

Glazer JCC hosts return of wrestling

For the first time in three decades, wrestling will return to the former Fort Homer Hesterly Armory, now the Bryan Glazer Family JCC.

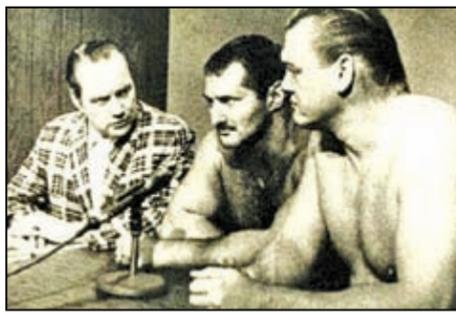
On Tuesday, Sept. 26, for one night only, wrestling fans will be able to enjoy matches and walk-ons by some of the greats from years' past. Bell time is 7 p.m. with VIP guests invited at 6 p.m.

Wrestling - before the Bucs, the Rays, the Lightning and Rowdies - was the

sports king in Tampa and throughout the state. Heroes and villains of the wrestling world included Dusty Rhodes, The Great Malenko, Jack Briscoe and as the years rolled on, others such as Wahoo McDaniel, John Cena, Chris Jerico, Ric Flair, Ricky Steamboat and, perhaps the most famous of all, Hulk Hogan.

The armory was one of several venues in Florida where the scripted matches, often

WRESTLING continued on PAGE 7



(L-R) Gordon Solie who often announced matches at the armory, interviews The Great Malenko, aka Lawrence Simon, and Johnny Valentine.

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Scoop: Ben & Jerry and their ice cream to top event



Ben Cohen, left, and Jerry Greenfield of Ben & Jerry's fame

The Jewish Federation of Pinellas & Pasco Counties will introduce a new signature event, Catalyst, on Saturday evening, Oct. 28, with a presentation by Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield, founders of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream and the Ben and Jerry's Foundation.

The Federation aims to make Catalyst an annual tradition featuring prominent global visionaries who embody entrepreneurial spirit, social responsibility, and radical business philosophies.

The inaugural event will be held at the Largo Performing Arts Cen-

ter, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo, starting at 7 p.m. with a cocktail party for VIPs who purchase an upgraded ticket for \$118. The regular program begins at 8 p.m. with general admission tickets, \$54. The Performing Arts Center will be handle ticket sales through the box office.

The event will be open to the general public, but there will be a pre-sale for the Jewish community. "This will not be an event where people can wait until the last minute to buy tickets," said the Federation's Elana Gootson.

BEN & JERRY continued on PAGE 13



Compiled from JTA news service

Billy Joel wears yellow Star of David during New York concert encore

Billy Joel wore a yellow Star of David - similar to ones Jews were forced to wear during the Holocaust - on his sports jacket during the encore of his monthly concert at Madison Square Garden.

Photos of the legendary singer wearing the star began appearing on Facebook shortly after his performance Monday night, Aug. 21.

Among those giving Joel accolades was his former wife, model Christie Brinkley, who was in attendance at the concert. "And on the day of the Solar Eclipse a yellow star appeared on the jacket of another kind of star with a clinched fist that seemed to be gripping painful, no excruciating, memories of loved ones who wore that star to their death," Brinkley wrote in the caption of photo featuring Joel wearing the star on stage.

Joel's parents are Jewish but he was not brought up with the faith. He has been described as a secular Jew and an atheist.

In June, Joel told *Rolling Stone*, that he tries to remain publicly apolitical. "I am a private citizen and I have a right to believe in my own political point of view, but I try not to get up on a soapbox and tell people how to think."

Israel terror attacks sharply spike in July

Israel's security services last month recorded 222 terrorist attacks against Israelis, the highest number in any month since December 2015.

The attacks resulted in the killing of five Israelis - two police officers shot by terrorists and three members of one family - and the wounding of seven, according to the Israel Security Agency's monthly report for July published earlier this week. Several Palestinians also died, some while perpetrating attacks and others during clashes with security forces.

The tally for July was more than double the 94 attacks recorded in June and nearly double the average of 121 per month from January 2016 onward. The Israel Security Agency, or Shin Bet, recorded a total of 2,314 attacks during that period in which 33 victims died and 223 were wounded.

Last month was among the deadliest in that period in terms of terrorist attack fatalities, second only to November 2015, when terrorists murdered 10 Israelis.

The surge in July attacks owed largely to tensions and clashes connected to the Temple Mount. That month, three Arab terrorists killed the two officers before being shot dead. Israel placed metal detectors at the entrance to the Temple Mount, a compound that is holy both to Jews and Muslims. Riots ensued, leading Israel to dismantle the metal detectors two weeks after installing them.

IN THE WAKE OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

Mayors, ADL announce agreement to combat hate

By BEN SALES
JTA news service

NEW YORK - More than 300 U.S. mayors including three from the Tampa Bay Area have signed on to a compact with the Anti-Defamation League to combat hate and bigotry.

The mayors are agreeing to explicitly condemn racism, white supremacy and bigotry, and to implement educational and public safety programs to safeguard vulnerable populations and discourage discrimination.

The local mayors who signed the agreement, initiated by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the ADL, are Rick Kriseman of St. Petersburg, Bob Buckhorn of Tampa and Julie Ward Bujalski of Dunedin.

Other signatories included the mayors of New York City, **MAYORS continued on PAGE 11**

3 Jewish movements nix Trump High Holidays call

■ Related stories, Pages 10 and 11

WASHINGTON (JTA) - Three streams of American Judaism will not participate in the traditional annual pre-High Holidays call with the president, saying Donald Trump has "given succor to those who advocate anti-Semitism, racism, and xenophobia."

"We have concluded that President Trump's statements during and after the tragic events in Charlottesville are so lacking in moral leadership and empathy for the victims of racial and religious hatred that we cannot organize such a call this year," said a statement by leaders of the Reconstructionist, Reform and Conservative movements.

The reference was to Trump's equivocation following the clash between white supremacists and counter-protesters on Aug. 12 in Charlottesville, VA.

CALL continued on PAGE 11

Temple Ahavat Shalom to dedicate Entel Benjamin Campus on Sept. 8

Earlier this summer, just months after Temple Ahavat Shalom celebrated its 40th anniversary, Syd and Irwin Entel, Robert Entel and Susan and Steven Benjamin bestowed a transformative gift of more than \$1 million to Temple Ahavat Shalom, creating the newly named Entel Benjamin Campus of Temple Ahavat Shalom.

As a tribute to the family, the congregation will hold the dedication of its Entel Benjamin Campus for temple members and special guests on Friday, Sept. 8 at 6 p.m.

The family members have all been actively involved in the life of the congregation for many years. This gift aims to ensure the congregation continues to thrive for years to come.

AHAVAT SHALOM continued on PAGE 5



(L-R) Back row, Alyssa Benjamin, Steven Benjamin, Susan Benjamin, Robert Entel, Richard Entel, and Rachel Benjamin. Front row: Daniel Benjamin, Irwin Entel and Syd Entel

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Meet Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield,

notable minds behind Ben & Jerry's delicacies and champions of philanthropy and social justice. The pair will speak on October 28 at the Federation event, Catalyst 2017.



Our campaign will officially launch on **OCTOBER 28, 2017**

Did you know?

"Catalyst" is the name for the Federation's new annual event, in which guests of influence and inspiration will speak to the community and represent the powerful role that the Federation plays in our interconnected and ever-changing community.

www.JewishPinellas.org



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Classes begin October 23 on alternating Mondays at locations around Tampa Bay. Cost is \$99 per person, which includes course and dinner. Scholarships available. Visit www.jewishpinellas.org or email emitie@jewishpinellas.org for more information. Proudly offered by the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties and the Tampa Jewish Federation.



SAVE THESE DATES!

- Oct 26 . 3rd Annual Mega Challah Bake
- Oct 28 . Catalyst 2018: An Evening with Ben & Jerry
- Oct 29 . Federation's Super Sunday

- Nov 9 . Gulf Coast's Annual Faces Gala
- Dec 3 . CBI Chase the Dreidel 5K
- Dec 17 . PJ Library Teddy Bear Tea
- Jan 27-29 . TBE Art Festival
- Feb 10 . Florida Holocaust Museum's Annual "To Life" Gala

- Feb 25 . TBI Food Festival & Purim Carnival
- Mar 11 . CBI Chaivana Nights Gala
- Mar 24 . Gulf Coast Golf Like a Rock Star
- Apr 15 . Jewish Heritage Festival
- Apr 29 . Sonya Miller Women of Distinction

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Advertising.....Aug 29

SEPTEMBER 22

Press ReleaseSept 8

Advertising.....Sept 12

OCTOBER 6

Press ReleaseSept 22

Advertising.....Sept 26

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Times of tolerance in our scary world

PERSPECTIVE

Emilie Socash
Executive Director, Jewish Federation of Pinellas & Pasco Counties



One of the best parts of my work in the community is getting to sit down and have meaningful conversations about the great (and on their way to great) happenings across our entire region. Just last week, I connected with friends like Jerry Benstock, Beth Rosenbluth, Betty Gootson (and more) and we chatted about the Jewish Community Camp, the future of Jewish education, the role of the Federation as a resource – and more.

I couldn't help but notice, however, that a pervasive backdrop to these conversations was making its way to the forefront, barging in, demanding attention. This background issue stomping into the spotlight is the issue made so very real by the recent rally in Charlottesville.

The metaphor that "all the world's a stage" is particularly relevant to this issue, as we watched the terrifying mobilization of a grab bag of white supremacist groups join forces to inflict their messaging, their vile hatred, and their ultimate wish for "action" upon the rest of the world. About six years ago, during my time at freeFall Theatre, I recall the sense of utter despair and dread when *Cabaret* was being staged and developed in the blackbox space. I sat watching the tech rehearsal in the space that is 48-foot square, all surfaces painted a suffocating flat black, as the close of act 1 ended with the unfurling of huge cloth banners from the ceiling in stark and symbol-laden black, white, and red fabric.

It made me sick to see the actors bring to reality the salute, the brown uniform of the Hitler youth, and the haunting use of the songs of the Hitlerjugend (Hitler youth). My reaction was no less deep and sickened than that of the actors portraying this on stage; I believe we all took some comfort in knowing that this was both a fictionalized presentation as well as an important educational tool in referencing and making real historical terror.

Charlottesville was not the first time that I saw the visible use of swastikas and hate language in an organized protest this year, unfortunately; the "Unite the Right" efforts only brought it closer to home. In June, my family and I visited Germany and took a one-day trip to Berlin with the sole purpose of visiting Sachsenhausen, the first designed concentration camp, which was later used as a model for camp layouts and architecture.

We stayed at a modest family hostel next to the Berlin HBF, the main train station, and as we settled in (with the girls getting on the wifi and taking selfies, Shane trying to find English-language news on the television, and me researching the vegan scene for our dinner later that evening) we started to hear screaming and chanting outside. Looking down, we saw a small protest with several bullhorns, and while the German chants were lost on me, the signs and symbols used were clear.

The next morning, we ventured with our guide from Mosaic Tours to the camp, taking the train about a half hour north of Berlin through Germany's amazingly scenic and quaint landscape.

It was our first time – as a family, and individually – visiting a concentration camp. Certain visuals I expected: the gate that declared "Arbeit Macht Frei," the administrative building that could see the entire camp, the uniforms on display. But I didn't expect green grass. A terrain course for testing army boots. Touching the marble slabs in the medical testing room. Or how close the neighboring homes were to the wall that surrounded the camp.

Hundreds of people lived within a few hundred feet of this camp (and countless other camps throughout Europe). Some responded; many didn't.

When considering our own backyard protests and events, whether that be Charlottesville, the subsequent shut-down of the Boston rally, or the full cancellation of the planned Act for America rallies slated for early September, I'm both terrified and reinvigorated. Terrified that there is a level of misguided tolerance of these movements in the first place, but reinvigorated that there are those in our communities willing to take action and speak up.

A great part of taking action is not just reactively speaking up at counter protests and solidarity vigils, although I remain tremendously proud that our community was represented very visibly at the St. Petersburg vigil held the day after the Charlottesville incidents, but also proactively enhancing the conversation regarding inclusion, respect, diversity, tolerance, and community cohesion.

To that end, the Federation is organizing a few key actions to reinforce and respond to the scary world in which we live. For families, we have launched a "Parent Education Program," bringing together leading psychologists for webinars on topics of current concern.

The first seminar addressed speaking to your kids about hate and anti-Semitism. We're also spearheading a community-wide disaster readiness portal which I hope we will never need to use. And finally, we're continuing to lean in to the important work that changes lives here at home and abroad.

Now more than ever, we need your support in getting involved, contributing to our work, and staying vigilant. Please join us.

For more information about how to volunteer, donate, or otherwise contribute to our community's readiness and response efforts to combat hate and promote tolerance, contact the Federation at (727) 530-3223.

Liked it? Loathed it? Want to react? I would welcome your feedback and can be reached at emilie@jewishpinellas.org.

Netanyahu calls body searches of female worshippers at Western Wall 'unacceptable'

JERUSALEM (JTA) – Body searches of female worshippers at the entrance to the Western Wall are "unacceptable," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said.

Netanyahu asked Minister of Public Security Gilad Erdan to look into accusations that at least four female rabbinical students were subjected to body searches while attempting to enter the Western Wall Plaza, the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement.

On Wednesday, Aug. 23, the students from the Reform movement's Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, including two Americans, were asked to lift their shirts and skirts for security before being allowed to enter the Western Wall plaza, where an egalitarian prayer service was being held. The four said they were questioned and pulled aside into a private room.

The women were among a group of 15 rabbinical, cantorial and Jewish education students from North America and Australia who joined about 200 men and women in an egalitarian service held that morning on the plaza behind the

men's and women's sections. The egalitarian service took place following the monthly rosh chodesh service of the Women of the Wall group.

The Israel Religious Action Center of the Reform movement said it planned to submit formal complaints about the body searches on the students.

Erdan said that if a complaint is filed, it will be "thoroughly checked."

Netanyahu and Erdan "agreed that if this indeed took place as described, it is unacceptable and will be addressed in accordance with the law and the instructions of the court," the statement said.

Western Wall security did not say what they were looking for, according to the Israel Religious Action Center. Western Wall officials in the past have detained women and searched for Torah scrolls and other religious items they consider inappropriate for women to bring to the wall.

In January, Israel's High Court of Justice ruled that women are not to be subjected to intense body searches when entering the Western Wall.

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RABBINICALLY — SPEAKING —

Season of inventory

By RABBI YOSSI EBER
Chabad of West Pasco

As we begin the Jewish month of Elul - the last month of the Jewish calendar year, it is a time to "take inventory" of the 12 months.

It's never easy to reflect on the past, however this month provides us with special assistance as explained by the founder of the Chabad movement.

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1745-1813) explains the month of Elul with a metaphor: The king's usual residence is in the royal palace in the capital city. Anyone wishing to approach the king must go through the appropriate channels of the palace bureaucracy and gain the approval of a succession of secretaries and ministers. He must journey to the capital then pass through the many gates, corridors and antechambers that lead to the king's throne room. His presentation must be meticulously prepared, and he must adhere to an exacting code of dress, speech and mannerism. However, there are times when the king leaves the city and comes out to the fields. At this time, anyone can approach him; the king receives them all with a smiling face and a radiant countenance. The peasant behind his plow has access to the king in a manner unavailable to the highest-ranking minister in the royal court when the king is in the palace.

The month of Elul, says Rabbi Schneur Zalman, is when the king is in the field and we all have unfettered access to him.

Let us take advantage of this special time to prepare ourselves for Rosh Hashanah and the coming year.

May all be inscribed and sealed for a happy and healthy year.

The Rabbiniically Speaking column is provided as a public service by the Jewish Press. Columns are assigned on a rotating basis by the Pinellas County Board of Rabbis. The views expressed in this guest column are those of the rabbi and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Jewish Press or the Board of Rabbis.



Congregations

Chabad Center of St. Petersburg

Guest rabbi to speak: Rabbi Elie Estrin of North Miami Beach will speak on "The Baby Who Wouldn't Die: Of Medicine, Miracles and Mindset" will on Sunday, Sept. 10 at 6:30 p.m. When their sixth child was diagnosed in utero with a rare cardiac disease, Rabbi Elie and wife Chaya Rochel mentally prepared for their unpredictable future. Rabbi Estrin will share the story of how, despite the fatal predictions of the doctors, his baby - and his family - are thriving. Along with being a Chassidic rabbi, he serves as a part-time chaplain with the 627 Air Base Group at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington State, making him the bearer of the first beard in the Air Force in over three decades. There is no charge for this event, but sponsorships are welcome. To RSVP: go to www.ChabadSP.com/ Estrin.

Temple B'nai Israel Clearwater

High Holidays 101: Take in a talk by Rabbi Daniel Treiser about the High Holidays on Sunday, Sept. 10 from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m. Get High Holiday questions answered, learn about customs, make and taste High Holiday inspired recipes and more. RSVP to the temple office at (727) 531-5829.

Friday Night Live: Shabbat services on Friday, Sept. 8 at 6 p.m. will feature music and blessings. Come early for a nosh at 5 p.m.

Pie oneg: Join in an annual tradition as the women of the congregation sponsor a special oneg for new and prospective members on Friday, Sept. 15, following Shabbat services at 7:30 p.m.

Race and tashlich: On Saturday, Sept. 23 at 4 p.m., meet at the temple for the start of an Amazing Race style scavenger hunt around town, finishing at the beach at Sand Key Park. There will be a picnic dinner at the park at 6 p.m., followed by Tashlich service at 7. Teams

are forming now. Call the temple office for more information.

Senior get together: On Thursdays at 1 p.m., join other seniors and play mah jongg, Mexican train dominoes or bridge at the temple. Coffee and cake will be served.

Talent search: The congregation is looking for singers in all sections to join Kol Rina, the temple's adult choir, led by Cantorial Soloist Laura Berkson. Practices are Thursdays from 7:30 - 9 p.m. For more information, contact Berkson at laurab@tbclearwater.org.

Preschoolers playdate: There will be a playtime for preschoolers and parents on Sunday, Sept. 10 from 10 a.m. to noon. This is an opportunity for families with young children to meet each other and engage in activities to play, learn and grow together. Classes meet once a month for 10 months. Non-members are welcome. Call temple office for schedule and pricing information.

Cong. Beth Shalom Clearwater

Camp-style service: The congregation will have a camp-style Kabbalat Shabbat service on Friday, Sept. 8 at 6:30 p.m.

Interfaith prayer: The congregation will participate in an interfaith prayer for peace event at First Methodist Church, 411 Turner St., Clearwater on Sunday, Sept. 24 at 6:30 p.m.

Talmud classes: On Mondays, explore ancient legal tradition with Dr. Priscilla Nathanson. The class, open to all levels of knowledge, is held after minyan from 10 - 11:15 a.m. Nathanson also leads a Talmud study on most Wednesdays, at 7 p.m. Contact the synagogue office to confirm when classes will be held.

Chabad of Clearwater

Torah and tea: Rebbetzin Miriam Hodakov leads a "Torah and Tea" exclusively for women on Wednesdays at 11:15 a.m. There is no charge to attend. RSVP to MiriamHodakov@gmail.com or (727) 265-2770.

Temple Beth-El St. Petersburg

L'Chaim luncheon: This luncheon on Thursday, Sept. 7 at noon in the library will feature a talk by Richard Dameshek, who will discuss his book *The Gang of Five - The Impact of Five German Refugee Rabbinic Students on Twentieth-Century Reform Judaism*. Bring a lunch or let the temple order you a sandwich (\$15 per person). RSVP by Sept. 5 to (727) 347-6136.

Shabbat for kids: On Friday, Sept. 8 at 10 a.m. the temple invites family members and special friends of Early Childhood Center children to come to the center's morning Shabbat service.

Trip to Israel: The temple is planning a trip to Israel from Oct. 22 through Nov. 1. Anyone interested in going should visit tinyurl.com/arzaworld-tbe or call (800) 811-2812.

Cong. B'nai Israel St. Petersburg

Disney-themed Shabbat: A Disney-themed Shabbat service will be held on Friday, Sept. 8 at 6:30 p.m. Dress as a Disney character and sing along as the Friday night service is set to favorite Disney melodies. Stay for a festive "Frozen" dessert oneg. Young families are invited to the synagogue's \$5 mac and cheese dinner prior to services at 5 p.m. RSVP for dinner by Wednesday, Sept. 6 to Maureen Sechan at the synagogue.

Talmud class: Steve Wein continues his Talmud Made Easy class with the study of *Berachot* (Blessings) - the first tractate in the Talmud. Class begins Tuesday, Sept. 5 at 5 p.m. in the library.

Shabbat & Yom Tov Candle Lighting Times



Sept. 1	•	7:33 pm
Sept. 8	•	7:25 pm
Sept. 15	•	7:17 pm
Sept. 20	•	7:11 pm
Sept. 21	•	8:04 pm
Sept. 22	•	7:09 pm

Explore the origins and reasons of our prayers and the genesis of the scheme of prayer we follow today. Novices and seasoned students alike are welcome to participate. For more information or to sign up, contact Pam Askin in the synagogue office.

Cong. Beth Shalom Gulfport

Adult b'nai mitzvah class: Bar/bat mitzvah instruction for children and adults is offered for free on Saturdays after services and kiddish. For more information, call (727) 321-3380.

Chabad of Pinellas County Palm Harbor

Rosh Hashanah dinner: Celebrate the new year with traditional holiday foods and delicacies on Wednesday, Sept. 20 at 8 p.m. The cost is \$25 for adults and \$12 for children, or \$75 for families. RSVP by Sept. 13 to www.yichabad.com/dinner or call (727) 789-0408.

Tea and fashion: The Women's Group of Chabad will present a Chai tea and fashion show on Sunday, Sept. 10 at 3:30 p.m. at the Chabad center with Designs by LuluRoe consultant Dani Gamson. There will be tea, appetizers and desserts. This is a free event open to all women in the community. RSVP at www.yichabad.com/women or call (727) 789-0408.

Afterschool program: Chabad of Pinellas County is now accepting applications for the 2017-2018 Grow Jewish Enrichment afterschool program for children 5-12, with the option of bar and bat mitzvah instruction available. The afterschool program takes place on Tuesdays from 4:30 - 6:15 p.m. The program integrates Jewish heritage with STEM and the culinary arts. To sign up, call Mushky Adler at (727) 789 or email mushky@yichabad.com. For more information go to www.YIChabad.com/Grow

Ethics class: Join in an ongoing class on "Ethics of Our Fathers" every Shabbat afternoon one hour before sunset at Chabad of Pinellas County. The class is free and no reservation is necessary. Call the office at (727) 789-0408 for more information.

Temple Ahavat Shalom Palm Harbor

Holiday season begins: On Saturday, Sept. 16, at 7:30 p.m., the congregation will conclude Shabbat with Havdalah, and then inaugurate the High Holy Day season with the showing of a film produced in Israel, *The Women's Balcony*. Following the film, a dessert reception will be held, sponsored by our Sisterhood. At 10 p.m. there will be a brief Selichot service. There is no charge to attend these events.

High Holidays primer: Learn about the history of the High Holidays during a presentation by Rabbi Gary Klein on Sunday, Sept. 17 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.. The presentation will include customs and blessings, tasty holiday

• CONTINUED on NEXT PAGE

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PINELLAS COUNTY

Reform

Temple AHAVAT SHALOM — 1575 Curlew Rd., Palm Harbor, 34683 • Rabbi Gary Klein • Services: Friday: 7:30 p.m., First Friday: 6 p.m., Saturday: traditional service third week of the month. 9 a.m., call for other service times • Telephone: (727) 785-8811 • Website: www.ahavatshalom.org • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

Temple BETH CHAI DAVID — 39330 U.S. 19 N., Bradley Plaza, Tarpon Springs • Mailing Address: P.O. Box 535, New Port Richey, 34653 • Rabbi David Levin • Shabbat Services: Friday: 7:30 p.m. • Telephone: (352) 428-2280 • Unaffiliated

Temple BETH-EL — 400 S. Pasadena Ave., St. Petersburg 33707 • Rabbi Michael Torop • Services: Friday 7:30 p.m., Saturday, service and Torah study, 10 a.m. • Telephone: (727) 347-6136 • Website: www.templebeth-el.com • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

Congregation B'NAI EMMUNAH — 57 Read St., Tarpon Springs, 34689 • Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1312, Tarpon Springs, 34688 • Rabbi Lynn Goldstein • Services: Friday: 7:30 p.m. • Torah study Saturday, 10:30 a.m. • Telephone: (727) 938-9000 • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

Temple B'NAI ISRAEL — 1685 S. Belcher Road, Clearwater, 33764 • Rabbi Daniel Treiser • cantorial soloist, Laura Berkson • Services: Friday 7:30 p.m. • Telephone: (727) 531-5829 • Website: www.TBclearwater.org • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

Conservative

Congregation BETH SHALOM — 1325 S. Belcher Road, Clearwater 33764 • Rabbi David Weizman • Rabbi Danielle Upbin, associate • Services: Friday: 6:30 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m., Sunday 9 a.m., Mon. & Thurs 8:30 a.m. • Telephone: (727) 531-1418 • Website: www.cbsclearwater.org • Affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

Congregation BETH SHOLOM — 1844 54th St. S., Gulfport 33707 • Cantor David Wicentowski • Services: Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. • Telephone: (727) 321-3380 • Website: sholomgulfport.org • Unaffiliated.

Congregation B'NAI ISRAEL — 300 58th St. N., St. Petersburg 33710 • Rabbi Jacob Luski • Cantor Jonathan

Schultz • Services: Friday 7:30 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m., Mon. - Fri. 7:45 a.m., Sun. 9 a.m.; evening minyan, 6:30 p.m. • Telephone: (727) 381-4900 • Website: www.cbistpete.org • Affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

Orthodox

CHABAD of CLEARWATER — 2280 Belleair Road, Clearwater, 33764 • Rabbi Levi Hodakov • Services: Call for information on Friday service times, Sunday, 9:30 a.m., men only • Telephone: (727) 265-2770 • Website: www.JewishClearwater.com • email: rabbil8@gmail.com.

CHABAD JEWISH CENTER OF GREATER ST. PETERSBURG — 4010 Park St. N., St. Petersburg 33709 • Rabbi Alter Korf • Services: Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Shacharit, Mon.-Thurs., 7:15 a.m., Torah study at 10:30 a.m. on Sturday, Sun., 8 a.m.; • Telephone: (727) 344-4900 • Website: www.chabadsp.com.

CHABAD of PINELLAS COUNTY — 3696 Fisher Road, Palm Harbor, 34683 • Rabbi Pinchas Adler • Services: Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m. and one hour before sunset • Telephone: (727) 789-0408 • Website: Yichabad.com.

PASCO COUNTY

Conservative

BETH TEFILLAH/JCC OF WEST PASCO — 9841 Scenic Drive, Port Richey, 34668 • Ron Becker and Elliot Shapiro, spiritual leaders • Services: Friday, 7:30 p.m., Saturday, 9:30 a.m. • Telephone: (727) 847-3814 • website: jewishcommunitycenterofwestpasco.com • Email at: Eileen-hochstadt13005@gmail.com • Unaffiliated

Orthodox

CHABAD OF WEST PASCO — Rabbi Yossi Eber • 10733 Maple Creek Dr., Suite 101, Trinity, FL 34655 • Services: Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; class: 10 a.m., • Telephone: (727) 376-3366 • Website: www.ChabadWP.org • email: info@chabadwp.org

HERNANDO COUNTY

Reform

Temple BETH DAVID — 13158 Antelope St., Spring Hill • Rabbi Paul Schreiber • Shabbat Services: Friday, 7:30 p.m., third Friday traditional service, 7:30 p.m. • Saturday, 10 a.m. • Telephone: (352) 686-7034 • Website: www.tbdf.org. Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism.

Atlanta private school students disciplined for Jews vs. Nazis beer pong

(JTA) — A student from a private high school in Atlanta was expelled and four others were suspended after a photo on social media showed them playing a game of Jews vs. Nazis beer pong.

The student who hosted the party earlier this month was suspended,

but can reapply to The Lovett School. Two other students who were watching the game but not playing were banned from extracurricular activities for the first two weeks of the new school year, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reports. Among the approximately two

dozen guests at the party, 19 are entering their senior year at the school. There were also some alumni, and some of the guests were minors.

The school learned of the game when a local rabbi, Peter Berg, told the headmaster about the party after receiving the photo in an email from

several people.

“The fact that someone could even conceive of such a game and then play it and think it’s funny is beyond words,” Rabbi Berg said.

The photo shows large red beer cups laid out on a table in the shape of a swastika and a Star of David.

For High Holiday Service Schedules, See Page 14

AHAVAT SHALOM

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

“Vibrant synagogues are essential to the perpetuation of Judaism as a force for good in the lives of individual Jews and of people outside the Jewish community,” said Rabbi Gary Klein. “A gift such as the one given by the Entel/Benjamin family to our congregation will play a major role in the perpetuation of Judaism.”

Rabbi Klein added, “Despite their many achievements, their wonderful knowledge and wisdom, and their exemplary generosity, they are among the most unpretentious and undemanding people whom I have ever known. No task is ever too large or too small for any of them be it helping our president, treasurer and our other lay-leaders create a far-sighted financial plan for our congregation, creating a magnificent piece of glass art for our congregation’s lobby, volunteering in the community during our congregation’s mitzvah day, or regularly polishing the silver that adorns our Torahs.”

Syd Entel said the donation was in honor of the family’s many years of association with the temple, the rabbi and the staff. “We have celebrated our children’s and grandchildren’s mitzvahs and holidays and feel blessed in every way. We hope that our gift will enhance the spiritual, educational, and religious needs of our Temple and inspire others to do the same,” she said.

Almost 55 years ago, Syd and Irwin Entel arrived in Dunedin with their three small children: Robert, Richard and Susan. The Entels moved from Brooklyn so that Irwin could start his medical career as a radiologist, in a town that the couple recognized would be a great place to raise their children.

The Jewish community in northern Pinellas County was in its infancy at the time and Syd and Irwin viewed this as an opportunity. Their vision was to ensure that their Jewish heritage lived on through them, their children, and eventually, through their grandchildren and future generations.

When Syd Entel enrolled her children in the only

Reform temple in the area at that time, she learned that there were not enough qualified Hebrew teachers. So, despite her limited working knowledge of the Hebrew language, she taught herself enough Hebrew each week to provide the handful of Jewish children the gift of learning about their sacred language and heritage.

The Entel family has made similar contributions to the larger community, especially the Dunedin Fine Arts Center and Mease Hospital.

Syd and Irwin’s children also developed the values of *tzedekah* - charity - and *tikkun olam* - repairing the world.

Robert Entel, who like his father became a radiologist and practices in Pinellas and Pasco counties, noted the example set by his parents and other Jewish “pillars” of the Pinellas County Jewish community. One vivid memory was a meeting of Jewish community leaders in 1967 called by the late Charles Rutenberg, who offered his thoughts about the imminence of the Six Day War and the dire need to provide financial support for Israel.

It was the example set by the Rutenbergs, as well as the Wolsteins, the Kents, the Schicks, and by Robert’s own parents, that taught him and his siblings that it was their responsibility as Jews to give back.

From being the only Jewish child in his elementary school classes and among a small group in his childhood temple, Robert Entel witnessed the impact that a few influential Jewish families had on the community by joining together, which ultimately led to the birth of Temple Ahavat Shalom in 1976.

“Rabbi Klein and Temple Ahavat Shalom have been instrumental in my life, and a true inspiration to my family,” Robert Entel said recently, adding, “I feel that it is my personal responsibility to ensure a bright future for my temple and my Jewish community – well beyond my years.”

It is the hope of the entire family that their gift to the temple will serve as a link to a stronger Jewish community and an inspiration to others to create a lasting impact.

Congregations

• CONTINUED from PREVIOUS PAGE

recipes including vegan and a take home guide to share with your family. All you need to bring are your questions for Rabbi Klein to answer. This event is free. For more information, call (727) 785-8811.

Mah jongg and more: The temple Sisterhood will hold a “Mah jongg, Mimosas & More” event on Sunday, Sept. 10 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the social hall. The advance cost is \$25 for temple members and \$30 for non-members. The cost is \$36 at the door. Send checks to TAS Sisterhood, 1575 Curlew Road, Palm Harbor, FL 34683, or email TV_Robin@yahoo.com.

Theater outings: The temple is planning trips to the Straz Performing Arts Center in Tampa to see, Andrew Lloyd Weber’s *Love Never Dies*, on Wednesday, Dec. 13 at 7:30 p.m., with a special orchestra seat ticket price of \$65, and to *The Bodyguard* on Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. with a special orchestra seat ticket price of \$58. RSVP and/or send checks to the temple, attention Anne-Marie Cummings, 1575 Curlew Road, Palm Harbor, FL 34683. Note on the check the shows you wish to attend and how many tickets you are purchasing.

Cong. B’nai Emmanah Tarpon Springs

Meal and a movie: There will be a movie and meal for congregants on the second Saturday of each month, with the next one on Saturday, Sept. 9 at 5:30 p.m. at the temple. The movie will be *A Hologram for the King*, with Tom Hanks. The cost is \$4.

Open house: Prospective new members can meet Rabbi Lynn Goldstein, board members and congregants at an open house on Sunday, Sept. 10 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Hear about unique space-sharing with a Unitarian Universalist church and a Buddhist meditation center. A light lunch will be available. RSVPs are appreciated. Call (727) 938-9000.

Interfaith service: Join with Congregation B’nai Emmanah, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tarpon Springs and the Church on the Bayou for an interfaith service on Monday, Sept. 11 at 7 p.m. to remember the victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. The event will be held at the Church on the Bayou, 409 Whitcomb Blvd, Tarpon Springs.

Ethiopian experience: On Saturday, Sept. 16 at 7 p.m., Rabbi Goldstein will give a presentation on her experiences in Ethiopia working with the Ethiopian Jews. Learn about the history and religious practices of Ethiopian Jews. The program will be followed by an oneg and then Selichot services at 9 p.m.

First Fridays: The congregation will hold a potluck dinner on the first Friday of each month at 6:15 p.m. at the home of a congregant. Call the temple for location. There is no charge, but folks are asked to bring a dairy or veggie dish. A service at the home will follow the dinner.

Third Fridays: The congregation has begun holding Third Friday events each month, where congregants can meet for dinner and to socialize. The next Third

Friday will be on Sept. 15 at 5:45 p.m. at Mamma Maria’s, 503 N. Pinellas Ave, Tarpon Springs. Call the temple to RSVP. Services will follow at the temple.

Chabad Center of West Pasco Trinity

Torah and tea: A monthly class for women is held on the last Tuesday of the month at Chabad of West Pasco. RSVP to Dina@chabadwp.com or call the Chabad center for more information.

Cong. Beth Tefillah/JCC of West Pasco Port Richey

Adult education: A class to study Pirkei Avot (Ethics of our Ancestors) and its relevance to Jewish life in the 21st century will be offered on Sundays from 10 - 11 a.m. The class is free, but donations are welcome.

Adult Hebrew: A class is offered on Sundays from 11 a.m. - noon to enable adults to participate in Hebrew prayer. This is for those with limited or no background in Hebrew language. The class is free.

Chabad Spring Hill

Shofar factory: Children can create their own shofar and learn how to blow it at an event on Sunday, Sept. 10 from 10:30 a.m. to noon at Holiday Inn Express, 3528 Commercial Way, Spring Hill. Participants can also decorate holiday cakes and do holiday crafts. The cost is \$5 per child with a reservation, or \$10 at the door. RSVP by Sept. 3 by going to www.chabad.springhill.com or calling (352) 600-2779.

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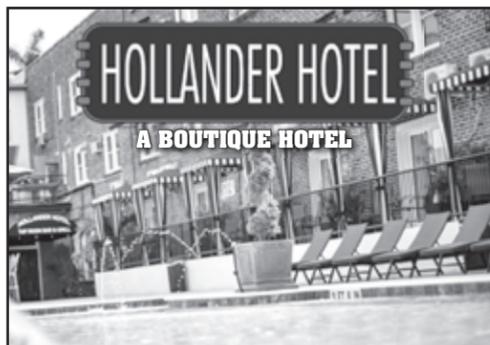
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Think it is hard to send your kids off to college? Think again

Parents across the country will soon be sending their precious children off to their freshman year of college. I remember those days and I remember my concerns.

It just so happens that amidst my reminiscing, I begin reading a book recommended by my brother-in-law, who travels frequently to Poland for business. *Irena's Children* by Tilar J. Mazzeo, documenting and highlighting Irena Sendler's story of the courageous feats of daring she performed as a public health specialist with access to the Warsaw ghetto during WWII. Termed the female Oscar Schindler, Sendler, a non Jew, with the help of the resistance, smuggled thousands of children past the Nazis – to safe houses, orphanages and convents.

On the eve of my sons leaving home for college, I worried incessantly that the meal plans offered through the dorms were carb laden and unhealthy. And that my children would pack on the dreaded "freshman 15."

Parents of children in the Warsaw ghetto worried over food too, but didn't have the luxury of worrying about excessive carbs and healthy food choices. Official rations allotted to Jews in the walled-off area were 184 calories per day per person. If lucky and/or wealthy, food was available through the black market at exorbitant prices. And great risk.

Would my kiddies be safe on campus? Get a bid to the fraternity of their choice? Survive Hell Week?

In the spring of 1942, 2000 Jewish children had begun living

separately from their parents too - but not by choice. They too had new living arrangements and new challenges. Alone on the streets of the Aryan side of Warsaw, young Jewish men hiding outside the ghetto were in constant danger. Thugs and black mailers sadi- stically and randomly stopped young teenage boys and ordered them to reveal their penises for inspection. Circumcision was an instant death sentence. They had no "choices." Every day was "Hell Week" for them.

Would they test out of beginning French so they could then pack-in more courses in their pre-law major?

Language proficiency was also a concern of Jewish residents of the over-crowded ghetto. Most of Warsaw's prewar Jewish population of 350,000 were unassimilated and spoke Yiddish, not Polish. This lack of ease with the Polish language was a dead giveaway of their Jewishness and a major barrier to being smuggled out through the fetid sewers to subsist on the Aryan side of Warsaw.

A high school guidance counselor once told me that acceptance to a college called for a quick trip to Bed, Bath & Beyond for quilts, bedding sets and extra shelving. And to the Apple Store for a laptop computer, iPad and iPhone – all of which parents hoped their kids would fully utilize to keep in touch.

Parents who made the agonizing decision to have their children smuggled out of the ghetto had no time or resources to help prepare their children for the rigors they

would face. Their last parting message to their kids was not to keep in touch – that was far too dangerous. The most common admonition from parents to children before turning them over to Irena and her cohorts was to urgently remind them "to wear the best disguise of all: happy faces." Their goal for their sons and daughters was not a diploma, but survival and to somehow be reunited with their families when the nightmare ended. Few were.

Parents routinely ask college campus student affairs administrators if their children will be safe walking home from the library late at night. What about the dangerous risks of binge drinking? Depression? Outbreaks of anti-Israel demonstrations?

Families who gave Irene Sendler their children only asked one question: What guarantee can you give us of our child's safety? Her answer: "I can promise you nothing but that I will risk my life today trying." Babies were tranquilized and stored in toolboxes under bricks in a flatbed trucks leaving the ghetto, bound for a "safe" house. Older children who were too Semitic looking had their hair dyed blonde, re-clothed and instructed to shed their past and internalize the information on the falsified documents they were handed.

I always worried that my kids, who had always approached studying and homework with underwhelming rigor, would feel overwhelmed their first semester at a university. My husband felt they could handle a full and de-

INCIDENTALLY, IRIS

— Iris Ruth Pastor —



manding 17-18 hour course load. I argued for less, to spare them undue stress and ease their fears of "flunking out."

Parents living in the ghetto hoped to spare their kids stress too - only their stress was based on keeping their children from selections that led to deportation on trains headed for the death camps. Wealthy families who had managed to smuggle money with them paid as high as \$15,000 per work permit for older children - who then had the privilege of toiling 17-18 hours per DAY in hard labor.

Of course the Jews in the ghetto didn't have to worry if their kids had the "right" wardrobe essentials for their leave taking: sports jerseys and caps with university logo, towel wraps, snow boots, backpack, texting gloves, fleece vests.

Jews in the ghetto wore patched, ragged clothing with the Star of David for identification. No option dressing. Authorities warned that severe punishment – up to and including death by shooting – was in store for Jews who did not wear the badge.

So even with keeping things "in perspective," what can we do when:

- Calls come about difficult roommates?
- Calls come about a disappointingly low test grade?

• Calls come about a run-in with a professor?

• Calls come about a disappointing social-life?

What three actions can modern parents take to help their kids successfully thrive when away from the nest?

#1 We can act as our child's coach, not rescuer.

#2 We can encourage them to take charge of their own experience – to seek out ways to solve their own problems using the resources available.

#3 We can praise them for their efforts to make the best of their situation and work to the best of their ability.

Yes, there are great perils "out there" now in 2017. And equipping our children to cope with our 21st Century reality is essential. But let's keep in mind how lucky we are to have these concerns and not the ones the parents in the Warsaw ghetto faced during Hitler's relentless reign of terror. Let's hold sacred our good fortune.

Editor's note: This is an occasional column by Tampa resident Iris Ruth Pastor. Iris is a married mother of five grown sons and a grandmother of five. She has been writing slice-of-life columns for more than 25 years including for the American Israelite in Cincinnati. In addition, Iris is a Huffington Post blogger.

Kushner visits Middle East in bid to restart peace talks

JERUSALEM (JTA) – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met in Jerusalem with senior White House adviser Jared Kushner and a delegation of American diplomats trying to restart peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians.

The meeting Thursday, Aug. 24, is part of a visit to the region by the U.S. diplomats. Kushner and the group were meeting that evening with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah.

The delegation led by Kushner, who is President Donald Trump's son-in-law, includes special Middle East peace envoy Jason Greenblatt; the deputy national security adviser for strategy, Dina Powell; and the ambassador to Israel, David Friedman.

"We have a lot of things to talk about: how to advance peace, stability and security in our region – prosperity, too. And I think all of them are within our reach," Netanyahu told Kushner.

Kushner responded that "We really appre-

ciate the commitment of the prime minister and his team to engaging very thoughtfully and respectfully in the way that the president has asked them to do so."

Abbas told a delegation of Israeli lawmakers earlier in the week, referring to the U.S. leadership, "I don't even know how they are dealing with us because his entire administration is in chaos." He told the lawmakers he does not expect any breakthroughs.

"I have met with Trump envoys about 20 times since the beginning of his term as president of the United States," Abbas said, *Haaretz* reported.

"Every time they repeatedly stressed to me how much they believe and are committed to a two-state solution and a halt to construction in the settlements," Abbas said. "I have pleaded with them to say the same thing to Netanyahu, but they refrained. They said they would consider it but then they didn't get back to me."

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WEDU highlights Jewish life, love and humor in September

PBS station WEDU is sprinkling its schedule with Jewish flavor this September. Here are some of the upcoming documentaries to keep an eye out for this fall, from food to fiddles:

A diverse range of Jewish families celebrate the importance of food as a cultural connection to the past in *Hugs and Knishes: A Celebration of our Jewish Foods and Traditions*. Snippets of home life, holiday gatherings, humor and history come together like the ingredients of a favorite grandmother's Shabbat chicken soup. This airs on Sunday, Sept. 17 at 2:30 p.m.



Sholem Aleichem

The Kol Nidre, the most sacred prayer in Judaism that begins its holiest day of Yom Kippur, is the topic of *8 Voices Sing Kol Nidre*. The program tells the Kol Nidre story impressively through the tales and anecdotes of those who have been touched by it. It airs on Sunday, Sept. 17 at 3:30 p.m. and on Tuesday, Sept. 19 at 1 p.m.

The collected stories of Sholem Aleichem (1859-1916) became the basis for *Fiddler on the Roof*, but



Scene from Hugs and Knishes

there is much more to the author's life than a Broadway melody, and it is shared in *Sholem Aleichem: Laughing in the Darkness*. In a time of great fear, Aleichem inspired a new, modern Jewish identity through laughter. The film includes rarely seen photographs, interviews with Sholem's granddaughter, Bel Kauffman. It airs on Sunday, Sept. 17 at 4:30 p.m. and on Tuesday, Sept. 19 at 2 p.m. on WEDU PBS.

Additional broadcasts of this film on WEDU+ are scheduled for 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 20 at 8 p.m., Friday, Sept. 22 at 9:30 p.m. and Saturday, Sept. 23 at 7 a.m.

WRESTLING

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

including fighting outside the rink as well as inside, were held. Referees were often ignored or punched out, fights erupted in the stands, folding chairs were used to bash opponents over the head, and the sport included a lexicon of moves, from running powerslams, the Texas cloverleaf, chokeslams, diving leg lariats, piledrivers, sleepers, leg locks, brainbusters, arm drags and many others. The moves were often very acrobatic and nearly always rendering damage more staged than real. *Championship Wrestling from Florida*, announced by Gordon Solie, was televised through the state and when the wrestlers performed at the armory and fans sweltered with no air conditioning, no luxury boxes and no gourmet food stands. Still, the stands were often full, loud and boisterous.

Jody Simon, retired wrestler and son of "The Great Malenko," is organizing the event card and promises "a Tuesday night that you won't forget. It's sure to bring back great memories ... a must for wrestling fans of all ages." Simon is one of only a handful of Jewish men who wrestled at the armory.

Seating is limited and tickets are on sale now at www.bryanglazerfamilyjcc.com/wrestlingreturns. Limited VIP tickets are \$100, general advanced tickets are \$20 and night of the event tickets are \$25. The Glazer JCC is at 522 N. Howard Ave. For more information, contact Michelle Gallagher at michelle.gallagher@jewishtampa.com or (813) 739-1687.



Under the name Malenko Wrestling, Lawrence Simon operated a training facility in Tampa. Jody Simon is organizing the return of wrestling at the Armory. He is shown, center, with sons Jody, left, and Dean.

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Jewish Food Society wants to preserve your bubbe's recipes – before they're lost forever

By JOSEFIN DOLSTEN
JTA news service

TENAFLY, NJ – Ayala Hodak usually cooks the way her mother taught her: adding a pinch of spice here or relying on her eyes – never a measuring cup – to judge how much liquid to add.

But on a recent Tuesday, she was being much more precise.

At her spacious home in this suburban town less than 15 miles from New York City, Hodak, 52, who grew up in an Iranian family in Israel, measured the amount of salt and pepper she added to a stew. She also paused to demonstrate how thickly to cut a piece of beef.

Her reason for the accuracy: Hodak's recipe was being recorded by a new nonprofit, the Jewish Food Society, which aims to be an archive of Jewish recipes from around the world.

Its kibbutz-born founder, who once promoted Israeli culture as an employee of the Israeli Consulate in New York, was inspired by the diversity of food traditions in Israel and her desire to preserve them in the Diaspora.

"I realized there is an urgency in capturing these stories because the older generation is about to leave the world, and many of these recipes are labor- and time-consuming in a way that we should really protect them," the society's founder, Naama Shefi, told JTA. "These are skills that would just disappear if no one could capture them in a methodic way."

The project, which launched officially in March and receives financial support from several Jewish foundations, has added over a dozen recipes to its online archive, and more are on the way. Along with the recipes are photographs and stories of the cook's family history, as well as how he or she learned to make the dish.

Each week, Shefi, 36, who lives on New York's Lower East Side, interviews a chef and takes down his or her story. If distance permits, Shefi or an Israel-based employee will meet with the cook in person; if not, they communicate long distance. All ingredi-

ents are measured, and dishes are then re-created in a test kitchen and adjusted accordingly.

Though some participants work in the food industry – Hodak is the manager and co-owner of Taboon, a Midtown Manhattan restaurant serving Middle Eastern and Mediterranean-inspired food – others are home cooks.

Shefi came up with the idea after a Shabbat meal in 2005 at the home of her now-husband's grandmother, who was born in Turkey but also lived in Greece and South Africa prior to immigrating to Israel with her family.

"The flavors really represented all of their previous immigration stories and journeys, and some worlds that do not even exist anymore," she said. "It was such a vivid expression of disappearing worlds, and of bitter and sweet memories. It was just moving, so I told him, let's just spend a day with her try to capture a few recipes. It was just really inspiring."

Shefi has always had an interest in food, though she did not get it at home.

"Good food wasn't part of my childhood," said Shefi, who grew up on Kibbutz Givat Hashlosha in central Israel. "Between the [kibbutz's] communal dining room and the fact that my mom is not the best cook in the world, good food was out of reach."

But as a young girl, she would urge her parents to take her to Tel Aviv's Carmel Market or a nearby Yemenite neighborhood to try different types of cuisines.

"It became my life's passion," Shefi said. "At the beginning just because it tasted really good, but later because I realized it tells a fantastic story about families and people and cultures."

In 2008, when she took the consulate job, she could use that passion in a professional way. Having just graduated from the New School with a master's degree in film, Shefi was tasked with promoting Israeli culture. She decided to do so through food, hosting Israel-themed dinners, wine tastings and panels in New York. She also organized trips

to the Jewish state for American food writers.

In 2013, Shefi launched the Kubbeh Project, a three-week pop-up in Greenwich Village serving kubbeh soup, an Iraqi Jewish dish featuring meat-filled semolina dumplings in vegetable broth. The project received wide media coverage and had people lining up for hours for a taste of the delicacy.

Now the Jewish Food Society, for which Shefi works full time, provides a way to combine her two passions: food and storytelling.

"For a while I was really interested in storytelling through filmmaking," she said. "Still my main interest is storytelling, but the medium changed to food."

In addition to the weekly cooking session, the nonprofit puts on larger-scale events, such as a Passover seder that showcased three Mexico-born Jewish chefs, and Schmaltzy, a yearly storytelling event where people share the stories behind family recipes. A Moroccan-style mimouna, a bread-filled celebration held the day after Passover, is in the works, Shefi said.

Her family are Polish Jews, not Sephardi, but said such distinctions blur in Israeli kitchens.

"Israel is a not just a melting pot, it's a pressure cooker, so a Polish girl like me considered kubbeh as my own," she told *The New York Times*.

Shefi's long-term goal for the Jewish Food Society extends beyond the archive of recipes. She wants to establish a center for Jewish food in New York, where visitors would be able to take cooking classes and learn about their family's culinary histories. Shefi describes her vision as "the James Beard Foundation for Jewish food."

For now, the Jewish Food Society provides a way for Jews to engage with their culture, Shefi said.

"These [recipes and stories] are just huge parts of our lives, of our history as a people, and I feel that for many people that are less connected to Jewish culture and Jewish life, it's a very inviting window to engage and to explore their identity," she said.

Food also provides a lens through which to



Photos by Josefin Dolsten

Jewish Food Society founder Naama Shefi, right, and program director Ellie Backer. They conduct weekly cooking sessions in order to preserve Jewish recipes.



Ayala Hodak showing ghormeh sabzi, a Persian dish she cooked with the Jewish Food Society, at her home in Tenafly, NJ.

understand Jewish history, she added.

"I feel that recipes really carry our cultural DNA because they tell stories not just about a particular time in history, but also about how people used to live, how people used to celebrate, how people used to mourn, how people used to get together," Shefi said. "It's not just about the flavor and the food, it's really about the experience."



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American Muslims seeking better mosque security find help from Jews

By **BEN SALES**
JTA news service

NEW YORK – With Islamophobic hate crimes on the rise, Muslim leaders are working harder to secure their mosques and institutions. Some are turning to Jewish experts for assistance.

A few Jewish organizations have partnered with local and national Muslim groups to advise them on best security practices and advocate jointly for stronger hate crime legislation. Cooperation between the two communities, which was growing late last year, is turning toward the particulars of staying safe in a nervous climate – how to prevent attacks and handle hate crimes.

“When people start to feel unsafe in Sabbath or Sunday or Friday services, that can make for a very complicated and challenging set of circumstances,” said Paul Goldenberg, director of the Secure Community Network, which advises Jewish groups and institutions on security and has worked with Muslim, Sikh and Christian institutions on composing security plans. “Extremist groups have come to realize our houses of worship are an Achilles’ heel.”

Goldenberg has worked with Muslim groups for years, coaching them on everything from forming relationships with local

law enforcement to receiving grants from the Department of Homeland Security to making sure staff know what to do in the event of an attack or threat. The ADL and American Jewish Committee have also worked with Muslim leaders and institutions on reporting, preventing, responding to and prosecuting hate crimes.

Muslims and Jews appear to have good reason to be vigilant. The Anti-Defamation League reported a 34 percent increase in anti-Semitic incidents in 2016 versus 2015. Islamophobic attacks went up 67 percent from 2014 to 2015, according to the latest FBI statistics, and the number of anti-Muslim hate groups has nearly tripled in the past year, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Both communities have suffered high-profile hate incidents in the past few weeks. A Minnesota mosque was bombed in early August, and the recent white supremacist rally in Charlottesville targeted Jews with neo-Nazi slogans. Brandeis University, a nonsectarian Jewish school, received a bomb threat Thursday, Aug. 24, though it’s unclear whether the threat was explicitly anti-Semitic.

Some Jewish institutions began forming security plans following the 9/11 attacks

in 2001, and SCN was founded three years later. Jewish institutions nationwide have beefed up security, including some that hired guards or restricted entry to their buildings.

Muslims now hope to do the same for their mosques and facilities.

Salam Al-Marayati, president of the Muslim Public Affairs Council, has been consulting with Goldenberg on security since 2011. This year, Goldenberg provided the Los Angeles-based council with a plan to secure area mosques, including best practices on coordinating with law enforcement and procedures to follow during an emergency.

“All of that was unknown to the community, and with the help of Paul it became known,” said Al-Marayati, regarding security procedures.

The ADL’s regional offices also provide local mosques with consulting similar to SCN’s – how to build relationships with law enforcement, how to monitor who enters and exits buildings, and the best ways to spread information about a threat or attack.

Elise Jarvis, who heads the ADL’s community security efforts, said one of the best ways to improve security would be for Muslim communities to increase reporting of hate crimes to police. Jews currently suffer the most hate crimes of any religious group

in the U.S., according to the FBI, but Jarvis said Muslims may avoid reporting hate crimes due to a lack of trust in law enforcement. Al-Marayati said many Muslims resent “being treated as suspects.”

“There’s underreporting across the board,” said Jarvis, who said that if communities make sure to report incidents, “law enforcement are able to respond and identify those behind hate crimes.”

The Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council has been pushing for stronger hate crimes legislation federally and at the local level.

Robert Silverman, U.S. director of Muslim-Jewish Relations for AJC, said the advisory council’s newly formed Dallas chapter will be examining how to oppose members of private militias who regularly stand outside synagogues and mosques brandishing their weapons – something that also happened in Charlottesville on the day of the far-right rally. The chapter hopes to advance legislation or regulations that would discourage such behavior.

Silverman said a law increasing punishments for hate crimes would deter bigots from moving from intimidation to violence. The advisory council supports federal legislation to define attacks or threats on religious communal institutions as hate crimes.



A menorah in front of an Arizona home, made out of pvc, was twisted into this swastika.

Teens who vandalized menorah must meet with Holocaust survivor

(JTA) – Three teens pleaded guilty to criminal damaging charges for twisting a large decorative menorah in the front yard of an Arizona family’s home into a swastika.

The teens, who were arrested in March and charged as juveniles in the December incident in a residential neighborhood in Chandler, pleaded guilty.

They were sentenced to serve 30 hours of community service, along with writing an apology letter to the victims and paying restitution. They also must meet with a Holocaust survivor and write an essay on what they learned about the Holocaust and how their desecration of the menorah affected the community, the CBS affiliate in Phoenix reported.

The County Attorney’s Office has not yet decided how to charge a fourth teen in the incident, Clive Jamar Wilson, 19, who posted an apology to the family on Facebook after he was arrested.

Naomi and Seth Ellis said they built the 7-foot menorah made of gold spray-painted PVC pipes and solar-powered lights after their three sons, aged 5, 6 and 9, asked for lights in their yard like their neighbors’ Christmas decorations.

Police helped the Ellises dismantle the swastika from in front of their home early in the morning before their children saw it. The menorah was rebuilt and replaced.

About 100 members of the family’s synagogue and neighbors gathered in the Ellis front yard to light the rebuilt menorah.

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Menorah Manor hosts annual dinner to honor new Founder's Association members

The annual Founders Association dinner, which was held at the Marion and Bernard L. Samson Nursing Center on Wednesday, August 9th.

Two new Founders were honored: The Menorah Manor Guild and RFLP Group - the Linsky/Rosenblatt Family.

In addition to a major financial commitment, Founders are also committed to providing leadership and to taking an active role in future planning. The beautiful and delicious meal was prepared and served by Menorah Manor's very talented Dining Services staff.

Menorah Manor is proud to honor its new Founders Association members. Mazel tov and thank you for being such important partners in Menorah Manor's mission of providing the best possible care in a warm, homelike, Jewish environment.



(L-R) Doris Rosenblatt, David Linsky, Frank Rosenblatt, and Nancy Linsky



(L-R) Carl Glassberg and Judy Ludin, Menorah Manor Chief Development Officer



(L-R) Marilyn Benjamin, Sally Siegel, Toby Nastir and Edie Seligman



(L-R) Jane Silverberg, Mary Ann Marger and Terri Gross



(L-R) Sue Heyman, Mike White and Rabbi Leah Herz, Director of Spiritual Care at Menorah Manor.



(L-R) Dr. Morrie LeVine, Dr. David LeVine and Marilyn LeVine



(L-R) Rob Goldstein, Menorah Manor CEO; Susie Berman, Menorah Manor Foundation Chair; Barbara Baughman, Menorah Manor Guild President; Jackie Kanner, Foundation Trustee and Co-Chair of the Samson Nursing Center Gift Shop; and Barry Kanner, Menorah Manor Chair.



(L-R): Toby Nastir and Mel Myers.



IN THE WAKE OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

In rare non-Israel statement, AIPAC rebukes Trump

WASHINGTON (JTA) – In a rare statement unrelated to Israel or the Middle East, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee implicitly rebuked President Donald Trump for drawing an equivalence between the sides in the Charlottesville clash.

“AIPAC shares the outrage and deep concern of our fellow Americans about the inexcusable violence and sickening displays of racism and anti-Semitism in Charlottesville,” the prominent Israel lobbying group said in a statement posted on Twitter.

“The vile hatred expressed by neo-Nazis, the KKK and white supremacists must be categorically and unambiguously rejected. We urge all elected officials to reject moral equivalence and oppose between those who promote hate and those who oppose it. There must be no quarter for bigotry in our country.”

AIPAC joins the virtual gamut of Jewish groups – encompassing all religious streams – that have issued similar statements.

AIPAC rarely makes pronouncements on issues not related to Israel and almost never issues statements that at least do not tangentially relate to the Middle East.

ADL: 1000% surge in online donations

NEW YORK (JTA) – The Anti-Defamation League received 10 times as much money as usual from online donations in response to the white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, VA.

The group, which combats anti-Semitism and bigotry, reported a 1000 percent increase in online donations during the week beginning Aug. 13, one day after the Charlottesville rally. The ADL said it received six times as many individual donations as during an average week this year, mostly from first-time donors.

In the aftermath of the rally, the ADL also has seen its profile skyrocket. It received \$1 million donations from Apple and 21st Century Fox CEO James Murdoch. JP Morgan Chase also announced that it would donate \$500,000 to the group. JP Morgan and Apple also pledged to match donations to the ADL and other nonprofits from employees.

AFMDA cancels gala at Mar-a-Lago Club

(JTA) – Nine charities have canceled planned galas at President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago Club in Palm Beach, including the American Friends of Magen David Adom.

AFMDA, the U.S. fundraising arm of the Israeli Red Cross organization, announced the cancellation of its 2018 benefit in a statement provided to the *Washington Post*, citing the “apolitical” nature of the humanitarian aid organization.

Some of the groups cited Trump's response to the far-right rally in Charlottesville, VA, as the reason for canceling. In other cases, groups said the venue was detracting from the message of their events.

The club makes \$100,000 to \$275,000 on such events, the *Washington Post* reported.

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Trump adviser Gary Cohn reportedly considered quitting after Charlottesville

(JTA) – Gary Cohn, a prominent Jewish member of President Donald Trump’s administration, considered resigning over Trump’s response to a far-right rally in Charlottesville, *The New York Times* reported.

Cohn, the top economic adviser for Trump, drafted a letter of resignation, according to the report, which cited two unnamed people familiar with the draft.

In an interview with the *Financial Times*, Cohn said the White House “can and must do better” in consistently condemning hate groups. His remarks came nearly two weeks after the Charlottesville rally, which turned deadly when an alleged white supremacist rammed a crowd of counter-protesters with a car, killing one and injuring at least 19.

It was his first public reference to the national dialogue about the violence. As a “patriotic American,” Cohn said he did not want to leave his job as director of the National Economic Council.

“But I also feel compelled to voice my distress over the events of the last two weeks,” he said.

After the Charlottesville rally, Trump said that both far-right marchers who gathered in the southern Virginia city and counter-pro-

testers shared the blame for the violence that ensued. Trump later condemned the Ku Klux Klan, racists and neo-Nazis amid criticism that he failed to single out the far-rightists immediately afterward, but a day later said there were “very fine people on both sides.”

Cohn was standing with other officials behind Trump in the lobby of Trump Tower in New York City on Aug. 15 when the president made his latter remarks to reporters. The presidential briefing was called to announce a new-proposal for infrastructure spending.

“Citizens standing up for equality and freedom can never be equated with white supremacists, neo-Nazis and the KKK,” Cohn said in the *Financial Times* interview. “I believe this administration can and must do better in consistently and unequivocally condemning these groups, and do every-



Photo by Drew Angerer/Getty Images
President Donald Trump speaking to the media at Trump Tower in New York City, Aug. 15. Looking on, from left, are Gary Cohn, director of the National Economic Council; Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin and Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao; and Mick Mulvaney, director of the Office of Management and Budget.

thing we can to heal the deep divisions that exist in our communities.”

Cohn added: “As a Jewish American, I will not allow neo-Nazis ranting ‘Jews will not replace us’ to cause this Jew to leave his job.”

He also told the *Financial Times* he spoke privately with Trump about these issues. “I

have not been bashful saying what I think,” Cohn said.

In the days after Charlottesville, Cohn’s family – including his wife – told him he needed to think seriously about departing, *The New York Times* reported, citing two people briefed on the discussions. Several of his friends in the business community also urged him to step away from the administration.

Amid fears that Cohn would resign, the U.S. stock market dropped until the White House denied the rumor. Cohn was deeply troubled by the market reaction, people close to him told *The New York Times*.

His remarks were in marked contrast to a statement by the Treasury secretary, Steven Mnuchin, who also is Jewish, and stood directly behind the president during the Aug. 15 news conference.

“I don’t believe the allegations against the president are accurate, and I believe that having highly talented men and women in the country surrounding the president in his administration should be reassuring to you and the American people,” he told former Yale classmates who had urged him to resign.

MAYORS

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Louisville and Phoenix.

“For decades, America’s mayors have taken a strong position in support of civil rights and in opposition to racism and discrimination of all kinds,” the Mayors’ Compact reads. “We are now seeing efforts in our states and at the highest levels of our government to weaken existing civil rights policies and reduce their enforcement. We have seen an increase in hate violence, xenophobic rhetoric, and discriminatory actions that target Muslims, Jews, and other minorities.”

The compact sets out a 10-point program that includes publicly condemning bigotry; ensuring public safety while protecting free speech; training and funding law enforcement to enforce hate crime laws; working with community leaders to combat bigotry; and strengthening anti-bias education programs in schools.

Many of the points echo a plan of action that the ADL called on the White House to adopt shortly after the white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, VA, and President Donald Trump’s response, which the ADL and many others have slammed.

“The events in Charlottesville once again showed us we have much work to do to bring Americans together,” said Jonathan Greenblatt, the ADL’s national director on a conference call with reporters. “We know that hate is on the rise. ADL can’t wait any longer for the president to act. ADL is ready to work with communities across the country to combat hate.”

Some of the mayors also portrayed the compact as a response in part to the president’s equivocation of white supremacists and those who oppose them. Steve Adler, the Jewish mayor of Austin, TX, who has volunteered for the ADL in the past, said during the call that “mayors don’t need a tele-

prompter to say Nazis are bad.”

“There’s a clear lack of a moral compass,” Mayor Shane Bemis of Gresham, OR, a city of 100,000 east of Portland, said on the call. “This shouldn’t be a surprise to anyone, how he has continued to divide us since the election. It is clearly, in my view, an absence of any sort of moral leadership from the president.”

But mayors were divided on a couple of contentious issues, including the removal of Confederate monuments from cities and how to strike a balance between protecting civil liberties while guarding against incitement and threats to public safety.

Tom Cochran, CEO of the mayors’ conference, said policy on how to deal with Confederate me-

morials should be left up to individual cities.

“This discussion is not about monuments,” he said. “This conversation is about coming together to denigrate all acts of hate wherever they occur, and making sure we protect public safety while making sure that the right to free speech will always be protected.”

CALL

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

Trump at first said there was violence on “many sides” and for two days did not single out the white supremacists for censure. A day after he did so, the president said there were “very fine people” among the far-right protesters and the counter-protesters.

“Responsibility for the violence that occurred in Charlottesville, including the death of Heather Heyer, does not lie with many sides but with one side: the Nazis, alt-right and white supremacists who brought their hate to a peaceful community,” the statement said. “Our tradition teaches us that humanity is fallible yet also capable of change. We pray that President Trump will recognize and remedy the grave error he has made in abetting the voices of hatred.”

It’s not clear whether there would be a separate call for Orthodox rabbis, who have participated in the annual calls, which were routine with President Barack Obama. Officials at Orthodox rabbinical groups said no separate call was in the works.

“We respect the office of the presidency and believe it is more effective to address questions and concerns directly with the White House,” said Rabbi Mark Dratch, the executive vice president of the Orthodox movement’s Rabbinical Council of America.

Similar briefings occurred with Presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton, but not necessarily formalized as a pre-High Holidays call.

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For Birthright founder Steinhardt, Israel 'substitute for religion'

By BEN SALES
JTA news service

MT. KISCO, NY – Michael Steinhardt has poured millions of dollars into ventures for American Jews. But he's no fan of American Judaism.

The hedge-fund billionaire turned mega-philanthropist is best known as the founder of Birthright Israel, the 10-day free trip to Israel for Jewish young adults. More recently, he's founded a network of publicly funded Hebrew-language charter schools. His latest endeavor is a natural history museum at Tel Aviv University that will host exhibits on the flora and fauna of Israel and the Middle East.

JTA visited Steinhardt at his New York estate, where he spoke about why he thinks American Jewish education needs to change, what to do with the hundreds of thousands of Birthright alumni once they return home, and why he's not worried about college students who rail against Israel.

JTA: You've spoken a lot about how the American Jewish community needs to promote secular Jewish culture. Is that what you're trying to do with your network of charter schools? Can that work if the schools are publicly funded and most of the students aren't Jewish?

Steinhardt: These are charter schools, and as charter schools they are open to anyone and they have, on average, no more than 50 percent Jewish students in the school. But these schools teach Hebrew in a way that is demonstrably superior to Jewish day schools.

Jewish kids in the charter schools will learn a great deal about Israel in these charter schools. The schools fund a trip to Israel and there's a great deal of emphasis on Israel, Zionism, stuff like that, but zero [on Judaism] as a religion.

And you prefer it that way, as an atheist?

I don't think you came here to talk about my theology, but it's tempting me to say I truly believe that the time of Jewish history that we have to devote far more energy to is the last 300 years. The last 300 years is the most enlightened – it is when Jews really shined. I would use the word superior, except people blanch when I use that word. But it's really what I mean: Jews have accomplished so much, so inexplicably out of proportion to their numbers, in these 300 years, and it's one of the great failures of Jewish education that that's not focused on at all.

Israel is also getting more religious, and you've criticized its government and business world. Why do you feel so positively about Israel if it has some of the same flaws you criticize in American Jewry?

The modern state of Israel is the Jewish miracle of the 20th century, but it's the secular part of Israel that's the miracle. It's the extraordinary achievement, it's the technology, the military, the development of a society out of nothing using Zionist ideals, taking people from terrible places and making them Israeli citizens. Israel has become, for me, the substitute for religion.

Are you worried that that secular society is not nearly as dominant in Israel as it was 40 years ago?

The people I know in Israel are overwhelmingly secular. Tel Aviv University, the natural history museum, are truly modern, secular institutions. I've been critical of a few things in Israel, [but] Israel is to me the most moral state on this planet, [even] with the occupation, with the differences between rich and poor, with the other issues ... but it's really an exceptional place.

I have a house in Jerusalem and I like Jerusalem a lot, but if you go to Tel Aviv, it's a phenomenal world. It's a world unto itself.

More than half a million young Jews have

gone on Birthright, but when they come home they're caught by the same Jewish institutions you've criticized. Is that an issue?

Guess what? They don't succeed in catching them. The way I dealt with it, and still deal with it, is to create Birthright post-programming.

Some organizations that we created seem to be doing OK, such as OneTable [a group that facilitates Shabbat dinners]. There are other organizations that seem to be doing better.

But it's a real issue. There are all sorts of things to deal with. There's 60 to 70 percent intermarriage rates [among young non-Orthodox American Jews], a falloff in synagogue attendance. There's all sorts of things like that. There are no easy answers, but the best answer to date is Birthright. I'm tempted to say it has saved a generation.

But there are reports that Birthright's numbers are shrinking. It recently began accepting applicants who attended an organized Israel trip in high school. Why is that?

The numbers we're taking this year will be a record. If you're saying we used to have huge waiting lists and we don't anymore, you're absolutely correct. I think Birthright has almost become a community norm and a large percentage of the age cohort of 18 to 26 go on Birthright.

Having trips to Israel has become a popular engagement for the Jewish world and that may be one of the reasons we don't get the huge excess of waiting lists.



Michael Steinhardt enjoys interacting with tortoises on his 55-acre "private zoo" on his estate about an hour north of New York City.

I think I'm too old, too ornery to be a believer that 10 days, Birthright, can change your life. You can't imagine how many people come back and say, 'This has changed my life.' But it's still 10 days, and they're 18 or 21 or 26. Has it really changed their life? I don't know.

Do you see criticism of Israel's policies as a threat to Birthright's impact on Jewish college students?

You can't avoid that being part of the message. Israel is a complicated place in a strange part of the world and there are plenty of issues to deal with. There are a substantial number of Jews who believe that Israel should leave the settlements, leave the West Bank.

I think most of us understand the occupation for what it is and what it isn't. The more one understands about Israel, the more comfortable one becomes with the politics of the Israeli government.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

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COMMUNITY SERVICES

COULD YOUR CHILD USE ANOTHER ADULT IN THEIR LIFE? Do you have children between the ages 6–17 who would benefit from frequent interaction with another Jewish adult/mentor? Call the Yad B' Yad Program Coordinator at Gulf Coast Jewish Family & Community Services, Deena Silver, at (727) 450-7278, for more information.

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hal@hk-cpas.com

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BEN & JERRY

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

All guests will be invited to enjoy a dessert reception immediately following the event, featuring a large-scale ice cream experience.

Cohen and Greenfield started their storefront ice cream business in 1978 in Vermont with its stated mission: to make the world's best ice cream, to run a financially successful company and to "make the world a better place." The formula worked with Ben & Jerry's becoming a business phenomenon by harnessing the power of social responsibility and creative management long before "cause marketing" and "corporate responsibility" were common. The company consistently offered higher-paying jobs, environmentally friendly approaches, and even animal-welfare focused endeavors.

The duo co-authored the 1997 best-selling book, *Ben & Jerry's Double Dip: Lead with your Values and Make Money, Too*. In 2000, Cohen and Greenfield sold their company, by then publicly traded, for \$326 million to Unilever.

While news reports about the purchase say there was some rocky road (not a Ben & Jerry's flavor) at the beginning, Unilever has seen the value of the company's approach. It continues to show the company's progressive values, concocting new flavors or rebranding old ones with names such as "I Dough, I Dough" to celebrate the legalization of same-sex marriage and "Save our Swirled" to support the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

Interviews with company officials say that Cohen and Greenfield have remained involved, although not on a day-to-day basis.

In addition to Cohen and Greenfield, the Catalyst event will include the presentation of two prestigious leadership awards: the Dr. Edward N. Ludin Young

Leadership Award and the Alfred Schick, MD, Award.

A participant in the Jewish Agency for Israel's Lone Soldier program will also share his personal experience.

Guests will have the opportunity to be the first to make commitments to the Federation's 2018 fundraising efforts, which will go on to fund community-wide Jewish programming of the Federation, partner agencies, and synagogues as well as supporting the ever-changing needs of the global Jewish community, including specific programs in Israel.

Catalyst 2018 will kick-off a week's worth of fundraising activities. Super Sunday, the Federation's large-scale annual phone-a-thon, is scheduled on Oct. 29 with volunteers making calls from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Then during the following week, different group of volunteers from Federation's giving societies such as Maimonides (healthcare professionals) and YAD (Young Adult Division) will be called upon to make more calls to community members.

"By introducing a larger-scale event as an anchor in our calendar, we will attract a larger-scale crowd and will be able to share our exciting community message with more people," said Steve Klein, president of the Federation. "This also means that all of our key supporter groups - like women's philanthropy, young adults, Maimonides Society, and Montefiore/Cardozo - will have the chance to enjoy a really top-notch speaker and event rather than attending many events throughout the year."

Full information about the event will be available after Sept. 1 on the Federation's website, www.jewishpinellas.org. Invitations will be mailed in mid-September. Those interested in getting involved in planning or sponsoring the event, should contact Elana Gootson at (727) 333-3102 or egootson@jewishpinellas.org.

Obituaries

ZELDA BECKER, 89, of Rochester, NY, formerly of **St. Petersburg** died Aug. 7. Born in Rochester, she was an accounts receivable specialist for the University of Rochester Medical Center. Survivors include her son Alan Becker of Rochester. (David C. Gross Funeral Homes, St. Petersburg Chapel)

NEIL JAY CANTOR, 86, of **Dunedin**, died Aug. 12. Born in Brooklyn, NY, he moved to Florida in 1980 from Washington, D.C. where he had lived for a number of years. Survivors include his son Neil Cantor II; sister Sue King. The family suggests memorials to the charity of one's choice. (Segal Funeral Home, Beth David Chapel)

SAMUEL WARREN LEVINE, 64, of **Clearwater**, died Aug. 15. Born in Brooklyn, he worked for many years in the jewelry district in New York City. He is survived by his husband, Dr. Jay Azneer; two brothers, Alan and Lee; mother-in-law Dr. Pat Cottrille; sister-in-law Reva (Leslie) Pearlstein; brother-in-law Dr. Ira Azneer. The family suggests memorials be made to Suncoast Hospice or Congregation B'nai Israel in St. Petersburg. (David C. Gross Funeral Homes, St. Petersburg Chapel)

BETTY NEUER, 90, of **Seminole**, died Aug. 19. Born in Argentina, she came to the United States at the age of 12. She was a lifetime member of Hadassah. Survivors include her daughter and son-in-law Elynn "Cookie" and Jerry Klein; two granddaughters and five great-grandchildren. The family suggests memorials to the Alzheimer's Association. (David C. Gross Funeral Homes, St. Petersburg Chapel)

PHILIP REDISCH, 81, of **Kenneth City**, died Aug. 24. A longtime member of Congregation B'nai Israel in St. Petersburg, he was a past president of the

congregation and a member and past president of its Mitzvah Men's Club. He was a member of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, a volunteer at Menorah Manor and the Mahaffey Theater, a longtime blood donor and member of the Jewish Sacred Society (Hevra Kadisha). He was the owner of Phil's Cabs, a division of Independent Taxi, St. Petersburg. He was also a two-term city councilman for the municipality of Kenneth City. Survivors include his wife Joan; son Steven; two daughters, Hope and BethAnn; two sisters Rhoda Payne and Francine Miller. The family suggests memorials to Congregation B'nai Israel or hospice. (David C. Gross funeral Homes, St. Petersburg chapel)

MARTHA JEAN SCHAFFER, 75, of **Gainesville**, formerly of St. Petersburg, died Aug. 18. Born in St. Petersburg, she was a graduate of Boca Ciega High School, after which she attended college to become a registered nurse. In 1964 she and her husband Gerald moved to Gainesville. In 1982 she returned to school, attending the University of Florida, where she obtained her bachelor's of Fine Arts degree with honors. In Gainesville, she was involved with Congregation B'nai Israel, as a board member as well as an officer in Sisterhood. Survivors include her husband Gerald Schaffer; two daughters, Sara and Rebecca; and son Daniel; sister Gail McKenzie; sister-in-law Susan Schaffer; and seven grandchildren. The family suggests memorials be made to UF Health Shands Arts in Medicine. (Williams-Thomas Funeral Home)

The Jewish Press publishes obituaries of Jewish community members, both local residents and individuals whose survivors live in the area, as a FREE public service.

Organizations

Hadassah

Sukkot flower sale: The St. Petersburg Chapter of Hadassah's Rosh Hashanah - Yom Kippur - Sukkot flower sale is open and will run until Wednesday, Sept. 13. Small arrangements are \$36 and large arrangements, orchid or roses are \$54 with free delivery in Pinellas County. To order call **Linda Weiss** at (561) 346-8000 or email LindaWeissFL@gmail.com

Annual meeting: The North Pinellas Chapter of Hadassah will hold its annual member appreciation luncheon on Monday, Sept. 11 at 11:30 a.m. at Temple Ahat Shalom, 1575 Curlew Road, Palm Harbor. This is open for all life and annual paid-up members, associates and prospective members. Cost is \$5, collected at the door. Reservations are required. To RSVP, call **Doris Harding** at (727) 772-4140.

Genealogical Society

Holocaust data resources: The next meeting of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Tampa Bay will be hosted by and held at the Florida Holocaust Museum, 55 Fifth St. S., St. Petersburg, on Sunday, Sept. 10.

Registration is at 1:30 p.m. and the program starts at 2 p.m. **Urszula Szczepinska**, curator of education and director of research at the museum, will discuss on-

line resources that have the most updated information and demonstrate how to use archival databases for information about victims of the Holocaust.

An optional docent-led tour of the museum, free for museum and society members and \$9 for non-members, will take place following the program. Advanced registration for the tour is requested. RSVP to **Sally Israel**, (727) 343-1652.

Job-Links

Career counseling: Tampa Bay Job-Links offers free motivational Monday Morning Links sessions from 9:30 - 11 a.m. at the Jack Roth Center for Career Development at TampaBay-Job-Links, 4100 W. Kennedy Blvd., Suite 206, Tampa. On Monday, Sept. 11, the topic is "Dos and don'ts from a recruiter perspective." Monday Morning Links is supported by the Vinik Family Foundation.

There are also Success workshops to aid with job-search skills On Thursday, Sept. 7 from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., the program is "5 steps to successfully negotiate a job offer."

The program is free for Job-Links program participants; \$15 for guests.

A special four-part series, "Switching Gears: A Roadmap for

Career Transition" will conclude on Sept. 13 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Cost is \$15 per session; free for full-program participants.

Reservations required for all programs. To RSVP, call (813) 344-0200, email RSVP@TBJL.org, or visit www.TBJL.org.

Support groups

Alzheimer's caregiver group: Menorah Manor offers a support group meeting in the Samson Nursing Center at Menorah Manor, 255 59th St. N., St. Petersburg, on the first Thursday of the month from 3:30-5 p.m. For more information, call **Gwen Kalenberg** at (727) 302-3750.

OBITUARIES of Jewish community members, both local residents and individuals whose survivors live in the area, are published as a FREE public service in the Jewish Press of Pinellas County, based on information supplied by the family to the funeral home. Information may also be submitted directly in writing to the Jewish Press. Email to jewishpress@aol.com or send to PO Box 6970, Clearwater, FL 33758. Be sure to include contact information. The information contained in the published obituary is at the discretion of the Jewish Press.



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We hope you will find our calendar, inserted in this Jewish Press, helpful throughout the New Year!

L'Shana Tovah!

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5788 High Holiday Service Schedules

Received as of press time. For more information on related holiday events, see the congregation listings on Pages 4-5. For High Holiday admission policies, contact the individual congregation.

PINELLAS COUNTY

Orthodox

CHABAD OF PINELLAS

3696 Fisher Road, Palm Harbor
(727) 789-0408

SELICHOT
Sunday, Sept. 17
Service, 1:25 a.m.
EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 7 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day
Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service, 9:30 a.m.
Youth Program, 11 a.m.
Shofar, approx. 11:30 a.m.
Mincha and Tashlich, 6:30 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 2nd Day
Friday, Sept. 22
Morning service, 9:30 a.m.
Youth Program, 11 a.m.
Shofar, approx. 11:30 a.m.
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 7 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 20
Morning service, 9:30 a.m.
Youth Program, 11 a.m.
Yizkor, approx. 12:30 p.m.
Mincha, 5:30 p.m.
Ne'ilah, 6:45 p.m.
Break-The-Fast, 7:53 p.m.

CHABAD OF CLEARWATER

Services at Tabacnic Chabad Center
2280 Belleair Road, Clearwater
(727) 265-2770

EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 7:15 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day
Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service, 9:30 a.m.
Shofar sounding, 11:30 a.m.
Kiddush following services
Mincha and Tashlich, 6:45 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 2nd Day
Friday, Sept. 22
Morning service, 9:30 a.m.
Shofar sounding, 11:30 a.m.
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 7:15 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Yizkor, 12:30 a.m.
Mincha, 5:45 p.m.
Ne'ilah, 6:45 p.m.
Final Shofar, 7:53 p.m.
Break-The-Fast to follow

CHABAD JEWISH CENTER OF GREATER ST. PETERSBURG

4010 Park St. N., St. Petersburg
(727) 344-4900

EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 7 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day
Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service, 9 a.m.
Children's services, 9:30 a.m.
Shofar, 10:45 a.m.
Tashlich service, 6 p.m.
(at Abercrombie Park waterfront)

ROSH HASHANAH – 2nd Day

Friday, Sept. 22
Morning service, 9 a.m.
Children's services, 9:30 a.m.
Shofar, 10:45 a.m.
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 7 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Morning service, 9 a.m.
Children's services, 9:30 a.m.
Yizkor, 11:15 p.m.
Mincha, 6 p.m.
Ne'ilah 7 p.m.
Final Shofar, 7:52 p.m.
Break-The-Fast to follow

Conservative

CONG. B'NAI ISRAEL

300 – 58th St. N. St. Petersburg
(727) 381-4900

SELICHOT
Saturday, Sept. 16
Program, 8:45 p.m.
Service, 10:30 p.m.
MEMORIAL SERVICES
Sunday, Sept. 17
Chapel Hill, 10:30 a.m.
Royal Palm, 11:30 a.m.
EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 7 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day
Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service, 8:30 a.m.
Shofar, 10:15 a.m.
Tashlich, 5:45 p.m.
(Lake Pasadena)
Mincha & Ma'ariv, 7 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 2nd Day
Friday, Sept. 22
Morning service, 8:30 a.m.
Shofar sounding, 10:15 a.m.
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 7 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Morning service, 8:30 a.m.
Yizkor, 1 p.m.
Mincha 4:50 p.m.
Ne'ilah, 5:50 p.m. (approx.)
Final Shofar, 7:50 p.m.
Break-the-Fast snacks to follow

CONG. BETH SHOLOM

1844 54th St. S., Gulfport
(727) 321-3380

SELICHOT
Saturday, Sept. 16
Service, 7:30 p.m.
EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 7:30 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day
Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service, 9:30 a.m.
Tashlich to follow service
ROSH HASHANAH – 2nd Day
Friday, Sept. 22
Morning service, 9:30 a.m.
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 7:30 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Morning service, 9:30 a.m.
Yizkor, 11 a.m.
Services resume, 4 p.m.
Ne'ilah, 5 p.m.
Break-the-Fast at conclusion

CONG. BETH SHALOM

1325 S. Belcher Road, Clearwater
(727) 531-1418

EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 7:30 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day
Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service, 8:30 a.m.
Tashlich, 6 p.m.
Ma'ariv, 8 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 2ND Day
Friday, Sept. 22
Morning service, 8:30 a.m.
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 6:45 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Morning service, 9 a.m.
Mincha, 5:30 p.m.
Ne'ilah, 6:50 p.m.
Final Shofar, 7:53 p.m.

Reform

TEMPLE AHAVAT SHALOM

1575 Curlew Road, Palm Harbor
(727) 785-8811

SELICHOT
Saturday, Sept. 16
Dessert followed by Havdalah and service, 8 p.m.
MEMORIAL SERVICES
Sunday, Sept. 17
Sylvan Abbey, noon
Curlew Hills, 1 p.m.
EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 8 p.m.

ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day

Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Youth services,
(grade 3+), 11 a.m.
(tot-2nd grade) 3 p.m.
Tashlich, 4:30 p.m.
(Dunedin Causeway)
ROSH HASHANAH – 2nd Day
Friday, Sept. 22
Morning service, 10 a.m.
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 7:30 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Youth services,
(grade 3+), 11 a.m.
(tot-2nd grade) 1:30 p.m.
Yizkor, 4:30 p.m.
Ne'ilah, 5:30 p.m.
Break-the-Fast, 6:30 p.m.

TEMPLE B'NAI ISRAEL

1685 S. Belcher Road, Clearwater
(727) 531-5829

SELICHOT
Saturday, Sept. 16
Dinner and cake off, 6:30 p.m.
Service, 9 p.m.
EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 8 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH
Thursday, Sept. 21
Tot Family Service, 9 a.m.
Morning service, 10:15 a.m.
Saturday, Sept. 23
Havdalah and Tashlich, 6 p.m.
(on the beach)
MEMORIAL SERVICES
Sunday, Sept. 24
Sylvan Abbey, 10 a.m.
Curlew Hills, 11 a.m.
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 8 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Tot Family service, 9 a.m.
Morning service, 10:15 a.m.
Afternoon service, 4:15 p.m.
(includes Yizkor, Ne'ilah)
Break-the-Fast

TEMPLE BETH-EL

400 S. Pasadena Ave., St. Petersburg
(727) 347-6136

SELICHOT
Saturday, Sept. 16
Program and Selichot service, 7 p.m.
EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 7:30 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day
Thursday, Sept. 21
Family services, 9:45 a.m.
Morning service, 10 a.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 2nd Day
Friday, Sept. 22
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Friday, Sept. 22 – 6:30 p.m.
Shabbat & Tashlich (on the beach)
MEMORIAL SERVICES
Sunday, Sept. 24
Chapel Hill, 9:30 a.m.
Royal Palm, 10:30 a.m.
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 7:30 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Family service, 9:45 a.m.
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Yizkor, 12:30 p.m.
Afternoon service, 4 p.m.
Ne'ilah, 6 p.m.
Break-the-Fast, 7 p.m.

CONG. B'NAI EMMUNAH

57 Read Street, Tarpon Springs
(727) 938-9000

*Services at Church on the Bayou,
409 Whitcomb Blvd., Tarpon Springs
SELICHOT
Saturday, Sept. 16
Program & oneg, 7 p.m.
Selichot service, 9 p.m.
EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 8 p.m.
***ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day**
Thursday, Sept. 21
*Morning service, 10 a.m.
***EREV YOM KIPPUR**
Friday, Sept. 29
*Kol Nidre, 8 p.m.
***YOM KIPPUR**
Saturday, Sept. 30
*Morning service, 10 a.m.
Followed by Yizkor Service
Afternoon service, 4 p.m.
Ne'ilah, 6:15 p.m.
Break-the-Fast, 7:20 p.m.

Humanistic

Service at Unity of Tampa
3302 W. Horatio St.
Tampa, FL 33609
(813) 701-9685
EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Program, 7:30 p.m.

PASCO COUNTY

Orthodox

CHABAD OF WEST PASCO

10733 Maple Creek Drive,
Suite 101, Trinity
(727) 376-3366

EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 7 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH
Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Shofar sounding, 11:45 a.m.
Tashlich, 6 p.m.
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 7 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Yizkor, 12:30 p.m.
Afternoon service, 5:45 p.m.
Ne'ilah, 6:45 p.m.
Break-the-Fast, 7:53 p.m.

Conservative

**Cong. Beth Tefillah/
JCC of West Pasco**

9841 Scenic Drive, Port Richey
(727) 847-3814

SELICHOT
Saturday, Sept. 16
Selichot service, 7 p.m.
EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 7:30 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day
Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service, 9:30 a.m.
Tashlich, 3:30 p.m. (at member's
home, RSVP required)
MEMORIAL SERVICES
Sunday, Sept. 24
Grace Memorial, 11 a.m.
Trinity Memorial Gardens, 1:30 p.m.
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 7 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Morning service, 9:30 a.m.
Yizkor, 5:30 p.m.
Evening service, 6 p.m.
Ne'ilah, 7 p.m.
Break-the-Fast will follow

HERNANDO COUNTY

Orthodox

CHABAD OF SPRING HILL

Services at the
Brooksville Elks Lodge
13383 County Line Road, Spring Hill
(352) 600-2779

EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 7 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day
Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Shofar sounding, noon
Kiddush to follow
ROSH HASHANAH – 2nd Day
Friday, Sept. 22
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Shofar sounding, noon
Kiddush to follow
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 6:45 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Yizkor, noon
Afternoon & Ne'ilah, 5:45 p.m.
Final Shofar, 7:52 p.m.
Break-the-Fast to follow

Reform

TEMPLE BETH DAVID

13158 Antelope St. Spring Hill
(352) 686-7034

SELICHOT
Saturday, Sept. 16
Service, 8 p.m.
EREV ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Evening service, 8 p.m.
ROSH HASHANAH – 1st Day
Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Kiddush following service
Tashlich and Barbecue, 5 p.m.
(at Pine Island Beach)
EREV YOM KIPPUR
Friday, Sept. 29
Kol Nidre, 8 p.m.
YOM KIPPUR
Saturday, Sept. 30
Morning service, 10 a.m.
Yizkor, approximately 12:30 p.m.
Afternoon services, 4:30 p.m.
Kiddush following
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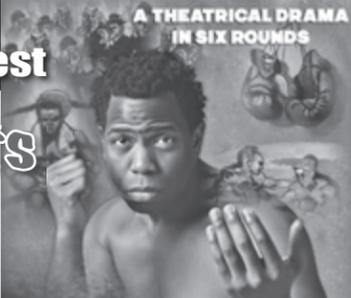
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Students do an art project at the Eclipse Party.

Hillel Academy students enjoy sights, lessons from eclipse

Hillel Academy students were quick to understand that they were experiencing the astronomical happening of a lifetime at their school's eclipse party on Monday, Aug. 21.

Head of School Gordon Rode made sure that his students not only got to witness the eclipse, but that the encounter would be memorable and beyond the merely educational.

The buzz began more than a week before. Some students pestered their teachers daily for details about the phenomenon and the school's plans for the big day.

When the day finally arrived, starting before lunch time, students viewed the eclipse on large TV screens throughout the school as it made its way across the country.



Rabbi Josh Hearshen, wife Carrie and daughter Ayelet

After lunch, the students joined together to:

- Listen to Rabbi Josh Hearshen of Congregation Rodeph Sholom tell a story about the sun and moon
- Participate in a science project utilizing paper plates and quarters to demonstrate the science behind an eclipse.
- Create eclipse-inspired artwork
- Have an eclipse-themed snack

Special safety glasses ordered weeks ahead were distributed and students went outside in small groups, monitored carefully by teachers. "Don't look up without your glasses," became the mantra, as teachers ensured the students followed that crucial rule.

Amazement and joy ensued, as many parents came to school to experience the celestial site with their children.

Jewish camp provides fun atmosphere for special needs kids

By JACOB McMANAMON
Jewish Press

Many in the Jewish community have heard of popular Jewish camps like Camp Coleman or Camp Ramah, but it's a good bet most have not heard of a special needs program called Kids of Courage (KOC).

It is an innovative, volunteer-based Jewish organization, dedicated to improving the lives of children and young adults with serious medical diagnoses.

Kids of Courage was founded in 2008 and its mission is to change the way people look at illness, and to open up a world of support, hope and opportunity for every sick child and family, no matter how serious the diagnosis.

One local Jewish young man, Avi Davidson of Tampa, has found all that at the camp, which he began attending in 2011, two years after a major accident left him with severe injuries.

Davidson was climbing a power pole near his house to take a photograph of the sunset when he accidentally touched the electrical wire. He was shocked badly and fell to the ground, suffering severe burns. He had his arm amputated and was left partially paralyzed.

"I joined KOC after having suffered [the] serious accident in 2009 at [the age of] 16," said Davidson. "My mother and father looked continuously for a program I would be able to still attend after my body and mind healed more; they found it and it was a perfect fit."

This summer, Davidson participated in an 8-day trip with Kids of Courage to a camp in Virginia. Campers came from across the U.S. and as far away as Israel and Brazil.

"We [take] 130 sick children and young adults with all their required medical supervision and life support equipment they need to a medically supervised camp that children with debilitating illnesses look forward to all year long," said Kids of Courage coordinator Esther Cohen. "This camp gives them an opportunity to relax and recuperate from the physically and emotionally exhausting lifestyles they lead and gives them the needed strength for the rest of the year."

Kids of Courage also assists families year-round with things like medical referrals and even weekend retreats, where the camp can offer a welcome change-of-pace for caregivers as well as participants. There is no charge for the any of the services.

Summer camp is just one of many Kids of Courage programs that Davidson has taken part in, adding that there are multiple experiences at Kids of Courage that he enjoys.

"As a camper in a 'mentoring' position, I do love every trip, gaining new experiences and traveling to new places," said Davidson, "To me, campers being able to experience things they would not have imagined in their wildest dreams is what I love most."



Avi Davidson with a counselor on one of his previous excursions with Kids of Courage.

"The experience I have on each trip differs, depending on location and activities, but what remains a constant is the wonderment of a child's *koach* (strength), the lifesaving effects faith and endurance can allow a child in the worst circumstances to still smile and face life head on," said Davidson, "I will continue to both participate and support KOC for the remaining life I have. They truly do conquer illness through adventure."

For more information about Kids of Courage or to make a donation, contact Cohen at Estt26@gmail.com (917) 921-4276.

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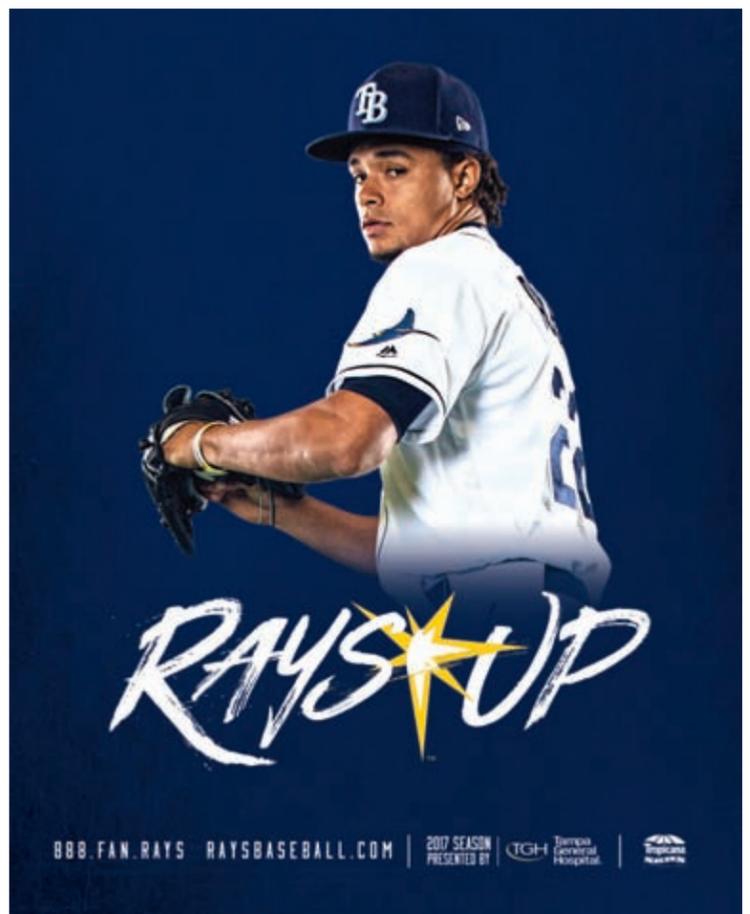


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114 just converted to Judaism in Nicaragua

By JOSEFIN DOLSTEN
JTA news

Over the course of just a few days, the tiny Jewish community in Nicaragua more than doubled when 114 people converted to Judaism.

In July, community members answered questions before a beit din, or religious court, of three Orthodox rabbis from Israel and the United States and immersed in a newly built mikvah in Managua, the Central American coun-

try's capital. Male converts underwent circumcisions or symbolic circumcisions if already circumcised.

Three days after the conversions conducted at the Managua home of a community leader, 22 couples wed according to Jewish tradition in a Managua social hall rented for the occasion.

Kulanu, a New York-based non-profit group that supports communities around the world seeking to learn about Judaism, had facilitated the conversions.

"There was a great amount of trepidation in their faces and anxiousness because it was so important to them, and when they emerged from the mikvah the glow on their faces was amazing," said beit din member Rabbi Mark Kunis, who was ordained at Yeshiva University's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary and works at the Shaarei Shamayim synagogue in Atlanta. "It's inspiring; the excitement that it engendered was phenomenal."

At least half the candidates claimed Jewish ancestry, and most had been studying Judaism for at least five years – with some pursuing Judaism almost their entire lives, Kunis told JTA. All the candidates except one family were accepted for conversion, and one of the beit din rabbis served as a Spanish translator, since most of the candidates could not communicate in English, he said.

"I feel at home," Even Centeno, 21, told JTA of having officially become Jewish. "This was for me like a dream."

Centeno is among the converts who trace their ancestry to Sephardic Jews forced to convert to Christianity during the Inquisition. Centeno, who converted along with his parents and sister, said he was aware of his family's Jewish ancestry since he was a young child and started learning about Judaism at the age of 11.

The conversions bring a significant influx of Jews to Nicaragua. Although Jews have been living there since the 18th century, the community numbered only about 50 in 2012 and was comprised mostly of American retirees, according to the Nicaraguan Israelite Congregation. That year, Kulanu



Nicaraguan men who converted to Judaism waiting for their brides prior to a Jewish wedding for 22 couples.



This woman and her young daughter were among the 114 converts to Judaism in Nicaragua.

helped facilitate the conversions of 14 people, most of whom claimed ancestry to Jewish men who had married non-Jewish Nicaraguan women. Another 14 converted in 2015, but the recent group is the largest to date.

Though the Nicaraguans converted together, they follow two different leaders, said Bonita Sussman, vice president of Kulanu.

The majority, including Centeno, are inspired by Hasidism and follow a local leader named Akiva Simja Fernandez, who converted to Judaism in 2012 with the help of Kulanu. Fernandez follows some Jewish customs that he learned from the Chabad-Lubavitch movement, which does not have a presence in Managua but caters to Israeli tourists in the beach town of San Juan del Sur.

Fernandez and many of his followers – some of whom claim Jewish ancestry – wear black velvet kippahs and wide-brimmed black hats, and sing and dance to Hasidic music during celebrations.

A second group with 38 members of one extended family heeds Moshe Omar Cohen-Henriquez, who traces his ancestry to Jews from Curacao who were forced to convert to Christianity. The group adheres to Sephardi customs and has access to a mikvah, or ritual pool, adjacent to Henriquez's home. The men wear big crocheted kippahs.

Prior to deciding to become Jewish, Sussman said, the converts identified with Christianity or messianism, a movement that infuses Christian belief with some elements of Jewish ritual practice.

This isn't the first mass conversion facilitated by Kulanu. Last year, the group brought rabbis to Madagascar to convert 121 people, building a Jewish community where none had existed.

Sussman noted how the members of the Nicaraguan community relate to their Judaism.

"These two are unique in that one is a Sephardic and descendants of anousim and the other tends towards Hasidic kabbalistic practice," she said.

"Anousim" is a Hebrew term for

Jews who were forced to abandon Judaism against their will.

The Nicaragua group that follows Simja is distinctive in the fact that it follows customs learned from Chabad, Sussman added. (Chabad has no official ties to the converts or Kulanu.)

Sussman sees the conversions as part of a larger phenomenon.

"This is a new trend in Jewish history," she said. "In the last 100 years we have seen the Holocaust, the destruction of all Jewish communities in Arab lands and the rebuilding of a Jewish homeland. We are now entering an era of rebuilding the Jewish people."

"In general, while there may be some hot spots of interest in Judaism in the Western countries, for the most part serious interest in religion is a thing of the past. Today, however, the interest lies in Africa, South America and India. As Jews we must be part of this exciting new development."

Kulanu is planning to send equipment to the Nicaraguans to perform kosher ritual slaughter. "The big need is for kosher meat. We're planning to get them shechitah knives," Sussman said. "They haven't eaten meat, some of them for years. They eat vegetarian and fish."

The dietary restrictions didn't seem to be a problem for Centeno, who was getting ready to cook for Shabbat, when he would be hosting 70 community members.

"[A]ll the community will be in my house, we'll do a Shabbaton," he said. "Today I'm preparing all the food."



Photos by Bonita Sussman

(L-R) Moshe Omar Cohen-Henriquez speaking with beit din members Rabbi Mark Kunis, Rabbi Andy Eichenholz and Rabbi Marc Phillippe. On the far right is Even Centeno, a convert who traces his ancestry to Sephardi Jews who were forced to convert to Christianity.

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BAR & BAT MITZVAH

28th annual Planning Guide

SECTION B

August 25, 2017



DOUBLE VISIONS

Sister and brother, Eliana and Gil Bloom, share their B'nai Mitzvah on the shores of Tampa Bay ...Page 3B

Photo by Robin Winkler



Cousins Rehna Halprin of St. Petersburg, left, and Abrianna Lalle of Weston, on the bima together at Temple Beth-El in St. Petersburg ...Page 10B

Twin sisters Peyton, left, and Landry Feldman, participate in the kiddush and hamotzi with Rabbi Gary Klein at Temple Ahavat Shalom ...Page 10B

Photo by Kathleen Hall Photography



Photo by Maddock Photographers

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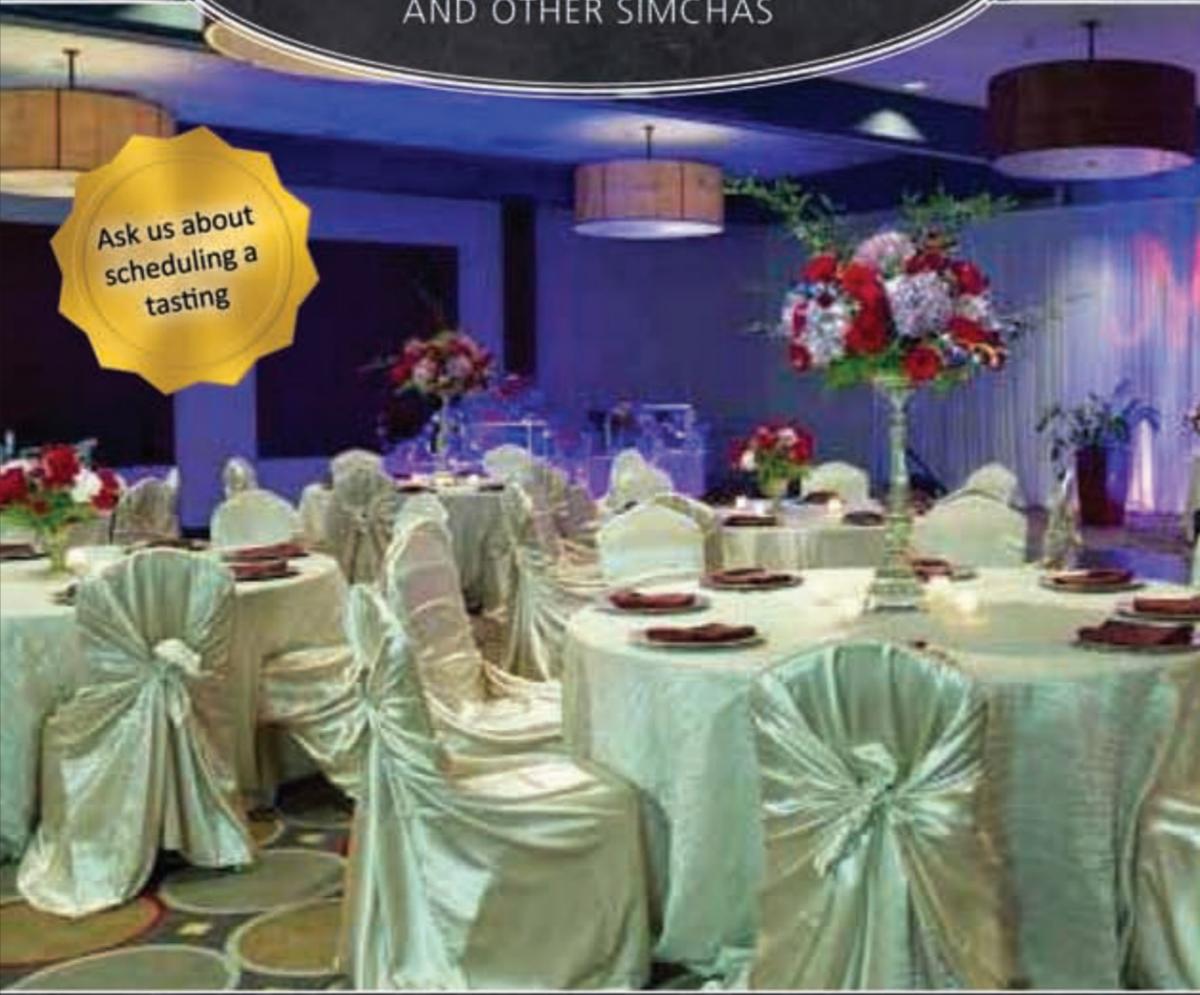
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Camp-style B'nai Mitzvah reflects this family's ties

By BOB FRYER
Jewish Press

Because twins Eliana and Gil Bloom have different personalities, finding a way to celebrate their B'nai Mitzvah could have been a problem, but their resourceful parents, Diana and Aaron Bloom, knew of one thing that binds the whole family together – Jewish summer camp.

More specifically, their ties are not to just any camp, but Camp Coleman in the Appalachian Mountain foothills in north Georgia. It is where the twins, since age 6, have spent happy summers with other Jewish kids, making friends and coming to love the outdoor activities, camper camaraderie, prayer sessions by a bonfire and other good times. It is also where Diana Bloom serves as head counselor each summer.

A firm believer in planning ahead, Diana said that the decision to hold a camp-style B'nai Mitzvah for the twins was made when the kids were 11. However, as the twins grew older and began attending Bar and Bat Mitzvahs of friends, the parents worried that Eliana and Gil might prefer their own event to be more traditional. They needn't have fretted, as both kids loved their shared special day.

The Blooms are members of Congregation Schaarai Zedek in Tampa and one of Diana's early concerns was that Rabbi Richard Birnholz would not be on board with a B'nai Mitzvah outdoors, and not at the temple. But she



Photo by Rebin Winkler

A rustic look, to make folks feel like they were at a summer camp, was the goal when it came to decorating the grounds for the Bloom twins' B'nai Mitzvah. A table was decorated with "Bunking area" and "Registration area" signs to resemble what summer campers would see at Camp Coleman. A "Camp EG" logo was also used at many spots on the grounds in honor of Eliana and Gil Bloom.

said the Schaarai Zedek clergy were enthusiastic about the idea.

Seeking a site

Initially Diana considered having the twins B'nai Mitzvah at Camp Coleman, but the logistics and cost for those attending was just too daunting, so she looked for some place on the water in the Tampa area. Her first local choice was a farm with a lake, but the owners were unresponsive as were a few other options she looked at. Eventually, they found a resort on Tampa Bay in Ruskin.

"Lots of venues were not willing to go outside the box," Diana said.

"All the out-of-town guests stayed on the property, so there were no worries about them having to travel from a hotel to the event," Diana said, explaining that this was especially good for some Modern Orthodox guests who do not travel on Shabbat. "I wanted it convenient and I also wanted the guests to have a Florida experience, with the water and sand and sunsets and outdoors, so it was not like just anywhere."

The venue also offered plenty of open space for a bonfire, camp style games, a beachside B'nai Mitzvah service, picnic tables and rock climbing wall. With the addition of some camp-style signs and woody decorations, the place captured the summer camp atmosphere they wanted.

After finding the venue, the next most difficult aspect of the planning was finding a DJ. She wanted one comfortable with the rustic atmosphere, willing to add camp songs to the play list, to direct camp games such as potato-sack and wheelbarrow races. After some research and interviews, she found the right guy and the kids and adults loved him, she said.

Planning the details

It was only after she found the venue, DJ and photographer that she said the realized she still needed to hire an event planner, who, she said, was helpful with travel logistics and the event details.

The Blooms did not send out paper
CAMP STYLE continued on NEXT PAGE

Chuppah provides more than shade at twins' simcha

One of the touches that added meaning to the Bloom twins' B'nai Mitzvah was that they led the outdoor service under a chuppah that has a 20-year family history and like each member of their family, has strong ties to Camp Coleman.

It was the same chuppah that the twins' parents, Aaron and Diana, were married under in 1997, and the same chuppah that was used for Gil's bris and Eliana's baby naming ceremony.

The twin's dad Aaron's ties to Camp Coleman began when he attended the camp as a child. Then in 1992 he served on the camp staff and was re-hired to return for the summer of 1993 when he met Diana earlier that year.

"We met at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, a Reform seminary. We were both just in college and there was a conference there to talk about Jewish social action issues. My synagogue [in New York] sent me and Schaarai Zedek [in Tampa, where Aaron was a member] sent him," Diana said.

Their romance began at the conference and Aaron quickly lined up a job for Diana at the camp that summer so they could be together.

Their long-distance relationship continued and they grew closer during the summers of 1994 and 1995 they returned to the camp as staffers, with Aaron part of the camp's leadership team and Diana as unit head.

Aaron and Diana married on Aug. 17, 1997. Before they tied the knot, they sent squares of fabric to friends, many of whom they met at camp, asking them to decorate the squares and send them back.

Those squares were sewed together to create the chuppah they were married under, with Camp Director Bobby Harris and many other friends from the camp in attendance. Harris and some of those same camp friends were also on hand for the twins' B'nai Mitzvah.

Following in their parents' footsteps, so were friends the twins have made since 2010 when they started attending Camp Coleman, where their mom continues her association as head counselor.

— BOB FRYER

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- ❑ Begin to meet educational requirements.
- ❑ Set date and begin gathering information to decide format.

9 to 12 months in advance

- ❑ Determine budget.
- ❑ Plan tentative guest list.
- ❑ Select theme.
- ❑ Select and reserve site for main reception.
- ❑ Interview and contract with professionals including party planner, caterer, photographer, florist and entertainment.
- ❑ Meet with synagogue staff to discuss bar/bat mitzvah policies.

6 to 9 months in advance

- ❑ Reserve facilities for such functions as Shabbat eve dinner and Sunday brunch.
- ❑ Select and order invitations; thank you notes.
- ❑ Select caterer for oneg and kiddush
- ❑ Reserve hotel accommodations for out-of-town guests, especially if your event is "in season."
- ❑ Complete guest list and collect addresses.

4 to 6 months in advance

- ❑ Send "Save The Date" cards.
- ❑ Order any imprinted items, like yarmulkes, napkins.
- ❑ Recontact caterer, restaurant or hotel with approximate number of guests.
- ❑ Make menu selections.
- ❑ Make a list of clothing needs.
- ❑ Order flowers/decorations for synagogue, reception.

2 to 3 months in advance

- ❑ Help with child's speech.

- ❑ Purchase religious items such as yarmulke and tallit.
- ❑ Have photograph(s) taken for sign-in board/book, synagogue bulletin, newspaper.
- ❑ Finalize bakery order such as challah for kiddush and bar/bat mitzvah cake.

6-8 weeks in advance

- ❑ Mail and address invitations. You may want to send to out-of-towners earlier.
- ❑ Send announcement to the synagogue bulletin.

4 weeks in advance

- ❑ Finalize hotel reservations and plan hospitality baskets for out-of-town guests.
- ❑ Determine transportation arrangements as needed.
- ❑ Send announcement and photo to the *Jewish Press*.
- ❑ Finalize arrangements with rabbi, i.e. aliyot honors.
- ❑ Complete candle lighting or other reception presentation.

2 weeks in advance

- ❑ Draw up seating plan.
- ❑ Make place cards.

Final week

- ❑ Have final consultation with caterer, florist, photographer, entertainment and confirm schedules.
- ❑ Confirm head count/floor plan with caterer.
- ❑ Deliver items, i.e. yarmulke and programs to synagogue.
- ❑ Deliver hospitality baskets to the hotel.
- ❑ Rehearsal at the synagogue.
- ❑ Relax and enjoy!



Photos by Robin Winkler

Healy Slackman, with guitar, served as songleader as she gathered up a procession of guests and led them to a fireside spot along Tampa Bay for a Shabbat service, then a dinner and s'mores. Diana Bloom made arrangements years in advance for Slackman to be there. In front of procession at left is Sarah Beth Berman, a former Camp Coleman program director who led the Shabbat service.

CAMP STYLE

• CONTINUED from PAGE 3

invitations, instead sending out emails that directed guests to a website created just for the event. The site had its own logo, which was also used in decorations at the resort, and it listed information about airports, shuttles from the airport to the resort, the schedule of events, how to RSVP, a section on what attire to wear and a spot to leave t-shirt size information so the right size shirts would be on hand for kids and adults at a tie-dye activity.

The website had information for non-Jewish guests about Bar and Bat Mitzvahs and what to expect at the service and party and there was even a page of essential information in Spanish.

Many of the out of town guests were either friends that Diana and Aaron or the twins had made at the camp and traveled here from south Florida, Georgia, Maryland, New York, New Jersey and even Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Most local friends came only for the Saturday events, but on Friday night there was a "Shabbat walk" where all invitees present dressed in white. A small group began the stroll and sang as Healy Slackman – songleader at Camp Coleman and a senior at Eckerd College – strummed a guitar. The procession swelled as they stopped along the way at the cabins of guests who joined the procession.



Eliana's Bat Mitzvah cake was designed as a s'more and Gil's featured a kayaker paddling down a stream.

Waterside services

Their path eventually led to a Shabbat service by the water. With dolphins surfacing in the bay waters behind them, friends of the Blooms, all current or former educators and counselors at Camp Coleman, led the service. A dinner on the lawn, as well as s'mores cooked over a bonfire, followed.

Rabbi Birmholz, Rabbi Nathan Farb and Cantor Deborah Cannizzarro of Schaarai Zedek were present for the twins' waterfront B'nai Mitzvah service on Saturday morning.

"It was beautiful. The sun was shining, the water in the background and Eliana and Gil doing their readings, and friends also doing readings," Diana said. The twins read from the Torah, chanted the Haftarah, led most of the service and they offered a d'var Torah, a personal interpretation of the weekly Torah portion.

Immediately following the service, a party on the grounds began.

The twins each had their own cake reflecting their individual tastes: Eliana's was shaped like a s'more and Gil's depicted a kayaker going down a mountain stream.

Sleeping bags were used as sign-in boards and the grounds had signs posted to various places at the resort, similar to the signs used at Camp Coleman.

The party food was casual, just like the event, featuring hamburgers and hot dogs, and, for dessert, ice cream. The hotdogs were kosher and veggie options were offered too, so those who keep kosher could do so.

The party ended before sunset and the local invitees went home, but for the out-of-town guests at the resort, there was a wine and pizza party by the pool Saturday evening and an indoor brunch the next morning before folks flew out.

"Everyone we spoke to said it was so special and memorable," Diana said. "They felt like it was very warm and they really understood our intent as to what we chose; they enjoyed the services and music and could feel our kids' personalities coming through. They enjoyed the spirit and atmosphere. It was very hamish."

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Why we went to Israel for my son's Bar Mitzvah instead of having big party

By JORDANA HORN
Kveller via JTA

When my oldest son became a Bar Mitzvah, we had a congregational kiddush luncheon in his honor, and a small party for him and his friends that evening. Instead of having the grand blowout party that seems to be the general expectation in my New Jersey suburb, we opted to go to Israel instead. It was the best decision I possibly could have made for these reasons (among others):

1. Visiting Israel is not just any trip. Sure, we could have gone to Paris or Punta Cana, or to see penguins in Antarctica, for that matter. But the trip to see the Jewish state is a special one, and one I wanted to save as a special one to honor my son becoming a Bar Mitzvah. The implicit message I wanted to send my son was this: "You have just pledged yourself as a full member of the people of Israel. We happen to live in an era of history in which Jews not only live in, but also govern, Israel. You, my son, are part of this history. The lives of the people who live here are inextricably intertwined with yours; the history that happened here is your history. Let's go see your world."

2. You get to focus on the mitzvah rather than the bar. When you take your kid to Israel, you don't have to stress about the alcohol per head at your event. Instead, you get to think about the good deed you are doing by taking your child somewhere truly important and showing your kid that the world is bigger than the small sphere carved out for them at middle school. When your child attends a school where there are many lavish parties, the "bar" continues to be raised as to the parties. Worrying about the party takes an inordinate amount of the time, effort and money when planning for a child to become a bar or bat mitzvah. I was very grateful to take that worry out of the equation.

3. The math works in your favor. For the complete cost of a lavish four-hour, 200-plus person party, you can have a weeklong vacation in one of the most fascinating places in the world. The photos you will take on your iPhone of your family in front of the Western Wall will be more precious to you than the professionally taken photos of your guests with cocktails in hand. The stronger sense of self and history that comes from this trip is, of course, priceless.

4. Israel is delicious. Whatever caterer you may find cannot equal the pleasure of Israel's food. Whether you want to try kosher gourmet street food at Crave in Jerusalem (tell them I sent you), incredible gelato at Anita's in Tel Aviv or savory falafel with hummus and tahini basically anywhere, you will be happy and full.

5. More time equals more memories. While I am sure we would have wonderful memories of my son and extended family and friends at a blowout party, I will say I am profoundly grateful to have made the decision I made to go to Israel instead. While in Israel, we did everything from sample a Hanukkah sufganiya

(doughnut) per day (at least!) to arguing about the definition of terrorism. We learned about wild horses in a makhtesh (what's a makhtesh? Go to Israel and find out.) and about the Israeli Declaration of Independence in the hall where it was signed. The memories forged in Israel are profound.

6. Israel is family. In going to Israel with my children, I wanted to set the scene that Israel is more than a backdrop for a one-off family trip – it is a place



A bar mitzvah at the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

Photo by Yonatan Sindel/Flash 90

where I hope they will return, with me and other family members and friends, to learn, to travel and to grow. I took a picture of them in front of the Western Wall and told them, "Every time you come here, you stand right here and take a picture of yourself, so that you will see how the stones don't change and how you do." And when they take those pictures, they will be able to frame them next to the pictures of their own mother standing in the same spot as a 13-year-old, as a 16-year-old, etc.

And last, and certainly least:

7. Nobody will miss your party. Look, I am a huge proponent of celebrating *simchas*. But not a single person has said to me, "You know, I feel bad you decided to go to Israel instead of having a party. I really missed the opportunity to look at you in an expensive dress and shout over a DJ as I eat elaborate hors d'oeuvres while drinking themed cocktails." And I didn't miss it either. While I love celebrating with my friends at their parties, I have to say that I felt relieved to not have had to think or worry about my own. The weeks go by and my son goes to several parties like this a month. I am not sure he will really be able to distinguish one from another when all is said and done. At the end of the day, I don't want to impress my friends and neighbors – I want to impress upon my son what it means to be part of the Jewish people. And for that goal, this trip was a great success.

Kveller is a thriving community of women and parents who convene online to share, celebrate and commiserate their experiences of raising kids through a Jewish lens. Visit Kveller.com. This story is reprinted by permission of Kveller.com. The original can be found at <http://www.kveller.com/why-we-went-to-israel-for-my-sons-bar-mitzvah-instead-of-having-a-big-party/>

Get your Bar/Bat Mitzvah noticed in the Jewish Press

As the time nears for your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah, you will want to let the community know by announcing it in the *Jewish Press*.

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Black and white or color photographs are acceptable (no color copies or digital prints). The photo may be mailed or e-mailed to jewishpress@aol.com as a JPG or TIF. Photos should be clear headshots and if emailed must be high resolution. There is a \$5 charge to cover the cost of reproducing the photo.

The completed form should be sent approximately a month in advance. The *Jewish Press* prints the announcement one to two weeks before the celebration, if possible. All information is published at the discretion of the *Jewish Press*.

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Event planners help families prioritize, alleviate stress

By **DEBORAH FINEBLUM**
JNS.org

When the time came to plan her older son's Bar Mitzvah nine years ago, Stacie Bartfeld freely admits she knew it was coming up.

"But I work and didn't have the time to start from scratch," she says. "And when it comes to putting together a Bar Mitzvah, I didn't have a clue."

So when she heard about Bar/Bat Mitzvah planning pros who can take the sting out of what can be a stressful experience, the San Diego mom was sold. But alas, her husband, Neil, was resistant to the idea — so much so that, the first time she spoke with event planner Sherrill Kinsler Gilford, it was from the privacy of her walk-in closet, where she was certain not to be overheard.

Bartfeld says the benefits of consulting with Gilford were impressive, including helping with such basics as the food, décor, prizes and music, for their roughly 200 guests. "And I knew that, no matter what came up in advance or even on the day of, she would intercept it," she says.

As Bar/Bat Mitzvah festivities around the country trend towards more elaborate and complicated undertakings, the event planner recalls her own brother's relatively straightforward rite of passage celebration.

"After the service, there was some food and a little dancing and then everyone went home," says Gilford, who runs RSVP Events of San Diego with Rachel Wood. "Now there are so many moving parts that having us onboard means

they can actually enjoy their own simcha (joyous occasion)."

That was a common theme with the event planners interviewed by JNS.org. From big-picture decisions, like helping clients choose from what can be an overabundance of competing venues, caterers and music options, to minutia like running around at the last minute in hot pursuit of batteries for table centerpieces, planners can take some of the weight off parents' shoulders.

They can also acquaint parents with the latest trends. Among them, according to Terri Bergman of Washington, D.C.-based Terri Bergman Events, is one toward unassigned seating and shorter parties, as well as "environments" rather than the more traditional concept of themes. "We've even recreated [New York's] Central Park," says Bergman, who cheerfully admits to "being known for stepping out of the box a little."

With many of her clients spending anywhere from \$20,000 to \$150,000 on their children's Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, Bergman has learned to be flexible. One memorable event coincided with the great Northeastern U.S. blizzard of 2001. Her clients were insistent on holding their Bar/Bat Mitzvah parties regardless of the snow piling up all around them. The upshot was that many young guests from a different canceled Bar Mitzvah came to her clients' party. Bergman approached the local Hummer dealership to rent their tank-

like vehicle to pick up stranded vendors and band members, the planner recalls.



Photo by Serge Attal/Flash90

French Jews celebrate a bar mitzvah in Paris.

"Against all odds, the show went on," Bergman says.

The show itself is often an extravaganza when it's in Beverly Hills. So says Mindy Weiss, whose business, Mindy Weiss Party Consultants, serves an elite clientele in southern California.

"When they're hiring me, they're getting heavy décor and often name acts," such as music producer and radio personality DJ Khaled, Weiss reports.

"In Hollywood, anything is possible," she says.

Weiss highly recommends that first-time Bar/Bat Mitzvah moms and dads hire an event planner. "Yes, it's a luxury, but it also takes off the stress. The rabbis say there is too much bar and not enough mitzvah today. We can help by freeing the parents to spend time with their child," she says.

San Diego-based Gilford strongly agrees, saying, "When we run the party, the family and the Bar or Bat Mitzvah child can focus on the service. That's the basic idea of hiring us."

For Weiss, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience is all about transitions and transformations. "They practice and work on this for months, and they go from being a child to a young adult who can get up in front of everyone and read from the Torah and speak from the heart," she says.

"They're communicating and participating and that demands a new maturity," Weiss adds.

Perhaps the highest praise for having a planner came from Neil Bartfeld, who went from skeptic to believer in a few short months. He cornered the planner, Gilford, at his first son's Bar Mitzvah to

secure a promise to direct their younger son's celebration three years later.

"What changed my mind? I could see how easy things were made for us, with her taking care of vendors and all the other details," he says nine years later. "All we had to do was concentrate on enjoying ourselves. So it was a no-brainer to book her for the second one, too."

Even if their connections with vendors don't serve to recoup the entire cost of a planner's services, the father notes that "what you do recoup is some of your sanity and that is also very valuable."



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Twins connect to Israel through mitzvah project

When Natalie Feldman began planning the B'not Mitzvah with her twin daughters, Peyton and Landry, she knew she wanted them to do something special for their mitzvah project.

It was important for Feldman that the girls worked on a project that was helpful to Israel. She and her fiancé, Dr. Douglas Weiland, wanted the girls to do something that tied them to the Jewish homeland.

"I wanted to do something locally and something in Israel," said Feldman.

"Partly because I wanted the girls to have connectivity to Israel when they go one day. Israel is a place on a map and a place we talk about, but they don't really know what its about. I wanted them to have something they already know and identify Israel with."

After doing an Internet search and researching the company to make sure they were legitimate, Feldman found their Israeli cause in Kishorit, an agency that provides services for special needs adults through a variety of services including nursing care, vocational training and employment opportunities.

Peyton and Landry planned to hold a mah jongg tournament to raise funds for a donation to Kishorit. Unfortunately, the mah jongg tournament proved too difficult to schedule with so many tournaments already happening locally.

So the girls changed gears and asked for donations in lieu of gifts. The invitation asked friends and family to make a donation either to Temple Ahavat Shalom or Kishorit, directing them to the websites. Feldman said they did not want to know how much each person donated, but wanted to be able to get a list of donors so the girls could personally thank each donor.

The Friends of Kishoret organization told Feldman that about \$2,500 was donated in her twins' honor.

The family also found a way to make Kishorit part of the actual B'not Mitzvah celebration at the Palm Harbor temple.

Among the many businesses the organization runs in conjunction with its outreach to special needs individuals, is a vineyard and winery, which annually bottles 56,000 bottles of wine. Some of that wine was served during the party.

Feldman said she was also inspired to create items that would be helpful for Bar and Bat Mitzvahs and donate the profits for them to the Kishorit.

When the girls visit Israel one day, they will be able to say they helped the Kishorit and feel an attachment to it already, said Feldman.

— THAIS LEON-MILLER



Wine from Israel Kishorit Vienyard. Kishorit, a non-profit that assists special needs individuals, received a \$2,500 donation from the Feldman B'not Mitzvah.

Capturing 'spirit of the community' infuses B'not Mitzvah planning

By THAIS LEON-MILLER
Jewish Press

Natalie Feldman, who grew up Christian, converted to Judaism not long after the loss of her brother in 1988. Feldman said that she didn't convert for marriage; she converted on her own because she was drawn to the religion.

"I converted because I bought in," she said. "Judaism to me was the most poetic. All the symbolism is life-based. I was just so brought to how 'human' Judaism is."

Feldman was unable to Bat Mitzvah her eldest daughter, Sinclair, due to poor timing in her personal life and living in a place without a day school or strong Jewish presence.

So when it was time for her twin daughters to come of age, she committed to making it a genuine and important experience for the family, especially since they didn't have a strong familial background in Judaism. As Feldman put it, there were no "bubbes and zaydas" around to help foster the spirit of the community.

The girls took private Hebrew lessons at Temple Ahavat Shalom in Palm Harbor each week for over a year to prepare.

Both girls attended Safety Harbor Middle School and Feldman said she was a little nervous about how many of their non-Jewish school friends would show up to the service. To her and the girls' surprise, not only did a lot of their fellow students come, a lot of their teachers did as well.

Thinking about guests also motivated the family to come up with creative ideas.

"The candle lighting presented this really bizarre conundrum of singling out people to come up when everyone there is a beloved guest," said Feldman. "I found the solution to that on the Internet, which I love. You actually put the candle on the table and you go from table-to-table and speak to the people at the table. The girls went around the room and spoke to each group."

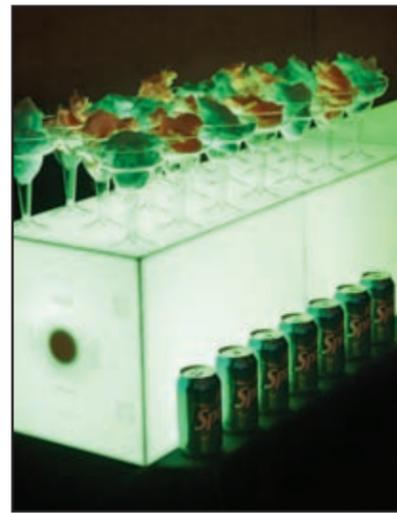
Feldman was tearful while describing seeing her girls working hard to get the words just right and staying dedicated to the idea of *tikkun olam* - repairing the world - throughout the entire B'not Mitzvah process.

"They are very different, and they like being different, but they collaborated a lot," said Feldman, before saying how proud she was of them.



Photos by Dylan Stevens

Instead of a traditional candle lighting, the Feldman twins recognized all their guests table-by-table. Speaking here is Peyton Feldman.



Glowing bars and cotton candy "cocktails" - a popular trend for teens at Bar and Bat Mitzvahs.

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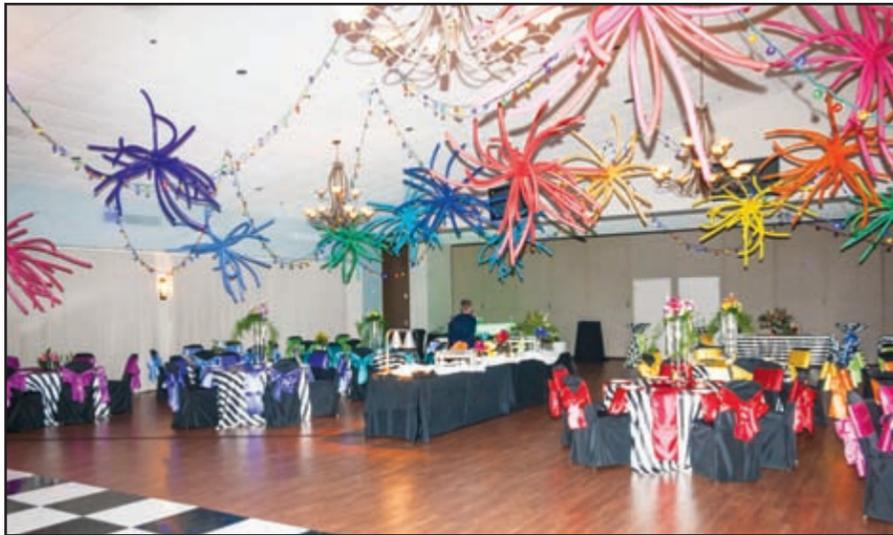
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ReBar asks adults to reminisce, reflect, reimagine their Bar/Bat Mitzvah

By **JAMIE SHAPIRO**
Jewish Press

If you could do over it again, what would you like to rewind and play again from your Bar/Bat Mitzvah? Is the horror of chanting your Torah portion still haunting you? Do you wish you'd chosen a different theme? Would you rewrite your speech, mostly composed by your mom?"

This is what reBar, a branch of the Reboot creative network, has been asking since it founded the program in 2013.

The answers, when it is asked of Jews in their 20s and 30s, opens a dialogue for considering and sharing reflections about family, community, belonging and Jewish inheritance and practice, said Tanya Schevitz, national communications and San Francisco program manager for Reboot.

"Going back for a fresh take on the bar or bat mitzvah – that time of transition a decade or two earlier – translates to the creation of go-forward paths of Jewish discovery and meaning," Schevitz said.

Online at www.rebarproject.org there are stories and photos of Bar/Bat Mitzvahs past and even DIY kits, offering ideas on how to reBar

solo, in a small group or as a community event.

ReBar has hosted several storytelling shows in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Chicago where people performed their Bar/Bat Mitzvah stories in front of a live audience.

One performer was illustrator Lisa Brown, who performed with her husband, Daniel Handler, better known by his pen name, Lemony Snicket. The two went through her Bat Mitzvah album channeling how her grandmother would have perceived the event, with Handler acting as her grandmother.

ReBar has also set up booths, where people answered the questions on a poster, and they put up a rebar photo booth, that allowed people to reflect on what was important to them at 13 and what is important to them now, at events.

While the target audience for the Reboot project is for young adults, the project has engaged adults of all ages.

"We want our audience to reflect on their 13-year-old-selves and commit to engaging with their community now and in the future," Schevitz said. "I feel that reBar is a powerful project."



Daniel Schifrin, left, a novelist and short story writer, wrote on the reBar website that one of the things he obsessed over for his August 1981 Bar Mitzvah was his hair.

"I was 13, the girls in my class all loved Parker Stevenson's blow-dried hair (the real star of the Hardy Boys TV show), and I was saddled with a helmet of impractical locks that defied gravity, the curls above my ears pointing sideways like the Steve Martin arrow-through-the-head posters gracing the bedrooms. As I sat in Hebrew school I shuddered to think about being up on the bima, my curls levitating and separating as I sat on the oversized chair next to the rabbi, imagining my friends imagining me being Steve Martinized. I wanted to take the yad and stick it through my ears, ending the horror."



Lessons my son learned during his Bar Mitzvah year

By **RANDI MAZZELLA**
Kveller.com

My son is in the 7th grade, which means he is in the middle of his Bar Mitzvah year. It has been an exciting and busy time for him. In addition to preparing for and having his own Bar Mitzvah, he has been fortunate to be invited to celebrate at the bar and bat mitzvahs of many of his friends.

Of course, he has had a lot of fun attending all the great parties. But beyond that, this year has allowed him to learn valuable life lessons including...

The satisfaction of accomplishing a goal: Many of us take for granted that our children are going to become B'nai Mitzvahs because we know so many children that have already accomplished this goal. But it is still pretty awesome! Our kids learn a foreign language and then speak (and sing) in this language in front of a large audience. My son had doubts when he started this process and voiced concerns over embarrassing himself publicly. But he had nothing to be worried about. With a lot of hard work and the support of a great tutor, he was able to confidently lead the temple service and beautifully read from the Torah. My husband and I were incredibly proud of him, and even more important, he was really proud of himself.

2. Prayers and Blessings: My son has spent more time at Temple Bnai Jeshurun in Short Hills NJ, the past few months than he did in the last 13 years combined. My son has been there almost weekly for his friends' Saturday services as well as a few Friday nights. He also went weekly for his own Bar Mitzvah lessons and studied Torah at home daily. While Hebrew school certainly teaches kids the basics, my son will learn more this year because he is submerged in prayers and blessings on a regular basis. This should make him much more comfortable in temple and willing to participate.

3. Wearing dress clothes: Prior to this year, my son's idea of "dressed up" was wearing his athletic pants that did not have a hole

in the knee. It has been a treat for me to see him get all dressed up, and even he has started to embrace his more formal attire. Trying to figure out what to wear to special occasions can be a challenge even for grown ups. The b'nai mitzvah year has given my son the chance to learn the difference between "cocktail attire," "club attire," and "smart casual" preferred. Dressing up sets the tone for behaving a certain way, which leads us to the next lesson...

4. Manners: The year has been a great opportunity for me to teach my son about manners. We have discussed at length how to be a good guest. When you get an invite, RSVP on time. If you accept an invitation, show up. If you have to arrive at the service late, walk in quietly. In services, pay attention. Don't talk or play on your phone. Congratulate the B'nai Mitzvah and let them know they did a great job. Be an active party guest – dance, eat, and engage with friends (again, stay off the phone). When you arrive or leave, if you can, thank the host for inviting you. And after your own Bar Mitzvah, send timely, handwritten thank you notes.

5. Supporting friends: On the Friday night of my own son's Bar Mitzvah service, a handful of his close friends came to support him. Seeing them in the audience made my son smile. His friends gave up their Friday night, put on dress clothes, and sat in temple for over an hour just because he is important to them. The next day I was pleasantly surprised by the number of kids who attended the service – especially since the party wasn't until the evening and a lot of them missed other events (like sports) to be there. Friendships at this age can change, but throughout the weekend, my son felt truly supported by his friends. It is a feeling he wants to pass on as he attends other Bar and Bat Mitzvahs.

This story originally appeared on the www.kveller.com website and is reprinted with permission. To view the original, go to <http://www.kveller.com/5-important-lessons-my-son-learned-during-his-bar-mitzvah-year/>

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Cousins bridge distance divide to celebrate together

Nothing – not even a 230-mile, four-hour car ride - could keep cousins and best friends, Rehna Halprin and Abrianna Lalle, apart for their Bat Mitzvah.

“The girls basically decided that they were going to do this together and share it, and then they left the adults to handle the logistics,” said Abrianna’s mom, Debbie Halprin.

Debbie and her two girls live in Weston, although her roots are in St. Petersburg where Rehna and her parents, Natalya and Mike Halprin, still reside.

The girls dreamed up plans via frequent text messages, FaceTime calls and during summers at Camp Shalom near Ocala.

It was actually nothing new for the families. Almost 40 years ago, Michael and Debbie fondly recall their sister’s shared her Bat Mitzvah with a cousin.

It also made sense for their large shared family members to come for one big celebration instead of asking them – especially the out-of-towners – to make the trip to Florida twice in a matter of months.

But while it sounded like a great idea, there were complications, particularly when it came to discrepancies in the girls’ Hebrew training.

Rehna had been attending Hebrew school regularly in preparation for her bat mitzvah, but Abrianna, who was used to attending a Chabad center in South Florida, had little to no Hebrew training.

In the months leading up to the big day, Abrianna worked diligently to teach herself Hebrew. With very little outside help, she used some online resources to help her perfect her pronunciation.



Grandmothers share joy at the B’nai Mitzvah of Rehna Halprin, second from left, and Abrianna Lalle. Far left, Rehna’s grandmother who came from Russia for the occasion, Zoya Tatarkina, and far right, Bette Schroeder, bubbe to both girls.

When it came time for the ceremony at Temple Beth-El in St. Petersburg, both girls performed admirably, mom Debbie said.

On the big day, friends and family members gathered to support the cousins, including a very special guest, Rehna’s grandmother from Russia. Unfortunately, Rehna’s grandfather from Russia declined to attend, not fully understanding the significance of a Bat Mitzvah. It was a decision he later regretted upon seeing photos of the ceremony and party, according to the family.

As a tribute to mom Natalya’s Russian heritage and her family visiting from Russia, Rabbi Michael Torop incorporated a prayer in Russian into the service.

“It was a lovely thing for the rabbi to do this for us,” Debbie said.

Following the formal B’nai Mitzvah service on Shabbat morning, attended by close friends and family members, there was a luncheon in the temple social hall. Later that night, 200 guests attended the B’nai Mitzvah celebration at a rented mansion in Tampa.

– JAMIE SHAPIRO

Party proves COOL idea

By JAMIE SHAPIRO
Jewish Press

On a sweltering September Saturday during Labor Day weekend 2016, two cousins - Rehna Halprin and Abrianna Lalle - shared their Bat Mitzvah, celebrating afterward amidst snowflakes, icicles, shimmering white trees, and icebergs floating on the water.

While the girls shared the big day, for the most part, the planning was not. Since Abrianna and mom Debbie Halprin live 230 miles south in Weston, and the service was at Temple Beth-El in St. Petersburg, and the party was at a rented mansion in Tampa, Rehna’s parents, Natalya and Mike Halprin, were responsible for getting all together.

“I was actively planning the party for only about two months before,” Natalya said. “But we had been brainstorming for well over a year.”

Originally from Russia and wanting to incorporate her heritage into the big event, Natalya won the girls’ OK for a Russian winter wonderland theme.

Shopping for the September event began as far back as nine months before the B’nai Mitzvah.

“I would just go to the stores during the Christmas season and buy anything that looked like it would fit,” she said.

This advanced shopping proved to come in handy when the hired decorators discovered it much harder to acquire the winter décor during the summer than they anticipated.

To create the wintery scene, Natalya put up “Christmas” trees, big and small, laced with decorative icicles and lights. Giant, icebergs shaped from Styrofoam were left to float in the mansion’s pool, with dry ice added periodically for effect.

Natalya also commissioned an ice bar for the event, dispensing shots of vodka to the of-age guests.

“What could be more Russian than an ice bar and vodka?” Natalya joked.

A selection of caviar added more Russian flavor to the party.

To keep both adults and children entertained, Natalya came up with the idea to separate the two groups; having a kids’ party on the mansion’s second floor, and a more laid back adult party on the back patio.

“We basically had two different parties in the same place,” said Mike.

The two groups did come together briefly for the cousins’ unique and non-traditional candle lighting.

For the candle lighting the Halprins handed out 200 electronic candles to guests.

“The candles were cool because they turn on when they come in contact with water,” Mike said.

With their 200 guests gathered around the mansion’s patio, Rehna and Abrianna thanked everyone in attendance before each guest threw their water-activated candle into the pool.

“It was incredible,” Mike said. “All those



Photos by MADDOCK PHOTOGRAPHERS (L-R) Abrianna Lalle, her cousin Rehna Halprin and Rehna’s sister Elizabeth are shown in front of their sign-in board. In the background are some of the Russian-inspired winter wonderland decorations.



In keeping with the Russian connection to the party, vodka was dispensed from an ice sculpture.



Guests crowded around the pool, filled with “icebergs,” for the B’nai Mitzvah’s unique candle lighting.



The girls’ friends danced the night away in their own nightclub.

candles lighting up at once.”

“I’m really proud of how the party came together,” Natalya said.

While both the Halprins will admit that planning a bat mitzvah for not one, but two, teenage girls had its stressful moments, both agreed all the planning was worth it and created memories for the two cousins that will last a lifetime.

An invitation to change

In a move that countered tradition, the Halprins decided to use electronic invitations, or e-vites, for the B’nai Mitzvah of cousins Rehna Halprin and Abrianna Lalle.

The virtual invitations saved the families hundreds of dollars on paper invitations, the hassle of tracking down the addresses of more than 200 guests and allowed guests to respond in a matter of moments.

The e-vites also allowed much more customizing, according to the Halprins.

“You could add pictures and change the colors” depending on what the girls’ wanted and who was receiving the invitation, explained Rehna’s dad, Mike.

Once the responses were received, it made it easy to send reminders, directions and other invites to specific guests for the Shabbat eve dinner and Sunday brunch.



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A beautiful Bat Mitzvah for a girl with Down Syndrome

By MENACHEM POSNER
Chabad.org/news

There was barely a dry eye in the room. Standing in the sanctuary before a close-knit group of friends and family who had come from all over the country, Heather Wilde carefully lit a single Shabbat candle and said the appropriate Hebrew blessing. Uncovering her eyes, she smiled at those around her and said, "Good Shabbos!"

A student at the Chabad Hebrew School of the Arts in Peabody, MA, it was only natural that the 12-year-old would celebrate her Bat Mitzvah in a way that was meaningful and personal. The question was just how.

"Heather is a very sweet and positive young woman," said Raizel Schusterman, who co-directs Chabad of Peabody Jewish Center in the northern Boston suburbs with her husband, Rabbi Nechemia Schusterman. "She also has Down Syndrome, which means that she has not been able to master Hebrew reading or deliver a long speech, but I tell the parents of our students – all students, regardless of their abilities – that this is a ceremony that has to be appropriate for the young person."

Working together with Heather's mother, Brenda Wilde, she set a goal for the young girl: to memorize and recite the Shema, and to light a candle and say the accompanying blessing.

Months of regular learning sessions paid off when Heather proudly did just that, late on the afternoon of Friday, June 23.

With his guitar balanced on one robed knee, the rabbi, already dressed in his Shabbat finery, then regaled the crowd with some of Heather's favorite songs from Hebrew school: "Oseh Shalom" and "Alef Bet."



Heather Wilde, who has Down Syndrome, covers her eyes for the blessing over the Shabbat candle.

'Exceeded Our Expectations'

As Shabbat drew near, the women and girls who were present lit candles that had been artfully arranged to spell out "Shabbat." Evening services were followed by a full-course dinner.

The next day, at the Kiddush reception that followed morning services, the Bat mitzvah Girl recited the Hamotzi blessing over the bread.

"Heather was very pleased with herself," said Wilde. "When she was practicing, I was worried like any mother. But she exceeded our expectations, and I found that as satisfying as when her brother had his Bar Mitzvah three years ago."

"It was a beautiful ceremony," said Raizel Schusterman, who hopes that Heather's Bat Mitzvah will encourage other families to think creatively about this milestone for their children with special needs. "Like Heather herself, it was sweet, intimate, loving and full of joy."



Heather Wilde celebrated her Bat Mitzvah at Chabad of Peabody Jewish Center in the northern Boston suburbs. Here, she is with Raizel Schusterman, co-director of the center with her husband, Rabbi Nechemia Schusterman.

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