

Honoring past leadership, welcoming new

Nashville wishes Freedman, Klein well in new chapter

Outgoing Jewish Federation Executive Director Mark Freedman and his wife, Leslie J. Klein, were honored for their contributions to the community at the annual meeting of the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee.

With more than 100 community members looking on, Freedman passed the torch – a real tiki torch, suitable for backyard use – to his successor, Eric Stillman, who starts as executive director this month.

The event took place on June 13 at the Gordon Jewish Community Center. Community members were recognized for their service and highlights of the year were celebrated. New members and officers of the Jewish Federation's board of directors were elected and the names of incoming heads of committees were announced. (Names are listed on page 2.)

"We Jews are a sacred assembly," Freedman told attendees. "Each one of us is a single letter in the Torah. If we become imperfect, the sacred assembly rushes to make us whole. ..."

"We are uniquely positioned, as we have always been, to renew the covenant that binds this sacred assembly to its destiny." (Full text of remarks is on page 3.)

The chairman of the Jewish Federation's Annual Campaign, Fred Zimmerman, said, "My job is not so



Mark Freedman, left, who retired as executive director of the Jewish Federation of Nashville last month, passes the torch and shares a chuckle with Eric Stillman, incoming executive director. PHOTOGRAPH BY RICK MALKIN

much to announce numbers. My job is to say thanks. ... Thanks for helping economically distressed people in this community, the elderly in the former Soviet Union, Ethiopian Jews in Israel."

The Jewish Federation of Nashville is projected to reach \$2.65 million for this year's campaign, with more than \$2.1 million collected so far. "Everything we've done leads us from strength to strength," he said. Zimmerman will lead the 2018-19 annual campaign efforts.

Ellie Flier, outgoing co-chair of the Jewish Federation's NowGen committee for young adults, received the Sandy

Averbuch Young Leadership Award.

Averbuch, a past president of the Nashville Jewish Federation, chair of its annual campaign, chair of the Jewish Foundation's development committee and president of Akiva School, died in 2016 at the age of 72, and the Federation's award for young leadership was named for her a month later. Averbuch received the first such award in 1971.

"Sandy dedicated four decades of her life to our community and she would be more than honored to have this award named for her," said her husband, Dr. Larry Averbuch.

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New executive director talks about Israel, community, Shabbat

By KATHY CARLSON

Eric Stillman may be new to Nashville, but he has an extensive history in Jewish communal life. He starts this month as the executive director of the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, and says he'll be learning and listening to Jewish Nashville in the months ahead.

"What I think is really important, especially in my first year, is to experience one of everything," he said in an interview last month. "In most Jewish communities where I've worked and lived, there's a rhythm and cycle to the year for federations, agencies, synagogues and other Jewish organizations." Stillman wants to take in these recurring events and get to know the community.

"I think it's vitally important to have an opportunity to meet as many community members as possible. "Building personal relationships is what I consider central to my role and the way in which Federation is strong and grows moving forward."

He also plans to "listen a lot because I think that hearing what people have to say and share about the community is really one of the very best ways to learn how people view the community – what they like, what they'd like to see improved in some way."

Continued on page 4

347 Jewish groups speak out against family separation at border

On June 20, 55 national Jewish organizations and 292 state and local Jewish organizations signed and sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions and Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen expressing "strong opposition to the recently expanded 'zero-tolerance' policy that includes separating children from their migrant parents when they cross the border." The text of the letter is below, along with a link to the document and names of all of the groups that signed it, including the Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation

and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee (CRC).

Co-leaders of the group of 347 were the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, Anti Defamation League – National, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, and HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society).

Immigration, refugee and border issues are of deep concern to all of us, and CRC is working on programs to help us become more educated citizens and voters. For information please contact Deborah Oleshansky, deborah@jewishnashville.org, (615) 354-1637

Text of the letter:

June 20, 2018

To The Honorable Jeff Sessions, Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice and The Honorable Kirstjen Nielsen, Secretary of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Dear Attorney General Sessions and Secretary Nielsen,

On behalf of the 55 undersigned national and 292 state and local Jewish organizations and institutions, we write to express our strong opposition to the

recently expanded "zero-tolerance" policy that includes separating children from their migrant parents when they cross the border. This policy undermines the values of our nation and jeopardizes the safety and well-being of thousands of people.

As Jews, we understand the plight of being an immigrant fleeing violence and oppression. We believe that the United States is a nation of immigrants and how we treat the stranger reflects on the moral values and ideals of this nation.

Many of these migrant families are seeking asylum in the United States to

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First class graduates from Jewish Baby U, page 17



Sharing with Sharon: Same place, different view page 24



Back To School Special Section, pages 11-17

Annual meeting

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"I am so beyond honored to receive this award," Flier said. Shortly after she arrived here from Los Angeles six years ago, she walked into the Gordon Jewish Community Center and announced to the person at the front desk: "I just moved here and I wanted to meet some Jews."

The Jewish Federation and NowGen "helped make Nashville an incredible home for me."

Earlier that evening, friends – some from Nashville, some not; some Jewish, some not – gathered at a brief reception for Freedman and Klein. More than a dozen people spoke with affection about working together, building community and developing friendships.

The Jewish Foundation's investment advisors, SEI, provided financial support for the reception and the publication of the 2017-18 Federation annual report.

Jewish Federation Treasurer Michael Doochin thanked Freedman for having "worked diligently to unite the disparate elements of this community." Bernie Pargh called him a "fair broker (between) the far right and the far left."

The Rev. Vicki T. Burgess, priest at St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Donelson, participated in a Jewish Federation trip to Israel in 2015 with other Christian clergy aimed at educating them on Israel and encouraging support of the Jewish state. "Thank you for getting us talking together," she said.

The Tennessee state director



Members of the Nashville Jewish community wished Mark Freedman all the best on his retirement.

of Christians United for Israel, Mike McNally, said Christians and Jews share a common support of Israel and called Freedman an excellent executive director, partner and friend.

Robin Cohen, chair of the Jewish Federation's Partnership2Gether committee, thanked Freedman and Klein for helping to strengthen connections between Nashvillians and their peers in the partnership region of Hadera-Eiron in Israel. She noted Klein's work on



Steve Hirsch, right, emceeds a community gathering honoring retiring Nashville Jewish Federation Executive Director Mark Freedman and his wife, Leslie Klein. ALL ANNUAL MEETING PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICK MALKIN

many arts-related projects with P2G.

"I'm so honored to talk about Leslie, as the current past-president of Hadassah and as a friend and mentor," said Nili Friedman, current president of the Nashville chapter of Hadassah. Leslie's passion for Zionism, social action and health care prompted her to become active in Hadassah and assume a leadership role here. Leslie has "blessed Nashville with your insight, wisdom, passion, creativity and, most of all, your love."

Other speakers included Alice Olsan, Freedman's mother; Akiva parent and community activist Erin Coleman; Fred Zimmerman; Moshe Werthan; Mindy

Hirt; Phyllis Alper, who contributed a poem; and Nashville attorney Irwin Venick, who chaired the Federation's Community Relations Committee.

Freedman's longtime friend Alan Margolies, executive director of Jewish Federation of Jacksonville, Fla., brought good wishes from two other friends leading Jewish communal organizations. He recalled Friday afternoon phone calls from Freedman wishing him and his wife, Jan, a good Shabbat.

"I'm grateful for your friendship with me and my wife, Jan, and we wish all light to shine on you and (for you and Leslie to) experience peace," Margolies said. •

Leadership of Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation

At the 2018 annual meeting of the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, held on June 13, new officers and board members were elected by acclamation.

Officers are Lori Fishel, vice president, and Steve Hirsch, secretary. Both will serve one-year terms. The terms of Lisa Perlen, president, and Michael Doochin, treasurer, were extended for one year, effective from June 13, by an earlier resolution of the Jewish Federation board of directors.

Serving three-year terms on the Jewish Federation board of directors are Tara Axelroth, Hilary Diskin, Mark Kaplan and Cara Suvall. Mindy Hirt will serve a one-year term on the board of directors. Rabbi Yitzchok Tiechtel will serve a one-year term as the Board of Rabbis representative to the Jewish Federation board.

These community members continue to serve on the board of directors: Mark Cohen, Adam Dretler, Aron Karabel, David Levy, Leslie Newman, David Steine Jr., Janet Weismark and Fred Zimmerman.

The Jewish Federation recognized and thanked these outgoing board members and committee chairs:

- Didi Biesman, board member, 2012-18
- Steve Hecklin, board member, 2016-18
- David Schwartz, board member 2012-18
- Ron Galbraith, Community Relations Committee Chair, 2016-18
- Andy May, Investment Committee Chair, 2015-18
- Mindy Hirt, Grants Committee Co-chair, 2016-18
- Ellie Flier, NowGen Co-chair, 2016-18
- Ben Katz, NowGen Co-chair, 2016-18
- Rabbi Saul Strosberg, board rabbi, 2017-18

Community members who are serving in the coming year as volunteer chairpersons with committees and other groups under the umbrella of the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee include:

- 2019 Annual Campaign Chair: Fred Zimmerman
- Grants Committee Co-Chairs: Suzanne Schulman and Batia Karabel
- Jewish Foundation Development Committee Chair: Adam Landa
- Jewish Foundation Professional Advisory Committee Chair: Marty Satinsky
- Jewish Federation/Jewish Foundation Investment Committee Chair: Adam Dretler
- Jewish Federation LIFE & LEGACY Team Captain: David Steine Jr.
- Jewish Observer Editorial Board Chair: Frank Boehm
- Jewish Foundation Advisory Committee on Distributions Chair: Mary Jones
- Budget and Finance Committee Chair: Michael Doochin
- Personnel Committee Chair: Aron Karabel
- Local Partnership2Gether Chair: Robin Cohen
- P2G Consortium Co-chair: Faith Haber Galbraith
- Community Relations Committee Chair: Leslie Kirby
- Nominating Committee Chair: Carol Hyatt
- NowGen Board Chair: To be determined
- B'nai Tzedek Philanthropy Board Chair: To be determined



Lawrence Averbuch, left, joins Jewish Federation President Lisa Perlen in presenting Ellie Flier with the Sandy Averbuch Young Leadership Award, named in honor of Averbuch's late wife. Last year's recipient of the award, Ben Russ, is at right.



Andy May, left, Mindy Hirt, Ron Galbraith and Ellie Flier were recognized for their service to the community.

Outgoing executive director speaks at annual meeting

By MARK S. FREEDMAN

Editor's Note: The following are Mark Freedman's remarks made at the 82nd annual meeting of the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee on June 13.

We Jews are a sacred assembly. Each one of us is a single letter in the Torah. If we become imperfect, the sacred assembly rushes to

make us whole. We cannot enjoy meaning in our lives unless we are surrounded by the letters and words that precede and follow us. The words of this sacred assembly are impressions in grains of sand at Sinai that do not erode, do not scatter in the wind, and do not wash away with the rains. We have been pressed downward then upward for all eternity.

This sacred assembly moves across the epochs. We are blemished, bruised and battered but never cast asunder. The

Jewish past, present and future stream like waves informing our deeds seeking to inspire greatness in each of us. This sacred assembly cannot be overwhelmed nor can it ever be complacent. Its guardians stand by the gates of Torah and Talmud and beyond the gates Israel beckons as it was, is and will forever be the home of this sacred assembly.

We are in a moment of history where this sacred assembly has been many times before. We cannot fear the illness and

weakness that might pervade us now for this sacred assembly can summon a cure at any moment. We are uniquely positioned, as we have always been, to renew the covenant that binds this sacred assembly to its destiny.

So, I say to you, "What grain of sand are you in the landscape of this sacred assembly?" You are with me always, letters inscribed forever in my heart with gratitude and great thankfulness in the presence of this sacred assembly. •

Moses named president elect of international family law group

Marlene Eskind Moses, founding manager of the Nashville law firm MTR Family Law, PLLC, has been elected president-elect of the International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL) during its annual meeting in Tokyo. IAFL is a worldwide association of practicing lawyers who are recognized by their peers as the most experienced and expert family law specialists in their respective countries; membership is by invitation.



Marlene Eskind Moses

IAFL was formed in 1986 as the International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers to improve the practice of law and administration of justice in the areas of divorce and family law. The organization includes 780 fellows from 57 countries. Its USA chapter is the largest of its four chapters, with 310 fellows from 39 states. Moses previously served as president of the IAFL USA Chapter.

She is a past president of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML) and was awarded that organization's Outstanding Fellow of the Year Award. She is a Fellow of the Tennessee Bar Association Foundation and the Nashville Bar Association Foundation. She is a Diplomate of the American College of Family Trial Lawyers and serves as secretary. She is a past president of the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society, the Tennessee Board of Law Examiners, and Lawyers Association for Women. She is a former vice president of the Nashville Bar Association. She has served on the Tennessee Bar Association's Family Law Code Commission. Moses has been recognized by Mid-South Super Lawyers for her family law practice since 2006.

Moses graduated from Tulane University with a Bachelor of Arts degree and Masters of Social Work. She received her law degree from the Nashville School of Law and has been honored with its Distinguished Alumni Award.

MTR Family Law represents and advises clients throughout Middle Tennessee in family law, premarital agreements, postnuptial agreements, domestic partnership agreements, marital dissolution agreements, divorce, child custody and support, spousal support (alimony), property and debt division, juvenile court matters and parentage. •

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Joseph Weil honored with 2018 Kehillah Award

Joseph Weil, who will be attending University of Maryland in the fall, received the Gordon Jewish Community Center's 2018 Kehillah Award, formerly known as the Ralph Shepard Award.

The Kehillah Award is given annually to a Jewish high school senior in metro Nashville and surrounding areas who exemplifies outstanding character and commitment to both the Jewish community and the larger Nashville community.

Nominees for the Kehillah Award demonstrate a positive attitude, maturity, achievement as well as participation

in the Jewish community, including participation in a Jewish youth group, Jewish educational study, congregational life, community service within the congregation, school and the larger Nashville community.

"This year we had four outstanding nominees, Shayna Beyer, Becky Hackett, Rachel Karp and Joseph Weil," JCC Program Director Michael Gross said. "They are all deserving of the award and exhibit leadership across a wide range of Jewish and secular organizations and activities that can only make their parents and families kvell."

Weil has served the Jewish community as a camp counselor and BBYO officer and is active in school, synagogue and with his parents. He was also captain of his tennis team at University School of Nashville, received the USN Tennis Leadership Award, and at West End Synagogue assisted as a Sunday School

teacher aide and was a member of United Synagogue Youth.

He said that being nominated for the Kehillah Award meant so much to him and reinforced that he had made not only his parents proud, but his community proud.

Sharon Paz, director of lifelong learning at West End Synagogue, said in her recommendation, "I have watched Joseph mature into an incredibly responsible and mature young adult over the past six years and couldn't be prouder or more enthusiastic in my recommendation for the Kehillah Award."

Teens are nominated by their synagogues, educational directors, rabbis or youth group advisors and complete a detailed application, which includes two essays. All past Kehillah/Ralph Shepard Award winners who are five years removed, then review the anonymized applications and cast their vote.



2018 Kehillah Award recipient Joseph Weil, center, with his parents, Howard and Karen Weil.

Winners receive \$500 from the Doyme Family Fund at the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee to be used towards their post-secondary education. •

Jessica Cohen Banish joins Federation in marketing

Jessica Cohen Banish will join the Nashville Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation team as its new part-time marketing director, beginning on July 2.

She comes to her position with a strong background in marketing most recently working as a Florida regional marketing field associate at Whole Foods. "Her experience in public relations and promotions in both the music industry and radio will be applicable as she begins her work with us," said Naomi Limor Sedek, assistant executive director at the Jewish Federation.

Jessica moved to Nashville last month with her husband and two young daughters. •

Stillman

Continued from page 1

Stillman, a native of Michigan, comes to Nashville after having served as executive director of Jewish federations in two communities and with recent experience in the broader nonprofit world. He was chosen in May to succeed Mark Freedman as executive director of the Nashville Jewish Federation, who retired on June 30. Stillman's first official day on the job is July 1.

Starting early

The new Nashville Jewish Federation leader says his ties with communal Jewish activities go back to JCC summer sleep-away camp and his bar mitzvah. He continued to be active through high school, with United Synagogue Youth activities, participation in retreats, conventions and Shabbatons. He was eager

to get involved in Jewish life when he arrived at the Worcester, Mass., campus of Clark University. He graduated from Clark with a bachelor's degree in both economics and government.

He was among about 2,000 undergraduates at Clark, and he was surprised to learn that upwards of 25 percent of the undergrads were Jewish, he recalls. There was no Hillel, but there was a Jewish student group – the Jewish Student Coalition – and he became active with it.

It was "very much a student-led effort and it gave me a wonderful opportunity to learn about and demonstrate leadership for a group of my peers," he said.

Stillman chaired Clark's campus campaign for the United Jewish Appeal, a Jewish philanthropic umbrella organization that was a forerunner of Jewish Federations of North America. (The Jewish Federation of Nashville is part of JFNA.) When Stillman was a Clark senior, he made his first trip to Israel through a UJA mission for college students.

The trip took place on winter break and Stillman packed a graduate school application so that he could work on it during the trip. The application was for what was then called the Baltimore Institute for Jewish Communal Service, now a program within Towson University in Maryland. Looking back on that time, Stillman realizes that a part of him wasn't quite certain about what he'd do after college.

The time in Israel helped him find answers.

Moment at the Kotel

He recalls being in Jerusalem's Old City, on the plaza in front of the Kotel. He was just outside the area designated for praying, taking in the atmosphere there after having prayed.

Stillman saw a little girl, maybe 2 or 3 years old, happily jumping up and down on a short curb separating the plaza from the prayer area. As she played, "a group of Israeli soldiers walked across my vision. ... I was struck at that little girl, oblivious of the religious (activities at the Wall) and realized that only because of these soldiers and their commitment and dedication" did the child have the opportunity to be there and enjoy the day in safety. It had a profound effect.

"Being in Israel cemented that for me and led me to complete the (application) materials," he says, and he mailed his application to the Baltimore Institute from Israel.

"My career path in Federation very much reflects that decision and inflection point ... to pursue my career in the Jewish world."

Stillman went on to earn a master's degree in modern Jewish history from Towson University (which was then the Baltimore Hebrew University) and a master's degree in social work at the University of Maryland at Baltimore, concentrating in community organization and social administration.

His first visit to Nashville was in 2007, at the Jewish Federations' General Assembly held at Opryland.

The South and Shabbat

"The size of the (Nashville) Jewish community very much appealed to me because it is large enough to support all the major Jewish institutions in the community yet at the same time it's not so large that I will be able to get to meet people and get to know members of the community. I like that very much.

"I like very much that it's in the South. Working and living in New Orleans, I've grown to really appreciate and understand how Southern Jewry is special and the sense of community is genuinely inclusive in the South." It's also a plus to Stillman that Nashville offers Southeastern Conference college sports.

Perhaps more importantly, he's looking forward to Shabbat in Nashville. Asked to name his favorite Jewish holiday or observance, Stillman replied: "I think that the beauty of the Jewish calendar, and in particular, Shabbat, is my favorite Jewish observance because it is an opportunity every week to rejuvenate and recharge, which I think is so beneficial. I believe we all need that - it's something that would help people of all faiths live more fulfilling lives.

"I also think that the beauty of how Shabbat is observed can differ from person to person, family to family, congregation to congregation. ... Shabbat is easiest (to observe) and most enjoyable as part of a community of people for whom the practice is the norm, in whatever form that takes." •

To show Eric the true meaning of Southern hospitality, Nashville style, anyone wishing to host him for Shabbat dinner in July, August or September, and/or for the holidays should email Lisa Perlen, Lisa.Perlen@gmail.com, with some date options.

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Trump-Kim summit, Israel and Iran

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) – Amos Yadlin likes talking about the Begin doctrine, which calls for removing existential threats to Israel before they are manifest -- maybe because he lived it twice.

As an Israeli Air Force pilot, Yadlin flew one of the planes that took out Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981, when Menachem Begin was prime minister. As director of military intelligence in 2007, Yadlin oversaw the operation that eliminated another nuclear reactor, this one in Syria.



Amos Yadlin

Watching President Donald Trump sign a statement on Tuesday with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un pledging to achieve "complete denuclearization," Yadlin again found himself in Begin doctrine mode. Now the head of Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies, an influential think tank, Yadlin suggests that the Trump-Kim summit means America can refocus its attention on another major world nuclear threat. It's the one that matters most to Israel: Iran.

But there are mixed messages as well in how quickly the meeting seemed to come together, and about what Tehran can expect if they also wish to negotiate.

Yadlin is in Washington, D.C., to meet with the Center for a New American Security, a think tank that serves as a holding pattern for top Democratic former national security officials waiting out the Trump administration. (They met to discuss the Iran nuclear deal. Yadlin has met with Trump administration officials on other occasions.) He spoke to JTA about reasons for hope and trepidation following the historic summit in Singapore.

The Israeli view

The good news for Israelis, Yadlin says, is that "denuclearization will remove North Korea as the No. 1 U.S. national security issue." That's welcome news because after a year and a half of rising U.S.-North Korea tensions -- with intimations of missile attacks on Guam, and Kim and Trump exchanging social media insults -- Israel wants Iran to be the top U.S. national security issue.

"Israel understands North Korea is more dangerous than Iran" to the United States, Yadlin said. "They have missiles that can reach the continental U.S., they do have nuclear weapons," as opposed to Iran, which does not. "America shifted all of its resources, planning resources, to North Korea. In Israel, we want to elevate Iran to the place of North Korea."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made that connection in his statement on the summit, slipping in praise for Trump pulling out last month of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, which swapped sanctions relief for a rollback in Iran's nuclear program.

Netanyahu commended Trump on the Singapore meeting with Kim and called it "an important step in the effort to rid the Korean peninsula of nuclear weapons."

"President Trump has also taken a strong stand against Iran's efforts to arm itself with nuclear weapons and against its aggression in the Middle East," he said. "This is already affecting the Iranian economy. President Trump's policy is an

important development for Israel, the region and the entire world."

The bad news is that Trump appears to be making concessions from the get-go, a signal of what he may be prepared to do should Iran come around to renegotiating the nuclear deal that Trump just abandoned, and also a signal to Iranian leaders of what they can ask for if they play nice.

"One can claim that the fact that America has accepted a nuclear North Korea until it will be denuclearized" instead of demanding denuclearization before launching talks, "and we don't know how many years until it will be denuclearized -- there is some concern that if you gave concessions to the North Koreans, the same thinking can apply to Iran," Yadlin said.

The Iranian view

The bad news for Iran's leadership is that there's good news for Trump.

"They are worried that Trump achieved not everything, but unlike the expectations he would fail with North Korea, he is succeeding, and this made him strong vis-a-vis Iran," Yadlin said.

The spare page-and-a-half document signed by Trump and Kim, however, may be seen as encouraging in Tehran.

"The fact that there are no numbers or red lines or goals gives them some leeway to negotiate," he said of the Iranian leadership.

Yadlin said the process with North Korea so far seems personality driven -- Trump and Kim heart one another, for now. He likened that dynamic to the chemistry between former Secretary of State John Kerry and Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif that helped drive the 2015 deal that Trump reviles.

"What I'm amazed at is how much in some aspects, the Trump administration having been portrayed to be 'anything but Obama,' at the end of the day is behaving in a very similar way as far as logic and decision making," he said.

Iran is not North Korea, part 1

I asked Yadlin if Israelis were not concerned that Trump seemed eager to embrace North Korea's demand that joint U.S.-South Korea exercises cease; Trump called the war games "expensive" and "provocative."

Yadlin said Israel would not be overly concerned at Trump's apparent ambition to pull the United States out of the peninsula for two reasons:

- Israel fights its own wars. The American involvement in the peninsula involves a risk to U.S. lives -- there are 30,000 U.S. troops in South Korea -- and decreasing direct American military involvement is key to Trump's doctrine.

"Israel never asks America to shed blood for us in the Middle East," he said. "This is not the case in Korea, where the United States fought a very bloody war. Israel is strong enough to cope with its traditional enemies in the Middle East."

- The United States has vested interests (read: oil) in remaining in the Middle East. While Israel fights its own wars, it also appreciates the war games it performs with the U.S. military as a deterrent to Iran. The exercises are a sign that Israel's powerful ally isn't going anywhere soon -- or was a sign until Trump started talking about retreat.

But Yadlin said he does not expect the United States to substantially lower its Middle East profile, if only to protect its energy interests and a key passage for

commerce between Asia and the West.

"America is not in the Middle East for Israel," he said. "A superpower cannot give up on the Middle East."

Iran is not North Korea, part 2

North Korea poses the greater rogue nuclear threat to the United States because it possesses nuclear weapons and due to the range of its missiles, which are believed to be capable of reaching the continental United States.

But Iran poses a less tractable threat because unlike Kim, whose nuclear ambitions are a matter of self-preservation, Iran wraps its nuclear planning into its ambitions for regional hegemony.

"Iran has developed two strategic aims: You need a nuclear arm to immunize you in order to achieve regional hegemony using conventional arms," Yadlin said, "and the conventional force

aims to take Tel Aviv and Riyadh hostage so the nuclear arm won't be attacked."

Yadlin said this is how North Korea has operated, targeting Seoul with devastating conventional weapons as a means of deterring strikes on its nuclear capabilities. Israel is alarmed by Iran's development of a similar devastating conventional missile capacity in Syria, where Iran is working with its ally, the Lebanese militia Hezbollah, to prop up the Assad regime. (He elaborates on the conventional Iranian threat to Israel this week in *The Atlantic*.)

That brings Yadlin back to the Begin doctrine and preemption.

"It may apply to the advanced Iranian missile operation in Syria," he said. "It could come to a level that threatens Israel not as an existential threat but just below it." •

letter to the editor

(Editor's note: Joseph Levin Jr. retired from the Southern Poverty Law Center in 2016. At the beginning of his talk in May, he said he was expressing his own views and not those of the Southern Poverty Law Center.)

To the editor:

In late May I attended a community-wide event presented by the Jewish Federation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee's Community Relations Council (CRC). The event came under much scrutiny because of the topic of the conversation, "Then and Now: Hate in the Mainstream", by the Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) co-founder, Joseph Levin.

In recent years, the SPLC has been criticized for using its platform to attack individuals and organizations that they disagree with politically, by designating them "as extremists" or "hate groups." The SPLC, once an effective "watchdog" civil rights group fighting for equality for all, now seeks to leverage its position to silence organizations they politically oppose.

I had decided to attend to find out why our organization, Proclaiming Justice to The Nations (PJTN) was on their long list of organizations they deemed "hate" and "extremist" groups. PJTN's mission, since its inception, has been to educate Christians about their biblical responsibility to stand with our Jewish brethren and Israel against the rise of global anti-Semitism. Whether Christian, Jewish, or Muslim, if an individual or organization is promoting anti-Semitism, we will expose those individuals, or groups publicly. Unfortunately, Mr. Levin's presentation became more about bashing President Donald Trump and accusing his election of stirring up the hatred and vitriol against Jews and Muslims.

Mr. Levin launched into a diatribe about how President Trump has inspired, and even provided, legitimacy to the rise of anti-Semitic neo-Nazi white supremacist movement yet he never mentioned the rise of Muslim anti-Semitism, especially as it pertains to the anti-Semitic incidents occurring on university campuses by the Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) or the Muslim Student Association (MSA).

Mr. Levin went on to cite the recent Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) report concerning the 67% increase in anti-Semitic incidents on college campuses, but he failed to mention SJP or MSA's involvement in these incidents.

During the question and answer session the Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, Mark Freedman, asked Mr. Levin if the SPLC was investigating the activity of SJP's involvement in the violence against Jewish students on U.S. campuses. Mr. Levin's response was beyond belief -- he said he was not familiar with the group. In my view, this is the height of hypocrisy! SPLC is not interested in justice, or exposing the real perpetrators of hatred and xenophobia.

To me it is obvious that the SPLC has lost its objectivity and its mission. Many reputable organizations have long been aware of the SPLC's bias. As for Mr. Levin's failure to know who SJP is -- it's either sheer ignorance, or worse, intentional. SPLC can no longer be taken seriously or considered as a reliable source as a watchdog organization.

Laurie Cardoza Moore, Th.D.
President & Producer - PJTN.org
ECOSOC NGO Special Envoy to
the United Nations - WCICC.org

Submission Policy

The Observer accepts original opinion pieces and letters from Nashville area residents on topics of interest to the Jewish community as long as they have not been published or submitted for publication elsewhere. Submissions should be sent by the 15th of the month prior to publication to Editor Kathy Carlson at kathy@jewishnashville.org or 801 Percy Warner, Suite 102, Nashville 37205. *The Observer* reserves the right to edit all submissions for clarity, length and style.



Beit Tefilah, Sherith Israel to hold joint Tisha B'Av Memorial Service

The Jewish Memorial Day, the fast of the ninth of the Jewish month of Av, Tisha b'Av, marks the end of a three-week period of mourning during which our people remember the series of events that led to the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem and the destruction of our people's first Temple on that date in the year 586 B.C.E.

Sadly, it also marks the day some six hundred years later in the year 70 C.E. when the Roman legions pushed through the crumbling defenses of Jerusalem to desecrate and destroy the rebuilt second Temple. The Romans crushed a rebellion that shook the heart of the empire and drove our people into exile, where persecution and spiritual darkness began. Over time, our people associated many of the most painful moments with this grim day.

Tisha B'Av is on Shabbat this year, so the fast is therefore postponed for Sunday, the tenth of Av. The fast starts on sundown on Shabbat, the ninth of Av, July 21, at 8:01 p.m., and lasts until the following nightfall, Sunday, July 22, at 8:30 p.m. During this time we fast, eschew pleasurable activities and lament the destruction of the Holy Temple and our nation's exile.

On the eve of Tisha B'Av, we gather in the synagogue to read the Book of Lamentations. Tallit and tefillin are not worn during the morning prayers. After the morning prayers we recite Kinot (elegies). We don the tallit and tefillin for the afternoon prayers.

To commemorate this day, Congregation Beit Tefilah Chabad and Congregation Sherith Israel will hold a joint Tisha B'Av Memorial Service with the reading of the Book of Lamentations, known as the Book of Eicha, by candlelight. It will be led by Rabbi Yitzchok Tiechtel and Rabbi Saul Strosburg. This will take place on Saturday night, July 21, at 9 o'clock at Congregation Sherith Israel.

On Sunday, July 22, Congregation Beit Tefilah Chabad will have a Tisha B'Av Mincha Service and Torah reading at 7:15 p.m., followed by a light break fast after dark. For more information or to learn more about Tisha B'Av, go to chabaddnashville.com.

Register for Bertram and Beatrice King Chabad Hebrew School

The Bertram and Beatrice King Chabad Hebrew School (CHS) has opened registration for the coming school year.

Directed by Mrs. Esther Tiechtel, CHS has earned a 19-year reputation of being an innovative program in which students excel in their Hebrew reading, Jewish knowledge and pride for their heritage.

Located at the Genesis Campus for Jewish Life, CHS meets weekly on Sunday mornings, and caters to students ages 5 through 13. The new academic year will begin on Tuesday, Sept. 4, with a special program introducing this year's theme, "Living Jewishly as a Community of One."

"The Bertram and Beatrice King Chabad Hebrew School emphasizes exploring the Jewish heritage is a creative and fun way, putting the FUN in FUNdamentals, with special focus on not only accumulating knowledge, but applying those lessons to our everyday life," said Mrs. Tiechtel. She adds that through "art, drama, songs, contests, and interactive activities, Judaism becomes real and alive to the students."

CHS prides itself on developing a community among its students, staff and parents. The Hebrew School's most important message is embedded in the culture and relationships it fosters, taking the time to build a community that attends to the needs of individual children, embracing them in an environment where their classmates become their good friends. The school is connected to congregation Beit Tefilah Chabad, sharing a feeling of warmth and hospitality, establishing values and morals that are at the core of our Jewish heritage.

During classes on Jewish values and holidays, children engage their minds of through peer discussions and hands-on experiences. They're challenged to analyze, evaluate and compare texts, ideas and ethical dilemmas. The cohesive, whole-school curriculum focuses on developing Emunah - Faith as the cornerstone in our lives. Children learn through stories of our heroes and heroines, illustrating how they used faith and connection to keep them grounded and strong.

CHS creates confident Jewish learners by giving them the tools to read Hebrew and participate in the davening/prayer services. The Alef Champ Program instills a love as well as fluency in Hebrew reading. This year, students will enjoy centers on Hebrew writing and language as well as interactive vocabulary.

For more information and to request registration forms, contact Chabad at (615) 646-5750, or email chabaddnashville@gmail.com

Jumpstart your child's Jewish life

As expectant women approach their due dates, a variety of emotions tend to surface. Some women are filled with excitement, anxiously anticipating the day that they will meet their baby face to face. Others get the jitters, nervous about the upcoming hours of labor. All women pray to G-d for a healthy baby.

Many Jewish women would be thrilled to know that there is one special prayer that has been customary for centuries in our tradition to safeguard both the mother and the baby. This prayer is the Shir Hamalot (Song of Ascents, Psalms: 121). The verses of this psalm declare our dependence upon the Creator for our safety and wellbeing and His commitment to guard us at all times.

These holy words contain the power to protect the mother and baby throughout the birthing process and the recovery period that follows. That is why it is so imperative that, as an expectant mother packs up her overnight bag with all of the items she plans to take to the hospital, that she not forget the Shir Hamalot. Just having this prayer by her side throughout the delivery provides that extra dose of protection that any woman in labor would welcome!

Once the baby is born, it is customary to place the Shir Hamalot on the baby's cradle; this is a great way to safeguard your new little bundle. It is also the custom to hang the Shir Hamalot in the doorways of your home, especially in the doorway of the baby's room, before entering with the baby. It is important to realize that everything that surrounds a newborn has a spiritual effect. The Torah teaches us that what a baby sees and hears, even during the first day of life, will have an influence on the child for many years to come. Jewish parents are encouraged to expose their children to holy images as soon as they are born. The Shir Hamalot is a wonderful way to begin.

If you are expecting a child or know someone who is, Chabad of Nashville is offering a free, beautiful, full-color Shir Hamalot prayer card for any family in Middle Tennessee that requests one. They come in slightly different colors for boys and girls, designed with gorgeous artwork in pastel pink and baby blue. There is no greater gift to give yourself or your loved one at this precious time.

To receive your free Shir Hamalot blessing card, kindly email office@chabaddnashville.com or call (615) 646-5750.

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BUYING, SELLING, & INVESTING

My architectural background and appreciation for structure, design, and engineering will support you in making solid decisions when purchasing, selling, or renovating a home. I am resourceful, creative, and pride myself on going above and beyond to achieve your real estate goals. In fact, many of my satisfied clients have become my dearest friends.



Buying and selling a house is a very personal experience, which requires trust, the ability to listen, and a passion for understanding a client's preferences and goals. As a Nashville native with nine years of experience helping people live their dream, I would love to help guide you through the process of finding, selling, renovating, or designing your home.

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@ West End

Save the date - Aug. 12 - for the WES BBQ

August is the month for BBS – brisket, bird and salmon – at West End Synagogue. The event will be held on Sunday, Aug. 12. Minyan will be at 6 p.m. followed by dinner in the Social Hall. \$12 includes brisket and chicken, or salmon, with sides, drinks and dessert. RSVP to office@westendsyn.org by Thursday, August 9.

Salmon will be limited. Please specify with your reservation if you'd like salmon.

There will also be:

- Israeli Dancing - The Nashville Folk Dance Group with Sharon Morrow, 4:45-5:45 p.m. in the East Lounge, for all ages
- Yoga with Harriet Workman, 4:45-5:45 p.m. in the Library, for families with young children
- Kids Activities, 4:45-5:45 p.m., downstairs
- Bourbon Tasting with Stuart Wiston will take place during the BBQ in the Social Hall; for adults only

Beit Miriam student awards

At the conclusion of the religious school year at Beit Miriam at West End Synagogue, the following students were recognized for their achievements and are shown in these photographs, submitted by West End Synagogue:



Charlotte Seloff, right, presents the Nathan Davis Award for outstanding student to Jake Bengelsdorf. Seloff is the granddaughter of Nathan Davis and the award is endowed by the Davis family.



Seventh-grader Isaac Cheng, right, receives the Simon and Alven Ghertner Award for excellence in Hebrew and in Bar/Bat Mitzvah studies from Frank Ghertner, son of Alven Ghertner.



Josh Crowley received a Special Recognition Award for his leadership and contributions to several synagogue programs in addition to Beit Miriam.



Leo Wiston, also a seventh-grader, receives a special recognition award for excellence in synagogue skills from Sharon Paz.



Bella Barocas, at left with Bernie Goldstein, received the Sandra Klein Goldstein Award for active and meaningful community service. Mr. Goldstein presented the award, named in memory of his wife.



Joseph Weil, left, received the 2018 Anna Isenstein Teacher Aide Appreciation award. At right is Sharon Paz, director of lifelong learning at West End Synagogue.

@ Sherith Israel

Rabbinic intern returns

We welcome back our rabbinic intern, Phil Kaplan, who will be helping out at the Shul this summer. He is also doing his chaplaincy internship at Saint Thomas West as part of his rabbinical training. Feel free to reach out to him, either in person, or by email, at plk121090@gmail.com

Sherith holds annual meeting

Congregation Sherith Israel held its annual meeting on June 18. Officers and directors were elected as follows:

President: Yuri Livshitz

Vice presidents: Evan Rittenberg (Administration), Ruth Levitt (Membership) and Cara Suvall (Programming)

Treasurer: Larry Sacks

Financial secretary: Shelly Lutz

Recording secretary: Pam Kelner

New directors are Greg Goldberg and Seth Thomas, whose terms end in 2019, and Lenn Goodman, Marty Kooperman, Diana Lutz and Jon Poster, whose terms end in 2021.

Board members not subject to a 2018 congregational vote include Roberta Goodman, past board president, and Reva Heller, director emerita. These board members continue to serve: Adam Horn and Evelyn Koch, whose terms end in 2020, and Jay Amsel, Mosh Koch, Marisa Mayhan and Michael Woolf, whose terms end in 2020.

The Sisterhood President and Gabbai representative also serve on the board.

The congregation thanked outgoing officers and directors Armin Begtrup, Stan Landau and Polina Vorobeychik for their years of service to the Shul.

@ The Temple

Summer song sessions with Cantor Fishbein

Join with Cantor Tracy Fishbein for a series of casual, fun and informative song sessions to learn some of the newest music of the Reform movement. All that's required is a love of singing and a desire to learn more about these energizing and innovative Jewish tunes. Song session takes place on Tuesday, July 17, from 6-7 p.m.

Lunch with the rabbi summer sessions

These take place on Thursday, July 19, and August 16 and include lunch at 11:30 a.m. and discussion starting at noon.

Join the rabbi for Sounds baseball

Come out on Thursday, July 19 and August 16 to the Sounds Stadium for an evening of baseball in a luxury suite. Games begin at 7:05 p.m. Admission donation is \$35 per ticket, including your seat in a luxury suite, popcorn, peanuts, and Cracker Jack. First reserved, first served. Call The Temple for more details on how to reserve your tickets at (615) 352-7620.

Study Shabbat service with Rabbi Shapiro

We are thrilled to welcome Rabbi Rami Shapiro for a series of innovative Shabbat morning programs. He'll lead our Chevrah Torah study hour at 9:30 a.m., and then join with Cantor Fishbein to lead meditative Shabbat services at 11 a.m. that will feature contemplative music, Kabbalistic teachings on our Shabbat morning blessings, and more. First program is set for Saturday, July 7, at 11 a.m.

Golden Lunch Bunch in July

Join us for lunch on Tuesday, July 3 and 17 at 11:30 a.m. For more information, please contact Anna Sir.

Taste of Judaism classes this summer

Everything you always wanted to know about Judaism in three easy lessons every Tuesday in July. Dates are July 3, July 10 and July 17 at 7 p.m. with Rabbi Rami Shapiro.

Continued on page 8

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & EVENTS

Continued from page 7

The Temple, Micah joint summer services

Join with the combined clergy and congregations of both of Nashville's Reform synagogues on Friday, July 20, at Micah and Friday, July 27, at The Temple. Services at both synagogues begin at 6 p.m.

Temple Songwriters Shabbat with Micah

For the second year in a row, The Temple is excited to come together for a Shabbat service featuring music written by our own Temple members and community. We hope you will join us on Friday, July 27, at 6 p.m. at The Temple as we come together with the clergy and members of Congregation Micah to showcase the newest musical settings of our Shabbat prayers written by Ellie Flier, Dennis Scott, Betsy Chernau and others from our Temple family. The music will be performed by Cantor Tracy Fishbein, Congregation Micah Music Director and Cantorial Soloist Lisa Silver, and members of our congregation, with special participation by our Temple Volunteer Band. This is a Shabbat not to be missed!

Preschool carnival set for July 15

The Temple preschool carnival takes place on Sunday, July 15, at 3 p.m. Awards and trophies will be given to the best cars and motorcycles in their category. If you have or know someone who has a 'fancy' car, please contact the preschool office, (615) 356-8009, or preschool@templenashville.org.

Independence Day service on July 6

The Temple presents an Independence Day service on Friday, July 6, at 6 p.m. with a picnic oneg to follow.

Next Dor hosts wine night

Wine night at Arrington Vineyard, for Jewish young adults and interfaith couples ages 22-40, will take place on Sunday, July 15, at 3:00 p.m. Join us for a fun evening filled with mingling and entertainment. Please send your wine RSVP to Rabbi Michael Shulman by July 12 at rabbishulman@templenashville.org.

Annual Sha-Barbecue event

Join us for our Annual Sha-Barbecue on July 21 for Jewish young singles and interfaith couples ages 22-40 at Sevier Park in Nashville's 12 South neighborhood at 4 p.m. This family friendly event is free of charge. RSVP to Rabbi Michael Shulman, rabbishulman@templenashville.org or call The Temple (615)352-7620.



July schedule for Tot Shabbat

Bring your tot for a special Shabbat service on July 6, 13 and 20 (Closed on the 27th) at 11:15 a.m. at Micah Children's Academy.

The service will be led by Congregation Micah Music Director and Cantorial Soloist Lisa Silver and one of our rabbis. Children and family can participate in singing, dancing, and learning Hebrew.

Shabbat Shaband Service

Enjoy the sound of traditional instruments as our Shabbat band accompanies song and prayer under the leadership of Lisa Silver on Friday, July 20, at 6 p.m. Weekly WINE-down begins at 5:30 p.m., with service at 6 p.m.

Temple Exchange set for Friday, July 20 and Friday, July 27

Congregation Micah welcomes the Temple and its clergy for a joint Shabbat service, including our Shabbat Shaband, on Friday, July 20. On July 27, services will be held at the Temple. Yahrzeits will be read at both services. Both services begin at 6 p.m.

Learn more about the Jewish Federation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee at www.jewishnashville.org

Make a difference for kids, word by word

"By the time poor children are 3, researchers believe they have heard on average about 30 million fewer words than children the same age from better-off families, setting back their vocabulary, cognitive development, and future reading skills before the first day of school."

- Stanford University Study, 2013

Join the Community Relations Committee (CRC) of the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee in closing the "word gap" by supporting the Nashville-based Read2Me program.

Together, we can change the trajectory of a student's life by reading for only 30-minutes a month. It's as simple as signing up for a reading group, selecting a convenient time, and deciding whether to read in person or virtually.

Prof. Donovan Robertson, a participant at the *Journey to Justice* event hosted at Congregation Micah, shared with us how he, Pastor Ron Mitchell, and Pastor Charles Beamon started to tackle the word-gap issue three years ago, in hopes of bettering the outcome of the African-American community.

Combining the Jewish values of education with our Jewish community's commitment to fostering meaningful rela-



Read2Me.US

tionships with the greater Nashville community, the CRC is thrilled to support the growth of this noble endeavor – an initiative that will undoubtedly enrich our lives as well.

"Reading to the children impacted me in a way I never anticipated," shares one participating Nashville police officer. "They lifted my spirits and confirmed just how important it is to have positive role models in your life. The children were just as much a blessing to me as I hoped I was to them."

To join our reading group, email CRC Director Deborah Oleshansky at deborah@jewishnashville.org •

FAQ about Read2Me

What is Read2Me?

Read2Me works with community partners to provide volunteer readers for students who have difficulty accessing vocabulary minimums. Research indicates that exposure to reading and diverse conversation provide greater opportunity for lifelong advancement.

Who are the other community partners?

Community partners include local churches, the Brentwood Public Library, CityCURRENT, Metro Nashville Police Department, the Urban League of Middle Tennessee, and Woodland Middle School.

Who is the "ideal" reader?

You! Our readers come in every form: parents, grandparents, teachers, police officers, even students who read to other students, anyone can share the gift of knowledge. This would be an ideal bar-mitzvah project as well!

How does it work?

After joining a reading group, volunteers register for an open 30-minute time slot through the Read2Me proprietary website. Readers have the choice of reading in the classroom or virtually. A confirmation e-mail will be sent with logistics information, login information (for virtual readers), and e-book materials.

LIFE & LEGACY Grove planted

This plaque near the flagpole just outside the Gordon Jewish Community Center marks the newly planted LIFE & LEGACY Grove. The grove represents the flowering of many seeds of generosity sown for the benefit of 13 local Jewish organizations through the LIFE & LEGACY program of the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville in partnership with the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. The program offers a systematic way for Jewish communities and organizations to set a firm foundation for the future through planned legacy giving. To learn more about the program, go to www.jewishnashville.org/waystogive/life-and-legacy or contact Shannon Small, finan-



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICK MALKIN

cial resource philanthropic officer at the Nashville Jewish Federation, shannon@jewishnashville.org or (615) 356-3242, extension 1651. •

Detention facilities or ‘concentration camps’?

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) – Simmering beneath the heated debate over whether Holocaust references are appropriate in the debate over the Trump administration’s policy of separating migrant families is a question of terminology: Are the shelters where the migrants are housed correctly described as “concentration camps”?

The debate is raging among Wikipedia’s editors after one of them added the facilities housing the children to the crowd-sourced encyclopedia’s entry “List of concentration and internment camps.”

Editors opposing the usage appear to be unsettled in part by the attention the revised Wikipedia entry has accrued, with Gizmodo, Vice and the Daily Kos each devoting major articles to the addition as a seeming validation of the awfulness of the detention policy.

More to the point, the Wikipedia dissenters question the accuracy of the designation: Are the centers correctly described as concentration camps?

Here are some of the complicating factors:

Shelter vs detention facility

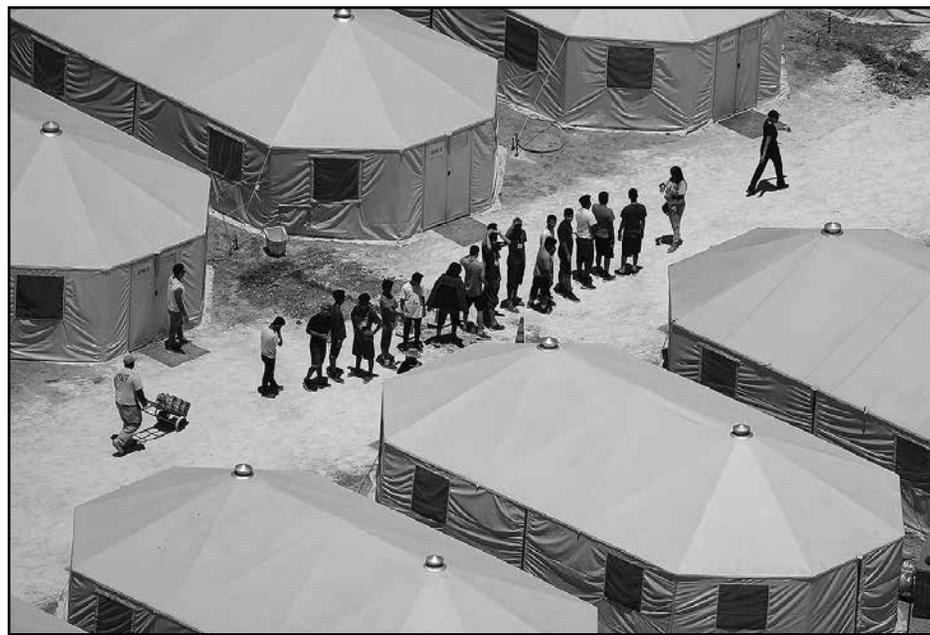
According to a Department of Homeland Security fact sheet, migrant children and parents may be separated when “individuals who are believed to have committed any crime, including illegal entry,” are “referred to the Department of Justice.” DHS then transfers children to the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, where they are held in a “temporary shelter” until a sponsor can be found for the child. Reports suggest these shelters include large centers with dormitory-like accommodations. Meanwhile, the adults are held in what the government calls “detention facilities” pending hearings.

The Encyclopedia Britannica defines a concentration camp as an “internment center for political prisoners and members of national or minority groups who are confined for reasons of state security, exploitation, or punishment, usually by executive decree or military order.” That definition comports with the arguments of those who note that the separations and detentions are being used to punish or deter would-be migrants, as some administration officials have acknowledged.

But the encyclopedia adds several caveats. Here’s one: Concentration camps, Britannica says, are “to be distinguished from refugee camps or detention and relocation centers for the temporary accommodation of large numbers of displaced persons.”

Whether the detention facilities at the border and beyond contain people “confined for reasons of state security, exploitation, or punishment” by Presidential Donald Trump’s “executive decree,” or whether they are “relocation centers for the temporary accommodation” of “displaced persons,” is the debate exercising the editors at Britannica’s scrappier rival, Wikipedia, and also informing the broader political debate.

“These children are not being held without trial,” editor Flamou1 said in the online encyclopedia’s behind-the-page debate. “Moreover, they weren’t taken from their parents from their homes and then imprisoned (ex: Nazi, Japanese situations). They are held, just like any other asylum applicant, until the hearing can be heard.”



Children and workers at a tent encampment built recently near the Tornillo Port of Entry in Tornillo, Texas. PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE RAEDLE / GETTY IMAGES

Kellyanne Conway, a top adviser to Trump, said on NBC’s “Meet The Press” that the intention was simply to facilitate returning the migrants to their countries of origin, not to punish them. “There are ways to repatriate these people back to their home countries expeditiously,” she said.

Joel Pollak of Breitbart News calls the concentration camp comparisons an abuse of the Holocaust and considers the separation policy humane, not punitive.

“When the U.S. Border Patrol separates children from parents who are arrested, it is to protect the children, and help them, with the intention of reuniting them with their families,” he wrote. “When the guards at death camps like Birkenau separated children, it was to lead them to the gas chambers.”

Concentration camps, Nazis

Much of the debate has been clouded by the conflation of the phenomenon of concentration camps, which predate the Holocaust, and the camps introduced by the Nazis. The key difference is between temporary measures instituted by authoritarian regimes before the Holocaust and the permanent dehumanization of classes of people under the totalitarian Nazi regime.

The camps launched by the Spanish rulers in Cuba in the 1890s – seen by historians as the first concentration camps – sought to control a civilian population perceived as sympathetic to insurgents for the duration of an operation aimed at quelling an uprising. The same is true of the camps that the British established in the subsequent decade to control the Boer insurgents in South Africa.

In both those cases, and in subsequent manifestations, concentration camps were inhumane and deadly, but not permanent. The authorities who established the camps hoped to quell opposition, not to establish a permanent system of imprisoning a designated class of citizen.

The same was true of the initial Nazi concentration camps, which were established shortly after the rise to power of Adolf Hitler in 1933. The first prisoners were “primarily Communists, Social Democrats and other political enemies of Nazism who were seen as being in need of political reeducation,” according to “The Holocaust Encyclopedia” edited by Walter Laqueur.

The SS assumed control of the camps within a year and by the outbreak of war in 1939, the camps’ mission had shifted.

Many had become slave labor camps, housing populations the Nazis considered subhuman, including Poles, Slavs and Jews, and contracting their labor out to the German private sector.

Another tendency is to conflate concentration camp with Nazi death camps, which had a single overriding purpose: the extermination of the Jews.

So are these concentration camps minus the Nazi baggage?

Andrea Pitzer, a historian who last year wrote a book, “One Long Night,” on the history of concentration camps, believes the designation is accurate in this case.

“Yes, of course they’re concentration camps,” she said this week on Twitter. “They aren’t the unique subset of death camps that were invented by the Nazis for genocide, or even Arctic Gulag camps built for hard labor. But they’re camps created to punish a whole class of civilians via mass detention without trial.”

Given that the Trump administration said it is seeking an expedited solution, and that displaced persons conventionally spend time in relocation

centers, I asked Pitzer to expand on her conclusion that these are indeed concentration camps. She said what was key to her determination was how other Trump officials, including Attorney General Jeff Sessions and top Trump adviser Stephen Miller, have described the policy as a deterrent.

“We have indications dating back to August that the separation policy was being looked at as a punitive measure – in the hopes that it would deter entry,” she wrote in an email.

“So we have punitive detention being used against asylum seekers, adults and children alike,” Pitzer said. “It’s a policy that wasn’t in place before under other administrations, and there’s no law requiring it. It wasn’t adopted as an emergency measure to deal with a new problem or a massive influx. People are being deported without their children, which is as punitive a measure as one can imagine. What can you take from people who have nothing? Their children.”

Historians take the long view

Deborah Lipstadt, the Holocaust historian, said it was not helpful to focus on the correct terminology while an event is under way.

“Ten years from now if we’re sitting around analyzing this from a historical point of view, we can make comparisons,” she said in an interview, noting for instance that it took years to precisely define the carnage in Cambodia in the 1970s as a civil war that included a genocide rather than a genocide in and of itself. “I think the comparisons are made too easily and too glibly; the comparisons don’t get us where we need to go.”

Lipstadt said the Trump administration’s policy of separating children from their parents as a deterrent measure should be regarded on its own terms, whatever historical term eventually defines it.

“Something doesn’t have to be like the Holocaust to be awful, to be just plain wrong,” she said. “Separating children from their parents, children in diapers, putting them in cages, listening to them weep – it’s treating people like commodities.” •

Border

Continued from page 1

escape violence in Central America. Taking children away from their families is unconscionable. Such practices inflict unnecessary trauma on parents and children, many of whom have already suffered traumatic experiences. This added trauma negatively impacts physical and mental health, including increasing the risk of early death. (Footnote reference to New England Journal of Medicine article omitted but available at website below.)

Separating families is a cruel punishment for children and families simply seeking a better life and exacerbates existing challenges in our immigration system. It adds to the backlog of deportation cases and legal challenges in federal courts, places thousands more immigrants in detention facilities and shelters, endangers the lives of more children, and instills additional fear in people seeking

safety in our country. In addition, those seeking asylum or other legal protection face numerous obstacles to making a claim, especially from detention. Separating family members at the border would force families into two or more immigration cases instead of a single case for each family, harming their ability to present a successful case.

Our Jewish faith demands of us concern for the stranger in our midst. Our own people’s history as “strangers” reminds us of the many struggles faced by immigrants today and compels our commitment to an immigration system in this country that is compassionate and just. We urge you to immediately rescind the “zero tolerance” policy and uphold the values of family unity and justice on which our nation was built.

Sincerely,
Jewish national, state and local organization

Full text of letter, names of signers

Go to <http://www.jewishpublicaffairs.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2015/09/Jewish-Letter-on-Family-Separation-1-1.pdf>

Rabbi Schiftan offers opening prayer in U.S. House of Representatives

U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper, who represents Nashville in Congress, welcomed Rabbi Mark Schiftan, senior rabbi at The Temple – Congregation Ohabai Shalom – as guest chaplain on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives on June 20.

Here are transcripts of Rabbi Schiftan's opening prayer and Rep. Cooper's remarks, courtesy of Rep. Cooper's office:

Rabbi Mark Schiftan:

God, bless this land and all its inhabitants. This land, built on foundations we may call our own; pledged to law and freedom, to equality and harmony; haven for the huddled masses, yearning to breathe free.

We and you who lead us are a nation of immigrants. Each of us, all of us, are here because of the individually and mutually inspired hopes and dreams of those who came before us – those who often fled persecution to find safe haven on this nation's shores.

For them, and for future generations that followed them, including each and every one of us: More than any other instruction in the Bible is the sacred

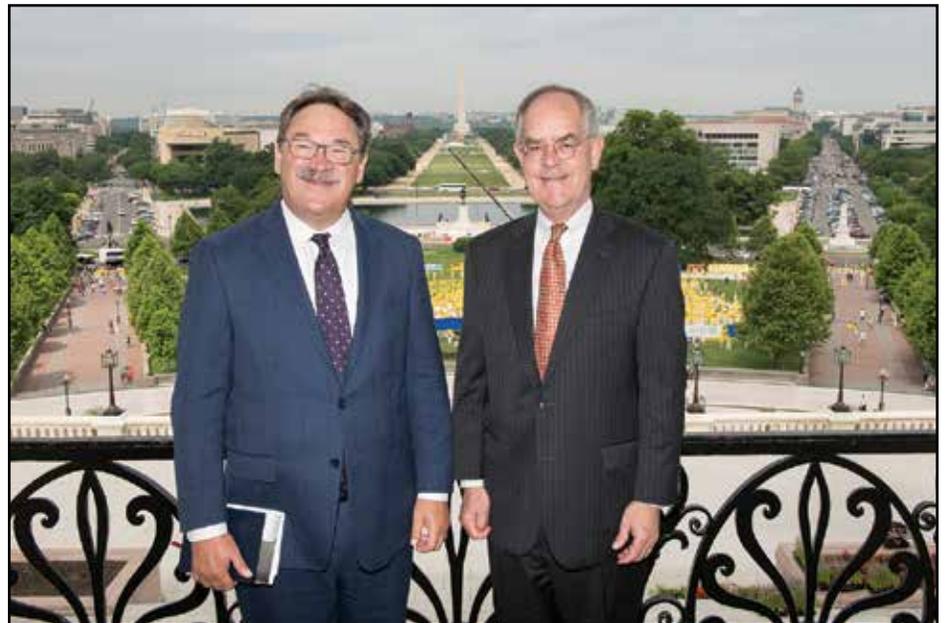
reminder to embrace the stranger, to love the newcomer as much or even more than the native-born. May we, may you who lead us, do just that.

Help us, oh God, to fulfill the promise of America. May we and you who lead us be true to this land and its traditions. Renew in all of us a zeal for justice. Tempered always with mercy, awaken within us compassion, so we may enter upon the future, with restored vision, and dedicated afresh to a proud destiny for all. Amen.

U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper:

Mr. Speaker, the opening prayer today was given by Rabbi Mark Schiftan of Nashville, the senior rabbi of the oldest and largest Jewish congregation in Middle Tennessee.

The congregation dates back to 1851 when the Vine Street Temple began worship services in downtown Nashville, even before the Civil War. Rabbi Schiftan has led today's Temple: Congregation of Ohabai Shalom, for nearly 20 years, and is well-known and beloved in our community. His family escaped the Holocaust from Vienna, Austria, fleeing first to Shanghai, China, and then to San Francisco. Rabbi



Rabbi Mark Schiftan, left, and Rep. Jim Cooper. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF REP. COOPER'S OFFICE

Schiftan was educated at San Francisco State University, the Hebrew Union of Los Angeles, and then was ordained at the Hebrew Union of Cincinnati.

Under Rabbi Schiftan's leadership, The Temple has been the indispensable

religious and cultural institution for all of Middle Tennessee. I would like to personally thank the rabbi for his strong leadership in our community, for our personal friendship, and for opening the House with prayer today. Thank you. •

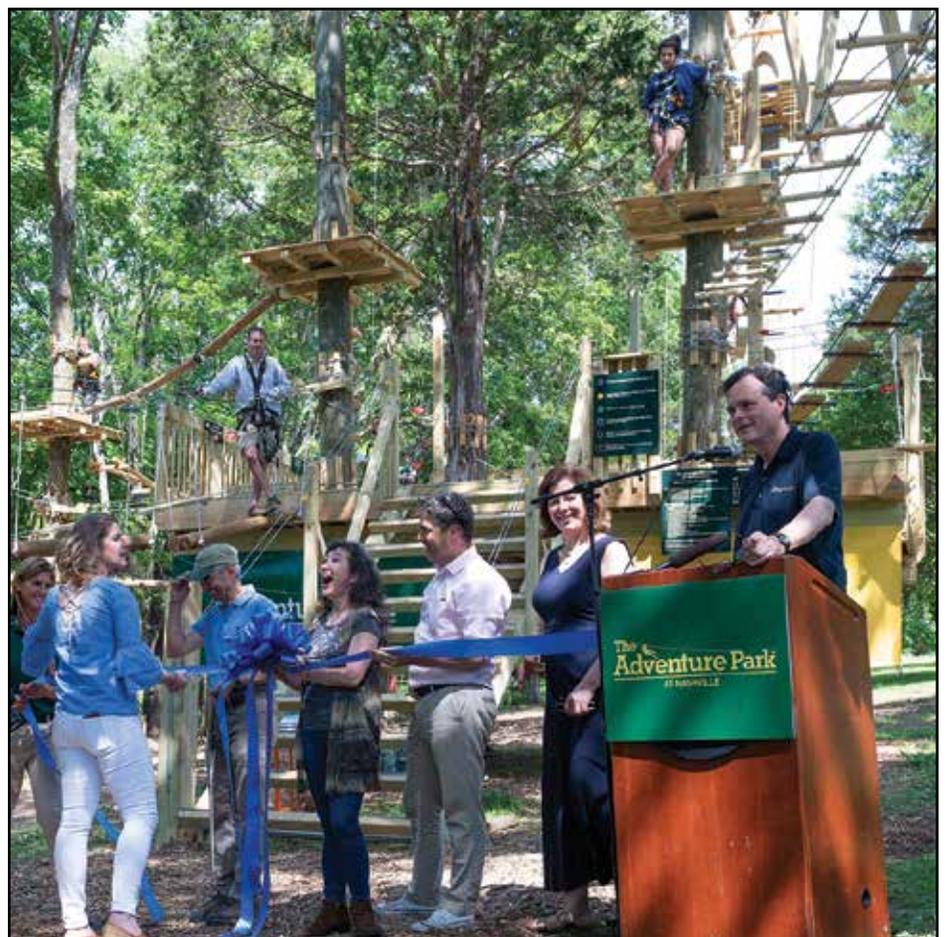
Ribbon cutting at Adventure Park

The Adventure Park at Nashville opened last month on the campus of the Gordon Jewish Community Center, offering tree-top climbing and zip lines for children, teens, adults and groups. The JCC partnered with Outdoor Venture Group LLC, which has designed, built and operated aerial forest parks and ropes courses in the United States.

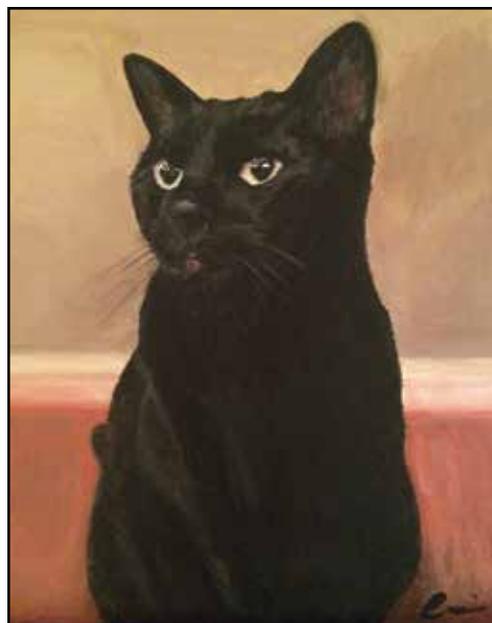
In photo at right, the park officially opened with a ribbon cutting by Metro Councilwoman Mina Johnson, at center

behind the big bow. Joining her, from left, Lynda Kelly, Adventure Park manager; Caroline Hoerner, Nashville Chamber of Commerce; Bahman Azarm, in cap, CEO of Outdoor Venture Group. To Johnson's right are Michael Gross, JCC program director; Leslie Sax, executive director of the JCC; and Anthony Wellman, marketing and communications director, The Adventure Parks of Outdoor Ventures.

In the photo at left, workers put finishing touches on the course. •



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Israeli flag made of cookies in Atlanta breaks Guinness World Record

(JTA) — The Atlanta Jewish community has broken a Guinness World Record after creating an Israeli flag out of edible cookies.

The flag assembled by volunteers last month used about 117,000 cookies and stretched to 3,224 feet across the plastic-covered floor of the Heritage Hall in Congregation Beth Jacob. It was created to celebrate Israel's 70th birthday.

The previous record-holder was a flag to mark Pakistan's 70th. The new record-holder is 32 percent larger, the

Atlanta Jewish Times reported.

The flag was certified by a Guinness adjudicator, Michael Empric.

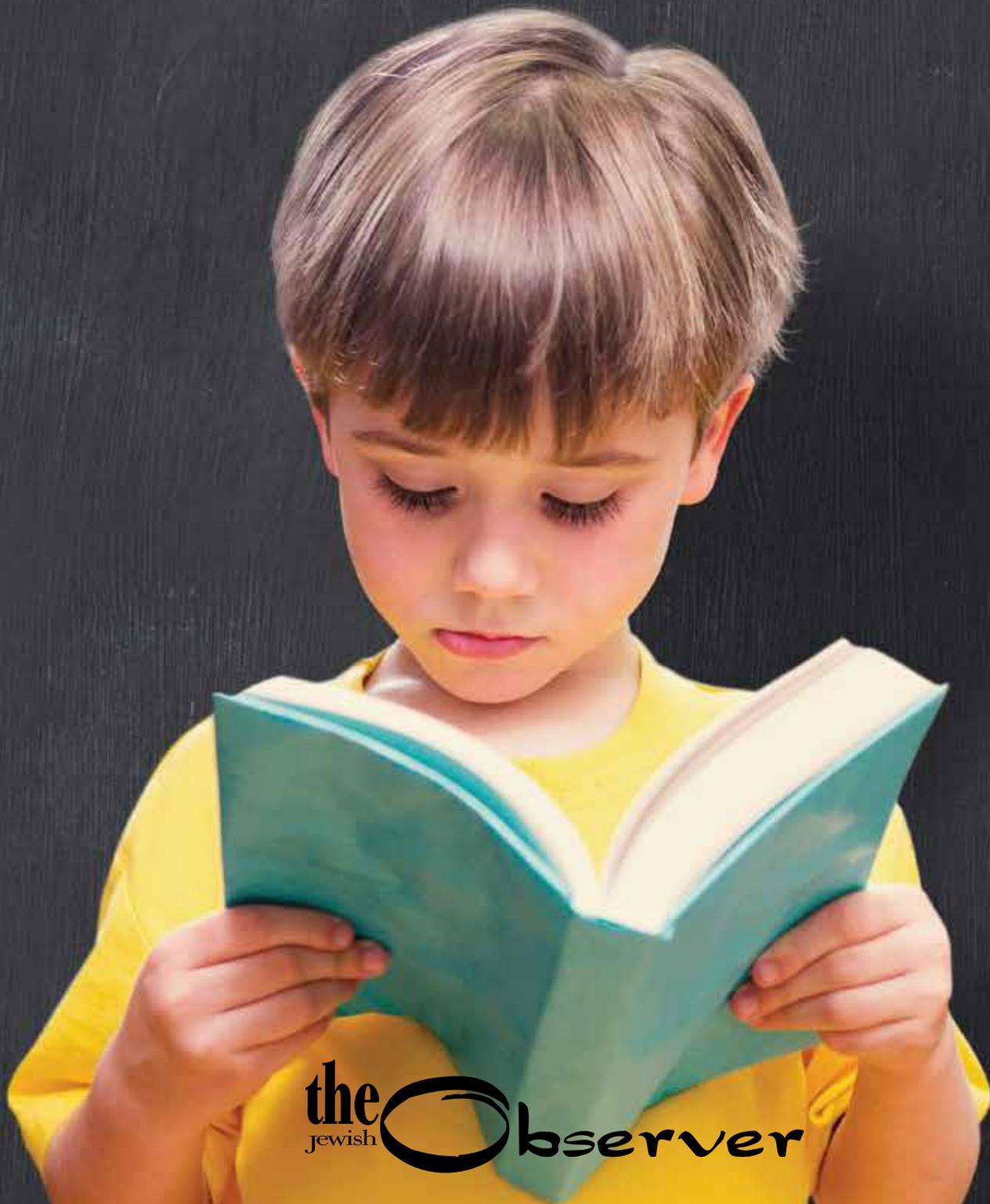
Sponsors of the cookies at \$10 each have raised more than \$103,000 for the Cookies for Israel project, with the donations going to three nonprofit organizations in Israel: United Hatzalah, the volunteer emergency medical service; OneFamily Fund, which supports victims of terrorism; and the Jewish Agency's Partnership2Gether program.

The cookies were donated to charities for distribution to be eaten. •

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL



JULY 2018



the
Jewish **Observer**

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Francine Schwartz, M.A., LPC, NCC
Independent Educational Consultant
Founder and President

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Beit Miriam at WES takes innovative, interactive approach

If you want to know how big the smallest sukkah is or how long it takes to make matzah, visit Beit Miriam at West End Synagogue. Depending on the season, you might see our K – 7 students constructing their own life-size sukkah or the entire school participating in the “Chanukah Games.”

In addition, you will find b'nai mitzvah students debating whether Judaism is a nationality, religion or ethnicity, 6th-graders making their own tallitot and students receiving individual and customized Hebrew training, ensuring that they are taught at their level. This wide and diverse programming is an example of the innovative and interactive educational initiatives that are the core of Beit Miriam.

Beit Miriam educates children from age 3 through eleventh grade, focusing on learning and living Jewishly. Many of our graduates return as teacher aides in their senior year, giving back to the program that has given them each so much.

Beit Miriam is proud of its faculty. Classes cover a breadth of Jewish literacy including Jewish history, customs, holiday celebrations, Israel, Torah, Talmud and Hebrew. Students come together as a kehilla (community) for interactive learning through music, art and technology.

All students attend on Sundays from 9 a.m. until noon.

Second- through seventh-graders attend midweek Hebrew classes on Wednesday

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afternoons from 4:15-6:30 p.m. and once-a-month camp-based Shabbat services.

Our school also offers opportunities for teen involvement in synagogue life and parent parallel learning sessions. Contact Sharon Paz, director, at (615) 269-4592, extension 17, or spaz@westendsyn.org for more information.

Battle Ground Academy embraces students' individuality

Located in Franklin, Tenn., Battle Ground Academy is the oldest – and only – K-12 independent school in Williamson County. Through enhanced learning opportunities, intentional character development and an inclusive, welcoming community, we offer our students an elevated educational experience. Believing each student is unique – and treating each as such – we create an indelible experience to equip him or her not only for success in college and career, but also for living with integrity, courage and compassion.

Visit battlegroundacademy.org/education-elevated to learn more about the Academy and how we can best prepare your child.

Connect with nature, Jewish values at Micah Children's Academy

Micah Children's Academy is situated on a large, beautiful campus at the corner of Old Hickory Boulevard and Hillsboro Pike, conveniently serving the communities of Brentwood, Franklin, and Nashville.

Continued on page 15



CRITICAL THINKING



CURIOSITY



PERSEVERANCE



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www.nashvillejcc.org/early-childhood



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615.356.8009

Continued from page 13

MCA's building has wonderful light-filled modern spaces with windows looking out onto the grounds, providing inspiration to both teachers and children. This strong connection with nature is continued in the natural playscape, where a child's imagination can run wild performing on the outdoor stage, digging in the sand, or cultivating the vegetable gardens. Students always find tremendous joy there as well as a connection to nature that is undeniable.

Jewish family values are the cornerstone of MCA's curriculum and help to shape students' budding social mores with lessons on helping others, or mitzvahs, protecting the earth, and promoting peace. In Judaica class, these teachings are reinforced with innovative dramatic play and hands-on activities. MCA's curriculum also utilizes the Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards to establish goals for every age group and adapt them to each child's specific needs. A focus on project-based learning, where children work together to solve a problem or create a finished work, promotes big-picture thinking and investigative minds.

MCA offers flexible schedules ranging from two to five days per week, with early- and late-care options and open doors from 7 a.m.-6 p.m. Children are also provided with a variety of healthy snacks twice a day, a place to nap comfortably, and most of all, a nurturing place to learn, paint, read, play, sing, dance and be themselves. Micah Children's Academy has been accredited as a Tennessee 3-star preschool (the highest rating) every year since opening its doors in 2010.

For more information or to schedule a tour, call Theresa LePore at (615) 942-5162 or visit www.micahchildrenacademy.org.

Revere Jewish Montessori Preschool sparks love of learning

The Revere Jewish Montessori Preschool is Tennessee's only Jewish Montessori Preschool. It is committed to enriching Jewish life and learning for every child in the Nashville community. It endeavors to impart a love for the beauty of the Jewish tradition and culture.

The Preschool is conveniently located on the beautiful Genesis Campus for Jewish Life. Tucked away on nine acres, the preschool's backdrop is a lushly wooded area complete with meandering walking paths and plenty of flora and fauna for investigating. A custom play structure and large play surface give children a starting point in which to use their imagination in countless, energy-burning ways.

The objective of the Preschool is to create a warm, healthy and happy environment where children can grow and develop emotionally and cognitively as well as physically. In early childhood, the seeds of learning, Jewish identity, curiosity and caring are planted. This program spans a period of personal, social, and academic growth. The teachers are sensitive to the wide range of abilities within this age group, and offer creative

Continued on page 16

Every student is valued and taught as an individual

To ignite and nurture student curiosity, intellect, and character, our teachers learn the passions of each child.



Battle Ground Academy

BGA is the only K-12 co-educational, independent school in Franklin, TN

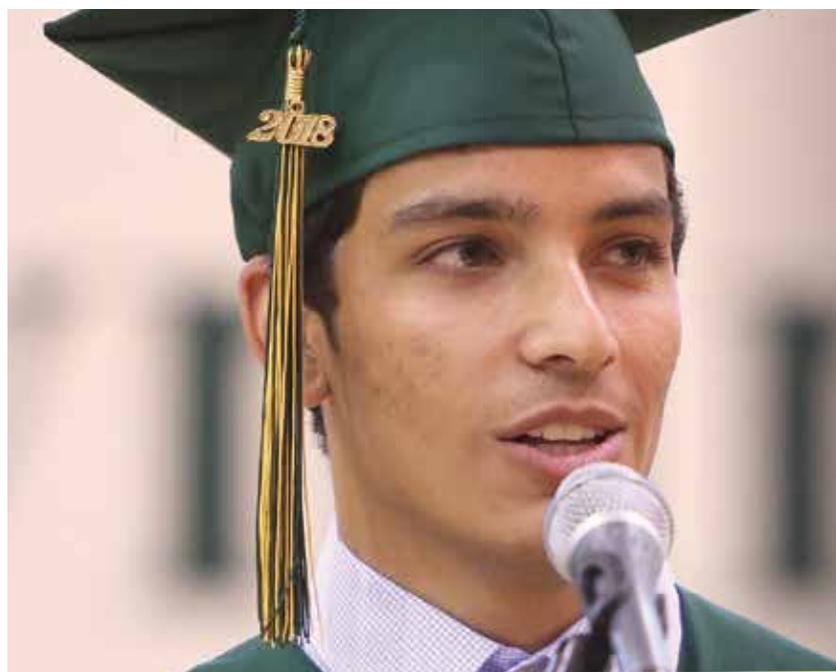
Harpeth Campus
(Grades K - 4)

150 Franklin Road

Glen Echo Campus
(Grades 5 - 12)

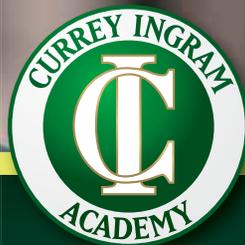
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Currey Ingram Academy

A K-12, independent, co-ed, college-preparatory day school in Brentwood for students with learning differences such as ADHD and dyslexia.

Promoting Strengths. Supporting Differences

6544 Murray Lane | Brentwood, TN | 615-507-3173 | Tours offered daily | Financial aid available

www.curreyincgram.org

Continued from page 15

activities that fit into the broad developmental continuum represented by the students.

The Preschool creates a stimulating and enriching educational environment for each child. The Montessori program helps children learn socialization skills, building their self-confidence, and teaching them the preliminary skills to explore and experience the world independently from their parents.

The Revere Jewish Montessori Preschool seeks to ignite a spark in each child to lay claim to their Jewish heritage and to a lifetime passion for learning.

For a preschool tour or to register call (615) 646-5750 or go to jewishmontessoripreschool.com

The Temple Preschool: Focusing on the whole child

The Temple Preschool is a play-based, child-directed learning environment that welcomes infants and children through Pre-K age. With a focus on the whole child as part of a supportive community, we rely on a number of ideals that support cognitive and socio-emotional health.

First, our emergent curriculum creates hands-on learning opportunities for children to develop a deeper understanding of language, math and science concepts while offering opportunities for conflict resolution, persistence and problem solving through social interactions.

Second, we consider an environment rich in open-ended provocations, authentic and natural materials and child-made materials an integral part of our learning experiences.

Third, teachers consider their role to be co-researchers and facilitators of learning by working alongside children to foster creativity, curiosity and community.

We would love to give you a tour of our program. Please contact us by phone (615) 356-8009 or via email at preschool@templenashville.org. We are open 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and offer a variety of part-time and full-time enrollment opportunities.

Harpeth Hall helps girls dream big, go far

At Harpeth Hall, girls and young women find a place where they become independent thinkers and confident leaders ready to pursue their bravest ambitions.

Our students draw from the very best of Harpeth Hall's rich traditions and its timeless values — honor, integrity, excellence and leadership — to think critically about how best to engage authentically in their school community and beyond.

Our teachers encourage collaboration and instill excellence. They're thoughtful and intrepid innovators in the classroom and labs and mentors on the stage and the playing field, creating coursework that brings out the very best in their students. Girls matter at Harpeth Hall.

Visit our website, harpethhall.org, to learn more about how Harpeth Hall is where girls come to "Dream Big and Go Far!"

Harpeth Hall School, 3801 Hobbs Road, Nashville, TN 37215; (615) 297-9543; grades: 5 - 12 (girls only); enrollment: 688; established: 1865; harpethhall.org.

Currey Ingram Academy supports full range of learning styles

If your child has average to superior intelligence but is not reaching his or her fullest potential in a traditional classroom, look at Currey Ingram Academy. Through small classes and personalized instruction, we address each student's learning needs, allowing students to soar ahead in strength areas while shoring up any areas of need. Each student has an individualized learning plan, and parents receive four conferences per year. Strong arts, athletics and extracurricular activities emphasize student strengths, while speech-language and occupational therapy supports (if needed), school counseling and college counseling support round out our approach to preparing every child for college and for life.

Currey Ingram Academy is a K-12, college preparatory day school for students with learning differences such as ADHD and dyslexia. The school is located on 83 acres in Brentwood's Beech Creek Valley, just 11 miles from downtown Nashville and eight miles from downtown Franklin.

Families have relocated from 33 states and eight countries, citing the school as a major reason for their move to Middle Tennessee.

Additional details and financial aid information are at www.curreygram.org. Visit www.curreygram.org/meetourstudents to see videos of real students and their families.

Currey Ingram offers private tours Monday through Friday. To arrange a tour, call (615) 507-3173 or click the button on the Admission page of the website. Currey Ingram also offers a diagnostic center that is open to the public and provides psychoeducational, speech-language and occupational therapy assessments. Call (615) 507-3171 for details.

Micah Religious School provides students with Jewish enrichment

Congregation Micah's Religious School is the home of joyous and progressive Jewish education. Our weekly family service fills our sanctuary with music, prayer and playful participation in the ever-present Jewish story.

We are a diverse community that celebrates our common bonds of Jewish identity - intellectually, spiritually, and culturally. We explore many disciplines of Jewish tradition: Hebrew, history, ethics, social justice, Israel, tzedakah . . . with Torah as our anchor.

Beyond the sanctuary, our students find delight and meaning as they study in both traditional (reading, writing, discussion, liturgical expression) and non-traditional (drama, photography, ceramics, culinary, visual art, music, and nature) realms. Every activity is designed to strengthen the relevance of Judaism as the foundation of everyday living, and each dedicated teacher helps our students not only learn, but also form special and sustaining friendships with one another.

We strive for Jewish enrichment in the classroom, in the home, and in the world. Our campus includes demonstration gardens, a gaga pit, a memorial garden, a cemetery, a labyrinth, and a beautiful playscape. We honor and respect the value of each of our students, which is likely why so many of our teens continue after becoming b'nai mitzvah. Following travels to New York, Washington, D.C., and Israel as part of our CHAI Society high school program, our NFTY and BBYO members, madrichim, confirmands and graduates have the commitment and confidence to participate fully in Jewish life on college campuses and in their new careers, which makes us all incredibly proud.

Pathfinder Counseling guides students in choosing college wisely

Finding the right college match is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. It's not only about being accepted by a college. More importantly it's about finding a fit that offers the best environment for each student's educational and personal growth where they can thrive and be successful.

With colleges becoming more expensive and competitive, families and students feel increased pressure to make the right college choice. Today, going to college represents a significant family investment of time and financial resources. Pathfinder Counseling provides valuable help to navigate the college search, application and financial aid process, while keeping everything as stress free as possible.

Francine Schwartz, M.A., LPC, NCC, founder of Pathfinder Counseling LLC, is a highly regarded professional counselor and educator as well as a parent. She understands that at times the transition to college can feel equally rewarding and overwhelming. With the explosion of information out there, busy family schedules, the desire to find the right school, not to mention today's college costs, where do you begin?

Francine established Pathfinder Counseling to serve as a guide and mentor, helping navigate the entire college process from exploring potential careers and majors to applying for financial aid and scholarships. Her goal is to ensure that each student finds the best possible college match, one where they can fulfill their potential. You can rely on Pathfinder Counseling to get to the heart of your student's aspirations and empower them to be ready for the next step in life.

To learn more, please visit www.pathfinder-counselingllc.com or contact Francine Schwartz at (860) 460-8829 or schwartzf88@gmail.com. She is a professional member of IECA, HECA, NACAC, NEACAC, ACA and ASCA.

The Observer's Annual

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ISSUE 2018

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Akiva School educates children Jewishly from K-6

Akiva School is THE Jewish day school of Middle Tennessee. We are a high-performing kindergarten-6th grade academic institution and a sought-after leader among Jewish day schools in the country. Our mission is to pursue excellence, foster critical inquiry, and inspire informed Jewish living. Our goal is that all families, regardless of affiliation, feel welcome at Akiva. We take pride in the diversity of our student body and respect each family's decisions regarding religious observance.

The rigorous curricula in both general studies and Jewish studies challenge students to analyze, investigate, question and take risks. The curriculum is centered on applied project-based learning and includes strategies to strengthen science, technology, engineering, the arts and math (STEAM). Graduates are consistently accepted into the most selective private middle and high schools and are recognized as leaders in both character and academics in their schools and in Nashville.

Akiva truly embodies what it means to be a community school. Our smaller class sizes provide a nurturing atmosphere that enables us to meet the individual needs of our students and ensure their success.

Akiva is accredited by the AdvancED and received an accreditation score in the top 23 percent of over 34,000 schools internationally.

For more information, please call Julie Fortune, director of admissions and outreach, (615) 432-2552 or email her at jfortune@akivanashville.net.

The Temple Religious School grows, nurtures strong Jewish identities

Our educational program at The Temple seeks to impart the most important aspects of Reform Judaism to our students while building a sense of community and shared values. We believe that it is in the context of community – teachers, clergy and parents, both Jewish and non-Jewish – working together, that Jewish learning is successful. Through this partnership, we foster a deep knowledge of and commitment to Judaism in all of our children.

Our Pre-K Parent-Child Program is a monthly “taste of religious school” experience for families that involves an exploration of Jewish values and holidays through music, stories and fun projects.

Children in grades K-3 explore Jewish identity and values through the study of Jewish holidays, Bible stories, prayer, music and Hebrew.

Children in grades 4-6 learn Hebrew prayers on Wednesdays in addition to classes on Sundays. Topics they explore include the Jewish lifecycle, family values at home, the people and history of Israel and the great Jewish debates.

Children in junior high and high school have a grade-level core class on Sundays and get to choose from interesting and relevant electives throughout the year.

11th- and 12th-graders continue to wrestle with what it means to be Jewish on a weekly basis on Wednesday evenings.

The classroom is one component of our broad program which includes youth group, worship, family education, social action projects and other informal experiences. Through all of these experiences, our students become both competent and confident Jews with a deep sense of who they are, where they came from and where they are going into the future.

To hear more about our dynamic program at The Temple Religious School, please contact Rabbi Michael Shulman, RJE, director of education by email, rabbishulman@templenashville.org, or by phone, (615) 352-7620.

Gordon JCC Early Childhood Learning Center: Explore, imagine, create

Choosing your child's first preschool experience may be one of the most important decisions you make. Discover the many enriching programs offered through the Gordon JCC's Early Childhood Learning Community for ages 6 weeks through pre-K.

Our Jewish early childhood program experience includes a Reggio Emilia-inspired approach to curriculum and play. Swimming lessons are included once per week for our 2-year-old program through pre-K. Our curriculum includes a project-based approach based on the interests of the children. In addition, we incorporate a monthly Jewish lens such as Tikkun Olam (repair of the world) into our lesson plans to help children grow into caring, thoughtful, and loving human beings who will carry these values throughout their lives.

Our program currently partners with Vanderbilt University's Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning as a lab site. Our teachers received training on the pyramid model for supporting social emotional competence in infants and young children. Studies show when children begin kindergarten, their struggles are not within the academic realm but of the social-emotional. When children have a positive self-concept, can solve problems and make friends, they are much more successful.

We are part of the JCC Association of North America's Sheva Center, adopting its seven core elements in our program: Children as Constructivist Learners; Early Childhood Directors as Visionaries; Early Childhood Educators as Professionals; Families as Engaged Partners; Environments as Inspiration for Inquiry; Discover: CATCH as Sh'mirat HaGuf (taking care of our bodies); and Israel as a Source and Resource.

We are fully licensed by Tennessee's Department of Human Services, adhere to all DHS regulations, policies, and procedures, and hold a 3-star rating from the Tennessee ECERS and ITERS programs.

For more information, please contact ECLC Director Brittany Montoya at brittany@nashvillejcc.org or visit www.nashvillejcc.org/early-childhood and we would be happy to set up a tour. •



The first graduates of Jewish Baby University, Nashville campus: From left, Lori and Liza Star, Hilary and Eric Mirowitz, Ben and Sarah Raybin, Michael and Penny Woody. Not pictured: Yoni and Rachel Limor and Joel and Felicia Abramson. The Abramson's son, Tobi Harris (Aryeh Yehudah), was born on June 6. PHOTOGRAPH BY CAROLYN HECKLIN HYATT

First class graduates from Jewish Baby U

By KATHY CARLSON

It was graduation night at Jewish Baby University (JBU), which a dozen Nashville parents-to-be had been studying and learning over a five-week course.

JBU, a new program of the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, was offered for the first time this year, from May 23-June 20. Its goal is to give first-time parents-to-be an opportunity to be a part of a community and create lasting friendships.

The classes include kosher dinner and a panel of experts: physicians, doulas, Lamaze specialists, rabbis from each synagogue, educators, psychologists, and a CPR trainer to present and take questions.

“We enjoyed participating in the first JBU,” said Lisa Star. “My wife and I looked forward to attending each week. We were especially pleased with the stories, tradition, and values the rabbis spoke of as we begin to think about how we want to raise our children Jewishly. The panel that Carolyn (Hecklin Hyatt) was able to put together each week was truly incredible and informative as we embark on this new journey.”

Akiva School's incoming head of school, Daniella Pressner, participated in an earlier JBU session on Jewish education. “In a landscape where parents have so many choices regarding the type of education they want to share with their child, there is no question that prioritizing Jewish education becomes a challenge,” she said afterward in an email.

“...It was humbling to see the couples so intimately engaging each other and the presenters as they consider how they will share these new souls with this world.”

The final class covered Jewish teaching on the child-parent relationship, spe-

cifically how parents are to treat their children. Rabbis Shana Mackler and Yitzchok Tiechtel detailed Jewish teachings.

Parents must, under Jewish law, observe birth rituals such as a bris for a boy and naming for a girl; formally educate children in Torah; assist children find a spouse and teach them a trade. Last but not least, parents should teach children to swim.

The requirements are designed for many purposes: bringing the child into the Jewish community through birth rituals, ensuring that they can participate in the community through education, ensuring through a trade that they can be self-sustaining and contribute to the community, helping them find healthy relationships, and through the swimming requirement, imparting survival skills.

Children these days must navigate the rough waters of the Internet sea, Mackler said. “It's challenging and it starts really early. It's a virtual sea.”

Both rabbis emphasized the importance of parents modeling to their children the type of behavior they want to see in them. “Resolve to yourself ... whatever you want your child to be, model it,” Tiechtel said.

“Do as I say, not as I do” doesn't work with children, Mackler said. Kids are “clever little investigators” who readily pick up on discrepancies.

Tiechtel also talked about recognizing differences among children. “Children have different temperaments. ... Help them grow with the temperaments they have,” he said. •

FYI...

To learn more about Jewish Baby University, contact Carolyn Hecklin Hyatt, carolynh@jewishnashville.org.

To access the Community Calendar, go to www.jewishnashville.org and click on “Calendar.”

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Welcoming Ambassadors reach newcomers at June reception

It started out rainy on June 10, but the sun came out in plenty of time for newcomers to Nashville to get to know one another at a reception organized by the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee. The receptions take place quarterly throughout the year, and this one drew more than 30 people of all ages. Follow-up activities are in the works so participants can keep making friends and strengthening ties to their new community. For more information about attending the next reception, or if you know someone we should contact, please get in touch with Michal Becker, adult outreach coordinator with the Jewish Federation of Nashville, at (615) 354-1696 or michal@jewishnashville.org.

Also, if you would like to become a Welcoming Ambassador and help those new to town get acclimated to life here, you can also contact Michal Becker, (615) 354-1696 or michal@jewishnashville.org. •



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Inserted with this issue is an envelope

which you can use to make a tax deductible contribution to the newspaper's annual Patron Campaign. A \$25 donation covers the cost of printing and mailing *The Observer* to a single home each year, but we hope you will consider donating at one of the higher levels: Reporter (\$50), Editor (\$100) or Publisher (\$150). •

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Scholar helps shed light on complexity of Gaza

By KATHY CARLSON

The recent deadly violence along the border of Israel and Gaza is anything but simple to try to understand. To help community members try to unravel the history and anticipate possible paths forward, intelligence expert Matthew Levitt of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy spoke in Nashville recently.

"This is not a conflict only or even primarily between Hamas and Israel," Levitt told his audience at the Gordon Jewish Community Center during his June 20 lecture, sponsored by the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee's Community Relations Committee.

The unrest reflects divisions among groups purporting to represent the people of Gaza, including its Hamas government and rivals such as the Palestinian Authority, Fatah and Palestine Islamic Jihad. It also reflects regional tensions and interests, including those of Iran, and rifts between Sunni and Shiite Muslims.

Another key problem, Levitt said, is that Hamas, which took over Gaza and ousted a Fatah government in 2007, wants to destroy Israel and doesn't want to govern Gaza. That makes it less likely that Hamas' actions would change its actions if Western nations tied aid to Gaza to Hamas's behavior.

There is very little likelihood that ordinary citizens of Gaza will rebel against Hamas, Levitt said, even though he said the majority wants nothing to do with Hamas.

Levitt, the Fromer-Wexler fellow and director of The Washington Institute's Stein Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence, has served in intelli-

gence and analysis capacities at the U.S. Department of the Treasury. He has spoken here previously on Israel-related intelligence issues. His most recent talk was titled "Why Gaza is more complicated than you think."

Levitt told some 100 attendees that he had been in Israel a week before he came to Nashville for the talk. His presentation included a timeline of key events in Gaza, starting with Israel's withdrawal in 2005. He showed photographs of Hamas tunnels that showed how close they are to Israeli towns.

He said there is no press coverage of the lengths to which Israel has gone to prevent loss of life along the Gaza border even as its goal is to keep its border secure. Israel is using rubber bullets, wind machines to physically blow people away from the fence, and a foul-smelling gas called the skunk to keep them away, he said.

It's hard to inform people about Gaza, he said, because it's a complex story and people want easy-to-understand narratives, such as the David and Goliath framework that some use to explain the conflict in Gaza.

Meanwhile, Israel is developing strategies to defeat the latest weapon being deployed against it from Gaza, the so-called terror kites.

People laugh about terror kites, Levitt said, but there's nothing funny about living on a kibbutz near Gaza and waking up to a huge brush fire caused by one of the kites.

As it did in dealing with rockets launched from Gaza and kidnappings facilitated by tunnels, Israel goes back to the drawing board to address each challenge as it arises, he said. It now is testing countermeasures against the kites, including drones. •

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the **Observer**
jewish

3 tourists keep challah commitment, despite snag in scheduling

On a recent Friday morning the phone rang in the offices of Chabad of Nashville. The woman on the line, Chaya Kibel, asked Rabbi Yitzchok Tiechtel, “Can I ask you a funny question?”

No question is a funny one, he responded.

She and two friends had come to Nashville for the 2018 CMA Music Festival last month and were on the way back home to Florida for Shabbat. “Our flight was delayed six hours and we want to come and bake challah at the Chabad kitchen,” Kibel said. When asked why, she said that they have a special tradition to bake challah weekly as this is a special Mitzvah given to the Jewish women, and it brings a great blessing into their lives.

Florida resident Esty Jungreis was one of the three friends. She says she began baking challah each week for Shabbat about five years ago and hasn’t missed a week since then. “I’ve gotten friends into it,” she said in a phone interview. She and her children prepare the bread each week. There are both physical and spiritual aspects to baking challah, and if she knows someone who needs a prayer, she’ll pray while working on the bread. “It’s a blessing, and people like to eat it,” she said. “I love doing it, I look forward to it.”

So, on that Friday in Nashville, the three friends then took an Uber, bought challah ingredients and arrived in Bellevue at Chabad. They mixed the ingredients, waited for the dough to rise and then together with the children of the Revere Jewish Montessori preschool made a special blessing on the dough and separated a piece of the dough for the mitzvah of challah. They then braided the bread, egg-washed it and put on their favorite toppings, and then dashed off to the airport just in time to make it back home in Florida shortly before sunset.

“We baked the challah for them as they did not have the time to bake it before they left,” Rabbi Tiechtel said. “The many guests that came for the Friday night dinner at Chabad of Nashville enjoyed the freshly baked challah, that was made by a small group of women who were dedicated to keeping this biblical mitzvah given to women, and one that brings great blessings to their families.”

Little did the women know, he said, that the Torah reading that very same Shabbat was about the mitzvah of Challah.

There’s another twist to the story: The women knew they’d have precious little time to make it home in time for Shabbat that Friday once their plane



Esty Jungreis, left, Chaya Kibel and Yalie Harel, with their challah ready to go into the oven. PHOTOGRAPH FROM CHABAD OF NASHVILLE

landed in Florida. “No way G-d’s going to get us home on time,” Jungreis recalls one of her friends saying. But, thanks to a driver who appeared at the airport almost immediately after they arrived, she got home in 20 minutes, just in time. •

To learn more about challah, go to www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/363323/jewish/Challah-a-Step-by-Step-Guide.htm

A meal to remember

By: Yoni Glatt, koshercrosswords@gmail.com • Solution on page 22

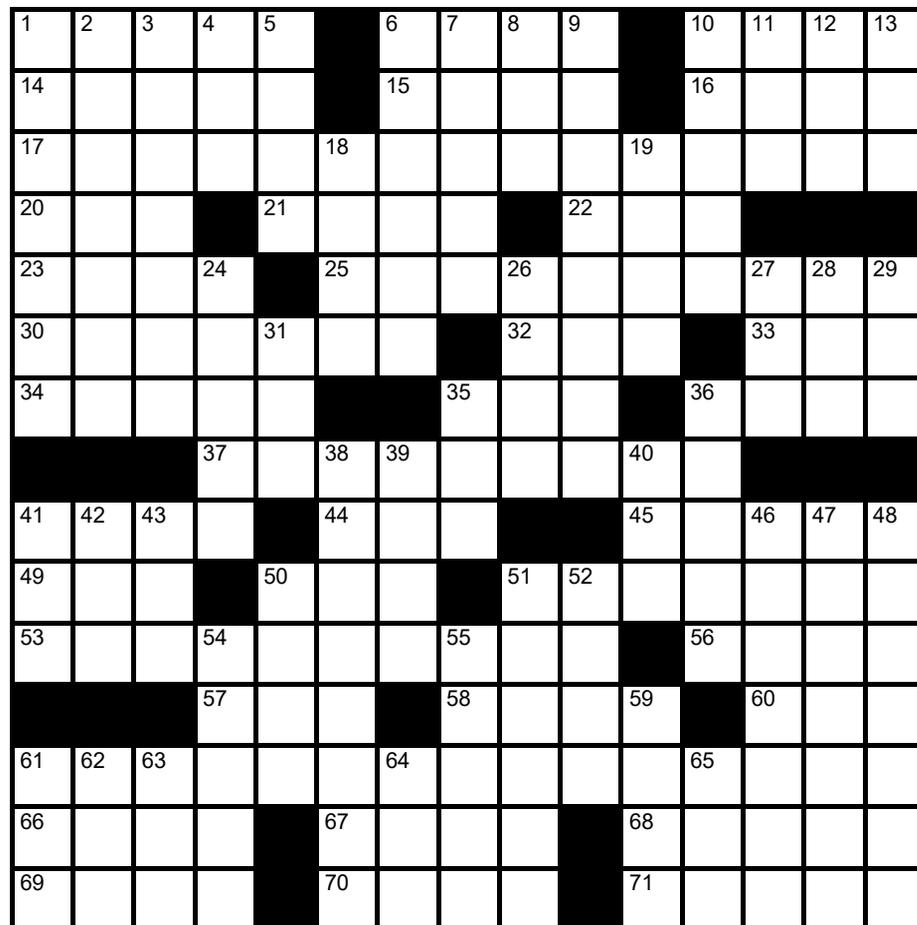
Across

1. Dipped fruit
6. Dealer’s bane
10. Bad dreidel spin
14. Former town employee
15. Inflatable things
16. One of four notable animals in Parashat Shemini
17. One who might have been offended by the menu of 61-Across
20. Day before
21. Britain’s last King Henry
22. “Fannie” follower
23. He played Bean, Button, and Black
25. Midwestern city where 61-Across occurred
30. Autocratic Russian rule
32. Batteries for remotes, perhaps
33. Pal
34. Dermatology issues
35. Kind of tree
36. Make like Doc Paskowitz
37. Menu item at 61-Across
41. They made a 42-Down obsolete
44. Female warrior in two “Thor” movies
45. Carlo, of Monaco
49. Aloof
50. Dells, for short
51. Nor’ ___

53. What many attendees at 61-Across were doing
56. Quick card game
57. Jean who was the abba of Dada
58. Blackens, in a way
60. Org. that will check you out after you check in?
61. Historic Hebrew Union College event that occurred on July 11, 1883
66. Equal
67. Little brook
68. 1/8 cup
69. Cowboys and Indians, e.g.
70. Hog hang out
71. Schruete Farms vegetable

Down

1. Admits
2. Qualifying clause
3. Bat goo
4. “The”, to Éponine
5. ___ Pesach (busy day)
6. Yonah and Yaakov, e.g.
7. From the top
8. Make a stink?
9. CBS spinoff
10. “The West Wing” actor
11. Muslim’s journey
12. Cause of an explosion?
13. Like a marriage during sheva brachot
18. Ocasek and others
19. Skateboarding apparel brand
24. Braid or plait, e.g.
26. Notable idol
27. Start of many an Arab name
28. Rabbi Yaakov ben Asher, AKA The ___
29. Israel’s protection: Abbr.
31. Book end?
35. Elrond, e.g.
36. Curry’s are often far out



38. The ones that got away
39. Place for VIPs?
40. Text message, formally and briefly
41. Be into
42. See 41-Across
43. Colorful rug
46. Poseidon, to the Romans
47. Cut in thirds
48. Jamaica ___ (Queens neighborhood)
50. Run well, as an engine

51. Pave the way for
52. Indian city often used in crosswords
54. One of a notable seven from Israel
55. Home of the world’s first ghetto
59. Social climber, often
61. Medicinal amt.
62. Habayit preceder
63. Melodramatic, in slang
64. Like many an action star
65. “___ pasa?”

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Births

Tobi Harris Abramson

Mazal tov to Joel and Felicia Abramson of Nashville, whose son, Tobi Harris Abramson (Aryeh Yehudah), was born on June 6.

Obituaries

Kenneth Bogach

West End Synagogue announces with sadness the passing of Kenneth Bogach on May 29. Mr. Bogach was preceded in death by his wife, Marsha Bogach.

He is survived by his sons, Steven (Margaret) Bogach, Bruce (Linda) Bogach and Lewis Bogach; grandchildren Anastasia (Jacob) Apgar, Jessica Bogach, Samantha Bogach, Sara Bogach and Jackson Bogach; and great-granddaughter Charlie Apgar.

Sonia Ruth Abramson Doochin

West End Synagogue announces with sadness the passing on June 5 of WES member Sonia Ruth Abramson Doochin (Shana Rachel bat R. Aaron). She was 92 years old.

Sonia was the daughter of Rev. Aaron and Rose Abramson. She was preceded in death by her beloved son, Alan Lewis Doochin, in 1989, and her husband, Julius Doochin, in 2003, to whom she was married for 54 years.

Sonia is survived by her son, Ben (Tish) Doochin, and her grandchildren Justin Doochin of Nashville; Olivia (Daniel) Heller of Newport Beach, Calif.; Rebekah Doochin of Nashville; and Gideon (Liza) Rosenbaum of Brooklyn, N.Y.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to West End Synagogue, Congregation Sherith Israel or Akiva School.

Irwin Bertram Green

Congregation Micah announces with sadness the passing on June 6 of Irwin Bertram Green.

Mr. Green is survived by his son, David Green, daughter-in-law Libby Older, and grandchildren Jacob and Emma.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made in Irwin's name towards the Richard and Cynthia Morin Fund at Congregation Micah.

Laurence Brent Koch

Laurence (Larry) Brent Koch passed away Sunday, May 27, at Vanderbilt Medical Center, surrounded by family and friends, after a long battle with heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. He was preceded in death by his parents, Ray A. and Alma Silverman Koch of Nashville, and his wife, Peggy Gammon Koch.

Laurence is survived by daughters Lesly Wade Wooley (Stu), Columbia, S.C.; Rachel Koch, New York; Carolyn Mandelbaum (Yossi), also of New York; son, Michael Koch (Anetia) of Memphis; his longtime companion, Linda Biles; brothers, Carl and Marvin (Evelyn) Koch, Nashville, two grandsons, Matt and Kenny Mandelbaum, New York, and Eve Wooley, granddaughter, of Atlanta.

Born in Nashville in 1940, Mr. Koch graduated from West End High School and the University of Tennessee (Knoxville), where he met his wife-to-be, Peggy Gammon. He worked as an accountant and auditor for W.R. Grace and Texaco before joining his family's business, Sam's Linoleum and Wallpaper Center. He was a Mason, a veteran of the U.S. Army, and a lifelong member of Congregation Sherith Israel where he, his brothers, and all three of his children celebrated their b'nei mitzvah. All of his children graduated from Akiva School.

His health struggles began in 1983 with a diagnosis of cardiomyopathy and he received a heart transplant in 2004. As a result of the anti-rejection drugs, he became diabetic and developed the lymphoma that ultimately ended his life. Talking about it shortly before the end, Laurence said the trade-off was worth it; the transplant bought him nearly 14 years of additional life.

Memorials may be made to Congregation Sherith Israel, 3600 West End Ave., Nashville, or to Akiva School, 809 Percy Warner Blvd, Nashville.

Morris Saltzman

Congregation Micah announces with sadness the passing of Morris Saltzman on May 27.

Mr. Saltzman is survived by his wife Trudy, his daughter and son-in-law, Susan and Charles Anthony Leath, and his granddaughters, Courtney and Rachel.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made in Morris's name towards Alzheimer's research and to Congregation Micah.

Apply for Hanukkah help with Jewish Children's Regional Service

Even though it's sunny and hot outside, it's not too early to think about Hanukkah.

Jewish Children's Regional Service (JCRS), based in New Orleans and serving kids in seven Southern states including Tennessee, is asking families to register NOW for its Oscar J. Tolmas Hanukkah Gift Program.

For 20 years, JCRS has brightened the Hanukkah celebrations of hundreds of children who are facing difficult times by sending out Hanukkah gifts to boys and girls throughout its seven-state region. Some children are recovering from natural disasters, some have special needs, and some are new immigrants. Almost all come from families struggling to stay afloat in this economy. JCRS wants these children to know that they are not alone and that they are remembered by the

Jewish community. Registration information can be found at <https://jcrs.org/services/hanukkah-program/>

JCRS also provides partial scholarships to enable children to attend non-profit Jewish sleep-away camp, and this year is providing more than 370 such scholarships. JCRS also provides financial aid for Jewish students beginning or continuing their studies. JCRS and its volunteer review committees in New Orleans, Houston and Dallas will allocate an average of \$2,600 for the 2018-2019 academic year to approximately 100 Jewish students in order to reduce the burden of debt and stress that these students and their families endure in continuing their education.

For more information about JCRS programs and services, visit www.jcrs.org or call (800) 729-5277. •



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July's featured artists include David and Kathy Wariner

The Gordon Jewish Community Center's July art show exhibits will feature the work of David and Kathy Wariner, Poverty and the Arts and Camp Davis.

The Janet Levine March Gallery will feature the work of David and Kathy Wariner.

David Wariner wears many arts "hats" and has had a passion for the importance of many disciplines.

He is a Nashville-based artist currently exploring his roots in abstract painting and drawing. He formally studied art at Herron School of Art and Design at the Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis campus, immersing himself in painting, drawing and art history. He also has been a successful illustrator for many years.

Kathy Wariner is educated as a fine artist and has more than 15 years of experience in the design industry, working as a graphic designer, illustrator, and surface designer. She was educated at Indiana University, Nashville State Community College, Arrowmont School/University of Tennessee, Watkins Institute and Indiana Vocational Technical College.

Her process is mixed media but currently she is experimenting with acrylic, and starts in her sketchbooks drawing in ink or pencil. Kathy draws from life and

feels her relationship with her subject inspires her to draw. In the studio, she shares her enthusiasm for the process by working with others. The opportunity to work with her students gives her energy back to continue doing art.

The JLMG2 Gallery will feature the work of the Camp Davis summer campers. This annual show continues to bring forth the unexpected and delightful work of children exploring and creating in multiple artistic disciplines.

The Sig Held Gallery will exhibit the work of Poverty & the Arts (POVA), a social enterprise nonprofit. POVA states on its website that it provides supplies, studio space, training and a marketplace for artists impacted by homelessness to create and sell artwork, as well as gain valuable entrepreneurial and social skills that help them earn creative income, access higher-waged employment, increase their housing stability, and build the necessary security nets to remain out of homelessness.

The title of their exhibition is "Home," in which the artists have curated works focusing on the concept. Each artist has, to varying degrees, experienced homelessness, which lends itself to diverse interpretations far beyond the generally accepted idea of a physical location as a home. For some, home represents a different period of time; for others, an emotion or mindset. For all of them, POVA is a home.

The House Gallery continues to feature vintage posters of Israel in celebration of Israel's 70th birthday.

The reception for the artists is set for Wednesday, July 18, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the JCC, 801 Percy Warner Blvd. There will be music by DJ Joseph Harris, henna painting by Seemi Rivzi along with complimentary food and beverage to accompany the event. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact the JCC at (615) 354-1699, curator Carrie Mills at carrie@nashvillejcc.org, or go to www.nashvillejcc.org. •



"Blue TV," by featured artist David Wariner

Crossword solution

1	A	P	P	L	E	6	N	A	R	C	10	S	H	I	N	
14	C	R	I	E	R	15	E	G	O	S	16	H	A	R	E	
17	C	O	N	S	E	R	V	A	T	I	V	E	J	E	W	
20	E	V	E	21	V	I	I	22	M	A	E					
23	P	I	T	24	C	I	N	C	25	I	N	N	26	A	T	
30	T	S	A	R	31	I	S	M	32	A	A	S	33	B	U	
35	S	O	R	E	S	36	E	L	M	37	S	U	R	F		
41	D	42	V	43	R	44	S	I	F	45	M	O	46	N	47	48
49	I	C	Y	50	P	C	S	51	E	A	S	T	E	R	S	
53	G	R	A	54	D	U	A	T	55	I	N	G	56	S	P	I
61	T	62	H	63	E	64	F	A	B	A	65	Q	U	E	T	
66	S	A	M	E	67	R	I	L	L	68	O	U	N	C	E	
69	P	R	O	S	70	S	T	Y	E	71	B	E	E	T	S	

around the town

Coffee Klatch starting up at Gordon JCC

The Gordon Jewish Community Center will be forming a Coffee Klatch group open to members of all ages and affiliations. A "coffee klatch" is a casual social gathering for coffee and conversation. The group will meet twice monthly, on Friday mornings from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. It is free and drop-ins are welcome.

The first two gatherings will be held on July 13 and July 27, in the JCC library.

This group is just forming, so join now to provide your input on topics and facilitator ideas for the future. Contact Vera Balter with any questions at (314) 817-8489.

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finisher. The distances are a simple 200-yard swim, 9.8-mile bike ride, and 2-mile run. Training on Tuesdays, 8 a.m. bike/swim, and Thursdays, 5:15 p.m. bike/run.

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Celebrate Ramah Darom's Fred Levick

Fred Levick has dedicated 18 outstanding years as CEO of Ramah Darom. An event will be held in August to recognize him for his leadership.

It's set for Sunday, August 19, at Congregation B'nai Torah, 700 Mount Vernon Highway, Atlanta and starts with cocktails 6 p.m. Dinner and festivities follow at 6:30 p.m.

All proceeds from this celebration will go towards the Fred Levick Campership Endowment Fund.

Tickets \$118 each/ \$75 (Alumni 27 years of age and under). The dinner is dressy casual and dietary laws will be observed.

RSVP by July 20. Download a PDF of the invitation or find out more at ramahdarom.org/celebrate-fred.

To access the Community Calendar, go to www.jewishnashville.org and click on "Calendar."

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Sharing With Sharon

Same place, different view

By SHARON BEN AMI
Community Shlichah

I was born and raised in Jerusalem, Israel. It is where I grew up, went to school, worked, made friends, jogged, shopped and more. I know the streets of Jerusalem like the palm of my hand; I have seen every yellow stone and thought that when it comes to Jerusalem - I knew it all. That is, until I chaperoned the Get Connected two-week trip to Israel that connects Nashville teens to Israeli teens and their families in the partnership region, Hadera-Eiron.



Sharon Ben Ami

Although I toured Israel many times, this time felt like a first. This time I got to see it through the eyes of the Nashville teens. For most of them it was the first visit in Israel. They reintroduced me to Israel through a new lens, that of a Jewish teen who doesn't live in Israel but is curious to learn more about it.

They questioned everything that the common Israeli probably takes for granted like:

"Why are all the buildings in Jerusalem made from the same stone?"

"What is this fire burning in the horizon?"

"Can we wear pants at the old City of Jerusalem?" or

"Why do the drivers honk so much?" and

"Are we in Jaffa or Tel Aviv?"

All of these questions made me rethink everything and not take it as a given anymore. Every dot and exclamation point turned to a question mark. I was reminded yet again of the complexity of Israel that manifests in the smallest things, and had to explain all that is written in between the lines.

Getting connected

On the first part of the trip, we toured together as a group of Nashville teens, with the awesome Sheri Rosenberg and I as chaperones. The teens didn't know much about each other and neither about their chaperones at the beginning of the program but we all had a miraculous quick connection to each other. The girls became friends, and so did the chaperones. This year it turned out to be, by chance, a group of eight teens, only girls, which allowed us to form deep connections. There were times I felt like their friend, other times that I felt like their older sister, and times that I felt like their mom, especially when they began associating me with food.

On the second part of the Get Connected trip, our Nashville teens got to connect with Israeli teens their age and stay with host families. Although they were pretty anxious about staying at a stranger's house and had lots of questions about their hosts prior to their arrival in the partnership region, once they met the Israeli teens they were inseparable and sadly, Sheri and I became completely irrelevant. Words cannot describe the deep connection that was made in only four days together. Even I was surprised by the impact that it had on them.

They met as hesitant strangers, and after four days said shalom and shared tears as friends. The personal connections between American teens to Israeli teens have no price tag, and they form the first bridge between their community to Israel and vice versa. This connection will continue, as some of those Israeli teens will arrive in Nashville for a two-week stay with host families here.

The Get Connected project, like other projects that are aimed to build personal connections between Israelis and Jews from around the world, embodies a mutual effort to bridge the differences, political tensions and the misinformation that is prevalent in today's society.

During Get Connected, the American teens get to experience Israel in an unmediated way, go through experiential learning about Jewish heritage and history and about Israeli society and culture. The Israeli teens that come to Nashville get to lift the fog that is the lack of information or misinformation and learn about Jewish culture and streams of Judaism that are unfamiliar to the common Israeli. Both groups get to form deep connections with one another. To those of us who are looking to maintain or build a sense of Jewish nationality, in which

Jews from around the world have better understanding of each other that will hopefully manifest one day in the policies of the Jewish country Israel, this is a great place to start.

Hear it from the teens

Here are some quotes from the teens who went on the Get Connected trip:



"Today was fantastic! We walked around the streets of creation and heard the story of Israel declaring its independence. From the graffiti on the walls to the colors among the dozens of people in the market, today was filled with art. The most amazing of all was being surprised by my brother - he is a lone soldier in the IDF whom I haven't seen in a few months. Today was lovely."

-Alitzah Gelman



"Today, we witnessed a group of Birthright kids get Bar Mitzvah. It made me realize how lucky I am to be a Jew, and how grateful I was for my bat mitzvah. I am extremely lucky to be able to express and embrace my Judaism at such a young age, a privilege that many have not had."

-Ilanit Sedek



"Today we hung out with Israeli teens and learned a lot about Israel culture while doing a fun rafting seminar on the Jordan River. We ended the day with an arts and crafts activity and bowling with our hosts. It was overall a very fun day and we learned how to collaborate and work together with the Israelis."

-Rebecca Mullaney



"Today we met the Israeli kids. We made stuffed chicken, pasta, and chocolate soufflé. Everyone was socializing, laughing, and having a blast. Can't wait to spend the next few days with them!"

-Lulu Hershey



"Today we stepped into the past and waded through spring water in Hezekiah's Tunnel in the old city of David. Then we viewed an underground portion of the wall and eventually made it to the iconic section of the western wall. After a little singing and dancing we had lunch in the Jewish quarter. We spent the evening at the Shuk (market) exploring the food stalls and shopping areas. Highlight: singing with Israeli teens in the tunnel."

-Olivia Hershey



"Today was incredibly meaningful and important as we visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum, the Mt. Herzl cemetery and went to the Western Wall for Shabbat. It was a day of remembering our Jewish past while also recognizing what we as Jews and Zionists are still fighting for every day. As the next generation of Jewish people, it is up to us to preserve the state of Israel so that all Jews that are to come after us are able to live and pray in peace. After today, I feel like I have a greater understanding of my past and a greater sense of gratitude for those who risk their lives to defend and protect Israel."

-Tess Herzog



"My favorite part of the day was going to the salad trail and learning about the kibbutz and tasting the fresh vegetables"

-Zoe Light



"The views, people and food were amazing. Israel is one of my favorite places out there. In some ways it feels like home."

-Sydney Saul

Special thanks: To Deborah Oleshansky, Director of Community Relations and Get Connected Coordinator at the Jewish Federation of Nashville, for making it all happen; Sheri Rosenberg, the best chaperone I could have asked for; and Rabbi Flip and Rabbi Laurie (of Congregation Micah) for blessing us on Shabbat services and at the Nashville Airport right before the flight. Shout out to all of the girls that participated in the trip: ya'll are AMAZING!

If you wish to have a meaningful Israeli experience like Get Connected, you are welcome to contact me at sharon@jewishnashville.org •

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