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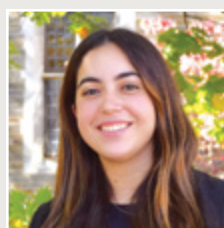
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A publication of The Buffalo Jewish Federation

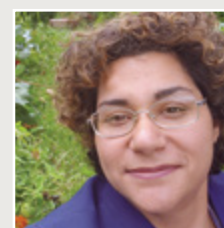
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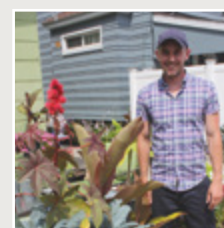
AUGUST 2021 | AV-ELUL 5781



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August 2021

Editor's Note



Ellen Goldstein, Editor

Why is this August different from all other Augusts?
Well, one reason is that we are emerging from COVID and can now savor the joys of summer and in-person events! In this issue of *The Journal*, you'll find many such events such as the PJ End of Summer party (page 6), the Teen Retreat (page 8), the Reverse Taschlich program next month (page 10), glorious garden wisdom (pages 14, 25), the brand new Community Religious School (page 16), and the community-wide Selichot service we can all attend (page 16). Yes, together.

Marc Brown's important story (page 11) on a 50-year old gift that has transformed into a Black/Jewish connection will warm your soul and get you ready to begin our communal journey during the month of Elul as we move into the High Holy Days next month, as interpreted by TBZ's Interim Rabbi Sharon Sobel (page 12).

And the Campaign for Jewish Buffalo kicks into gear this month as well. You can get ready now for the Virtual Kick-Off event (cover and page 4) on September 19 with Chairs Gil Wolfe and Joni Shatkin by enjoying it from the comfort of your home and perhaps even inviting a few friends over for some great snacks (check out Robin Kurss' ratatouille on page 19) .

So rest, relax, read, and revel in the beauty that is Western New York in August. I hope to see you IN PERSON sometime before the Holidays. Stay well and stop to smell the roses...the lilies and take in all the bounty with which we are so blessed!

Ellen Goldstein - Editor

On The Cover



"Better Together" is the theme of this September's Campaign for Jewish Buffalo Kick Off Event. Read more on page 4. *Graphic: Jill Komm*

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CEO/Executive Director.....**Rob Goldberg**
President.....**Shelly Yellen**
Editor.....**Ellen S. Goldstein**



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Creative Director.....**Jean-Pierre Thimot**
jpthimot@buffalospree.com
Lead Designer.....**Kimberly Miers**
kmiers@buffalospree.com
Senior Graphic Designers.....**Josh Flanigan, Adam Van Schoonhoven,**
Nicholas Vitello
Director of Advertising.....**Barbara E. Macks**
Sales Director.....**Cynthia Oppenheimer**
coppenheimer@jewishjournalwny.com
Senior Account Executives...**Terri Downey, Keren Green, Mary Beth Holly,**
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Proofreader.....**Amy Goldstein**

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The Pew 2020 Study on American Jews: Decline or Transformation?

We are grateful to Dr. Matt Boxer for sharing his insights on the recent Pew Research Center study of American Jews. Matt is an assistant research professor at the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University. A native of Western New York, he graduated from Kadimah Academy and the High School of Jewish Studies. The son of Dr. Larry and Linda Boxer, Matt is one of the leading researchers on contemporary Jewish life in the United States and was the principal investigator of Buffalo's 2013 Jewish community study.

On May 11, 2021, the Pew Research Center released the findings of a study of American Jews. The study, *Jewish Americans in 2020*, updates findings from Pew's landmark 2013 study, which had been the first nationally representative study of American Jews since 2001 and the subject of frenzied commentary by Jewish scholars and communal leaders when it was released. The early reactions to the 2020 study remind me very much of the reactions to Pew's 2013 study, about which my mentor, Professor Leonard Saxe, began many of his presentations with a quote from Kohelet (1:9): "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun."

- Both in 2013 and today, the data largely confirm what we already knew or thought we knew: the community as a whole is growing and relatively affluent, is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse, is not especially religious, and remains heavily concentrated in a few dozen communities around the country.
- Both in 2013 and today, commentators have largely told the same stories about the same fears for the future of the community, even when some of these fears are not justified by the data. For example, the fears expressed about Jewish young adults' connection to Israel today are identical to the



Dr. Matt Boxer

fears expressed about Baby Boomer's "disenchantment" with Israel and hyper-critical approach to Israel, compared to their elders, 30 years ago, after the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey.

- Both in 2013 and today, some of what commentators have described as "decline" in the American Jewish community could better be described as "transformation." For example, many commentators have noted the decline of Conservative and Reform synagogues in particular, without noting the socioeconomic, cultural, and institutional factors that have led many young adults in particular to fulfill religious needs through alternative *minyanim* and *chavurot*, campus Hillels (even post-graduation), and Chabad.

But the 2020 study also offers some new questions that might stimulate new insight into who we American Jews are and what we do, and what we can and can't do with survey data. For example, for several years, my research team at Brandeis University has been trying out lots of different kinds of measures to assess different ways American Jews engage with Judaism – religiously, socially, culturally, and in other ways. We have discovered that although no two communities show exactly the same patterns of engagement in Jewish life, most communities have between three and five predominant patterns. These patterns typically include a group who are actively involved in Jewish life both at home and through communal organizations, a group who are active in Jewish life through organizations but do not do many Jewish activities on their own, a group who engage in Jewish practices on their own but not with Jewish organizations, and a group who don't do many Jewish activities at all. This diversity of engagement is on full display in the Pew report, with measures that have triggered responses ranging from "why are they asking so many religious questions?" to "it's great that surveys aren't so exclusively focused on religious behavior as they used to be." And the more I learn about the diversity of the American Jewish experience, the more diversity I think we need in our measures.

But I am also cognizant of what we are

missing even when we have measures like these. Unavoidably, in a large survey trying to cover lots of topics, there is going to be some ambiguity. To one person, a survey question asking about cooking or eating traditional Jewish foods may mean little more than having a bagel with cream cheese and some lox on occasion, and to another it may mean eating apples and honey for Rosh Hashanah, matzah for Passover, and cheesecake for Shavuot. If the survey asks about watching TV shows with Jewish themes or content, does *Seinfeld* count or does the show have to be as explicitly Jewish as *Shtisel* or *Unorthodox*? When survey respondents are asked if they read Jewish newspapers or seek Jewish news online, how are we to assess differences between readers of *The Jewish Journal of WNY* and readers of *The Algemeiner Journal*, *The Forward*, or *Hadassah Magazine*?

It is not possible to decipher that level of detail from Pew's study – and that is not a criticism, it is merely the nature of survey research. When you have a survey like this, that covers lots of different topics but cannot get into any one of them in too much detail, you can obtain valuable data on questions about how many people do this, feel that, think the other, but you cannot get much information about *why*. Qualitative research is often necessary to obtain that kind of information, but that is not what an omnibus survey like this does. We need follow-up, which must also take into account how the pandemic has affected our community. We should not look at Pew 2020 as a final product but as a starter kit, and we should experiment with all the different directions it can direct us.



The 2022 Campaign for Jewish Buffalo: Better Together

Campaign Kicks Off from the Comfort of Home!

The Campaign for Jewish Buffalo will hold its annual Community Kick Off Event virtually on September 19th at 7:00 p.m. The theme of this year's program is "Better Together" reflecting the impact of the relationships that Federation has built over the years that make our community more caring, connected and vibrant.

We hope you will join us from the comfort of your own home as we celebrate how Federation, our community partners and you help make us "better." Donors who have not yet made their gift to the 2022 campaign will be able to do so during the event. Additionally, when registering for this year's event, participants will have an opportunity to make a donation to **Dignity Grows™**, a new initiative of Women's Philanthropy in partnership with Jewish Family Services of WNY, that provides monthly personal hygiene supplies at no cost to those in need. **To learn more, go to www.dignitygrows.org.**

Gil Wolfe, incoming General Campaign Chair notes how honored he is to have been asked to take on this new role. "I am learning from professional staff

and dedicated volunteers, like Howard Rosenhoch and Joni Shatkin, the best ways to engage Jewish Buffalo. I hope to relay the message to our community the integral role Federation plays in supporting people and programs locally and overseas. Both prior to and during the pandemic, we can point to ways Federation support has made a real difference in people's lives. As we emerge from the pandemic, the "Better Together" theme of this year's campaign really rings true. Community-wide efforts were needed to stage victories against SARS-COV2, and we hope the same type of communal spirit will pervade this year's campaign."

Joni Shatkin shared, "I am very excited to extend my tenure as Women's



Women's Philanthropy Chair Joni Shatkin and General Campaign Chair Gil Wolfe

Philanthropy Chair for an additional year. As we all know, COVID changed the landscape of our lives for the last 18 months. I am very proud of the educational and thought-provoking programs that allowed us to stay connected during this time. I now look forward to being able to implement many of the programs and events that I wanted to accomplish

safely and in person. I appreciate all of the support and leadership from our campaign cabinet and members of our community. Working with the Jewish Federation leadership led by Rob Goldberg and Randi Morkisz is such a joy. I can't wait to begin our work together for the 2022 campaign as we are all Better Together."

2022 CAMPAIGN FOR JEWISH BUFFALO
VIRTUAL KICK OFF EVENT

Better Together

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2021 @ 7 PM

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Questions? CONTACT [RANDI@BUFFALOJEWISHFEDERATION.ORG](mailto:randi@buffalojewishfederation.org) | 716.463.5051

Intern Raquel Zohar Mapping Antisemitism and Hate

BY HANNAH GABELNICK

According to Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and FBI hate crime statistics, antisemitism and hate are on the rise. There was a 75% increase in reported antisemitic acts after the Israeli-Hamas conflict began in May (ADL), and hate crimes against Jews have increased by 14% from 2018 to 2019 (FBI). However, there is not a lot of data available about Greater Buffalo.

Raquel Zohar, a rising junior at Cornell University studying Industrial and Labor Relations with minors in Business, Inequality Studies, Jewish Studies, and Law & Society, is working with the the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) this summer to study hate and antisemitism in Greater Buffalo through her High Road Fellowship managed by Partnership for Public Good. On campus, Raquel is involved with Sigma Delta Tau, writes for the Undergraduate Law and Society Review, and serves on the Executive Boards of the Roitman Chabad Center and Cornellians for Israel.

Originally from Miami, Florida, Raquel was raised in a modern Orthodox Jewish household and attended Jewish day school. Judaism has always been a large part of her life, especially the social justice value of *tikkun olam* (repair the world). This and other values inspired Raquel to apply for the High Road Fellowship, an engaged learning and applied research fellowship that pairs Cornell University students with local grassroots organizations in Buffalo, NY. This 10-week summer fellowship is designed to bring students into the Buffalo community and connect them to practitioners who are driving change in the local economy.

Raquel has been working remotely from Miami with the JCRC to conduct her research. Her project consists of four primary goals: 1) Map out hate crimes in Greater Buffalo, primarily focusing on antisemitism; 2) Map out local organizations that aim to combat hate within the region; 3) Assess these organizations' responses to hate; and 4) Make recommendations for the future based on these findings to inform the Buffalo



JCRC intern Raquel Zohar

community and encourage action.

The project is particularly important because of the lack of accurate hate crime data. In order to supplement this lack of quantitative data, Raquel has been interviewing members of the Jewish community in order to gain insight on hate crimes in Greater Buffalo, as well as what cross community coalition-building looks like in the area. Although it would have been beneficial to be working in Buffalo and meeting community members face to face, Raquel has been able to meet with them virtually to hear their stories.

Raquel works closely with JCRC Director Mara Koven-Gelman with the ultimate goal of creating a project that the JCRC can use to combat antisemitism and hate. By mapping out hate crimes and antisemitic incidences, the Jewish community can be aware of where hate exists and what contributes to its growth. Raquel's project will help strengthen our communities through education and building relationships and provide research data that can be used to apply for grants and advocate for legislative local laws against hate.

Hannah Gabelnick is a rising senior at Amherst Central High School and a student intern at the Buffalo JCRC.

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Living and Learning Jewishly All Year Long

BY SHERI RODMAN

The Hebrew month of Elul, which starts on August 9th, is a great time to reflect on the previous year and look forward to the year ahead. At the *Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning* (CJEL), our work touches the lives of hundreds of individuals who are Jewish, exploring Judaism, those who love someone Jewish or see Judaism as a part of their many identities. Our extraordinary team of volunteer and professional leaders work with babies and toddlers, young children and teens, family units, parents, and adults of all ages and at all stages of life; we make connections, build relationships, and design meaningful Jewish living and learning experiences.



Jewish Teen Initiative

This past year presented unique challenges, but we met those challenges head-on and managed to host more than 60 programs, including 16 semester-long, deep Jewish learning experiences, and 5 ongoing monthly gatherings.

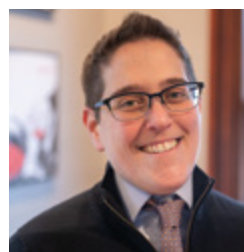
Last fall, Nickel City Jews hosted an intensive four-week leadership development learning experience that brought together 10 emerging leaders. Shiri Kester, the chair of Nickel City Jews, and Mike Steklof, Director of Jewish Experience at CJEL, facilitated conversation about engagement methodology and led the group through a strategic planning process for the year.

In the winter, with the support of a lead gift from Nina Lukin, Elliot Gabelnick and their family, in addition to other generous donors, along with the extraordinary and ambitious vision of the CJEL professional team led by Chief Experience Officer Miriam Abramovich, we provided 275 “Boxes of Light” filled with 8 nightly activities and Jewish texts to help families celebrate Hanukkah.

In the spring, PJ Library Chair Marni Marciano, Vice Chair Rebecca Freedman, and CJEL Director of Jewish Experience Susan Schwartz created a “Drag Queen Purim” event that was



Nickel City Jews



Rabbi Becky Silverstein

a big hit! More than 45 families joined the party to hear the story of Purim and sing songs together. Most importantly, having Mamie, a local Jew-adjacent drag queen, as a co-host, the event was the epitome of our core value of *b'tzelem elokim*, celebrating individuality, inclusion, and belonging.

Earlier this summer, with the leadership of Belonging Chair Robin Raphael, Vice Chair Kirstie Henry, Mike Steklof, and a committee of volunteer leaders, we hosted a series of programs featuring Rabbi Becky Silverstein. The compelling virtual experiences helped local leaders explore progressive approaches to Jewish learning.

As we begin planning for 2021-22 (Jewish year 5782), **CJEL will continue building toward our vision of a community where all Jews, their friends and partners of other faiths, and those exploring Judaism, have access to Jewish living and learning experiences that help them thrive.** We will continue to engage and nurture relationships with and among families and individuals at all stages of life, create opportunities for meaningful and relevant Jewish exploration and learning, and support and amplify the work of synagogues and partner organizations. Our tremendous Leadership Council is committed to strengthening community collaboration and a vibrant and caring Jewish community. I invite you to join us. Come to our end-of-summer family event on Sunday, August 29 (see page 6) or enroll in a fall course like “Living a Jewish Year,” “Beginning Hebrew,” or “Mussar for Men.” And definitely let us know how we can support you to live and learn Jewishly.

Sheri Rodman, who most recently *Director of Data and Operations for America Achieves*, is *Chair of Buffalo Commons Charter School*, serves on the board of the *Buffalo Jewish Federation* and chairs the *CJEL Leadership Council*.



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Jewish Teen Retreat August 29!



Kick-off the year with the Buffalo Jewish Teen Initiative (JTI), a project of the Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning (CJEL) and the JCC of Greater Buffalo, at this year's Teen Retreat! See your friends and make new ones for a day of fun activities, self-exploration, community service and camp. The Teen Retreat is on Sunday, August 29th at Camp Centerland at the Irving M. Shuman Campgrounds from 11 a.m.-10 p.m. The Teen Retreat is open to all Jewish teens in grades 8-12, and registration fee is \$18. Included with your registration is lunch, dinner, snacks, time at the Ropes Course, and more! Register at bit.ly/JTITEENRETREAT. **For more information, contact Ben Wolfson at Ben@buffalojewishfederation.org.**

Buffalo Jewish Teen Initiative

TEEN RETREAT

SUNDAY, AUGUST 29
11 AM-10 PM
CAMP CENTERLAND
 At the Irving M. Shuman Campgrounds

Open to Grades 8-12
 Fee: \$18

Register: bit.ly/JTITEENRETREAT
 Questions? Contact: ben@buffalojewishfederation.org

A Project of CJEL and the JCC

PJ Library In-Person Again!

How wonderful it was to finally see our PJ Library families in person! On Friday, June 25, PJ Library held its first Shabbat in the Park on the beautiful lawn in Glen Park/Amherst State Park. More than 80 people, including babies, children, parents and grandparents, joined us for songs, blessings, stories and more!

The following Sunday, PJ Library families gathered at Island Park for My Grown Up & Me. Once again, families of multiple generations joined Susan Schwartz for a special story-time filled with songs, dance, stories and crafts. We hope to see you again throughout the summer!



Project Belonging Provides Series of Compelling Jewish Learning Experiences

BY MIKE STEKLOF, ED.D

Over three days in early June, the Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning (CJEL), with the generous support of the Institute for Liberal Jewish Studies Fund, welcomed Rabbi Becky Silverstein (he/him/his) to Buffalo as part of *Project Belonging: A Series of Compelling Virtual Jewish Learning Experiences*. Rabbi Becky is a genderqueer and trans rabbi who uses his birth name and “he, him, his” pronouns. During his virtual visit, the Rabbi engaged the community in Torah and Talmud study teaching, “Torah is an agitator, pushing us to be some things while also pushing us away.”

This idea of Torah as an agitator deeply resonated with the Project Belonging planning team, who in addition to visioning this experience, gathered together to study the book *Torah Queeries*. The planning team was able to look at familiar Torah stories through a queer lens, expressing feelings of anger, confusion, or deeper understanding when the text prompted that feeling. During his visit, Rabbi Becky taught that the Torah belongs to each of us and it is ours to interpret and be in conversation with. One participant shared with us, “Torah is the song we hear in our heart every day.”

During his visit, Rabbi Becky delivered a keynote address, met with the LGBTQ+ Taskforce, clergy and professional leadership of synagogues and agencies, explored ritual with Nickel City Jews, and hosted a SVARA-style Beit Midrash (svara.org). During each program, Rabbi Becky shared deep Jewish wisdom while also challenging participants to apply Jewish wisdom to life today and create space for LGBTQ+ Jews to engage deeply with Jewish text, ritual and belief.

At the end of Rabbi Becky’s keynote address, he shared this story from the Babylonian Talmud, *Menachot* 29b: “Rav Yehuda says that Rav says: When Moses ascended on High, he found the Holy One, Blessed be G-d, sitting and tying crowns on the letters of the Torah. Moses said before G-d: Master of the Universe, who is delaying Your hand? G-d said to him: There is a man who, in the future, at the end of several generations, and Akiva ben Yosef is his name. He will



Project Belonging planning team



derive from each and every thorn, mounds upon mounds of *halakhot* (Jewish law).”

“Moses said before G-d: Master of the Universe, show him to me. G-d said to him: Return behind you. Moses went and sat at the end of the eighth row and did not know what they were saying. Moses’ strength was weakened until Rabbi Akiva came to a certain matter. His students said to him, ‘My teacher, where did you learn this?’ He said to them, ‘It is *halakha* given to Moses at Sinai.’ Moses’ mind was settled.”

From this story, Rabbi Becky taught that together we can create Judaism that is based on tradition, unrecognizable to our ancestors, and deeply resonate with Jews of today. We can mix Torah with our lived experience and create something new.

We deeply appreciate the Project Belonging Planning Team: Kirstie Henry, Iris Danziger, El Bernatovicz, Erica Colligan, Nadine Chalmers, Adam Scheldt, Mark Horowitz, Sheri Darrow, Sheri Rodman, Shira Jacobson and Miriam Abramovich, and the Institute for Liberal Jewish Studies Fund for their deep commitment to providing rich Jewish Learning experiences to adults throughout Jewish Buffalo.

We are also appreciative of our partners: Gay Lesbian Youth Services of Western NY, Congregation Shir Shalom, Jewish Family Services of Buffalo and Erie County, Pride Center of Western NY, Temple Beth Zion, Temple Beth Tzedek, Hillel of Buffalo, Congregation Beth Abraham, JCC of Buffalo, and Congregation Havurah for helping make these events possible.

Mike Steklof, Ed.D, is Director of Jewish Experience for the Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning (CJEL).

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Collecting our Sins in Unique Twist of Ancient Ritual

Jewish Buffalo will participate in *Reverse Tashlich* on September 12

BY S. BRUCE KOHRN

It began with the thoughtful musings of environmentally conscious Jewish students at Florida's Eckerd College during the Rosh Hashanah ritual of Tashlich: "Why are we casting our sins into the ocean," they asked, "when we should be pulling them out?"

Thus, began *Reverse Tashlich*, a waterway cleanup program seen through a Jewish lens that started with five students in 2016 and expanded to 850 volunteers and 48 teams in the US, Canada, Argentina, and Israel in 2019. It is organized by *Tikkun HaYam* ("Repair the Sea"), a Jewish marine conservation program founded by Rabbi Ed Rosenthal, an avid scuba diver and Executive Director of the Suncoast Hillels in Tampa. His goal for 2021 is to double the program, which is held each year on the Sunday between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. This year, *Reverse Tashlich* will be on September 12th, and several Jewish organizations, including Hillel, the JCC, Federation and several synagogues, will join together to participate as a new "Jewish Buffalo Team."

Most Jewish sources trace the custom of *Tashlich* back to the 15th Century. For many synagogue communities, it has become a ritual traditionally observed on the first day of Rosh Hashanah when congregants proceed to a body of running water and symbolically cast off their sins. The ceremony includes reading the source passage for the practice, the last verses from the prophet Micah (7:19):

"He will take us back in love; He will cover up our iniquities. You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

To the students' point, Jews symbolically cast away our sins by throwing breadcrumbs into the water to begin the New Year with a pure heart. Unfortunately, humans also cast away approximately six million tons of trash every year that ends up in the world's oceans, posing a health and safety risk to marine animals. This human carelessness is a blatant violation of the Jewish ethical principal *Bal Tashchit* ("Do Not Destroy"), a

Mitzvah in Deuteronomy forbidding the destruction of fruit trees. The concept was expanded in the Talmud to include all forms of senseless damage and waste. Rabbi Rosenthal's *Tikkun HaYam* acts to protect the oceans, waterways and wildlife and to change our culture of carelessness.

Our plan is to collect litter and garbage along Ellicott Creek and other areas waterways, all of which are part of the Great Lakes watershed, one of the world's largest surface freshwater ecosystems and a dominant part of the physical and cultural heritage of

Western New York and North America. While great strides have been taken to restore the health of the Great Lakes in the last 50 years – to the benefit of both public health and the Western New York economy – there is always work to be done. Keep in mind that since all waterways are ultimately connected to the sea, the work we do here benefits the oceans and marine wildlife everywhere.

On September 12th, we will meet at 11:30 a.m. at Camp Centerland for bagels and coffee; the program will start at noon. Some teams will then head out to clean up along Ellicott Creek. While other teams will head out to other waterways in the Buffalo area.

Please join us by registering online at repairthesea.org/reverse-tashlich. In the Team Selection scroll down menu, choose "New York, Buffalo – Jewish Buffalo." All the equipment you will need will be provided. Be sure to wear long pants and a long-sleeved shirt to guard against ticks and poison ivy, and since we will be recording data on the litter we collect, download the Marine Debris Data app beforehand. If you're a Bills fan, don't forget to record the game!

If you have any questions, please contact Buffalo Jewish Federation CEO Rob Goldberg: rob@buffalojewishfederation.org

S. Bruce Kohn of Vision & Grit, LLC, is an expert in environment and sustainability and is the Chair of Buffalo's first Reverse Tashlich effort.



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The Impact of a Positive Gesture 50 years Later

BY MARC BROWN

I recently attended a meeting and the guest speaker was Herbert L. Bellamy, Jr., President of the Buffalo Black Achievers Program. The Black Achievers recognizes achievements of Black people in our community, and uses positive images to both educate and inspire. The Black Achievers also hosts a yearly dinner that has honored over 2,000 people over the past forty years. However, what personally stuck with me was Mr. Bellamy's story about his father.



JCRC and Community Leaders at The Black Achievers Museum

According to Mr. Bellamy, his father worked at a liquor store on the east side of Buffalo, which was owned by a Jewish person by the name of "Mr. Myles." When Mr. Myles retired, he gave his store to Mr. Bellamy's father, which was how he began his long career as a successful businessman. This gesture resonated with me given the positive interaction my family had with the Black community through their pharmacies across Buffalo over a century ago. Following Mr. Bellamy's insightful presentation, I introduced myself as a member of the Buffalo Jewish Federation Board of Governors, and invited Mr. Bellamy to meet with members of the Federation's leadership.



On June 29, Mr. Bellamy opened his doors of the Black Achievers Museum

to our group, which included Federation professionals Rob Goldberg and Mara Koven-Gelman, and members of the Racial Justice Sub-Committee of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC). Mr. Bellamy and Black Achievers Board Member Robert L. Robinson, II, told us about their Museum and Annual Dinner, which I and others in our group look forward to attending in the future.



It is amazing that Mr. Myles's positive gesture half a century ago could strengthen the bonds today between the Black and Jewish communities. I look forward to doing my part to connect our communities and be a part of positive programs like Black Achievers.

Marc W. Brown is an experienced commercial litigator with Goldberg Segalla and an adjunct professor at the University at Buffalo Law School. He joined the Federation Board of Governors last January.

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Driving Down the Highway: A Metaphor for Elul

BY RABBI SHARON L. SOBEL

My exit is the first one on the 290 immediately after I've exited from the I90. This exit is at a dangerous crossroads: I have to immediately cross over three lanes of traffic while avoiding oncoming traffic entering from my right. I always feel my anxiety level increase as I approach, and hope that I won't get in an accident crossing over and that I won't miss my exit onto Main Street. I realize this particular highway with these difficult crossroads is really a metaphor for our lives.

Each and every day, we each travel along our own highway of life. Each of us does all that we can to ensure we live our lives to the fullest and best of our abilities: we eat right, exercise, nurture our minds and spirits, engage in warm and loving relationships with family and friends, and do all of those other "good things." But we never know what might come careening suddenly down the road beside us: will it be some unexpected building collapse, like the one that just happened in Surfside, Miami? A global pandemic? Personal illness or loss of a beloved family member or friend? Or, something else for which we cannot possibly be prepared?

How do we safely navigate these unforeseen obstacles that enter the paths of our life's journey like the cars that come zipping down the highway, since some things are simply out of our control.

The upcoming *Ya'mim Nora'im* – the High Holy Days, and the Hebrew month of *Elul* preceding them-this month, help give us the tools so that we can chart our course and re-direct our life's journey if we so need. We might not be able to control what happens, but we are able to find strength and support from within ourselves, from our community and from God.

Elul begins Sunday evening, August 8th. Traditionally, *Elul* is dedicated to studying and



Rabbi Sharon L. Sobel

preparing for the necessary work of "repairing our souls." But this is not a once-a-year endeavor. The High Holy Days make us stop and take notice of the frailty of life. They remind us that we are on a journey. We learn that if we take the time to transform ourselves throughout the year – through reflection, prayer, study, acts of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) and repentance, we will be prepared to enter that "danger-filled metaphorical crossroads" of life.

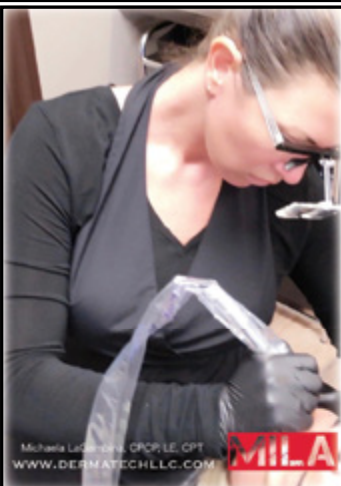
There are many ways to use this upcoming month to begin to prepare. Here are just a few ideas to help begin this process:

- Join with your congregational community for Shabbat worship and study and with our greater community for our Annual Communal *Selichot* evening of study and prayer on August 28th at 9:00 p.m. at Temple Beth Tzedek. The power of community, prayer and music has the ability to nurture and transform one's spirit and soul.
- Subscribe to Craig Taubman's "Jewels of Elul." These are short, inspirational insights on the theme of the upcoming High Holy Days written by different people, both well-known and not-so-well known at JewelsofElul.com.
- Do some preparatory background reading. A few suggestions:
 - *This is Real and You are Completely Unprepared: The Days of Awe as a Journey of Transformation*, Alan Lew, Little, Brown and Co., 2003.
 - *Saying No and Letting Go: Jewish Wisdom on Making Room for What Matters Most*, Rabbi Edwin Goldberg, Jewish Lights Publishing, 2013.
 - *Rosh Hashanah (or/and) Yom Kippur Inspiration, Contemplation*, edited by Rabbi Dov Peretz Elkins, Jewish Lights Publishing.

We each will encounter many intersections, crossroads and metaphoric "careening cars" in the journey of our own lives. The obstacles we encounter will seem less daunting and the more secure we will feel, the more prepared we are.

"*K'tivah v'chatimah tovah* – May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year."

Rabbi Sharon L. Sobel is Interim Senior Rabbi at Temple Beth Zion.



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This month we are excited to highlight one of the 17 communities in our Partnership consortium, Budapest, Hungary. With an estimated Jewish population of between 75,000 and 100,000, Budapest is home to the largest Jewish community in Central Europe. Many Hungarian Jews, most of whom are unaffiliated, are rediscovering their Jewish roots.



The Tree of Life

Since the fall of Communism, Budapest boasts a wide variety of Jewish institutions catering to nearly every brand of Jewish expression. The modern Bálint Ház Community Center (Bálint Közösségi Ház), established in 1995, is the venue of a wide variety of Jewish cultural and educational activities. It aims to foster dialogue not only among community members but also with anyone seeking to know more about Judaism. In addition, several Jewish organizations have been reactivated. Among them are the Zionist Federation, the March of the Living, Limmud Hungary, and B'nai Brith. The Maccabi sports club continues the tradition of Hungarian Jewish sportsmanship. Jewish primary schools and high schools are attracting increasing numbers of students, and the Budapest University of Jewish Studies trains both rabbis and cantors as well as students interested in Jewish studies.



Bronze Shoes on the banks of the Danube

Budapest has numerous sites of interest for Jewish visitors:

The 19th-century Dohány Synagogue is the largest in Europe (second largest in the world) and was recently renovated.



(top) Yom Haatzmaut Celebration in Budapest;
(bottom) The Great Synagogue

Designed by German architect Ludwig Förster and built in only four years, the synagogue was consecrated in 1859 and has since been the most iconic symbol of Hungarian Jewry.

The Emanuel Holocaust Memorial, in the courtyard of the Dohány Synagogue, is called the Tree of Life. On this modern sculpture, each

leaf symbolizes a victim of the Shoah. A statue in Budapest honors Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who rescued several thousand Jews in Budapest from deportation to the Nazi death camps.

Along the banks of the Danube is an evocative monument to the Jews who were murdered by the Arrow Cross along the banks of that river in January 1945. The monument consists solely of shoes made of bronze, recalling the fact that the victims were made to leave their shoes along the shore.

For more information or any questions about Partnership or how you can connect with the Jewish community in Budapest, please contact Mandy Weiss at mandy@buffalojewishfederation.org.

P2G Book Club

Sunday, August 29th @ 1:00 p.m.

Book Club – Share your thoughts and comments on “The Orchard” by Israeli author Yochi Brandes.

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Invigorating neighborhoods and inspiring change

BY SAMANTHA WHITE

My husband, Byron, and I have lived in our home on the East Side of Buffalo since 2005. We started with a grassy lot and some trumpet lilies in front. My mom, Elaine Bergman, would send me flowers and trees like iris, rose of Sharon, and forsythia from my childhood home on Long Island through the mail.

And my garden grew. I became a gardener on the 2019 East Side Garden Walk (ESGW), an annual free self-guided garden tour supported by Gardens Buffalo Niagara (GBN) held on the third Saturday of July. I saw it as a way for us to contribute to the narrative of our own community and we were able to help create a positive story about our neighborhood on the news. The day of the walk, Byron and I spoke face to face with visitors from inside and outside of our community. We shared our garden, our love of community, and our story of his father rehabbing the property in the 80's, our move to the house and my mom's long-distance garden contributions. We also squashed a few stereotypes that day.

After helping to get The Olmsted Conservancy to open the MLK Park Greenhouse to the public for the first time in its history in 2019, I was drafted to Co-Chair ESGW. Since becoming a Co-chair and GBN Board Member, we have worked hard to build an event hoping to replicate the success of Garden Walk Buffalo, another GBN event, which has a \$5 million impact on its community.



Community Leaders at the Freedom Wall

We have proudly grown the resident participation from about 20 gardens in 2018 to almost 75 gardens for this year. We have advocated for beautifying the East Side, and GBN supported that work by giving out beautification microgrants.

Since 2018, our group has been pushing for the repair of the dilapidated streetscape in front of the Freedom Wall, a mural which pays tribute to national and local African American leaders. I began leading those ESGW efforts in 2019, and by 2020 we had partnered with the Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor Commission. Our joint efforts resulted in a New York State grant for \$366,000, secured by State Senator Tim Kennedy, to create a more dignified Freedom Wall experience by

replacing the sidewalks and upgrading the streetscape. We have completed 6 months of community input and are now at the design panel stage of the process. The project has a 2022 estimated completion date.

For more information about the ESGW please go to EastSideGardenWalk.com. And if you would like one last chance to catch some East Side gardening this year check out GBN's Urban Farm Day Tour on August 28, 2021 from 10am-3pm UrbanFarmDay.com.

Samantha White is a Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, a member of Temple Beth Zion and has recently become involved with Buffalo's Jewish Community Relations Council.

JCC in August!

Day Trip to the Roycroft Campus August 26

The JCC community will be heading to the Roycroft Campus for a 1-hour tour of the Campus, a printing press demonstration and lunch at The Inn. Participants are responsible for their own form of transportation to and from the Roycroft Campus. The price per person is \$60.00 for members and \$80.00 for non-members. Registration required by Thursday, August 12. **For more info or to register please contact Katie Wzontek at kwzontek@jccbuffalo.org.**

Cultural ARTSventure Family Summer Series

JCC Benderson Family Building.

August 2 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Visit from the Buffalo Public Library. Board the Library on Wheels and check-out books, movies and so much more. Art activities and Story time for the whole family.

JCC Benderson Family Building.

August 9 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Visit from the Albright Knox Art Truck. Create a fun art project and participate in family yoga

Check-in and activities will be outdoors, near the front circle. Families are encouraged to pack a picnic and bring a blanket/chairs. Open to the Community. **Registration required at www.jccbuffalo.org.**

JCC member - Free; Non-member - \$5 per child.

Poolside Summer Concert Series

Enjoy live music at the Grossman Outdoor Family Pool Complex at the Benderson Family Building.

Free and open to the community. **Registration required at www.jccbuffalo.org.**

August 5 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Mark Conrad Julkowski - Acoustic Rock

August 12 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Moshe Shulman - Argentine Tango and Klezmer

Sunday Funday

August 29 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Lawn Games, Snack Shack, Kids and Family Activities at the JCC Grossman Outdoor Family Pool Complex at the Benderson Family Building.



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Along with a new mission, Jewish Family Services of WNY is thrilled to provide a sneak peak of its new logo to the readers of *The Jewish Journal*. Bold and modern, the logo's charcoal gray text style is timeless and solid, yet simple to reflect humility and trust. The bits of color are added to represent the diversity of the constituents we serve regardless of beliefs or backgrounds. The coming months will see a new web site and materials reflecting the new JFS and all are invited on the journey.

Ride For Roswell 2021



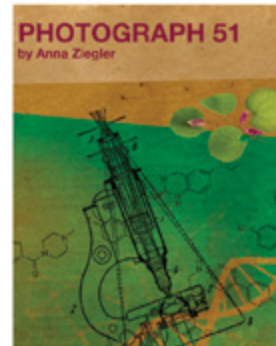
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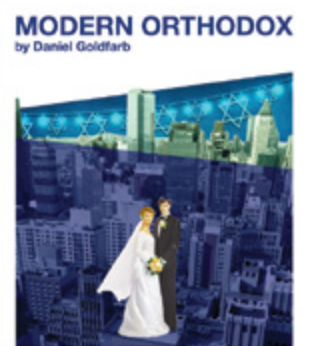
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Registration Open for New Community Religious School

BY BETH STEINBERG

By now you hopefully have seen plenty of publicity about the new Community Religious School (CRS) opening this fall – a collaboration between Congregation Shir Shalom, Temple Beth Zion and Temple Beth Tzedek. We are very grateful to *The Jewish Journal* for featuring us on the front cover of the July issue and for including Ezra Rich's great write-up of the new venture.



My CRS Co-Director, Einav Symons, and I are working through this summer on numerous aspects of this exciting new venture: hiring and preparing our faculty, reviewing our curricula, choosing materials for teachers and students, developing our *Tefilah* (prayers) and *minyanim*, determining our building usage and making classroom assignments, promoting the CRS throughout the community, processing our online registrations, and planning for our Opening Day on September 12th!

It is a delight each time another registration comes in – seeing the commitment to their children's Jewish education from families who belong to Congregation Shir Shalom, Temple Beth Tzedek, or Temple Beth Zion, and others not currently (or not yet) affiliated with our three sponsoring synagogues.

We are delighted that several teachers from the CSS/Gesher and TBZ Religious Schools will be staying on with us in the new school. We are enthusiastically welcoming other qualified, passionate individuals to our team. We are also looking to connect with college students living in the area who would like to enhance their own Jewish life and experiences while contributing their skills and energy to the wider Buffalo Jewish community.

The CRS is also proud to continue the wonderful tradition of utilizing volunteer teens as *Madrichim* (volunteer guides). The *Madrichim* program helps the teens (8th-12th graders) to build self-confidence, strengthens their pride in being Jewish, reinvigorates their thirst for Jewish knowledge, and confirms a meaningful place

for them in our community. The students in our religious schools look up to their *Madrichim* as role models and relate to them in a very special and loving way. *Madrichim* may engage in assisting teachers in lesson preparation, leading small group discussions or activities, devising and leading classroom games and activities, providing 1-on-1 assistance to students, modeling Jewish values, providing a safe and caring environment for every student, sharing their *ruach* (spirit), and showing how cool it is to be Jewish!

Most, if not all, local high schools recognize these hours for their volunteer service requirements. If you or someone you know would like to participate in the CRS *Madrichim* program, please contact me (beth@tbz.org, 716-835-6565 ext. 131), or Einav (einav.symons@shirshalombuffalo.org, 716-633-8877).

Registration for the school is online at: <https://www.jotform.com/211467225215146>. No payment is required at the time of registration. Billing will be handled by the individual congregations. If you are new to the area, haven't yet made a commitment to synagogue membership, or are affiliated with another synagogue in the Buffalo area, please feel free to use our online registration link as well.

Beth Steinberg is the Co-Director of the new Community Religious School.

Temple Beth Tzedek Events

Mini Shabbaton at Camp Centerland with an Animal Twist

Temple Beth Tzedek will be hosting a mini shabbaton at Camp Centerland on August 14th. Rabbi Rosenbaum will be leading an alternative service open to all members of the community. For young families, there will be a special Tot Shabbat service led by Ariel Marcus with some special guests. In addition to traditional songs and stories, there will be an animal trainer and Centerland staffer Clare Sweeney will bring bunnies and ducks. TBT member Rabbi Sara Rich will discuss the Jewish value of "Tzaar Baalei Chaim," treating animals properly. Light snacks will be served, and attendees are welcome to bring their own lunch for a picnic after services.



TBT Hosts Community Selichot 8/28

After an extended period of Zoom services, Temple Beth Tzedek welcomes all members of Jewish Buffalo to the annual community-wide Selichot Service on Saturday night, August 28th. The recitation of Selichot in the days leading up to Rosh Hashanah is a tradition that has been in practice for over a thousand years.

The evening will begin at 9:00 pm at TBT with Havdalah followed by a discussion on "Return to Community" featuring Rabbi Adam J. Rosenbaum of Temple Beth Tzedek, Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein of Congregation Shir Shalom, and Rabbi Sharon L. Sobel of Temple Beth Zion. This will be followed by a Selichot service.

The event is co-sponsored by Congregation Beth Abraham, Congregation Havurah, Congregation Shir Shalom, Temple Beth Tzedek, and Temple Beth Zion, in partnership with the Buffalo Board of Rabbis and Cantors.



Rabbi Silberschein Returns for the High Holidays

As Temple Beth Tzedek prepares for in-person High Holiday services, the congregation is pleased to welcome back Rabbi Moshe M. Silberschein to the clergy team for this sacred season. Rabbi Silberschein was TBT's interim rabbi from 2019-2020. The main sanctuary on North Forest accommodates 300 people, creating the necessity for

multiple services in the building. There will be additional details in the September issue. A Detroit native, Rabbi Silberschein made Aliyah to Israel in 1982 and is a beloved teacher of undergraduate, graduate, rabbinic, cantorial and seminary students in Jerusalem.

Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies

Spotlighting Golden Goldman Fund

For the past 25 years the Foundation has assisted Deborah Goldman and Dr. Grant Golden in carrying out their philanthropic mission through the administration of The Golden Goldman Philanthropic Fund. The Fund's mission is to maximize local impact in support of Judaism, Arts and Culture, Literacy, Reducing Income Inequality, and Women's issues including Reproductive Health and Rights.

The Golden Goldman Philanthropic Fund accepts applications for projects furthering the Fund's mission from community organizations and funding is awarded based upon potential impact. Important factors include the organizations' fiscal viability and their ability to reach underserved individuals. Proposals are reviewed quarterly with most approved projects receiving grants of \$2,000 – \$20,000.

Some recent projects include:

- Massachusetts Avenue Project to upgrade the Mobile Market
- Temple Beth Zion for new High Holiday Prayer Books
- Erie County Public Library for the "B is for Book" program
- Planned Parenthood of CWNy for the Promise for Tomorrow project
- Explore Buffalo to support their shift to virtual programming
- Buffalo Zoo for a new portable x-ray machine
- CEPA Gallery for Free workshops and the creation of a public art archive
- Kleinhans Music Hall to remodel the Musician's Lounge
- Say Yes Buffalo for curriculum kits
- Buffalo Jewish Federation in support of PJ Library

Dr. Grant Golden wears a number of hats in our community. He has been practicing radiology in Buffalo since 1981. Grant has also written the scores (and some of the books) for several locally produced musicals and ran the Old Chestnut Film Society for more than 35 years. He reviewed local plays on the radio, WBEN and WBFO, for 20 years before making the switch to *Buffalo Rising*. Grant also serves on the board of Congregation Beth Abraham in the Elmwood Village. Deborah Goldman is the Chair of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) and is a member of the Buffalo Jewish Federation Board of Governors. She has also served as Chair of Planned Parenthood of Western and Central New York, and in numerous volunteer leadership roles in



Dr. Grant Golden and Deborah Goldman

the Jewish and general Buffalo Community. After serving in local government, Deborah is currently a consultant for behavioral health agencies, counties, and not-for-profits across New York State, and for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration.

A grant proposal may be submitted to the Fund by visiting the Foundation's website at <https://jewishphilanthropies.org/golden-goldman-fund/>. If you would like more information, please email the Fund at goldengoldmanphilanthropicfund@gmail.com.

If you would like more information in how the Foundation can help preserve your legacy and carryout your philanthropic mission, please contact Irv Levy, Executive Director at irv@jewishphilanthropies.org or call Irv at 204-1139.

Lorne Steinhart joins FTP Team

The Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies is pleased to welcome Lorne Steinhart to its professional team as the Senior Manager of Client Relations. A newly created position designed to support the Foundation's continued growth in scope, Lorne will enable a greater focus on client engagement, communications and the cultivation of strong enduring relationships with existing and prospective clients, organizations, and Jewish Buffalo. Lorne started in this new role in late July.

Irving Levy, the Foundation's Executive Director, looks forward to further developing the organization's brand, visibility and ability to meet and exceed existing and prospective clients' expectations. "The Foundation is committed to helping, guiding and empowering individuals and families to fulfill their passions and dreams of supporting mission-based organizations and causes through current and planned legacy giving," Irv noted. "Lorne has extensive experience in strategic planning, development and relationship building in the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. His expertise will help the Foundation grow and enable its clients to further positively impact Jewish Buffalo, WNY and the world."

Previously, Lorne developed the marketing and business development program at EMS Healthcare Informatics, a local software solutions firm for healthcare organizations. Also, he served Erie County as Deputy Comptroller of Finance and Accounting and directed the business analysis and development functions at Erie County Medical Center including their strategic business development initiatives.

Lorne is a graduate of the State University of New York at Albany. He earned his MBA at Canisius College with a concentration in health care management and finance. Lorne enjoys quality time with his family and friends, especially traveling and outdoor activities such as hiking, kayaking and cycling.



Lorne Steinhart



SUMMER HOURS

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FRI-SAT 10am-10pm



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Hadassah Virtual Art Auction, 8/24



Hadassah Buffalo will hold a juried Virtual Art Auction on Tuesday, August 24 at 2:00 p.m. The collection includes art works on paper from artists from all over the United States, Europe and Israel. There are several micro-calligraphy pieces done by artists from Safed as well as other Israeli artists Amran Ebgi and Amos Amit. The collection also includes several pieces by talented female artists such as Ilona Royce Smithkin, Joanne Miller Rafferty, Leah Hayerushalmi, and Buffalo's Susan Bergman and Nancy Greenberg.

Dr. Mark Finklestein will serve as auctioneer. You can preview the art before the auction, and can find it is currently hanging in the second-floor hallway of the Benderson JCC. The auction will be virtual but community members may also attend in person. **For more information email mseller@buffalo.edu or mkatzel@me.com.**

Ohr Temimim: Wrapping up the Year with STEAM

BY MRS. NANCY BOLLES

Our fifth and sixth grade girls class at Ohr Temimim has been engaged in STEAM activities throughout the year. STEAM is an educational approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. One recent project included solar cooking where each student designed a solar cooker from cardboard, foil, and plastic wrap and then cooked a meal in it. Another project had students create a business plan for a food truck and built a 3-D model of the truck. The food trucks included a variety of themes from Meat-Out which provides meat and vegetable dishes, to Lemon 'n Love selling freshly squeezed lemonade as well as fruit kabobs. Students from other classes were able to "visit" each food truck and ask the entrepreneurial students various questions.

Nancy Bolles is a fifth and sixth grade girls teacher at Ohr Temimim School.



Gila Gellman snacks on pizza made in her solar cooker.



Chavie Gurary shows another student her social media ideas for her food truck called Bubby's Bagels.



Mushky Labkovski explains her business plan for Lemon 'n Love to a younger grade student.

Historical Jewish Houses of Worship Exhibit Opens at JCC 9/1

The upcoming exhibit in the Levy and Daniel Families Art Gallery at the Holland Family Building is a solo photography exhibit by artist Richard Steinberg entitled **Historic Jewish Houses of Worship**. The exhibit will be on display September 1 – October 28.

From an early age, visits to famous galleries and museums in NYC made a strong visual impression upon Richard. A photography class in the local high school hooked him on sharing photographic works with friends and family. People, nature and structures in urban settings always provided inspiration. *The Historical Jewish Houses of Worship* show brings together his religion, traditions, culture and structures in urban settings. He is honored and



excited to share his work with the Buffalo Jewish Community and beyond.



Open to the Community, the JCC will be hosting a free opening reception, on Wednesday, September 1, 5:30-7:30 p.m., in the Levy and Daniel Families Art Gallery. Included in the evening will be an artist talk at 6:00 p.m. with light refreshments. All artwork is for sale with 20% of the sales supporting the Gallery and Cultural Arts programs at the JCC. Visitors can access the gallery by checking in at the



member service desk during. **For more information contact Katie Wzontek at kwzontek@jccbuffalo.org.**

FOOD

Ratatouille

BY ROBIN KURSS

This is my favorite recipe for August, a time when the farmer's market is bursting with beautiful summer produce. It can be enjoyed hot, warm or cold, as a filling for sandwiches, a topping for meat or fish or all by itself! Enjoy!

Ingredients:

1 eggplant, cut into 1/2" dice
 2 red onions, cut into 1/2" dice
 1 each: red, green & yellow pepper, cut into 1/2" dice
 3 small zucchini, cut into 1/2" dice
 3 tomatoes, cut into 1/2" dice
 4 Tbsp olive oil
 6 cloves garlic, sliced
 1/4 c fresh basil leaves, torn
 Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

In a large pot, heat oil and add garlic and veggies. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and sauté until all the veggies are very soft and caramelized. Take off the heat, sprinkle with the basil and season with more salt and pepper to taste.



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Buffalo's Watchdog Journalists

BY JIM HEANEY

Buffalo has the usual complement of news outlets - a daily newspaper, three network-affiliated television stations and a public broadcasting operation. Buffalo also has something not found in many other markets: an investigative reporting center, *Investigative Post*.

Nonprofit news outlets like *Investigative Post* have proliferated around the country over the past decade. There are more than 300, most focused on topics such as education, health and the environment, or providing coverage of state government or local affairs. Relatively few are focused on producing hard-nosed investigative reporting, which is our stock and trade. Our aim is to expose injustice and wrongdoing, explain complex issues and hold people in power accountable.

Investigative Post has had outsized influence since it began publishing in 2012. We broke the Buffalo Billion bid-



Jim Heaney, founder of *Investigative Post*

rigging scandal. Reported relentlessly on lead poisoning in Buffalo's inner-city. Documented police misconduct. To name

just a few of the topics we've tackled. We're helping to fill an important void. Local news is at risk here in Western New York, as it is in most communities across the country, because of the collapse of the newspaper industry. A precipitous decline in advertising and circulation revenues had led to deep cuts in reporting staffs and news coverage. Investigative reporting is the costliest type of coverage to produce and there's less of it as a result - at a time when accountability journalism is needed more than ever.

That's where we come in. We're producing as much - or more - accountability journalism as any news outlet in town. And we're conveying it on all the major media platforms: television, radio, print and the web. We distribute our work on our website, investigativepost.org, and through partnerships with WGRZ and WBFO. In addition, I write a monthly column for *Buffalo Spree* and appear regularly on "The Capitol Pressroom," heard on 20 public radio stations around the state, including WBFO. Our work can reach an audience of up to 150,000 readers, viewers and listeners per story.

We select stories based on their importance and potential for impact. We apply rigorous reporting standards to our work and make extensive use of data and documents to supplement interviews and other methods of shoe-leather reporting. While we cover a range of topics, our reporting is focused

on the environment, education, criminal justice, economic development and government and corporate malfeasance. Much of our work has a social justice bent and our next reporting will develop a beat focused on racial and economic inequality.

Our staff includes myself, as editor, and four full-time investigative reporters, including Geoff Kelly, former editor of *Artvoice* and *The Public*. Our board of directors include two Pulitzer Prize winners: Tom Toles, formerly of *The Buffalo News* and *The Washington Post*, and Sarah Cohen, formerly of *The Post* and *The New York Times*. (I'm a former Pulitzer Prize finalist for reporting I did in the 1990s on slum housing in Buffalo.)

Our work has been cited for excellence in 20 journalism competitions, including Investigative Reporters & Editors, the Edward R. Murrow Awards and the New York State Associated Press Broadcasters Association. *Buffalo Spree* magazine in 2017 honored *Investigative Post*'s staff as the best print reporters in WNY, citing our "intensively researched stories on vital topics."

As a nonprofit, *Investigative Post* relies on community support to fund its work. Our donors value a free press and a vibrant local media. Funders include the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, The M&T Charitable Foundation, Try-It Distributing, Savarino Companies and Confer Plastics.

Investigative Post is in the midst of a campaign, Journalism Worth A Million, to raise funds to sustain our current operation and enable us to hire more reporters, expand our award-winning coverage and bolster our business operations to ensure our economic sustainability. Former federal prosecutor Preet Bharara, for one, believes supporting investigative journalism is a smart investment. Here's what he said in announcing the Buffalo Billion indictments, while tipping his hat to *Investigative Post* for alerting his office to the corruption.

"A lot of the greatest work that prosecutors and watchdogs do comes from the work that journalists do, and I would encourage anyone who's able to fund investigative journalism to spend money on it because it's money well-spent and it's good for the public."

Jim Heaney is the Editor and Executive Director of *Investigative Post*. You can reach him at jheaney@investigativepost.org.

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1»

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2»

Families in WNY are hungry and there are still food scarcities during this difficult time. **You can help by donating to Feedmore WNY**, which now encompasses Meals on Wheels and the Food Bank. **Go to feedmorewny.org to donate online, volunteer or learn more.**

3»

Begin to celebrate the High Holy Days at a Selichot service. Dubbed "A return to Community," this event is open to all and takes place Saturday, August 28 from 9:00-11:00 p.m. at Temple Beth Tzedek (TBT), 1641 North Forest Road, and is sponsored by TBT, Temple Beth Zion, Congregation Shir Shalom, Congregation Havurah and Congregation Beth Abraham.

4»

PJ Library hosts an End of Summer Fest Sunday, August 29 from 2:00-5:00 p.m. at Camp Centerland on the JCC North Forest Campus (See ad on page 6). Register at bit.ly/PJLIBRARYSUMMERFESTIVAL. **For more information, contact Miriam Abramovich at miriam@buffalojewishfederation.org.**

5»

The JCC will host an opening of Richard Steinberg's "Historical Houses of Worship" photo exhibit **Wednesday, September 1** at the Levy and Daniel Families Gallery at the JCC on Delaware Avenue from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Artist talk is at 6:00 p.m. Contact Katie Wzontek at kwzontek@jccbuffalo.org.

WHERE IN JBFL0 ?



Where is this found in Jewish Buffalo?

The first 5 people to correctly identify the location will be mentioned in next month's Jewish Journal.

Last month Sharon Krebs and Cheryl Tobias correctly identified the location of the menorah in front of the Chabad Building on North Forest Road.





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Lindy Korn, Esq.
 Attorney & Mediator

SYNAGOGUES

ORGANIZATIONS

Jewish Community Organizations in Western New York

Buffalo Jewish Federation

2640 North Forest Road
 Getzville, NY 14068
 716-204-2241
 buffalojewishfederation.org
 Rob Goldberg - CEO & Executive Director
 Shelly Yellen - President

Buffalo Vaad of Kashrus

49 Barberry Lane
 Williamsville, NY 14221
 716-534-0230
 bvkkosher.com
 buffalo@yahoo.com, bvkkosher@gmail.com
 Rabbi Eliezer Marcus - Rabbinic Administrator
 Michael Paskowitz - President

Center for Jewish Engagement & Learning

2640 North Forest Road
 Getzville, NY 14068
 buffalojewishfederation.org
 Miriam Abramovich - Chief Experience Officer
 Sheri Rodman - Chair

Center for Jewish Life

757 Hopkins Road
 Williamsville NY 14221
 716-639-7600
 Jewishbuffalo.com
 Rabbi Laizer & Chani Labkovski

Chabad House of Buffalo

2450 North Forest Road
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 716-688-1642
 chabadbuffalo.com
 Rabbi Moshe Gurary

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 Chani Labkovski - Director

Department of Jewish Thought

712 Clemens Hall - University at Buffalo
 Buffalo, NY 14260
 716-645-3695
 jewish-studies@buffalo.edu
 jewishstudies.buffalo.edu
 Dr. Sergey Dolgopolski - Chair

Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies

2640 North Forest Road
 Getzville, NY 14068
 716-204-1133
 jewishphilanthropies.org
 Irv Levy - Executive Director
 Jonathan Schechter - President

Hadassah

2640 North Forest Road
 Getzville, NY 14068
 716-688-5260
 buffalohadassah@gmail.com
 Elaine Kellick and Annette Magid -
 Co-Presidents

Hebrew Benevolent Loan Association

2640 North Forest Road in FJP offices
 Getzville, NY 14068
 716-204-0542
 Judith Katzenelson Brownstein - President

Hillel of Buffalo

Campus Center of Jewish Life
 520 Lee Entrance/UB Commons
 Suite #101B
 W. Amherst, NY 14228
 716-616-0083
 hillelofbuffalo.org
 Rabbi Sara Rich - Director
 Marc Adler - President

Holocaust Resource Center

2640 North Forest Road
 Getzville, NY 14068
 716-634-9535
 hrcbuffalo.org
 Elizabeth Schram - Director
 Ann Marie Carosella - President

Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo, Inc.

Benderson Family Building
 2640 North Forest Road
 Getzville, NY 14068
 716-688-4033
 jccbuffalo.org
 Mike Rawl - Executive Director
 Alon Kupferman - President

Holland Family Building

787 Delaware Avenue
 Buffalo, NY 14209
 716-886-3145
 jccbuffalo.org

Jewish Community Relations Council

2640 North Forest Road
 Getzville, NY 14068
 buffalojewishfederation.org
 Mara Koven-Gelman - Director
 Deborah Goldman - Chair

Jewish Discovery Center

831 Maple Road
 Williamsville, NY 14221
 716-632-9467
 Jewishdiscovery.org
 Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

Jewish Family Services Of Western New York

70 Barker Street
 Buffalo, NY 14209
 716-883-1914
 jfsbuffalo.org
 Molly Short Carr - CEO
 Blaine Schwartz - Chair

Jewish Federation Apartments

275 Essjay Road
 Williamsville, NY 14221
 716-631-8471
 jewishfederationapartments.org
 Kathleen Haggerty - Property Manager

Jewish Federation Cemetery Corporation, Inc.

2640 North Forest Road
 Getzville, NY 14068
 716-204-2246
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 Deborah Pivarsi - Director
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kadimah.org
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Nathan Sull - Publisher
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Robert Mayer- President & CEO
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Western New York Synagogues and Temples

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Rabbi Moshe Gurary - Director
chabadbuffalo.com

Congregation Beth Abraham (Conservative)

1073 Elmwood Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14222
congregationbethabraham.net
Cantor Irwin Gelman
Marty Kerker - President

Congregation Havurah (Reform)

6320 Main St., Williamsville, NY 14221
716-689-8059
congregationhavurah.org
info@congregationhavurah.org
Bernard Schenkler, President
Enid Edelman, Membership Chair

Congregation Shir Shalom

(Reform/Reconstructionist)
4660 Sheridan Drive
Williamsville, NY 14221
716-633-8877
shirshalombuffalo.org
Rabbi Alexander Lazarus-Klein
Cantor Arlene Frank
Joanne Marquisee - Executive Director
Bruce Corris - President

Kehillat Ohr Tzion (Modern Orthodox)

879 Hopkins Rd
Williamsville, NY 14221
ohrtzion.org/kot
Rabbi Ori Bergman
Cheryl Stein - President

Knesset Center (Orthodox)

500 Starin Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14214
716-832-5063
chabadbuffalo.com
Rabbi Shmaryahu Charitonow

Saranac Synagogue (Orthodox)

85 Saranac Avenue
Buffalo New York 14216
716-876-1284
SaranacSynagogue.org
President - Shmuel Rashkin
Vice President - Reuven Alt
Gabbai David Kunkel

Temple Beth Tzedek (Conservative)

1641 North Forest Road
Williamsville, NY 14221
716-838-3232
btzbuffalo.org
Rabbi Adam J. Rosenbaum
Cantor Mark Spindler
Marcia Goldstein - President
Kim Jones - Administrator

Temple Beth Zion (Reform)

Sanctuary: 805 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14209
Religious School and Offices:
700 Sweet Home Road
Amherst, NY 14226
716-836-6565
tbz.org
Rabbi Sharon Sobel
Jeff Clark - Executive Director
David Goldberg - President

Temple Beth El (Reform)

720 Ashland Avenue
Niagara Falls, NY 14301
716-282-2717
niagarafallstemple.com
Rabbi Ellen Franke
Cantorial Soloist Barry Rose
William Bell - President

Temple Hesed Abraham of Greater Jamestown (Reform)

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President - Joe Gerstel (716-665-2118)
valprojdg@netsync.net

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In Remembrance

The following individuals in our community passed away during the period from June 22-July 19, 2021*. May their memories forever be a blessing, and may their loved ones be comforted among the mourners of Zion.

Dr. Herschel Balsom
Harold Ein Benjamin
David A. Chodrow
Linda Herman
Richard Merlo
Mimi June Swados
Meyer "Mike" Tubin
Sara Weinstein



"If we inadvertently missed printing the listing of your loved one, please write to ellen@buffalojewishfederation.org. and we will include the name next month.

IN LOVING MEMORY

Remembering Robert B. Sommerstein: 1944 – 2021

BY DALE ANDERSON

Robert B. Sommerstein, a criminal defense attorney for more than 50 years, believed firmly that everyone should have proper representation in court, regardless of their means. As a member of the board of directors of the Erie County Bar Association, he was longtime chairman of its assigned counsel program, where he vetted lawyers to represent clients who otherwise could not afford them. He regularly defended them himself. "Even though you're poor, he thought you should have a good lawyer," his wife Lynne said. "He took assigned cases all through his career."

A resident of Williamsville, he died April 27 in Gates Vascular Institute from complications following heart surgery. He was 77. Born in Newark, N.J., the older of two boys, he was the son of Eastern European immigrants who escaped the Holocaust during early days of



Robert B. Sommerstein

World War II. He was a dean's list student at the University at Buffalo, earning a bachelor's degree in geography in 1966.

While attending UB Law School, he met an undergraduate, Lynne Kramer, at a Hillel mixer. After they were married in 1967, he took a job as a law clerk with the firm of Goldstein and Freed in downtown Buffalo while continuing to attend classes. He received his degree in 1969 and became an attorney with the firm, which later became Dubin, Sommerstein and Hunter.

Affiliated with Temple Beth Zion, Mr.

Sommerstein supported many American Jewish charitable projects. He was a past president of Jewish Family Services in Buffalo and a founding member of the U.S. Holocaust Museum. He and his wife were co-founders of **Yad B'yad**, a local Jewish organization that advocates for people with disabilities and successfully campaigned to include them in religious schools and other activities. They were honored in 1998 with Sister/Brotherhood Awards from the National Conference for Community and Justice.

His daughter Michelle was the first to graduate from an integrated education program in which the Williamsville schools provided special assistance for students with learning disabilities after the Sommersteins and other parents campaigned to establish it. Michelle went on to attend Trinity College in Vermont, where a similar program was established.

Mrs. Sommerstein, a lecturer in special education at SUNY Buffalo State, helped set up the College-Based Transition Program, a noncredit program for students there with significant disabilities, and served as its director.

Although just 5 feet, 4 inches tall, Mr. Sommerstein was a competitive athlete. He played football in high school and was a member of the baseball team at UB. He also played tennis and golf and enjoyed fishing. A dedicated card player, he attended a weekly poker club and played duplicate bridge, attaining the rank of Bronze Life Master with more than 800 points. Although not known to most people, he had a beautiful singing voice, as well, Mrs. Sommerstein remembered.

Mr. Sommerstein made friends easily and had an endless supply of jokes and stories. He entertained the staff at his law office every year by dressing as an offbeat Santa Claus, with reindeer antlers, elf shoes and a shiny red nose. "You could get anything on him and he'd wear it," his wife said. "He loved doing it."

In addition to his wife and daughter, survivors include a son, David, news director for North County Public Radio at St. Lawrence University in Canton; a brother, Richard; and a granddaughter. Services were private.

Dale Anderson is a reporter for The Buffalo News. This article was printed in May 4, 2021 edition of The News, and is reprinted with permission of the author and editor.

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Celebrating the Blessings of August

BY RABBI ADAM SCHELDT

It is no secret that I am a gardener (even though I keep most of my garden hidden in my back yard). What many may not know, however, is that my garden looks its best in mid-July. That is when the plants I collect and tend to look the most beautiful and are in full bloom; mid-summer is when many of the flowers I plant anew each year have filled out and are in their prime, and that is when most all of the garden tours, group visits, and open visiting hours take place. Needless to say, July is a very busy month. The beauty, the bustle, the busy-ness—it all keeps me on my toes.

August, however, is another story. Peak bloom is winding down amongst some of my more prized plants. And, although everything in the garden continues to grow and bloom and enjoy the summer, there is a big part of me that exhales.

Don't get me wrong. To grow things and cultivate beauty is always something that brings me joy and fulfillment. Whether at its peak or sometime thereafter, goodness comes from helping beauty come into the world.

But August is a time in which we begin to make a shift. People find time for trips or weekends away before the summer draws to a close. Households with kids start to realign and transition to a new school year. And personally, I enjoy my exhalation. I take a moment to offer a bit of gratitude for a flower-filled July. I still enjoy the beauty growing around me, and while everything is still fresh in my mind, I begin to think about what might be next.

I think that that is really what August is all about. Enjoying what was, and looking forward to what will be. It is a month in which temperatures are pleasant, things are green, and you have the opportunity to create a space for



Rabbi Adam Scheldt is Director of Spiritual Care at Hospice Buffalo

yourself to pause, take stock, enjoy the present, and mindfully move into the fall with a measure of grace.

Not everyone welcomes the fall. Some people don't like the colder weather that arrives with the autumn. Many kids dread the return to school. But August gives us the chance—while things are still green and growing around us—to adjust to what is ahead. We have the chance to look around ourselves in the present, take in the beauty of flowers and wonderful growing things, and recharge our inner batteries to enable us to look forward to the fall with gratitude and grace.

As this robust month of summer comes to a close, may we all find the time to look back over a summer of green-growth, and warmth with gratitude as we begin to take our first steps toward an autumn season of beauty in its own right.

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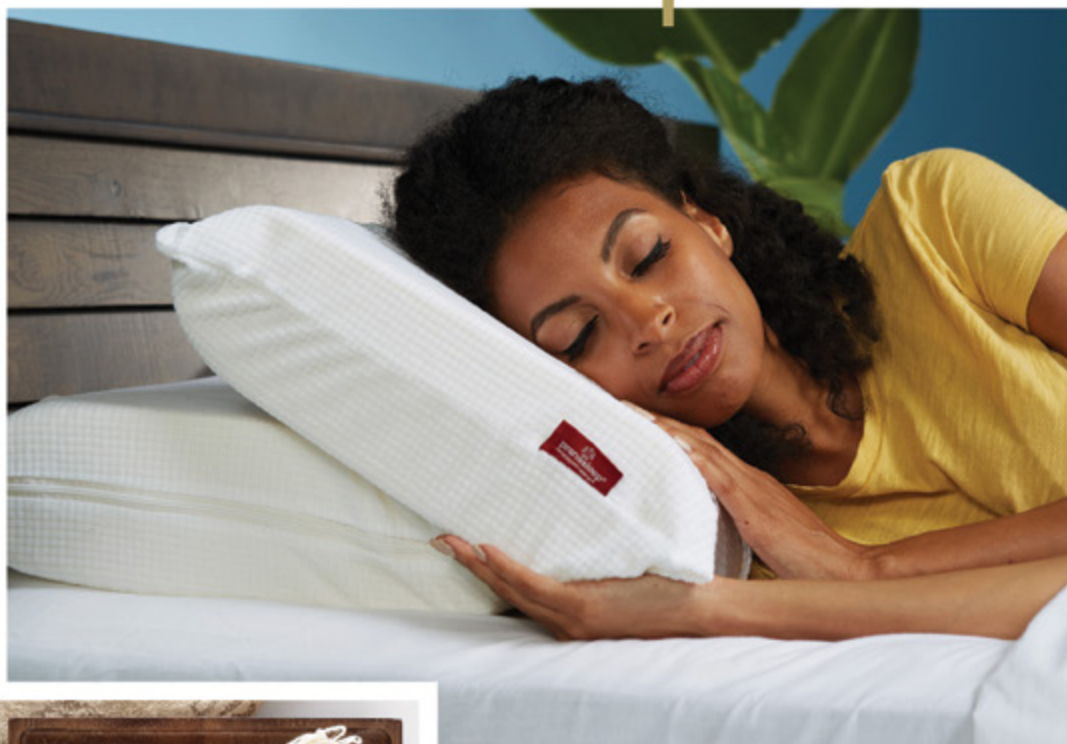
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