



SHALOM



The Journal of the Reading Jewish Community. Published as a community service by the Jewish Federation of Reading, Pa.

Volume 44, No. 10

DECEMBER 2014

KISLEV-TEVET 5775

2015 Federation Campaign begins

The 2015 Jewish Community Campaign kicked off Oct. 29 with the Leadership Gifts Dinner. More than 50 members of the community attended the evening of good food, good companionship and inspiring words.

The dinner was held at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom in honor of the congregation's 150th anniversary. Community members attending heard inspirational words from Board Chairman Larry Rotenberg, Campaign Co-Chairs Haia and Meir Mazuz, Federation President William Franklin and Keynote Speaker Susan Jackson, one of Canada's

most experienced outreach and community development professionals, and a leading Jewish speaker. She captured the audience with her wit, humor and energy while using stories from her life to exemplify the Jewish values of Tikkun Olam, Kehillah, Talmud Torah and Tzedakah. She made the point that being Jewish meant living those values in our everyday lives.

In addition to the inspirational messages, a new Campaign logo and slogan were introduced. The logo, a stylized Star of David with a heart in the middle, with the phrase "One people – One Heart" in both English and

Hebrew was designed by Jack Gernsheimer of Partners Design, an award-winning design firm run by Jack and his brother Jeff. They generously donated their design services to the Federation to support the Campaign.

The 2015 Campaign's slogan is "Jewish Values and Leadership – from Strengths to Needs". The Campaign's messages will center on core Jewish values and how the Federation uses the Campaign's income to express those values through services to our local community, worldwide disaster relief and support for Jews in need in Israel and throughout the world.

Time for Chanukah

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JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE: Try the mitzvah of "Bikur Cholim" this Chanukah

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Sheila Lattin, Gordon and Carol Perlmutter and Betsy and Al Katz.



Haia and Dr. Meir Mazuz, Campaign co-chairs



The rotunda at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom undergoes a magical transformation



Chana Lipsker and Federation Treasurer Janine Ure



Campaign logo by Partners Design



Federation President Bill Franklin



Keynote speaker Susan Jackson



Federation Chairman Larry Rotenberg

2014 totals as of Nov. 17

Jewish Community Campaign
\$517,140

*Includes transfers from Donor Advised Funds

JFNA condemns synagogue attack that killed five men in Jerusalem

In response to the horrific Nov. 18 attack on a synagogue in Jerusalem, where Palestinian terrorists killed four Jewish worshippers and a police officer, The Jewish Federations of North America called on the global community to join in condemning those responsible. President and CEO Jerry Silverman and Michael Siegal, Chair of the Board of Trustees, issued the following statement: “The Jewish Federations of North America is shocked by the horrific attack on innocent worshippers that took place in Jerusalem. We send condolences to the families of the victims and wish a speedy recovery to the injured.”

Siegal and Silverman called the attack a despicable and reprehensible act of terrorism, one made particularly horrific by the location of the attack. Some of the victims were wearing tallitot and tefillin at the time of the attack.

“The recent wave of Palestinian terror attacks and acts of violence in Israel is outrageous and completely unacceptable, but this attack on innocent people praying in a synagogue is incomprehensible. We call on the entire global community to join us in condemning this attack in the strongest possible terms, immediately

and unconditionally.” *USA Today* reported that four of the dead were rabbis and one was a police officer who died of his wounds hours after the attack. Three of the rabbis were born in the United States, and the fourth was born in England, though all held dual Israeli citizenship.

The U.S.-born victims were identified as Moshe Twersky, 59, Aryeh Kupinsky, 43, and Kalman Levine, 55. The Israeli Foreign Ministry said the British man was Avraham Goldberg, 68, who immigrated to Israel in 1993, the newspaper reported. The fifth victim was identified by the *Jerusalem Post* as police officer Zidan Saif, 30. He leaves behind a 4-month-old child.

Jewish Federation of Reading President William D. Franklin urged the local community to show support for Israeli loved ones in the wake of the attack.

“It’s important and meaningful to let your Israeli family and friends know that we mourn with them and care,” he wrote in an email to the community. Please call or e-mail them to let them know that we stand with them and pray for peace.”

Obituaries

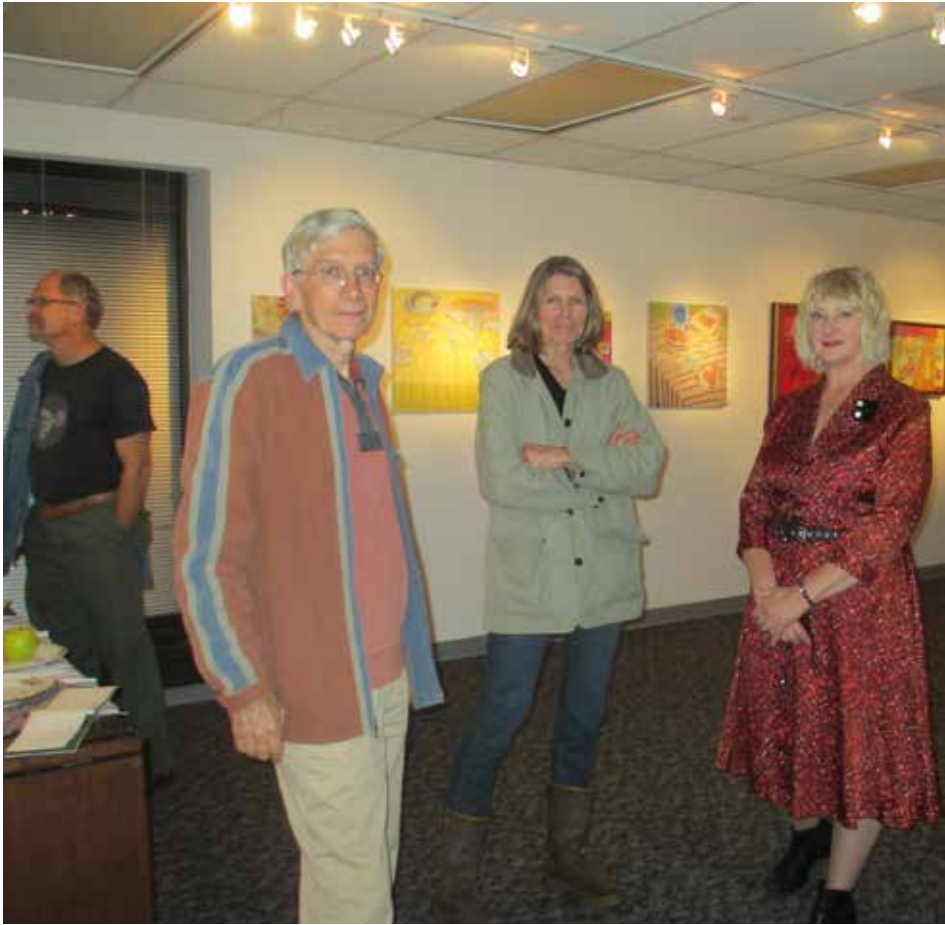
Rose (Watson) Brown, 93, of Reading. Rose was born in Oxfordshire, England. She is survived by her son Jeff Brown of Reading.

Norma C. (Taksa) Dashe, 95, of Connecticut, formerly of Reading. Norma was active in the Reading School District, the Visiting Nurses Association, and President of Hadassah. She is survived by her son, Murray Dashe and his wife, Robin, of California, and her daughter Eve and her husband Alan of Connecticut. She is also survived by her four grandchildren, three great-

grandchildren and a brother, Jack Taksa of Seattle.

Alexander Abramowicz, 86 of Reading. Alexander was born in Berlin, Germany and came to the U.S. in 1950. He served in the U.S. Army and was a recipient of a Purple Heart. He is survived by a son, Steven Abramowicz and his wife, Marilyn, of Royersford, his daughter, Rebecca Martin and her husband, Kenneth, of Muhlenberg Township, his other daughter Corinne Balestrier and her husband, Anthony Laino, of Shillington. He is also survived by 10 grandchildren.

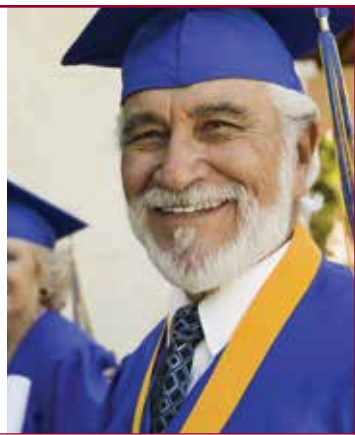
New paintings by Marilyn J. Fox



Artist Marilyn J. Fox took part in a reception at the JCC Nov. 6 to mark the opening of an exhibit of her new paintings. Her artworks are on exhibit until Dec. 29 during regular JCC hours.

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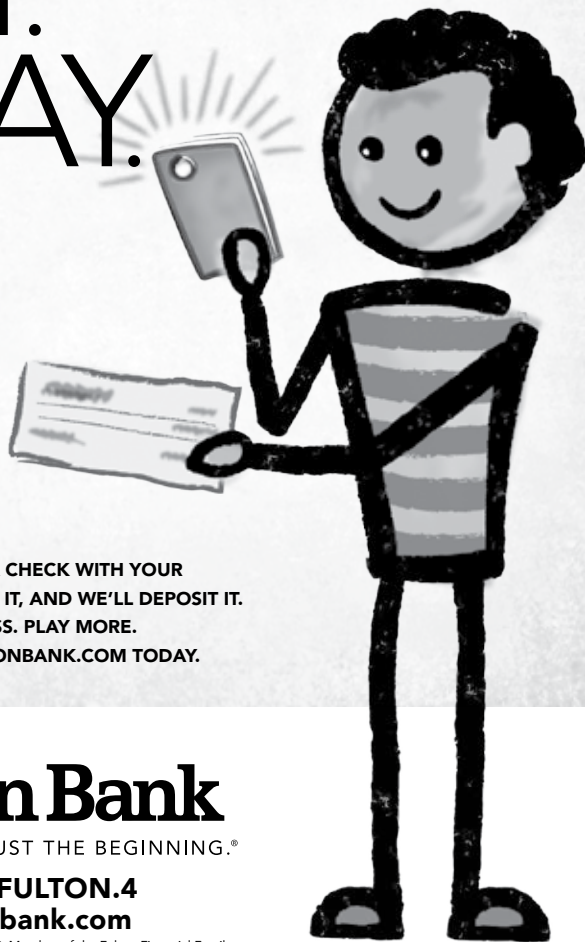
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Working together to strengthen our community

By William D. Franklin
President

Shalom. Led by our Campaign '15 co-chairs, Dr. Meir and Haia Mazuz, we successfully kicked off our 2015 Campaign several weeks ago with a Leadership Dinner at RCOS. Our theme is “One People - One Heart — From Strengths to Needs,”



and our goal is to continue the Reading Jewish community’s admirable record of supporting Jews and non-Jews here in Berks County, across the U.S., in Israel and around the world. Recently the Reading Jewish community joined Jewish communities around the world raising money to support Israel’s effort to rebuild physical structures and restore the well-being of Israelis living in the Negev. Within weeks more than \$50 million was raised; and our community exceeded our target goal by

over 50 percent. Kol HaKvod!! Bravo!! Federation campaigns are not just about raising money. Funds raised are a means to an end, working together, leading to the future and building a sense of belonging. Being Jewish we are always part of a family. Please share your ideas and concerns so that we can design a strong, sustainable future. We have in our community many programs and services that may be of interest. In November Dr. David Leisawitz spoke on the “Evocation of the Lost World

of the Roman Ghetto.” It disturbed me to be reminded of the many centuries we were forced to live in ghettos. The freedom to live wherever we wish is a wonderful blessing. The challenge it presents is how to remain connected. Creating portals into our Jewish community, with all its richness, is a primary goal. Federation is a strong conduit through which individual lives can be enriched. Together we can actualize the words of the Talmud, “Kol Yisrael arevim zeh la-zeh” – all Israel is responsible one for another.”

The bottle is half full

By Larry Rotenberg
Chairman

Just about everyone knows the story about the two Scotsmen who are sharing a bottle of whiskey. One is crying because the bottle is half empty. The other one is happy, because it is half full. (As the father of an executive at the Caron Foundation, I must make a disclaimer. This article in no way encourages alcohol consumption). In this season of Thanksgiving, I must say that while we always have issues, our bottle is more than half full. So recently, my wife and I, accompanied by Dr. and Mrs Toso, went to the Jewish Food and Cultural Festival at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. It was simply magnificent. Nearly 2,000 people, from every variety of Jew to every conceivable non-Jew was there. The food was



delicious. The Temple volunteers were most friendly. Rabbi Michelson and his whole family labored together with all the others. The rabbi’s tour of the sanctuary, the demonstration of the Shofar and the historical presentation of the 150 years of RCOS were instructive. This demonstration, which helped not only to show the beauty of Judaism, but to demystify it to non-Jews, was most fitting. A few days later we went to a minyan at Keshet Zion, The new Rabbi, Rachel Schwartz, conducted the service. Her toddler little boy was taking a nap while all this was going on, which added a warm, family feeling to the whole process. Those present could only smile as the little boy lay sleeping, while his mother, a charming and spiritual young woman, led us through the Maariv. A week later we attended the Kristallnacht Service at Christ Episcopal Church in Reading, where both Rabbis Michelson and Schwartz participated, and where Mara Winn acted as the Cantor.

Well over 100 people, both Jews and Christians, were part of a very dignified memorial to that terrible event in 1938. And what about Chabad? As long as we have Rabbi Yosef Lipsker and his wife, Chanah, Orthodox Yiddishket will remain alive and well in this area. On Sukkot my wife and I, together with many others, came to “Sushi in the Sukkah”. Each of us got to wave the Lulav and the Esrog. The food was delicious, and the whole experience was made special by the charisma of this young rabbi and his charming wife. As always, the rabbi, who is one of the spiritual leaders at Caron, brings over young people from that rehab facility, who, while recovering, want to continue some of their traditions. And listening to the rabbi’s occasional interaction with his children in Yiddish, reminds me of my own childhood, where Yiddish was the “Mammeloshon”, the mother tongue. And then we have the Federation, the umbrella organization for the Jewish

Community. We recently lost Tammy Mitgang as our president. But we have gained Bill Franklin, who has started his job running. The Federation does many things for the local Jewish community. For example, its Family Service, provides innumerable supports for our community, ranging from getting someone taxi fare to reach a doctor’s appointment, to helping someone with back rent in order to avoid eviction, to visting the sick, and holding services for Jewish elders during Passover and other major Jewish occasions. The Federation also supports Jews around the world and especially in Israel. There, under the inspiration of Michael Fromm, the Federaton supports Meir Panim and Yemin Orde, two organizations that do valuable work in the Jewish State. And so, we can truly be proud of our community. Let us build the future together in order to maintain and enhance what we have.

Uncertainty!

By Paul L. Landry

If there is one thing we can be sure of, it’s that nothing is certain! As I write this, more than two weeks before Thanksgiving, a Polar Vortex has hit the US, temperatures dropped into the 30s and we had snow in mid-November — one of the earliest snowfalls in history. When something like this happens, I always think about the things in the yard that I haven’t accomplished yet and may not get a chance to do at all. For instance, if the snow had been heavier and



had stayed on the ground, I would not have had a chance to get rid of all the leaves that covered the back yard, and that could have been bad for the grass in the spring. Where am I going with this? Well, 70 percent of us will die without having made out a will. Most of us plan to do that someday. After all — there’s still time, isn’t there! But like the snow in November, the end might come unexpectedly. You might not get warning — so if you don’t already have a will, you might die without one. And when that happens, State law, not you, determines where your assets will go.

If you have small children, do you want their future (after you are gone) to be uncertain? Of course not! You may be young, but if you want their guardian to be a specific person, you need to designate that in your will. If you (and your children) are older, you may have accumulated substantial assets. To make sure any of them that are not covered by a beneficiary designation (see last month’s *Shalom*) go where you want them to go, you need to stipulate that in your will. So it’s a really good idea to stop putting it off and contact an attorney now! And as you are preparing your will, please keep the Federation

in mind. Leave a bequest to the Federation to ensure it will be there for your children and their children and their children. Ensure a vital, local Jewish community for generations to come! Any amount is welcome. If there is something specific you would like to support with your bequest, call me. I’m not a lawyer, but I can help you with suggestions about how to make your bequest do what you want it to do. All contacts are confidential and without obligation. My phone number at the Federation is 610-921-0624 and my email address is paul@jfreeding.org.

SHALOM

A newspaper serving the Jewish community of Reading, Pennsylvania, and published monthly, September through June, under the Jewish Federation of Reading. Funded by the Reading United Jewish Campaign.

General Offices: 1100 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 125
Wyomissing, PA 19610
Phone: 610-921-0624 FAX: 610-929-0886
Web site: www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org

Jewish Federation of Reading
Chairman: Larry Rotenberg
President: William D. Franklin
Communications Director: Mark Nemirow, Editor
Proofreaders: Federation staff
Member: American Jewish Press Association

The opinions expressed in Shalom are of the writers and not the Jewish Federation of Reading

Next deadline, Dec. 5



Leisawitz delivers talk at JCC
Daniel Leisawitz, PhD, appears at the JCC Nov. 13 to deliver a lecture on “Evocation of the Lost World of the Roman Ghetto: The Poetic Project of Crescenzo Del Monte.”



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SAVE THE DATE:
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Stuffed Cabbage Demo



PJ Library pajama party!

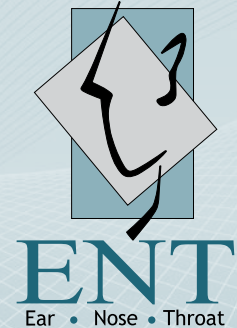



Rabbi Rachel Schwartz leads a PJ Library Pajama Party and Teddy Bear Sleepover at Keshar Zion Synagogue. Children brought their favorite toys for a fun party including stories courtesy of PJ Library, then the toys got to "sleep over" at the synagogue to be picked up by the kids the next day. The PJ Library program provides free Jewish-themed books to children in our community. Please call the Federation office at 610-921-0624 for more information.

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Congregational News

How’s the load?

By Rabbi Yosef Lipsker
Chabad Center of Berks County

There was once a man struggling along with an obviously heavy sack slung over his shoulder. The weather was hot and humid, making his task arduous and tiring. To his concern, the road began to slope upwards, compounding his misery. A passer-by, clearly intrigued by this individual, asked him what it was that he had in the sack. The man replied that he was carrying rocks and stones. He persisted to enquire as to the weight of the sack. The reply was not long in coming; it was quite heavy and laborious, he said with a long sigh. To his exasperation and annoyance, the man then asked him if he would be interested in having some more stones added to the load. The reaction to this ridiculous suggestion is totally predictable and understandable!

Now let’s imagine the same man walking along, in the same heat and



in identical conditions. But this time, in response to the question about the contents of the sack, he replies that he is carrying diamonds, rubies and other precious stones. When asked if the sack is heavy, again the reply is in the affirmative. But when asked if he would like to have more added, how do you think he would react? Of course, it would be an emphatic yes!

The different reactions in the two stories are reasonable and logical. Although the man was carrying a substantial load on a very warm day, and up a hill, the contents of the sack were highly influential to his condition and well-being. When it was mere rocks, it was a real effort, but the knowledge that a great fortune was in the bag helped to lighten that burden.

In the same way, the reaction we have toward our responsibilities, particularly to the Mitzvot that we are directed to perform, depends entirely on our approach to them. They could be burdensome like rocks or treasured like precious and expensive diamonds.

Indeed, we are encouraged to view

Mitzvot as just that; precious and special. Yes, it is not always easy to observe Shabbat, to eat Kosher, to pray, or to study Torah. But the knowledge that we are accumulating precious cargo is surely the best stimulus to overcome any and all doubts.

This is precisely what Chanukah teaches us. The miracle is all about the Menorah that was once again kindled in the holy Temple after its liberation from control of the Greeks. To be more specific, the miracle is all about one tiny jug of oil that was not ritually contaminated by the enemy. The jug only had sufficient quantity to burn for one night, but it lasted for eight!

The liberation of the Temple came after a sustained period of many years persecution of the Jews at the hand of the Greeks. This harassment was, in effect, a clash of cultures.

The Greeks maintained that all ideas were legitimate, provided they were logical. Injecting a G-dly dimension was utter nonsense in their view, and should be abolished. Their idea of Mitzvot (the directives that connect us to G-d) was

that they were rocks; a heavy burden that was not necessary for the advancement of the human race and in its future progress.

The Jewish view, on the other hand, totally rejects this attitude. We recognize the intrinsic and genuine benefit of a Mitzvah, precisely in its ability to bring us that little bit closer to G-d and divinity. We appreciate the link and opportunity afforded to us mere mortals of creating a close bond and relationship with G-d. For us the burden is desirable and attractive as it only serves to add to our collection of “gems.”

Our victory over the Greeks was thus much more than physical alone. It was, more importantly, a victory of belief over indifference, ignorance and arrogance.

So as you kindle the Menorah and watch the beautiful flickering of the flames, remember how light banishes the cold and the dark. Remember, too, its silent but powerful message “the cargo you are carrying is very precious indeed”!!

Have a wonderful and Happy Chanukah from Chana & myself.

The fight for freedom can’t be taken for granted

By Rabbi Brian Michelson
Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

As I write this, as a nation, we are marking Veterans’ Day. This is the day when we pay tribute to those who have dedicated their lives to protect us and our way of life.

The story of Chanukah reminds us that there are some things that are worth fighting for. Two thousand years ago, the Jews, living in Judea, lived under the brutal regime of the Syrian tyrant, Antiochus. Antiochus demanded that



his subjects desert their own beliefs and that they bow down to his image as an act of homage. This led to a rebellion against Antiochus and those Jews who had adopted Hellenistic ways. Antiochus tried to quell the rebellion by force.

Antiochus knew he could always win in a battle against the Jews, because the traditional Jews refused to fight on the Sabbath. All he had to do was to wait until Saturday to attack Jewish enclaves and towns. He knew that the Jews would quickly surrender rather than desecrate the Sabbath.

The Maccabees changed their interpretation of Jewish laws. They argued that Judaism could not survive if the Jewish

people were unwilling to defend themselves. Therefore, to fight on the Sabbath was a matter of life and death, and because Judaism values life above almost all else, they said it was permissible and even obligatory to defend one’s life on the Sabbath.

In an ideal world, we would never have to fight. However, in a world that is filled with evil and violence, there are times when we must be willing to put our life on the line to defend our way of life. The Maccabees became a role model for the modern Israeli Army. They challenge us to ask ourselves, “What values and ideals are worth fighting for today?”

Sometime we must be willing to fight in order to defend ourselves. However,

this does not mean there is not a price that we must pay. Maybe that is why the sages chose the words of the prophet Zachariah as the Haftarah portion that we recite in synagogue on the Sabbath during Chanukah: “Not by might nor by power but by my spirit, says the Lord.”

Violence and force are a two-edged sword. While we can’t always avoid it, we must recognize the price that it sometimes exacts upon us. May those who fought for our people 2,000 years ago and those who still fight for our freedom never be taken for granted. May our Chanukah celebration, this year, be one that is filled with life and with peace.

Chag Chanukah Samayach!

Share the gifts of Judaism

By Rabbi Rachel Schwartz
Keshet Zion Synagogue

Every Chanukah I feel that I see the miracle of the holiday in the special sparkle in my children’s eyes when they light the menorah. With each night of the holiday, their eyes grow wider and the sparkle brighter as we add another candle to show how much more amazing it was the oil lasted for eight nights. I am then reminded of a second miracle, that, after all of these years, we, as a Jewish people, continue to exist and live in a meaningful way.

My parents passed this gift of Judaism to me, and now I have the chance to pass it to the next generation. This is one of the most important and lasting gifts we can give in this season. The toys may break, and for some reason there never seems to be enough of them, especially when they see what their friends have received. However, the values and way of life we share with our children can last forever.

This Chanukah I encourage us to give our children and grandchildren different gifts (or additional spiritual gifts) on one or more of the eight nights. They can be given in any order.

1- Give the gift of gimilut chasadim — acts of loving kindness. Volunteer with your children or grandchildren this holiday season. For example, you can help a neighbor shovel snow or take over latkes



the children helped make to someone whose children moved away.

2- Give the gift of kehillah — community. Light candles, share stories, and sing with other families.

3- Give the gift of mishpachah- family. Our lives can get so crazy that it is hard for so many of our families to even all sit together around the table at the same time. For one night, light the candles and have a meal together.

4- Give the gift of Jewish literacy. Buy your children books with Jewish themes so the stories and lessons become part of their lives in a fun way.

5- Give the gift of Jewish education. You are your child’s best teacher. Arrange a re-enactment of the Hanukkah story or another story from the TaNaKh in your living room. What little boys don’t love a good battle scene?

6- Give the gift of cooking together. There are so many fun holiday recipes. This is a great time to pass down a family tradition of how something has been made in your family or start a new tradition.

7- Give the gift of mitzvah. For example, if you do not have a mezuzah, why not buy one, invite over friends, and dedicate your house (have a Chanukat habayit) together this holiday season.

8- Have old-fashioned Jewish fun and play dreidle on the floor with your little ones!

Our tradition is full of joye and meaning. I hope that you feel these this Chanukah as you light the candles and celebrate the miracles of the holiday.

LOCAL CONGREGATIONS AND SERVICE TIMES

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REFORM CONGREGATION OHEB SHOLOM (610) 375-6034
Friday, Dec. 5 at 6 p.m.; Fridays, Dec. 12 and 26 at 7:45 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 19, Chanukah Family Service and dinner, 6 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 13: Tot Shabbat, 10 a.m.

CONGREGATION SHOMREI HABRITH

Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Rachel Schwartz

All classes at noon at Keshet Zion Synagogue

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Dec. 2 – Miriam. Dec. 9 – Nachshon.
Dec. 15 — To be determined by class

All are welcome to join.
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Please join us
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***“A Taste of Chanukah:
A Celebration of the Joys and Music of the Holiday.”***
Thursday, Dec. 18, at 1:45, JCC.

Celebrate Chanukah with this 60-minute holiday concert hosted by stage legend Theodore Bikel and musical director Hankus Netsky, founder and director of the Klezmer Conservatory Band. This PBS Home Video brings together the Boston Community Gospel Choir, Cantor Morton Shames, Humorist Chasia Segal, and over 150 musicians.

The program features a broad range of music from around the globe including traditional Chanukah favorites.

Optional lunch at 1 p.m.
For lunch reservations, contact Carole Robinson (610) 921-0624.

The entire community is invited
to join us for

CHANUKAH
Family Concert

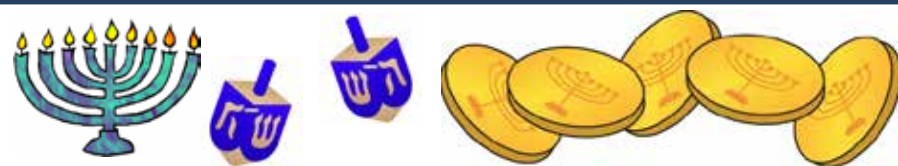
Tuesday, December 16
6:00 p.m.
IN BERKSHIRE MALL
@ the Boscov's entrance
1665 State Hill Rd.,
Wyomissing, PA 19610

Featuring
BAAL SHEM
TOV BAND

SINGING • DANCING • DREIDELS
HOT LATKES • DELICIOUS DONUTS
CHOCOLATE GELT

A fun time for all!

Chabad Lubavitch of Berks County and Boscov's Department Store



**Chanukah fun for the
whole family!**

Save the date! Chanukah is almost here and RCOS invites you and your family to our annual Chanukah service and dinner celebration.

Friday, December 19, 2014
6:00pm Services
7:00pm Dinner
RSVP by December 12

We will light the Chanukah candles together on the bimah, so please bring your menorah from home. Dinner is graciously sponsored by Sisterhood, and attendees are asked to bring a side dish or dessert. Children 3-12 are invited to participate in supervised activities following the service.

Members and Non-members are welcome
RSVP to Temple Office 610-375-6034



If it's between Uncle Sam and the Federation, guess where the balance of my IRA will go?

With retirement assets being taxed at such a high rate, it might make sense to plan on leaving them to charity and leaving other assets to your heirs. Talk to your tax advisor or contact me, Paul Landry, 610-921-0624 or paul@jfreeding.org. All contacts are completely confidential.



Youth News



Kids go gaga over youth event at Body Zone

An enthusiastic group of kids gathered at the Body Zone Nov. 16 for a chance to play "gaga ball."

Gaga is a fast-paced descendant of dodgeball and is a very popular pastime at Jewish summer camps. Body Zone has turned it into a year-round activity that is winning fans throughout the community.

Like dodgeball, players attempt to knock each other out of the game and conversely are always on the move trying to avoid being hit. The last player/team standing wins.

It differs from dodgeball in that players may not throw the ball. They must hit it. A ball that's hit and strikes an opponent - knee level or below only - will result in that player being knocked out of the game.



Introduce your children to the joy of Shabbat. Tot Shabbat is a musical, story-filled Shabbat morning experience geared towards families with young children through grade 2. Bring your family and friends to celebrate with Rabbi Brian Michelson and stay for a pint-size Oneg offering grape juice, challah, and child friendly treats.

December 13, 2014

January 24, 2015

February 21, 2015

March 21, 2015

April 18, 2015

May 16, 2015

June 20, 2015

Tot Shabbat services are held Saturday mornings at 10am at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom located at 555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing, PA 19610. No registration is required. Please call the Temple office with any questions: 610-375-6034.



Liberty Region BBYO Tournies: Fun, fun and more fun

By Becca Cantor and Marissa Missan

Tournies, short for tournaments, is BBYO's convention unique to Liberty Region, consisting of events ranging from volleyball to black-and-white photography to oratory.

Chapters, the subdivisions of the region, prepare for competitions individually and as a team, competing against each other for first place.

It takes the largest amount of dedication, time, and creativity, but Tournies is many members' favorite convention of the programming year.

Berks Chai, our local chapter, has taken hours of their time in preparation for the competitions. All for fun, it gives Jewish teens the opportunity to explore activities out of their comfort zone and make new connections.

This year, Berks Chai is most excited to share their original dance and song to the tune of "Sunshine" by Matisyahu.



Birthright offers students internships/fellowships in Israel

Birthright Israel Excel is an exciting summer internship/fellowship program for North American college sophomores, juniors and select seniors.

Students interested in pursuing careers in business and technology are placed in 10-week summer internships in leading global companies in Israel. They live and travel together as a group and meet with leaders in business, politics and global economics.

Internships cover a range of industries, including finance, venture capital, consulting, biotech and technology.

Only 40 positions are available for this exclusive opportunity. The fellowship program continues upon return from Israel with leadership and professional development programming.

Past Fellows have shown wonderful success as they begin their professional journey. They are spread throughout the U.S. and are highly successful in their job search efforts.

Alumni are in jobs covering the fields of consulting, investment banking and finance, engineering and technology and are employed by firms such as Boston Consulting Group, Bain Consulting, Ernst & Young, Deloitte, Blackstone Group, Morgan Stanley, Barclays, JP Morgan, Exxon Mobile, Google, Thiel Macro, Palantir Technologies, Amazon, IBM and Yelp.

The enrollment period for Summer 2015 is open and runs through Jan. 25.

For more information about the program visit www.BirthrightIsraelExcel.com.

A moment in time

By Anne Seltzer

Every once in awhile in our lifetime there is a moment in time we would like to freeze on and not move. Our family was blessed to have an entire weekend in October that was that way. Our son Matt got married to Jamie a few weeks ago. I am truly certain there has not ever been a better wedding or weekend in the Hudson Valley, ever. And there was never a more beautiful bride than Jamie. Alan and I kept saying to each other all weekend “I wish we could just freeze here and not move for awhile.” How often in life does one get to be surrounded by those they love the most in the world at the same time? Not often in my life. From the moment we got to Fishkill on a rainy Wednesday afternoon to the moment we left in the sunshine on Sunday afternoon after brunch, the weekend was amazing. A side trip to Olana (Frederic Church’s home) and Rhinebeck on Thursday, and dinner with Ron, Jamie’s stepdad, on Wednesday, were added bonuses.

It was so special to have time with Alan’s family, my family, our children and a few of our friends. Spending extra time with Jonathan, Abbie, and Ben was another bonus. And getting to spend a weekend besides Thanksgiving with my extended family was extra special. Of course it would have been even better to have more special friends, but as we found out, weddings are very expensive. There were many people who are no longer with us, which of course is always at the back of your mind, and they were truly missed. It is still hard to believe they are no longer here with us. But I know they were in heaven looking down on the festivities.

It was sort of a high school/college reunion for us, too. We had



not seen many of Matt’s friends from high school and college for years. Most of them are already married, and a few have children of their own. I remember countless evenings with them hanging out in our basement just being kids. Now they were asking us to watch videos of their children. Where did all those years go? When did they grow up? Catching up on their lives was really special, as was meeting friends we have heard about for years.

Alan and I are fortunate to have gained a new family — an extended family we are excited to spend time with without the kids. In fact we already have a weekend and activity picked out. And we did not invite Jamie and Matt! It also feels good to know Matt has another family who loves him. Because they live closer, we know that if something comes up, Jamie’s family will be there quickly for them.

Yes, I can honestly say that as of this moment, that was the very best weekend in my life. All the pieces came together to make it perfect. May Matt and Jamie only know love and happiness for many years to come. Did I mention that there was an amazing dessert table instead of a wedding cake? It appears that Matt never got to have any dessert, though that was the only thing he was concerned about besides the cocktail wieners wrapped in pastry. So, I guess I would make him his favorite cookies.

Chocolate No Bakes

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| 2 c. sugar | ½ c. milk |
| 1 stick butter or margarine | |
| 3 c. quick oats | ¼ c. cocoa |
| 1 tsp. vanilla | |

Combine sugar, butter, cocoa and milk in a saucepan. Stir until it comes to a boil. Boil 2 minutes without stirring. Remove from heat and add vanilla and oats. Stir quickly. Drop by tablespoon onto parchment. Cool and enjoy!



The Annual Chanukah Dilemma

Gardening with Vicky

African violets bring color home

By Vicky Sokoloff

At this time of year less is happening in the garden, so thoughts turn to bringing color into the house with African violets. Many people still think of them as small purple flowers, but hybridization has produced flowers of many colors, variegated foliage, and plants of many different shapes and sizes. Flower colors include white, pink, burgundy, yellow, blue, green, nearly red and even bicolors. The variegated varieties can be green and white, or green, white and pink. Plant sizes range from micro-minis (grown in a 1-inch pot) to large (8-inch pot). The African Violet Society of America has more than 10,000 registered cultivars.

African violets are not difficult to grow. The most frequent cause of problems is overwatering. They don’t like wet feet or having their leaves wet. Watering the right way is the key to success. A plastic drink bottle that allows you to direct the water through the leaves to the soil is perfect.

It is not possible to have a set schedule for watering; it depends on the humidity level in your home, which can change throughout the year. It’s best to just touch the soil every few days and water when it begins to feel dry. The kind of water you use is also important. You don’t want any chemicals in the water. If you can’t avoid them completely fill a gallon jug with water and let it stand for four or five days. Then add liquid fertilizer to the water at about half the stated amount on the product you are using. Use the fertilized water regularly except when it’s very hot or very cold.

Plants flower best when roots fill the pot, so even though you should repot in

fresh soil once a year, don’t use a bigger pot unless the roots are really crowded. Be sure to use soil that is labeled for African violets.

It is very easy to propagate AVs. Just take off a leaf with about an inch of stem. Slice a clean diagonal cut and insert it in damp (not wet) AV soil. A 3 oz Solo cup with a couple of drainage holes poked in the bottom is perfect. Place the cups on a small plastic tray and put the whole thing in a clear plastic bag in a bright spot. The bag not only helps retain moisture but helps maintain a constant temperature. In about a month small leaves will emerge from the soil around the mother leaf. It is not uncommon for one leaf to produce three to four baby plants that will be separated and potted up to grow on.

Many hybridizers have focused on plants that can grow on a windowsill in an average home. When growing on a windowsill, turn your plants weekly to maintain symmetry. You can use grow-lights, but a standard shoplight with one warm and one cool bulb works nearly as well for a fraction of the cost.

To get more information or see some fantastic varieties, check out these websites:

- lyndonlyon.com
- optimara.com
- bluebirdgreenhouse.com
- avsa.org

Vicky Sokoloff is a Berks County native who has been a Master Gardener since 1997. Information for this column comes from a variety of sources and may not reflect Penn State recommendations.

True or False: talking to your plants helps them grow.

We wish to express our thanks to the Reading Jewish community for the heartfelt support you showed us in the time of our loss. The warmth that emanated from all directions was really comforting.

Naomi and Alex Knoll

“The Green Prince” Coming to the GoggleWorks Film Theatre Dec. 5-11

Nadav Schirman’s “The Green Prince” retraces the details of an unprecedented partnership that developed between sworn enemies. In the style of a tense psychological thriller, this extraordinary documentary recounts the true story of the son of a Hamas leader who emerged as one of Israel’s prized informants, and the Shin Bet agent who risked his career to protect him.

As a defiant teenager, Mosab Hassan Yousef’s fervor against Israel was unquestionable, ultimately landing him in prison. Shaken by Hamas’s brutality within the prison’s walls and a growing disgust for its methods, he had an unexpected change of heart. Recruited by the Shin Bet, he spied on the Hamas elite for over a decade, constantly risking exposure and certain death while grappling with the perception that he had betrayed his own family and people. Along the way, what started as a cautious alliance between Mosab and his Shin Bet handler Gonen Ben Yitzhak grew into an enduring loyalty.

Based on Yousef’s bestselling memoir, the film exposes a complex world of terror, betrayal and impossible choices. Through firsthand testimony, dramatic action sequences, and rare archival footage, decades of secrets come to light in this unflinching exploration of a profound spiritual transformation and the transcendent bonds of friendship.



Jewish Family Service

**United
Way**



Make 'Bikur Cholim' a part of your Chanukah celebration

By Carole Robinson

The happy holiday of Chanukah begins Dec. 16. For most of us, latkes and dreidels go hand-in-hand with family and friends. We light the menorah and celebrate together. However, there are some members of our Jewish community who do not have people with whom to share the holiday joy.

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, more than 50 percent of nursing home residents have no close relatives. 85 percent of them never have



visitors. One of my responsibilities as Social Worker for Jewish Family Service is outreach to senior citizens residing in nursing homes, personal care, and independent living facilities. Not only are my visits greatly appreciated, they are personally rewarding. I invite you to join me in spreading some Chanukah light!

Bikur Cholim is a mitzvah encompassing a wide range of activities to provide comfort and support to people who are ill, homebound, or isolated. Developing strong connections between our older adults and our community can have tremendous benefits for young and old. The resident will realize that people care about him. Social contact and support positively impacts those needing comfort. Visiting and caring activities help build community. The visitor will derive

satisfaction from making a difference in someone's life.

Here are some guidelines to make your visit enjoyable:

- Plan your visit in advance. Call and introduce yourself. Choose a time to visit that works for the resident.
- When you visit, reintroduce yourself. Your visit may be short or long, depending on the person and how they are feeling. Even a few minutes can brighten a resident's day.
- Don't be in a hurry. Most residents have time on their hands, and your visit will probably seem short to them, no matter how long you stay. Plan to stay about 20-30 minutes.
- If you would like to bring a small gift, some suggestions are holiday treats, small toiletries, writing supplies, or puzzle books.

- Don't feel obligated to solve the personal problems of a resident. Just being there to listen and empathize is important.

- Not sure what to say? Tell the resident about yourself and your family, ask them questions about themselves, talk about favorite holiday foods and let them share memories of special occasions.

- At the end of the conversation, thank the resident for spending time with you. If you and the resident found your visit mutually enjoyable, make arrangements to visit again!

Ready to play the dreidel with some new friends? Call me at the JCC (610-921-0624) and I will give you the names and phone numbers of some people who would appreciate a visit!

Living with Loss

Mondays, Dec. 8 and 22

3 - 4:30 p.m. at the JCC

For more information, call Sari at 610-921-0624

The Benefit Bank

A Jewish Family Service Program

Find out your eligibility and apply for benefits online with a counselor in a confidential setting.

Food Stamps

Medical Benefits

Cash Assistance

LIHEAP and more

To find out if TBB can help you, call Sari or Carole at 610-921-0624

Did You Know Jewish Family Service:

- offers discounted taxi transportation to seniors and the disabled?
- has a monthly need-based food pantry?
- offers counseling and information and referral services?

Thanks to People First contributors

Jewish Family Service

thanks all who contributed to the 6th annual People First Event.

JFS, working along with other nonprofit agencies, provided hats, scarves and gloves to more than 1,500 people who were treated to a meal at the Queen City Diner by owner Steve Elmarzouky on Veteran's Day.

Grateful recipients were unemployed veterans, low-income families and people with physical and mental disabilities.

Thanks go to all contributors of warm, winter items, including preschool and religious school families. Thanks also to those who knitted items and to those who made cash contributions, which we used to purchase items.

Jewish Family Service Food Pantry Collection

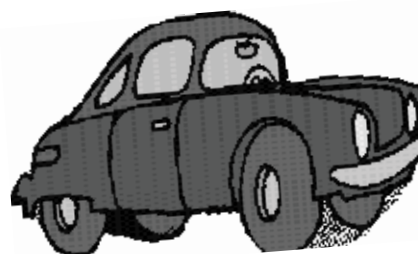


We are serving more families each month! Please bring donations of canned tuna, soup, fruits and vegetables to Keshar Zion or the JCC. Thank you!

We also need plastic and paper grocery bags!

Enjoy Tax Benefits While Contributing to

Jewish Family Service Vehicle Donation Program



Call Sari at 610-921-0624,
e-mail sari@jfreeding.org
or go to
www.charitableautoresources.com

Gratz JCHS News

Students join to remember Kristallnacht

By Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner
Branch Director, Gratz JCHS

Students at the Reading Branch of Gratz Jewish Community High School commemorated “Kristallnacht: A Nationwide Pogrom,” on Nov. 7.

A memorial candle was kindled similar to those used for Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day.

We set aside this moment lest this next generation forget. If anyone should think the events of the Shoah are unforgettable, there are too many stories about those who just don’t know or even deny the facts.

Tom Duggan is a playwright and actor who starred in a memorable production of “Wiesenthal” — the story of Simon Wiesenthal, famed writer and Nazi hunter. Following the play, Duggan returned to the stage once in California to have a discussion with the audience.

A young woman asked, “Are you sure that all the facts are true?”

“Yes, of course,” he said, “we wouldn’t present without due diligence. Why do you ask?” She paused for a moment and said, “My great grandfather was Adolph Eichmann.”

During the Gratz program Gabriella Michelson read a memorial prayer from the National Board of Rabbis.

Avenu Sh'Bashamayim, Master of the Universe, Creator of all, on this day commemorating Jewish persecution when our people were singled out and murdered, as we pray for the souls of our departed who perished in 1938 on Kristallnacht and during the Shoah that followed - May their souls be bound up in the bond of eternal life - We pray for the safety and well being of our Jewish, Christian and Muslim sisters and brothers and all who suffer persecution only by reason of their faith in places where they are minorities. May You, Oh God, defend them and protect them. May their religious rights and freedom to worship be respected in the places where they reside. Amen!

We pray that peace come to the Holy Land, bringing safety and security to all who dwell in your Holy Precincts. Amen!

And Dear God, we pray that all



Gabriella Michelson leads a Kristallnacht observance at the Reading Branch of Gratz JCHS

words and acts of violence in your name threatening the innocents and the safety of children, women and men be condemned and rejected. Amen!

And Dear God, As our mothers and fathers petitioned you in times of peril and persecution: “Achotaynu V’ Achaynu; - Sisters and Brothers; those given over to trials and tribulations, captives and victims, protect them and defend them; have mercy upon them and bring them forth from suffering to safety. Amen!

After the memorial prayer, Rabbi Dani Zucker, one of our two teachers for Gratz and a rabbi in Pottstown, shared his personal connection to Kristallnacht.

His father, a rabbi in Germany, had just moved very suddenly in 1938 to a new pulpit in Heidelberg. The Gestapo had a list of men to find and arrest where they lived, and they were looking for Rabbi

Zucker in Frankfurt, so he and his wife escaped arrest. After comforting his new congregants, he was fortunate to be able to emigrate ultimately to the United States where in time our Rabbi Dani was born and educated.

Today and Tomorrow

Gratz JCHS as an educational experience speaks to the “now” and what our students can learn, but also to “tomorrow” when they move into a college or campus environment.

Some of our best accolades come from our students when they enter college. They continue to contact us, offering suggestions for strengthening our curriculum and sharing with us their experiences for which Gratz uniquely prepared them.

Several of those “nachas” letters are rewarding and inspiring:

“Both of my children graduated from the JCHS program with

teaching certificates, attending twice a week for five years. They never complained about going, usually looking forward to meeting their ‘Gratz’ friends. They enjoyed their courses, took the college-level teaching courses, and received college credit. Our son got a Hebrew school teaching job at a synagogue near his university. He even developed new curricula for that synagogue, building upon the education he got at JCHS.”

“I really owe you and everyone at Gratz a huge thank you! Going to Gratz and participating in the program has changed my life. It has given me direction and has opened me up to so many incredible opportunities.

“I am truly grateful for all that you & everyone at Gratz has done and continues to do.

“I hope someday I can impact someone’s life as much as Gratz has impacted mine.”

EVERYTHING’S RELATIVE

by Jordan B. Gorfinkel • www.jewishcartoon.com

BECCA
The Altruist

BETH
The Realist

BERNIE
The Idealist

Yael
The Perplexed

LOUIS
The Rebel

ZAYDS
The Traditionalist

BUBS
The Bubbe

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Food Festival at RCOS a smashing success once again

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom hosted its 14th annual Jewish Food and Cultural Festival Nov. 2 at the synagogue in Wyomissing.

As usual, thousands of people representing a wide cross-section of the Reading community came to enjoy the selection of delicious food, much of it prepared by members of the congregation in an effort lasting months. And the event once again gave many non-Jews an opportunity to learn more about Judaism.

For the second year the Reading Theater Project performed at the festival, this time with a look back at 150 years of Yiddish theater as a tribute to the congregation's 150th anniversary.

Photos courtesy of Bruce Cohen



While Jerusalem terror rages, Israel-Jordan relations hang in balance

By Sean Savage
JNS.org

While facing increased Arab riots and terrorist attacks that resemble the underpinnings of a renewed Palestinian intifada (uprising), Israel is simultaneously working to manage tension in its delicate relationship with Jordan, one of its two peaceful Arab neighbors.

On Nov. 5, masked Arab rioters threw rocks and shot fireworks at Israeli security forces on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, forcing Israel to temporarily close the holy site to visitors and touching off a diplomatic spat between the Jewish state and Jordan.

Israel again temporarily closed the Temple Mount to all worshippers after an Arab man's attempted assassination of activist Yehudah Glick, a promoter of Jewish access to the Temple Mount. The preventative move came against the backdrop of weeks of increased Muslim riots and assaults on Jewish residents, including a vehicular Palestinian terror attack on Jerusalem's Ammunition Hill light rail station that killed two people.

After pressure from U.S. and Muslim leaders, the Israeli police decided to reopen the Temple Mount ahead of Muslim prayers on Oct. 31. Yet Nov. 5 saw another car-ramming attack by a Palestinian driver, this time at the Shimon Hatzadik light rail station in Jerusalem. That car attack killed an Israeli Druze border police superintendent and a 17-year-old yeshiva student.

Following the temporary closure on Nov. 5, Jordan threatened to undermine its relations with Israel

by recalling its ambassador to the country over Israeli "violations" on the Temple Mount. Jordan and Egypt are the only Arab nations that have diplomatic relations with Israel.

After a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, Jordan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nasser Judeh, accused Israel of "escalating the situation in Jerusalem" and "violations against the Al-Aqsa Mosque," the Jordanian news agency Petra reported. Judeh added that Jordan would continue to counter "unilateral Israeli moves through diplomatic and legal means, especially using its vantage position as a member of the U.N. Security Council."

Grant Rumley, a research analyst specializing in Palestinian politics and the Levant region for the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, toldJNS.org that he believes Jordan's calculations "are mostly the result of domestic pressure."

"It's harmful for the Jordanians to pull their minister from Israel, but it's even worse for [Jordan's] King Abdullah domestically if he doesn't do anything," Rumley said. "This, combined with a complaint to be filed at the Security Council, amount to symbolic gestures that are likely to appease the Jordanian public (a majority of whom do not support the country's peace treaty with Israel) while still not severely damaging the strategic relationship with Israel."

Despite fighting against each other in the 1948 War of Independence and 1967 Six Day War, Jordan and

Israel have always maintained a relatively close relationship, which was finally formalized in 1994 with the Israel-Jordan peace treaty.

Today, both countries cooperate in several important areas, including security, the economy, and natural resources. Jordan in September signed a 15-year, \$15 million natural gas deal with Israel that was hailed at the time as a historic agreement. As top allies of the U.S., Jordan and Israel also cooperate closely on intelligence sharing, especially amid the threat of the Islamic State and other terrorist groups in nearby Iraq and Syria. Jordan and Israel have also set up joint industrial parks, including the Jordan Gateway, whose formation was announced in late 2013.

At the same time, Israel and Jordan maintain a unique arrangement in Jerusalem. According to the 1994 peace treaty, Jordan retains custodianship over the Muslim holy sites in eastern Jerusalem, including the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. But since the late 1990s, Israel has gradually allowed the Palestinian Authority to assert greater control over the site, which has caused some friction with Jordan and a gray area over control.

As part of the Jordan-Israeli arrangement on the holy sites, Jews and non-Muslims are permitted to visit the Temple Mount, site of the First and Second Temples, on select days, but are not permitted to pray there. Yet there has been a push by some Israelis for greater Jewish sovereignty at the Temple Mount, including prayer rights.

Meanwhile, Muslim leaders, including in the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, have used the Temple Mount issue to incite protests and violence. Recent Palestinian news has been flooded with speeches, articles, and cartoons featuring calls by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to "defend" Al-Aqsa "in any way," Palestinian Media Watch reported.

"This is our Sanctuary, our Al-Aqsa, and our Church [of the Holy Sepulchre]. They (Jews) have no right to enter it. They have no right to defile it. We must prevent them. Let us stand before them with chests bared to protect our holy places," Abbas said.

For Jordan, the Temple Mount arrangement is just one of the critical issues facing the country.

"Jordan has about four major areas of concern these days: the threat of Islamic State, the economy, the crisis of handling Syrian refugees, and the tensions in Jerusalem," Rumley told JNS.org.

"Now, for Abdullah, that's probably exactly the order he'd list these issues in importance," he said. "For the Jordanian public, it might be the other way around. These are sensitive issues, and Abdullah made a strategic calculation in keeping this spat with Israel at the diplomatic/rhetorical levels. There are too many benefits to the relationship with Israel in regards to the other categories for the king to seriously consider severing ties."

Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesperson Paul Hirschson, meanwhile, was careful not to place too much blame on Jordan for recent unrest, instead focusing on PA incitement.

"We regret the Jordanian decision [to recall its ambassador], which

doesn't contribute to calming the situation," Hirschson told JNS.org. "We would expect Jordan to condemn the violence, deliberately instigated from [PA headquarters in] Ramallah."

Before the news of the recall of the Jordanian ambassador and the threat of diplomatic action in the U.N., reports indicated that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and King Abdullah met secretly in Amman on Nov. 1 to discuss the situation in Jerusalem and urge calm.

The two leaders spoke again over the phone on Nov. 6 about the importance of ending violence and incitement over the Temple Mount.

"We agreed that we'll make every effort to calm the situation," Netanyahu said after the phone call.

"I explained to him that we're keeping the status quo on the Temple Mount and that this includes Jordan's traditional role there, as consistent with the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel," Netanyahu added, referring to claims in the Muslim world that Israel is seeking to change the status there.

Some Israeli lawmakers, however, feel that Israel is conceding sovereignty over Jerusalem and the holy sites.

"Israeli society needs to decide if it is willing to pay the price for maintaining sovereignty over the Temple Mount and the entire land," said Member of Knesset Moshe Feiglin (Likud), who has been a leading advocate for Jewish rights on the Temple Mount and recently visited the site. "The weakness being shown in dealing with the Temple Mount reflects on the whole country."

After the two vehicular terror attacks on Nov. 5, Netanyahu placed the blame on Palestinian incitement.

"This attack was the direct result of the incitement of Abbas and his Hamas partners," Netanyahu said. "This front of hate wants to run over all of us. Peace will come when Abbas stops calling Jews 'defilers' and he stops embracing murderers."

The prime minister blamed that same incitement for the Nov. 18 attack on a Jerusalem synagogue that killed four worshippers and a police officer.

Abbas's Fatah movement declared Oct. 31 to be a "day of rage" in Jerusalem, calling on Palestinian "fighters" to defend Al-Aqsa, while Hamas similarly called for further protests and violence.

While the tension continues to escalate, Rumley believes that the situation has not yet risen to the level of another Palestinian intifada.

"I think there are a lot of analysts out there eager to label this as an intifada," he told JNS.org. "But intifadas have to have leadership at some point. The first started leaderless before local committees sprouted up. The second [Intifada] was top-down coordinated. So far, the situation in East Jerusalem is leaderless."

"What we're seeing instead is not so much local leadership as it is external groups attempting to steer the situation," added Rumley. "Hamas calling for protests, Abbas calling for days of rage, etc. ... Right now, these attacks and clashes appear to have a short shelf life, but that doesn't mean it will stay that way in the future."

Save The Date!



Musical Shabbat & Oneg

Friday, March 20, 2015

7:00pm

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing

Please join us as we celebrate Shabbat with Rabbi Brian Michelson and student Cantor Jordan Shaner as they lead a special service featuring the musical talents of our congregants.

Members and Non-members are welcome

Israeli aid organization plays key role in addressing global crises

By Sean Savage

JNS.org

Known primarily for their military prowess and high-tech ingenuity, Israelis are often overlooked when it comes to their global engagement. But IsraAID, an Israeli nonprofit and non-governmental organization founded in 2001, has been on the front line of every major humanitarian crisis of the 21st century – including today’s most difficult hotspots in Iraq and West Africa.

“Our mission is to efficiently support and meet the changing needs of populations as they strive to move from crisis to reconstruction and rehabilitation, and eventually, to sustainable living,” Navonel Glick, IsraAID’s program director, told JNS.org.

Drawing on Israel’s military expertise and robust health care system, IsraAID has tackled humanitarian disasters in 22 countries, including earthquakes in Japan and Haiti, refugee situations in South Sudan and Kenya, and Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy in the United States.

In early October, IsraAID supplied mattresses, blankets, food, and hygiene kits to more than 1,000 people in the Dohuk and Erbil refugee camps in Iraq’s Kurdish region.

Providing aid to refugees in the Arab world is no easy task for an Israeli organization, especially in countries as hostile to the Jewish state as Iraq, which has been overrun by jihadists from the Islamic State terror group.

“This is an issue that is very sensitive, but not for the reasons that one would expect,” Glick said. “More than our security, our concern is how to make sure to protect the people that we are helping. Having people we want to assist become the target of Islamic

State sleeper cells within camps would be horrendous.”

The plight of Iraq’s Christians and Yazidis is eerily similar to the story of the country’s former Jewish community. The modern persecution and expulsion of Iraqi religious minorities draws many parallels to the waves of attacks on, and eventual expulsion of, Iraqi Jewry during the mid-20th century. Nearly 135,000 Jews were forced to leave Iraq from 1948 onwards.

“We decided to launch this project because of the incredible needs of the displaced populations fleeing death and abuse at the hands of the Islamic State,” said Glick. “They are coming with absolutely nothing but the clothes on their backs.”

According to estimates, more than 1.8 million Iraqis have been displaced by Islamic State. Christians in particular have been singled out by the jihadists, with many being forced to convert, leave, or die.

Most of the refugees living in Iraq’s Kurdish region are Christians and Yazidis who fled from Islamic State during the summer. A video recently posted by IsraAID shows the organization’s truck arriving at a refugee camp in Kurdistan, with relief workers being warmly greeted by the refugees as they distribute the humanitarian items.

While Israel does not have diplomatic relations with Iraq, Israel and the Kurds maintain warm relations, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has backed Kurdish independence.

“We do not want to hide our identity, and to be honest, with those who knew where we were from, we never encountered any animosity whatsoever — quite the opposite at times, in fact,” Glick said.

IsraAID is funded by a diverse group of sources including North American

Jewish communities, Christian partners, foundations, corporate sponsors, and private individuals. The American Jewish Committee recently announced it would provide assistance to IsraAID’s efforts in Iraq and West Africa. AJC has partnered with IsraAID in the past on a number of humanitarian relief missions.

“AJC has long responded to humanitarian crises around the world,” Kenneth Bandler, AJC’s director of media relations, told JNS.org. “Our partnership with IsraAID began about a decade ago to offer an international Jewish response to manmade and natural disaster and emergency situation.”

“IsraAID’s ability to send quickly much-needed humanitarian and medical experts and supplies and to be among the very first on the ground is impressive, and, importantly, demonstrates that Israelis can and do assist others,” added Bandler.

Currently, IsraAID is the only Israeli entity present on the ground in West Africa amid the Ebola crisis. Glick, who recently traveled to Sierra Leone to help lead the organizations efforts there, described the situation as “very worrying.”

The Israeli Foreign Ministry and MASHAV — Israel’s Agency for International Development Cooperation have jointly begun sending aid to the region, including the deployment of mobile field hospitals that feature isolation units and protective gear for medical professionals.

Despite increasing international assistance, more than 4,000 people have died so far in the Ebola outbreak.

“The Ebola outbreak continues to spread, and while an increasing amount of international support is coming, the healthcare workers that have been on the frontline of the fight for over five months now are absolutely exhausted, burnt out,

and traumatized,” Glick said.

In Sierra Leone, IsraAID is beginning to provide training to address the psycho-social impact of Ebola.

“Most people realize the very direct medical efforts necessary to tackle the disease, but only now are people starting to realize the psychological toll that the outbreak has had on huge sections of the population — from fear of infection, to grief for whole families and communities that have been decimated, all compounded by increasing stigma towards survivors and the families of victims,” Glick said.

According to Glick, the reaction to IsraAID training has been very positive among the people of Sierra Leone and the country’s government — including support from the First Lady of Sierra Leone, Sia Koroma, who is a trained psychiatric nurse.

Though the crisis in West Africa is serious, Glick said people around the world need to stop the panic and hysteria surrounding Ebola. He said the sensationalistic global reaction to the outbreak is leading to a growing stigma associated with people from West Africa and hampering efforts to combat the disease.

“This disease is indeed dangerous and scary, but it is not easily transmitted, and even in the affected countries, there are still millions of people that are living their lives every day,” he said.

Glick said IsraAID is committed to continuing to provide aid to Iraqi refugees as winter approaches, and he believes that the Ebola outbreak in West Africa is also a long-term project that may take several years to contain and heal.

“The road to containing and eventually beating this disease is still a ways away, and mitigating its psychological impact will probably take years,” he said.

Sodastream bows to BDS, and the only losers are the Palestinians

By David Rosenberg

Haaretz

SodaStream appears to have finally surrendered to the global boycott, sanctions and divestment movement.

The Israeli manufacturer of machines for making fizzy drinks at home, which achieved some fame for recruiting Scarlett Johansson as its pitchwoman, is closing its factory in the West Bank.

The BDS movement may feel it claimed a victory. But against whom? Neither the company, nor the occupation, nor Israel lost much, but the hundreds of Palestinians employed at the plant lost their jobs.

BDSers zeroed in on SodaStream not because it was a fair or logical target, but because it was an easy one. It is one of the very few big Israeli companies actually operating in the West Bank, rather than inside pre-1967 Israel. So even more moderate BDSs who might feel squeamish about boycotting Israel could comfortably snub SodaStream.

Moreover, unlike most Israeli exports that sit in the bowels of your smartphone or part of an anonymous corporate computer network, SodaStream has an easy-to-identify product line vulnerable to boycott — a soda-maker you buy to start off with and then CO2 capsules and flavored syrups you buy for years thereafter. A guilt-ridden boycotter, having bought the device not realizing the full extent he or she was contributing to Palestinian oppression, could find relief from guilt by refusing to restock it with syrups and capsules, or buy a rival’s.

And even though SodaStream enjoys a certain amount of cachet, even in left-liberal bastions like Brooklyn, it is certainly not a product you can’t do without. In other words, it perfectly fit the model of the anti-Israel BDS movement

— and for that matter lots of other boycott movements — that demand few if any personal sacrifices from supporters, and places the moral burden and its costs on others.

Thus universities are routinely urged to divest holdings in companies whose products the boycotters themselves use. Thus people living in Europe and the United States make a moral decision to put hundreds of Palestinians out of work while they move on to the next cause or campaign.

Those Palestinians might be quietly lauding the activists, but I doubt it: If they found working for SodaStream so morally loathsome, why were they working there at all? If it is because they desperately needed the jobs, how moral was it for BDSers to tell them they must give up their livelihood to score a point for Palestine?

It was an easy target, but did SodaStream really merit the kind of rage it elicited from BDSers?

Yes, if you take the view of the BDS movement, which regards anyone and everything connected with Israel as morally tainted. When Israel sends an aid mission to Haiti, it is only doing it to present itself in a good light, not to help Haitians like everyone else, says the movement. If Israel respects gay rights, it’s only to distract attention from its oppression of Palestinians.

When the French cosmetics company Garnier sent free products to female soldiers during last summer’s Gaza conflict, it became an inseparable part of Israel’s war effort. “If Garnier supports IDF, they will not see a single penny from me ever again for as long as I live” was a typical online response.

In this universe of moral black and whites, where even eyeliner can be tainted

with Palestinian blood, SodaStream was doomed to be black because it is Israeli.

But in the real world of limited moral choices, where people and even large businesses often can do no more than act the best they can under the circumstances, SodaStream did pretty well. It’s a business, so BDS spokesman Rafeef Ziadah’s charge that SodaStream wasn’t acting out of the “kindness of its heart” is irrelevant as it is ludicrous.

More to the point is that the company has been paying wages four or five times higher than the average for the West Bank (BDSers angrily say it was only three or four times). Even Israeli labor rights groups have not accused it in recent years of treating its Palestinian employees badly.

Moreover, SodaStream isn’t an ideologically motivated settler intent on occupying the West Bank at all costs. It’s a business that chose to manufacture in the territories because of cost considerations, most of which are due to tax breaks whose costs fell on the Israeli government, not on Palestinians. If Israel and the Palestinians ever reach an accord, it’s hard to imagine SodaStream in the frontlines fighting to stop it; in fact, it might have easily decided to continue doing business in Palestine.

Indeed, SodaStream’s high public profile and vulnerability to consumer boycotts makes it such a tempting target that the movement appears to be gearing up a campaign against it. On the heels of the factory closure, the movement accused SodaStream of preparing to exploit the local Bedouin population when it moves manufacturing to a new plant inside pre-1967 Israel Negev region. “It’s new Lehavim factory is close to Rahat, a planned township in the Naqab (Negev) desert, where Palestinian Bedouins are

being forcefully transferred against their will,” Ziadah thundered.

Ignoring the over-the-top terminology about forced transfer, BDS is saying that SodaStream will remain a corporate criminal for building a plant near a controversial place. It’s grasping for straws.

And for now, straws is all it has. BDS remains a movement of a lot of noise, but few results. SodaStream is such a tempting target that it can’t be allowed to go away because there are so few others the movement can target with any hope of succeeding and because meeting the high standards of ethical behavior by Israel and anyone associated with it is impossible. Are BDSers going to try to convince supporters not to use Intel chips and consign themselves to the Stone Age because the company’s Kiryat Gat plant is near the site of the former Palestinian village of Iraq al-Manshiyya? Will it dare urge people not to buy homes or work in office building constructed with Caterpillar tractors?

If the movement is making the case that any association with Israel is morally wrong, how can it not apply these same impossibly high standards to struggles for freedom and against oppression elsewhere in the world?

BDS supporters should be asking themselves these and other difficult questions, but they won’t, because even as they cast their struggle in the framework of right-versus-wrong, what they are really waging is a tribal battle animated by hatred for the enemy, Israel, and reversing the humiliation of losing Palestine in 1948. The goal is to score victories. The fact that not a single Palestinian is better off today without SodaStream in the West Bank is irrelevant.

Netanyahu to Federation leaders: ‘Israel is ready for peace’

Speaking by video to the Jewish Federations of North America’s General Assembly near Washington Nov. 11, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke forcefully and openly about Iran and Palestinian incitement that has led to much unrest in Jerusalem and throughout Israel. He also took the occasion to thank the leadership and the rank-and-file membership of the various Jewish Federations for their unflagging support for the Jewish State.

Here are excerpts from his talk:

I want to acknowledge and salute DeDe Feinberg, Chair of the Executive Committee; Jerry Silverman, the JFNA President and CEO; and the hundreds of leaders and professionals who are there tonight, for the terrific job you do to strengthen the Jewish communities of North America and to strengthen support for Israel. Your communities have stood resolutely by our side as Israel has defended itself time and again against enemies bent on our destruction, including during this past summer in Operation Protective Edge.

You led solidarity missions; you raised money to help those in need; and you held rallies in support for Israel. And as our soldiers defended Israel on the battlefield, you helped defend Israel in another battlefield — in the court of public opinion. And you did that by doing something very simple — you just told the truth. You told the truth about Israel’s just battle against Hamas terrorists. I want to say two words to you: Thank you. Thank you for standing up for Israel. Thank you for standing up for the truth.

And by the way, Ron Dermer (Israel’s Ambassador in Washington) — you can tell Vice President Biden that I know we’re still buddies. We’ll always be buddies. The vice president said yesterday that we don’t always agree. That’s true. But we definitely agree that Israel has no greater friend and ally than the United States, and that the United States has no greater friend and ally than the State of Israel. I deeply appreciate the unique and special friendship between Israel and the United States of America, as well as the great friendship between Israel and the state of Canada.

The threat of Iran

It’s important for any country to have such alliances, but especially for a country like Israel that faces many challenges unlike any other nation on Earth. But none of these challenges is more important than the threat posed by Iran’s nuclear ambitions.

Our goal must not be merely to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons today. We must also prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons tomorrow.

Iran is openly committed to Israel’s destruction. And even as Iran negotiates a nuclear deal with the leading powers in the international community, its Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, brazenly calls for Israel’s annihilation. These are not my words, these are his words: “Israel’s annihilation.”

He just did it again three days ago on his Twitter account. That’s apparently the Iranian regime’s idea of modernity — tweeting about the annihilation of Israel.

But I’m afraid these aren’t mere words. These aren’t mere words; they’re not just statements thrown out in the air, which is harmful enough. The regime in Iran’s wild rhetoric is also backed by murderous action.

Iran arms, trains, finances the Palestinian terrorist groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad. It has supplied them, and its main terrorist proxy, Hezbollah, with tens of thousands of rockets to fire on Israeli citizens. Iran perpetrates murder

and mayhem throughout the Middle East — in Syria, in Iraq, in Lebanon, in Gaza, in Yemen and elsewhere. It has spread a reign of terror across five continents - from Bangkok to Burgas, and even an attempt in Washington, DC.

Iran’s savagery abroad is also matched by its brutality at home. The ayatollah regime executes political opponents, religious and ethnic minorities, gays, feminists and journalists. And executions have increased, not decreased, under the supposedly moderate Rouhani regime.

This is how Iran acts without nuclear weapons; now imagine how Iran will act if a deal is made that leaves it as a threshold nuclear power.

My friends, it’s obvious that Iran wants to remove the sanctions that have had such a devastating impact on its economy. But it should be equally obvious that Iran is not prepared to dismantle its nuclear weapons program in return.

Unfortunately, instead of holding firm and demanding that Iran dismantle its program, the international community is reportedly, and I hope these reports do not prove to be true, but the international community is reportedly willing to leave Iran’s nuclear program largely intact. They hope to rely on intelligence and inspectors to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. I believe this would be a bad deal and a huge mistake.

We must recognize the limitations of our own intelligence gathering capabilities. Remember — for years, both Israel’s intelligence and US intelligence failed to discover Iran’s secret enrichment facilities at Natanz and Qom. And given that record, there is no reason to believe that our intelligence facilities will be perfect in the future.

As for inspectors, they weren’t able to stop North Korea from getting the bomb. And if the 10-year run-around that Iran has given the International Atomic Energy Agency is any indication, inspectors won’t stop Iran from getting the bomb either.

The IAEA itself has reported just last week that Iran continues to conceal the most suspicious aspects of its nuclear program from the international inspectors that are already in Iran.

Some people have suggested that Iran can help America solve the problems of the Middle East. But Iran is not part of the solution. It’s a huge part of the problem. The Islamic State of Iran is not a partner of America. It’s an enemy of America. And it should be treated as an enemy — by keeping tough sanctions on the regime; by making clear that the international community is determined to do whatever it takes to prevent Iran from breaking out or sneaking out to get the bomb.

See, the worst thing that can happen now is for the international community to agree to a deal that leaves Iran as a threshold nuclear power and removes the sanctions. That would be a disaster of historic proportions. It would embolden all of Iran’s terrorist proxies throughout the region; it would trigger a nuclear arms race between Sunnis and Shi’ites that would endanger the entire planet. And it would pose, needless to say, a grave danger to the State of Israel. Israel cannot allow a regime committed to its destruction to develop the weapons to achieve that goal.

But the alternative to a bad deal is not war. It means giving existing sanctions and even stronger sanctions more time to work to achieve the goal of fully dismantling Iran’s military nuclear capabilities.

To remove sanctions before that goal is reached is to remove any hope of a genuine diplomatic solution.

That is why avoiding a bad deal and

maintaining strong pressure on Iran should be the policy of all responsible governments. So too, all responsible governments should help President Obama in his effort to degrade and defeat ISIS.

But as I said to the United Nations a few months ago, to defeat ISIS and allow Iran to be a threshold nuclear power would be to win the battle and lose the war. The greatest threat facing our world is to have the forces of militant Islam get the bomb. That must never be allowed to happen, for Israel’s sake, for the peace in the Middle East, for the peace and security of the entire world.

Confronting Palestinian terrorism

As we work to prevent the ultimate danger of a nuclear-armed Iran, we must also act forcefully to confront Palestinian terrorism and incitement. In recent weeks, we have seen a dramatic rise in terrorist attacks against Jews across the country, including here in Jerusalem. These attacks have been accompanied by a systemic campaign of incitement, including libels about Israel trying to change the status quo on the Temple Mount and even wild allegations that we are planning to destroy Muslim holy sites.

These are false accusations. They’re absolute fabrications. Israel is fully committed to the status quo. Last week, I spoke to King Abdullah of Jordan, and I reiterated Israel’s commitment to maintain the religious status quo on the Temple Mount. I will continue to make every effort to restore calm, to restore quiet and security, so that all may enjoy the religious freedom guaranteed by Israeli law.

But I regret to say that the Palestinian Authority, which should also be working to calm tensions, has joined Hamas and other radical Islamists in fanning the flames. President Abbas himself called on Palestinians to prevent Jews from entering the Temple Mount. He used the words: “by any means possible.”

See, this — the Temple Mount, the holiest place in Judaism, where Jews have visited peacefully for years — President Abbas says we should not set foot there. That’s changing the status quo.

President Abbas publicly praised the Islamic Jihad terrorist who tried to murder Rabbi Yehuda Glick, declaring that the would-be assassin would, and here’s his quote: “would go to heaven as a martyr defending the rights of our people and its holy places.” That’s the end of the quote.

And just today President Abbas accused Jews of “contaminating” — his word — contaminating the Temple Mount. Once again, this incitement to violence is coupled with revisionist history intended to delegitimize the Jewish people and the Jewish state.

The official Facebook page of Fatah, just turn it on, you’ll see it, you have to Google this to believe this. The official Facebook page of Fatah denies that the Jewish people have any connection to the Temple Mount or that there was ever a Temple Mount at all — a temple on the Temple Mount.

Jerusalem, the ancient City of David, like the Land of Israel, is simply erased by the Palestinians from their history books. Unfortunately, the international community does not hold the Palestinians responsible for this sort of incitement and denial of history, and I think that’s tragic, because these distortions and this incitement are so corrosive to the effort to reach a genuine peace.

Setting back the cause of peace

Rather than help advance peace, many in the international community are setting back the cause of peace by convincing Palestinians that they can have a state without making peace with Israel.

Recognizing a Palestinian state without demanding an end to the Palestinian Authority’s pact with Hamas, an internationally recognized terrorist organization is absurd. Recognizing a Palestinian nation-state without demanding that the Palestinians recognize the nation-state of the Jewish people is unjust.

Recognizing a Palestinian state without demanding an end to incitement in official Palestinian media and schools is reckless. And recognizing a Palestinian state without demanding robust security arrangements to enable Israel to protect itself and the peace that is dangerous.

If the issue of Palestinian statehood is brought before the UN Security Council outside the context of a peace agreement with Israel, this should be flatly rejected. If any one-sided anti-Israel resolution is brought before that council, it should be vigorously opposed. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict will not be solved by exploiting the automatic anti-Israel majorities in the UN bodies. You can pass anything there. But that is not the way to achieve peace.

The only way to peace is through direct negotiations that address all the core issues. Israel is ready for these negotiations; Israel is ready for peace; I am ready for peace. But it must be a genuine peace, a durable peace, and for that, we must have a Palestinian partner who is committed to forging such a genuine peace — a partner who is prepared to confront terrorism and end incitement; a partner who is prepared to recognize the nation-state of the Jewish people; a partner who is prepared to address Israel’s legitimate security concerns seriously; a partner who wants a Palestinian state not to continue the conflict with Israel, but to end it once and for all.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there are many countries in the region today who do want to put the conflict behind us. I think that offers hope. There are leading Sunni Arab states that are re-evaluating their traditional hostility towards Israel. They increasingly understand that the real threat to them doesn’t come from Israel. It comes from militant Sunni radicals like ISIS and from a nuclear-armed Iran.

And I believe that cooperation with these states — that are more ready to work for peace and security with Israel than ever before — I believe that cooperation with them can help open the door to peace with the Palestinians, and I believe this is possible. But for that, we need the international community to stand by Israel, to demand from the Palestinians to stop incitement and to demand from them to go for peace.

My friends, for 66 years, the Jewish communities of North America have been dedicated partners in building the State of Israel. You have helped us transform Israel into a global technological powerhouse, a wonder of medicine and science and innovation, a vibrant and dynamic democracy.

You have stood by Israel’s side as we forged historic peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan, and as we have worked to advance peace with the Palestinians.

And just as you have stood with Israel, Israel stands with you in confronting anti-Semitism; in strengthening Jewish identity; in working to ensure that the next generation of Jews remains just as committed to our remarkable partnership; and in ensuring that all Jews around the world know that they will always have a home in Israel.

We are one people. We share one history. And we have one destiny.

Thank you all. Thank you for standing by Israel, and goodbye from Jerusalem.

Federation Honorial - Memorial Card Information

Please mail your payment with complete information to the Jewish Federation, PO Box 14925, Reading, PA 19612-4925 or bring to the Jewish Cultural Center, 1100 Berkshire Blvd, Suite 125, Wyomissing. You may set up a “**savings account**” for the purpose of sending cards. Please contact the Jewish Federation at 610-921-0624 for further information.

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Holocaust Library & Resource Center

In memory of:
Sandra “Honey” Youngerman – Rosalye Yashek
Eugene Abramowicz – Irwin Goldstein

Jewish Family Service

In honor of:
Florence and Marvin Segal’s new home – Louise Zeidman
Gabrielle Levine’s Bat Mitzvah – Irwin Goldstein

In memory of:
Sandra “Honey” Youngerman – Harriet Baskin, Robert and Sheila Spector, Sid and Esther Bratt, Dr. Sandra K. Rowan
Morton Daniels – Edith Mendelsohn
Pearl Baker (Sharon Syret’s mother) – Carol and Bernie Gerber, Icy Cohen

Federation Jewish Community Campaign

In honor of:
Albert and Eunice Boscov receiving the Franciscan Award from Alvernia University – Rob and Yvonne Oppenheimer
Joey Abramson’s engagement – Jackye and Jim Barrer
Birth of Elina and Vlad Vaysman’s grandson Owen Josef Baker – Jackye and Jim Barrer
Birth of Jay Steinberg’s new grandchild – Rob and Yvonne Oppenheimer
Brian Wernick’s engagement – Susan and Richard D’Angelo

Sy Youngerman and sons

have made a donation to the Jewish Federation of Reading to acknowledge our gratitude to those who made generous contributions to the JCC and Federation in loving memory of
our wife and mother, Honey.

It is gratifying to know your kindness in honoring Honey will have a beneficial effect on others.

Honorials and Memorials

Contributions may be made to the following Funds:	
Federation Jewish Community Campaign	\$10
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JFS Food Bank	\$25
JFS Taxi Transportation Program	\$20
Holocaust Library & Resource Center	\$18
Doris Levin Fund	\$10

In memory of:
Sandra “Honey” Youngerman – Marlene and George Weiss, Dena and Vic Hammel, Rob and Yvonne Oppenheimer, Donna and Saul Eisenberg, Elaine and Paul Safir, Driben Family
Pearl Baker (Sharon Syret’s mother) – Dena and Vic Hammel, Debbie Goodman and John Moyer

Friendship Circle Fund

In memory of:
Martin Schneider – Marcia Gross
Sylvia Sulman – Irwin Goldstein
Sandra “Honey” Youngerman – Irwin Goldstein

Evelyn Thompson Nursery School Fund

In memory of:
Marilyn Frank – Beth and Bob Caster

In honor of:
Birth of Al and Betsy Katz’s granddaughter Amalia Aliza Katz – Beth and Bob Caster
Gary Lattin’s retirement – Beth and Bob Caster
Brooke Gunter’s engagement – Beth and Bob Caster
Matthew Seltzer’s marriage – Beth and Bob Caster
Joey Abramson’s engagement – Beth and Bob Caster

All Around the Town

Congratulations to **Elina and Vladimir Vaysman** on the birth of their grandson Owen Josef and to new parents Alyssa and Colin Baker of Wynnewood, Pa.

Mazel tov to **Ralph and Kristin Kabakoff** on the birth of their son Maxwell Joseph on October 27 and to delighted grandparents **Myron and Karen Kabakoff**.

Mazel tov to parents **Ellen and Don Abramson** and grandmother **Lillian Abramson** on the engagement of Joey

Abramson to Debbie Konstadt.

Mazel tov to **Janet and Bernie Kaplan** on the birth of their great-granddaughter Tehillah Hannah, daughter of Fran and Rafi Miller of Jerusalem.

We love good news about members of our community! Please share it by emailing Marknem@aol.com.

Until next time: Shalom!

Penn State Berks professor honored

Laurie Grobman, professor of English and women’s studies at Penn State Berks, was recognized as one of the best in American higher education when she was named Outstanding Baccalaureate College Professor of the Year Nov. 20 at a luncheon and awards ceremony at the National Press Club in Washington. She is one of four national winners of the 2014 U.S. Professors of the Year awards.



Sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and administered by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, the awards recognize professors for their influence on teaching and commitment to undergraduate students.

At the awards luncheon, Grobman was introduced by one of her students, Elizabeth Kemmerer, a sophomore childhood and early education major. “Dr. Grobman inspires, encourages, and deeply cares about her students,” Kemmerer said. “She demands the excellence we as students should all desire, and it is an honor to not only be present for her acceptance of this prestigious award but also to be the one to introduce her.”

Penn State Berks Chancellor R. Keith Hillkirk said: “Dr. Grobman

inspires and challenges her students to levels of achievement and excellence that I’m sure surprise the students themselves at times.”

Among Grobman’s accomplishments is bringing the Center for Service Learning and Community-Based Research to the college in the fall of 2010 and serving as the coordinator. Students and faculty are partnering with several nonprofit organizations, such as Friend Inc., the Greater Reading Food Bank, the Pagoda, Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead and the Salvation Army’s Mañana program.

She and her students have worked closely with the local African-American, Latino and Jewish communities to tell their stories.

“A History of the Jewish Community in Reading and Berks County” was written by Penn State Berks students in partnership with the Jewish Cultural Center/Jewish Federation of Reading and with hundreds of members of the local Jewish community. Then a second book, “Jewish Reading and Berks,” which is a photographic history of Berks County’s Jewish community, was produced by students in Grobman’s “Jewish Representation in History and Photography” course. The photographic history book focused on the issues emanating from the telling of history through photographs, such as accuracy, selectivity and historical truth. The book was published by Arcadia Publishing for the “Images in America Series.”

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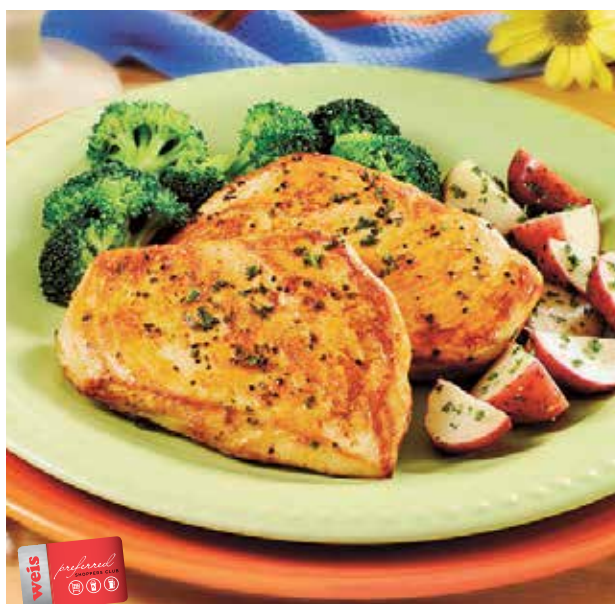
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