

# Jewish film fest to add reach with new partnership

The Tampa Bay Jewish Film Festival and the Suncoast Credit Union Gasparilla International Film Festival (GIFF) have agreed to a partnership that will create one of the largest film festivals in Florida.

From March 20-25, the newly combined six-day event will showcase over 150 films, which is expected to attract more than 25,000 attendees in both Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties.

Venues will include Tampa Theatre, AMC Centro Ybor, Bryan Glazer Family JCC, AMC Sundial, AMC Palm Harbor and Largo Cultural Center.

"Combining efforts with the Jewish Film Festival allows us to leverage each other's reach and resources to put Tampa Bay on the map for having one of the largest film festivals in the South-

east," said Joseph Alexander, board president of Tampa Film Institute, Inc., which oversees GIFF.

The logo for this year's Tampa Bay Jewish Film Festival (at left) has been updated to reflect the change.

"This collaboration exposes the broader Tampa Bay community to the vast array of offerings that our two festivals provide," said Heidi Shimberg, chief operating officer of Tampa JCCs.

The Tampa JCCs and Federation and the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties are co-sponsors of the Tampa Bay Jewish Film Festival.

Emilie Socash, executive director of the Pinellas/Pasco Federation, said the Jewish portion of the film festival will

**PARTNERSHIP continued on PAGE 7**



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16 PAGES



## Synagogues in Philadelphia and Boston make Super Bowl wager

They are calling it the Tzedakah Super Bowl Wager. Congregation Rodeph Shalom of Philadelphia and Temple Israel of Boston are making a friendly bet on next week's Super Bowl for charity.

The synagogue from the city of the losing team will donate 18 times the point difference in the final score to the charity of the other synagogue's choice.

Rodeph Shalom has chosen Philly Youth Basketball, which empowers youth as students, athletes and leaders. Temple Israel has chosen the CTE Center at Boston University Medical Center, which conducts high-impact, innovative research on the long-term consequences of repetitive brain trauma in athletes and military personnel. Both synagogues also urged their congregants to donate to the charities ahead of the Super Bowl.

There are cross-city Jewish ties on each side of the upcoming game. Philadelphia Eagles owner Jeff Lurie, who grew up in Newton, MA, attended Temple Israel of Boston as a child. He is a former Patriots season ticket holder and reportedly was outbid by current Patriots owner Robert Kraft in an effort to purchase the team, WHDH Boston reported. Meanwhile, Temple Israel's Associate Rabbi Matt Soffer is from Philadelphia and remains an Eagle's fan. He grew up going to Congregation Rodeph Shalom.

## At LA Women's March, Natalie Portman recalls 'sexual terrorism' after 1st film

Actress Natalie Portman told thousands of marchers at the Women's March Los Angeles that she experienced "sexual terrorism" at the age of 13 following the release of her first movie.

The Israeli-born actress said her first fan letter after the release of *The Professional*, in which she played a young girl who befriended a hit man in hopes of avenging the murder of her parents, was from a man describing his "rape fantasy" involving the young actress.

Portman, 36, said she rejected movie roles including a kissing scene, began to dress in an "elegant" style, and built a reputation as a "prudish, conservative, nerdy, serious" young woman "in an attempt to feel that my body was safe and that my voice would be listened to." "At 13 years old, the message from our culture was clear to me," Portman said. "I felt the need to cover my body and to inhibit my expression and my work in order to send my own message to the world that I'm someone worthy of safety and respect. The response to my expression, from small comments about my body to more threatening deliberate statements, served to control my behavior through an environment of sexual terrorism."

In November, Portman was named the winner of the 2018 Genesis Prize, the so-called Jewish Nobel, and said the \$1 million prize will go to programs that focus on advancing women's equality.



# Tampa synagogue leader, PR executive slain in Afghanistan hotel terror attack

By BOB FRYER  
Jewish Press

Glenn Selig of Tampa, president of Congregation Mekor Shalom, former investigative reporter for WTVT-Channel 13 and owner of a high profile public relations firm, was among 22 people killed when Taliban terrorists attacked the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul, Afghanistan on Jan. 20.

Selig, 50, is survived by his wife Charyn, daughter Drew, 15, and son Josh, 13, all of Tampa.

Selig was one of four Americans who died after a small group of Taliban wearing suicide vests stormed the hotel, beginning a 13-hour siege. News reports said that the attackers targeted foreigners and Afghan officials who were there for a conference. During the siege, a portion of the hotel went up in flames and multiple explosions could be heard as security forces battled with the attackers, all of whom were killed. Video showed people trying to escape by tying bedsheets together and climbing down the side of the 6-story luxury hotel. Besides those who died in the attack, about 150 were injured.

"Glenn was in Kabul on a potential success story involving Afghanistan and its steps to battle extremism. The focus was highlighting the country's new president



With the Tampa skyline behind him, Glenn Selig appears on the "Good Morning Britain" television program in 2015. Known for taking on controversial clients, former TV host Nancy Grace called him a "PR guru." On his softer side, Selig created websites with parenting advice for dads.

and constructing a democracy forum event for Afghani women," SeligMultimedia spokesman Adam Farragut said.

"From the information we've been given we're unable to determine if Glenn was targeted because of his faith," Farragut added.

On Jan. 14, less than a week before he died, Selig was re-elected president of Mekor Shalom, a small Conservative congregation in the Carrollwood area.

"So honored and thankful to be the synagogue president," he wrote on the synagogue's Facebook page last Thanksgiving.

Selig had already served two years as president and this year, to ensure a smooth transition when his new term was to end, bylaws were changed to create a position of president elect, filled by Yael Hatfield.

Both Hatfield and the congregation's

**SELIG continued on PAGE 9**



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Donald Trump meet at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

# Embassy move timetable revealed; Trump blasts PA for Pence brush-off

(JTA) – President Donald Trump said Palestinians disrespected Vice President Mike Pence when they snubbed him during his recent trip to Israel and threatened to cut off assistance to the Palestinians unless they returned to the negotiating table.

During a Thursday, Jan. 25, meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the World Economic Summit in Davos, Switzerland, the president also added detail to Pence's announcement that the U.S. would move its embassy to Jerusalem in 2019.

"We anticipate having a small version of it open by next year," Trump said, apparently confirming reports that the embassy will temporarily be in a building already owned by the United States,

**TIMETABLE continued on PAGE 10**

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## Meet Dr. Rob Entel,

recipient of the 2018 PRIMER Award. His community involvement spans synagogue involvement, Tampa Bay Jewish Film Festival support, Federation work, and arts and culture work in creating his own Beatles-themed museum! He's being honored for his long-term commitment to ensuring that the Jewish community is represented in all areas of community life.



\*Campaign officially began October 28, 2017.

Since July 1, 2017 we have raised \$1,005,963 toward our goal.

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- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Jan 27-29.</b> Temple Beth El Art Festival      | <b>Feb 10.</b> Florida Holocaust Museum's Annual "To Life" Gala | <b>Mar 20-25.</b> Tampa Bay Jewish Film Festival  |
| <b>Feb 8.</b> Cardozo & Montefiore Societies Event | <b>Feb 25.</b> Tampa Bay Jewish Food Festival & Purim Carnival  | <b>Mar 24.</b> Gulf Coast Golf Like a Rock Star   |
|  | <b>Mar 11.</b> Congregation B'nai Israel Chaivana Nights Gala   | <b>Apr 15.</b> Jewish Heritage Festival Israel@70 |
|  | <b>Mar 13.</b> Community Women's Seder                          | <b>Apr 29.</b> Sonya Miller Women of Distinction  |

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# 2017 Year in Review

## PERSPECTIVE

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



Nadine Gordimer, in her 1966 piece “The Late Bourgeois World,” quipped “Time is change; we measure its passage by how much things alter.” Each January, I jot down a quick catalog of what has transpired in the preceding 12 months in an attempt to do just that: measure the change and alterations that I have been some small (or large) part of. This column is an attempt to make such a documentation, and I hope that you’ll join me on this very short jaunt down memory lane.

To be sure, my perspectives here center on the work of the Federation, but I believe you’ll find a tremendously collaborative and community-oriented tone to this snapshot, more so than in any year previous and likely indicating a deeper connection between community leadership, Federation, synagogues, and agencies than in many communities.

During the last 12 months, we learned more about ourselves as a region, connected more people and families, and ultimately connected with each other far more than we’ve done before. Our demographic study, which was done in partnership with the Federation and Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services and nearly every Jewish organization in our area, began in early 2017. In November, we released results that showed that our community connects through culture, trends a bit older, and is very proud of their Jewish identity and ties to Israel.

In order to serve even more families, we launched the Jewish Community Camp in Clearwater, offering a full summer of fun and friendship to campers of all ages and from all parts of our region. Transportation from Congregation B’nai Israel in St. Petersburg and Temple Ahavat Shalom in Palm Harbor made camp a logistical reality for many families and will surely delight families again in 2018.

Our campaign itself again hit a record high-mark since I took on my role in 2015, with a total of \$1.5 million going to the budget committee for funding in the current fiscal year. We hosted new types of events, including the reinvigorated annual meeting, this year a showcase format in which an array of community members spoke about their personal connections to the Jewish community – whether that be through Menorah Manor’s Federation-funded YOUiversity, summer camp, Hillel, the Fed Fellows, or other avenues.

Speaking of Fed Fellows, in 2017 we also sent our first cohort of Federation volunteer leaders on the national Young Leadership Division’s annual mission to Israel. This investment in their Jewish identity and our community’s future leadership has already begun to repay itself in their ongoing involvement in the work we do.

Throughout the year, we had remarkable and engaging cultural programming, spanning from the Tampa Bay Jewish Film Festival in the spring, to our Israel Independence Celebration in early summer. We welcomed our community’s Schlicha, Yael Mor,

in September and she has brought tremendous connection to the ruach that is the Israeli spirit and our own fondness for it.

It’s hard not to also recognize that the year was marked by shocking and unpredictable crises. As a nation, and later as a local community, we were battered by the triple-threat hurricanes of Harvey, Irma, and Maria. Irma ripped a path through our own Chapel Hill Memorial Park Cemetery, eliciting over \$100,000 in damage. Shortly before this, the community of Charlottesville saw the most vile display of public anti-Semitism in a long time as the “Unite the Right” movement gained a brief foothold. And the psychological and spiritual difficulty presented in the loss of one of our own families on New Year’s Eve again took our breath away.

These tremendously difficult occurrences presented us – as a community – with a need to respond, repair, recover. To counter the messages of hate, we conducted a webinar on talking to our kids about anti-Semitism. To rebuild the cemetery, the Federation immediately provided \$10,000 and secured an additional \$40,000 through the national crisis response. And to assist with our community’s continuing process of grieving the loss of the Weiss family, the Federation helped communicate the arrangements for memorial services and will take the lead in the new year on dealing with our shared grief.

To that end, I look forward to another successful year of building community together with all of you – our readers – and all of our community agencies and leaders who share the strong commitment of creating a Jewish present and future that is meaningful for all, attractive for all, and a home for all. Considering the opening words from Gordimer, I would estimate that far more than a year has passed given how altered we are – for the better, and in some cases, just permanently.

Here’s where you come in: if you believe in Jewish community, if you believe that our kids deserve to be connected with other Jewish kids, if you believe that we are challenged and duty-bound to be there for one another, join me in participating in this year’s change. In the year to come, we’ll be exploring the findings of the demographic study so a plan can be formed. We’ll be funding more of everything: more summer camp scholarships, more agency allocations, more for the Fed Fellows to experience Israel, and more on culturally enriching activities that breathe life into the spaces of our community. You’re the bridge between today and tomorrow: please join me in being a part of our today and tomorrow.

If you’d like to get involved with creating an amazing future for our community, email me at emilie@jewishpinellas.org to explore how you might find a rewarding fit with Federation.

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

## Joanne and Rabbi Jacob Luski to be honored at Israel Bonds international dinner

Joanne and Rabbi Jacob Luski of St. Petersburg will be among a group of multinational luminaries to be honored on Sunday, Feb. 11 for their dedication to the Israel Bonds organization and their commitment to the State of Israel through investment in Israel bonds.

The annual Israel Bonds International Prime Minister’s Club Dinner will be held this year at the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach, and will bring together Israel Bonds’ leadership and supporters from several countries in appreciation for bonds investors and to celebrate the State of Israel’s 70th anniversary.

The Luski’s will receive the Israel 70 Award in recognition for their longstanding devotion to Israel Bonds and the Tampa Bay Jewish community. The Luski’s have served Congregation B’nai Israel in St. Petersburg for the past 41 years, with Rabbi Luski as spiritual leader of the congregation while also serving as the Jewish chaplain at the VA Medical Center, Bay Pines. He will retire from the pulpit later this year.

The Luski’s previously received the Israel Bonds Heritage and Star of Peace and Hope awards. In addition, Rabbi Luski will become chairman of the Israel Bonds Rabbinic Advisory Council at a Jerusalem ceremony in February.

The International Prime Minister’s Club Dinner is the launch of a new campaign for Israel Bonds/Development Corporation for Israel following last year’s \$1 billion achieved in domestic Israel bonds investments for the fifth straight year.

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## Jewish roots

# RABBINICALLY SPEAKING

By RABBI DANIELLE UPBIN  
Cong Beth Shalom, Clearwater

*In memory of Hannah Weiss, z"l, whose commitment to environmental sustainability and health inspires us to make a difference in this world*

*While the sage Choni was walking along a road, he saw a man planting a carob tree. Choni asked him: "How long will it take for this tree to bear fruit?" "Seventy years," replied the man. Choni then asked: "Are you so healthy a man that you expect to live that length of time and eat its fruit?" The man answered: "I found a fruitful world because my ancestors planted it for me. Likewise, I am planting for my children."*

~Taanit 23a

This powerful text prompts us to ask ourselves: What kind of planet do we want to leave for our children?

How do our choices today impact our future, long-term health and resilience of the planet? These questions are often debated in the public domain, but one may be surprised to learn of the profound and authentic contributions of Jewish thought to these matters. Over the centuries, our tradition has eloquently and creatively urged its adherents to be environmentalists - to be mindful of consumption and unnecessary waste, to support sustainable agriculture, to provide for the needy, and to exhibit gratitude for what we have.



Consider another evocative text: Shimon bar Yochai taught that "if you are holding a sapling in your hand and someone says that the Messiah has drawn near, first plant the sapling, and then go and greet the Messiah." ~Avot d'Rebbe Natan 31b

Planting a tree demonstrates our commitment to a healthy planet. Even when our long awaited spiritual redemption is at hand, we don't forgo our personal responsibility as partners with God. We are the dreamers, but we are also the planters. The seeds we sew will inevitably become the fruits of the next generation. Spiritual freedom is dependent on our informed choices and responsibility for one other.

Our tradition is keenly aware that our encounters with the natural world stir in us a sense of peace, wonder, and wellbeing - simple gifts bestowed upon those who are willing to accept them. Consider this gentle passage from a mystical tradition:

"Every blade of grass sings poetry to God without ulterior motives or alien thoughts - without consideration of reward. How good and lovely it is, then, when one is able to hear this song of the grasses..." - Rebbe Nahman of Bratslav.

Calling to us through a busy, loud, and over-connected society, Jewish thought invites us to do something counter-cultural like take a "tech-break" and stroll outside. We are invited to turn off the constant chatter and "tune-in" to the symphony of the natural world. Imagine getting so externally and internally quiet, as to actually hear the song of a blade of grass!

There is no better gift to ourselves, to one another, and to future generations, than owning our role as the true stewards of the earth that we were created to be. As the Torah states: "The Eternal One placed the human being in the Garden of Eden, to till and to tend it" (Genesis 2:15). By making some small changes to our consumption, consumerism and waste habits, we may just be able to hear that song of the grasses from our abodes!

These are just a few of the many Jewish ideas that speak to the timely subject of "conscious living" on the planet. As we celebrate the "New Year of the Trees" this month on Tu B'Shevat, the 15th of Shevat, may we inspired to go back to our Jewish roots to plant a tree or even an entire orchard for the benefit of future generations.

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

## Congregations

### Cong. B'nai Israel St. Petersburg

**Havdalah with your pet:** All God's creatures are invited to bid farewell to Shabbat and welcome the new week with a pet-friendly Havdalah on Saturday, Feb. 17 at 6:30 p.m. in the courtyard of the synagogue.

**World Wide Wrap:** Celebrate the mitzvah of tefillin at a World Wide Wrap on Sunday, Feb. 4, at 8:30 a.m. at the synagogue. Learn how to lay tefillin before davening at 9 a.m. as men, women and children unite in prayer. Stay for Sunday brunch sponsored by the Mitzvah Men's Club.

**Jammies and Jeans Shabbat:** With the kids in their jammies and you in your jeans, celebrate a comfortably casual Shabbat experience for young families on Friday, Feb. 9 at 5 p.m. in the youth lounge, followed by a kid-friendly dinner (gluten-free and vegan option available.) RSVP to [Maureen Sechan at dll@cbistpete.org](mailto:Maureen Sechan at dll@cbistpete.org) or call the synagogue at (727) 381-4900, ext.1011. The dinner is \$5 per family.

**Rosh Hodesh group:** "Relationships in the Torah" is the topic of discussion in this women-only program on Sunday, Feb. 18 at 10:30 a.m. This group meets in different congregant's homes each month. For details, contact the synagogue office.

**Talmud Made Easy:** On Tuesdays, Feb. 6 and 20 at 5 p.m., **Steve Wein** will lead a study of Talmudic text and selected commentaries. All materials will be provided. The class involves textual analysis, lively discussion, and is open to all. The class is free; no previous knowledge is needed.

### Chabad of St. Petersburg

**Schindler's List survivor speaker:** Hear **Rena Finder**, one of the youngest survivors and beneficiaries of the world-renowned kindness and compassion of Oskar Schindler, give her riveting firsthand account of that time. Finder, who was twice saved by Schindler, will speak on Monday, Feb. 12 from 7:30-9 p.m. at the Palladium, 253 5th Ave. N, St. Petersburg. Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$5 for students. Visit [www.ChabadSP.com/SchindlersList](http://www.ChabadSP.com/SchindlersList) to register. For more info, call (727) 344-4900.

**Women's Book Club:** Get a weekly social and spiritual boost every Tuesday from 10:30-11:30 a.m. during a round-table discussion led by **Chaya Korf**. Delve into the book for this year, *Towards a Meaningful Life*, by Simon Jacob-

son. The group will share strategies for not only discovering where your true meaning lies, but also in actually making it a part of your daily life. Enjoy coffee, fruit and homemade pastries during these free sessions. Walk-ins are welcome. RSVP to [Chaya@ChabadSP.com](mailto:Chaya@ChabadSP.com).

**Lunch and learn:** Women are invited to share an hour of camaraderie and inspiration at a Lunch and Learn session at the Chabad Jewish Center on Tuesday, Feb. 13 at noon. There is no charge. RSVPs are appreciated but not necessary. To RSVP, email [Chaya@ChabadSP.com](mailto:Chaya@ChabadSP.com) or call (727) 344-4900

**TGI Shabbat:** Enjoy melody and song, conversation and kosher cuisine, seasoned with just the right amount of Torah on Friday, Feb. 16 at 6 p.m. There is no charge but reservations are appreciated. To RSVP, email [info@chabadsp.com](mailto:info@chabadsp.com) or call the Chabad center.

### Temple Beth-El St. Petersburg

**Torah on Tap:** Young professionals, Gen X, Gen Y and millennials are invited to monthly meet-ups to grab a nosh and a drink and have a conversation with **Rabbi Michael Torop** about Judaism. There will be sessions on Wednesday, Feb. 7 at 6 p.m. at Cage Brewing, 2001 First Ave. S., St. Petersburg; on Wednesday, March 7 at St. Pete Brewing Company, 544 First Ave. N., St. Petersburg; on Tuesday, April 10 at Three Daughters Brewing, 222 22nd St. S., St. Petersburg and on Wednesday, May 2 at Pinellas Ale Works, 1962 First Ave. S., St. Petersburg.

**Adult Hebrew:** Learn Hebrew and explore Hebrew as well as Jewish learning on a more personal level on Sundays, beginning Feb. 4. The class will be taught by **Rebecca Barancik**. The education session runs from 10:30-11:30 a.m. and a question and answer session will be held from 11:30 a.m. to noon. RSVP to [info@templebeth-el.com](mailto:info@templebeth-el.com).

**Israel-Palestine study:** The second part of an iEngage study of the Israel-Palestine conflict will be offered on Thursdays beginning Feb. 15 at 7 p.m. Last year's program was interrupted and will conclude this year for those who attended. For those who would like to start attending, contact the office for more information. RSVP to [info@templebeth-el.com](mailto:info@templebeth-el.com).

**Daystar lunch making:** Help feed the homeless and families at the Daystar Life Center by gathering in the social hall on Sunday, Feb. 11 at 9:30 a.m. to schmooze and make sandwiches for folks at Daystar.

## Shabbat Candle Lighting Times



Feb. 2 • 5:54 pm  
Feb. 9 • 5:59 pm  
Feb. 16 • 6:04 pm  
Feb. 23 • 6:09 pm

### Cong. Beth Shalom Gulfport

**Seeking donations:** The congregation's annual flea market is not until the spring, but donations are being sought for the event now. Those who have items to donate should call the synagogue at (727) 321-3380.

### Temple B'nai Israel Clearwater

**Super Bowl Party:** Enjoy the big game, along with the commercials and the half-time show with other congregants at Temple B'nai Israel on Sunday, Feb. 4 at 4 p.m. There will be food on hand for those watching the game. Contact **Polly Kraus** at [kraushouse5@gmail.com](mailto:kraushouse5@gmail.com) or call the temple at (727) 531-5829.

**Cinema café:** Come watch a movie at the temple on Sunday, Feb. 11 at 1 p.m. The film, *Rosenstasse*, an award-winning German film about Aryan/Jewish marriage during the Holocaust. Popcorn and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided. There is no charge for members and friends.

**Jewish Food Festival:** The second annual Tampa Bay Jewish Food Festival will be held at the temple on Sunday Feb. 25 beginning at 10:30 a.m. The event will feature Carnegie Deli corned beef and pastrami sandwiches, homemade matzo ball soup, falafel, kugel, knishes, rugelach and more for purchase. There will be a wine tasting room, kids play area, live entertainment and local arts and crafts vendors. Admission is free.

**Bible study:** Explore the Second Book of Samuel and discover a unique period of Jewish history. **Rabbi Daniel Treiser** leads the classes on Wednesdays from 7-8 p.m. There is no fee for members; \$30 for non-members for the year.

**Sunday funday:** Preschoolers and their parents can enjoy playtime on Sunday, Feb. 25 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. when the children can play in the kid's center and experience the second annual Tampa Bay

• CONTINUED on NEXT PAGE

## Religious Directory

### 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](http://www.ahavatshalom.org) • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

**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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.JewishClearwater.com) • email: [rabbil18@gmail.com](mailto:rabbil18@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](http://www.chabadsp.com).

**CHABAD of PINELLAS COUNTY** — 3696 Fisher Road, Palm Harbor, 34683 • Rabbi Pinchas Adler • Services: Friday, 5:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. • Telephone: (727) 789-0408 • Website: [Yichabad.com](http://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](http://jewishcommunitycenterofwestpasco.com) • Email at: [Eileenhochstadt13005@gmail.com](mailto:Eileenhochstadt13005@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](http://www.ChabadWP.org) • email: [info@chabadwp.org](mailto: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](http://www.tbdf.org). Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism.

### Orthodox

**CHABAD SPRING HILL** — 13576 Hunters Point St, Spring Hill, 34609 • Rabbi Chaim Lipszyc • Services: Monthly First Friday call for times Telephone: (352) 600-2779 • Website: [chabadspringhill.com](http://chabadspringhill.com)

## Israeli cuisine

Not too long ago I had a discussion about Israeli cuisine. It started with the question of what type of Israeli food I would recommend eating when visiting Israel and my immediate, excited response was (obviously) shakshuka, falafel and shawarma. These are the most common, cheap, anywhere to be found types of foods that one can eat in Israel.

“But these are not Israeli food, all of them are originally from other countries” is what I was told in reply. In response, I decided to do a little research in order to find out once and for all, what is “Israeli food?”

Israeli cuisine is a term that describes either foods that are common in Israel or foods that are originating in Israel. Having said that, there is still a very lively discussion about Israeli cuisine. Some people say that there is no such thing and it is due to several reasons: Israel is a young country with a relatively short tradition of cooking and many of the foods considered Israeli are actually sourced from Middle Eastern cuisine like falafel, hummus and shakshuka. Another argument is that Israeli cuisine has adopted, and continues to adapt, elements of various styles of Jewish cuisine, particularly the Mizrahi, Sephardic and Ashkenazi styles of cooking like matbukha and gefilte fish.

Having said that, it is still safe to say that Israel has its own, unique cuisine. To start with, other countries – like Israel – have adopted different types of food as national ones even though it’s origin is elsewhere.

Take the United States for example. Hamburger, hot dogs and french fries are all considered in some way to be a local cuisine, but their origin is in Germany and

## Mor About Israel

Yael Mor

Israel Shlichah (Emissary)



France. Still it doesn’t take away the fact that these dishes are very local.

Besides that, much of Israel’s foods which are considered to be originated in other countries has transformed

and nowadays combines different elements of the both Jewish and Middle Eastern cuisine. In other words – you can find the same type of food both in Israel and in other countries but what makes it Israeli is the transformation it got once it “landed” in Israel and got its special twist by mixing it with other cuisine customs.

But that’s not all. Israel does have its own share of original culinary contributions to the world. A few



Bamba



Ptitim

of our national foods were invented in Israel and are sold or made all over the country. The most common ones are ptitim and bamba. Ptitim, if you haven’t heard about it yet, was developed in Israel in the 1950s when rice was scarce and is shaped like little balls or like rice grains. It is basically little grains of baked pasta and is also called “Ben Gurion rice” or “Pearl Couscous.” Ptitim is popular among Israeli children, who eat it plain, or mixed with fried onion and tomato paste but, in some places you can even find them as a gourmet dish.

Bamba probably rings a bell to some of you. It is a peanut butter flavored snack manufactured and sold in Israel since 1964. It is one of the leading snack foods that is produced and sold in Israel and nowadays is also in various countries around the world. You will not find one high school field trip, birthday party or social gathering that doesn’t have bamba in it. It’s so popular in Israel and with kids especially, that according to studies, it has been proven that Israel has the smallest ratio of people allergic to peanuts. Yes, it is because we eat bamba from infancy.

To say that Israel has no national cuisine is far from the truth. Since before the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, and particularly since the late 1970s, an Israeli Jewish fusion cuisine has developed and became what it is today – a rich, diverse and yummy cuisine that if you ever get a taste of it, all you want to do is feast on it all day long.

*Yael Mor’s yearlong visit to the community is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties. She can be reached at (727) 530-3223 or by email at yael@jewishpinellas.org*

## Congregations

• CONTINUED from PREVIOUS PAGE

Jewish Food Festival. Non-members are welcome. Call the temple office for full schedule and pricing information at (727) 531-5829.

**Adult playtime:** Play mah jongg, Mexican Train Dominoes or Bridge on Thursdays at 1 p.m. Join active seniors and play the game of your choice. Coffee and cake is served. For more information, contact **Linda White** at linda33217@gmail.com or (727) 688-0626.

### Cong. B’nai Emmunah Tarpon Springs

**Big game plans:** Congregation B’nai Emmunah is working with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tarpon Springs, another small church, and possibly a mosque to throw a Super Bowl party for the homeless and indigent on Sunday, Feb. 4. The party will include dinner, snacks, football trivia, give-away prizes, personal hygiene items, and more. Planners hope to have a player from the Tampa Buccaneers, and perhaps other special visitors. A team is being assembled to coordinate the event, with members from each of the participating religious institutions. To join the planning team, email [bnaiemmunah@gmail.com](mailto:bnaiemmunah@gmail.com) or call (727) 938-9000.

**Meal and a movie:** On Saturday, Feb. 10 at 5 p.m. bring your dinner and enjoy a showing of Groundhog Day. Dessert will be supplied.

### Temple Ahavat Shalom Palm Harbor

**Torah study:** Congregant **Susan Segal** teaches a Torah study class on Thursdays from noon to 1:15 p.m. Bring a lunch, and of course, opinions. No prior knowledge or attendance is required. The class will use the book *The Torah: A Woman’s Commentary*.

**Judaism basics:** An Introduction to Judaism class is offered on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. This class, taught by **Rabbi Gary Klein**, is appropriate for non-Jewish spouses and significant others; those considering adopting Judaism as their faith, and those who are already Jewish who wish to review and enhance their knowledge of Judaism. New students are welcome anytime. The course fee is \$100 per person or couple, for non-members. There is no fee for temple members.

**Science and religion:** Tuesday morning adult education class is under way with remaining sessions on Tuesdays, Feb. 6, 13 and 20 at 11 a.m. in the social hall. **Professor Alan Gorlick** leads the course, “Science and Religion,” focusing on the aspects of the universe too tiny to imagine, as the class in-

vestigates quantum physics. Call the temple office to join.

**Healthy eating potluck:** Bring vegetables, legumes, and whole grains for a potluck meal on Saturday, Feb. 17 at 6:30 pm. when **Dr. David Bernstein** will present a program on healthy aging. Bring a dish to share. No meat, dairy or eggs. RSVP to **Paula Rosoff** at [prosf2@gmail.com](mailto:prosf2@gmail.com), or **Marcia** at [msatin1945@aol.com](mailto:msatin1945@aol.com).

**History lesson:** **Dr. Eric Steckler** will present “Conflict & Coexistence: The History of the Old City of Jerusalem From 70 CE to the Present.” Part 1 will be on Tuesday, Feb. 20 7 p.m. on “The Ancient and Medieval City.” Part 2 will be on Wednesday, Feb. 21 at 7 p.m. on “The Modern Old City.”

### Cong. Beth Tefillah/JCC of West Pasco Port Richey

**Understanding prayer:** A class to study the history, meaning, and relevance of the prayers in Shabbat services beginning with Kabbalat Shabbat and continuing with the Maariv service on Friday night and all of the parts of the Saturday morning service. Knowledge of the Hebrew language is not required. It is anticipated that the class will help participants make services more meaningful, relevant and enjoyable. The class meets every Wednesday at 7 p.m. through May. There is no fee and all are welcome.

**Purim:** There will be an ice cream social followed by the reading of the Megillah interspersed with the congregation’s annual original spiel and merriment beginning at 6:30 p.m. on erev Purim, Wednesday, Feb. 28. Costumes are welcome, but optional. All are welcome. There is no charge to attend.

### Cong. Beth Shalom Clearwater

**Walk of Peace:** Join in a United Faiths Walk of Peace on Sunday, Feb. 4. This event is sponsored by 17 faith-based organizations, including Congregation Beth Shalom. It will begin at 2 p.m. at John R. Lawrence Pioneer Park, 400 Main St., Dunedin, and continue for about 2 miles through the city, stopping at several venues for reflections on peace from a variety of faith leaders. Everyone is welcome. Those interested in purchasing a T-shirt should contact the office at (727) 531-1418.

**Women’s heart health:** On Tuesday, Feb. 13 at 7 p.m. there will be an “Every Beat Counts” discussion on heart health for women that will include experts from

Clearwater Cardiovascular Consultants, **Dr. Vanessa Lucarella**, cardiologist, and **Michelle Cameron**, director of clinical research. Heart healthy desserts will be served. This is a free event and open to the community. RSVP to **Cheryl Schwartz** at [cschwartz@ramapo.edu](mailto:cschwartz@ramapo.edu).

**Brotherhood Shabbat:** Members of the Brotherhood will conduct special Shabbat services on Friday, Feb. 16 at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 17 at 9 a.m.

**Talmud classes:** On Mondays and most Wednesdays, explore ancient legal tradition with **Dr. Priscilla Nathanson**. The class is open to all levels of knowledge. The Monday class is held after minyan from 10 - 11:15 a.m. and the Wednesday class is at 7 p.m. Contact the synagogue office to confirm dates of the classes.

**Lox & Learn:** Led by **Rabbi David Weizman**, explore the weekly Torah portion every Thursday following minyan. Breakfast begins at 9:45 a.m. and the study session at 10 a.m.

**Haftarot study:** This study will be led by **Johanna Bromberg** in the synagogue library on Wednesday, Feb. 7 at 10 a.m.

### 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](mailto:MiriamHodakov@gmail.com) or (727) 265-2770.

**For women only:** The author of the book, *Thank You G-d for Making Me a Woman*, **Rabbi Aaron L. Raskin** will be the guest speaker at Chabad of Clearwater on Sunday, Feb. 25 at 9:30 a.m. Rabbi Raskin aims to show that it is a mistaken belief that Judaism values the male contribution to its daily liturgy and life more than the female. His book lays out traditional observance and new scholarship on the Jewish woman’s role, which shows that it isn’t marginal, it’s essential.

Rabbi Raskin is the official Chabad emissary to downtown Brooklyn and has been the rabbi of Congregation B’nai Avraham in Brooklyn Heights, NY, for more than a quarter of a century. He is also the dean of Brooklyn Heights Jewish Academy. A dynamic orator, his other books include: *Letters of Light, By Divine Design, Guardian of Israel: Miracle stories of Tefillin and Mezuzah*. All Jewish women in the community



Rabbi Aaron L. Raskin

are invited to attend.

Admission is \$10 and Sponsors \$180. RSVP online @ [JewishClearwater.com](http://JewishClearwater.com) or call: 727-265-2770.

### Chabad of West Pasco Trinity

**Pray, eat, watch video:** On Sundays from 9-10 a.m., feed your body and soul with bagel and lox plus tefillin. Afterward there will be a short video presentation. There is no charge and everyone is welcome.

**Study groups:** Probe the ideas and issues presented in each week’s Torah portion on Mondays from 7 – 8 p.m. The Torah studies classes offer timely lessons for living. The class is free.

**Tanya class:** A new weekly Tanya class, A Tale of Two Souls, meets on Saturdays from 10:15-11 a.m. The Tanya offers a roadmap for emotional healthy living. The in-depth study will ask the questions: What is a soul? How many do we have? What is our purpose here on earth? How are we to battle our evil inclination? The class is free.

### Cong. Beth David Spring Hill

**Direct from Sweden:** Temple Beth David will welcome the Stahlhammer Klezmer Classic band direct from Sweden for its Florida debut. This international group will perform on Sunday, Feb. 25 at 2 p.m. They will play klezmer, Swedish music, tango and more. Tickets, including dessert and coffee, are \$18. Order tickets at (352) 686-7034 or go to [tbdf.org](http://tbdf.org). Send check to: Temple Beth David, 13158 Antelope St., Spring Hill, FL 34609.

**Torah study:** **Rabbi Paul Schreiber** will conduct Torah study classes on Mondays at 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. The classes are free for members and \$5 per class for non-members.

**Judaism class:** A free Jewish conversion class will be held on Saturdays at 1 p.m., conducted by Rabbi Schreiber.

**Talmud for beginners:** This class, already under way, is held every Wednesday at 8 p.m., except for the third Wednesday of the month. It is free for members and \$5 per class for non-members.

### Chabad of Spring Hill

**Torah studies:** The Jewish community is invited to attend Torah study classes, with bagels, on Wednesdays from noon to 1 p.m. The classes, taught by **Rabbi Chaim Lipszyc**, are not sequential, so folks can drop in for any class. The first class is free then the fee is \$7 per class.

For more information, call **Ro Kerschner** at (352) 746-6258.

## B'nai Mitzvah

## Samantha Rose Hesse

Samantha Rose Hesse, daughter of David and Jackie Hesse of St. Petersburg, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, Feb. 10 at Temple Beth-El in St. Petersburg.

Samantha is a seventh-grade student at Bay Point Middle School. Active in sports, Samantha plays on the North-West softball team.



## Joshua Samuel Frenzen

Joshua Samuel Frenzen, son of Dan and Lori Frenzen of New Port Richey, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, Feb. 3 at Congregation Beth Am in Tampa.

A seventh-grade honors student at Dayspring Academy, Joshua is a member of the Thespians. Interested in baseball, he also is a member of Jr. Bitty. Joshua is an annual Jewish National Fund donor.

Special guests will include grandfather Stuart Portnoy of Land O'Lakes, grandmother Marie Frenzen from South Dakota and great-grandmother Rosemarie Hlosta from Chicago.



## 16 women begin Federation-sponsored leadership development program

Sixteen professional and lay leaders in the Jewish community will be sharpening their skills as part of a new leadership training initiative of the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties.

The Yesod Community Leadership Development Program held the first of eight sessions Jan. 12.

Educator Rabbi Danielle Upbin, who also serves as associate rabbi at Congregation Beth Shalom in Clearwater, is leading the program, which has been developed by the Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The curriculum is based on Jewish Leadership 2.0, written by renowned expert Dr. Erica Brown.

Yesod is the Hebrew word for foundation and it is anticipated that the participants will serve as the foundation for the leadership in their respective organizations.

Members of this year's class are: **Sandra Braham** – Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Children's Services; **Lisa Cohen** – Temple Beth-El; **Caren Evans** – Congregation Beth Shalom; **Sarah Feld** – Congregation B'nai Israel; **Sarah Gotlieb** – Temple Beth-El; **Eileen Hochstadt** – West Pasco Jewish Community Center; **Polly Krauss** – Temple B'nai Israel; **Maxine Kaufman** – Jewish Federation of Pinellas & Pasco Counties; **Beth Levin** – TOP Jewish Foundation; **Gayle Maller** – Temple Ahavat Shalom; **Stefani Margolis** – Temple Beth-El; **Cindy Minetti** – Gulf Coast Jewish Family & Children Services; **Kelli Rolfe** – Benjamin Tower Foundation; **Maureen Sechan** – Congregation B'nai Israel; **Karen Tashman** – Congregation Beth Shalom and **Ellen Weiss** – TOP Jewish Foundation.

It so happens that this first cohort is made up entirely of women.

Rabbi Upbin noted that while this was not the original intention, the vibe of the participants in the room feels "right" and very natural.

The YESOD curriculum is built upon the knowledge and skills a leader, whether professional or lay, needs to be effective. Course content merges Judaic text study, business skills, leadership theory and experiential application.

Yesod sessions will provide participants with tools and techniques to help them advance their leadership skills. Most importantly, it creates a cohort of peers who will serve as resources and strategic partners.

"Volunteer succession planning is a critically important process and Yesod helps organizations and communities prepare their rising leaders for expanded leadership roles," said Federation Executive Director, Emilie Socash.

The course will continue through August.

## Tampa's Bryan Glazer Family JCC racks up awards for design, construction

Since opening Dec. 8, 2016, the Bryan Glazer Family JCC has not only become a community hub, but the facility has picked up accolades for those who helped conceptualize and renovate the historic Fort Homer Hesterly Armory in West Tampa.

Tampa JCCs and Federation officials say it cost \$31 million to transform the long-vacant and aging building – it opened the day after Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941 – into today's vibrant multi-use facility, which has been called "the communal heartbeat" and a "YMCA on steroids."

The Federation agreed from the start to preserve much of the art-deco exterior. A leaky roof was replaced and scores of windows with small panes and aging frames

were restored to keep the exterior look, yet weatherproofed to today's standards. The armory's seal, embedded in the floor and emblazoned with the motto Never a Step Backward, were retained. Other efforts were made to create displays highlighting the building's past as a venue for speeches by President John F. Kennedy and civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, as well as the many professional wrestling bouts and musical concerts.

A new grand entrance was built and air conditioning was added. An elevated jogging track was created around a new gymnasium and a large variety of fitness and exercise equipment was added. The new creation also includes a premier events center, stage for lectures and performing arts and screens for showing movies. A café, aquatics center, arts center, and agency offices are also part of the new JCC.

At the 6th Annual CREW (Commercial Real Estate Women) Tampa Bay Excellence Awards in November, FleischmanGarcia Architecture, the architect of record for the JCC project, and Behar-Peteranecz Architecture, the firm that designed the center's Jeff and Penny Vinik Grand Entry and other parts of the facility, were both honored with the Exterior Architecture Excellence award.

The same evening, Clearwater-based Creative Contractors Inc., took home a Construction Renovation Excellence award for their work on the Glazer JCC. The construction firm also received an Excellence in Construction award for the project from the Associated Builders & Contractors, Inc.-Florida Gulf Coast Chapter at a separate event.

At the 35th Annual Planning

& Design awards in October, FleischmanGarcia received the Jan Abell Award from the Hillsborough Planning Commission for the Glazer JCC's outstanding contributions to the community. The judges loved the adaptive reuse of the armory and how the new look, both inside and out, incorporates historic preservation.

Capping off its award-winning first year, the Glazer JCC placed third in the 2017 Florida's People's Choice awards, sponsored by the Florida Foundation for Architecture.

David Scher, a commercial real estate developer and member of the Tampa JCCs and Federation's Leadership Council, was there to help receive most of the awards. As lay chairman, Scher was heavily involved with the project from its initial inception.

He, along with Tampa JCCs and Federation CEO Gary Gould, worked with pencils and paper at Scher's dining room table on a Sunday afternoon more than five years ago and developed the original conceptual framework the project was designed around.

"It was a very ambitious idea," noted Sol Fleischman Jr., chairman and CEO of FleischmanGarcia. "We helped put together a master plan, floor plan and rendering for the site, which were circulated among various influencers in the community to gauge interest in the project. There was obviously considerable excitement."

After Scher headed the effort to negotiate the lease for the property, he and Fleischman became involved in every aspect of the project – from the design and planning to the construction documents and administration. They also worked closely with Gould, Jack Ross,

the former executive director of the JCCs, and Sally Benjamin, the organization's chief financial and administrative officer, until the JCC opened its doors.

Creative Contractors Inc. and its vice president, Josh Bomstein, were brought on as the general contractor to help the building's renovation and construction come to fruition and according to Gould, "did a remarkable job."

Bryan Glazer, who the facility is named in honor of, has had a long-term interest in architecture and he also contributed several innovative concepts that were used in designing the facility. "Bryan's ideas were very creative and extremely helpful," Gould said.

When recently reached for comment, both Scher and Fleischman reflected on the Glazer JCC in its completed state.

"How lucky are we to be surrounded by such wonderful art at the JCC, from the remarkable Art Deco armory building to the brand-new Roberta M. Golding Center for Visual Arts and the exciting new art collection that adorns the facility's walls," Scher said. "How does an individual get such an opportunity in a lifetime to contribute something of this magnitude? It was a blessing."

A lifelong native of Tampa, Fleischman has many fond memories of the armory building during its previous heyday as a premier event venue throughout the 1950s-'60s. "I'm so pleased I was able to be a part of helping the building continue for at least another 75 years."

The Glazer JCC is located at 522 N. Howard Ave. For more information about programs and services, go to BryanGlazerFamilyJCC.com or call (813) 575-5900.



# THE PEARL

by chef karim

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## Jewish same-sex couple sues U.S. for denying citizenship to one of their twins

(JTA) – A Jewish same-sex couple is suing the United States for denying citizenship to one of their twin sons.

Andrew Dvash-Banks, an American, and Elad Dvash-Banks, an Israeli, married in Canada in 2010. Their sons, Ethan and Aiden, now 16 months, were conceived with donor eggs and the sperm from both fathers, and were born from the same surrogate mother minutes apart in September 2016. Both fathers are listed as the parents on the birth certificates.

Shortly after the births, the fathers went to the U.S. Consulate in Toronto to apply for American citizenship for their sons. The officer there asked for "highly personal details" about the conception of the twins, leading the men to leave the consulate "shocked, humiliated, and hurt," according to the lawsuit filed by Immigration Equality, an LGBTQ immigrant rights organization, and the law firm of Sullivan & Cromwell.

The men and the babies were "forced to submit

DNA tests and other documentation of their biological relationships to their boys, even though the law imposes no biological requirement," according to the Immigration Equality. The tests proved that Elad Dvash-Banks is the father of Ethan and Andrew Dvash-Banks is the father of Aiden.

In March, Aiden received a U.S. passport, but Ethan received a letter saying his citizenship request had been denied. The family has since moved to Los Angeles and applied for a Green Card for Ethan. The lawsuit asks the court to declare that he is a U.S. citizen from birth.

The suit charges that the State Department's "policy unconstitutionally disregards the dignity and sanctity of same-sex marriages by refusing to recognize the birthright citizenship of the children of married same-sex couples."

It claims the twins qualify for citizenship under the Immigration and Nationality Act, but the State Department is applying a section that applies to children born out of wedlock.

## Dr. Robert Entel to receive PRIMER award for Israel advocacy at awards brunch on Feb. 18

Dr. Robert Entel will be recognized for his Israel advocacy efforts at the ninth annual PRIMER (Promoting Responsibility in Middle East Reporting) Advocacy Award brunch on Sunday, Feb. 18.

The award and brunch is sponsored by the Greater Tampa Bay B'nai B'rith Unit 2603, in conjunction with the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties and the Tampa JCCs and Federation.

In addition to the award presentation, the brunch will feature past PRIMER award winner Dr. Eric Steckler, who will speak on the history, modern-day controversy and Jewish perspective of the Western Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Entel, director of radiology at Morton Plant North Bay Hospital, has been a visiting professor of medicine in many coun-

tries abroad, including Israel, where he has taught at Hadassah Hospital, Hadassah College and Al Quds medical school in the West Bank. For 10 years, he served on the special projects team of Hadassah International, for which he received the Myrtle Wreath Award.

Currently on AIPAC's National Council, Entel also serves on the board of the Jewish National Fund of Tampa Bay. He previously served as a board member of the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties, Gulf Coast Jewish Family and



Dr. Robert Entel

Community Services, the Florida Holocaust Museum, and the Jewish Community Centers of Pinellas. In addition, Entel has been on the boards of the Morton Plant Mease Health Care Foundation and Pinellas Community Foundation. He is a member of Temple Ahavat Shalom.

Entel has been the recipient of the Dr. Alfred Schick Award from the Maimonides Society of the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties, the Humanitarian award from the American Friends of Magen David Adom, the Tree of Life Award from JNF and was recognized by State of Israel Bonds.

PRIMER was established in 1992 by Dr. Norman Gross, M.D., and others, to counter anti-Jewish and anti-Israel messages in the media. In August of 2009, PRIMER became

inactive, but created the Dr. Norman Gross "PRIMER" Advocacy Award through the TOP Jewish Foundation to recognize individuals in Tampa Bay who best embody the PRIMER motto that "silence is not golden" when dealing with Israel and anti-Jewish bias.

Gross was the first recipient, followed by Herb Swartzman, Dr. Eric Steckler, Steve Schwesky, Hillel of the University of South Florida, Stuart Berger and last year's honoree, Jonathan Ellis.

The event will be held at The Preserve (formerly the Inn on the Pond), 2010 Greenbriar Blvd. in Clearwater, beginning at 10 a.m. Cost of the brunch is \$15, payable at the door. RSVP to Maxine Kaufman at (727) 333-3106 or email her at mkaufman@jewishpinellas.org no later than Wednesday, Feb. 14.

## PARTNERSHIP

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

continue to operate the same way with committee members participating in planning and selection of the films.

"The great thing about this partnership is the symbiotic relationship it creates, allowing for a greater number of films of Jewish interest to be a part of the phenomenal GIFF line-up and for GIFF to have partnership and visibility within the TBJFF," Socash said.

"In many ways, this is a natural next step for both festivals, as each has credibility in its own right. Through this partnership, we're able to offer our audiences more exposure to the art of film and the corresponding experiences that go along with a film festival experience," she added. "Who benefits? Everyone."

A complete schedule of events, film lineup, special guests and more will be announced in February.

### About the Tampa Bay Jewish Film Festival

Started in 1995, The Tampa Bay Jewish Film Festival (TBJFF) is

dedicated to using film to celebrate Jewish culture and reflect the diversity and richness of the Jewish experience. The festival seeks to use the power of film to entertain, educate and challenge conventional perspectives on complex issues facing the Jewish people and global community alike.

The festival delivers a collection of dramas, documentaries, and comedies depicting Jewish life from filmmakers around the world. The films are shown in venues across Tampa Bay. For more information, visit [www.tbjff.org](http://www.tbjff.org).

### About the Gasparilla International Film Festival

Launched in the summer of 2006, the Gasparilla International Film Festival (GIFF) has grown into an entertaining and educational year-round entity in Tampa Bay. GIFF is operated by the 501(c)(3) non-profit Tampa Film Institute and continually upholds its mission to provide yearlong support for film screening, production, and education throughout Tampa Bay and the region. For more information on GIFF, visit: [www.gasparillafilm.com](http://www.gasparillafilm.com).

## Israeli Embassy to reopen in Jordan, ending diplomatic crisis over shooting

(JTA) – Israel and Jordan agreed on the resolution of deadly incidents that shut down the work of the Israeli Embassy in Amman, officials in both countries said.

Officials in Jerusalem announced the agreement Jan. 18, saying it means that "the Israeli embassy in Jordan will return to full activity immediately."

The agreement was on the shooting of two Jordanians by a security officer at the Amman embassy in July and on the 2014 slaying of a Jordanian judge by Israeli security officers at the Allenby border crossing. Israel has already apologized for the shooting of the judge.

In the embassy shooting, security officer Ziv Moyal shot two Jordanians dead after one of them

allegedly attacked him. The ensuing diplomatic crisis between Jerusalem and Amman prompted diplomatic staff, including Ambassador Einat Schlein, to return to Israel in 2017.

"The Israeli authorities will continue reviewing the materials regarding the July 2017 incident and anticipate making a decision in the coming weeks," said the Israeli Prime Minister's Office. The statement did not say that Israel has apologized for the incident.

But at least one Jordanian official, government spokesman Mohammad Momani, said Israel did apologize and would bring legal action against Moyal while offering financial compensation to the families of the three people killed.

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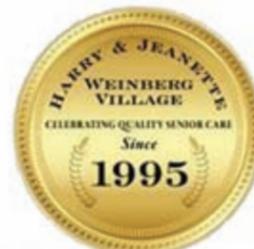
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# Engagement

## Appelbaum/Walker

Dr. and Mrs. Peter Appelbaum of Land O'Lakes announce the engagement of their daughter Madeleine Lisette Appelbaum to Michael Walker, son of Nanette Fiermark Walker of St. Petersburg.

The future bride is a graduate of Clarion University with a bachelor's degree in Rehabilitative Science and a master's degree in Public Administration from Villanova University. She is a teacher at Pepin Academy in New Port Richey.

The prospective bridegroom graduated from Ohio State University with a bachelor of science in Applied Mathematics and received his master's in Statistics from the University of Florida. He works as a data analyst for Citibank of Tampa. A June 2019 wedding is planned.



## Israeli youth from varied backgrounds to display tennis talent

Daniel Dudockin was born and raised in a kibbutz near the Lebanon border.

When he was 9, the second Lebanon war had started and his family was wrought with fear and uncertainty because his oldest brother was a soldier. The Israel Tennis Center (ITC) became Dudockin's safe haven, the place he turned to, during his personal struggles.



Daniel Dudockin

ITC is an organization that works through the medium of sport to enhance the development of Israeli youth. The Tampa JCCs & Federation will again host the ITC Foundation tennis team on Thursday, March 1 from noon to 1:30 p.m. for an exhibition and fundraiser at the Sandra W. Freedman Tennis Complex on Davis Islands, 59 Columbia Drive, Tampa. A complimentary lunch will be served.

While there is no admission, a donation is appreciated to help fund current ITC programs. Maureen and Doug Cohn are chairing the

event.

Those in attendance will get to see some talented young tennis players, hear their inspiring stories and learn more about the Israel Tennis Centers.

Since opening its first center in Ramat Hasharon in 1976, the ITC has helped over a half million children, including at-risk youth and those with special needs with many coming from outlying and underserved towns. The ITC's 14 centers stretch from Kiryat Shmona on the Lebanese border in the North to Beer Sheva bordering the Negev Desert in the South.

Dudockin, 20, is the oldest of the Israeli tennis players who will be showing off their talents here.

Other ITC players are:

Jessica Bekkerman, 18, lives in Jaffa with her parents, who emigrated from the former Soviet Union before she was born. She attends an international school where the student population is predominantly comprised of Arabs, and as an Israeli Jew, Bekkerman is the anomaly. Since the age of 5, she trained as a competitive ballroom dancer and traveled abroad for international competitions. Her parents encouraged her to learn tennis at the Nussdorf Mark Families ITC-Jaffa as a recreational sport to maintain her fitness and health.



Jessica Bekkerman

Besides learning a new sport that she has grown to love, Bekkerman joined the Girls Empowerment Program, where the girls learn about nutrition, fitness and coping skills to deal with a variety of gender issues and concerns including sexism in Israeli society.

Jennifer Ibeto, 16, is the oldest child of a Nigerian single mother who came to Israel 16 years ago. Jennifer trains at the ITC's Center in South Tel Aviv. Things have been financially difficult for Ibeto. As a result, the ITC sponsors her training and equipment.



Jennifer Ibeto

In addition, the center provides counseling to help her become a more confident and successful person both on the court and in life. She says her ITC coach is like the father she never had. "He is a man that loves everybody regardless of where they came from."

Orel Adga, 14, lives in Beer Sheva with his seven brothers and sisters. His parents emigrated from Ethiopia to Israel via Sudan in the mid-1980s during Operation Moses. He joined the ITC sponsored "Future Generation" tennis program for Ethiopian children at the Samson Israel Tennis Center in Beer Sheva at the age of 6, benefiting from not only tennis training, but also help with homework, English language fluency, science projects and social activities, as well as meals and transportation.



Orel Adga

"The ITC has not only taught me how to be a better player, but how to be a better friend and teammate with kids from all backgrounds," said Adga. "The other activities in my program have helped me improve in school. The ITC is preparing me for life."

The coach of the team is Badia Karkabi, a Christian Arab from the northern Israeli town of Wadi Nisnas. It is an underserved community, and Karkabi had a difficult childhood. He found the Selma & Irving Ettenberg Israel Tennis Center in Haifa and was able to thrive at school and on the court. He eventually became an assistant coach at the ITC-Haifa, where he participates in a program that teaches the younger students life skills and values. Recently, Badia became the head coach of the ITC-Galilee-Sajur.

Following the exhibition, there also will be an opportunity for community members to play with team members.

Anyone interested in playing or for more information, contact Doug Cohn at dcohn@trane.com. If you are interested in housing a member of the team for the evening, contact Pam Cotner at pam.cotner@jewishtampa.com.

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# SELIG

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

spiritual leader, Hazzan Jodi Sered-Lever, declined to speak about Selig, citing family wishes for privacy. But later on the synagogue's Facebook page, condolence messages were posted: "Congregation Mekor Shalom notes with deepest sorrow the death of our beloved, dedicated, and indefatigable president" and "We honor Glenn Selig for his steadfast commitment to Congregation Mekor Shalom."

"Glenn was very involved in the Jewish community and passionate about his faith," said Farragut. "Since I've known Glenn it has been abundantly clear that his faith played a large role in his life..."

Selig's death rocked the local community and prompted expressions of sympathy to his family and respect for Selig by friends and former co-workers.

"If there was a dictionary of Yiddish words Glenn's picture would be next to the word Mensch," wrote Dena Joy-Schwartz Fields on the Mekor Shalom page. "He was a wonderful leader BUT most of all friend, husband and father! He will be missed profoundly by all and never forgotten! May his memory always be for a blessing and a smile! I can think of so many times when I smiled from the pure kindness he projected!"

SeligMultimedia officials wrote: "Glenn was a tireless professional, loyal friend and pillar of the community, but most importantly he was a loving husband and wonderful father. The loss for his family and friends cannot be measured nor conveyed strongly enough, but we thank everyone for the outpouring of support we have received."

"I respected you as a colleague at Fox 13. I was in awe of your successful transition into public

relations," wrote Ray Collins on Selig's Facebook page, adding "I am so sorry for your family. You were so proud of them."

Selig was born in Los Angeles in 1967, and graduated in 1985 from Valley Torah High School in North Hollywood. He graduated from New York University in 1989, where he studied politics, international relations and journalism.

In his company biography, Selig said that even as a young child, he was destined for a career in media. He would write letters to family and sign them "Glenn Selig, News Staff."

Selig described himself as a workaholic.

His first television news job was in El Centro, CA, and then he worked for TV stations in Eureka, CA, Victoria and Beaumont, TX, and Flint, MI, before moving to Tampa to work as an investigative reporter for the local FOX news affiliate, WTVT, Channel 13. During his news career, he won the National Headline Award. He was a fill-in anchor at times before leaving WTVT in 2007.

That same year, he formed SeligMultimedia, serving as company president and CEO. He also founded The Publicity Agency and PR Newschannel. SeligMultimedia is parent company to those entities. The companies provided a variety of services from producing standard press releases to providing crises management strategies for politicians and criminal defendants.

Several other ventures revolved around fatherhood. In 2002, while still at WTVT and his daughter Drew was about to be born, he created Interactive Dad, "It [the website] came to be because while seeking a tool for myself as a dad-

to-be, I discovered that most (actually nearly all) parenting stuff was geared toward moms, and dads were the 'also-parent,'" he wrote, adding "So I figured I'd create it. And Interactive Dad was born." Selig brought writers and other experts for his website "because I obviously did not know much about being a dad... I remember vividly holding Drew as a newborn on my lap as I typed!"

That website eventually petered out due to demands of his jobs, but in 2013 Daddyhood.net, was launched, which covered news, finance sports and parenting for dads.

That pride in being a father did not wane as Selig and his wife shared details of how they planned Drew's bat mitzvah in the *Jewish Press'* annual *Bar/Bat Mitzvah Planning Guide* in 2016. They provided pictures of decorations they made for the cleverly named, "Selibration."

After entering the public relations field, Selig gained a reputation for handling high profile clients. Among those he represented are Rod Blagojevich, the Illinois governor convicted of soliciting bribes for political appointments, and Casey Anthony, the Orlando mom acquitted of killing her daughter Caylee. More recently his firm was hired by former top Trump campaign operative Rick Gates after his indictment in connection with an investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

Selig appeared on a variety of television news shows and in publications, offering advice on how public personalities should handle their public relations

But it was not all about the "big fish," touting on the company's website a branding campaign for

Hillel Academy. Selig's wife is on the board for Hillel Academy in Tampa. Son Josh still attends the school and daughter Drew graduated from there last year.

Selig's last post on his Facebook page on Jan. 17, three days before the hotel attack, was of a video of him on the streets of Dubai, where he stopped on his way to Kabul. He said it was "an absolutely gorgeous night," with the weather similar to Tampa. He said he was just checking in, decided to take a walk, and assured his Facebook friends, "It is extremely safe here."

He ended the post with, "I will talk to you soon."

As of press time, there was no indication of any funeral arrangements.

## New Orleans rescinds resolution favored by anti-Israel activists

(JTA) – The City of New Orleans rescinded a resolution, celebrated by anti-Israel activists, that would have prohibited investment with human rights violators.

Although the measure passed 5-0 on Jan. 11 did not mention Israel or the Palestinians, it was drafted by the New Orleans Palestinian Solidarity Committee.

Both pro-Palestinian supporters of the resolution and Israel supporters say the resolution could be used to target Israel as part of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement.

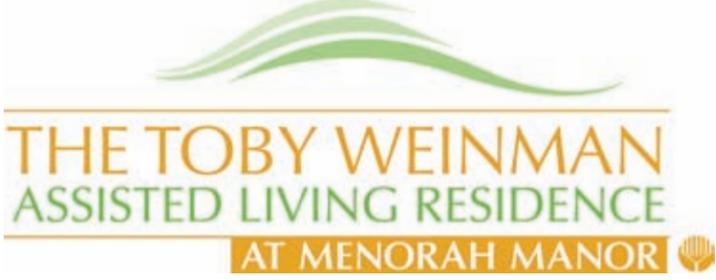


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## TIMETABLE

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while a larger new embassy is built.

Pence, in a speech to the Knesset three days earlier, called the decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital "in the best interest" of peace, saying that "fact is the only basis for peace." He stressed that such recognition does not change the status quo arrangements on holy sites in the city and that the United States has not taken a position on final status issues such as borders.

As he began to speak, Arab-Israeli lawmakers from the Joint Arab List party began waving signs protesting the U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, leading to their expulsion from the Knesset chamber. Palestinians also declined to meet with Pence during his visit to the region, blaming it on that announcement.

"When they disrespected us a week ago by not allowing our great vice president to see them and we give them hundreds of millions of dollars in aid and support, tremendous numbers, numbers that nobody understands, that money's on the table, that money's not going to them unless they sit down and negotiate peace," Trump said during his sit down with Netanyahu.

In recent weeks, the administration froze \$65 million in U.S. funding for UNRWA, the organization that delivers relief to Palestinian refugees and their descendants. However, it is allowing another \$60 million to go through. Trump also suggested that should negotiations resume, Netanyahu would have to come up with concessions.

"You win one point," Trump said, looking at Netanyahu and apparently referring to his recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, "and you'll give up some points later on in the negotiation if it ever takes place. I don't know that it ever will take place."

He also said he believed Israel wanted to negotiate peace.

"I can tell you that Israel does want to make peace and they're [the Palestinians] going to have to want to make peace too or we're going to have nothing to do with it any longer," he said.

Netanyahu thanked Trump for recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital and promising to move the embassy, for his support for Israel's position on the Iran nuclear deal and for U.S. support at the United Nations.

"As you finish your first year in office, I want to say that I look forward to continuing our remarkable, tremendous friendship in the years ahead, and I want to express the appreciation of the people of Israel to you," said Netanyahu.

## VP Pence's faith drives his support for Israel. Does it drive Mideast policy?

By RON KAMPEAS  
JTA news service

WASHINGTON — When Mike Pence moved to Washington last year, he and his wife took with them a framed phrase they had for years hung over their fireplace in their Indiana home, and then over the fireplace in the governor's mansion in that state.

Now it hangs over the mantle at the vice president's residence at the Naval Observatory. The words, from the *Book of Jeremiah*, reads: "For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you, and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope, and a future."

The "you" is the people of Israel, and Pence, an evangelical Christian, makes that clear when he addresses pro-Israel audiences. "They're words to which my family has repaired to as generations of Americans have done so throughout our history, and the people of Israel through all their storied history have clung," Pence said last August at the annual conference of Christians United for Israel.

Pence took that message to Israel on his recent trip ostensibly aimed in part at reviving the prospects for Israeli-Palestinian peace. He is seen as a key Trump administration figure when it comes to Israel policy and reportedly helped nudge the president to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Pence's first visit to Israel as vice president led some to ask to what degree are his views — and the administration's policies — shaped by the brand of evangelical Christianity that invests his faith?

Pence, a convert to evangelical Christianity from Roman Catholicism, has spooked some liberals with his insistence on rooting his pro-Israel bona fides in faith as much as the United States' national security. Their fear is that a messianic outlook might run riot over one of the most delicate dilemmas facing successive U.S. governments, namely stability in the Middle East.

"Trump has handed Israel policy to Evangelicals," *The Forward's* Jane Eisner wrote in an editorial as Pence headed to Israel. "That's terrifying." Like many liberals, she worries that policy will be driven by evangelical beliefs that certain conditions — like Jewish control over the West Bank and sovereignty in Jerusalem — fulfill biblical prophecies.

Republicans and conservatives say that

it is reductive to believe that Pence shapes his views solely according to the tenets of his faith.

"They always highlight the fact that he's an evangelical, as if that's a pejorative when in fact [Pence and other evangelicals] are motivated first and foremost by shared values with Israel," said Matt Brooks, the director of the Republican Jewish Coalition, who has known Pence for years.

Pence began his speech to the Knesset by outlining the shared values Brooks described, but he quickly pivoted to depict support of Israel as both biblical (Deuteronomy 30:4, to be exact) and rooted in an American strain of Christianity.

"Down through the generations, the American people became fierce advocates of the Jewish people's aspiration to return to the land of your forefathers, to claim your own new birth of freedom in your beloved homeland," he said to applause. "The Jewish people held fast to a promise through all the ages, written so long ago, that 'even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there. He would gather and bring you back to the land which your fathers possessed.'"

Pastor John Hagee, the founder of Christians United for Israel, described a natural trajectory for evangelical supporters of Israel from biblical belief to the more practical modern reasons for supporting the state.

"The promises of the Hebrew Bible are the foundation of Christian Zionism, but our motivations for supporting Israel do not end there," he told JTA in an email. "We see in Israel a democracy that shares Western values and is a force for stability in the Middle East. While standing with Israel is a Biblical mandate, it is also a moral imperative and in the national security interests of the US. I am confident that all three of these considerations inform the Vice President's approach to the Middle East and I believe that is perfectly appropriate."

Pence has since the outset of his political career made it clear that his support for Israel is first grounded in biblical precepts. "My support for Israel stems largely from my personal faith," he told *Congressional Quarterly* in 2002, a year after he was first elected to Congress. "God promises Abraham, 'those who bless you, I will bless, and those who curse you, I will curse.'"

Sarah Posner, a journalist who for years has tracked evangelicals, said Pence's faith seemed to be preeminent in his consideration of Israel. "I don't think he is thinking about that in terms of shared democracy or not shared democracy, he's thinking about it providential terms, that these missions are God's plans for Israel," said Posner, a reporting fellow at The Nation Institute's



Vice President Mike Pence at the Kotel

From Twitter

Investigative Fund.

It's hard not to see Pence's belief as an impetus driving Trump's recognition of Jerusalem, said Daniel Seidemann, an Israeli expert on Jerusalem who advocates for including all the city's sects and groupings in considering its permanent status.

"It would be fine for him to have those beliefs, if he weren't the vice president and shaping policy," Seidemann told JTA. "Jerusalem has been witnessing over the last 20 years the ascendancy of faith communities that weaponize religion."

Pence's trip, by including only Jewish sites and skipping meetings with other faith leaders, was contributing to the weaponization, Seidemann said.

Christian faith leaders declined to meet with Pence during his visits to Egypt and Israel; various reports framed their objections as a reaction to policies they feared put religious imperatives before meeting the needs of Arabs in the region, including the Christian minority.

Mae Elise Cannon, the director of Churches for Middle East Peace, an umbrella group that includes most of the Christian denominations in Israel and the West Bank, told JTA that local Christians were wary of how Pence framed his support for Israel as a matter of Christian faith.

"They didn't meet with him because they don't view him as an honest broker or an unbiased broker," she said.

Still, some conservatives charge liberals with weaponizing religion, and using Pence's faith as a way to discredit otherwise normative policies.

"That vast numbers of Americans are inspired by the Bible to support Jewish rights in their ancient homeland isn't so much a function of the left-right conflict as it is an integral part of the nation's political culture," wrote Jonathan Tobin, a former executive editor of *Commentary* and current editor in chief of JNS.org. "Those turned off by Pence's rhetoric need to ask what exactly it is about a desire to respect Jewish rights and demand that Palestinians give up their century-old war on Zionism that annoys them so much."

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# Palestinian envoy to U.S. says Trump's Jerusalem decision was a 'backstabbing'

By RON KAMPEAS  
JTA news service

WASHINGTON (JTA) – President Donald Trump's recognition last month of Jerusalem as Israel's capital amounted to "backstabbing," the Palestine Liberation Organization envoy to Washington said.

Husam Zomlot delivered his first remarks since the Dec. 6 recognition, addressing the Middle East Institute, a think tank on Thursday, Jan. 25. A main contact between the Trump administration and the Palestinian Authority, Zomlot conveyed a measure of the fury with Trump that P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas delivered at a PLO Central Council meeting last week.

But he also recommitted the Palestinians to the two-state solution and to continuing to seek engagement with Israelis.

The remarks, while defiant, also underscored a key Palestinian weakness, one Zomlot said his side must take blame for: They had failed to make their case to the American people, while domestic support for Israel in the United States remained strong.

"We need to start the real process of either removing Israel-Palestine [as a domestic issue] or making Palestine a domestic issue," he said. "But just to keep Israel as a domestic issue and not Palestine – that hasn't worked for 26 years."

He said Palestinians might target Congress, the elites, the media and the Jewish community.

Trump, meeting earlier in the day with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Davos, Switzerland at the World Economic Forum, made clear Zomlot's dilemma. The president blasted the Palestinians for "disrespecting"

the United States and said that U.S.-Israel relations were "never stronger."

Zomlot suggested the winds were in the Palestinians' favor, alluding to an erosion of support for Israel among younger and liberal Americans.

Netanyahu "can speak to this Congress," he said. "But can he speak at a university in California or Wisconsin?"

Trump, by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, Zomlot said, broke not only with 26 years of U.S. commitments to act only as a peace mediator between the Israelis and the Palestinians, but also his own pledge at the outset of his presidency not to impose a solution.

"Trump violated his own pledge, 'I do not want to impose, I do not want to dictate,'" Zomlot, formerly a top aide to Abbas and the leader's confidant, said. "Then you come and you want to take the core of the two-state solution out ... you turn, backstabbing?"

Zomlot dismissed Trump's reassurance at the time that the recognition and the pledge to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem did not determine the city's final status, and that it left open the possibility that a Palestinian capital might still emerge in eastern Jerusalem.

Zomlot said that Trump himself now insists that Jerusalem is "off the table." He said that if Trump and the negotiating team led by Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, were sincere about maintaining a Palestinian stake in Jerusalem, they could have waited until Kushner rolled out a peace plan later this year and included in it a vision of the city as the capital for Israel and Palestine.

"Any embassy in the city

is tacit recognition of Israel's claim," Zomlot said. "After reaching an agreement, we don't mind two embassies" in Jerusalem, one serving Israel, the other Palestine.

Trump in Davos said the Palestinians had "disrespected" the United States by refusing to meet this week with Vice President Mike Pence during his visit to the region. He suggested that if they don't return to talks, the United States would cut assistance to the Palestinians.

Zomlot said threats to cut U.S. funding to the Palestinians would only embolden his people.

"If the choice is between starving the people of Palestine and surrendering rights, the people will not choose surrendering their rights," he said.

The thrust of Zomlot's speech was that the Palestinians no longer saw the United States as an honest broker, and were now seeking a different multilateral structure for peace talks – one that would include the United States, but in which it would not be preeminent. That could be a critical distinction if Zomlot is to keep his job: the Trump administration has said the PLO office will remain open only as long as the Palestinians are committed to a peace process.

He said the Palestinians remained committed to the two-state solution – a retreat from a threat that Abbas and others have made recently that, should they despair of the peace negotiations, they would agitate toward Israeli citizenship and a "one state solution," a solution that would likely ultimately erase Israel's Jewish character.

"Even if we are the last samurai," the Palestinians believe that the blood shed on both sides toward a two-state outcome made it



Husam Zomlot, the Palestinian Liberation Organization's envoy to Washington, addressing the Middle East Institute in Washington, D.C. on Jan. 25. Seated left is MEI Vice President Paul Salem.

worthwhile, Zomlot said.

Zomlot also downplayed a litany of anti-Jewish tropes in Abbas' recent speech. The Palestinian leader had dismissed any Jewish connection to Israel, said Zionism was a European colonialist plot and claimed that Holocaust era Jews had preferred the Nazis to Zionism. Zomlot said that the media would have done better to focus on the policy substance of the speech, in which he said Abbas renounced violence and called for engagement with Israelis, repudiating those Palestinians who oppose such encounters because they "normalize" the Israeli occupation.

Zomlot refuted claims by Netanyahu that Israel could accrue support without coming to a deal with the Palestinians, repeatedly saying such claims were "delusional." In addition, he belittled leaked reports that U.S. allies including Egypt and Saudi Arabia were ready to back a peace deal that would deliver Palestinians a truncated state, with its capital in

the West Bank near Jerusalem, and not in the city.

Zomlot challenged Netanyahu to find an Arab leader who would look the Palestinians "in the eye" and back such a plan. He claimed that support for Palestinian statehood remained strong worldwide, and that the Palestinians would continue to seek statehood recognition in international forums.

He acknowledged the limits of the international approach, pointing out that a U.N. Security Council resolution last month condemning Trump's Jerusalem announcement failed because the United States vetoed it. But he also said that every other member of the council, including America's allies, voted for the resolution, and that a non-binding General Assembly resolution condemning the announcement won a clear majority.

"There is a lot of thinking that the Palestinians are in their weakest position," he said. "The key to Israel's survival is in the Palestinians."

## Israeli female reporter threatens to sue Western Wall rabbi over segregation during Mike Pence visit

JERUSALEM (JTA) – An Israeli journalist threatened to file a lawsuit against the rabbi of the Western Wall over the segregation of female reporters and photographers from their male counterparts during Vice President Mike Pence's visit to the site.

Tal Schneider of the Israeli business daily *Globes* told an Israeli radio station, 103 FM, that she is being backed by *Globes* in suing Rabbi Shmuel Rabinovich, *The Times of Israel* reported. Following the incident, which was widely covered in the media, *Globes* sent a letter of protest to Rabbi Rabinovich.

"First we will send him a warning letter and see how he responds, and then we will go to court if necessary, because it seems unreasonable to us that male and female

journalists are treated differently when they come to report and work," Schneider told the radio station.

On a podium erected for the journalists, the women were required to stand behind the men. The women finally removed a tarp and stood on chairs so they could see over their male colleagues.

In a personal reflection on the incident published in *Globes*, Schneider took her male colleagues to task for not showing solidarity with the female journalists.

"Next time, look behind you and see what is happening behind your backs," she said.

The women journalists created a hashtag – #PenceFence – and took to social media to decry the second-class treatment.



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# Organizations

## Hadassah

**History of healthcare in Israel:** Special guest **Freda DeKeyser Ganz** will address "100 Years of Nursing and Health Care in Israel" at a lecture sponsored by the St. Petersburg, Lylah, North Pinellas, and Tampa Ameet chapters of Hadassah. The program will be on Sunday, Feb. 11 at 11 a.m. at Temple B'nai Israel, 1685 S. Belcher Road, Clearwater.



**Freda DeKeyser Ganz**

Ganz's resume includes more than 40 years in nursing as well as more than 80 published articles. She was the first person named a professor at Hadassah-Hebrew University School of Nursing in Jerusalem, where she continues to teach. Her areas of concentration include ethics in the ICU, palliative and end-of-life care. She holds a PhD in Nursing-Psychophysiology from the University of Maryland and has done post doctorate work at Johns Hopkins University in Psychoimmunology. She will speak with perspectives from both Israel and the United States. RSVP to **Harriet Stein** at (727) 465-4641 or [harnaomi@outlook.com](mailto:harnaomi@outlook.com) or to **Sally Laufer** at (727) 781-3619 or [sally1318@yahoo.com](mailto:sally1318@yahoo.com).

## Young Adults

**Bark in the Park:** Bring your pup for a relaxing afternoon at the Davis Islands Dog Park, 1002 Severn Ave, Tampa, hanging with other pooches and dog owners on Sunday, Feb. 11 from noon to 2 p.m. as part of a #Gather event. Don't have a dog? Come out and play anyway.

#Gather offers a mix of social and interactive activities designed to help young adults connect. It is open to young adults of all faiths and backgrounds. For more information or to RSVP for any #Gather events, visit: [www.bryanglazerfamilyjcc.com/gather](http://www.bryanglazerfamilyjcc.com/gather) or contact **Lisa Robbins** at [lisa.robbins@jewishtampa.com](mailto:lisa.robbins@jewishtampa.com).

com or (813) 769-4723.

**Art night:** Create a self-portrait at the private art studio of local artist **Sara Scher** on Monday, Feb. 26 from 7-9 p.m. The cost is \$15 for #Gather members and \$20 for guests (includes art materials, snacks and wine). This event is limited to 14 people. No skill is needed.

## Genealogical Society

**Immigration research:** The Jewish Genealogical Society of Tampa Bay will offer a two-session seminar titled: "The JGSTB 2018 Guide to Immigration Research: "Why You Can't Find Your Bubbe's Immigration Record" on Sunday, Feb. 11 and Sunday, March 11 at 2 p.m. at Gulf Coast Jewish Family & Community Services, 14041 Icot Blvd., Clearwater. Registration will be at 1:30 p.m. on both dates. This seminar will enable participants to discover their family's immigration records. The presentations will concentrate on both traditional and recently available Internet resources. **Dr. Emil H. Isaacson**, who will lead the seminar, has more than 33 years of experience in genealogy. The seminar is free to members. Non-members will be charged \$25 for individuals or \$35 for a family, which will include an annual membership. A seminar booklet, for attendees only, summarizing the presentation and containing updated references will be available for \$10. To pre-register for the class, for more information, or for directions, call **Bruce Hadburg** at (727) 796-7981.

## Job-Links

**Monday Morning Links:** Free sessions of Monday Morning Links are offered at the Jack Roth Center for Career Development at TampaBay-Job-Links, 4100 W. Ken-

edy Blvd., Suite 206, Tampa from 9:30 -11 a.m. On Monday, Feb. 5, the topic is "What's in Your Job Search Toolbox." On Feb. 12 the topic is "Market Yourself Through Business/Networking Cards." On Feb. 19, the topic is "Staying Optimistic During Career Transition." On Feb. 26 the topic is "Why the Most Qualified Candidate Doesn't Always Get the Job." Monday Morning Links is supported by the Vinik Family Foundation.

**Job-search aids:** There are Success workshops on select Thursdays to aid with job-search skills. On Feb. 15, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. the topic is "Preparing for Your Interview." On March 1 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. the topic is "Transferring Your Skills and Re-Careering." The workshops are free for TampaBay Job-Links full program participants and \$15 for guests. Reservations required for all programs.

**Career transitioning:** The next series of "Switching Gears" workshops for those in career transition will be on Wednesday, Feb. 7 and Thursday, Feb. 8. On Feb. 7 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. the topic is "Enhance Interviewing Skills and Techniques, Compose Cover Letters, Thank You Notes and Email." On Feb. 8 from 9:30 a.m. to noon, the topic is "Financial Fundamentals for Now and the Future." These are targeted to those in career transition. To RSVP, call (813) 344-0200, email [RSVP@TBJL.org](mailto:RSVP@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 Kaldenberg** at (727) 302-3750.

## Israeli born jazz pianist to perform here

The Tal Cohen Trio will perform at the Palladium Theater's Side Door on Wednesday, Feb. 21, at 7:30 p.m.



**Tal Cohen**

Pianist Cohen was born in Gadera, Israel and owes his musical roots to the Jewish folk songs and classical music he played during his childhood there. He moved to Perth, Australia as a teenager and earned a bachelor's and masters' degree in Jazz Performance at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. Cohen recently graduated from the University of Miami School of Music, where he received a full scholarship and teaching assistantship while completing another master's degree.

Cohen has performed at the Melbourne Jazz Festival in Australia, including several shows with renown saxophonist Joe Lovano who praised Cohen's playing as "full of passion, focus, and creativity."

In 2014, Cohen was named the Grand Prize Winner in the Barry Harris National Jazz Piano Competition in Detroit.

Along with Cohen, the trio includes Dion Kerr on bass and David Chiverton on drums.

Part of the 2018 St. Petersburg Jazz Festival, admission to the performance is \$20 for general seating; \$30 for reserved seats. The Palladium is located at 253 Fifth Ave. N. in downtown St. Petersburg. For tickets, go to [www.mypalladium.org](http://www.mypalladium.org) or call (727) 822-3590.

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# William Hauben – Tampa cantor, author, teacher, survivor – dies at 95

By **BOB FRYER**  
Jewish Press

Although the Nazis killed his family and his life was in constant peril during World War II, William Hauben survived – despite imprisonment in four concentration camps – and went on to live a full life, spending nearly half a century in Tampa that included 20 years as cantor at Congregation Rodeph Sholom.

He was also known as a teacher and author.

Cantor Hauben died on Jan. 20 at the age of 95. He is survived by his son, Sheldon, of Miami.

He was born in 1922 in Cracow, Poland, and by age 4 his parents said he was destined for a life of music, which Hauben speculated came from his paternal grandfather and from his father, who played violin.

He began singing in the synagogue choir at age 6, then he studied cantorial art under the tutelage of prominent cantors until he became a soloist with a beautiful alto voice.

After Nazis invaded Poland, his family was sent to a ghetto in Cracow and eventually his parents and younger brother were sent to death camps and perished. Hauben was an apprentice electrician, so the Nazis put him to work in the Plaszow concentration camp. In

time, the Germans learned of his singing talent and forced him to perform at their social events. As the war wore on, he was transferred to the Gross-Rosen death camp in Poland, the Ludwigsdorf death camp in Austria and finally to Ebensee in Austria, where he and others were liberated by the Americans.



Cantor William Hauben

Rabbi Josh Hearshen of Congregation Rodeph Sholom came to serve here years after Cantor Hauben had retired, but got to know him, talking about his legacy when he delivered Hauben's eulogy.

Hauben "survived the hatred and the murder. He survived the madness and the camps. He survived all of that and then paved a path for himself that paid a lasting tribute to the world that looked like it could've been destroyed," said Hearshen. "He survived the terror of God's creations only to spend the remainder of his life bringing people closer to God."

After liberation Hauben worked in Italy with the Jewish Brigade

in intelligence. While in Italy he spent three years of intensive vocal study at a conservatory in Torino.

He arrived in the United States in 1949 and sold typewriters in Chicago before completing cantorial studies at the Cantor's Institute of the College of Jewish Studies there.

"He did this because singing and Judaism were who he was," said Rabbi Hearshen. "He did this because he loved teaching, he loved learning, he loved singing and he loved praying. Being a cantor just made sense and so he pursued it."

Hauben moved to Los Angeles to serve as a cantor at Temple Beth Am from 1958 to 1969, then moved to Tampa and served as cantor at Rodeph Shalom for the next 20 years before retiring and remaining a frequent worshiper at the synagogue.

For many years Hauben, like many Holocaust survivors, was reticent to talk of his experiences, and when Rabbi Kenneth Berger at Rodeph Shalom encouraged him to tell his story, he still resisted. It was not until after Rabbi Berger and his wife died in a plane crash in 1989 that "... suddenly he [Hauben] understood that he didn't have all of the time in the world to share and so he opened up and began to share his story,"

Rabbi Hearshen said. "Once Cantor Hauben opened up his heart and soul it would never be shut ever again. He took every opportunity he had to share what had happened to him and to the Jewish people. He did so because he survived and because he needed to testify about what had happened and what had been done."

Hauben wrote of his Holocaust experiences in his book, *From the Flames: Miracles and Wonders of Survival* including two times in Plaszow when he miraculously escaped being killed when the camp Commandant, Amon Goeth, shot at groups of Jews as target practice. In one instance, Hauben recalled he and other Jews who had been forced to build a road made of Jewish tombstones were told to run while carrying the heavy stones as Goeth shot at them. Goeth, whose sadistic behavior was captured in the movie *Schindler's List*, was tried after the war, convicted of murdering tens of thousands of people, and hanged in 1946.

During his time at Rodeph Shalom, Cantor Hauben was instrumental in bringing renowned Jewish performers to the community for the annual Jewish Music festival and prepared hundreds of students for their B'nai Mitzvot. He received the Honorary Fellow (1985) recognition and Doctor of

Music Honoris Causa (2006) from the Cantors Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. "Cantor Hauben came here and women were not allowed to really participate in services. He found this to be absurd. He explained that they were half of the community and their voices needed to be heard as well. He worked very hard to bring about egalitarian practices here at Rodeph," Rabbi Hearshen said.

Hauben was also credited with helping create the Hillel School at Rodeph Shalom before it later moved to north Tampa and is now known as Hillel Academy, a premier Jewish day school in our community.

In retirement, Cantor Hauben continued to teach others about the Holocaust and in his second book, *Light: Courage and Hope*, he and friend Bill Sefekar paid tribute to 10 nations and a variety of individuals who saved the lives of others during the Holocaust.

He would teach wherever there was a potential audience. He went to churches, schools and many other places. All of this was so that he could fight to realize the statement "Never Again."

The family suggests memorial donations to the Florida Holocaust Museum, St. Petersburg, or to USF to benefit Holocaust studies.

## Obituaries

**SCOTT IRA CARL**, 47, of **St. Petersburg**, died Jan. 20. He was born in St. Petersburg and lived here his entire life. He attended Shorecrest Preparatory School and Admiral Farragut Academy, later graduating from Center Academy. He was an avid surfer and a Bob Marley and Pittsburgh Steelers fan. Survivors include his mother, Susan Carl-Singleton, St. Petersburg; sister, Michelle Carl Rodriguez, Los Angeles; his mother's partner, Charles Morachnik. The family suggests memorials be made to the Florida Holocaust Museum or Temple Beth-El. (David C. Gross Funeral Homes, St. Petersburg Chapel)

**CHARLA FOGEL**, 86, of **Clearwater**, died Jan. 15. Survivors include her daughters and sons-in-law, Stacy and Bruce Orloff, and Randi and Ben Rabin; and four grandchildren. The family suggests memorials to Suncoast Hospice Foundation. (David C. Gross Funeral Homes, Clearwater Chapel)

**MARIAN GREENGOLD**, 90, of **Palm Harbor**, died Jan. 22. She was born in Hungary and was a Holocaust survivor. Survivors include her son and daughter-in-law Dr. Julian and Liz Greengold; three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. The family suggests memorials to Hadassah or Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services. (David C. Gross Funeral Homes, Clearwater Chapel)

**MELVIN J. MYERS**, died Jan. 23. He was a longtime lay leader at Menorah Manor, serving on its board of trustees. Survivors include his children: Audrey and Shawn Hollander, Rick and Ellyne Myers, Linda and Jim Roberts, Alan and Ellen Nastir, Sheri and Charlie Berke; 11 grandchildren; and his companion Toby Nastir. The family suggests memorials to ALE FOR ALZ

www.aleforalz.org, Menorah Manor or Temple B'nai Israel. (Curlw Hills Memory Gardens)

**MARTIN ROSENBERG**, 89, of **Safety Harbor**, died Jan. 22. Born in Brooklyn, he was a longtime member of Congregation Beth Shalom in Clearwater. Survivors include his children; Gary and Marsha, Ellen, Jeff and Dana; 12 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. The family suggests memorials be made to Congregation Beth Shalom. (David C. Gross Funeral Homes, Clearwater Chapel)

**FREDERICK ROSENBERG-WILMOTH**, died Jan. 18. He was born in New York City and was a volunteer at various museums in New York. (David C. Gross Funeral Homes, Clearwater Chapel)

**STACI R. SACHS**, 45, of **Clearwater**, died Jan. 23. Survivors include her daughter and son-in-law, Morgan and Stephen Green; her parents, Paul and Elaine Sachs; her sister, Kyli Sachs. (Curlw Hills Memory Gardens)

**EDITH WEISS**, 90, of **Oldsmar**, died Jan. 19. Survivors include her children: Steven and Irene Weiss, Richard and Melody Weiss, Wendy and Mark Yura; brother and sister-in-law, Joseph and Sheila; 11 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren. The family suggests memorials to the Morris and Edith Weiss College Fund at Temple Ahavat Shalom in Palm Harbor. (Curlw Hills, Memory Gardens)

**DAVE ZIMRING**, 93, of **St. Petersburg**, died Jan. 14. Born in Toledo, OH he grew up in Pittsburgh, PA. He was a veteran of the United States Navy, serving as an Ensign on transport carriers in the South Pacific during World War II. He was a graduate

of the University of Pittsburgh with a degree in Industrial Engineering and from the University of Virginia with a degree in Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps, Engineering. He also attended the University of Wisconsin and NYU during his tour of duty during the war. He moved to St. Petersburg in the early 1950s to join his brother in a window manufacturing business. He went on to develop and build homes, office buildings and shopping centers across the Tampa/St. Petersburg region. Survivors include his wife of 38 years, Sharon Moore Zimring; children: Sabrina Zimring, Denver; Dane and Jessica Zimring, Tampa; Lisa Zimring, Bradenton; Lori Zimring Woodward and Jeff Woodward, Atlanta; Devin Zimring, Terra Ceia; and six grandchildren. The family suggests memorials to Menorah Manor. (David C. Gross Funeral Homes, St. Petersburg Chapel)

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# Poll: Democratic support for Israel is waning, but experts say truth is more complex

By BEN SALES  
JTA news service

NEW YORK — The share of Democrats who sympathize more with Israel than the Palestinians is falling fast, while Republican sympathy for Israel over the Palestinians is spiking.

So says a new poll by the Pew Research Center. But experts are divided on what it means, and whether pro-Israel activists — and Democrats — should be worried.

Do the results indicate that Democrats are abandoning Israel en masse? Is it another sign of political polarization, which makes it harder for one party to support an issue associated with the other? Or, as some analysts suggest, was it a badly worded question?

The Pew poll, released Tuesday, Jan. 23, shows that partisan polarization around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is starker than ever in the United States.

While 79 percent of Republicans sympathize more with Israel than with the Palestinians, that number is only 27 percent for Democrats. Twenty-five percent of Democrats sympathized more with the Pal-

estinians, while only nine percent of Republicans did. Overall, 46 percent of Americans sympathize more with Israel, and 19 percent with the Palestinians.

Since 2001, the share of Republicans who sympathize with Israel has increased 29 percentage points, from 50 percent to 79 percent, says Pew. Over the same period, the share of Democrats sympathizing more with Israel has declined 11 points, from 38 percent to 27 percent.

As recently as two years ago, 43 percent of Democrats sympathized more with Israel. And the drop for Israel this year is especially steep among liberal Democrats: 35 percent said they sympathized more with the Palestinians — nearly double the 19 percent who sympathize more with Israel.

## Reason to worry?

The worriers see this as another crack in the bipartisan support that Israel has long enjoyed in the United States.

“The numbers are worrying for anyone like me that cares about the U.S.-Israel relationship,” Den-

nis Ross, a former American peace negotiator for presidents of both parties, wrote in an email to JTA. “Israel has been and must remain not a Democratic or Republican issue but an American issue. That is a challenge now, especially with the attitudes of the progressive side of the Democratic Party, the alienation of the majority of the Jewish community from the Trump administration, and the administration’s strong symbolic support for Israel.”

The trend, according to one theory, was exacerbated by eight years of feuding between President Barack Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, which, according to whom you ask, showed either that Democrats couldn’t be trusted on Israel or that Netanyahu stumbled in associating Israel so closely with the Republican side.

It continues with the current love fest between Netanyahu and President Donald Trump, who just had a typically warm meeting at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

A solidly right-wing government in Jerusalem, another theory goes, makes it harder for liberal Democrats to warm up to a country they once solidly supported.

## Political polarization

With an increasingly diverse coalition underpinning the Democrats’ base, Israel needs to make its case as a liberal and open society, said Jason Isaacson, the American Jewish Committee’s associate executive director for policy. That has become harder, he said, as the peace process has frozen and the government in Israel has shifted further to the right.

“It’s a reminder that it’s essential for Israel and friends of Israel to make the case for Israel’s openness and liberalism and devotion to justice and yearning for peace,” Isaacson said. “I recognize that the messages of a government [in Israel] can have an effect on how that message takes hold on particular constituencies in the United States.”

Republican Jewish activists, meanwhile, are saying the poll proves what they’ve long asserted: that Republicans are the only party that’s truly pro-Israel. Republicans have celebrated Trump’s opposition to the Iran nuclear agreement — brokered by Obama and reviled by Netanyahu — as well as his recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. Trump and Vice President Mike Pence both enjoyed the warmest of welcomes on their trips to Israel.

“We saw the Democrats’ views on Israel implemented by the Obama administration, which put ‘daylight’ between the U.S. and our chief ally, Israel, while pursuing a disastrous Middle East policy,” Republican Jewish Coalition President Matt Brooks said in a statement.

Previous administrations also sought to be “honest brokers” in the Middle East, and Democrats like to argue that under Obama the level of U.S. funding and cooperation provided to Israel was unprecedented. But Republicans assert that the Iran deal was a disaster for Israel and that Obama’s pressure on Netanyahu was relentless, culminating in his decision, in the last days of his presidency, to allow the U.N. Security Council to adopt a resolution condemning Israeli settlement construction.

But other experts say shifting sympathies in the conflict are a symptom of political polarization, not of Democratic opposition to

Israel. Democrats “are increasingly conflating their feelings about Israel with their feelings about Trump, associating Israel with the American president,” wrote Michael Kaplow, the policy director of the Israel Policy Forum, in the *Forward*.

Trump has cast himself as vociferously pro-Israel, so for some Democrats, coldness toward Israel is one more way to protest a president whose policies they abhor, says Rabbi Jack Moline, former president of the National Jewish Democratic Council.

Pew’s polling has shown increasing polarization overall between Americans of the two parties. A December poll found 86 percent of Americans feel there is strong or very strong conflict between Republicans and Democrats, and the share of Democrats and Republicans who have very unfavorable opinions of the other party has doubled since the 1990s.

“I think this is not a sudden surge of sympathy for Palestinians,” Rabbi Moline said. “I think that’s always been there. I don’t think it’s an abandonment of Israel by anybody. I think that what this is is one of the pieces of fallout from the very ugly divisiveness on all matters in this country.”

Recent polls show a vast majority of Americans do support Israel. A February 2017 Gallup poll showed 71 percent of Americans view Israel favorably, a number that has stayed relatively constant for the past 15 years. The differences in the Gallup poll among Republicans (81 percent), Independents (70) and Democrats (61) aren’t as dramatic as the Pew poll.

## Bipartisanship in Congress

Resolutions and legislation favoring Israel routinely pass Congress with little to no opposition. A vote recognizing Jerusalem as Israel’s undivided capital passed the Senate 90-0, months before Trump issued his own recognition. Among the 18 states that have passed laws against the boycott Israel movement, half are blue states, half are red.

“There remains broad, bipartisan support in Congress for the US-Israel relationship, because strengthening that relationship serves American interests,” Marshall Wittman, the spokesman for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, wrote JTA in an email. “That support is demonstrated regularly in consistent, bipartisan votes on pro-Israel initiatives.”

Wittman’s predecessor, Josh Block, told JTA support for Israel remains robust among Democrats, and anti-Israel feeling represents a group that is still on the party’s extreme. He noted numbers from the same Pew poll showing support for Israel is still high across ethnic groups and religious denominations.

“There’s been a legitimate effort of people on the far fringe of the Democratic party ... to poison and undermine the legitimacy of Jewish pride and support for Israel,” said Block, now CEO of The Israel Project. “The reality is the vast majority of Americans and the vast majority of Democrats identify Israel as one of our closest allies in the world. They see Israel as a free, open, democratic society.”

## Pew’s question questioned

Polls showing broad support for Israel led some observers to criticize the way Pew framed the question.

“I don’t think this poll tells you anything useful about American support for Israel,” said Tamara

Cofman Wittes, a senior fellow in the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution. She said the poll question encourages respondents to make a binary choice whether they sympathize with the Israelis or the Palestinians.

“You can also answer ‘both’ or ‘neither’ but the push in such a construction is toward dichotomous answers,” she tweeted. “Which side are you on? [Thus] the responses suggest greater polarization than perhaps exists.”

Wittes also noted that the question measures attitudes toward the conflict, not towards Israel.

She preferred a November 2017 poll conducted by the University of Maryland, which asked respondents to weigh in on government policy and offered the explicit option of favoring neither the Palestinians nor the Israelis. The Maryland poll found that 59 percent of Americans don’t want the government to favor either Israelis or Palestinians. Broken down by party, 77 percent of Democrats said Trump should lean toward neither side in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, compared to 38 percent of Republicans. Only 9 percent of Democrats wanted Trump to lean toward the Palestinians.

## Israeli policies to blame?

Still, there are unmistakable signs that there are more Democrats willing to criticize Israel, especially its current government, than Republicans. In both 2012 and 2016, Democrats faced pressure from pro-Palestinian delegates to alter their party platform’s planks on Israel. In 2012, boilerplate references to Jerusalem as Israel’s capital were dropped from the platform but later restored. And in 2016, the party altered its platform to reflect Palestinian aspirations but rejected language calling for Israel to end its occupation of the West Bank and settlement activity.

James Zogby, who was the chair of the Democratic National Committee’s Resolutions Committee, was among those who wanted to add language about Israel’s occupation to the 2016 party platform.

Zogby, the founder of the Arab American Institute, told JTA that the Pew results show that Democrats are growing tired of Israeli actions in the West Bank and resent the mutual admiration between Trump and Netanyahu. Zogby also says Democrats are upset about Netanyahu’s past efforts to undermine Obama’s Iran nuclear deal — including a 2015 speech to Congress he delivered at the invitation of its Republican opponents.

“This is largely the result of really bad Israeli policy, and an embrace by a president who also has a really negative agenda,” he said.

Wittes and others also noted that this poll isn’t good news for Republican supporters of Israel, either. Pro-Israel activists have long emphasized that defending Israel is a bipartisan priority. If that support does erode among Democrats, it could hurt Israel even if Republicans continue to support the Jewish state.

“Every member of Congress who supports Israel is a good thing,” said Jennifer Rubin, a columnist for the *Washington Post* who self-identifies as center-right and has been very critical of Trump. “My conclusion is that [support for Israel] has become way too imbalanced. The challenge is to remove this from the partisan dynamic that is so fierce right now.”

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## The puck stopped here

Members of the Tampa Bay Lightning organization including players conducted a hockey clinic for students at Hillel Academy during a clinic last month. While there was no ice, the students in third through eighth grade learned hockey techniques and played in scrimmages on Hillel's basketball court. Following the clinic, players and students enjoyed lunch together at the school.

Students getting instructions (above) and playing the game (below.)



## Sarasota group seeks artisans for Jewish cultural celebration

The Fogartyville Community Media and Arts Center will hold a showcase of Jewish culture March 3 - April 13.

"Celebrating Jewish Culture" seeks to showcase Judaic culture and diversity through Jewish artistic expression as well as use the arts to talk about contemporary issues impacting American Jews. The festival will include a series of events, including speakers, food, and music.

The art center is looking for visual arts, craft pieces, poetic, written, or spoken word pieces and performance presentations (including music and dance) that speak about and/or lead to a deeper appreciation of Jewish culture.

To have work considered for inclusion, send jpgs, excerpts or clips of pieces with a short description of your submission, an artist resume and a bio to FogartyvilleArt@gmail.com.

Deadline for submission is Feb. 16. For more information, contact Arlene Sweeting at peacenter@gmail.com or 941-545-5635

The arts center is also looking for Jewish food and craft vendors to participate.

The Fogartyville Community Media and Arts Center is located at 525 Kumquat Court, Sarasota.

The Fogartyville Community Media and Arts Center is a project of the Peace Education and Action Center in the Arts/Rosemary District of Sarasota.

## Correction

Incorrect and incomplete information supplied by the Florida Holocaust Museum about Mary Wygodski was contained in a Jan. 12 story in the *Jewish Press*. During Nazi occupation, the Vilna, Poland, ghetto was liquidated in 1943 and Wygodski was separated from her parents and siblings, never to see them again. The Stutthof concentration camp she spent some time in was in East Prussia. Upon liberation, she was placed in a displaced persons camp in Charleroi, Belgium, and from there she immigrated to Israel.

## Letter to the Editor

The Jewish Press welcomes Letters to the Editor. Letters are published on a space available basis with the Jewish Press reserving the right to edit or reject letters for clarity, brevity, legalities or taste. Letters must be signed and bear the writer's address and telephone number (which will not be published). The writer's name will be withheld on request.

### Advice to Israel: Slow down the Trump name train

Dear Editor:

The Israeli Minister of Transportation, Yisrael Katz, intends to honor President Trump for recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel by naming a new train station after him in the Old City that would allow thousands of tourists directly into the Jewish Quarter a few hundred yards from the Western Wall.

I would recommend that he wait until the clouds over the Trump administration and President Trump involving the Special Counsel and the women who are suing him for harassment are cleared before he takes a step that could be em-

barrassing in the future. Over the last year the U.S. has experienced remorse over statues that were established during the Jim Crow period because they celebrated a war fought over slavery and did not comport with our values. President Trump used those episodes to further divide the country while being unsympathetic to that period of history.

Recognizing Jerusalem has been cheered by many and for good reason, but it also should be seen as what it really is: a negotiating chip so that the president can claim a "win" and while he is at it, satisfy the large Evangelical portion of his so-called base by playing up his support for Israel. What is missing is sincere interest in real Jews. The President had an opportunity to distinguish himself by standing up for Jewish values by condemning the events in Charlottesville, but he did not and he willingly accepts the support from groups of neo-Nazis as represented by their response to President Trump's characterization of immigrants and refugees from s—hole countries. According to the Daily Stormer website his remarks were seen as support for their alt-right/anti Semitic ideology.

Robert Berman  
St. Petersburg



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## At 100, Mildred Plotnick stays on track

By BRUCE LOWITT  
Jewish Press

Mildred Plotnick has come a long way from admiring horses on the stage of her father's theater outside Philadelphia to betting on them.

Since moving to Palm Harbor in 2003, Mildred has spent at least one day a week at Tampa Bay Downs in Oldsmar and on Jan. 20 she and five generations of Plotnicks celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday there. The family surprised her with the naming of the seventh race in her honor.

"I come as often as I can," she said, even when there's no live racing. There's always simulcasting of races at more than a dozen tracks from Aqueduct to Santa Anita.

Mildred is an inveterate, albeit judicious, bettor. The \$2 ticket is her style, so wins and losses are minimal – although she says she once collected \$1,200 on a \$2 daily double wager.

Born on Jan. 21, 1918, Mildred was introduced to horse racing by her late husband Samuel. "Samuel took me to my first race when I was 21, when we were first married," said Mildred. Samuel, who died 23 years ago, was a painting contractor whose biggest job was

painting the Ben Franklin Bridge that opened in 1926. She was his bookkeeper prior to their marriage.

That first horse race she and Samuel attended was at Havre de Grace in Maryland; blue laws outlawed thoroughbred racing in Pennsylvania until 1959. When Keystone Racetrack in Philadelphia opened in 1974, they became regulars there.

Fast horses begat fast cars. Mildred owned Corvettes in the 1950s and '60s and drove in sports car rallies. "I still have my (driver's) license," she said, "but I don't drive anymore."

While it was Samuel who introduced his wife to horse racing, Mildred's enthusiasm for equines began far earlier.

"My father owned the Ardmore Theater on West Lancaster Avenue," she said. It opened in 1922 and showed silent films, with animal acts, including horses, on stage between the movies. But the combination of talking pictures and the depression forced him to sell the theater and he went into the furniture business in southwest Philly. They kept a horse behind the house to pull the delivery wagon and Mildred would ride it. "I had a lot of fun," she said.

She's still having fun, win or lose. At



Mildred Plotnick at the horse track



Tampa Bay Downs' racing form printed birthday wishes to Mildred.

her 100th birthday celebration at Tampa Bay Downs, Mildred made her usual \$2 bet, on the No. 7 horse in the seventh race. It finished out of the money.

## BACA concert set for Feb. 11

An eclectic concert of liturgical, popular, Broadway and Hollywood music will be presented by the Tampa Bay Area Cantorial Association on Sunday, Feb. 11 at 3 p.m. at Congregation Beth Am in Tampa.

Participants in the 15<sup>th</sup> annual concert include Riselle Bain (Temple Israel of Highlands County, Sebring), Laura Berkson (Temple B'nai Israel, Clearwater), Rick Berlin (Temple Beth El of North Port), Deborrah Cannizzaro (Congregation Schaarai Zedek), Tanya Greenblatt (Temple Beth Orr, Coral Springs), Joy Katzen-Guthrie (Congregation Beth Am, Tampa), Andres Kornworcel (Congregation Rodeph Sholom, Tampa), Diane Becker Krasnick (Cantor Emerita, Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas), Beth Schlossberg (Congregation Kol Ami, Tampa), Jonathan Schultz (Congregation B'nai Israel, St. Petersburg), Jodi Sered-Lever (Congregation Mevor Shalom, Tampa), Vikki Silverman (Cantor Emerita, Congregation Beth Am of Tampa), Marci Vitkus (Jewish Congregation of Venice), with pianist Tara Richards Swartzbaugh (University of Tampa).

Tickets are available at the door for a suggested donation of \$18 each. All donations are gratefully accepted and no one will be turned away. Beth Am is located at 2030 W. Fletcher Ave., Tampa. Doors open at 2:15 p.m. For more information Contact Admin@BethAmTampa.org or call (813) 968- 8511.



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(L-R): Event committee members Lynda Lind-Fontana, Linda Reimer, Deanna Susskind and Barbara Baughman, Menorah Manor Guild President.



Standing: (L-R) Susan Goldstein and Rob Goldstein, Menorah Manor Chief Executive Officer, Sitting: (L-R) Fagl Oxman and Marilyn Benjamin, Menorah Manor Guild members

The Menorah Manor Guild is the volunteer arm of Menorah Manor, with the purpose of enriching the lives of Menorah Manor's residents through service, special projects, and the funding of special equipment and programs. For more information about joining the Guild, please contact Bonnie Berman, director of volunteer services, at volunteers@menorahmanor.org.