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Art exhibit

'SACRED SCRAPS'

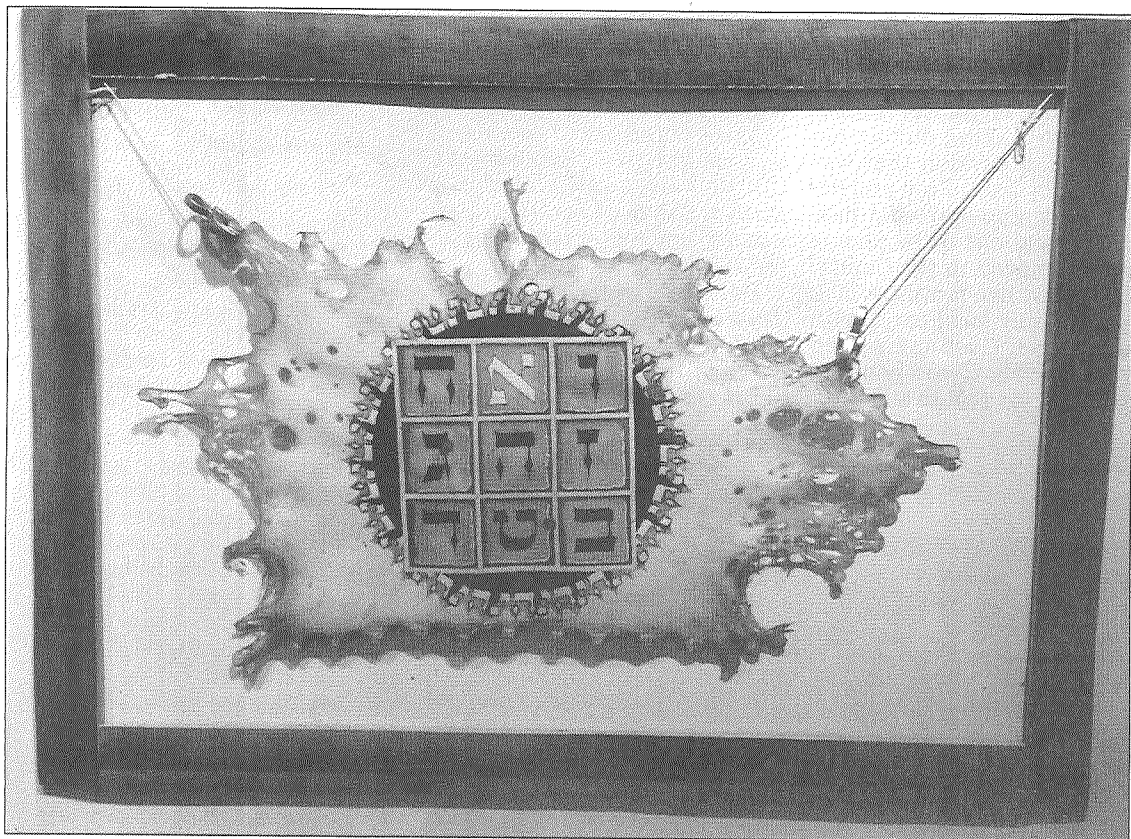


PHOTO PROVIDED

This is one of the works of art in "Sacred Scraps: The Work of Rabbi Linda Motzkin." Rabbi Motzkin has been a presence in Saratoga Springs' rich cultural community for decades, both as co-rabbi of Temple Sinai and also as Jewish Chaplain at Skidmore College. The exhibit runs through Aug. 8 at Spring Street Gallery at 110 Spring St. See story at right for more about her and the exhibit.

Calendar

Area codes are 518 unless noted. See more Bulletin Board Calendar listings at www.saratogian.com/Life. Submit items to calendar@saratogian.com or mail to: Bulletin Board Calendar, The Saratogian, 20 Lake Ave., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Call 583-8729, ext. 220.

New Listings

CLAM STEAM: Fish Creek Rod and Gun Club, Route 32, Victory Mills, annual clam steam will be held noon-9 p.m. Aug. 9. Tickets, \$40 for a full steam menu including steamed clams, raw clams, potato, sweet potato, corn on the cob, sausage, chicken, watermelon, open bar (soda, water, beer),

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will be a special guest at the event. The presentation will feature two distinct and acclaimed films, both sharing intimate views of two of Secretariat's legendary connections, as well as rare historical and previously unreleased footage. The evening's festivities begin at 6 p.m. with an optional VIP reception with refreshments where guests will have an opportunity to meet and greet Turcotte and get an autograph prior to the screenings. "Secretariat's Jockey, Ron Turcotte," produced by the National Film Board of Canada, will start at

activities, film clips, and more. A large number of Northup descendants are expected to be in attendance, as well as descendants of Samuel Bass, the Canadian carpenter who assisted in Northup's rescue by contacting the captive's friends back home in upstate New York.

MEETING: Heritage Hunters of Saratoga County will meet at 1 p.m. July 19 at the Town of Saratoga Town Hall, corner of Routes 4 and 29, Schuylerville. Matt Farina, past president of the Capital District Civil War Round Table, will be the speaker. He will talk about Elmer Ephraim Ellsworth, the law clerk, personal friend, and bodyguard for President

SPRING STREET GALLERY

Rabbi Motzkin's
'Sacred Scraps'
on exhibit

SARATOGA SPRINGS » Rabbi Linda Motzkin has been a presence in Saratoga Springs' rich cultural community for decades, both as co-rabbi of Temple Sinai and also as Jewish Chaplain at Skidmore College. But behind her public role as a rabbi, Motzkin has been on a private artistic journey that is on exhibit through Aug. 8 at Spring Street Gallery at 110 Spring St.

The show is titled, "Sacred Scraps: The Work of Rabbi Linda Motzkin."

Motzkin was ordained a rabbi in 1986, and came to Saratoga Springs that summer with her husband and co-rabbi Jonathan Rubenstein. Since her youth she had dabbled in various art forms, including the study of Hebrew calligraphy as a college student under master calligrapher David Moss. But it wasn't until 2003 that she began studying with Rabbi Dr. Eric Ray to become a soferet (a Hebrew scribe who writes Torah scrolls and other sacred documents), a profession traditionally restricted to men. She is one of a handful of women worldwide who have mastered this craft, and the only soferet in the world who makes her own parchment, which she prepares using deerskins donated by local Adirondack hunters.

"I never dreamed I'd get involved in scraping and fleshing animal hides," Motzkin recalled, "but at the time I began, it was the only possible way for me, as a female scribe, to obtain kosher parchment."

When Motzkin began making parchment for the Torah scroll that she is currently writing, she discovered that not every deerskin can produce suitable parchment, due to inherent flaws in the skin as well as damage that occurs during processing.



From Motzkin's "Sacred Scraps" exhibit

"Even though I couldn't use them as Torah panels, I still thought these flawed pieces had their own sacred dimension," Motzkin said.

So she decided to highlight their imperfections and transform them into a different sort of sacred art, weaving fragments of Hebrew texts and other design elements around the holes and tears in the skins. Some of her pieces are small, and some over five feet in length, sometimes resembling Swiss cheese, with their organic intricacies.

The process of creating these pieces reflects the mystical belief that holiness lies embedded within all matter, waiting to be recognized, uplifted and transformed. Motzkin hopes her artistic journey may serve as an inspiration to those of every background, sacred and secular, who seek to find beauty and meaning in the midst of the flaws and imperfections of life.

For exhibit hours and more information, contact the Spring Street Gallery at (518) 587-6433 or visit springstreet-gallery.saratoga.org