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## A JEWISH CULTURAL FESTIVAL

 Jewish Community Federation  
of the Mohawk Valley

[www.jewtica.com](http://www.jewtica.com)

This project is made possible through the CNY Arts Grants for Regional Arts and Cultural Engagement regrant program thanks to a New York State Senate Initiative supported by the NYS Legislature, the Office of the Governor and administered by the New York State Council on the Arts.

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June 9, 2024  
Utica, NY



# JEWTTICA

# Welcome to Jewtica 2024

**Shalom!** We are delighted to welcome you to the grounds of the Jewish Community Center for our 3rd annual edition of JEWtica, a celebration of the food, music, and culture of the American Jewish experience.

JEWtica is presented by the Jewish Community Federation of the Mohawk Valley. The Federation represents all Jews (and those who love them!) as well as all Jewish houses of worship within the geographical area we call home.

Thanks to a small but mighty team of volunteers, we have an amazing line-up of entertainment for you this year. On our main stage, in addition to local favorites like Kal Socolof, Chap-O's, Gustavo Geier and Sara Tisch, we are pleased to present - LIVE from Brooklyn, NY - a unique group with unique music: Sandcatchers. Later in the afternoon, rock on with LIVENOAH & Friends currently "making the scene" in our area.

Don't miss Jewish food expert Leah Koenig appearing in our auditorium at 2 pm. She'll be demonstrating dishes from her newest cookbook, *Portico*, which honors the recipes of the Jewish ghetto of Rome, Italy. This book, as well as some of her other Jewish cookbooks will be available for sale, and she'll be glad to autograph them after her presentation.

If all that makes you hungry, visit our local restaurants and food trucks on site with a wide variety of menu items to make your mouth water! You can even try some kosher options from our local Chabad houses: falafel, knishes, and cheesecake!

Got questions about Jewish customs, worship, or holidays? All four of our local congregations have information tables set up behind the performance tent. They'll be featuring displays that explain our annual holidays and the unique ways in which we celebrate them. Have more questions? Look for the rabbis on site in their gray "This Is What A Rabbi Looks Like" t-shirts.

If you've brought the kids, make sure to let them explore the kids' activity tent, visit the animals from the Utica Zoo, play some mini golf, and wear themselves out in the bounce house or a game of gaga!

Thanks for joining us in this celebration of our community. You are also welcome to take advantage of other activities here at the JCC year round. Cultural events, book clubs, films, basketball, and pickleball all have a place on the JCC calendar! We also have a non-denominational preschool program for children ages 2-5.

See you again soon,

**Victor Pearlman**  
Executive Director



## On the Main Stage



- 12:00** Kal Socolof
- 12:30** Mohawk Valley Jewish Hall of Fame Inductee
- 12:35** **Featured Performer:** Sandcatchers
- 1:50** Utica Mayor Michael Galime
- 2:00** Chap-O's
- 2:45** Rabbi Gustavo Geier & Sara Tisch  
Music & Israeli Folk Dancing
- 4:00** LIVENOAH
- 5:00** Hallelujah Sing-Along

Scan for lyrics >



## What's on the Menu

- A. Chabad of Clinton (Kosher):** Falafel with all the fixings
- B. Chabad of the Mohawk Valley (Kosher):** Knishes, Cheesecake
- C. Tickets for Kosher Food**
- D. Southern Comfort BBQ & Catering:** Brisket, Brisket Pastrami, Authentic Jewish Seeded Rye Bread, Swiss Cheese, Cole Slaw, Pickles
- E. The Good Life Ice Cream:** Ice cream, desserts, and Fig Sundaes (an Israeli treat!)
- F. Squeezers Lemonade:** Lemonade, Limonada, Pickle Lemonade, Pretzels
- G. Jay's Kitchun Catering Service:** Wings, Israeli Chopped Salad, Apple Cherry Crisp
- H. The Grapevine:** Shawarma, All Beef Hotdogs
- I. Tony's Pizzeria & Sports Bar:** Delicious fried food
- R. Wakin' Bagel:** A Selection of Artisanal Bagels
- S. Full of Beans Coffee Co:** Delicious Coffee
- T. He-Brew Beer Garden:** Beer and wine for 21+

Updated May 30, 2024 & subject to change.

# Vendors & Organizations

1. Your Neighbors
2. Oneida County Pride Association
3. NYS Civil Service/Diversity & Inclusion
4. Reed Designs
5. Stampin' up
6. Indivisible Mohawk Valley
7. Jewish Books
8. AuraGlowArt
9. Craftydadny
10. So Sweet Candy Shoppe
11. Just Keep Blooming
12. Garden Mentor
13. Alisa's Photography
14. Jessica's Creations
15. Utica Zoo
16. Camps Crane Lake/URJ Eisner
17. Utica Public Library
18. Girls Scouts /NYPENN Pathways
19. JCC Pre-school
20. Cancer Services Program of the Central Region
21. Mohawk Valley Health Systems
22. JCC Membership
23. JCC Tahini and Halvah
24. Jewtica T-Shirts
25. Congregation Zvi Jacob
26. Temple Beth Joseph
27. Temple Emanu-El
28. Temple Beth El
29. Keaton & Lloyd Bookshop
30. Nelson & Strife Financial Group
31. Safe Haven Museum
32. Kabari Wellness Institute
33. Fountainhead Group
34. Steet-Ponte Nissan Car Display

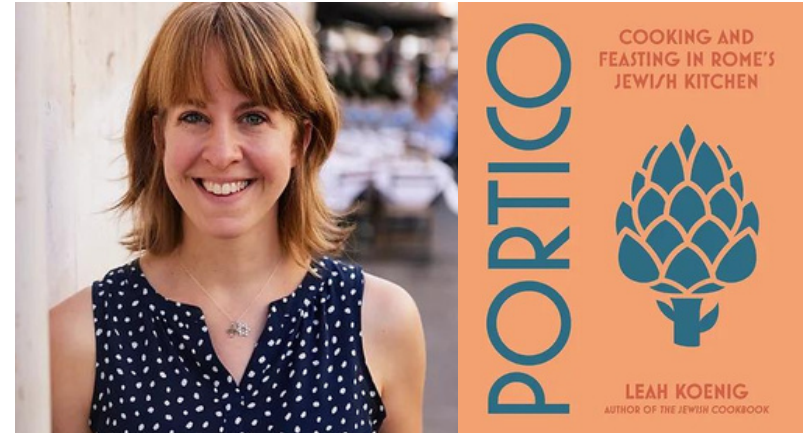


Updated May 30, 2024 & subject to change.

# Introducing Chef Leah Koenig

## 2:00 Food Demo in the Auditorium

We are thrilled to introduce Leah Koenig, a renowned Jewish food expert and cookbook author from NYC. She will be sharing her culinary expertise and conducting food demonstrations at Jewtica.



Leah's writing and recipes have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Magazine's Grub Street*, *Saveur*, *Epicurious*, *Food52*, *TASTE*, *Departures*, and *Tablet* magazine, among other publications.

She is the author of 6 cookbooks, including *The Jewish Cookbook*, *Modern Jewish Cooking* and *The Little Book of Jewish Feasts*, and *Portico: Cooking and Feasting in Rome's Jewish Kitchen*.

In addition to writing, Leah leads cooking demonstrations and classes all over the world. She lives in Brooklyn, New York with her husband and two kids. She can be found at [www.leahkoenig.com](http://www.leahkoenig.com) & [@leah.koenig](https://www.instagram.com/leah.koenig)



**KEY**

- Food Vendors
- KOSHER Food Vendors
- Craft Vendors
- Organizations
- Portable Toilets
- Information
- Accessible Parking



Oneida Street

# Mohawk Valley Jewish Hall of Fame

The Mohawk Valley Jewish Hall of Fame recognizes those Jews with a connection to our region whose contributions to the Jewish people of the Mohawk Valley, the United States, or the world are notable, significant, or otherwise deserving of such recognition. This year's inductees are:

## Helen and Leon Sperling

Helen and Leon were Holocaust survivors. They were both born in Poland; Helen in Otwock, and Leon in Krakow.

As a young girl, Helen's home was invaded by the Nazis where she lost her entire family except for her brother. She was forced to live in a ghetto and worked in death camps for years. She survived a vicious beating which resulted in her being hospitalized for three years following liberation in 1945. She came to the U.S. in 1949.

Leon suffered horrendous treatment throughout the war and was liberated from Terezin Concentration Camp in 1945. He spent two years in a Displaced Persons Camp, then came to the U.S. in 1947.

Helen and Leon married on December 7, 1952. Helen used to say, "You had to marry a survivor," because they understood what you were thinking, especially when you couldn't sleep or woke up screaming or crying due to their lived experiences.

When Leon completed his master's in engineering at the University of Michigan, he received a job offer at General Electric in Utica and the Sperlings moved to Utica in 1956. They raised their two children, Frances and Paul, and were both very active in the Jewish community at Temple Beth El and the JCC. The Annual Holocaust Memorial Lecture series at the JCC started in 1967 and was soon named after the Sperlings.

After their daughter experienced an antisemitic incident in school, Helen decided that she had to speak out about the Holocaust to educate children. She spoke at area schools where she shared her story in a very personal way that made everyone who heard her understand the horror of man's inhumanity toward man. Her message spread as she spoke at an expanding number of schools and colleges, churches and civic groups.

Many people who have heard her story felt compelled to do something to thank Helen for sharing such a difficult story. Scores of lilac bushes have been planted throughout the Utica area and far beyond to honor the memory of Helen's father, whose prized lilacs had been torn out of his yard and shipped to Germany, when the Nazis took over their home.

Helen and Leon Sperling had the goal of making sure that the horrors of the Holocaust were never forgotten. Helen ended each talk with what she said should be the 11th Commandment: **"Thou Shall Not Be a Bystander."** Everyone should remember what happened and make sure it never happens again.





# Utica Jewish Community History

Utica traces its Jewish roots to the first wave of Jewish immigration to the U.S. between 1847 and 1870. Though small, this early community established much of the necessary infrastructure for an engaged religious life.

By 1897, following a major influx of Jews from Eastern Europe to Utica, the community hired its first ordained rabbi, Moses Reichler.

During the first quarter of the 20th century Jews served their social needs through fraternal lodges, a YMHA and YWHA and a Workmen's Circle (1892).

In 1933, a Jewish Community Council was established to unify the many functions of the Jewish community. The Jewish Community Center was founded in 1955.

Today, the Utica Jewish community supports three congregations, two Chabad houses, and the Jewish Community Federation of the Mohawk Valley.

*"Jewish life cannot be separated from its desire for Jewish education for young and old, from its philanthropic, social and religious activity and the institutions it created in order to preserve Jews and Judaism.*

*Similarly, Jewish life cannot be divorced from the American environment and is intertwined with the American scene."*

**-Former Utica Rabbi S. Joshua Kohn (1959)**



*This photo taken in 1967 appeared on April 17, 1991 in a New York Times story by Trish Hall on adult reading groups. The Chai Study Group began in October 1952 and was organized as a Hadassah Study Group. Everyone in the photo has been active in the Utica Jewish Community at one time.*



Scene in the Jewish District. Utica, N. Y.



Czech Holocaust Torah Scroll - Temple Beth El

Young Judea 1917 Utica, NY



Congregation  
Zvi Jacob



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Your donation helps us continue our vital work building understanding and appreciation for Jewish culture across our diverse Utica community. Visit [www.jewtica.com/donate](http://www.jewtica.com/donate)



# Jewish Holidays

Jewish holidays follow the lunar Hebrew calendar, with days beginning at sunset.

<b>Shavuot</b> June 11-13, 2024	Marks the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, celebrated by studying Torah through the night and eating dairy foods.
<b>Tisha B'Av</b> August 12, 2024	A major fast day mourning the destruction of both the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem.
<b>Tu B'Av</b> August 18, 2024	A celebration love and rebirth, often compared to Valentine's Day.
<b>Rosh Hashanah</b> October 2-4, 2024	The Jewish New Year, marked by prayer, reflection and the sounding of the shofar (ram's horn).
<b>Yom Kippur</b> October 11, 2024	The Day of Atonement, the holiest day of the year, dedicated to fasting, prayer, and repentance.
<b>Sukkot</b> October 17-23, 2024	A festival commemorating the Israelites' 40 years of wandering in the desert, celebrated by feasting and dwelling in temporary shelters called sukkot.
<b>Shemini Atzeret</b> October 23, 2024	A holiday immediately following Sukkot, dedicated to assembly and prayer for rain in Israel.
<b>Simchat Torah</b> October 24, 2024	A celebration marking the conclusion of the annual Torah reading cycle and the beginning of a new cycle.
<b>Hanukkah</b> December 25, 2024 - January 2, 2025	The Festival of Lights, commemorating the rededication of the Second Temple and the miracle of the oil that lasted eight days.
<b>Tu B'Shevat</b> February 12, 2025	The New Year for Trees, often celebrated by planting trees and eating fruits associated with the land of Israel.
<b>Purim</b> March 13, 2025	A joyous holiday commemorating the salvation of the Jews from Haman's plot to destroy them, as recounted in the Book of Esther. It is celebrated with costumes, parades, and revelry.
<b>Passover (Pesach)</b> April 12-20, 2025	A festival celebrating the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, marked by a Seder meal and eating matzah.
<b>Yom HaShoah</b> April 23, 2025	A day of remembrance for the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust.
<b>Yom HaZikaron</b> April 29, 2025	A day of remembrance for Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terrorism.
<b>Yom HaAtzmaut</b> April 30, 2025	Israeli Independence Day celebrates the of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.
<b>Lag B'Omer</b> May 15, 2025	Commemorates the end of a plague among Rabbi Akiva's students and the death of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. Usually celebrated with bonfires.
<b>Yom Yerushalayim</b> May 25, 2025	Jerusalem Day celebrates the reunification of Jerusalem under Israeli control in 1967.

# Festival Organizers & Participants

A heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers who made this day possible! Your time and generosity are truly appreciated.

## Jewtica Committee

Joe Silberlicht, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Courtney Marshall
Marsha Silverman, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Lindsay Meislin
Katrena Berkovich, <i>Food Chair</i>	Victor Pearlman
Sara Tisch, <i>Marketing &amp; Design</i>	Wendy Sanders
Keri Campbell, <i>Children's Activities</i>	Rabbi Peter Schaktman
Coordinator	Joel Seif
Andi Dinerstein	Anne Yoss
Rabbi Gustavo Geier	

**תודה רבה!**  
(Thank you very much!)

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Sunday, June 8, 2025**



Sponsors | Volunteers | Vendors  
[www.jewtica.com](http://www.jewtica.com)