

Israeli tech companies to show off products at Tampa event

Eight startup companies from Israel and two speakers from Israeli tech superstars, Waze and Wix, will be featured at the second annual Innovation Fusion event on Wednesday, June 13 at the Bryan Glazer Family JCC in Tampa.

The event is being put on by the Florida-Israel Business Accelerator

(FIBA), based at the JCC, and will showcase how FIBA is enabling partnerships and collaboration between Israeli tech companies and local organizations with the goal of bringing in hi-tech jobs and growing the Tampa Bay economy.

The Israeli companies presenting at

TECH SHOW continued on PAGE 15



Executives Aron Di Castro of WAZE, left, and Danny Brigid of Wix will be guest speakers at Innovation Fusion.

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16 PAGES



Photo by Yonatan Sindel/Flash90

People watching President Donald Trump speak via video at the opening ceremony of the U.S. embassy in Jerusalem on May 14. Some in the crowd wore Trump's signature red baseball cap commemorating the move.

At US Embassy dedication, a day for marking history and praising Trump

By SAM SOKOL
JTA news service

JERUSALEM – Israeli leaders and citizens responded with euphoria as the Trump administration moved the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem on Monday, May 14, designating a pre-existing consular building as the official U.S. diplomatic mission to the Jewish State.

Hundreds of revelers sat on bleachers outside the new embassy in Jerusalem's Arnona neighborhood as an honor guard of U.S.

Marines paraded the national colors and Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin and First Daughter Ivanka Trump unveiled the building's seal carved into an outer wall.

The crowd, which included both chief rabbis, the Israel Defense Forces chief of staff, the mayor of Jerusalem and the head of the Jewish Agency, stood and applauded for at least half a minute after U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman welcomed them, in a booming voice, "to the dedication

EMBASSY continued on PAGE 11

Birthright alum invited to beach reunion June 10



Jonathan Bowman rides a camel in the Negev desert during his Birthright trip in 2006.

By BOB FRYER
Jewish Press

Anyone in the Tampa Bay area who has ever been on a Taglit-Birthright trip since the program that sends young adults to Israel began in 1999 is invited to a reunion on the beach in Treasure Island on Sunday, June 10.

The free Birthright Beach Bash begins at 5:30 p.m. and will end at sunset. The event is sponsored by the Tampa JCCs and Federation and the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties.

At the reunion, Birthright alumni will be transported back to the sights and sounds of Israel, a time for reconnecting with Birthright friends, sharing stories,

BIRTHRIGHT continued on PAGE 10



Compiled from news wires

Canadian government to apologize for turning away Jewish refugees in 1939

Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said the Canadian government will formally apologize for turning away a ship full of Jewish refugees who had fled Nazi Germany.

"When Canada denied asylum to the 907 German Jews on board the *MS St. Louis*, we failed not only those passengers, but also their descendants and community," Trudeau said in a statement.

In May 1939, the ship set sail from Hamburg, Germany. Even though they had Cuba landing certificates, Cuban authorities refused to let them disembark. The ship then headed toward the United States, but was denied entry there, too. The ship ultimately returned to Europe and most of the passengers ended up back in the hands of the Nazis. About a quarter of those on board died in the Holocaust.

"An apology in the House of Commons will not rewrite this shameful chapter of our history," Trudeau said. "It will not bring back those who perished or repair the lives shattered by tragedy. But it is our collective responsibility to acknowledge this difficult truth, learn from this story, and continue to fight against anti-Semitism every day, as we give meaning to the solemn vow: 'Never again.' I look forward to offering this apology on the floor of the House."

The U.S. officially apologized in 2012.

In California, campaign robocall refers to Dianne Feinstein as 'traitorous' Jew

A robocall against California Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein used anti-Semitic slurs and urged listeners to support the campaign of her neo-Nazi challenger.

Patrick Little, who is running as a Republican, is polling at 18 percent behind Feinstein, a Democrat who has served more than four terms in the Senate. Feinstein is polling at 39 percent in the race, which will pit the top two vote-getters in the June 5 primary against each other in the general election in November. Mainstream Republicans have not put up a serious challenge in what is considered a safe seat for a Democrat.

"To rid America of the traitorous Jews like Dianne Feinstein, vote for Patrick Little for U.S. Senator for California," the 90-second call said. "He's a patriot, a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, and he's vowed to end Jewish control over America, starting with Diane Feinstein, an Israeli citizen pretending to be an American while she takes our money for her real country, Israel, and kills our children for it, too."

The call continues: "He's going to get rid of all the nation-wrecking Jews from our country."

Little told the *San Francisco Chronicle* that he was not aware of the existence of the call. He did not renounce its message, however, telling the newspaper: "Show me the lie, and I will consider renouncing it."

Did Israel's action on Gaza border actually save lives?

By BEN SALES
JTA news service

What should an army do when tens of thousands of protesters mass on its border?

When that happened on Gaza's border with Israel on Monday, May 14, Israeli soldiers opened fire on protesters who were storming the border fence, killing 60 and wounding more than a thousand.

Britain, France, Canada and other countries have accused Israel of using excessive force in Gaza, though the U.S., Australia and other countries have blamed Hamas for the bloodshed.

But in real time, did the Israel Defense Forces conduct itself appropriately? Could it have defended its border with less lethal force?

GAZA BORDER continued on PAGE 8



Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images

Palestinians protest at the border fence with Israel in Gaza City on May 14.

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Jewish Press Online
Ticket Contest
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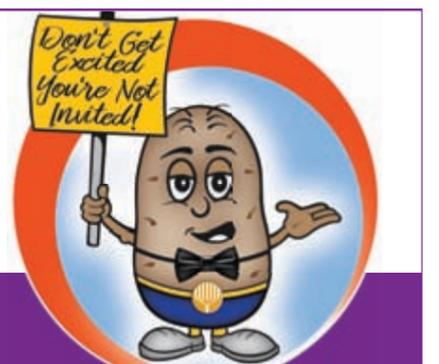
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- May 29. St. Pete Happy Hour with YAD
- June 10. Birthright Beach Bash Alum Reunion
- June 13. Seminole Happy Hour with YAD
- June 22. YAD Shabbat Dinner
- July 17. Happy Hour at Jimmy B's with YAD

Young Adult Division (YAD) Events: See facebook.com/pinellasyad for full details

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Monday, June 4 - Friday, June 22
SESSION 2:
Monday, June 25 - Friday, July 13
SESSION 3:
Monday, July 16 - Friday, August 3

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PERSPECTIVE

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



'Bad Jews,' Part 1

"Oh, like the Jews need more money."

It was a surprising statement to hear said so boldly at the Citrus Park Walmart some 10 or so years back. The comment was prompted by one of the Tampa JCC staff members submitting the boilerplate form the company used at the time that promised any legitimate nonprofit a \$100 gift card. After the shift supervisor's unsolicited verbal surprise, the gift card was issued (and it went to purchase a couple oversized coolers for Camp J field trips). The remark was irksome at best.

In our own homes and in our close circles, however, there's a level of comfort with poking fun using terrible stereotypes. Certainly it varies according to the family or the relationship (think of how siblings might banter versus the more respectful dialogue between kids and grandparents), but I'd argue that most of us have engaged in that quiet, in-group mockery of ourselves. We call attention to what we're unfortunately known and loathed for, as if this sarcastic self-deprecation (or at least degrading humor) offers a bit of power against those that use it in hate.

Cultural reclamation – the process in which a culture takes back a term or artifact that was previously used to disparage – often comes through the common-place use of language that an out-group intended (or still intends) as ethnophaulism, or as an ethnic slur. A quick gander of Wikipedia's list of ethnic slurs is mind-bogglingly long and perplexing, with 16 related to Jews (3 of which are terms Jews use for non-Jews). Of additional note, an ethnic slur differs from a racial epithet in that the latter simply uses a commonplace word ("dirty," "filthy," and so forth) together with the base ethnic term ("Jew," "Russian," "Immigrant," and on).

When my husband, Shane, and I bought our home a few years ago, I was tickled that it had what I termed the "Kosher Kitchen Starter Kit:" two ovens, both with the "Shabbat" feature that would override the automatic off setting and allow the oven to remain on the warm setting for up to 24 hours. Our cabinetry was gloriously abundant, for separating dishes (if we ate meat). Unfortunately, that was the end of the accoutrements, as the concrete counters are impossible to *kasher* (porous, cracked surfaces must be covered). Yet as vegetarians, we had no need for the second oven; a single dishwasher and fridge would suffice, and we could work around the counters.

"We're already keeping kosher!" I declared, as if the fancy oven was the only thing holding us back before.

"Being vegetarian doesn't make us kosher. We're still bad Jews." Shane said simply.

A deep and meaningful discussion ensued about intentionality and observance, and the off-hand "bad Jews" remark wasn't even noted at the time. This in-home ethnophaulism fit in just as much as when a friend coyly confesses she's a bad Jew as she enjoys shrimp cocktail, or when you see a fellow temple member out on the town on a Friday night who smirks a similar comment in your direction.

Slur? Derogatory? Racist? Offensive? Maybe, maybe not. When used among friends and family, it assuredly doesn't convey the worry, the off-balance reaction, the sense of potential hate or disrespect that can be experienced when someone outside our close group does the same.

When American Stage announced their season line-up for the 2017-18 season, so timely named "We the People" and boldly declaring the intent to embark on a storytelling journey like no other, I was excited to see another year of a mix of well-known and lesser-known pieces: *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, and *It's a Wonderful Life Radio Show* counterbalanced *The Royale* and *Marjorie Prime*. And there, wrapping up the season, was a show called *Bad Jews*.

I admit, I had a bit of a knee-jerk reaction. I had a wash of righteous indignation – who is entitled to tell the story of our people, especially in a "bad" context? Was this a publicity stunt on the theater's part? Is this the beginning of the end as we normalize racial epithets in such a public space? If you've read my column before, you know that I'm particularly incensed by the role that everyday language plays in shaping one's world view.

There had to be more to the story than this unfortunate title. In looking beneath these questions, I found that the playwright, Joshua Harmon, is a nice Jewish boy who found inspiration to write the play after attending a Yom HaShoah service. At the service, he realized that the invocation of "Never Forget" was in the hands of today's young Jews, and was potentially at risk. He set out to develop an artistic piece drawing from his own family experience that would contemplate the generational aspects of Jewish family life, with particular story structure surrounding intentionality, observance, remembrance, and what it means to be a "good" or a "bad" Jew – and who gets to make that determination in the first place.

Wow.

Admittedly, I still struggle with the title of the play, but after my initial inquiry, I found myself holding lightly the idea that this play may have more substance than I originally thought. And earlier this month, when the opportunity to sit down with Stephanie Gularte, American Stage's artistic director (and the lead professional who brought the show into this season's line-up), I jumped at the chance.

In the next edition of the *Jewish Press*, I'll share the follow-up to this column, including my sit-down with Jewish Press co-owner Karen Dawkins and Gularte, my impressions of the script, and perspectives from Amy Resnick, the show's director.

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

Israeli 'Friendship Caravan' to display talents at 2 shows

By BOB FRYER
Jewish Press

Much like in the United States, they have Scouts in Israel, and next month a group (they call it a Caravan) of them will make two visits in Pinellas County.

Unlike most American Scout groups, the Tzofim Friendship Caravan will offer performances akin to a variety show as they share their musical, singing and dancing talents and sprinkle in stories about life in Israel.

Their first visit in Pinellas this year will be at Congregation B'nai Israel in St. Petersburg where they will entertain folks of all ages on Thursday, June 14 at 5:30 p.m. The public is invited to this free event and light refreshments will be served. The synagogue is located at 300 Fifth St. N. in St. Petersburg.

On Friday, June 15 at 2 p.m. the caravan will perform for the Jewish Community Camp housed at Temple B'nai Israel, 1685 S. Belcher Road, Clearwater. This free event is also open to the public as well as to kids in the summer camp sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties.

There are different scout groups in Israel that send caravans abroad, all part of a mission to serve as goodwill ambassadors from Israel, making friendships and building bonds between Americans and Israelis. The group that has been making frequent summer visits to this area is the Tzofim organization. Founded in 1919, it was the first Zionist youth movement in pre-state Israel and today it is the largest scout group in Israel with 80,000 active members and 180 chapters/troops in various cities, towns, moshavim and kibbutzim.

Just like American scouts, the Israeli scouts start young – around age 10 – and participate in regular meetings, attending camps and taking on projects to help others while earning badges. But when the Israeli Scouts, reach age 16 or 17, select ones are chosen to be members of the Caravan based on their maturity, fluency in English, and of course their talent in the performing arts. After several rounds of competitive auditions and interviews, the scouts spend a year training and rehearsing for their exciting summer in North America.

Traditionally each caravan has 10 teen members and two counselors in their 20s. This year one teen is not able to make this trip, but among those coming, all are quite notable.



The Israeli Scout Caravan

Each teen enjoys working with younger scouts in their homeland, mentoring them and sharing a positive attitude. Most of those coming here have older brothers or sisters serving in Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and several have apparently inherited their love for music, song or acting from their parents. One girl, Shai, is the daughter of the CEO of SodaStream International whose bio also notes that her dad has been a longtime cantor at a synagogue in Cincinnati, where Shai and her singer/songwriter mom got to join him on the bima for the High Holidays.

Shai is not the only one who has already visited the United States. Sharon visited the Grand Canyon and Universal Studios on a trip to America and a boy, Amir, lived in California for three years when he was younger and his dad got transferred to a job there.

All the caravan members said they are eager to share their talents, stories, culture and values with Americans in hopes of forming strong bonds.

For second year, Clearwater Chabad wins big at Give Day

For the second year in a row Chabad of Clearwater was the winner of the Give Day Tampa Bay contest. Chabad once again received the highest number of unique donors in the small nonprofits category.

Give Day Tampa Bay is a 24-hour online giving event sponsored by the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay to promote charitable giving to local nonprofits.

This year's contest was held on Tuesday May 1 and featured more than 400 non-profit organizations from across the Tampa Bay region.

When the clock on the contest ran out at midnight on Wednesday, Chabad of Clearwater had raised more than \$12,000 from 415 donors. Additionally, Chabad won \$5,000 in prize money including \$2,000 for being first in the small nonprofits category, \$2,000 for winning the power hour lunch prize and a \$1,000 Matching Grant Prize.

The 415 unique donors for Chabad of Clearwater was the second highest total of donors from all the non profits competing in Give Day.

"Chabad is extremely grateful to each and every one of our donors for their generosity and for carrying us to this amazing win. We also extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay for all their hard work and effort in putting this yearly contest together" Rabbi Levi Hodakov of Chabad of Clearwater said.

Like last year, the money raised, as well as the additional prize money, goes to Chabad's \$1.5 million building fund.

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A moment to save the world

By **RABBI ALTER KORF**
Chabad Center of St. Petersburg

You can feel it in the air....The school year is almost done. Homework, tests, graduations and parties will be over soon. As the school year winds down, it's a great time for reflection on the past year.

This past year has been particularly difficult for students and their parents, shaken by the terrible events at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. It's frightening to know that since the beginning of 2018, there have been a staggering 20 school shootings, and they have been steadily increasing year after year.

We are all asking the same question: What can we do to prevent this in the future?

Of course, many important and necessary measures are being discussed: To upgrade school security and tighten our gun laws making it more difficult for mentally disturbed people to access weapons. Yet, we are looking for more. We understand that there are less obvious – but more integral – issues that are leading kids to believe that murder is an option.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe spoke in 1983 about the solution to this very problem. He stressed the importance of a proper education and explained that it's not enough to study what is written in this textbook, or in another book – to become an encyclopedia of various tidbits of information. We need to focus on the most important goal of education: values, character development, and cultivating a moral conscience in our future.

The only healthy and true foundation for a child's education is to know that G-d Himself created this world, and He is aware of and directs everything that occurs in this world. And He wants this world to be governed by righteousness, morality, kindness and justice – light, purity, and holiness; for it to be obvious that G-d dwells here.

From the youngest age, a child must be raised to begin each day by acknowledging G-d, the Supreme Being above him, Who is above and beyond every human being, Who is also a personal G-d to each individual. He is the "Eye that sees and Ear that hears" everything that the child does.

He strongly encouraged that each and every school begin the day with "A moment of silence." It must be the start of the day, when the children are fresh and it will guide the entire day. This moment is about giving our children the space and structure in which they can turn inwards from all the noise of life and discover

RABBINICALLY SPEAKING

themselves. This is a minute in which they could connect to a Higher Power, and commit – in their own words – to having a higher day.

If a child wants to know exactly what to think about, he should ask his father and mother, and this is a time parents can share their religious views with their child. Beyond the benefit to the children, this will also awaken fathers and mothers in this country to become aware of their vital role and their principal responsibility – to raise upright, good children.

It's true, they may use the time to say a prayer, but only if they choose to because they personally feel that it gives them strength. If instead they use the minute to think about a classmate they know could use help, or realize the impact of a comment they just made, that's just as good – maybe better. And if they just want to breathe deeply and mentally calibrate themselves for the day ahead, that's also fine.

This is not a new idea. It's already being successfully done in an impoverished corner of Brooklyn at P.S. 191, the Paul Robeson School. This is where 99 percent of its roughly 300 students in prekindergarten through fifth grade qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. Some live at the homeless shelter next door. (<https://forward.com/news/124918/evangelist-for-silence-promotes-a-quiet-gift>).

It is being done at the Arturo A. Schomburg Satellite Academy in the Bronx, which is a transfer school designed to re-engage students who have dropped out or fallen behind. (www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/08/mindfulness-education-schools-meditation/402469)

Both schools have seen "tremendous changes behavior-wise and in terms of punctuality." They describe its academic impact, and how "it focuses the children who made their resolutions for the day and are ready to learn, and get right to work."

Today, we need a paradigm shift in educating our future leaders. There are many things we can do to give them these values and ideals. A Moment of Silence each day is a powerful step we can take.

The critical component here is to teach our children to be a *mensch* not only because it's the law, or because it's socially acceptable, but because there is something called right and wrong, and that your actions matter. Today's kids will understand. We just need to tell them.

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



Congregations

Cong. B'nai Israel St. Petersburg

Rabbi's final Shabbat: Celebrate Shabbat one last time with **Rabbi Jacob Luski** on the bima on June 2 at 9 a.m.

Pride Shabbat: Show your colors and join in a welcoming Shabbat service on Friday, June 23 at 6:30 p.m. as congregants embrace all traditions and members of the community. Guest speaker will be **Dr. Elizabeth Unruh**, Hofstra University professor emerita of Culture, Language, and Cognition. A festive cocktail oneg will follow the service.

Temple Beth-El St. Petersburg

SAGE meeting on tap: The monthly meeting of the SAGE (Seniors for Arts, Growth and Education) group will be held on Monday, June 18 at 11 a.m. There will be a discussion on "Jewish Responses to Issues that Matter," led by **Cantor Pamela Siskin**, then lunch. At 12:30 p.m. there will be a discussion on the future of the group. The lunch is free but reservations are required by Thursday, June 14.

To RSVP, for more information, or for those who may want to help with programming, contact Siskin at psiskin@gmail.com or call (727) 851-9134. For those who need transportation, call **Kendra Clark** in the temple office at (727) 347-6136.

Jewish genealogy: A three-part course on Jewish genealogy concludes on June 15 at 6 p.m. in the BEEFY lounge. Learn about genealogy tools and techniques and listen as participants "show and tell." Contact **Bill Israel** for any questions at wisrael1@tampabay.rr.com.

Chabad of St. Petersburg

Women's Book Club: Get your weekly social and spiritual boost over a round-table discussion led by **Chaya Korf** on Tuesdays, May 29 and June 5 and 19 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Delve into the book for this year, *Towards a Meaningful Life*, by Simon Jacobson. The group will share strategies, tips and suggestions for discovering where your true meaning lies and making it a part of your daily life. Refreshments will be served. There is no charge and walk-ins are welcome. RSVP to Chaya@ChabadSP.com.

Lunch and Learn: Women are invited to share an hour of camaraderie, inspiration and a free lunch at a Lunch and Learn session on Tuesday, June 12 at noon. There is no charge for the event. RSVP's are appreciated but not necessary.

To RSVP: Chaya@ChabadSP.com or call (727) 344-4900.

Cong. Beth Shalom Clearwater

Kabbalat Shabbat on the beach: Join **Rabbis David Weizman and Danielle Uppin** on Sand Key beach to welcome the Sabbath on Friday, June 1 at 6 p.m. Park at the north end of the parking lot and look for two tents on the beach. Contact the CBS office for more information at (727) 531-1418.

Shabbat Candle Lighting Times

May 25 • 8:00 pm
June 1 • 8:04 pm
June 8 • 8:07 pm
June 15 • 8:10 pm
June 22 • 8:11 pm



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 at (727) 531-1418 to confirm dates of the classes.

Lox & Learn: Led by Rabbi 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.

Temple B'nai Israel Clearwater

Game night: The Brotherhood is hosting a relaxing evening of playing cards with the guys on Monday, June 11 at 6:30 p.m. in the Makom.

Havdalah on the Beach: Join **Rabbi Daniel Treiser and Cantorial Soloist Laura Berkson** for a Havdalah service on Saturday, July 21 at 6 p.m. at Sand Key Park.

Chabad of Clearwater

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

Temple Ahavat Shalom Palm Harbor

Book Club: Join in a discussion about *Ten Years Gone*, by Jonathan Dunsky, on Sunday, June 3 at 10:30 a.m.

Young Israel Chabad of Pinellas County

Shabbat learning: Attend a class titled "Ethics of our Fathers" at the Chabad center an hour before sunset on Shabbat afternoons. The class is free and no reservation is needed. For more information, call (727) 789-0408 or email info@yichabad.com.

Chabad of West Pasco

Classes with the rabbi: **Rabbi Yossi Eber** teaches weekly classes, alternating between Torah study and the Tanya, on Mondays at 7 p.m.

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

Tanya class: A new weekly Tanya class, *A Tale of Two Souls*, meets on Saturdays from

• CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Religious Directory

PINELLAS COUNTY Reform

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

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

Temple B'NAI ISRAEL — 1685 S. Belcher Road, Clearwater, 33764 • Rabbi Daniel Treiser • cantorial soloist, Laura Berkson • Services: Friday, 7:00 p.m. • Telephone: (727) 531-5829 • Website: www.TBIClearwater.org • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

Conservative

Congregation BETH SHALOM — 1325 S. Belcher Road, Clearwater 33764 • Rabbi David Weizman • Rabbi Danielle Uppin, 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.cbclearwater.org • Affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

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

Congregation B'NAI ISRAEL — 300 58th St. N., St. Petersburg 33710 • Rabbi Jacob Luski • Cantor Jonathan Schultz • Services: Friday 6:00 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m., Mon. - Fri. 7:45 a.m., Sun. 9 a.m.; evening minyan, 6:30 p.m. • Telephone: (727) 381-4900 • Website: www.cbistpete.org • Affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

Orthodox

CHABAD of CLEARWATER — 2280 Belleair Road, Clearwater, 33764 • Rabbi Levi Hodakov • Services: Call for information on Friday service times, Sunday, 9:30 a.m., men only • Telephone: (727) 265-2770 • Website: www.JewishClearwater.com • email: rabbi18@gmail.com.

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

CHABAD of PINELLAS COUNTY — 3696 Fisher Road, Palm Harbor, 34683 • Rabbi Pinchas Adler • Services: Friday, 6:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m • Sunday, 8:30 a.m. • Telephone: (727) 789-0408 • Website: Yichabad.com.

PASCO COUNTY Conservative

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

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

For Israelis, it's good to know, we've got a friend in you – the Jews of America

As I sit down to write my last article before heading back to Israel May 29, wondering which unfamiliar and important side of Israel I should show next, news and updates about the all too familiar, never-ending war situation in Israel comes up, and discussions fill up my Facebook news feed. So, I thought I should write about how it feels to be an Israeli living abroad during times like these and what worries me.

Ever since I came to the United States as a *shlich*a for the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties, I have had to explain on several occasions what it is that I'm actually doing here. Well, *shlich*a in Hebrew means emissary or messenger and there are people all around the world, just like me, who are fulfilling this role. We "bring the message" of Israel into the community and build the "living bridge" between Israeli Jews and diaspora Jews. This type of position is not new; it's been around since before Israel's Declaration of Independence and the main purpose is to make a strong (or stronger) connection between the local Jewish community and Israel.

Before becoming emissaries, we go through screening and tests to examine if we are qualified for the job. After that, we get selected by different Jewish organizations like Federations, JCCs and synagogues, according to our profile, and then we finally start the process of becoming an emissary.

About a month or so before hopping on the plane toward our new community, the Jewish Agency (the organization that is responsible for the program of emissaries) holds a seminar in which they give us tools and educate us for the position we are about to take. During the seminar we learn about the structure of Jewish communities, different Jewish and political organizations and also, we learn about the demography

Mor About Israel

Yael Mor

Israel Shlicha (Emissary)



of Jews around the world.

I remember in particular one lecture about Judaism in the United States. A guy whose job it was to sum it up for us, explained, among some other things, the relationship between American Jews and Israeli Jews:

To start off – most Jews of the world live either in Israel or in the United States, with approximately 6.5 million Jews in Israel (49 percent of the world's Jewish population) and 5.3 million in the U.S. (40.2 percent of world Jewry).

That does not mean American and Israeli Jews have the same perspectives. For example, according to a Pew study released in January 2017, when asked to describe in one word the biggest long-term problem facing Israel, 66 percent of American Jews cited a military or security issue, and only 1 percent mentioned economic difficulties. For Israeli Jews, 38 percent listed security as the top long-term problem, but 39 percent listed the economy as their chief long-term concern.

There are also differences about the two-state solution. Pew surveys have found Jews in Israel much less optimistic than Jews in the United States about the prospect for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Fewer than half of Israeli Jews (43 percent polled in 2014 and 2015 said they believe "a way can be found for Israel and an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully with each other," compared with a clear majority of American Jews (61 percent) polled on the same question in 2013.

To me, an ordinary Israeli girl, Jews can hold thoughts and criticism about Israel while still taking into

consideration more than one narrative.

Yes, we have a problem – a dangerous one – with terror, Iran and Gaza, but we also have a problem with injustice, our economy, and religion.

Yes, we want to have peace, but we also want to trust the other side so that once we achieve it, we won't start another war.

Yes, there are still people of rational thinking living inside this crazy place called Israel with complex opinions who care about their country and care about its sustainability.

It's hard to stand by yourself and it's hard to always have to defend our actions, sometimes when it seems like there's nothing to be defensive about.

From what I heard after talking to so many members of this Jewish community, there's love and there's deep connection to Israel as a home. But I know that there are plenty of American Jews who disconnect themselves from Judaism and, by doing so, from Israel.

Even though there is still plenty of support, I always feel like Israel could use more.

To me, you can critique Israel but still support it and see the whole picture, not just the one portrayed in the media.

To me, Israel will always be home for the Jewish people – but a home needs strong pillars to hold it from falling apart. In this case it is us – the Jewish people.

Living in Israel is not easy. People are constantly thinking about normal life struggles, like choosing a career, buying a house, rent, and school. On top of that there are worries about war, security and worldwide criticism, and that is a lot. The thought that we have a shoulder to lean on, a friend that can tell us when we are doing something wrong but at the same time supports us, is a big relief and means that we will have more power to struggle for a better existence.

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

Scholar, author, authority on Lubavitcher Rebbe works to speak in Clearwater on June 11

Rabbi Chaim Miller, a noted scholar, prolific author and lecturer, will speak at the Tabacnic Chabad Center in Clearwater on Monday, June 11 as part of a special event commemorating the 24th anniversary of the passing of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

Rabbi Miller is a leading international authority for interpretation of Torah and mysticism, specifically the Torah-related works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Rabbi Miller's works have been disseminated widely and earned acclaim among colleagues in the educational and religious communities in which the works circulate.

The event is being sponsored by both Chabad of Clearwater and Chabad of Pinellas County and is open to the public. A dessert reception will be held at 7 p.m. and the lecture will be at 7:30 p.m.

Born and raised in London, Rabbi Miller was fascinated by Jewish mystical teachings and took a year off from his university studies to learn at a

Lubavitch yeshiva. Five years later he was an ordained rabbi practicing in Leeds, running both a synagogue and a yeshiva, and writing in his spare time what would soon become the *Gutnick Chumash*.

In 2004 Rabbi Miller relocated to the United States. Since this time, he has completed two commentaries on the Torah, a commentary on the Haggadah, the book of Psalms, Megillat Esther and two volumes exploring *Rambam's Thirteen Principles of Faith*.

In 2014 he released *Turning Judaism Outwards*, a biography on the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Rabbi Miller's most recent work is *The Practical Tanya*, an adaptation of the *Tanya*, one of the most influential works of Jewish spiritual thought ever written, penned by Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi (1745-1812), the founder of the Chabad movement.

"It is a real honor for our community to host such an accomplished scholar who has done so much for Jewish life and learning," said Rabbi Levi Hodakov, co-director of Chabad of Clearwater.

Admission to the event is \$10 per person, \$18 per couple and \$180 for sponsors (which includes a free copy of the book.) RSVP online at: www.yichabad.com/rebbe or call (727) 265-2770. The Tabacnic Chabad Center is at 2280 Belleair Road in Clearwater.



Rabbi Chaim Miller

Congregations

• CONTINUED from PREVIOUS PAGE

10:15-11 a.m. The *Tanya* offers a roadmap for emotional healthy living. The in-depth study will ask such questions as: What is a soul? What is our purpose here on earth? The class is free.

Temple Beth David Spring Hill

Fashion show: Temple Beth David will host Shabby Chic Fashions on Sunday, June 3 at noon. Fashions will be shown by Southern Sisters Boutique specializing in gently used women's clothing. Also featured at this event will be door prizes, contests, and a Chinese auction.

will be provided by Panera Bread and entertainment will be by Nadine Joy. There is no cost for children age 3 and under. It is \$8 for those 3-10, and the cost is \$18 for all other guests \$18. RSVP

immediately. To RSVP and for more information, call Mickie at (352) 597-7393.

Torah study: Rabbi Paul Schreiber conducts Torah study classes on Mondays at 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Free for members and \$5 per class for non-members.

Chabad of Spring Hill

Torah studies: The community is invited to attend Torah study classes on Wednesdays from noon to 1 p.m. The classes, taught by Rabbi Chaim Lipszyc, are not sequential, so drop-ins are welcome. Brunch and coffee will be served. The first class is free then \$7 per class. For more information, call (352) 600-2779.

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Trump's faith-based initiative removes barrier to proselytizing – and some Jews are worried

By **RON KAMPEAS**
JTA news service

WASHINGTON – Flanked by clergy – including a priest, an imam and an Orthodox rabbi – President Donald Trump revived the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, a system that since its 2001 launch has delivered humanitarian assistance to Americans through religious organizations.

“Americans of faith have built the hospitals that care for our sick, the homes that tend to our elderly, and the charities that house the orphaned, and they minister – and they really do, they minister to the poor, and so beautifully and with such love,” Trump said in remarks earlier this month in the Rose Garden.

Buried in legal speak in the executive order, however, was a clause that left liberal-leaning Jewish groups aghast: Trump removed a section that required religious groups using government money to refer applicants to appropriate alternatives if the applicant did not want a dose of salvation with their relief.

Marc Stern, the counsel for the American Jewish Committee, said the now moot requirement protected the starving man from having to listen to a sermon before entering a soup kitchen for a meal.

“It’s always been thought that the provision of an alternative is an essential element of preserving religious liberty,” Stern said in an interview. “Dropping it is more than a step backward. Forced sermons remind us” – Jews – “of efforts at various times to make us listen to conversionary sermons.”

Orthodox groups welcomed the re-establishment of the faith-based initiative office and Trump’s expansion of its ambit to the entire executive branch. But groups that lobbied hard for the protection under past administrations were quick to object.

The order “puts America’s most vulnerable citizens at risk of choosing between accessing essential, taxpayer-funded social

services and being subject to unwanted proselytizing or religious activity,” the Anti-Defamation League said in a statement.

“Any White House faith-based initiative must uphold and enhance constitutional protections for the separation of church and state and protect the rights of all people, regardless of their faith,” the Reform movement’s Religious Action Center said.

Conservative religious groups were pleased by the executive order not only because it reopens an office that has been moribund since Trump assumed office in 2017, but because it expands the scope of the office.

The office steers funding to faith-based groups to carry out humanitarian interventions, including delivering food to the needy and administering addiction rehabilitation programs. It had been limited to White House initiatives. Now other government agencies will be expected to launch faith-based initiatives.

President George W. Bush launched the office in 2001 and Barack Obama – to the surprise of some – maintained it, but launched a lengthy review process to make sure it operated within constitutional church-state separations.

Conservative religious groups have chafed at the Obama-imposed restrictions, saying they inhibited productive partnerships with proven relief providers. Michelle Boorstein, *Washington Post* religion correspondent, tweeted a quote from an unnamed Trump administration official saying the idea behind this week’s order was to launch programs “without all of these arbitrary concerns as to what is appropriate.”

That outraged Jack Moline, a Conservative movement rabbi who is the president of the Interfaith Alliance, a liberal-leaning umbrella group.

“President Trump and his staff would do well to remember that we are a nation of laws, not prayers, and that there is nothing arbitrary in respecting the First Amend-



Photo by Mark Wilson/Getty Images
President Donald Trump, flanked by members of faith-based communities, signs a proclamation declaring a National Day of Prayer during an event in the Rose Garden at the White House.

ment,” he said in an emailed statement linking to Boorstein’s tweet.

In a Religion News Service column, Mark Silk, who heads the Leonard E. Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life at Trinity College in Connecticut, said, “Where Obama ensured religious freedom, Trump creates religious establishments.”

It probably didn’t help that Trump, in extemporized remarks at the signing, goaded church-state separationists, saying that the use of the phrase “Merry Christmas” had increased since he assumed office.

“We’re starting to say ‘Merry Christmas’ when that day comes around,” the president said to applause. “You notice the big difference between now and two or three years ago?”

He provided no evidence for his claim.

Agudath Israel of America, a haredi Orthodox umbrella group, welcomed Trump’s order. Abba Cohen, Agudah’s Washington director, said in an email that the removal of the protection made sense to religious assistance programs that chafed at having to identify alternative providers – a job he said was best left to government authorities.

“Federal or local offices are often better situated, have more re-

sources and less limitations than faith-based providers have in regard to find accommodations for objectors,” he said in an email. “If a faith-based provider is able and willing to help with a referral, as they generally have been, that’s fine. But being mandated to do this is not beneficial when it is taking their energies away when they are best utilized in providing actual services.”

Other Orthodox groups, while supporting the overall order and the expansion of the office, were less than sanguine about the removal of the requirement for referrals.

“I certainly would have preferred that provision not be eliminated in the new executive order,” Nathan Diament, the Washington director for the Orthodox Union, said in an email. “That said, other critical protections we developed and were adopted in the Obama executive order remain in place – the most important of which are that the faith-based entity receiving a government grant may not use the grant funds for its religious activities and that those religious activities must take place at a separate time and in a separate location from the government-funded activities.”

The Orthodox Union, like Agudah, praised Trump’s order. Dia-

ment, in a statement noting that he attended the signing ceremony, said the notion of faith-based collaboration spanned Republican and Democratic administrations.

“This bipartisan continuity is an important statement of principle and rebuttal to those who would seek to have government policy discriminate against faith-based entities,” he said.

Rabbi Levi Shemtov, the executive vice president of Friends of Lubavitch (Chabad), who delivered a prayer at the signing, said he would raise the removal of the protection with the administration.

“Any time somebody doesn’t feel comfortable religiously in the context of humanitarian assistance it’s a cause for concern and review, and I definitely intend to be in touch with the administration as appropriate to learn what implications this might have,” he said. “At the same time, I would doubt that a religious institution offering humanitarian help would be crass in this regard if the person needing this help objected.”

Stern of the American Jewish Committee said it’s not a question of having to accept an institution’s religious beliefs, but being forced to listen to them in the first place. He predicted that a civil rights group would soon challenge the order with a lawsuit.

For Shemtov, the mere opportunity to deliver a blessing at the White House for an office that extends government cooperation to all religions was a cause for celebration.

“As a Jew, so mindful of my forebears and their tribulations, I am deeply grateful to the president for this invitation and for the opportunity this gives me to publicly offer this prayer freely from my heart and according to my own faith,” he said at the White House.

Shemtov explained later in an interview that his grandfather and great-grandfather had been jailed by the KGB in the former Soviet Union.

Support for Israel should not trump hate speech

Dear Editor,

Where is the outrage from the organized Jewish community in the United States over the selection of two of the most virulent “Jew haters” in our country, the Reverends Robert Jeffress and John Hagee, to give the opening prayer and final benediction at the dedication of our Embassy in Jerusalem

They have said that Jews are going to hell; Hitler was a hunter from God to get the Jews to Israel; Mormons and Islam are heresies; Catholics were led astray by the devil; and 70 percent of gay people have AIDS.

Why have our organizations remained silent? Have we sold our soul to the Evangelical Christian community in exchange for a few political coins to get their support for Israel? Do we care that the only reason for that support is the hope that the Messiah will come and that all Jews will become Christians?

Has Israel become the “New Golden Calf”? Do we worship Israel rather than God?

Evangelicals are just the latest group that would seek the destruction of Judaism. Embracing their support for political reasons is wrong.

The only outrage I have seen is

Letters 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.

in the American and Israeli press. They have called out the president for his selection of these virulent anti-Semites. Where are we?

Carl L. Zielonka
Tampa

Volunteer for Israel feels pride

Dear Editor,

In February, I went to Israel to do volunteer work for the 10th time. I was with a group of 30 people who came from the United States, Canada, Australia, Hungary, England, and France. I was doing non-military, non-combat, non-political, non-religious volunteer work. I was emptying expired medical supplies, replacing them with new updated medical supplies, including vital signs medical gear, and first aid kits. It required paying attention to details, and affirming the new equipment is assembled according to instructions before going for inspection. Human lives relied on this equipment. The program authorities notified the group about 40 percent of the

work is done by volunteers. I felt that I was where the action is and that my work was important. The group had three wonderful leaders. The leaders were women who came alone to serve Israel: a deed of courage.

The group had mature adults who were giving their best and showed how how difficulties can be overcome with a purpose in life. The group had soldiers who served from all branches of the United States military in past wars. Some of these volunteers also had children now serving in the military, making vital sacrifices for the great country we are privileged to live in – the United States of America. It is important to remember these heroes and their sacrifices.

This instilled pride in me that the United States of America is supporting Israel. I am looking forward to going again in the near future to do volunteer work in Israel with the Volunteers for Israel Program. Contact 866 514-1948 (Toll Free), or email address: info@vfi-usa.org.

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GAZA BORDER

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

Here are the cases for and against the IDF's conduct – and an example of a similar situation where things ended a little differently.

Defenders of Israel's conduct say it minimized casualties.

"The number of casualties was very, very small," said Doron Almog, who led the IDF Southern Command from 2000 to 2003.

Like other Israeli officials and veterans, he is defiant. What the world described as a protest, he said, was a crowd-sourced operation by Hamas, the militant group governing Gaza, to infiltrate Israeli territory and harm civilians.

"What's the last time you stood opposite 47,000 people?" he said. "Are you crazy enough to imagine what that is? What happened was a planned affair by Hamas. Hamas took out operational directives, it gave orders that within the groups of people there would be people armed with pistols."

Defenders of Israel's conduct all said that the core threat lay in protesters who were trying to break through the fence, which is only a couple hundred yards away from Israeli towns. Protesters had to be stopped before they breached the fence, the Israeli officers said, because a break in the fence could allow thousands to stream through and overwhelm Israeli forces, and then Israeli civilians, at a close distance.

Shooting protesters before that happened, they said, minimized the number of dead. And they all emphasized that Israel used crowd-dispersal means like tear gas and rubber bullets before turning to sniper fire.

"Once it becomes a question of two meters, three meters, ten meters, if you're 100 soldiers there, and there are 2,000 unarmed people, at that point the numbers talk," said Noru Tsalic, a veteran of the IDF who was a low-level officer during the first Palestinian intifada in the late 1980s, which saw frequent Palestinian protests. "If there is no fence anymore and thousands of people are coming toward you, then your only option is to shoot into the crowd and try to kill as many people as possible."

Israel has not officially accounted for every person it killed, instead publicly relying on a declaration from Hamas that 50 of the victims were its own members. But Shaul Shay, the former deputy head of Israel's National Security Council, said the issue boils down to Israel facing an incursion on its southern border – and acting as any sovereign state would.

"The role of the IDF on the Gaza border is to defend the borders of the state of Israel, and the way the IDF functioned was correct," said Shay, now the director of research at the Interdisciplinary Center's Institute for Policy and Strategy. "It showed a lot of strength, and in the end, no Gazans infiltrated into Israel."

A human rights lawyer says Israel must do more to protect human life.

"The Israeli forces have adopted rules of engagement that deviate in a not just dangerous but immoral way from what international law allows," said Michael Sfar, a prominent Israeli human rights lawyer.

Sfar acknowledged that Israel faced a threat on its border and had the responsibility to counter that threat. But those counter measures, he said, should not include live fire except if someone's life is under clear threat.

"Using force that is potentially lethal can only be done in an immediate danger to life," he said. "Not to property, not to sovereignty, not to anything else. That does not mean if there is a danger to property, to sovereignty, that we should stand idle."

In other words, Sfar says Israel is not allowed to use live fire to stop someone from breaking through the fence. If that person has a gun and is coming toward soldiers, force would be acceptable, he said. But if not, soldiers should wound or arrest the culprit. Soldiers cannot simply assume, he said, that every infiltrator intends to kill civilians.

"This is killing people on the basis of a speculation," he said. "You have enough forces in [border kibbutz] Nahal Oz and everywhere else, and the IDF knows exactly if the border is being cracked."

"If you see someone who's armed, that's a different matter," he continued. "You can shoot to kill. We're talking about unarmed civilians. To say that cracking the fence and infiltrating Israel is a capital offense – someone completely lost their mind."

Sfar likewise questioned the relevance of 50 of the dead belonging to Hamas. While Hamas is a terror group, it also has a political party and a bureaucracy that runs the coastal strip. The key question, Sfar said, was whether those Hamas members posed a threat to Israeli lives when they were shot.

"The question is not whether someone is a member of a terror organization," Sfar said. "The question is whether a person is a combatant or a civilian, and if a civilian, does he engage in combat or pose an immediate danger? Their ideology has no bearing on whether they should be targeted."

What happened when protesters breached Israel's northern border?

Both Sfar and Shay discussed a previous time when Israel had to deal with the same problem: a mass rush on its border by civilians. In June 2011, thousands of people in Syria stormed toward the border into the Golan Heights, with some crossing over. Israeli forces fired on them, killing 22 and wounding 350. No Israelis died in the clashes.

Sfar and Shay both pointed to the incident as proof of their points. Sfar says that, in a case when protesters did actually rush into Israel, its citizens were unscathed, and fewer people died. Israel could have taken the same approach this week, he said.

"Did the sky fall?" he said. "No, they were arrested. Many people got in, and what happened? We're dealing with unarmed civilian protesters."

But Shay said the 2011 incident should be seen as a debacle, not a test case. The army was unprepared, he said, and should never have allowed anyone to cross the border. The fact that no Israelis were harmed, he added, was a lucky break that Israel cannot expect again.

"It was a failure that the IDF wasn't ready as it should have been," he said. "Don't bring a failure as a best practice."

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Israeli-run social media firm may have worked to help Trump get elected

(JTA) – U.S. special counsel Robert Mueller has sent investigators to Israel to uncover the activities of an Israeli-run social media firm that may have led a social media manipulation effort to help Donald Trump get elected.

The co-founder of the firm, identified as Joel Zamel, who was born in Australia, met in New York three months before the 2016 election with Donald Trump Jr., as well as with Lebanese-American businessman George Nader representing the crown princes of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, who he said wanted to help get his father elected, according to a *New York Times* report.

The Aug. 3, 2016, meeting was arranged by Erik Prince, the founder and former head of private military contractor Blackwater, who also attended the meeting. (Prince is the brother of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos).

It is illegal for foreign governments or individuals to be involved in American elections. The Israel Police and Zamel are cooperating with the investigation, according to the *Times*.

After Trump was elected, Nader reportedly paid Zamel a large sum of money, reportedly up to \$2 million, because among other reasons given, a company

linked to Zamel provided Nader with an elaborate presentation about the significance of social media campaigning to Trump's victory.

Zamel told the *Times* that his client never carried out any campaign on Trump's behalf.

A company connected to Zamel, Psy-Group, had been working on a proposal for a covert multimillion-dollar online manipulation campaign to help elect Trump, the *Times* reported. The plan involved using thousands of fake social media accounts to promote Trump's candidacy.

The company, whose motto is "shape reality," consulted an American law firm, and was told that it would be illegal if any non-Americans were involved in the campaign, according to the report.

After Trump's inauguration, Zamel and Nader visited the White House, where they met with White House advisor Jared Kushner and then-chief of staff Steve Bannon.



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Religious leaders urge State Dept. to name anti-Semitism monitor

WASHINGTON (JTA) – More than a thousand lay and clergy leaders across a range of faiths signed a petition urging Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to name an anti-Semitism monitor.

"Around the world, violent and even lethal attacks have been made on Jews and Jewish institutions; physical harassment of Jews who wear a kippah in public is all too common," says the petition addressed to Pompeo, organized by the American Jewish Committee.

There has been no anti-Semitism monitor since President Donald Trump assumed office in January 2017, and Rex Tillerson, Pompeo's predecessor, emptied the Office to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism of staff last summer.

The signatories include a wide geographical range of Jewish lay leaders, rabbis covering all streams of Judaism, and hundreds of Christian leaders. There are also a number of Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh and Bahai leaders.

Tillerson said he wanted to transfer duties from special envoys to State Department staff as a cost-saving measure. A range of Jewish organizations and lawmakers reminded him that the anti-Semitism monitor is mandated by Congress and is required by law to be filled.

Meanwhile, the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee approved a bill – with bipartisan support – that would elevate the anti-Semitism monitor to ambassador level and require the president to nominate someone for the position within 90 days of its passage.

The bill now goes to the full House. With a companion bill introduced in the Senate, the likelihood of it becoming law is enhanced.



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BIRTHRIGHT

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

enjoying Israeli food, playing games and participating in a service project to Repair the Seas (Tikkun Ha'Yam).

Among those planning to attend are Melanie and Jonathan Bowman of St. Petersburg, who both said their trips – Melanie in 2005 and Jonathan in 2006 – served to strengthen their bonds to both Israel and Judaism – major goals of those who created the Birthright program.

The founders of Taglit [the Hebrew word for discovery] Birthright wanted young adults of Jewish heritage to discover new meaning in their personal Jewish identity and to connect to Jewish history and culture through Israel – all without the impediment of cost. The free 10-day trips are restricted to those aged 18-26 (now with limited expansion to age 32). Since

trips began, more than 600,000 from 67 countries have participated in the program – now at a rate of 40,000 a year – with the vast majority of participants from the United States and Canada.

“It [the trip] gives you a real respect for Israel, for members of their army and what they do,” Jonathan said, adding that his sunrise hike to Masada, (regarded by many as a sacred place of Jewish resistance to Roman rule), was “a very spiritual experience.”

Melanie, who went on her trip before she met Jonathan, was also impacted by it. “My Birthright trip sparked a love and concern for Israel. Now that I’ve been to Israel, I would do anything to protect it. After climbing Masada, visiting the Kotel and walking the streets of Jerusalem, the story I tell myself about who I am changed forever. My Birthright trip deeply connected me to the story of Judaism.” Jonathan said Melanie had fin-

ished her trip when he met her at a Vodka Latke event in the Tampa Bay area, just before he was to go on his trip. He said when he returned from his trip, they began dating.

Soon after their trips both became more involved in the local Jewish community, taking turns as president of the Federation’s Young Adult Division, serving on the Federation board and getting involved in the Jewish National Fund. The birth of two children since their trips has taken time away from participation in local Jewish organizations, but Jonathan said as the kids get older they would love to take them to Israel.

Jonathan grew up in Clearwater and is founder and CEO of Harmony Home Health in Largo. Melanie, who grew up in Tampa, is owner of Caregiver Strategies and Support.

Yet another local Birthright participant, Josh Bloom, who lives in Pinellas Park and went on a Birth-



Josh Bloom’s 2001 Birthright group wades in the water at the Nahal Snir Nature Reserve in Israel.

right tour in 2001, said even before he went to Israel, he had an affinity toward the Jewish state. His mother lived on a kibbutz for about a year after she finished high school, so he was raised knowing about the culture in Israel.

“Israel is our homeland, so I always wanted to go there and see my homeland. . . . I absolutely loved being there,” Bloom said.

Not only was he touched by his tour of Yad Vashem, Israel’s official memorial to the Holocaust, but after he returned, he created a Power-Point presentation on Yad Vashem and the Holocaust for a college class he was taking. His professor was so impressed he got Josh to return for presentations to other classes, something he liked doing until marriage and a baby made life too busy to continue. He said lecturing on the Holocaust helped him feel stronger about his faith and have a greater appreciation “for what others have gone through.”

Josh, who does technology support and audio-visual engineering for St. Petersburg College, said he continues to have a strong affinity toward the Israeli people. He said when he hears news reports of people accusing Israel of attacking people, his response is, “No, we do not attack until after we are attacked.”

Soon after his return from his Birthright trip Bloom began going to temple again and he said his wife is in the process of converting to Judaism.

Visits to the Western Wall, the Dead Sea, Yad Vashem and Masada are common for Birthright participants, but one sight that caught 2008 participant Michael Tebbi off guard: “Seeing graffiti in Hebrew left an impression. It’s a mundane thing that blends into the background for people there but was an oddity to me – graffiti in the same

language as holy prayers.”

An attorney who grew up in Tampa and still lives here, Tebbi said the people of Israel were like people everywhere, focused on their day-to-day issues and with a wide range of personalities. “In general people had the humor, sharp wit, and sometimes abrupt character traits I expected.”

Tebbi said his Birthright trip served as more of a confirmation of his Jewish commitment than a spiritual awakening. “I was pretty involved in the Jewish community in college and law school before my Birthright trip and remained so afterwards. I was a regular at Hillel and Chabad both before and after



Michael Tebbi was taken aback when he spotted graffiti in Hebrew during his Birthright trip.

the trip,” he said.

Like the Bowmans and Bloom, Tebbi said, “I supported Israel before going and still do after.”

* * *

Those who know a Birthright alum living in the Tampa Bay area are asked to send their contact information to Lisa Robbins, director of young adult engagement for the Tampa JCCs and Federation, so they can be sent a personal invitation to the reunion. Robbins can be contacted at (813) 769-4723 or lisa.robbins@jewishtampa.com.

Those planning to go to the reunion should RSVP by going to www.jetishtampa.com/IMPACT. Location details will be shared upon receiving RSVPs.

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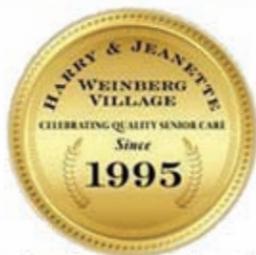
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U.S. Israeli ambassador chose 'controversial' pastors who gave embassy prayers

(JTA) – Two controversial pastors who offered prayers at the dedication of the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem were invited by U.S. Ambassador to Israel, David Friedman.

Robert Jeffress, the Dallas pastor of a Southern Baptist megachurch who has disparaged Jews, Mormons and Muslims delivered the opening prayer at the Jerusalem embassy dedication. Robert Jeffress, is a Fox News contributor, a prominent supporter of President Donald Trump and host of radio and television shows broadcast throughout the United States.

He has said “you can’t be saved by being a Jew” and “Mormonism is a heresy from the pit of hell.”

Prior to the embassy dedication ceremony on May 14, former Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney lambasted Jeffress as a religious bigot.



Robert Jeffress

The other minister, Pastor John Hagee, head of Christians United for Israel, who gave the closing benediction, has also made controversial remarks including that Hitler and the Holocaust were part of God’s plan to bring Jews to Israel.

The day following the embassy dedication, State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in response to a reporter’s question that it was Friedman’s decision to bring Jeffress on board for the ceremony. “We would certainly not agree with the pastor’s remarks, some of his controversial remarks that he has made about various religious groups, but he was chosen by Ambassador Friedman, who was certainly welcome to do so, and made that decision,” Nauert said.

“(E)mbassies certainly have their free will sometimes to make decisions about who they want to bring in as guest lecturers or people to lead a ceremony or some sort of a celebration.



John Hagee

To my knowledge, we did not have any role in making that decision,” she also said.

Friedman, who is Jewish, defended the participation of Jeffress and Hagee in an interview with Breitbart News. “I chose those pastors because they deserve to speak,” he said, “because they represented a community very much in support of what happened yesterday.”

Added Friedman: “The evangelical community in particular shares the same belief that Jewish people have, that Israel is a special place, that its existence is evidence of a covenant between God and the Jewish people, and that the relationship between the United States and Israel is a blessed one, and that America itself will receive blessings – if not Godly blessings, then certainly the benefits that come to people who act righteously and courageously.”

According to the *New York Times*, Hagee told an NPR interviewer that he believes Jews will be saved during the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. While Jews do not believe in Jesus as their savior, Hagee said, they will accept him when he appears and “they will weep as one weeps for his only son for a period of one week.”

EMBASSY

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

and opening of the United States Embassy in Jerusalem, Israel.”

Inevitably, perhaps, the images of pageantry vied with darker news out of Gaza, where at least 60 Palestinians died during violent clashes with the Israeli military along the border. Outside the new embassy, dozens of demonstrators, including several Arab members of Knesset, held up signs calling Jerusalem the capital of Palestine. Fourteen protesters were arrested following skirmishes with police.

At the ceremony itself, meanwhile, local politicians vied with each other to see who could offer the most expansive plaudits as their constituents posted memes on social media describing the president in almost messianic terms.

Addressing the dedication ceremony via video, President Donald Trump asserted that “for many years we failed to acknowledge the obvious, the plain reality that Israel’s capital is Jerusalem.”

Likely responding to Palestinian assertions that such recognition hampers efforts at a negotiated settlement to the conflict, Trump asserted that the United States was “committed to facilitating a lasting peace agreement” and to the maintenance of the status quo on the Temple Mount.

Despite the violence accompanying the embassy move, Trump adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner told attendees at the ceremony that “previously unimaginable alliances are emerging” and that the U.S. would support a peace agreement in which “both sides can get more than they give.” Last week, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain welcomed Trump’s decision to pull the U.S. out of the Iran nuclear deal and reimpose sanctions on Tehran.

Bibi: Trump made history

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who juxtaposed Trump’s Embassy decision with the Balfour Declaration promising British support for a Jewish homeland, said “by recognizing history” Trump had “made history.”

“The truth and peace are interconnected. A peace built on lies will crash on the rocks of Middle Eastern realities and the truth is that Jerusalem will always be the capital of the Jewish state,” he said. “May the truth advance a lasting peace between us and our neighbors.”

Both administration figures and Israeli politicians heaped praise on the president in response to the

embassy move. At a reception organized by the Orthodox Union at Jerusalem’s Waldorf Astoria hotel, former Sen. Joseph Lieberman, I-CT, one of the architects of the 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act, told JTA that it had been “very frustrating and disappointing every time a president of the United States suspended the implementation of that act” and that he was “thrilled” by Trump’s decision. The Jerusalem Embassy Act recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and called for the relocation of the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, but Trump’s predecessors declined to implement it, citing foreign policy concerns.

Asked if he believed that Trump’s involvement would turn Israel into a partisan issue, Lieberman replied that his bill had been bi-partisan and “support for Jerusalem as the capital of Israel is broadly supported by members of both parties.”

Trump a Churchill?

The O.U.’s Mark Bane called Trump “God’s messenger on this important day.” Citing his decision to pull out of the Iran nuclear deal, Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked called Trump the “the [Winston] Churchill of the 21st century.”

This rhetoric was off-putting to some attendees, who decried what they saw as excessive. While there was no question that the embassy move was significant, “the focus needs to be on the essence and not about Trump,” opposition MK Pnina Tamano-Shata of Yesh Atid told JTA.

“To compare him to Churchill or to Balfour is a little exaggerated. The state of Israel and the people of Israel know that our capital is Jerusalem and the transfer of the Embassy is [correct] but let’s take things in proportion. I am for our nation celebrating but we also need to be careful that we don’t excessively praise in an exaggerated sense of euphoria ... and not to raise up a man in an exaggerated way,” she said.

Asked about how Israeli leaders were addressing Trump, Dan Shapiro, who served as U.S. ambassador to Israel under President Barack Obama, told JTA that it was understandable that they were engaging in “hyperbole” because “it’s become accepted in international circles that the way to gain favor with President Trump is to engage in excessive flattery.”

Shapiro said he supported the embassy move but harbored reservations about how it was implemented. He explained that Israel

was doing “everything possible to have the best possible relation with the president of the United States” and that this was “completely legitimate.”

However, he cautioned, “it would be advisable to bear in mind the significant number of Americans deeply who are alienated from this president on other issues” and to work on “maintaining the historic bi-partisan nature of this relationship.”

A deadly decision?

K Ayman Odeh, an Arab Israeli who heads the Knesset’s Joint List, linked the killing of Gaza protesters – who are engaged in a six-week series of demonstrations to coincide with Israel’s 70th anniversary celebrations – to the embassy dedication.

“The opening of the American embassy in Jerusalem and its grand ceremony is part of the same policy that has claimed the lives of dozens of Gazans,” Odeh said in a statement. “Today, there is nothing to celebrate. The opening of the embassy is yet another provocative step that signals the destruction of the notion of peace. The Netanyahu-Trump alliance continues to deepen the conflict.”

Meanwhile, in East Jerusalem, the mood was subdued. Near the Damascus Gate, tourists and Arab shoppers mingled, watched by dozens of police officers clad in

body armor and carrying automatic weapons. Local residents, while unhappy with the American decision, seemed apathetic in the face of a reality they couldn’t change.

Playing with fire

Inside the Old City’s Arab market, a man who identified himself only as Yassir sat in his dress shop, watching news footage from Gaza. “Trump is playing with fire,” he said. “There could be war all over. The people of Gaza don’t care if they die.” Asked why there wasn’t any significant unrest in East Jerusalem, Yassir replied resignedly that it was “very difficult living directly with the Israelis” and that any young man who went out in the street would end up with a police record that would follow him for life.

“It’s different in Gaza, the authorities support the protests,” he said.

In a nearby restaurant, a man named Tawfik expressed similarly fatalistic attitude, asserting that the Israelis had Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states in their pockets. Trump, he said, was “more Jewish than the Jews.” The Palestinians “have to be smart,” he continued, claiming that if Jerusalem residents took to the streets “the Jews will kill us and say we are against peace.”

“I’m not ready for my son to go out and die,” he said.

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Berlin volunteers hand out 6,000 kippahs at public parks in solidarity with Jews

By **TOBY AXELROD**
JTA news service

BERLIN – In an unusual sight, the people lazing about or strolling down the paths in several parks here on a sun-drenched Sunday were wearing gleaming white kippahs.

Seventy volunteers handed out some 6,000 of the satin yarmulkes in total at five parks in the German capital to counter a recent anti-Semitic incident targeting a man wearing the Jewish head covering.

Three non-Jewish friends planned the event, dubbing it “Kopf Hoch” -- literally “Keep your head high,” or “Cheer Up.”

“It’s always important to do something against anti-Semitism, and for the safety of our city in general,” Anne, one of the organizers, told JTA. “But with the last incident, it clearly is not the job of Jews alone – all of us have to watch out for each other.”

Initially, more parks were included in the plan. But Anne said the Berlin police advised the organizers not to carry out their action in the Kreuzberg and Neukoeln districts, as both areas have large Arab populations. Some of the recent anti-Semitic incidents here have been attributed to people of Arab background.

The organizers of the kippot action – Jannik and Marco joined Anne – received support from the Berlin Jewish community, the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the Amadeo-Antonio Foundation, as well as from private individuals. They asked that their last names not be used to avoid people trying to contact them at work; they can be contacted through their Facebook page.



A volunteer hands out kippahs to visitors at the Mauerpark in Berlin on a sunny Sunday afternoon in late April.



Belgian tourists posing in yarmulkes with Pete the dog - also sporting a yarmulke - in the Monbijou Park in Berlin.

The volunteers started handing out the yarmulkes early Sunday afternoon. Within an hour, the green lawns of Monbijou Park in the Mitte District were dotted with kippah wearers lounging on the grass, picnicking or otherwise enjoying the day.

Janin Viviane Ahnefeld, a German-Israeli attorney, took a break from work to hand out the free yarmulkes. She was accompanied by the best ice-breaker: her kippah-wearing golden retriever, Pete.

Ahnefeld said her best customers were “tourists from other countries.”

“I had people from Denmark, France, Poland, Britain,” she said. “And they were all very open, they wanted to join in and they gladly took a kippah.” And they posed for photos with Pete and Ahnefeld.

Locals tended to be more reluctant, she said.

“I had a conversation with one German

guy who said, ‘I am not religious, and don’t want to have anything to do with it.’ I told him it has nothing to do with whether you are religious or not, but he was not interested,” Ahnefeld said.

Anne said she only had two negative reactions, “but they weren’t bad. One person said ‘no,’ and another nearby said, ‘Then I’ll take it!’”

The event follows a kippah “flash mob” and a rally that drew some 2,500 concerned Berliners to the doorstep of the Jewish community center in the former West Berlin. The recent increase in anti-Semitic incidents has been met by calls for tougher action against perpetrators.

In mid-April, an attacker shouting “Jew!” in Arabic assaulted a non-Jewish man wearing a yarmulke on a Berlin street. The victim was an Israeli Arab who said he donned the kippah to test whether it had

actually become dangerous to wear one in Germany.

These events get people to “come out of their bubble and talk about what is happening in our city,” Anne said, and also can help people overcome fear of others and stereotypes.

On Sunday, she met with some Arab families in the park. In one case, Anne said, “Someone translated for me, and the father of the family said, ‘Of course! We will do it with you.’”

She added: “Other Arab families reacted differently, but always respectful.”

Though not all park-goers were wearing kippahs by the end of the day, there was a distinct impression of something unusual going on. “One woman came over and asked if a Jewish festival was being celebrated today,” said Anne. “It was a moment of normalcy” for yarmulkes in Berlin.

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How Israel's tech scene is helping wounded combat veterans

By **BEN SALES**
JTA news service

TEL AVIV – When Elad Horovitz was shot in the head during Israel's 2014 war in Gaza, his first concern was survival, not how to maintain peripheral vision while driving.

Horovitz, then 20, was shot through his left ear and right eye. Somehow he survived, losing half of his hearing and sight, and underwent two years of rehabilitation before he was able to return to normal life. Now he's a psychology student at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

He has a driver's license, but his vision problems provide obstacles: Horovitz can't see past the right corner of the car, making it difficult to drive on the narrow streets that crisscross Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and other Israeli cities.

That, however, changed recently.

At a South Tel Aviv garage, Horovitz watched as a couple of computer engineers worked on his car. One bent under the open hood while the other crowded the left side of the steering wheel with electronics. One small rectangular screen was connected to sensors on the front-left corner of the car, blinking if it got too close to anything. A camera similar to the now-common rearview cameras was for Horovitz's blind spot.

"Today I can do almost everything, and I drive a lot, almost every day," he said. "If I avoid going down narrow streets, it's just because I'm a little scared. Now I'll stop avoiding it. So these are things you can overcome, and that reduces the presence of my wound day to day."

The Horovitz project was one of 14 showcased at "Makers for Heroes," a Tel Aviv event at which wounded former soldiers worked with 150 Israeli tech engineers to devise solutions to problems posed by their disabilities. After two months of prepping, the veterans and their tech teams met in the basement of a WeWork office and spent much of the next 72 hours building their products with code, 3-D printers, polymers and the electronic guts of medical devices.

Some of their innovations seemed like they would be helpful to a broader clientele. One team created a wristband that could sense the advent of a panic attack by measuring the wearer's pulse and the moisture on their skin, then playing a soothing song or providing a different distraction.

Another project aimed to prevent blood clots by wrapping a veteran's legs in blood pressure sleeves and pushing blood back up the veins.

The teams were drawn from Tel Aviv's fertile tech ecosystem. Some took off three days from their jobs to participate in the "make-athon," while some local startups sent teams to participate.

"These soldiers gave us everything they can – their health, their entire life," said Shoshi Rushnitsky, a former Israeli tech worker and the founder of Restart, an organization that aids wounded Israeli veterans and organized the event with the Reut Institute think tank. "Let's take our connections, our knowledge, our experience, and help the wounded get out of the cycle of injury. The injury cycle can really get you stuck. That feeling of immobility is what we want to set free."

The Israeli government funds rehabilitation for its 51,000 living wounded veterans – a population that receives public sympathy in a small country where most citizens are subject to a mandatory draft. Wounded soldiers also receive public benefits follow-



Photo by Ben Sales

Elad Horovitz, whose vision was affected after he was shot during Israel's 2014 war in Gaza, tests a device that will make it easier for him to drive.

ing their rehab.

Restart's mission is to support the soldiers after the government scales back its obligations to them, providing them with benefits to ease their daily lives. One program matches 15 wounded veterans with professional mentors who can help them find jobs and burnish themselves professionally. "Makers for Heroes," which has taken place twice, aims to bring Israeli tech prowess to bear on helping the veterans.

"There's an inclination after the war to neglect the wounded soldiers," said Niv Efron, an Israeli veteran who was shot in the chest and hand in the 2014 Gaza war and underwent six surgeries. Efron participated in the first iteration of "Makers for Heroes" two years ago, where his team built a device to help him do pull-

ups. "You can't blame them," Efron said of Israelis who stop paying attention to the wounded. "They need to go back to work. But the wounded soldiers are still there."

The engineers brought experience ranging from biomedical tech startups to Israel's robust security tech industry. For the most part, the veterans themselves did not take part in the tech development. They were there to test out their teams' innovations and guide them on what would be most helpful. They also helped figure out which projects would be possible to complete within a three-day period. Horovitz, for example, decided not to pursue creating a hearing aid that would alert him when someone was speaking to his deaf ear.

"I told them my problem, we discussed it, they came up with the idea and they banged it out," said Assaf Dory, an Israeli American who had his leg amputated after being wounded twice on police duty in Florida. His team was fashioning a cushion that would allow the ex-Israeli soldier to sit in any chair.

"It's amazing to see all these professionals dancing, doing their thing," he said.

None of the products will end up being licensed by a savvy tech firm. Instead, they will all be uploaded online, complete with plans and open-source code. The idea, Dory said, was to help the veterans and empower them. If someone wants to copy any of the ideas, he said, they can go ahead.

"It's the ability to do something you couldn't or thought you couldn't," Efron said. "We find a product to enable [a veteran] to do what he wants to. It will also show him that even with his limitations, he can still do things."

Obituaries

LUBA ROSEN, 79, of Seminole, died May 15. Born in Mexico City, Mexico, she moved here two years ago to be near family. Survivors include her children Dr. Bernardo Stein (Stephanie), Nathan Stein, and Evelyn Stein-Karchmer; brother David Rosen; sister Ana Shteremberg. The family suggests memorials to Congregation B'nai Israel in St. Petersburg. (David C. Gross Funeral Homes, St. Petersburg Chapel)

REBECCA SIMMONS, 97, died May 10. Born in Haifa, Israel. Survivors include her husband Warren; and children, Anita Simmons, and Dr. Ronny and Denise Simmons. (David C. Gross Funeral Homes, St. Petersburg Chapel)

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

Sincerely yours,
Judy
Judy Ludin



Welcome to the world... Madison Rose Cowart (Mayim Ziva) was born on March 4 to proud parents **Lyle and Hana Cowart** of St. Petersburg. Madison is the couple's second child, joining older sister **Sarah**, age 4.

P.S. As always, I'm looking forward to hearing about all your family simchas. Photos are welcome, too. Send information to: Sincerely Yours, P.O. Box 6970, Clearwater, FL 33758, or e-mail jewishpress@aol.com.

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Shoshana Cardin, Jewish leader who broke multiple glass ceilings, has died

(JTA) – Shoshana Cardin, a Baltimore philanthropist who blazed trails as the first woman to chair her city's Jewish federation, the national Jewish federation and the powerful Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, has died.

Cardin was 91, according to JmoreLiving.com.

Known for her intellect and leadership capabilities, she was from 1988 to 1992 chairwoman of the National Conference of Soviet Jewry, during a time when the priorities of the Soviet Jewry movement shifted from campaigns to free Soviet Jews to efforts to help resettle them in Israel.

Prior to that she was president of the Council of Jewish Federations, the representative body of

200 community federations in the United States and Canada.

Cardin also gained prominence in 1988 for spearheading opposition to efforts in the Israeli Knesset to amend the Law of Return. The so-called "Who Is a Jew" amendment, which would have denied Israeli citizenship to immigrants whose conversion to Judaism did not meet Orthodox standards, was ultimately withdrawn in the face of pressure from American Jews.

Born Shoshana Shoubin to Latvian parents in what was then British-controlled Palestine, Cardin arrived at age 2 in Baltimore, where she later became active in local Jewish affairs.

She was also president of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency from 1999 until 2001.

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Organizations

Hadassah

Kotel conversation: The Lylah Pinellas Hadassah will present an educational program on Thursday, May 31 at 7 p.m. regarding prayer in Israel, featuring **Rabbi Danielle Upbin**, who will speak on the topic, "Controversy at the Kotel: A synagogue for all Jews?" The Western Wall in Jerusalem is an evocative religious and cultural symbol for the Jewish people. As religious pluralism gains traction, the question of who can pray at the Kotel has become a divisive political issue concerning egalitarianism, feminism, religious freedom and the relationship with American Jews.

The program will be held at Congregation Beth Shalom, 1325 S. Belcher Road, Clearwater, and is free to all. Dessert and coffee will be served. RSVPs are suggested. To RSVP and for information, call or email **Evelyn Schreiber-Steckler** at (727) 726-7828 or seferworm@aol.com.

Genealogical Society

Examining evidence: Guest speaker **George G. Morgan** will discuss "Principles for Effective Evidence Analysis" during the next meeting of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Tampa Bay on Sunday June 10. The lecture will include the principles of genealogical evidence analysis and show examples of capturing all the clues to expand and improve research. The meeting takes place at

Gulf Coast Jewish Family & Community Services; 14041 Icot Blvd., Clearwater. A pre-session social with refreshments and library access begins at 1:30 p.m. Morgan, a local resident, is one of the world's most prolific and best-known authors and speakers on genealogy. Among his books is the award-winning *How to Do Everything with Your Genealogy* and is co-host of two podcasts on the topic. Anyone interested in learning how to do Jewish genealogy research is invited to participate. There is no charge to attend and guests are welcome. For information about the organization or directions to the meeting, call **Bruce Hadburg** at (727) 796-7981.

Young Adults

YAD events: The Young Adult Division of Pinellas and Pasco Counties hosts monthly Hebrew happy hours. The next one is on Tuesday, May 29 from 7 to 9 p.m., at Pour Taproom, 225 Second Ave. N., St. Petersburg. Future happy hours will be held on June 22 in Seminole and July 17 at Jimmy B's, St. Pete Beach.

YAD also celebrates "Shabbat with Friends" on select Friday nights when young adults across Pinellas join together for a potluck Shabbat in a private home. The next Shabbat dinner will be held on June 22; for more information, contact yad@jewishpinellas.org.

The Young Adult Division aims to connect young Jewish adults

(both singles and couples in their 20s, 30s and 40s) to a broad range of educational, social, philanthropic, and leadership activities as a means to enhance their commitment and connection to the Jewish community. For full line up of all YAD activities, visit facebook.com/PinellasYAD.

#Gather events: The #Gather group has several upcoming events, beginning with a brew bus adventure on Sunday, June 3 from noon to 4 p.m. The cost is \$10 for unlimited bus rides throughout the day on the local loop bus as folks stop at various breweries, restaurants and bars in Tampa. Food and beverages are at the cost of participants. The next event is a private tour of the Florida Holocaust Museum's exhibition: "Operation Finale: The Capture & Trial of Adolf Eichmann," on Sunday, June 24. The group will gather first at 12:30 p.m. at La V, a Vietnamese fusion restaurant, at 441 Central Ave., St. Petersburg. The museum is a few blocks away and the tour there begins at 2 p.m. The cost is \$12 for members and \$15 for guests, lunch not included. Registration in advance is required for this event.

Also planned is a tour of the renovated Tampa Armature Works building into a mixed-use facility. This tour will be on Tuesday, June 26 at 6:30 p.m. Tour Tampa's hottest new project with **Taryn Bruck**, managing director of Armature Works. After the tour, the group will dine together in the Heights Market inside Armature Works. Cost of dinner is not included.

#Gather offers a mix of social and interactive activities designed to help young adults connect. It is open to young adults in their 20s, 30s and 40s of all faiths and backgrounds. For more information or to RSVP for any #Gather events, visit: www.bryanglazerfamilyjcc.com/gather or contact **Lisa Robbins** at lisa.robbins@jewishtampa.com or (813) 769-4723.

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. Kennedy Blvd., Suite 206, Tampa from 9:30 - 11 a.m. Monday Morning Links is supported by the Vinik Family Foundation.

Switching gears: The final two in a series of four evening workshops, each from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. are offered, targeting those in career transition. These sessions cover the nuts and bolts of career transition. People can enroll for the full series or come for any individual session. The sessions are on Tuesdays, May 29 and June 5. Reservations are required. Cost is \$15 per workshop or \$50 for all four. To RSVP, call (813) 344-0200, email 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.

B'nai Mitzvah

Noah Stephen Allen

Noah Stephen Allen, son of Debbie and Mike Allen of Gulfport, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, June 2 at Temple Beth-El in St. Petersburg.

Noah is a seventh-grade student at Shorecrest Preparatory School. Active in sports, he plays soccer for his school and the St. Pete Raiders. For his mitzvah project, Noah is volunteering at the Pet Pal Animal Shelter and collecting donations for the shelter.

Debbie and Mike Allen will host a luncheon at Temple-Beth El on Saturday, June 2.

Special guests will include grandparents and friends from Boston, along with other relatives from New York and Arizona.



Zachary Allen Goldman

Zachary Allen Goldman, son of Lynn and Dr. Stephen Goldman of Indian Shores, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, June 2 at Temple Ahavat Shalom in Palm Harbor.

Zachary is a seventh-grade student at St. Paul's Episcopal Independent School. An accomplished pianist, he enjoys performing and for his mitzvah project has joined with another student to perform at various nursing homes. Zachary enjoys all aspects of music, including composing, digitalizing and recording on the computer and keyboard. A member of Ahavat Shalom's youth group, he also enjoys tennis, golf, 3D printing and being a camper in the summer at 6 Point URJ Camp in Boston. Zachary previously attended Camp Coleman.

Stephen and Lynn Goldman will host a celebration at Innisbrook Golf and Tennis Resort on Saturday evening, June 2.

Special guests will include aunt Ellen and uncle Ian from Surrey, England, along with other family from New York, Hawaii, Canton, OH, Teaneck, NJ, and friends from other various states.



Bonnie Stein speaks to a class at Horizon Academy at Marion Oaks in Ocala.

Museum group looking for 'second generation' to share their legacy

Bonnie Stein, past president of the Florida Holocaust Museum's Generations After group—an organization for children of survivors—spoke to the 8th grade classes at a school in Ocala in conjunction with Holocaust Remembrance Day in April.

In the front of the classroom was a poster, showing a picture of Bonnie's mother, Lilly Steg Schmidmayer, who was sent to Auschwitz when she was the same age, 13 1/2, as most of the eighth graders. Stein's parents, Lilly and Michael Schmidmayer, currently live in Ft. Lauderdale.

Speaking on "Lessons from the Holocaust," Stein challenged the students to think about their lives compared to her mother's. For ex-

ample, she asked the class, "How many of you ever wished you didn't have to go to school?" By contrast, she said, "Jews weren't allowed to go to school anymore when my mother was your age."

* * *

Generations After and the Florida Holocaust Museum are looking for sons and daughters of Holocaust survivors who are willing to speak about growing up in a family with survivors. Call Sandy Mermelstein at the museum (727) 820-0100.

Anyone who is a Second Generation—born after 1945 to Holocaust Survivors or Holocaust Refugees—and would like to get involved with Generations After, email Leah Davis (LeahLD100@yahoo.com).

British magazine publishes article calling Nazis the heroes of D-Day

(JTA) A far-right race baiter who works as a columnist for a respected weekly British current affairs magazine wrote a piece sympathizing with the Wehrmacht, the unified armed forces of Nazi Germany.

The column by Taki Theodoropoulos, a Greek writer who lives in London and New York, basically asks readers to feel sorry for the 76,000 Germans, reserve troops who had "not trained in combat," as they fought against 150,000 British, American and Canadian troops in Normandy on D-Day. Taki, as he

is known, visited the site as a guest of liquid natural gas magnate Peter Livanos.

"It might sound strange me writing in *The Spectator* from a German perspective, but fair's fair. I asked my companions which side they'd choose, and all of them agreed that the attacking forces had a better chance of survival than the defenders," he wrote.

In 1998, Taki accused Jews of "trafficking in the Holocaust," saying their "constant harping on about the Germans seems to be motivated by profit."

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TECH SHOW

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

the event are participating in the FIBA 2018 program. Each of the FIBA companies has developed cutting-edge solutions in the healthcare, construction, HR, advertising, security or retail industries.

Aron Di Castro, head of WAZE global partnerships and business development, will speak about the post-acquisition integration of Waze into Google, and about Waze's plans for growth. Waze is a GPS navigation app developed by an Israeli startup that was acquired by Google for nearly \$1 billion in 2013. Di Castro recently relocated from Tel-Aviv to Google's headquarters in Silicon Valley.

Danny Brigido, Wix director of customer solutions, built the Wix office in Miami. He will address the challenge of hiring tech employees in Florida and how Wix was able to overcome this challenge and hire more than 100 Floridians to grow Wix's Miami operations. Wix is a website development platform for small businesses. Wix was founded in Israel in 2006 and today has 120 million users worldwide. Wix is traded on the NASDAQ.

Each year FIBA brings in promising Israeli tech companies that are ready to expand into the U.S. market. FIBA offers Israeli entrepreneurs strategic alignment with corporate partners, facilitates introductions to prospective customers, strategic partners and investors. FIBA also encourages the companies to establish a U.S. subsidiary in Tampa Bay that is responsible for sales, marketing, tech and customer support throughout North America.

FIBA, created in 2016 with a \$1 million grant from the state, and has received additional state funding in 2017 and 2018, according to Rakefet Bachur, FIBA's executive director of marketing. Additionally, she said FIBA receives support from Hillsborough County along with corporate and individual donations.

The Tampa JCCs and Federation originated the idea for FIBA to assist Israeli tech companies, create jobs in the Tampa Bay area and to provide a new revenue stream for the JCCs and Federation. FIBA negotiates individual agreements with each of the companies in the program. There are some companies in which the JCCs and Federation or its affiliates has a small equity stake.

From the inaugural cohort in 2017, StemRad, an Israeli company that makes personal protection equipment from deadly gamma radiation, landed a \$6 million investment led by Tampa's investor Jeff Vinik, and WeissBecker, a beverage consumption analytics company, was acquired by Anheuser-Busch InBev SA/NV, the world's largest beer brewer, for a reported \$80 million.

FIBA's 2018 cohort of eight Israeli companies included four that came to Tampa in February and another four that were welcomed on May 9. During their time in Tampa, each of these entrepreneurs study the U.S. market, identify business opportunities, receive coaching on sales and marketing, and immerse themselves in the Tampa Bay community and business environment. All will be showcased at the Innovation Fusion event.

The newest contingent of companies is:

• **GlobeKeeper:** This company developed an encrypted communication platform centered around an intuitive collaboration interface to create a secure, end-to-end solution that keeps security personnel safe, reduces costs, and enhances decision making capabilities, using standard equipment.

• **Intervyo:** Leveraging human predictive analytics, Intervyo is the first and most advanced interview

Panama president wants 1994 plane crash probe reopened

(JTA) – The explosion of a Panamanian commuter plane in 1994 that killed 21 people, including 12 Jews, was a terrorist incident, the country's president said.

President Juan Carlos Varela called for the case to be reopened, after disclosing that Israel provided him with reports late last year about the explosion. Varela met last week in Israel with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Several prominent Jewish businessmen working in the Caribbean port city of Colon were victims of the plane crash, which was headed for Panama City but only lasted about 20 minutes.

The crash occurred a day after the bombing of the AMIA Jewish Center in Buenos Aires that left 85 people dead. At the time, it was reported that a bomb went off inside the plane's cabin, but this was never confirmed, according to the BBC.

Varela said he asked Panamanian and Israeli authorities to reinvestigate the incident.

"I've requested the re-opening of the case given intelligence reports that clearly show it was a terrorist attack," he told reporters, according to reports.

simulation engine in the world, capable of screening candidates, and accurately predict their suitability for the job.

Say: This company created a dynamic wearable display controlled by a smartphone that can be incorporated into clothing and accessories. It allows consumers to express themselves, brands to engage with their fans in a new way and event organizers to deliver a synchronized live content experience.

• **WiseShelf:** This company transforms existing shelves into a dynamic inventory management solution for retailers. Using low cost hardware and a sophisticated software, WiseShelf helps stores to manage inventory and fulfill online orders.

Of the companies that joined with FIBA earlier in the year, three are already in active discussions about pilot projects with local businesses and are looking into opening an office and hiring in the Tampa Bay area. The four companies are:

• **BetterCare:** This company develops a real-time communication and care management platform to improve care at skilled nursing facilities.

• **ECOcrete:** This company has developed a revolutionary approach to eco-engineering of coastal and marine infrastructure.

• **Nucleon:** The focus of this company is on identifying and analyzing cyber threats.

• **UC-Care:** This company develops, manufactures, and sells two products aimed at improved detection and treatment of prostate cancer.

More about the speakers

Aron Di Castro has been leading global business development and partnerships at Waze since April 2017. He and his team focus on partnerships aimed at improving mobility for cities and citizens. The company leverages data and technology platforms to help develop smart cities through partnerships with municipalities, governments, startups and large enterprises. Prior to his current role at Waze, Di Castro led the Google "Startup Nation" Department, managing Google Israel international strategic business. He also worked several years at Unilever, where he covered a range of sales and trade-marketing roles.

Danny Brigido co-manages the Wix Customer Solutions office in Miami, an operation of more than 120 highly trained gurus ready to provide support to an ever-growing number of Wix users. He started with Wix at the ground level in the Customer Solutions department in San Francisco in 2012. He has since helped the company grow its customer solutions reach by developing the U.S. Languages department. Brigido also developed the Miami office. Prior to Wix, he worked in retail management and CG Animation. He holds a master's degree in animation from the Savannah College of Arts and Design and a bachelor's degree in communication from the University of Tampa. He is originally from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and has lived in Africa and Europe before coming to the United States. This international upbringing has helped him thrive in the culturally diverse environment of Wix.com.

More about the event

Innovation Fusion 2018 will begin with registration and breakfast from 8-9 a.m. The program, featuring the two speakers and presentations from the eight 2018 FIBA companies, will be from 9 a.m. to noon, with a networking lunch from noon to 1 p.m. The cost is \$25 and includes breakfast, lunch and free parking. Valley National Bank is presenting sponsor.

To register, go to <http://www.fiba.io/events/innovation-fusion/>.

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How Israel overcame politics in winning Eurovision song contest with unconventional tune

By CNAAN LIPSHIZ
JTA news service

Hours before the Eurovision song contest's kickoff, Rafi Kishon posted on Facebook a sobering message and a picture of himself wearing a head of lettuce for a hat.

Israel's entrant, he said, didn't stand a chance of winning in anti-Semitic, anti-Israel Europe.

"I'm sorry to disappoint you," the Israeli veterinarian wrote in Hebrew. Netta Barzilai's "excellent" song could not win Eurovision "because Europe is imbued with bi-colored anti-Semitism: The classic Christian anti-Semitism of Holocaust's perpetrators and Muslim anti-Semitism that's striking root" there, he wrote, vowing to eat his own "hat" if he's proven wrong.

Kishon, a political hawk and the son of the late humorist Ephraim Kishon, failed to predict the future: Barzilai's unconventional song "Toy" in fact did win the contest, earning the fourth-highest score in the pan-European song competition's 63-year history. But his prediction nonetheless illustrated how many Israelis apparently overestimate the politicization of Eurovision, the prevalence of anti-Israel sentiment in European societies – or both.

Like the *American Idol*-style song competitions that it resembles, this annual pageant of novelty pop songs, outlandish costumes and sugar-coated nationalism is judged by in-house juries from each participating country and by viewers watching at home.



Netta Barzilai, the winner of this year's Eurovision contest, performing at Rabin Square in Tel Aviv on May 14.

Photo by Tomer Neuberger/Flash90

At this year's contest, Israel would have come in third if it were up solely to the official juries of the 43 countries that participated. But the juries, which gave Israel 212 points, determine only 50 percent of the scores. Callers gave Israel another 317 points to bring their total to 529 – nearly 100 points more than the next closest contestant, Cyprus.

A breakdown of voting for Israel both by juries and viewers belies any assumption of politicization or anti-Semitic bias.

For example, Israel was the top vote-getter from juries both in France – which

many consider emblematic of Europe's anti-Semitism problem – and the Czech Republic, which is a historic and contemporary bastion of support for Israel and Jews in Europe.

And the countries where callers gave the highest number of perfect scores to Israel included France, Azerbaijan – a Shi'ite Muslim nation – and Spain, where Catholic anti-Semitism for centuries has been rife and has more municipalities boycotting Israel than any other country in Europe.

(It might not have hurt that during the contest's final, *Wonder Woman* star Gal Gadot encouraged her nearly 20 million Instagram followers to vote for her fellow Israeli.)

Even though Israel won this year's contest, the organizers were still accused of politicizing the event after its Portuguese hosts did not mention Jerusalem when asking the Israeli jury to announce their score. Instead of the typical greeting "good evening" followed by the jury's capital city, the Jerusalem-based Israeli jury received only "Shalom Israel."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu alluded to this perceived slight by triumphantly saying after Barzilai's win: "Those who did not want Jerusalem in the Eurovision got the Eurovision in Jerusalem." (The winning country gets to host the event the following year.)

But Israel was not the only country's capital not to get a mention and the organizers denied any intentional snub of Jerusalem, which Israel and the United States consider its capital despite the refusal of most of the world's countries to agree.

Barzilai's victory was the fourth for Israel, suggesting that catchy pop trumps politics in the four decades Israel has taken part. Barzilai's eccentric feminist anthem "Toy" – which combines clucking chicken noises over looped vocals and English lyrics – seemed to win out over any qualms about Zionism.

Nevertheless, the contest, which is viewed by 200 million people annually, can't always avoid politics.

Russia was kicked out of the 2017 competition because its contestant, Yulia Samoylova, had been barred from entering Ukraine for political reasons.

And there's the chronic issue of bloc voting, in which neighboring, culturally similar or politically sympathetic countries consistently give each other high scores. Greece and Cyprus are notorious for this, with each country giving the other top scores most years.

Terry Wogan, a British juror, in 2008 threatened to resign from the Eurovision, saying it was "no longer a musical contest."

But these arguably have been minor issues in light of the potential for problems in a contest involving countries with open or dormant disputes such as Armenia and Azerbaijan, Russia and the Baltic countries or Croatia and Serbia.

Despite tensions, the Eurovision contest remains a talent show where the unexpected, the spectacular and the original stand a chance of winning regardless of politics.

Barzilai, a plus-sized 24-year-old, said "Toy" was a celebration of diversity and a protest against the objectification of women and body shaming.

Whether that upbeat, defiant message can keep politics out of next year's contest in Jerusalem is another story. Two Irish lawmakers in the European Union along with Dublin's mayor have already called for a boycott of the contest in Israel.

In Israel, too, some saw a political message in the victory by Barzilai. "When Israel sends to the world a symbol for being different, tolerance and liberal values, suddenly the world is not against us and we win!" wrote Yariv Oppenheimer, a former leader of the Peace Now left-wing group in Israel.

"That's how it went with Dana," he noted, citing the 1998 victory in the Eurovision contest by an Israeli transgender woman, Dana International.

"[S]o it went with Netta and that's the Israel the world wants to love – as we do, too!" he said.

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