

HOLY COWAN!

A Jewish beer maker looks to Judaism for inspiration.

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Baton of Fun

Semyon Bychkov conducts the Philadelphia Orchestra.

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▲ Emily Leventhal (center) a recovering addict, has leaned heavily on her parents, Bari Wolfson and Jeff Leventhal, for support as she's pieced her life back together. Photo by Gregory Bezanis

Following Heroin Death, Bucks Launches Recovery Group

BRYAN SCHWARTZMAN | JE STAFF

THE DEATH of a 19-year-old from an overdose of heroin — just days after he was last in synagogue for Yom Kippur — has badly shaken a Bucks County synagogue and called attention to a problem that many say is being overlooked in the Jewish world.

"This must be a wake-up call to the Jewish community in Pennsylvania, New Jersey — and the entire country," Brandon Wind, the current co-president of Congregation Brothers of Israel in Newtown, wrote in the synagogue's newsletter. "Too many families refuse to acknowledge that their child, their father, their mother or their spouse has a problem."

In the tragedy's wake, the congregation, and its new rabbi, Aaron Philmus, are struggling to process the loss and to figure out how best to move forward.

Synagogue leaders are spreading the word about a new Jewish recovery support group that was already in the works before the young man's death. It was started at the behest of another recovering addict who grew up at the same synagogue, 20-year-old

It Was the 'Love' of Her Life, and It Nearly Destroyed Her

BRYAN SCHWARTZMAN | JE STAFF

IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE the person Emily Leventhal describes: someone whose eyes lack any life, someone in such despair that she can't bear the thought of God, someone utterly powerless over her drug addiction.

But that was the world of this 20-year-old from Langhorne who now comes across

as upbeat, self-possessed and reflective. And it wasn't all that long ago.

Leventhal is a recovering addict who, bit by bit, is reclaiming her life, her future and her faith — though, as she explained, an addict is never free from the fear of relapse.

She's successfully pushed to create a

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