

Concert honored Morris Mertz

Morris Mertz, ob”m, was a Scranton icon. Known for his music, love of rhyme, appreciation of fine art and a good after-services collation (*kiddush*), Morris was an integral part of the Scranton community. He particularly was a proud Jew and enjoyed calling so many his friend.

The Aronzon family – Cantor

Vladimir, Ludmilla, Leo, Sascha, Elizabeth and their extended family – truly became a home for Morris. They looked out for him and cared for him till his passing this April. It was very fitting when Cantor Aronzon approached Dr. Daniel Chejfec, executive director of the Jewish Federation, to offer a tribute

concert in Morris’ memory. Dr. Chejfec immediately agreed and the concert planning began.

More than 70 members of the Scranton community attended, See “Concert” on page 7



Congregation B’nai Harim to hold break the fast on Oct. 5

Congregation B’nai Harim will hold a “Yom Kippur Break the Fast” at Lake Naomi Club House on Wednesday, October 5, at 6:30 pm.

The cost is \$38 per adult, \$20 for children 12-6 and free for children 5 and under. If you are interested in attending please call the temple mes-

sage service 570-646-0100 as soon as possible to make your reservation.

If you would like to join us for Yom Kippur services, call the tem-

ple message service 570-646-0100. Yom Kippur begins at sunset on Tuesday, October 4.

Congregation B’nai Harim is located in Pocono Pines, PA, at Route 940 and Sullivan Trail. The address is 5349 Pocono Crest Road, Pocono Pines, PA. Its mailing address is PO Box 757, Pocono Pines, PA 18350. For further information, call the message center at 570-646-0100 or visit the website www.bnaiharimpoconos.org.

Weinberg Judaic Studies Institute to host lecture on Hebrew Bible on Oct. 27

On October 27, the Weinberg Judaic Studies Institute at the University of Scranton will host a lecture by Dr. Dru Johnson titled, “Does the Hebrew Bible have a Unique Philosophy.” The lecture will be in Pearn Auditorium in Brennan Hall at 7:30 pm.

Johnson teaches biblical literature at The King’s College,

where he is an associate professor of biblical and theological studies, and the director/founder of the Center for Hebraic Thought (hebraicthought.org). He has written several monographs on the intellectual world of the Bible,



Dr. Dru Johnson

including “Knowledge by Ritual” (Penn State Press), “Epistemology and Biblical Theology” (Routledge) and “Biblical Philosophy: A Hebraic Approach to the Old and New Testaments” (Cambridge University Press).

CANDLE LIGHTING

October 4.....	6:21 pm
October 7.....	6:16 pm
October 9.....	6:13 pm
October 10.....	7:12 pm
October 14.....	6:05 pm
October 16.....	6:02 pm
October 17.....	7:01 pm
October 21.....	5:54 pm
October 28.....	5:45 pm
November 4.....	5:36 pm

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Pioneering farmers’ techniques over 100 years have made Israel an agricultural leader.

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Beth Shalom Academy kicked off a new school year with an end-of-summer corporate fund-raiser.

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One hundred years of innovation turns Israel into an agricultural leader

BY ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN

(Israel21c via JNS)—If the Israeli cow is the world champion milk producer, if Israel has superior wheat for pasta and bread, if tomatoes grow year-round and citrus fruits are peelable and pit-free – we can thank Yitzhak Elazari Wilkanski.

This agricultural scientist, who immigrated to Ottoman Palestine in 1908 from Lithuania and changed his last name to Volcani, established the Agricultural Experiment Station at Ben Shemen in 1921. This was the forerunner of the Volcani Center Agricultural Research Organization, the research arm of Israel's Ministry of Agriculture since 1952.

The center's logo is seven species encircled by a biblical verse describing Israel as "A land of wheat and barley and grapevines and figs and pomegranates, a land of oil olives and dates."

Volcani saw that the pioneer Jewish farmers needed more than grit and determination: they needed cutting-edge scientific research. "The worker of the land, himself, does not investigate, or make new innovations, does not discover codes, and does not pave roads. If he devotes



At left: Cherry picking near Kibbutz Ein Zivan in the Golan Heights, on Shavuot, June 5. (Photo by Michael Giladi/Flash90)

his efforts to such endeavours, he will not make a living," he wrote in 1918. "Therefore, the worker of the land has to place research work in the hands of those entrusted to do so, and they will guide the growers in the fields of their labors."

Today, the Volcani Center is the largest institution devoted to agricultural research and development in Israel, advancing agriculture in Israel and abroad through innovation and problem-solving. Headquartered in Rishon Lezion with experimental research stations north and south, the Volcani Center is responsible for many of Israel's groundbreaking developments in plant and animal breeding, protected agriculture, irrigation, arid-land agriculture, postharvest handling, crop protection and farm mechanization.

The Volcani Center encompasses six institutes: Animal Sciences; Plant Protection; Soil, Water and Environmental Sciences; Plant Sciences; Agricultural Engineering; and Postharvest and Food Sciences.

Approximately 200 Ph.D.s employed in these institutes share their expertise and innovations with agronomists across the globe, and work with hundreds of graduate students from Israel and abroad.

Volcani's northern Neve Ya'ar research station has a model farm for sustainable agriculture, spices and health products. The southern Gilat research station focuses on desert agriculture.

"Yitzhak Volcani was such a visionary," said professor Vinnie Altstein, a neurochemist at the Volcani's Institute of Plant Protection and consultant to the chief scientist of the Agriculture Ministry. "People who'd been sent here by the

Rothschild family [in the 1880s to establish farms and vineyards] brought varieties that were excellent in Europe but inedible here. Yitzhak understood we needed to make our own varieties, that have good yield and ability to grow under local conditions of little water and diverse climatic regions. He thought agriculture should be very diverse, focusing on crops as well as animals that could be adapted to conditions in Israel."

In addition to basic and applied research from lab to field, the center provides practical training at universities and research institutes. Volcani convinced Israel's first president, Chaim Weizmann, to start an institute in Rehovot to commercialize research from the agricultural station. In 1949, this became the world-renowned Weizmann Institute of Science.

Another of Volcani's initiatives in Rehovot turned into the Faculty of Agriculture at the Hebrew University, established in 1952 and still a major source of agricultural research in Israel.

Research highlights of the past century

Here are just 10 of the many Volcani Center innovations over the past century.

- ◆ The Israeli cow is the world champion milk producer. A hundred years ago, milk production per cow was 700 liters per year, while now it's 12,000 liters. The secret: the Israeli Holstein cow, a breed developed at the Volcani Center.
- ◆ A series of durum wheat cultivars – each named after an Israeli agriculture minister – are used to produce top-quality pasta. One was even grown in Italy by a leading pasta company.

- ◆ A closed-loop aquaculture system provides fish for food and wastewater for crops that can feed livestock.

- ◆ Globally successful new fruits and vegetables such as easy-peeling Orri mandarin oranges and Or tangerines; the nutritious Orangetti spaghetti squash; the TableSugar acorn squash; the Tomaisin cherry tomato; and the bright yellow Goldy zucchini squash.

- ◆ A gene therapy that prevents day blindness in sheep that was later applied to humans suffering from a disease that causes blindness by damaging the retina.

- ◆ A machine that can pick out 95 percent of the seeds in a pomegranate, extracting the seeds from 16 pomegranates per minute.

- ◆ The Aliza grapefruit, named after Volcani researcher Aliza Vardi, is unique among grapefruits because it does not contain furanocoumarins, compounds that can interact dangerously with some medications.

- ◆ A simple, quick and inexpensive technique for detecting pesticide and drug residues on fruits and vegetables, as well as in water and air, based on the same principle as home pregnancy tests.

- ◆ The use of insect sex pheromones as "traps" for monitoring and disrupting the mating of harmful pests such as the red palm weevil, that can infest date trees.

There's always lots of new research going on at the Volcani Center. Among the projects currently underway:

- ◆ Raising commercial cocoa beans in Israel.
- ◆ Growing a new peanut variety enriched with high-oleic acid.
- ◆ Research into the health benefits of goat-milk cheese compared to cow-milk cheese.
- ◆ Red, green and black chickpea varieties with specific uses, flavors and traits.
- ◆ Establishment of the Helmsley Center for Artificial Intelligence Research in Agriculture
- ◆ Determining proper growth conditions for medical cannabis and building a national cannabis gene bank for the use of authorized growers, scientists and breeders.
- ◆ Investigating the potential of the tropical "miracle tree" Moringa oleifera and its desert relative, Moringa peregrina, as edible seed-oil and protein crops.

For more information about the Volcani Center, visit <https://www.agri.gov.il/en/home/default.aspx?csrt=18230949231972094881>.

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E-mail: jfnepareporter@jewishnepa.org
Fax: (570) 346-6147
Phone: (570) 961-2300

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The Reporter
Published by the Jewish Federation of Northeastern Pennsylvania

COMMUNITY NEWS

Elizabeth II, Charles III – Any difference for Jews?

There is no denying that the death of Queen Elizabeth II and her succession by Charles III dominated the news cycle lately. Jews have been quick to jump on the bandwagon reacting to what it means for the Jewish people and for Israel – and I mean all kind of Jews!

The Israeli news media has been full of reactions to the events. Some claim that the passing of Queen Elizabeth represents the closing chapter of British colonialism, while



FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DANIEL CHEJFEC, PH.D.

others focus on Queen Elizabeth's attempts to promote a sense of unity and stability in a time of growing polarization. When it comes to King Charles, some highlighted the fact that he visited Israel twice, and others chose to focus on his marital history, including his affair with (now

queen consort) Camilla.

But there is another side to both, mother and son, when it comes to their connection with Jews and Judaism. There are multiple stories of Queen Elizabeth taking extra time to speak with Holocaust survivors one-on-one during public events, and of her warm relationship with Jewish leaders. As for King Charles, he takes pride

in the actions of his grandmother, declared a Righteous Gentile by Yad VaShem and buried in the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. His personal connections with Shimon Peres (whose funeral he attended), as well as Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (at whose funeral he delivered a eulogy),

are also well known.

Both, mother and son, expressed great kindness and warmth toward the Jewish people, respect for Judaism and for the Jewish experience. From that perspective, the Royal family has been good for the Jews. And that kindness and personal connection is the only aspect of their connection with Jews that really matters because at the end of the day, as the rabbis remind us, we are all children of one father and one mother (Adam and Eve). All politics and personal faults aside, it is in our relationship to each other that (in the words of Buber) the Divine is defined. And in the words of Hillel... the rest is commentary.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

New Israeli research could render COVID-19 vaccines unnecessary

A team of researchers at Tel Aviv University has proven that antibodies isolated from the immune systems of recovered COVID-19 patients are effective in neutralizing known strains of the virus, including the Delta and the Omicron variants. Researchers have declared this a scientific breakthrough. The discovery could remove the need for frequent booster immunizations. Dr. Natalia Freund, along with doctoral students Michael Mor and Ruofan Lee from the Department of Clinical Microbiology and Immunology at the Sackler Faculty of Medicine at TAU, led the study. Dr. Ben Croker of the University of California, San Diego, collaborated on it. Professor Ye Xiang of Beijing's Tsinghua

University, Professor Meital Gal-Tanamy and Dr. Moshe Dessau of Bar-Ilan University were also involved in the research. The findings were reported in the journal Nature Communications Biology. Freund and her colleagues sequenced all B immune system cells from the blood of those who recovered from the original COVID strain in Israel and discovered nine antibodies produced by patients. In addition, the researchers learned that some of these antibodies are highly effective at neutralizing the coronavirus subtypes Delta and Omicron.

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The Reporter
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DEADLINES

The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming Reporter issues.

DEADLINE	ISSUE
Friday, October 14.....	November
Friday, November 11.....	December
Monday, December 12.....	January
Monday, January 16.....	February

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Jewish online resources

BY REPORTER STAFF

A variety of Jewish groups are offering educational and recreational online resources. Below is a sampling of those. *The Reporter* will publish additional listings as they become available.

◆ Reform Judaism will hold the virtual class “Pursuing Justice” on Tuesdays, October 18 and 25, from 8-9:30 pm. The class will look at foundational Jewish teachings about a systemic approach to justice, including the obligation to provide for society’s most vulnerable and to set up a fair legal system. People can join one or both sessions. For more information, visit <https://donate.reformjudaism.org/event/pursuing-justice/e412204>.

◆ The Yiddish Book Center will hold the virtual talk “Women’s roles across literature, culture, and the rise of feminism: 1973-2005” with Deborah Dash Moore on Thursday, October 27, at 7 pm. Deborah Dash Moore, editor-in-chief of The Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization, will discuss women’s roles across literature and culture, and the rise of feminism after 1973. For more information or to register, visit https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_t8xMwGQRRbqVWwV2Zj5RfA.

◆ Maven will hold the virtual class “Talmud and Midrash” on eight Tuesdays, from October 25-December 20, at 3-4:30 pm. The cost to attend is \$285. The course will explore what the Talmud is, why it is so important to Judaism and more. For more information, visit <https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/talmud-and-midrash1>.

◆ Maven will hold two virtual global world tours: “Central Asia’s Historic Jewish Silk Road” on Wednesday, October 19, from 5-6 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/tour-global-jewish-life-central-asias-historic-jewish-silk-road>); and “Jewish Life: Mexico City” on Tuesday, November 8, from 5-6 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/-tour-global-jewish-life-mexico-city>). The cost for each tour is \$21.

◆ The Hadassah-Brandeis Institute will hold a virtual program of Sandra Seltzer Silberman HBI Conversations Series with Tamar Biala, editor of “Dirshuni: Contemporary Women’s Midrash” on Monday, October 19, at 12:30 pm. Her book is the English edition of a collection of midrashim composed by Israeli women. For more information or to register, visit https://brandeis.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYoceCqrDMoEtS4mRFnW_ksld_PobPWiqpD.

◆ Reform Judaism will hold the virtual course “Spaghetti & Matzo Balls Watch Party and Conversation” with Rena Strober on Sunday, October 2, from 7:30-9 pm. It will focus on how Strober rediscovered her Jewish roots. For more information or to register, visit <https://reformjudaism.org/calendar/spaghetti-matzo-balls-watch-party-and-conversation>.

◆ The Jewish Book Council will hold the virtual 2022 Jewish Writers’ Conference on Sunday,

November 6, from 10 am-5:30 pm. The conference will bring together agents, editors and authors for discussions, workshops and panels discussing Jewish book publishing and writing. For information on specific programs or to register, visit www.jewishbookcouncil.org/events/2022-jewish-writers-conference.

◆ Maven will hold several virtual classes: “Empathy Economics: Janet Yellen’s Remarkable Rise to Power,” with Owen Ullmann talking about his book “Janet Yellen’s Remarkable Rise to Power and Her Drive to Spread Prosperity to All” on Thursday, October 6, from 3-3:45 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/empathy-economics-janet-yellens-remarkable-rise-to-power>); “War of Shadows: Codebreakers, Spies, and the Secret Struggle to Drive the Nazis from the Middle East” on Wednesday, October 12, from 3-3:45 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/war-of-shadows-codebreakers-spies-and-the-secret-struggle-to-drive-the-nazis-from-the-middle-east>); “The Secret Jewish History of James Bond” on Thursday, October 27, from 1-1:45 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/the-secret-jewish-history-of-james-bond>); and “Creativity as a Jewish Spiritual Practice” with Eve Rodksy, author of “Find Your Unicorn Space” on Thursday, November 3, from 8-8:45 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/creativity-as-a-jewish-spiritual-practice>).

◆ The Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning will hold the virtual four-part course “Jewish Perspectives on the Ballot: Key Issues in the U.S. Midterms Using a Rabbinic Lens” on Thursday, October 13-November 3, from 1-2:30 pm. Payment is a sliding scale, which four choices. The course description notes, “The aim is not to persuade anyone to vote in a particular way but rather to broaden our perspectives around these issues using Jewish lenses.” For more information or to register, visit <https://events.org/events/calendarcourse?tid=f1b58cf4-22e7-450e-8ccb-3edca68c9443>.

◆ The Jewish Theology Seminary will hold the virtual learning series “Dangerous Ideas: Censorship Through a Jewish Lens” on Mondays, October 24-December 19, with an additional lecture on Wednesday, November 30; from 1-2:30 pm. Topics include “Written in Stone? Writing and Rewriting the Bible”; “(Not So) Hidden Anti-Gospels: Suppressed Talmudic and Medieval Polemics against Jesus”; “Persecuting Ideas: The Case of Maimonides”; “The Danger of Spreading the Word: Book Censorship in 16th-Century Venice”; “Intra-Jewish Censorship: The Case of Spinoza”; “How Should a Jewish Philosopher Read the Bible? Hermann Cohen’s Problem with Spinoza”; “The Circle of Censorship and Book Burning in East European Jewry”; “Censoring the Holocaust: How Books Shape our View of a Painful Past”; “The Hollywood Blacklist and the Whitewashing of American

Culture”; and “Where Do We Draw the Line? The Importance of Highlighting Multiple Perspectives in Jewish Education.” One does not need to attend all classes. For more information or to register, visit www.jtsa.edu/news/fall-2022-learning-series-dangerous-ideas-censorship-through-a-jewish-lens/.

◆ The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion will offer several virtual programs this fall: “The Gospel of Matthew: Both Jewish and Sectarian” on Thursday, October 20, at 12:45 pm; “‘What Have the Romans Ever Done for Us?!’ Parallels in Monty Python’s ‘Life of Brian’ with Rabbinic Writings” on Thursday, November 17, at 12:45 pm; and “Stolen Books: Recovering Our Family’s Legacy” on Wednesday, December 7, at 1 pm. Most information and registration for these and other events can be found at <http://huc.edu/libraryseries/fall>.

◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage will offer several virtual programs in October: “Pink Triangle Legacies” book talk on Sunday October 2, from 4-5 pm (https://898a.blackbaudhosting.com/898a/tickets?tab=2&txobjid=ebc73ba1-5915-4e9b-9228-c54e20bcf645&_ga=2.166589750.925505628.1662988775-1935898665.1661346607); “Love Brought Me Through the Holocaust: Stories Survive with Judith Koeppl Steel” on Thursday October 13, from 2-3 pm (https://898a.blackbaudhosting.com/898a/tickets?tab=2&txobjid=552c779a-81a8-49fd-a8c8-15830e44d651&_ga=2.166055990.925505628.1662988775-1935898665.1661346607); “The Lost: A Search for Six of Six Million” with Daniel Mendelsohn on Thursday October 13, from 7-8:30 pm (https://898a.blackbaudhosting.com/898a/tickets?tab=2&txobjid=c8b158b0-1dbd-4f4f-af0c-aa80ea1c100f&_ga=2.57004578.925505628.1662988775-1935898665.1661346607); “Book of Ruth,” featuring the Met Opera Chorus Artists, on Sunday October 23, from 2:30-4 (https://898a.blackbaudhosting.com/898a/Book-of-Ruth-Featuring-the-Met-Opera-Chorus-Artists---LIVESTREAM?_ga=2.161215157.925505628.1662988775-1935898665.1661346607); and “The Last Ghetto” book talk on Tuesday October 25, from 1-2 pm (https://898a.blackbaudhosting.com/898a/tickets?tab=2&txobjid=7ade05e4-27b2-4a50-a3e3-31b440845f73&_ga=2.123531523.925505628.1662988775-1935898665.1661346607).

◆ The Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning will hold the virtual program “Once Upon a Time in Mexico: A Glimpse at Mexican Jewish History” on Thursday, October 13, from 7-8:30 pm. The cost to attend is \$18. Dr. Sara Aroeste will explore the history of Jews in Mexico and discuss Crypto-Jews, 16th century Spain and Portugal, 20th century immigrant arrivals and more. For more information or to register for the event, visit <https://events.org/events/calendarcourse?tid=dee4e947-9176-4a56-90e7-3246f54bd89f>.



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Temple Israel of the Poconos Shabbat School

September 10 was the beginning of a most successful Shabbat School at Temple Israel of the Poconos. Classes were attended by children ages 5 years old through 10 years old. Students learn Hebrew letters and about holiday celebrations and the history of Israel, as well as about living as a young Jewish person. Shabbat School will continue throughout the year. Children and grandchildren of members in good standing participate for free. Bar/bat mitzvah training and

classes are available for older students.

The Temple Israel of the Poconos sukkah building and BBQ will be held on Thursday, October 6, beginning at 5 pm. Join with other members to erect the congregational sukkah followed by a BBQ with friends and congregants. There will be good food, good friends and a full sukkah. A few days later, on Sunday, October 9, at 5:30 pm, will be a “Share homemade pizza with us in the Sukkah” event. Shake

the lulav, inhale the fragrance of the etrog and enjoy fresh pizza.

On Friday, October 7, Temple Israel of the Poconos will “kick off” its first 2022-23 Tot Shabbat Program in the morning from 10-11 am.

On Tuesday, October 18, from 11 am-noon, will be a Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Johanan Bickhardt.

For further information and/or questions, call the office at 570-421-8781.

Fish and fall fruits to break the Yom Kippur fast

BY ETHEL G. HOFMAN

(JNS) – It’s tradition! After *Neilah* services at my synagogue on Yom Kippur, there’s a surge to tables of light fare typically set out by the Sisterhood. Tired and hungry worshippers gather round to gulp down a glass of orange juice or sweet wine, along with a bit of sponge or honey cake. Then it’s back home for platters of fish, cheese, kugel and dairy dishes.

That’s a custom for American Jews in the United States. But for those from Russia – and this year, for so many from Ukraine – break-fast is a slice of sweet babka and a glass of lemon tea. Syrian and Iraqi Jews tend to nibble on *ka’akim*, round crunchy sesame cookies that look like mini-bagels. Turkish and Greek Jews break their fast with a sweet drink made with melon seeds. On the Shetland Islands where I grew up, my mother served homemade pickled herring and seltzer water – essential, she insisted, “to replenish liquids and salt lost during fasting.” And rightly so.

Close as Shetland is to Norway, my mother served the Norwegian herring salad year-round, not just during the High Holidays. Similarly, these break-fast recipes can be enjoyed all year long. A rib of celery adds a slight zest to Cool Peach Soup. Vegans will delight with an antipasto platter, Jewish-style, as supermarkets offer the makings of a bright palette of exotic and familiar items. Seasons and Gefen offer briny items like pickled eggplant, baby corn, straw

mushrooms and hearts of palm to name just a few. Open the cans, drain and arrange on a lettuce-lined platter. Add fresh veggies like sliced avocado (sprinkled with lemon juice to avoid discoloration), tricolored fresh pepper strips, sweet cherry tomatoes and pitted black olives. Toss sliced water chestnuts over top to add some crunch. No recipe is needed. What could be easier?

Keep in mind:

- ◆ Have plenty of seltzer and orange juice ready to pull from the fridge.
- ◆ Measure coffee and water into the percolator to plug in as soon as you get home from synagogue or set on a timer so it’s ready

when the fast ends.

◆ For a crowd, set up two percolators, one for decaf coffee and one for regular. If using only one, make it decaf unless you know guests definitely want regular coffee.

◆ Split bagels ahead of time, arrange on a tray and cover with a damp paper towel, then with plastic wrap to prevent drying out.

◆ Don’t hesitate to use paper and plastic; there are so many lovely designs these days. Heavy-duty plastic flatware may be recycled.

◆ Cook ahead and freeze.

L’shanah tovah! May we be inscribed for a sweet, healthy and happy New Year.

See “Fast” on page 11

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Beth Shalom Academy held corporate fund-raiser

As tradition usually demands, Labor Day weekend generally has parents and teachers getting in their last-minute school preparations and gearing up for the start of another school year. However, the Beth Shalom Academy parent body, faculty and dozens of community members spent the Sunday evening of Labor Day weekend preparing for the onset of their fall schedule in a fun and unique manner with the first annual end-of-summer corporate fund-raiser for Beth Shalom Academy.

Sushi and salads catered by Chop Chop of New York City, delectable desserts, wine and other refreshments were enjoyed as guests engaged in lively conversation in the relaxed environment of Commonwealth Coffeehouse in downtown Scranton. The vibe was calm with positivity and excitement for this young school, which has grown from 12 students last year to 29 starting in fall '22.

“How unique,” one guest remarked, “to have so many different types of people in one location, with one common goal – truly remarkable.” This common goal referred to was the coming together by a cross community range of supporters all keen to celebrate the

start of the fourth year for BSA.

BSA welcomes all Jewish children, regardless of background or affiliation. With a full-time school guidance counselor, “we are able to meet the social and emotional needs of each and every student,” remarked one board member.

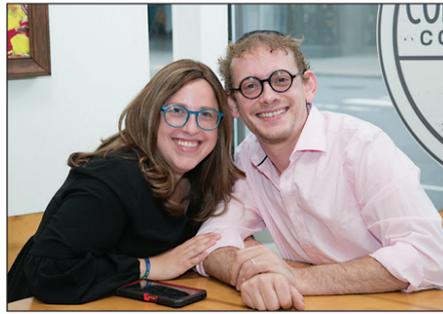
These sentiments were shared by one of Beth Shalom Academy’s newest members to its parent body, Mushkie Vogel: “New to town, BSA welcomed us and our children with an open heart. From the moment we walked into the building, it just felt so right. BSA was everything we were looking for, a warm school, with differentiated learning, hands on experiences and so much more! A school where education is of utmost value with focus on bringing each child to their potential. The school is super loving, and we feel very much at home here.”

In addition to serving students from the greater Scranton and Kingston area, BSA also offers an after public school program to “learn with Rebbi.”

“Whether it is *aleph bet* or bar/bat mitzvah prep, every Jewish boy and girl deserves an education, and we can give them that,” another supporter at the event was heard to say.

The fund-raiser exceeded all expectations, the amount raised will directly support the goals of Beth Shalom Academy.

For more information, contact BSA at info@bethshalomacademy.com or check out BSA’s stellar staff at www.bethshalomacademy.com/faculty/.



Are you on the Jewish Federation's email list?

We send updated announcements and special event details weekly to those who wish to receive them.

Send Dassy Ganz an email if you would like to join the list.

Dassy.ganz@jewishnepa.org



Concert.....Continued from page 1

mostly people who knew Morris and others who appreciated his witty poems and puns. With refreshments available in bags on the table, people sang along, tapped their toes and enjoyed the singers and their musicians.

Our thanks to Vladimir and Leo Aronzon and the excellent musicians that played. Our thanks go to

Toyota of Scranton and to the Jewish Federation of NEPA for sponsoring the event.



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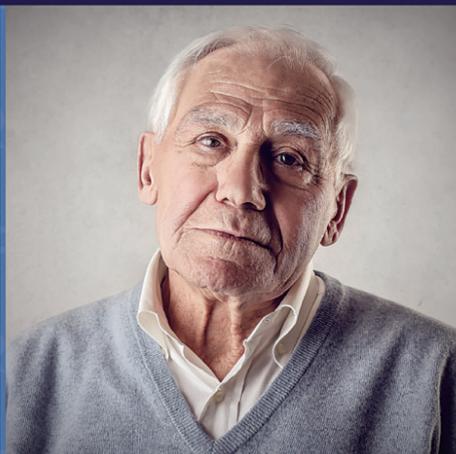
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President: Liza Roos Lucy
Contact person: Cheryl Badner, Congregation Administrator
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Circle Saturdays at 11:30 am

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Contact person: Jay Schectman, 570-954-9354
515 East Drinker St., Dunmore, PA 18512
Saturday morning Shabbat 7:30 am, also services for *Yizkor*

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711 Wallace St., Stroudsburg, PA 18360
(one block off Rt. 191 (5th Street) at Avenue A)
570-421-8781 • website: www.templepoconos.org
E-mail: tipoc@ptd.net
Friday evening Shabbat 6 pm; Saturday morning Shabbat 10:30 am

TEMPLE ISRAEL OF SCRANTON

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi Miriam Spitzer
Cantor: Vladimir Aronson
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Security vigilance isn't just for the High Holidays, says Jewish safety executive

BY MIKE WAGENHEIM

(JNS) – For many American synagogues, this High Holiday season will be the first with in-person services since 2019. They will also be the most crowded since the latest high-profile attack on American Jewry – the January 2022 hostage situation at Congregation Beth Israel in Colleyville, TX. It has many Jewish communal leaders thinking about safety and security.

“The holidays are the moment where the Jewish community, globally, really starts thinking about security because so many people are going to go to *shul* that maybe don't necessarily always go,” Evan Bernstein, CEO and national director of Community Security Service, told JNS. He added that his organization has been working with congregations to refresh on best safety practices.

But while the High Holidays services typically bring about the highest attendance of the year, Bernstein and others in the Jewish security industry are making the issue of safety a year-round endeavor. As Bernstein points out, the overwhelming majority of the attacks on American Jewry have taken place outside the High Holidays.

“People who don't like us and want to do bad things to Jews are not necessarily looking at the Jewish calendar to determine when they're going to perpetrate something. We need to be on high alert at all times,” he said.

That perpetual state of alertness has the capacity to draw Jews away from focusing on their actual practice of faith and culture while placing more and more attention on ensuring they are simply safe enough to do so, as anti-Semitic acts across the United States continue to mount.

“I think it's getting harder and harder to have that balance. I was just in Europe meeting with our sister organizations in the United Kingdom, France, Belgium and the Netherlands, and those groups are always on alert. If you speak to those communities, there is no downtime. There is no moment where they can take that break,” said Bernstein, who fears what he calls the golden age of safety for American Jewry may have passed.

“I hate to say it, but you look at the number of major assaults, attacks on synagogues, mur-

derous attacks on Jews over the last five to 10 years, it's really unprecedented in American Jewish history. I don't think we have the luxury of being able to sit back and have ebbs and flows. I think we need to maintain diligence, as hard as it is, as exhausting as it is. Times have changed and the American Jewish community needs to change with it. It's an unfortunate fact,” he said.

Bernstein argues that American Jews must become more like their European brethren in relying less on law enforcement and private security, and instead taking more proactive measures, from situational awareness and proper security training to recruiting volunteers within the synagogue community to provide protection at services and other events.

“No one's going to care more about who's inside that synagogue than a volunteer is. We as a Jewish community can't just rely on outsourcing our security. If you look at what's taking place in other Diaspora communities around the globe, Jews are the ones that are leading their security operations. I think the American Jewish population needs to start embracing that and get more engaged and be aware,” he said.

Bernstein was quick to say that American Jewry has a great relationship with federal and local law enforcement, and it's not something to take for granted. He noted that CSS works in tandem with partner organizations such as Secure Community Network and the Jewish Federations of North America to “really cover all of our bases, which is so critical. I think that leads to better and more organized security.”

Ultimately, he said he doesn't want to send a message of fear. American Jews, overall, should feel safe, especially those who became used to staying away from synagogues during the COVID pandemic. “We should never let hate stop us from practicing our religion. We need to be active Jews. We need to go to the synagogue. We need to be doing everything we can to be proud about being Jewish in every way shape or form,” he said. “But let's be aware of security issues, of the threats from the right and from the left, not only for the holidays but every Shabbat.”

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You will be able to look back and say: “I'm just doing what my People have always done for each other.”



For further information on gifting stocks in payment of your pledge to our Annual UJA Campaign, please contact the Federation at 570-961-2300 (ext. 3) for details.

Ancient Indian Jewish community holds on to customs despite shrinking numbers

BY AVI KUMAR

(JNS) – The Jewish community of Kerala, India, better known as Cochin Jews, has been shrinking ever since most of its members emigrated to Israel. Those who remain claim to be “the oldest diaspora community outside the Middle East.”

Today, only 15 Jews live in Kerala. An estimated 6,000 to 8,000 moved to Israel or elsewhere. The youth still in Kerala increasingly marry outside the community.

The community commemorated the annual Onam festival on September 8. In addition, last month its members conducted their first wedding in more than a decade, a notable achievement given how few Jews live in the state.

Newlywed Thapan Dubayehudi, in an exclusive interview with JNS, said, “Onam is observed by all religious groups in Kerala, and called ‘the harvest festival of the state.’”

Although Kerala, population around 35 million, is majority Hindu, like the rest of India, it has a diverse religious landscape with a long Jewish presence.

“You will notice many women in their striking, colorful garb, the saree,” said Dubayehudi. “Onam is very important for the local Jewish community as well, and we celebrate by preparing a traditional sadhya (a meal consisting of vegetarian dishes served on a banana leaf) at home.”

Legend holds that their ancestors arrived in

the subcontinent shortly after the First Temple was destroyed in 587 B.C.E. Their claim to be the oldest Jewish community outside the Middle East is contested by another Indian group, the Mumbai Jews.

In the 1500s, a different group came to Kerala from Europe, called the Paradesis, sometimes referred to as “White Jews.” They were mostly Ladino-speaking Sephardim from Spain and Portugal. The older, established community became known as Malabar, and the two groups remained distinct and sometimes experienced frictions.

The Cochin Jewish dialect, Judeo-Malayalam, which is spoken by both Paradesis and Malabar, is now considered endangered.

Many moved to Israel in the 1960s and ‘70s; this was time when many synagogues and congregations shut down very quickly.

Zipora Meir is among those who emigrated in this era. She reminisces about “enjoying the atmosphere of the Onam festival” at her Hindu friends’ homes.

Elias Josephai, the caretaker of the Kadavumbhagam Ernakulam Synagogue in the city of Kochi, is better known as “Babu Uncle,” Babu being a term of respect meaning “boss” or “father.” He stands out as the one striving to keep the remnants of Jewish life going in Kerala. Meir describes him as “the one-man army keeping the community and synagogue alive.”

Cochin Jews in Israel still celebrate Onam. “This

year’s celebration was conducted in the house of Menahem Pal some days ago. The ambassador of India to Israel, Sanjeev Singla, and other officials honored us with their presence,” said Meir.

Dubayehudi adds that “most of the younger generation have already emigrated or are in the process of emigrating. Those who choose to stay in Cochin are almost exclusively older; some who feel that their roots are grounded here and say that they ‘wouldn’t have anything to do’ if they were in Israel.”

Josephai said, “Many of my relatives have made *aliyah*. But I feel like I would be like a fish out of water if I moved to Israel.”

Dubayehudi, 25, said, “I am extremely honored and blessed to have had my wedding conducted at the Kadavumbhagam Ernakulam Synagogue and officiated by Babu Uncle.

“But it was far from a proper Jewish wedding. There was no minyan or chuppah, just a ring exchange and prayers, *b’ezrat Hashem* (‘With the help of Heaven’)! Later, we intend to conduct a more ‘complete’ Jewish wedding in Austria at the Vienna Synagogue (the Stadttempel), which my wife is a part of.”

Meanwhile, the community in India struggles to hold on, to maintain its cultural memory and customs as much as possible. “Realistically speaking, I don’t think there is much future for the Kerala Jewish community. It is finished!” said Josephai.

The Reporter

Published by the Jewish Federation of Northeastern Pennsylvania



Friends of *The Reporter* make big news!

The Federation is asking members of its communities to support its “*Friends of The Reporter*” Campaign which seeks to raise \$5,000 to assist in funding the newspaper.

The newspaper is delivered monthly to each and every identifiable Jewish home in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

The Reporter is the primary intercommunal newspaper of the Jewish communities of Lackawanna, Monroe, Pike and Wayne counties. Supplementing synagogue newsletters, bulletins and e-mails, *The Reporter* is issued to hundreds of Jewish households throughout our region. Over the past several years, the publishing cost of the newspaper has increased dramatically although the newspaper continues to be provided at no charge to members of our Jewish communities in northeastern Pennsylvania. The Federation has assumed the financial responsibility of funding the newspaper at a cost of \$23,990 per year and asks only that its readers assist it in raising \$5,000 as part of its “*Friends of The Reporter*” Campaign to offset a small share of these expenses.

Your gift to fund our regional Jewish newspaper matters a great deal to our readers and we would be very grateful for your financial support.

As always, your comments, opinions & suggestions are always welcome.

With best wishes,
Daniel Chejfec, Executive Director
Jewish Federation of NE Pennsylvania
601 Jefferson Avenue
Scranton, PA 18510

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Study shows viruses can kill gut bacteria of Crohn's, bowel disease

BY ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN

(Israel21c via JNS) – Many of the microbes that live in our gut are good for our health, while others contribute to inflammatory bowel disease or other disorders. Until now, it hasn't been possible to target “bad” bacteria without harming the surrounding “good” bacteria. Antibiotics kill them both and tend to trigger bacterial resistance as well.

Now, in an international study published in *Cell*, researchers say common viruses called bacteriophages can specifically kill gut bacteria associated with inflammatory bowel disease.

“There are thousands of different phages, and their big advantage is that each of them specializes in attacking a different type of bacteria,” explained professor Eran Elinav of Israel's Weizmann Institute of Science, who headed the research team. “This enabled us to harness phages to target only those gut bacteria that contribute to disease. To our knowledge, this constitutes the first ‘silver bullet’ approach promising a precise suppression of disease-causing gut microbes, without harming the surrounding microbiome.”

After identifying the exact bacterial strains that play a role in human intestinal inflammation and implanting these bacteria into mice used for

the study of inflammatory bowel disease, the researchers screened thousands of phages and selected about 40 that were most promising. They then formulated a cocktail of five phages that were best at preventing the bacteria from fighting back.

In mice, the cocktail significantly reduced intestinal inflammation and tissue damage caused by these bacterial strains, as well as mortality stemming from the inflammatory disease.

In a laboratory system simulating the human gut, two representative phages from the cocktail were shown to be stable when used together with antacids. In a follow-up Phase I clinical trial with 18 healthy volunteers, the phages were found to be well tolerated.

The phage cocktail persisted and even multiplied in the human intestines over time while causing no unwanted, off-target changes in the rest of the gut microbes.

If the phage cocktail is found to be safe and effective in larger clinical trials, it may become the basis for developing therapies for not only inflammatory bowel disease but also other disorders found to be affected by gut microbes, including obesity, diabetes, neurodegenerative disease and perhaps even cancer.

“Our vision is to eventually develop personalized therapies for a variety of disorders, in which the disease-causing strains of gut bacteria will be identified in each patient and a phage cocktail will be designed to kill only those strains,” said Elinav.

The study, conducted in collaboration with professor Rotem Sorek of Weizmann's Molecular Genetics Department, was led by postdoctoral fellows Sara Federici, Rafael Valdés Mas and Denise Kviatcovsky from Elinav's lab, with Sharon Kredo-Russo and other researchers from BiomX, a clinical-stage microbiome company advancing novel phage therapies that target specific pathogenic bacteria, based on Weizmann Institute research under exclusive license from Yeda Research and Development Company, Weizmann's technology transfer arm.

Researchers also contributed from DKFZ, Heidelberg; Keio University School of Medicine, Tokyo; University of North Carolina; Tel Aviv University; Sorbonne Université, Paris; Christian-Albrechts-University of Kiel, Germany; and University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf.

This article was first published by Israel21c.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Berlin allocates an additional \$1.2b. for Holocaust survivors

The German government has agreed to a compensation agreement that will provide more than \$1.2 billion in 2023 for homecare and social welfare services for Holocaust survivors around the world, Greg Schneider, executive vice president of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (the Claims Conference), announced on Sept. 15. The announcement was made during a ceremony at the Jewish Museum Berlin commemorating the 70th anniversary of the signing of the “Luxembourg Agreements” – the Reparations Agreement between Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany. The 1952 agreements made it possible for Holocaust survivors to receive compensation payments for the Nazi persecution they faced during World War II. Also, for the first time an agreement has been reached on Holocaust education funding of almost \$10 million for 2022, close to \$25 million for 2023, almost \$30 million for 2024, and almost \$35 million for 2025. At the invitation of German Finance Minister Christian Lindner, the Claims Conference joined Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Israel's Minister for Social Equality Meirav Cohen and several hundred guests at the Sept. 15 event. The Luxembourg Agreements were signed on Sept. 10, 1952, in the City Hall of Luxembourg by the State of Israel, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Claims Conference, a nonprofit organization that negotiated on behalf of Holocaust survivors. “This historic event, the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Luxembourg Agreements, is cause for commemoration and reflection,” said Gideon Taylor, president of the Claims Conference. “These agreements laid the groundwork for compensation and restitution for those survivors who had lost everything and continue to serve as the foundation for the ongoing negotiations on behalf of the estimated 280,000 Holocaust survivors living around the world.”



Quick Reference Guide to Planned Giving

Use this planned giving quick reference guide to help determine the best strategy for achieving your philanthropic and financial goals.

For more information or to discuss these planned giving options, please contact Daniel Chejfec, Executive Director, Jewish Federation of NEPA, 570-961-2300 (x1) or daniel.chejfec@jewishnepa.org.

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Avoid the two-fold taxation on IRA or other employee benefit plans	Name a charity as the beneficiary of the remainder of the retirement assets after your lifetime	Tax relief to your family on inherited assets
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Make a large gift with little cost to you	Contribute a life insurance policy you no longer need or purchase a new one & designate a charity as the owner	Current & possible future income tax deductions
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Give income from an asset for a period of years but retain the asset for yourself or your heirs	Create a charitable lead trust	Federal estate tax savings on asset & income tax deductions for deductions for donated income
Create a hedge against inflation over the long term	Create a charitable remainder unitrust	Variable payments for life plus tax advantages
Make a revocable gift during your lifetime	Name a charity as the beneficiary of assets in a living trust	Full control of the trust terms during your lifetime

FastContinued from page 5

COOL PEACH SOUP (DAIRY)

Serves 4-6

Cook's tips:

- ◆ May use 4 small mangoes instead.
- ◆ Kefir is fermented milk similar to a thin type of yogurt.

4 large peaches, pits removed and sliced
1 cup orange juice
1 Tbsp. fresh-squeezed lemon juice
1 cup peach kefir
1 rib celery, sliced

2 Tbsp. finely shredded mint or 2 tsp. dried
Place all ingredients except the mint into a blender or food processor.

Purée, stir in the mint and chill.

Serve in small bowls or glasses.

NORWEGIAN HERRING SALAD (DAIRY)

Serves 6

Cook's tips:

- ◆ May be prepared 1-2 days ahead and stored in fridge.
- ◆ Top the bowl of herring salad with sliced



Herring Salad (Photo by Ethel G. Hofman)

1 jar (12 oz.) pickled herring tidbits with onions, drained
1 small baked potato, peeled and cut into ¼-inch chunks

1 sweet apple, peeled, cored and cut into ¼-inch chunks

2-3 Tbsp. plain yogurt

2 Tbsp. snipped dill, packed

Snip the onions into ½-inch pieces. Place in a bowl with herring tidbits and remaining ingredients. Stir lightly to mix.

Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

POTATO PESTO SOUFFLÉ (DAIRY)

Serves 8-10

Cook's tip:

Recipe may be doubled. Bake in a 13x9x2-inch dish.

10 potato blintzes



Potato Pesto Soufflé (Photo by Ethel G. Hofman)

½ cups frozen sugar snap peas, thawed (optional)

½ medium onion, thinly sliced

3 Tbsp. butter or margarine

½ cup bottled pesto

3 eggs

1 cup sour cream

½ tsp. minced garlic

½ tsp. freshly ground pepper

2 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Spray a 9-inch square baking dish with non-

stick cooking spray.

Arrange the blintzes in one layer in prepared dish. Scatter the snap peas (if using) and onions over the blintzes. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, melt the butter in the microwave. Add the pesto, eggs, sour cream, garlic and pepper. Mix well. Pour over the blintz mixture. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Bake in preheated oven for 1 hour, or until puffed and nicely brown.

Serve hot or at room temperature.

FIGS IN POMEGRANATE SYRUP (PAREVE)

Serves 6-8

Cook's tips:

- ◆ Fresh figs may be used for dried figs. No need to soak or microwave.
- ◆ Substitute 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon for a cinnamon stick.
- ◆ May prepare 1 to 2 days ahead and refrigerate.
- ◆ Pomegranate juice is available in supermarkets.

1 lb. dried figs

1 cup golden raisins

1½ cups pomegranate juice

½ cup kosher white wine (Pinot Grigio or Sauvignon Blanc, for instance)

2 Tbsp. fresh-squeezed lemon juice

3 Tbsp. water

cinnamon stick

3 thin slices of ginger root, about 1-inch diameter

2 Tbsp. honey or to taste

Place figs in a bowl and cover with hot water. Microwave for 3 minutes at high heat. Drain well.

Place in a saucepan with raisins, pomegranate juice, wine, lemon juice, water, cinnamon stick, ginger root and honey. Cover loosely.

Simmer for 30 minutes or until dried figs are plump. Sweeten to taste. Chill.

Remove cinnamon stick and ginger before serving.

SIMPLE ESPRESSO MOLD (PAREVE)

Serves 6-8

Cook's tips:

- ◆ Substitute for espresso, strong coffee with ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract.
- ◆ For a dairy showstopper: When chilled, chop mold coarsely, spoon into demitasse cups or wine glasses. Top with a dollop of vanilla yogurt or whipped cream and a sprinkling of shaved chocolate.

2 (3-oz.) packages kosher peach gelatin

1½ cups boiling water

1½ cups cold espresso coffee

¾ cup white wine

½ cup pareve chocolate coffee beans

In a large bowl, thoroughly dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Stir in the coffee and wine.

Pour into a 1-quart bowl or mold. Refrigerate until just beginning to jell. Stir in the coffee beans.

Return to fridge and chill until set.

BUNDT CAKE STUFFED WITH FALL FRUITS (PAREVE)

Serves 15-18

Cook's tips:

- ◆ This cake freezes well. Freeze individual slices to remove as needed.
- ◆ Use kitchen scissors to snip plums and dates.
- ◆ Substitute diced mango for pear, apple or dates.
- ◆ Make a batch of cinnamon sugar; equal amounts of cinnamon and sugar. Stir, cover tightly and store in a cool dry place. Do not refrigerate.
- ◆ Note: 1 tablespoon of baking powder equals 3 teaspoons.

1 pear, core removed and coarsely diced

1 Granny Smith apple, core removed and coarsely diced

4 prune plums, pitted and snipped in ¼-inch pieces

1 cup dried cranberries

1 cup pitted dates, coarsely chopped

2 Tbsp. cinnamon-sugar

1 tsp. cardamom

3 cups all-purpose flour

2 cups sugar

1 Tbsp. baking powder

1 cup vegetable oil

5 eggs

1 Tbsp. vanilla extract

¼ cup orange juice (optional)

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Spray a 12-cup Bundt pan with nonstick cooking spray.

In a medium bowl, combine the pear, apple, plums, cranberries, dates, cinnamon-sugar and cardamom. Set aside.

In a large bowl, stir together the flour, sugar, baking powder, vegetable oil, eggs, vanilla and orange juice. Using an electric hand mixer, beat at medium speed, 3 to 4 minutes, until mixture is smooth and little bubbles appear.

Spoon half the batter into prepared pan. Spread about ¾ of the fruit mixture over. Top with remaining batter and fruits.

Bake in preheated oven for 1¼ hours or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Cool slightly on a wire rack. Loosen sides and turn out onto a serving platter. When completely cool, slice with a serrated knife.

Ethel G. Hofman is a widely syndicated American Jewish food and travel columnist, author and culinary consultant.

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