

## Upcoming services and events

**Saturday, June 30, 2018** **Spiritual Leader Barbara J. Cohen becomes Rabbi Barbara J. Cohen!**

**Thursday, July 5, 9:00am – 1:00pm:** People's Pantry at St. James Place. Generally 2 hour shifts: contact Walter Orenstein at [ptcpa@roadrunner.com](mailto:ptcpa@roadrunner.com) to participate.

**Saturday, July 14, 10:00am:** Shabbat Service with Rabbi Barbara Cohen, followed by coffee, tea, pastry and conversation.

**Thursday, July 19, 7:00pm:** Judith Schumer, teacher and author of Esther's Journey, A Holocaust Memoir, will present her new book, In the Presence of My Enemies.

**Saturday, July 21, 10:00am:** Shabbat Service (abbreviated) and Tisha B'Av Study Session

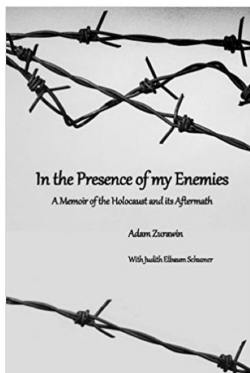
**Sunday, July 22, 10:15am:** Book Group: "The Two Family House" by Lynda Cohen Loigman, led by Helen Radin. Please contact Diana Richter at [drpajama1@gmail.com](mailto:drpajama1@gmail.com) for location of this meeting. Check for changes as this group occasionally changes the date or time".

**Friday, July 27, 5:30 pm:** Erev Shabbat Service

## Articles/Information

- *A Thursday Evening Talk by Judith Schumer: "In the Presence of My Enemies"*
- *CAS Annual Meeting*
- *Introducing new Board member Ilene Spiewak*
- *Milchidika with Marty: "Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire"*
- *A Bar Mitzvah, a Bat Mitzvah and two Weddings*
- *Irene Goldman-Price at The Mount*
- *"Keep Smiling!" Photo memories by Don Victor*
- *"Bar Mitzvah Boy" at the Chester Theatre Company*
- *CAS Book Group*
- *July Yahrzeits*
- *July Donations*

## Thursday Evening Series: "In the Presence of My Enemies" Author and Educator Judith Schumer introduces her new book



Author and educator Judith Schumer will be delivering the third and final presentation of the spring/summer CAS

Thursday Evening Lecture Series on July 19, 7:00 p.m. at the synagogue. This talk is about a new book she wrote titled *In the Presence of my Enemies: A Memoir of the Holocaust and its Aftermath*. It is the true story of a Jewish survivor who spent part of the war in Poland pretending to be a Christian Pole in order to save himself and his family in a world gone mad. It is the story of a man who jumped off a cattle car headed for the Auschwitz concentration camp, eventually came to America, and was later accused of being a Nazi collaborator. It is a particularly compelling narrative in 2018 with the new law being passed in Poland that criminalizes what can and cannot be told about Polish involvement in the Holocaust.

Judith was born in Shanghai, China in October, 1945 - two months after the end of the war with Japan. Her parents survived the Holocaust by first escaping to Lithuania from Nazi-occupied Poland and then getting a special visa which enabled them to get out of Eastern Europe and travel first to Japan and then to China. They spent the war under Japanese occupation in Shanghai and were finally able to get visas to the United States in 1948. Her first book was about her family's escape and survival titled *Esther's Journey - A Holocaust Memoir*.

She and her husband live in Sheffield, MA and in Reno, NV where she was recently appointed Chairperson of the Nevada Governor's Advisory Council on Education Relating to the Holocaust. She is also a member of the Northern Nevada Holocaust Education Task Force. She speaks at schools, universities, and adult groups about her books and her responsibility as a "Second Generation" survivor.

Please join us for this event. Wine and cheese will be served. There is no admission charge for this talk, but donations to support CAS lectures and events are welcome.

## CAS Annual Meeting

The CAS Annual Meeting was held on June 24, 2018. After opening remarks by Barbara Cohen and a short introduction by Alison Adams-Weinberg, Diana Richter presented the nomination of Ilene Spiewak as our new board member. Ilene and the returning slate of board members were unanimously elected by the thirty-five congregants in attendance.

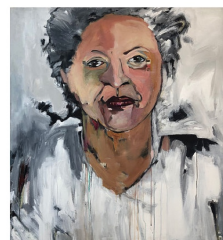
After Marty Stransky's positive financial report, committee reports were given. Harold Schragger spoke about the role of the Ritual and Spiritual Life Committee, followed by reports by members of the Executive Committee. Arthur Hillman spoke about fundraising, the newsletter and website; Alison Adams-Weinberg discussed membership, hospitality, and the Federation; Sandra Flannery described programs, the nomination committee and religious education; Linda Josephs talked about advertising and the building. Walter Orenstein followed up the reports with a short discussion about the Peoples Pantry.

Business over, we all went upstairs to enjoy a typically delicious CAS potluck dinner and mingle with friends.

## Introducing New Board Member, Ilene Spiewak



Ilene Spiewak



Some of Ilene's paintings from her recent CAS exhibit

Philadelphia-born Ilene Spiewak lives in a 210-year-old renovated schoolhouse in rural West Stockbridge, Massachusetts. On her lushly wooded property stands a rugged little red studio where she can be found energetically wielding a paint brush almost daily. Although her career has taken a variety of turns, Ilene's been "coloring" and painting since childhood. Some of her happiest studio moments are spent with her grandchildren Jacob and Maya, and sons Jason and David when they come to visit and make art together.

Ilene worked mostly on Sundays in the Education department at the Norman Rockwell Museum when she and her partner Brenda first moved to the Berkshires almost ten years ago. She also worked part-time at a private residential program in Lee as an art educator and therapist for young adults on the Autism Spectrum. In addition, Ilene was an art therapist at the Brien Center for Children and Adolescents in Pittsfield.

In the years prior to moving to the "middle of nowhere" she developed an art program and art history curriculum at an alternative high school in West Philadelphia where she worked for nine years. Her work history also includes both inpatient and outpatient art therapy for adolescents in Philadelphia and New Jersey.

Ilene graduated from the Pennsylvania State University with a BA in Art Education and Hahnemann University Hospital, MA in Art Therapy. As a continuing education student, she studied at The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (PAFA), Moore College of Art, University of the Arts, Fleisher Art Memorial, Provincetown Art Museum, and the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts. She received her MFA from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in August 2017. Ilene is a regular contributing writer for ProximityArts.Org. She is a member of the Berkshire Art Association and a founding member of the Richmond West Stockbridge Artists Guild.

Throughout her years as an educator and student, Ilene has exhibited her paintings in juried shows in regional galleries, as well as the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the Berkshire Museum.

She and Brenda enjoy the inclusive, thoughtful, re-constructed spiritual life they found in the Berkshires and especially in the CAS community of people.

## **Milchidika with Marty: "Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire"**

Well, we're not quite the same as that famous dance team, but both my wife Isabelle, and I enjoy writing short stories and poetry. Isabelle, was an English major in her college days and was always interested in writing.

In fact, it was what she wrote about herself on [Match.com](https://www.match.com) (as well as her photograph) that made me say to myself, not only that I wanted to meet her in person, but rather "That's who I want to marry." That's the power of the written word. So here we are thirteen years later and one of Isabelle's earlier stories.

### One Thousand Dollars

She gave me \$1,000 to buy clothes for going away to college.

She never went past second grade in some village in Russia.

She always wore old, ill-fitting, stained pants and dresses.

I was ashamed to have schoolmates come to the house.

\$1,000!

My aunt, who was fashionable, took me to stores.

I bought a pink angora sweater and a pleated skirt.

I bought a black dress with sequins on the top.

My roommate said it was in poor taste.

She said I had no taste.

I never wore that dress.

## A Bar Mitzvah, a Bat Mitzvah and two Weddings

It is a pleasure for us to recognize four wonderful celebrations that will have taken place over the 2018 spring and summer months.

### The Bar Mitzvah of Isaac Scribner

At the Apple Tree Inn on Saturday May 5, Cinco de Mayo, Isaac Jonathan Scribner, son of David Scribner and Juliane Hiam, was called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah, with Congregation Ahavath Sholom Rabbi Barbara Cohen officiating. About 70 guests – family, friends and Isaac's classmates from Berkshire Country Day School -- had assembled at the Apple Tree Inn in Lenox to witness the service.

The service began at 6 p.m., as a Havdalah, since for the program Isaac had written a piano trio in which he played the piano, his school chum Sam Creelan played cello, and his father, David, played violin. It was Isaac's wish that the service include his composition that required the Bar Mitzvah to take place just after Shabbat ended, since it is the tradition of Congregation Ahavath Sholom that music not be played on Shabbat.

Those who have attended High Holy Day services may recall that they have listened to Isaac's musical performances before. He and his younger brother Davy were taught to blow the Shofar by Don Victor, and for the past five years have sounded the ram's horn at the final moments of Yom Kippur during the High Holy Day services at Berkshire South Regional Community Center.

Isaac's Torah reading was Parsha Behar, from Leviticus 25, verses 47 through 49, that addresses what it means to be free – and under what conditions people were enslaved. His mother, Juliane, sister Harper Glantz and brother Jack Glantz, also read Torah portions.

Below is the text of Isaac's Dvar Torah:

I want to thank all of you for coming to share this experience with me. Studying and preparing for my Bar Mitzvah has been a wonderful process and purely eye-opening. Going into the preparation I had thought and had always thought that studying for my Bar Mitzvah would just be another thing that I do in my life; I would go and wait for it to be done. But that's not the way it has been. It has been interesting and fun and blew away all of my expectations. From our very first meeting with Barbara and my parents I had the freedom to offer my ideas and had a voice in the discussion. I want to thank Barbara for allowing this to be as amazing of an experience as it has been.

The theme that I would like to explore with you this evening is freedom. My Torah portion Behar which means in Hebrew "in the mountain" Leviticus 25:47-26:2 is about people who either own or are slaves and the relationship between the two. My portion describes Israelite people who fell on rough times, who needed to become servants to other Israelites in order to survive. The Torah portion says that at the end of seven years they are to be set free. This idea of setting things free after owning them also relates to something called the Jubilee which happens every 50 years. The Jubilee makes all land go back to its original owners. This makes sure that no one person or family gains too much power and wealth. I think that this is a very fair system because it prevents people from getting too self-centered and making idols of their possessions. As it states in the Torah portion, God says that we do not own anything. God created us and everything on earth so God can decide what happens to everyone and everything.

I think that another meaning of this portion is being able to get a fresh start. Since everything goes back to its original owners, the Jubilee is almost as if you have the ability to hit the reset button on all of your debts and everything. Since this portion is about everything going free I thought that I would talk a bit about my freedom as a person. I always felt as if my parents gave me a power to decide many decisions about my life. Even with this Bar Mitzvah I had a big part in planning it. I am having a Havdalah Bar Mitzvah because I wanted to compose a piece for this occasion and play for you, and since there is a tradition in this congregation of not playing music on Shabbat, we planned this Bar Mitzvah for late in the day on Shabbat to allow me to fulfill this wish. I am grateful for the ability to share my music today.

There are many other things that I am thankful for, including my parents and my family. I'd like to thank my family for everything that they have done for me. They have all made my life better in different ways and I could not have asked for any one more supportive of me. Mommy and Daddy have allowed me to make choices for my own and I think that that has made me a better, more independent person. Harper and Jack help me when I have any tough decisions that I have to make. You guys have helped me through so much. Thank You. And Davy, I know that we fight sometimes but almost always you are a great brother and a great friend and have helped me up when I am down. Independence and freedom doesn't necessarily mean that you are alone; it means that you are your own person and are unique from other people in the community that you are a part of. Thank you for being my community.

Parsha Behar, Isaac read Leviticus 25, verses 47-49, David read 50-51, Harper read 52-53, Jack 54-55, and Isaac chapter 26 verses 1-2.



### The Bat Mitzvah of Samantha Seeley

June 16 marked the Bat Mitzvah of Samantha Seeley, daughter of Robin Slick and Richard Seeley. *Thank you Barbara for the kindness and generosity that you gave to our whole family as you helped Samantha prepare to become a Bat Mitzvah. It was a beautiful Shabbat service and we were honored that our friends, family and the CAS community could share in the joy of seeing our daughter reach this milestone in her life as a Jewish woman. The day was so meaningful and Samantha knocked it out of the park with her chanting of her Torah portions.*

The Seeley/Slick Family



### The Wedding of Barbara Janoff and David Birch

On June 3rd Barbara Cohen officiated at the wedding of CAS members Barbara Janoff and David Birch. After Shabbat Services on Friday evening, June 22nd, the newlyweds hosted a special oneg in honor of their marriage.



### The Wedding of Angelina Oszust and Nathan Rothstein

CAS members Dan and Lori Rothstein are pleased to announce the marriage of their son Nathan to his long-time girlfriend Angelina Oszust on Saturday July 14th in Willseyville, NY.

Nate and Angie have been together since Angie's Junior Prom in high school, when Nate was a freshman and Angie, who is a good friend of our daughter, Isabel, didn't have a date. Nathan stepped in to take her to the dance and the rest is history.

Nate graduated from Binghamton University in 2017 with a B.S. in Neuroscience and Angelina has an A.A.S. in Early Childhood Education from Hudson Valley Community College and a Montessori Diploma Casa dei Bambini through Association Montessori Internationale.

Nathan is working with pre-school and kindergarten aged children at the Ithaca Montessori School, where Angie is a classroom teacher, while he works toward a nursing degree. They plan to stay in Binghamton for now, where they live with their cat.



Congregation Ahavath Sholom sends our warmest best wishes to each of these individuals and their families.

## Irene Goldman-Price at The Mount

Edith Wharton (1862-1937) was a brilliant writer, publishing more than forty books of fiction, poetry, travel, design, criticism, memoir, and war reportage. She was well-traveled and fluent in four languages. She was recognized with several international awards for her humanitarian service during World War I, which was only one aspect of her lifelong habit of quiet assistance to those in need. And yet, Wharton shared her age and class's attitudes towards race and towards Jews. With a few exceptions, she found them repugnant.

Because of her home in Lenox, now a house-museum and cultural center, Wharton looms large in the Berkshire literary world. CAS member Irene Goldman-Price, who has been reading and teaching and writing about Wharton for more than forty years, has always had mixed feelings about her involvement with a writer who may indeed not have deigned to meet her at luncheon. And yet, there is no disputing the power and genius of Wharton's writing or her prodigious talents and managerial capacity. How to reconcile all the good with Wharton's distasteful and hurtful racial beliefs?

Last year Nancy Maurice Rogers, Program Director at the Federation, offered Irene an opportunity to consider the question of Wharton's anti-Semitism in a public talk at Hevreh, co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and The Mount (on whose board Irene is a member). The popularity of that talk led The Mount to invite Irene to reprise it.

Edith Wharton's Anti-Semitism: A Consideration  
July 12, 2018, 11:00 am at The Mount

For more information: [https://www.edithwharton.org/event/edith-whartons-anti-semitism-consideration-encore-lecture/?instance\\_id=18801](https://www.edithwharton.org/event/edith-whartons-anti-semitism-consideration-encore-lecture/?instance_id=18801)



Edith Wharton

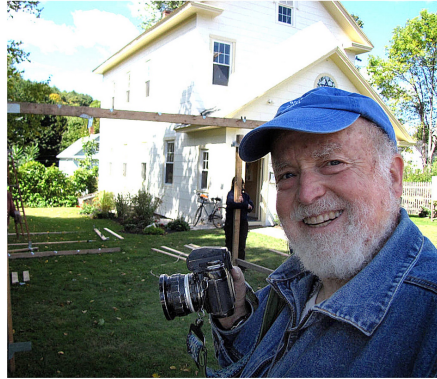


Dr. Irene Goldman-Price

## "Keep Smiling!" Photo Memories by Don Victor

Don Victor was a long-time and beloved CAS member and community photographer. Don moved to Great Barrington in 1976 and, when he passed away in 2016, he left a legacy of photographic documents of massive proportions. Most of these photographs were donated to the Great Barrington Historical Society where today over 200 double-sized file boxes house his remarkable collection of images. Michele Waldman, Barbara Janoff and Arthur Hillman have begun to explore these files and the newsletter will begin each month to feature a few of the images that relate to the history of CAS over approximately the past forty years.

If any readers have photos that Don took of the CAS building, events or congregants (or such photos taken by others), we would love to include some of those images in the newsletter as well.



Don Victor

Photograph by David Scribner, The Berkshire Edge



Don's aerial view of the synagogue, 1993

(Note Rabbi Axelrod's butcher shop/deli to the left of our building)



Rabbi Axelrod at the door of his butcher shop, 1980



Rabbi Jacob Axelrod, 1978

## "Bar Mitzvah Boy" at the Chester Theatre Company

I have never written a theater review before but just having seen Bar Mitzvah Boy at the Chester Theatre in Chester MA, I am moved to tell everyone about it. The story opens with a female jogger running up onto stage while an older gentleman with tallit, yarmulke and tefillin (with the straps hanging down his arm) is sitting in an office with a huge wall of books behind him. Okay, so who's who? And where is the Bar Mitzvah boy?? It turns out that a successful divorce attorney needs to have his Bar Mitzvah before his grandson has his sometime in the near future. We travel through crises of faith, an emotionally devastating situation, and a reaffirmation of life while we laugh and cry and sing. Sitting through this play was a wonderful experience for me as a Jew. It presents Jewish values, thought and traditions in an open and positive way. I hope both Jews and non-Jews flock to see this production.

It was written by Mark Leiren-Young, a Canadian journalist, screenwriter, playwright and occasional performer. The production is directed by Guy Ben-Aharon, the Artistic Director and Founder of Israeli Stage in Boston. Tara Franklin and



Will LeBow are the actors. And a huge thank you goes to CAS members Karen and Charles Schader, who sponsored this production.

Sandra Flannery



L to R: Tara Franklin and Will LeBow



L to R: Tara Franklin and Will LeBow



Tara Franklin

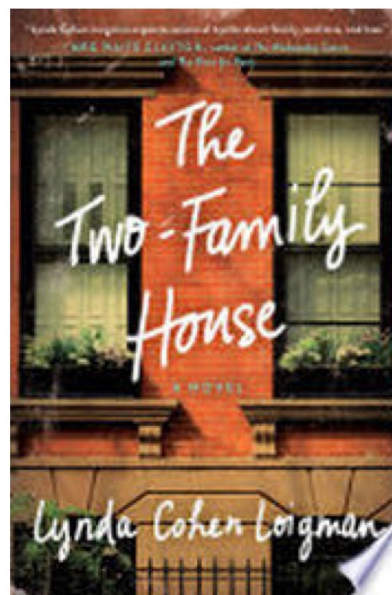


Will LeBow

Photo Credits: Elizabeth Solaka

## CAS Book Group

The CAS Book Group will meet on Sunday, August 19th at 10:15 a.m. (postponed from July 22) to discuss *The Two Family House* by Lynda Cohen Loigman. Helen Radin will lead the discussion of this family saga set in post-war Brooklyn. It focuses on two families that are inextricably linked by blood, marriage, and a long-held secret. Please contact Diana Richter at [drpajama1@gmail.com](mailto:drpajama1@gmail.com) for location of this meeting.



## July Yahrzeits

"Much of our experience of divine goodness, grace and love has come to us through those whose lives have touched our own."  
Kol Haneshamah

Fannie Ketay Tammuz 18 5713	7/1	Fannie Friedman Av 05 5722	7/17
Barbara Halberstadter Tammuz 19 5774	7/2	Shirlee Robbins Av 05 5775	7/17
Benjamin Uttal Tammuz 21 5660	7/4	Aaron Broverman Av 06 5732	7/18
Max Slaminsky Tammuz 22 5713	7/5	Doris Soman Av 06 5773	7/18
Eva Pevzner Tammuz 22 5739	7/5	Joan Sussman Av 8 5766	7/20
John Armstrong Tammuz 22 5763	7/5	Emma Bittman Av 11 5755	7/23
Israel Lewis Samel Tammuz 24 5660	7/7	David Maskowsky Av 13 5731	7/25
Ellis Penziner Tammuz 25 5722	7/8	Milton Diamond Av 13 5758	7/25
Sara Rapport Tammuz 26 5715	7/9	Meyer David Graubard Av 13 5660	7/25
Renee Millimet Tammuz 26 5747	7/9	Samuel Kalin Av 15 5703	7/27
Louise Helman Av 01 5742	7/13	Ira Rogovin Av 15 5763	7/27
Philip Schiffman Av 03 5763	7/15	Mitsue Mitsuda Av 15 5768	7/27
Leo Mayers Av 03 5769	7/15	Abraham Moskowitz Av 18 5714	7/30
Erwin Millimet Av 04 5775	7/16		

## July Donations

### In honor of Barbara Cohen's ordination

Ellen Axelrod  
Joan and Dan Burkhard  
Lisa and Eric Chamberlain  
Paul Graubard and Karen Chase  
Ann Dorfman  
Irene Goldman-Price  
Nettie Hammond  
Arthur and Louise Hillman  
Mike and Kaye Jaffe  
Barbara Janoff and David Birch  
Linda Josephs  
Estelle Miller  
Dan and Loretta Rothstein  
Diana and Richard Richter  
Harold Rudin  
Charles and Karen Schader  
Lee Schwartz  
Donald and Arlene Shapiro

Rabbi David Weiner

**In honor of the wedding of Barbara Janoff and David Birch**

Gary Burgess

Ilene Cohen

Paul and Debra Deres

David Drachman

Linda Drachman

William and Sandra Flannery

Henry and Helen Freedman

Linda Hamalian and Paul Avrin

Arthur and Louise Hillman

Janet and Martin Kaplan

Dr. Richard and Shirley Maranoff

Chris and Jim Warren

Alison Weinberg and Stephen Adams

**In honor of Irene Linder**

Barry Linder, MD and Lyesum Linder

**In memory of Muriel and David Goldman**

Irene Goldman-Price