

## Reintroducing our Community Relations Council

By Communications Subcommittee Co-chairs Jennifer Ross and Jeanette Krebs

Thanks to the leadership of Federation President, Mark Maisel, and Julie Wright Halbert, our region's Community Relations Council has reemerged. Three committees will address critical issues locally, nationally and internationally: Communications, Public Affairs (Co-Chairs Steve Loux and Alex Halper) and Interfaith/Intrafaith (Co-Chairs Ted Merwin and Rabbi Carl Choper).

In the upcoming year, we will work with representatives from our community to proactively and reactively deal with issues. We will seek guidance from the Jewish Council of Public Affairs (JCPA) while seeking input from our members. One piece of guidance we are adopting from JCPA is that all discourse will be civil. The following is language from the JCPA Compendium (Full 2012 Compendium from

JCPA:[http://engage.jewishpublicaffairs.org/t/1686/p/salsa/web/common/public/content?content\\_item\\_KEY=1069](http://engage.jewishpublicaffairs.org/t/1686/p/salsa/web/common/public/content?content_item_KEY=1069)):

*The community relations field should: model civility in our own work based on a commitment to dialogue and mutual respect for those with whom we may disagree, and swiftly condemn acts of demonization, defamation, and demagoguery; mount Civil Discourse campaigns in communities throughout the country in cooperation with partner organizations; educate our community about the rich sources in our tradition that embrace civility as an ethical and moral duty and that warn of the consequences of incivility; develop resources including training modules for lay and professional leaders on conflict resolution, active listening, and respectful communication; advance programmatic and process oriented solutions for difficult communal issues that afford opportunities for disparate voices to be heard, respected, considered, and valued; examine the role of the internet and other media in the decline of civility; and develop respectful mechanisms to challenge false or defamatory communications. (Resolution 2010 Plenum)*

The CRC invites you to our first of two forums on Israel featuring expert Israel speakers representing diverse and informed perspectives, on Israel's current challenges. On Monday, April 27 at 7:00 pm, we are welcoming Dr. Gershon Baskin to the JCC.

### **SAVE THE DATE- MONDAY APRIL 27 7:00PM**

"An Israel Frontline Briefing from Gershon Baskin, peace activist, hostage negotiator and intermediary"

The Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Greater Harrisburg invites you attend the first program in a speaker series featuring Gershon Baskin, Monday April 27 from 7:00-9:00pm at the Jewish Community Center in Harrisburg with Gershon Baskin, Ph.D. the initiator and the person responsible for the secret back channel between Israel and the Hamas that successfully negotiated the release of Israeli abducted soldier Gilead Schalit.

Dr. Baskin was the Israeli Co-Director and founder of the Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI) - a joint Israeli-Palestinian public policy think and "do"-tank located in Jerusalem. Since January 2012 he is the Co-Chairman of IPCRI's Board of Directors.

During the Premiership of the late Yitzhak Rabin, he served as an advisor on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process to a secret team of intelligence officers established by Mr. Rabin. Dr. Baskin was a member of the Jerusalem Experts Committee established by the Israeli Prime Minister's Office during the Final Status Negotiations in 2000-2001.

Dr. Baskin holds a Ph.D. in International Affairs from University of Greenwich.

Watch for details in the upcoming month regarding additional speakers to this series to ensure a broad perspective is represented and shared in our community. The CRC also plans to hold a primary debate in the fall to encourage discussions about current politics.

One other planned outcome of the CRC is the development of a detailed Crisis Communications Plan for the Jewish Federation to deal with internal and external issues. CRC Communications co-chair Jeanette Krebs and Director of Development, Marketing and Communications Ivy Schneider are currently developing a draft for the committee's consideration.

If you have an interest in participating in the CRC, please contact CRC Chair Julie Halbert at [jbhalbert@comcast.net](mailto:jbhalbert@comcast.net) or Federation CEO Margie Adelman at [m.adelman@jewishfedhbg.org](mailto:m.adelman@jewishfedhbg.org).