world's biggest challenges by tapping into the nation's soul: the spirit of *tikkun olam* – the Jewish concept of repairing the world. Following Start-Up Nation's account of Israel's incredibly prolific start-up scene, "Thou Shalt Innovate" tells the story of how Israeli innovation is making the whole world a better place. Israel has extraordinary innovators who are bound together by their desire to save lives and find higher purpose. In a part of the world that has more than its share of darkness, these stories are rays of light."

The book, which is being translated into multiple foreign languages – including Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, Indonesian, Korean, Spanish and Vietnamese – features 15 Israeli inventions that are said to be changing the world. "Based on extensive research, more than 100 personal interviews and written by a Middle East insider, the book examines the driving force behind Israel's outstanding contributions to technology, science, agriculture, water management and defense," said organizers of the event.

Jorisch is an entrepreneur and Middle East expert. He is a senior fellow at the American Foreign Policy Council and founder of IMS, a merchant processing company that serves clients nationwide. A thought leader in exploring global innovation trends, the Arab world, counterterrorism and illicit finance, Jorisch previously served in the U.S. Departments of Treasury and Defense. He holds a bachelor's degree in history from Binghamton University

### Correct time for Piaker lecture

There was a typographic error in the mailed invitations to the Pauline and Philip Piaker Memorial Lecture. The event will take place at 9:30 am, rather than 10 am.

and a master's degree in Islamic history from Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He also studied Arabic and Islamic philosophy at the American University in Cairo and al-Azhar University, considered the pre-eminent institution of Sunni Islamic learning. An author of five books, including "Beacon of Hatred; Inside Hizballah's Al-Manar Television" and "Iran's Dirty Banking," Jorisch's articles have appeared in outlets that include *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Forbes* and *Al-Arabiya.net*. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Entrepreneurs' Organization.

"I am extremely excited about welcoming Avi to deliver the Piaker Lecture, a much sought after and dynamic speaker, a close personal friend (Avi graduated from Binghamton in 1997) and a brilliant scholar. Avi's presentation will enthrall, enlighten and make us all feel extremely proud of our Jewish homeland. I look forward to seeing everyone at the event," said Rivkah Slonim.

There is no charge for the event, but reservations are necessary and can be made at [www.JewishBU.com/Piaker](http://www.JewishBU.com/Piaker) or by calling Chabad at 797-0015.

## Early deadlines for The Reporter

Due to holiday closings, the deadlines for the following upcoming issues of *The Reporter* are as follows. *No exceptions will be made.*

Issue .....	Deadline
Friday, September 28 .....	Tuesday, September 18
Friday, October 5 .....	Wednesday, September 26

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# Amy Bach, author who researches criminal justice system, awarded \$100,000 Charles Bronfman Prize

By Josefina Dolsten

NEW YORK (JTA)—Amy Bach has won the 2018 Charles Bronfman Prize for her research in statistics about the criminal justice system. The organization announced on September 5 that it was giving the Jewish humanitarian award to Bach, a lawyer and award-winning author. She is the founder and executive director of Measures for Justice, an organization that provides data on the criminal justice system across the United States



Amy Bach won the 2018 Charles Bronfman Prize for her research in statistics about the criminal justice system. (Photo by John Schlia)

presented annually to a Jewish humanitarian under the age of 50 whose work draws on Jewish values. (Bach, now 50, was 49 in time for the nomination deadline in January.) Previous recipients include Israeli writer Etgar Keret, KIPP charter schools network co-founders Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin, and Gift of Life founder Jay Feinberg. The prize was created by Ellen Hauptman and Stephen Bronfman – together with their spouses Andrew Hauptman and Claudine Blondin Bronfman – in honor of their father Charles, a Jewish philanthropist and co-founder of the Taglit Birthright program.

Charles Bronfman praised Bach's work in a statement. "Amy's work revealed a critical gap in our criminal justice system, and she developed an ingenious method for filling it," he said. "She epitomizes the concern for social justice and entrepreneurial spirit that the prize recognizes."

Bach told JTA she was "thrilled" to receive the prize, which carries a \$100,000 award. She said she will give her prize money to her organization. "It means so much to the work that we're doing and to all the people on our team who've worked so hard to create public data that people can use so they can see how their county's justice system is working," she said in a phone interview.

Measures for Justice currently provides data for free on its website about six states' criminal justice systems, including statistics about case outcomes from arrest to post-trial. The data can be filtered by categories such as defendants' race and ethnicity, sex, age and offense type. The organization plans to release information about 14 additional states by 2020, Bach said.

"It's foundational that we need to see the problems in the criminal justice system before we can fix them," Bach said. "Otherwise, we're flying blind."

Founded in 2004, the Charles Bronfman Prize is

Rosalie Silberman Abella, a justice on Canada's Supreme Court, said in a statement on behalf of the prize's judges that Bach's research helps improve the situation of marginalized people. "Prison impacts some of the most disadvantaged," Abella said in a statement. "Amy's initiatives go toward taking care of people who can't take care of themselves, addressing universal issues of poverty, race, indigenous populations, the undereducated."

Bach, a graduate of Stanford Law School, first started investigating the criminal justice system as part of an article for The Nation about an overburdened public defender

## Social . . . . . Continued from page 2

should forever ban him from decent society as well as any credible news venue, was hard to argue with.

Yet the problem is not whether we ought to be outraged by hate speech, but whether we are really comfortable with people like Zuckerberg and their underlings using their power to shut some people or ideas down.

Private companies like Facebook have every right to ban anyone they like from their sites. But we should be wary of cheering such decisions because once you start down that slippery slope, the objects of such bans can quickly expand from those with odious and false views like Jones to the merely controversial or unfashionable.

Social-media companies have already flirted with banning users whose views they don't like, and the result has led to bans or "shadow bans" on Twitter. Many conservatives believe that tech-company personnel have disproportionately targeted them. Some on the left challenge that assertion, but political bans can never be limited to just one side. Moreover, when unreliable and partisan groups like the Southern Poverty Law Center are used to label some entities as controversial yet entirely defensible conservative organizations as hate groups, the result is a politicized purge, not a defense of the truth.

As scholar Deborah Lipstadt – who famously had to defend the truth of her scholarship in a British court when David Irving, a notorious Holocaust-denier, sued her – has

said, criminalizing hate speech is not the answer. Such bans undermine rather than aid the fight against antisemitism, which rests on exposure and highlighting the truth, as opposed to suppressing hateful speech.

What, then, do we do?

Perhaps the best answer comes from writer David French, who recommended that social-media companies should rely on a process that rests on facts proven in court, such as libel and slander judgments, and not arbitrary and often biased decisions rooted in smell tests about unpopular ideas. As it stands now, the same process that might sweep up undeniably bad actors could also wind up affecting pro-Israel advocates if prejudices against Jews or others out of step with intellectual fashion gain more traction in Silicon Valley.

While we must be vigilant in calling out hate and antisemitism whenever it rears its ugly head, Jews should think twice about cheering on the Internet thought police. If Facebook has truly become the world's public-information highway, then efforts to censor it by either the tech giants or the government should be something thinking people should worry about it, even when the intended objects of such bans are exactly the people we wish to expose as liars and hatemongers.

Jonathan S. Tobin is editor-in-chief of JNS – Jewish News Syndicate. Follow him on Twitter, @jonathans\_tobin.

who had little time for his clients. That story prompted her to look further at how people were being treated in the justice system and culminated in the publication of her book "Ordinary Injustice: How America Holds Court." In the book, which won the 2010 Robert F. Kennedy Book Award, Bach looks at how the shortcomings of the criminal justice system affect ordinary people.

A year later, Bach founded Measures for Justice. She says she draws inspiration from Judaism. "In terms of my Jewish values, it's making the world a better place and trying to make visible the invisible harm that people have to suffer on a daily basis," she said.

She added that her goal is both to help people in the criminal justice system who are suffering and people working in the system who "want to do the right thing, but can't see the problem yet."

Bach lives in Rochester with her husband, John Markman, a physician at the University of Rochester Medical Center, and their 10-year-old son, Leo.



## Jewish Harlem Walking Tour

The Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy will hold a Jewish Harlem Walking Tour on Sunday, October 14, from 10:45 am-1:30 pm.

Marty Shore, urban historian, will guide the group through the sites of Jewish religious life in the urban settlement of Harlem, once the second largest Jewish community in the United States. In 1917, it was home to more than 175,000 Jews. Among the attractions are the exteriors of the Ethiopian Hebrew Synagogue called "The Commandment Keepers," Temple Israel of Harlem, Congregation Shaarei Zedek and The Oheb Zedek Synagogue home to Cantor Yossele Rosenblatt in the 1910s-1920s.

The tour is approximately three hours long and walkers will meet at the plaza in front of the statue of Adam Clayton Powell Jr. State Office Building, 163 West 125th St., northeast corner. The cost is \$25 for adults and \$23 for seniors and students. There is an additional \$2 charge the day of tour. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [www.nycjewishtours.org/public-tours-and-events](http://www.nycjewishtours.org/public-tours-and-events).

## Podcast about "The Red Tent"

Jewish Women's Archives offers an episode of its podcast "Can We Talk?" featuring a conversation with Anita Diamant, author of "The Red Tent," with host-producer Nahanni Rous, JWA Executive Director Judith Rosenbaum, Rabbi Liza Stern and Rev. Gloria White-Hammond. They discuss the book's impact within the Jewish community and beyond, and its premise of giving voice and agency to the silent women of the bible.

The podcast can be found at <https://jwa.org/podcasts/canwetalk/episode-22-red-tent-claiming-our-place-in-story>.

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# Israelis want American Jewish help in promoting religious pluralism, study finds

By Ben Sales

(JTA)—For years, American Jewish groups have agitated for more religious pluralism in Israel. And year after year, the Israeli government has acted as if the country’s demographic and political realities make any kind of substantial reform impossible.

The latest version of an annual survey disputes that claim: It shows that Jewish Israelis disapprove of how their government handles religious issues. It shows that they want more liberal religious policies. And it says they want American Jews to intervene in the debate.

The one wrinkle is that when Jewish Israelis talk about “religious freedom,” they are mostly talking about a different set of issues than their American counterparts. American Jewish institutions have poured their energy into changes at the Western Wall and blocking restrictions on Jewish conversion. But Jewish Israelis mostly care about quotidian issues like public transit on Saturdays and government funding of yeshivas.

Those are some of the takeaways from an annual survey of attitudes among Jewish Israelis on religion and state conducted by Hiddush, an Israeli organization that supports religious pluralism. The survey questioned 800 Jewish Israelis in July and has a margin of error of 3.5 percent.

“The overwhelming majority views negatively the government’s policy on religion and state, opposes practically every aspect of any decision or any issue, whether it’s the [military] draft or marriage or public transit on Shabbat,” said Rabbi Uri Regev, the founder and CEO of Hiddush. “The public does want freedom, does oppose government decisions and policies. The public wants Diaspora Jewish involvement in promoting religious freedom.”

As it does every year, the survey found that Jewish Israelis are far more liberal on religious issues than their government. The government’s religious policies are largely administered by the *haredi* Orthodox Chief Rabbinate, which only recognizes Orthodox rabbis, Orthodox weddings, Orthodox conversion and Orthodox kosher certification. Israel bans nearly all public transit on Shabbat. It does not recognize same-sex marriages performed in the country.

But two-thirds of Jewish Israelis support separation of religion and state, representing an increase of 10 percentage points since 2012. Seventy percent back government recognition of all forms of marriage, including civil marriage—an increase from 53 percent in 2009. Sixty-six percent support the three major denominations of Judaism – Orthodox, Conservative and Reform – enjoying equal status in Israel.

Nearly half support recognition of all forms of Jewish conversion, while an additional 28 percent support a liberalization of current conversion regulations. More than 70 percent want increased public transit on Shabbat.

“There is a consistent and continual decline in people’s preference for the Orthodox option,” Regev, a Reform rabbi, said regarding marriage. “The self-righteous claim of the Rabbinate to be the authentic, authoritative, legitimate representative of *halachic* Judaism is not borne out by the people.”

The survey does have some good news for fans of Israel’s religious status quo. On issue after issue – from conversion to marriage to kosher certification – younger respondents favored more traditionalist policies than their elders. While more than 80 percent of respondents over age 50 support separation of religion and state in Israel, for example, only 42 percent of those under 29 do.

Regev said part of this divide is due to high *haredi* birth rates. But he said it’s also due to “an element of contrarianism you find in young people.”

And while only 22 percent of Israelis identify as religious or *haredi* – and 13 percent self-identify as Conservative or Reform – a greater part of the population has traditional religious tendencies. Nearly half of Jewish Israelis observe Shabbat partially or fully. And given the choice between different types of weddings, most would still opt to be married in an Orthodox ceremony – either under the Chief Rabbinate’s auspices or outside of it.

But while 76 percent of Jewish Israelis express dissatisfaction with the current government’s religious policies, it may not make a difference. Israelis have not historically voted on religious issues, prioritizing security and economic concerns. Even so, the survey found that most Jewish Israelis are more likely to vote for a political party if it supports increasing religious freedom.

“If they waver between party A and party B, and party A took a strong stand on this issue, it’s going to win brownie points with the voters,” Regev said, adding, however, that “It will depend on what happens, to a great degree, shortly before the elections,” which are scheduled for next year.

Whether or not they vote on religious issues, Jewish Israelis say they want Diaspora Jewry’s help in advancing religious pluralism. Two-thirds expressed support for Diaspora groups “working to strengthen religious freedom and pluralism in Israel.” That includes 65 percent of those who voted for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the 2015 election. Netanyahu froze a compromise last year – backed



Conservative Jews prayed at Robinson’s Arch in Jerusalem on July 30, 2014. (Photo by Robert Swift/Flash90)


by American Jewish groups – that would have expanded a non-Orthodox prayer plaza at the Western Wall.

The Western Wall has been the top religious policy priority for American Jewish groups over the past several years, but it doesn’t register with non-*haredi* Jewish Israelis. They told Hiddush that their most important religious issues were, in order: reducing government funding of Orthodox yeshivas, instituting civil marriage and allowing public transit on Shabbat. American Jewish groups have also pushed for civil marriage, but have not spoken out significantly on the other two issues.

“It’s not about giving carte blanche to American Jewry,” Regev said. “It’s saying these are things we feel strongly about... and we welcome your help. Clearly there is a disconnect over the wall. The wall, unlike marriage, is a symbol of what many American Jews feel so strongly about that in Israel is seen as a marginal issue at best.”




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# In Israel, discovering a shared reality through disability inclusion

By Ma'ayan Gutbezahl

(JNS) – The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has dragged on for so long and with such persistence that many have begun to wonder if it is has simply become Israel's new "normal." Despite the constant fighting and amplified tensions between the two populations, some hopeful pockets of coexistence do exist.

One such example can be found at Ono Academic College in Jerusalem, where an experiential education program focused on disability inclusion brings together young Jews and Arabs to develop educational programming for a segment of society that is often neglected.

The program was created by Dr. Noorit Felsenthal-Berger, a psychologist who began her career by comparing the maternal identity of secular and *haredi* (ultra-Orthodox) women. Her comparative research on different groups within Israeli society eventually led her to focus on students with special needs – those who learn differently than the general population and are largely under served. Bringing her expertise to Ono, Felsenthal-Berger created a hands-on program in disability studies that quickly became popular with young Arab and Jewish students who were trying to understand their own identities within the complex milieu of Israeli society.

"Many of my students have never even met someone with a disability before they join my program, and their experiences are often rather jarring at first," she says.

These experiences impact the students "so significantly" that they often consider quitting the program early. However, they rarely ever do. Felsenthal-Berger explains that this initial hesitation is typically followed by dedication and perseverance once the students take some time for introspection and begin to understand the importance of the task at hand.

"Learning to work with people who look and behave very differently is challenging, but they instinctually realize that sticking with this work is a societal imperative that is also personally rewarding," she says.

Together, the diverse group of students tackles 100 hours of field work in special education, engaging in hands-on experiential learning activities with groups of children with disabilities at different sites throughout Jerusalem, which culminates with a capstone workshop. Perhaps the most important element of the program is that the students are given the freedom to create and initiate projects of their own for the children and communities to which they are assigned.



Students with the disabilities inclusion program at Ono Academic College in Jerusalem. (Photo by Ma'ayan Gutbezahl)

"The projects are an opportunity for students to look outside of themselves and see the inherent humanity that all of us possess, no matter how different that other person may seem on the outside," says Felsenthal-Berger.

The experience extends beyond the scope of the projects developed for the children with disabilities to the team members themselves, a collection of students with diverse backgrounds. Working side by side in the classroom and on the same projects in the field, the "intense, emotional" experience, which is void of politics, often unites the Arab and Jewish students, allowing them to see beyond their cultural differences and work toward a common goal for the greater good. "For my students, being able to reach out to someone else and make their world better has the side effect of allowing them to see commonalities between people who are different on the surface, while simultaneously boosting their own self-esteem," explains Felsenthal-Berger. "It is in an empowering experience."

Many of the program participants grow up believing that they will never be able to change Israel's "status quo," and that there is a possibility that Arabs and Jews will always be at odds with one another. Yet through their work with the disability community and each other, they often become galvanized in ways that allow them to make positive changes, realizing that they have the power to forge their own paths in life and influence the world around them.

Rasha Aliyan, one of students in the program, was raised in the eastern Jerusalem Arab neighborhood of Beit Safafa. For years, she lived next door to a boy with disabilities, but rarely interacted with him. After joining the disability-studies program at Ono, she became interested in learning more about her neighbor and made an effort to get to know him.

"When I started the program, I told my neighbor about it. He was so happy that I was helping the disability community and learning about people like him," she recounts. "I wanted to be closer to him – to really understand his struggles and how I, and society, could help him and change the way that we look at people with disabilities."

Aliyan also became a mentor to a 16-year-old girl, who is blind and has cerebral palsy, at Ilanot, a school for children with severe disabilities in western Jerusalem. Although the girl is from Beit Safafa, Aliyan had never crossed paths with her prior to meeting her at Ilanot. Aliyan's interactions with individuals with disabilities in her own community inspired her to create her own project, which would partially integrate Ilanot students into Beit Safafa public schools in an effort to bring the community's children together. "I come into class and my students are all so excited to see me – to see someone who knows them and who accepts



A student in the disabilities inclusion program at Ono Academic College in Jerusalem worked with a community member on a painting project. (Photo by Ma'ayan Gutbezahl)

them. Our connections are real and mutual, and I have realized that there isn't much of a difference between us after all," she relates.

While working to promote disability inclusion and education in her community, Aliyan also became friends with many of the Jewish students who collaborated with her on the Beit Safafa project, realizing that they were also not nearly as different as she had been led to believe in her youth. "We all had an amazing connection throughout the course. We worked well together and learned a lot from each other. In the end, we realized that our differences weren't so drastic, and we had more in common than we could have ever expected," says Aliyan.

While Jewish-Arab friendships remain taboo throughout much of Israeli and Palestinian society, personal experiences can prove lasting and powerful. They can be used as a tool to chip away at a status quo steeped in conflict and tension, and make way for a brighter future. For Ono's disability studies students, those experiences have changed how the young participants view each other and reshaped their worldview.

"I grew up in Beit Safafa right next to the Jewish neighborhood of Gilo," explains Aliyan. "While Jews and Arabs live side by side every day, we don't get to know each other and don't really see each other as full people. Having experiences like this opens your eyes for the first time. There is just so much there that you didn't see before. But once you see it, it changes you forever."

## Students on archaeology program unearth a 1,700-year-old coin

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Students from schools in the Lev Hasharon Regional Council helping on an archaeological dig on the Sharon plain have unearthed an ancient coin dating back to the year 300 C.E., among other finds.

Most of the finds at the Kilodia site near Moshav Kfar Yavetz, east of Netanya, date to the early Muslim period (700-1050 C.E.). They include glazed bowls, wine jugs, decorative bronze weights, a bronze bell and semiprecious stones. The coin predates all these discoveries by several centuries.

The excavation is a joint project with Ariel University and is being overseen by archaeologist Ahiya Cohen-Tabor. Researchers believe that Kilodia was populated in the Byzantine period, based on the discovery of a wine press

with a mosaic floor typical of that era.

The students are helping with the excavation as part of the local council's Karev program, which is designed to interest young students in history and which spearheaded the first excavation at the Kilodia site. Relics were unearthed in the very first dig.

Cohen-Tabor said, "What's nice here is that local children are coming to investigate a site very close to their homes, and are discovering and getting to know the children who lived in the same place 1,000 years ago. The great thing about this project, other than the archaeological aspect, is that it's mainly educational," she continued. "One of the students said that if he had something like this in his backyard, he wouldn't touch his phone. For me, that's the most important thing."

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# Nine things you didn't know about Yom Kippur

By MJL Staff

(My Jewish Learning via JTA) – Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement, starts at sundown on Tuesday, September 18. Traditionally one of the most somber days on the Jewish calendar, it's known for fasting and repentance – not to mention killer caffeine withdrawal headaches. However, the holiday has some lesser-known associations as well.

1. The word “scapegoat” originates in an ancient Yom Kippur ritual.

Jews historically have been popular scapegoats – blamed for an array of ills not of their creation. But, and we're not kidding, they really do deserve blame (or credit) for the term scapegoat. In Leviticus 16:8 (in the Torah portion Acharei Mot), the high priest is instructed on Yom Kippur to lay his hands upon a goat while confessing the sins of the entire community – and then to throw the animal off a cliff.

2. Another animal ritual, swinging a chicken around one's head, has sparked considerable controversy, and not just from animal-rights activists.

In 2015, the *kapparot* ritual, in which a chicken is symbolically invested with a person's sins and then slaughtered, spurred two lawsuits in the United States: one by traditional Jews claiming their right to perform it was being abridged by the government and another by animal-rights activists. Centuries earlier, the ritual drew criticism from sages like the Ramban (13<sup>th</sup> century) and Rabbi Joseph Caro (16<sup>th</sup> century), whose objections had less to do with animal welfare than with religious integrity.

3. Yom Kippur once was a big matchmaking day. The Talmud states that both Yom Kippur and Tu b'Av (often described as the Jewish Valentine's Day) were the most joyous days of the year, when women would wear white gowns and dance in the vineyards chanting “Young man, lift up your eyes and see what you choose for yourself. Do not set your eyes on beauty, but set your eyes on a good family.” Given the aforementioned caffeine headaches and the difficulty of making a de-



Orthodox Jewish girls performed the kapparot ceremony in Jerusalem on October 10, 2016. (Photo by Ilia Yefimovich/Getty Images)

cision on an empty stomach, we're glad this particular tradition is no more.

4. Food and drink are not the only things Jews abstain from on Yom Kippur.

Other traditional no-nos on Yom Kippur include bathing, wearing perfume or lotions, having sexual relations and wearing leather shoes. The less-than-attractive aroma resulting from the first two restrictions (not to mention the romantic restrictions imposed by the third) may explain why the day ceased to be an occasion for finding true love.

5. In Israel, Yom Kippur is the most bike-friendly day of the year.

Although many Israelis are secular, and there is no law on the books forbidding driving on Yom Kippur, virtually all the country's Jews avoid their cars on this day. With only the occasional emergency vehicle on the road, bikers of all ages can be seen pedaling, even on major highways.

6. Eating a big meal before the holiday begins will make your fast harder rather than easier.

Traditionally, the meal eaten before beginning the fast is supposed to be large and festive, following the talmudic dictum that it is a mitzvah (commandment) to eat on the eve of Yom Kippur, just as it is a mitzvah to fast on Yom Kippur itself. However, eating extra food – particularly in one last-minute feast – does not help to keep you going for 24 hours, says Dr. Tzvi Dwolatzky of Israel's Rambam Health Care Campus. He suggests eating small amounts of carbohydrates (bread, potato, rice, pasta), some protein (fish, chicken) and fruit.

7. On Yom Kippur in 1940, London's Jews kept calm and carried on.

In the midst of the Battle of Britain, the relentless Nazi bombardment of London that began in September 1940, the city's synagogues went on with their Yom Kippur services. According to JTA, while air raid warnings “twice disturbed” the morning services on October 12, 1940, “most synagogues carried on regardless” and a “large proportion of the men attending services wore uniforms of the various forces.”

8. Yom Kippur's *Kol Nidre* services are the only night of the entire Jewish calendar when a prayer shawl is worn for evening prayers.

According to the late Rabbi Louis Jacobs, the *tallit* (prayer shawl) is worn during *Kol Nidre* as “a token of special reverence for the holy day.” It is traditional to wear a *tallit* or a white garment for the entire holiday, with the color white symbolizing both our spiritual purity and our removing ourselves from the vanities of the material world. Many people actually wear a white robe called a *kittel*.

9. A Virginia rabbi's pro-civil rights movement sermon on Yom Kippur in 1958 riled up local segregationists and sparked fears of an antisemitic backlash.

JTA reported that Virginia's Defenders of State Sovereignty group demanded that local Jews “move quickly to refute and condemn” Rabbi Emmet Frank of Alexandria's See “Nine” on page 8



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# Here's some savory for Sukkot if you've had enough sweet stuff at the New Year

By Megan Wolf

(JTA) – So much at the Jewish New Year is sweet – first fruits, honey, honey cake. By the time Sukkot rolls around, we're often looking for something savory to offset it all.

Regardless of the time of year, we have some favorites in our house. One is smoked salmon with cream cheese and vegetables on an everything bagel. This menu is a riff on that very dish, but with a lighter and healthier take on the very foods that make the flavors so delicious.

For a time saver, the fish can be crusted ahead of time and set, covered, in the fridge. This salmon is also delicious served cold the next day.

Everything bagel spices are now sold commercially, but they are also very easy to make at home.

## Everything Bagel Crusted Salmon

- 1 tsp. poppy seeds
- 1 tsp. sesame seeds
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1½ tsp. dried garlic
- 1½ tsp. dried onion
- ½ tsp. red pepper flakes, optional

- 4 5-6-ounce salmon filets
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil

Mix the spice ingredients together in a small bowl and crust each piece of salmon with the spice mix.

Heat half the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat, then cook 2 pieces of salmon skin side down for about 3 minutes, flip and cook on the seeded side another 5 minutes or so until cooked through to your liking. Repeat with the other 2 two pieces of fish. Set aside.



Everything Bagel Crusted Salmon (Photo by Megan Wolf)

## Creamy Tahini Salad

- ¼ cup tahini
- 2 lemons, juiced
- 2 Tbsp. hot water
- Salt to taste
- 2 English cucumbers, washed and quartered
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes, washed and quartered

In a small bowl, whisk tahini, lemon juice and hot water, season to taste with salt.

In a large bowl, combine vegetables and toss to mix the tahini mixture. Plate the tahini salad first followed by a piece of salmon. Top each plate with leftover everything bagel mix.



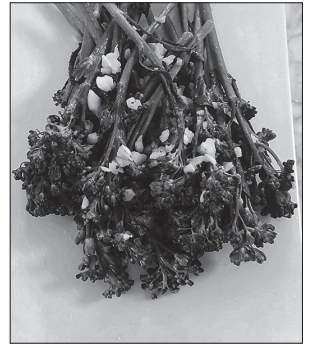
Creamy Tahini Salad (Photo by Megan Wolf)

## Ten Garlic Broccoli Rabe

- 10 cloves garlic, peeled
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. hot water
- 2 large bunch broccoli, washed with ends removed
- Kosher salt to taste

In a blender, combine garlic with olive oil and hot water until well mixed and the garlic chopped.

Place broccoli in a large saute pan over medium heat, then pour garlic oil mixture on top. Cook until the broccoli is just cooked through and tender, but still bright green, about 4-5 minutes. (You may loosely cover the pan to help the steaming process.) The liquid will have evaporated.



Ten Garlic Broccoli Rabe (Photo by Megan Wolf)

# Tiny Russian village dreams of starting its own Jewish pilgrimage tradition

By Cnaan Liphshiz

LYUBAVICHI, Russia (JTA) – At the age of 92, Valentina Prilashkevitch and her twin sister, Claudia, need to cautiously negotiate the dirt road leading to their wooden home in this tiny village near the Belarus border. In winter,

frost could easily mean a broken hip for the twins. The risk of falling returns in summer, when the swampy earth turns to soft powder.

Asphalt is one of many basic amenities missing from this horsefly-infested village of 200. Its dilapidated houses lack electricity, running water, central heating, indoor toilets and a steady supply of cooking gas. Some members of the graying population here are so poor that they still use horse-drawn vehicles and rely on backyard farming for sustenance. But things are beginning to turn around for Prilashkevitch and her neighbors because their village is the cradle and namesake of Chabad-Lubavitch – considered one of the largest and most influential Chasidic movements in Judaism.

In recent years, the village has started to attract hundreds of visitors every month, prompting the local authorities to undertake what in local terms is a massive investment in infrastructure with the aim of cultivating an unlikely source of income: Western tourism.

The Prilashkevitch sisters, for their part, are about to have their street paved for the first time since the village was established. The reason? It leads to an ancient Jewish cemetery. “It is all thanks to the Jews,” said Valentina Prilashkevitch’s grandson, Sergey Levashov.

Standing shirtless amid the chickens roaming his grandmother’s yard, he said, “I think it’s a very good that this place is beginning to become known internationally for its tradition of coexistence with the Jews. More good things can come to us for it.”

More good things are already happening to Lyubavichi, according to Yuri Ivashkin, the mayor of the district where the village is located. “A deal to lay down cooking gas pipes was signed this summer, there’s a new hotel that’s about to be built here. Come back in five years. You won’t recognize this place,” he told JTA.

Ivashkin, who lives in the nearby city of Rudnya, came to Lyubavichi on September 2 to attend the dedication of a fence around another Jewish cemetery. It contains the remains of two 19<sup>th</sup>-century rabbis, Menachem Mendel Schneersohn and Shmuel Schneersohn – respectively the third and the fourth sages of the Chabad movement, which was based here for a century before World War I. Chabad has only had seven supreme spiritual leaders.

The fencing was a preservation project headed by the European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative, or ESJF. The nonprofit organization has completed similar projects in 102 cemeteries across Eastern Europe with funding from the German government. “Initiatives like these are vital because of neglect, economic and agricultural development, and vandalism,” said Rabbi Isaac Schapira, the founder and chairman of the ESJF board. Separately, Chabad has undertaken another project at the cemetery – to pull up headstones swallowed by the marshy ground.

See “Village” on page 9

## Nine . . . . . Continued from page 7

Temple Beth El for his sermon criticizing the state’s “massive resistance” to school desegregation and said that if he had intended to destroy Christian-Jewish relations, “he could not have been more effective.” While a “leading member” of the Reform temple reportedly said a “considerable” number of congregants worried Frank’s stand “might result in increased antisemitism,” others “sided with the rabbi, holding that he held a spiritual and moral duty to speak out for social justice.” The congregation stood by Frank, and *The Washington Post* published an editorial calling him a “courageous clergyman.”



District Mayor Yuri Ivashkin, center, and his employees stand outside a Jewish cemetery in Lyubavichi, Russia, on August 26. (Photo by Cnaan Liphshiz)

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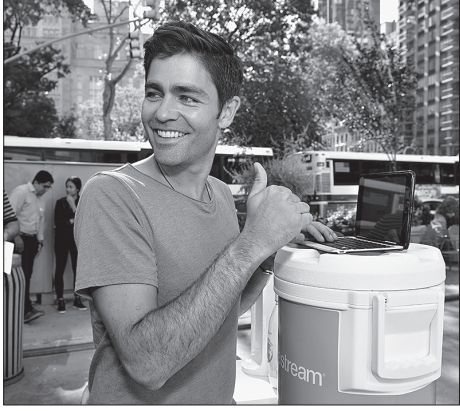
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Rabbi Jehoshua Raskin shared a ride with other visitors to Lyubavichi, Russia, on August 26. (Photo by Cnaan Liphshiz)



# SodaStream is behind this 20-foot Statue of Liberty replica drowning in plastic bottles



Adrian Grenier signed the SodaStream pledge on September 4. (Photo by Sean Zanni/Getty Images for SodaStream and Oceanic Society)

By **Josefin Dolsten**

NEWYORK (JTA) – Tourists and locals wandering around Flatiron Plaza in downtown Manhattan were met with an unusual sight: a 20-foot replica of the Statue of Liberty standing in a steel cage filled with empty plastic bottles and metal cans. On the other side of the eye-catching set-up, titled “Drowning Liberty,” were booths with people handing out glasses of seltzer. The installation, which was display the first week of September, was organized by SodaStream, an Israeli company that sells at-home carbonation kits, together with the Oceanic Society.

Its goal is to raise awareness of the negative consequences of single-use plastic (and drum up business for the

company while they’re at it). Passers-by were encouraged to sign SodaStream’s sustainability pledge, promising to eschew one-use bottles for reusable ones. The company claims that making soda at home in reusable bottles results in “less plastic manufactured, less plastic waste and less transport of bottled beverages.”

“We have no choice,” SodaStream CEO Daniel Birnbaum said in a statement. “We have to go reusable. Annual plastic production is skyrocketing and the U.S. is one of the biggest polluters in the world.”

Among those who stopped by to sign the pledge on September 4 was Adrian Grenier, an actor known for his role on the TV series “Entourage.”

On September 5, passers-by who paused to take photos and have a drink of seltzer told JTA that the set-up resonated with them. Henry Ortega, 24, said that seeing Lady Liberty up to her waist in plastic bottles reminded him of the importance of not littering. “As you know, the City of New York is dirty in the streets,” he said. “This See “Bottles” on page 11

At right: This SodaStream display was set up in New York City to raise awareness of the negative consequences of one-use plastic bottle on September 5. (Photo by Josefin Dolsten)



## Village . . . . . Continued from page 8

While the cemetery certainly attracts some pilgrims, the real engine behind the growth in Jewish tourism is Chabad’s 2008 opening of an information center. About 12 people are based permanently at the center, which is called Hatzet Raboteinu Nesieinu Belubavitch. That fenced compound, where in 2016 about 500 Chabad rabbis from across the former Soviet Union convened for a conference, is located in a part of Lyubavichi where the town’s Chabad sages had once lived with their families and disciples.

Lyubavichi was founded approximately 500 years ago, according to some accounts, by a Rabbi Meir who named it in reference to his people’s love (“lyubov” in Russian) of God. For Jews in czarist Russia, it was prime real estate because it was one of the points closest to Moscow within the Pale of Settlement – the western provinces to which Jews were restricted until the communist revolution of 1917.

Hundreds of them settled in Lyubavichi, which became a major shtetl – Yiddish for a predominantly Jewish town. In the early 19th century, Lyubavichi became home to Dovber Schneuri – Chabad’s second supreme spiritual leader, or *admor*. He turned Lyubavichi into a hub of Jewish learning. Jews from across Eastern Europe would come to seek advice and guidance, many of them settling to join the hard core of the Chabad movement, according to the late historian Moshe Tzinovitch, who published an essay about the town’s history in 1943.

But Chabad followers fled the town in World War I as the German army advanced on it. Hundreds of Jews remained in the interwar period until the Nazis killed them in 1941. The center of the movement shifted from Russia to Poland and, following World War II, to the United States.

Few Jews visited this place under communism, when it was behind the Iron Curtain. But the visitors began trickling in during the early 1990s. By 2000, the town was seeing dozens of visitors each month. Since then, the number of visitors to Lyubavichi has climbed to about 10,000 annually, according to Gavriel Gordon, a Chabad rabbi tasked with preserving the movement’s heritage sites. Gordon said plans are underway to restore, based on archived maps, a part of the original shtetl, whose houses were taken apart and used for construction during communism.

For now, though, the most authentic characteristic of shtetl life seems to be the horse-drawn carriages used by some of the villagers. They regularly come out to greet large groups of Jews, offering short rides and selfie moments for tips.

In recent years the village changed the names of some of its roads to highlight its Jewish heritage. The main road is now called Derech Lubavitch, Hebrew for Lubavitch Way. Another is now Chabad Street. The Prilashkevitch twins live on Schneersohn Road, carrying the last name of five generations of Chabad leaders.

Some of the village’s houses boast a fresh coat of paint, including bright yellow, pink and green – a common scheme in Belarus and western Russia. But even newly painted

houses here are so old and poorly maintained that they lean outward at strange angles, seemingly ready to collapse.

The residents collect water in buckets from faucets, or water points, on main roads.

Many of the visitors to Lyubavichi today are devoted Chabadniks. One is Jehoshua Raskin. The Russia-born rabbi moved to Israel in 1967, only to return to Russia after communism to “make Judaism great again” there, as he put it. He has one son serving as an emissary of Chabad in Uganda, another in Cyprus and a third in Budapest.

Today, the 70-year-old Raskin travels across Russia and beyond giving lectures about Judaism to far-flung Jewish communities. “I am brought in to give strength to communities from Brazil to Australia,” he said on the six-hour car ride from Moscow to the fence-dedication ceremony, which he said he decided to join at the spur of the moment when a friend told him about it. “Lyubavichi is where I draw that energy. I come whenever I can.”

But even with devotees like Raskin, the number of visitors here is a fraction of the traffic to the site of Europe’s largest Chasidic pilgrimage: the Ukrainian city of Uman, located 500 mile south of Lyubavichi. About 30,000 visitors, mostly from Israel, arrive in Uman each year on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, to visit the grave of Rabbi Nachman, an 18th-century luminary who founded the Breslov Chasidic movement.

But whereas Uman is an established destination, Lyubavichi has yet to realize its potential, said Ivashkin, the district mayor. “I know Uman. There is no reason why Lyubavichi shouldn’t match and surmount it in terms of attracting Jewish tourism,” he said.

Ivashkin’s favorable attitude to Jewish tourism – a common approach by officials in Russia under President Vladimir Putin – is in and of itself a major difference to the one prevalent in Uman, where many of the city’s 70,000 residents resent the local pilgrimage and the crowds, noise and even crime that it brings.

Uman has seen several protests featuring antisemitic rhetoric in recent years, as well as agitation by the xenophobic far right. This hostility is exacerbated by some rowdy Jewish visitors, but it is unfolding amid a dramatic increase in nationalism and antisemitic incidents in Ukraine following a 2014 revolution in which the far right played a “prominent” role.

By contrast, Lyubavichi has seen almost no anti-Jewish agitation. Earlier in August, antisemitic graffiti appeared on the external wall of the Chabad compound here. But Ivashkin said the suspect in that incident was a man from the city of Murmansk, hundreds of miles north of Lyubavichi.

Russian authorities are quick to punish perpetrators of antisemitic hate crimes. Chabad leaders enjoy a high degree of access to Putin, and under him have become the undisputed leading force in Jewish communal life in Russia.

“There are certainly challenges attached to making a place like Lyubavichi a major site for pilgrimage,” said Gordon, the Chabad caretaker. “But it can make a huge contribution to the spirituality of the Jewish people, and to the material situation of this very poor village.”

*New Year Greetings from these Healthcare Professionals*

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## Weekly Parasha

Vayelech, Deuteronomy 31:1-30

# We do not pray, we daven (sing)

RABBI MOSHE SHMARYAHU, HEAD OF JUDAIC STUDIES, HILLEL ACADEMY

Moshe *rabbeinu* is approaching the end of his turbulent and astonishing days of leadership, and puts Joshua as the new leader over Israel. He can continue to lead the people, but he has no permission from Hashem.

His time passed, a new generation arose and a new leader had to take his place, but not before he signed the Torah in poetry, the end of his term and the end of his life in poetry (*be'shira*). The moon (Joshua) replaced the sun (Moses).

Before he takes his leave of life, God has one last com-

mand for him, and through him, for the future: "And now write for yourselves this song and teach it to the children of Israel, put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for Me among the children of Israel." (32:19) The plain sense of the verse is that God was commanding Moses and Joshua to write out the song that follows, that of *parasha* Haazinu (32:1-43) as Rashi and Nahmanides understand it, but the oral tradition read it differently.

According to the sages, "and now write for yourselves"

applies to the Torah as a whole. Thus, the last of all the 613 commands is to write – or at least take part in writing, if only a single letter – a Torah scroll. Here is Maimonides' statement of the law: "Every Israelite is commanded to write a Torah scroll for himself, as it says, 'now, therefore write this song,' meaning 'write for yourselves [a complete copy of] the Torah that contains this song,' since we do not write isolated passages of the Torah [but only a See "Daven" on page 11

## Congregational Notes

### Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
Rabbi: Barbara Goldman-Wartell  
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm  
Phone: 723-7355  
Fax: 723-0785

Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com  
Website: www.templeconcord.com  
Regular service times: Friday, 8 pm; Saturday, 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.  
Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 5:15 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the school year unless otherwise noted.

On Friday, September 14, at 8 pm, there will be Shabbat Shuvah services led by Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell.

On Saturday, September 15, at 9 am, there will be religious school, at 9:15 am, there will be Torah study and, at 10:35 am, there will be Shabbat Shuvah morning services.

On Tuesday, September 18, erev Yom Kippur, at 7:45 pm, there will be Kol Nidre services.

On Wednesday, September 19, Yom Kippur: 9:30 am morning service, 1:15 pm Jonah discussion, 3 pm meditative music, 4 pm Yizkor memorial service, 4:45 pm healing service, 5:45 pm Neilah concluding service, and 6:30 pm Havdalah, followed by congregational break fast.

On Thursday, September 20, at 5:15 pm, the joint Temple Concord/Temple Israel Hebrew school will meet.

On Friday, September 21, at 8 pm, there will be Shabbat evening services led by Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell.

### Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Rabbi: Molly Karp  
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820  
Phone: 607-432-5522  
Website: www.templebetheloneonta.org  
E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com

Regular service times: visit the temple website for days of services and times  
Religious School/Education: Religious School, for grades kindergarten through bar/bat mitzvah, meets Sunday mornings. Rabbi Karp conducts services and holds classes in Torah, beginning Hebrew and Maimonides.  
For the schedule of services, classes and events, see the website.

### Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch  
Rabbi: Aaron Slonim, E-mail: aslonim@binghamton.edu  
Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 797-0015, Fax: 797-0095  
Website: www.Chabadofbinghamton.com  
Chabad on the West Side  
Rabbi: Zalman Chain, E-mail: zchein@JewishBU.com  
Address: 27 Bennet Ave., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Phone: 722-3252

Regular service times: Daily 7:30 am, Friday evening 6 pm, Shabbat morning 9:30 am, Maariv and Havdalah one hour after candle-lighting time, Sundays 9:30 am.  
Linking Hearts for youngsters with special needs: This program connects Jewish special-needs children and teenagers, ages 5-14, who have mental, physical and/or functional disabilities, with student volunteers who will visit participating youngsters weekly in their homes.

To join the mailing list, for up-to-date information on adult education offerings or to arrange for a private tutorial, for details concerning the Judaica shop and resource center, or for assistance through the Piaker Free Loan Society or Raff Maasim Tovim Foundation, call Chabad's office at 797-0015.

### Congregation Tikun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY  
Phone: 607-256-1471, E-mail: info@tikunvor.org  
Website: www.tikunvor.org  
Presidents: Miranda Phillips and Shawn Murphy  
Rabbi: Brian Walt  
Religious School Director/Admin. Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky  
Services: Fridays at 7:30 pm unless otherwise noted. Family services and Tot Shabbat once a month at 6:30 pm. Call for weekly schedules.

Religious School: Preschool through seventh-grade classes meet on Sunday mornings. Sixth-grade Hebrew and seventh-grade b'nai mitzvah classes meet on Wednesday afternoons. Adult Ed: Mini courses throughout the year. Adult Hebrew offered regularly. Call the office for details.

For a full list of High Holiday schedules provided to *The Reporter*, see page 5 of the August 31-September 7 issue, online at [www.thereporter.org/Resources/Website/file/Current-Past-Issues/bng0829\\_.pdf](http://www.thereporter.org/Resources/Website/file/Current-Past-Issues/bng0829_.pdf).

### Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative  
Rabbi: Geoffrey Brown  
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 723-7461 and 231-3746  
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs. 8:30 am-4 pm; Fri. 8 am-3 pm  
E-mail: titammy@stny.twcbc.com  
Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org

Service Schedule: Tues., 5:30 pm; Fri., 5:30 pm; Sat., 9:30 am  
On Saturday, September 15, at 9:30 am, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown. The Torah portion will be Deuteronomy 31:1-30. The haftarah will be Hosea 14:2-10. Bonnie Brown and Sylvia Horowitz will sponsor the kiddush following services.

On Sunday September 16, there will be a Community Holocaust Memorial Service at Temple Israel Cemetery. Visitation will be at noon, followed by the service at 12:20 pm.

On Tuesday, September 18, at 7 pm, there will be Kol Nidre services.

On Wednesday, September 19, Yom Kippur services will begin at 8:45 am.

### Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive  
Rabbi: David Regenspan  
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815  
Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 336-1523  
Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.  
Adult Ed.: Saturday morning study is held at 10 am. Call for more information and to confirm.

### Kol Haverim

Affiliation: Society for Humanistic Judaism  
Address: P.O. Box 4972, Ithaca, NY 14852-4972  
Phone: 607-277-3345  
E-mail: info@kolhaverim.net  
Website: www.kolhaverim.net  
Chairwoman: Abby Cohn

Kol Haverim: The Finger Lakes Community for Humanistic Judaism, is an Ithaca-based organization that brings people together to explore and celebrate Jewish identity, history, culture and ethics within a secular, humanistic framework. KH is part of an international movement for Secular Humanistic Judaism and is affiliated with the Society for Humanistic Judaism, a national association with over 30 member communities and congregations around the country. Established in the spring of 1999, it offers celebrations of Jewish holidays, monthly Shabbat pot-lucks, adult education, a twice-monthly Cultural School for children, and a bar and bat mitzvah program.

KH welcomes all individuals and families, including those from mixed religious backgrounds, who wish to strengthen the Jewish experience in their lives and provide their children with a Jewish identity and experience.

On Saturday, September 15, at 10:30 am, a children's Rosh Hashanah celebration and Tashlich will be held at Stewart Park Small Pavilion.

### Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated  
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045  
Phone: 607-756-7181  
President: Louis Wilson, louiswilson1995@yahoo.com  
Service leaders: Lay leadership  
Shabbat services: Either Friday evening at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 10 am from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot. Holiday services are also held. Check the weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.

Religious School: Students are educated on an individual basis. Temple Brith Sholom is a small equalitarian congregation serving the greater Cortland community. Congregants span the gamut of observance and services are largely dependent on the service leader. The Friday night siddur is "Likrat Shabbat," while the Saturday morning siddur is "Gates of Prayer." The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences.

Friday, September 14, light candles ..... 6:56 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, September 15..... 7:55 pm  
Tuesday, September 18, light candles ..... 6:50 pm  
Wednesday, September 19, yom tov ends ..... 7:48 pm  
Friday, September 21, light candles ..... 6:44 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, September 22..... 7:43 pm

### Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union  
Rabbi: Zev Silber  
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Phone: 722-1793  
Rabbi's Office: 722-7514  
Fax: 722-7121

Office hours: Mon. closed; Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Wed. closed; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm; Fri. 10 am-1 pm  
Beth David e-mail address: bethdavid@stny.rr.com  
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Shabbat Services:  
Fri., Sept. 14 ..... 7:10 pm  
Shabbat, Sept. 15 ..... 9 am  
..... Mincha after the kiddush  
..... Maariv 6:45 pm  
..... Mincha/Maariv 7:05 pm  
Erev Yom Kippur, Tues., Sept. 18 ..... Mincha 3 pm  
..... Kol Nidre 6:50 pm  
Yom Kippur, Wed., Sept. 19 ..... Shacharit 9 am  
..... Yizkor 12:15 pm  
..... Mincha 5:30 pm  
..... Fast ends/Shofar 7:48 pm

#### Weekday Services:

Mornings:  
Sun., Sept. 16 ..... 8:30 am  
Mon., Sept. 17 ..... 6:50 am  
Tues, Sept. 18 ..... 7 am  
Thurs.-Fri., Sept. 20-21 ..... 7 am  
Evenings:  
Sun-Mon. Sept 16-17 ..... 6:55 pm  
Thurs., Sept. 20 ..... 6:55 pm  
Fri., Sept. 21 ..... 6:45 pm  
Classes: Rabbi Zev Silber will hold his weekly Talmud class every Tuesday evening after services.

### Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Rabbi: Scott L. Glass  
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292  
Phone: 273-5775  
E-mail: rabbi@tbeithaca.org and secretary@tbeithaca.org  
Website: www.tbeithaca.org

President: Jerry Davis  
Sisterhood President: Julie Paige  
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody  
Administrative Assistant: Jane Griffith  
Services: Friday 8 pm; Saturday 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sundays and legal holidays).

Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday afternoons, 3:45-5:45 pm. The Midrashah (eighth-grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers.

Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.

On Friday, September 14, erev Shabbat Shuvah services will be held at 6:15 pm.

On Saturday, September 15, Shabbat Shuvah services will be held at 10 am.

On Sunday, September 16, at 9 am, religious school classes will begin with learning and activities for children in kitot gan-vav (kindergarten-sixth) and their parents from 9 am-12:30 pm.

On Tuesday, September 18, erev Yom Kippur, Mincha will be held at 6 pm and Kol Nidre at 6:30 pm.

On Wednesday, September 19, Yom Kippur, Shacharit will be held at 9 am, Junior congregation at 11:30 am, Yizkor at approximately 11:30 am and Mincha at 5:45 pm. A break fast hosted by Sisterhood will follow Neilah.

On Friday, September 21, Kabbalat Shabbat services will be held at 6:15 pm.

On Sunday, September 23, an erev Sukkot service will be held at 6:15 pm.

### Penn-York Jewish Community

President-Treasurer-Secretary: Harvey Chernosky, 570-265-3869  
B'nai B'rith: William H. Seigel Lodge  
Purpose: To promote Jewish identity through religious, cultural, educational and social activities in the Southern Tier of New York and the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania, including Waverly, NY; Sayre, Athens and Towanda, PA, and surrounding communities.



# Jewish Community Center

## JCC Friendship Club

The JCC Friendship Club met on September 5 and heard Rabbi Rachel Esserman talk about “Thoughts About Rosh Hashanah.” She said many holidays have special foods associated with them. If you visit or travel, the smells and taste of these foods remind you of home and family.

For Rosh Hashanah, we think of apples and honey. Other cultures have different foods. Sephardic Jews and Mediterranean Jews have their own special foods. Jews of India use spices such as curry and anise. In America, many of us send out new year cards and wish everyone a sweet new year. In Europe, some people eat the head of a fish for good luck. *Rosh* means head, so Rosh Hashanah means head of the year. Some families have a seder that includes foods such as dates, pumpkins, leeks, onions and beets. Ethiopian Jews eat lamb. Most of us are used to having soup, gefilte fish and brisket. In Cuba, it is a custom to eat 12 grapes at midnight on Rosh Hashanah for good luck. Rabbi Esserman pointed out that many people eat less meat today for health reasons.

A discussion followed about noodle kugels. Most of us like sweet kugels. Sylvia Diamond said that her noodle kugel has cheeses, eggs and applesauce.

We eat a round challah for this holiday. Sue Herzog said that her family called the bread cholly. So did Sylvia. We don't know if this is a New York City custom or if it is Yiddish.

The program ended with Sue and her mother, Ada Brummer, reciting a poem for Rosh Hashanah in Yiddish. Loosely translated, it means “Rosh Hashanah is coming and there will be lights all around the world.”

After the program, the meeting was called to order by Sylvia. Ann Brillant said the blessing over the cookies after the Pledge of Allegiance. We voted to send a financial gift to Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell and Rabbi Rachel Esserman to thank them for the programs they gave. Sue gave a treasury report. Sylvia distributed new year's cards to be delivered to Jewish residents in nursing facilities and those who are homebound.

There will be no meeting on Wednesday, September 19, which is Yom Kippur.

Join us on Wednesday, September 26, at 1:30 pm, to hear Heidi Thirer talk about “The World of Birds.”

Sylvia Diamond  
President

## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

### Health ministry warns Israelis to get kids measles vaccine

Israel's Health Ministry warned the public on Aug. 28 to vaccinate children in the wake of a significant increase in the number of cases of measles in 2018. Since the beginning of the year, 262 cases of measles have been reported, compared to 33 cases in 2017 and only nine in 2016. According to the ministry, 90 percent of the cases occurred in people who had not been vaccinated or had been in contact with unvaccinated people. Though measles was once a common illness, vaccinations kept it at bay. It is fatal in 1 out of every 1,000 cases. According to the World Health Organization, measles kills approximately 134,000 children a year.

### Study reveals that half of Israeli adults are overweight

A new study released by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics revealed that approximately half of Israelis over the age of 20 are overweight. Published on Sept. 3, the study found that 55 percent of men and 41 percent of women are overweight. Though 54 percent of Arabs were found to be overweight, as compared to 46 percent of Jews, 54 percent of Jews said they wanted to lose weight, as opposed to just 41 percent of Arabs. More than 30 percent of Israelis within the normal weight range also said they wanted to lose weight. As for diet, 41 percent of Israelis reported eating at least three vegetable dishes a day, 4 percent eat two helpings of fruit or more, 60 percent eat legumes at least twice a week, and 38 percent said they drank at least three glasses of sweetened drinks per day. Just 25 percent of Israelis said they ate red or processed week three times per week or more. The statistics were “very similar” to data gathered in 2010.

### Bottles . . . . Continued from page 9

can actually give us an open mind that we've got to wake up. It's a wake-up call.”

Azinat Axorova, a 28-year-old visitor from Russia, said the statue made her think of what she had observed about Americans' consumer habits. “Americans use a lot of things that they don't need,” she said. “Consumption in this country is so vast that there is so much waste that you don't even think about it.”

## JCC to host free dance lessons

As part of National Ballroom Dance Week, free dance lessons will take place at the Jewish Community Center, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal. Free Polka lessons by Gary Truce will be held on Wednesday, September 26, with a beginner lesson from 7-8 pm and an intermediate lesson from 8-9

pm. Free Sala/Bacchatat lessons by Geraldo Iglesias will be held on Thursday, September 27, with a beginner lesson from 7-8 pm and an intermediate lesson from 8-9 pm.

For more information about these and other classes, contact Ruth Swezey at 341-2923.

## Daven . . . . . Continued from page 10

complete scroll]. Even if one has inherited a Torah scroll from his parents, nonetheless it is a mitzvah to write one for oneself, and one who does so is as if he had received [the Torah] from Mount Sinai. One who does not know how to write a scroll may engage [a scribe] to do it for him, and whoever corrects even one letter is as if he has written a whole scroll.”

Why this command? Why, then, at the end of Moses' life? Why make it the last of all the commands? And if the reference is to the Torah as a whole, why call it a “song”?

The oral tradition is here hinting at a set of very deep ideas. First, it is telling the Israelites, and us in every generation, that it is not enough to say, “We received the Torah from Moses,” or “from our parents.” We have to take the Torah and make it new in every generation. We have to write our own scroll. The point about the Torah is not that it is old, but that it is new; it is not just about the past, but about the future. It is not simply some ancient document that comes from an earlier era in the evolution of society. It speaks to us, here, now – but not without our making the effort to write it again.

In my speech to the 2018 graduates of Hillel Academy, I said, “I wish to give you with great pride a gift: The Bible, the Book of Books, this book is really your book, it will accompany you to continue the path, open it from time to time read a verse or chapter in Hebrew, write your chapter and add it to the Bible.”

And why call the Torah a song? Because if we are to pass on our faith and way of life to the next generation, it must sing. Torah must be affective, not just cognitive. It must speak to our emotions. Though the reasoning part of the brain is central to what makes us human, it is the limbic system, the seat of the emotions, that leads us to choose this way. If our Torah lacks passion, we will not succeed in passing it on to the future. Music is the affective dimension of communication, the medium through which we express, evoke and share emotion. Precisely because we are creatures of emotion, music is an essential part of the vocabulary of mankind.

Music has a close association with spirituality. Song is central to the Judaic experience. Music has a close association with spirituality – we do not pray; we *daven* (divine), meaning we sing the words we direct toward heaven. Nor do we read the Torah. Instead we chant it, each word with its own cantillation. Even rabbinical texts are never merely studied; we chant them with the particular sing-song known to all students of Talmud. Each time and text has its specific melodies. The same prayer may be sung to half-a-dozen different tunes depending on whether it is part of the morning, afternoon or evening service, and whether the day is a weekday, a Sabbath, a festival or one of the High Holidays. There is different cantillation for biblical readings, depending on whether the text comes from Torah, the prophets, or the *ketuvim* (or *megillot*) (the writings). Music is the map of the Jewish spirit, and each spiritual experience has its own distinctive melodic landscape.

Judaism is a religion of words and, yet, whenever the language of Judaism aspires to the spiritual it modulates into song, as if the words themselves sought escape from the gravitational pull of finite meanings. Music speaks to something deeper than the mind. If we are to make Torah new in every generation we have to find ways of singing its song a new way. The words never change, but the music does.

A previous chief rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Avraham Shapiro, once told a story about two great rabbinic sages of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, equally distinguished scholars, one of whom lost

his children to the secular spirit of the age, the other of whom was blessed by children who followed in his path. The difference between them was this, he said: when it came to *se'udah shlishit*, the third Sabbath meal, the former spoke words of Torah while the latter sang songs. His message was clear. Without an affective dimension – without music – Judaism is a body without a soul. It is the songs we teach our children that convey our love of God.

Some years ago, one of the leaders of world Jewry wanted to find out what had happened to the “missing Jewish children” of Poland, those who, during the war, had been adopted by Christian families and brought up as Catholics. He decided that the easiest way was through food. He organized a large banquet and placed advertisements in the Polish press, inviting whoever believed they had been born a Jew to come to this free dinner. Hundreds came, but the evening was on the brink of disaster since none of those present could remember anything of their earliest childhood – until the man asked the person sitting next to him if he could remember the song his Jewish mother had sung to him before going to sleep. He began to sing “*Rozhinkes Mit Mandlen*” (“Raisins and Almonds”), the old Yiddish lullaby. Slowly others joined in, until the whole room was a chorus. Sometimes all that is left of Jewish identity is a song.

Rabbi Yehiel Michael Epstein, in the introduction to the “*Arukh Ha-Shulchan, Choshen Mishpat*,” writes that the Torah is compared to a song because, to those who appreciate music, the most beautiful choral sound is a complex harmony with many different voices singing different notes. So, he says, it is with the Torah and its myriad commentaries, its “70 faces.” Judaism is a choral symphony scored for many voices, the written text its melody, the oral tradition its polyphony.

So, it is with a poetic sense of closure that Moses' life ends with the command to begin again in every generation, writing our own scroll, adding our own commentaries, the people of the book endlessly reinterpreting the book of the people, and singing its song. The Torah is God's libretto, and we, the Jewish people, are His choir. Collectively, we have sung God's song. We are the performers of His choral symphony. And though, when Jews speak they often argue, when they sing, they sing in harmony, because words are the language of the mind, but music is the language of the soul.

To hear the song “*Rozhinkes Mit Mandlen*” (“Raisins and almonds”), visit [www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHY2dN\\_ItU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHY2dN_ItU).

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**NEWS IN BRIEF**

From JTA

**Sweden to create Holocaust museum**

Sweden has plans to launch a Holocaust museum with a focus on Holocaust survivors from the Scandinavian country and a center devoted to the diplomat Raoul Wallenberg. Announcing the decision to create the museum, Swedish Minister of Social Affairs and Sports Minister Annika Strandhäll said on Sept. 4 on Twitter that the news “feels more important than ever.” The museum is likely to be built in Malmo, a city of approximately 350,000 where dozens of antisemitic incidents are recorded annually. It is tentatively slated to be ready to open in 2020, the Dagen news website reported. A center on Wallenberg, who saved tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews from the Nazis during the Holocaust, is expected to attract international visitors, according to Dagen. The museum will focus on surviving Swedes and collect items, interviews and documents about their experiences. Many of these objects are now scattered at museums, archives and private homes. In Malmo, first- and second- generation immigrants from the Middle East make up one-third of the population. Several hundred Jews live there.

**Britain’s chief rabbi publishes guide for Orthodox schools on providing support for LGBT students**

Britain’s chief rabbi published a guidebook for Orthodox Jewish schools to help them provide support for LGBT students in the Jewish community. The guide by Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis calls for a zero-tolerance approach to homophobic or transphobic bullying, despite a biblical prohibition against homosexual acts. The 36-page booklet, titled “The Wellbeing of LGBT+ Pupils,” was produced with input from LGBT Jews and the support of KeshetUK, an organization promoting equality for LGBT members of the Jewish community. The booklet in some cases employs Torah values to show the school leaders how to teach students to deal with the issue, such as not speaking ill of others. Mirvis said in an op-ed published on Sept. 6 in the London-based *Jewish Chronicle*: “Young LGBT+ people in the Jewish community

often express feelings of deep isolation, loneliness and a sense that they can never be themselves. Many are living with the fear that if they share their struggles with anyone they will be expelled, ridiculed and even rejected by family and friends. They may even be struggling with a loss of *emunah* (faith, trust in God) and the fear of losing their place of acceptance and belonging in the Jewish community. I hope that this document will set a precedent for genuine respect, borne out of love for all people across the Jewish world and mindful of the fact that every person is created *betzelem Elokim*, in the image of God.” Some *haredi* Orthodox schools in Britain have been criticized by the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills, or Ofsted, and some sanctioned for failing to teach students about LGBT issues and censoring textbooks with chapters on the topics. The guide defines LGBT+ as referring to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender, as well as those who are gender-fluid, non-binary or questioning their sexuality or gender identity.

**Israel’s Supreme Court paves way for demolition of West Bank Bedouin village built without permits**

Israel’s Supreme Court has rejected a petition by the residents of a West Bank Bedouin village slated to be razed to halt the demolition. An injunction against the plan to demolish Khan al-Ahmar, located outside of Jerusalem near Maale Adumin, expires in a week. The international community and human rights organizations have rallied in support of the village. In their decision on Sept. 5, the justices also declined to delay Khan al-Ahmar’s demolition until an alternative site is found for its approximately 200 residents. The Supreme Court had authorized the demolition in May, since the homes were built without permits. The July injunction called on the state to review a compromise offer drawn up by the locals that would legalize the village. Critics of the demolition believe that Israel is tearing down the village in order to make a contiguous Palestinian state impossible. U.N. Middle East envoy Nikolay Mladenov called the impending demolition “against international law” and tweeted that it would “undermine prospect for two state solution.”

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