

Help rebuild Jerusalem Lego-by-Lego at Glazer JCC

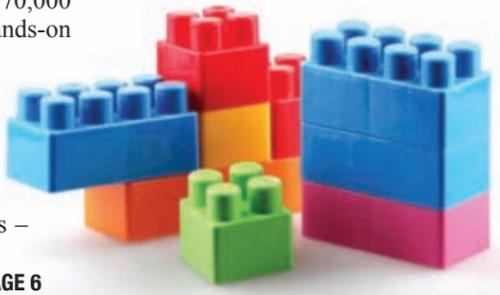
Children and adults are invited to build Jerusalem one Lego at a time at a Building Blocks Workshop, a communitywide event to be held at the Bryan Glazer Family JCC on Sunday, March 4, beginning at 4:30 p.m.

The Old City of Jerusalem will come alive on a 20-foot by 20-foot layout, complete with the walls, eight gates to the city, the Kotel, King David's Tower, and all of the other important landmark elements.

The project is part of the Jewish History

Construction Series, using about 70,000 Lego building blocks. This is a hands-on activity for the whole family.

Under the direction of Stephen W. Schwartz AIA, a principal with SWS Architects in Livingston, NJ, participants are guided through a collective effort to build a scale model of one of the building projects – in this case, Jerusalem.



LEGO continued on PAGE 6

Jewish Press of Tampa

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Pinellas/Pasco Jewish community is all over the map

By BOB FRYER

Jewish Press

The Jews of Pinellas and Pasco counties are everywhere and nowhere.

When people consider moving here, it is not unusual for them to call Jewish institutions here and ask, "Where are the Jewish neighborhoods?"

Those of us already here know that the answer is "there aren't any" – at least none with really high concentrations of Jews like we remember back home in Skokie, the Lower East Side or on vacation in Miami Beach.

There are about 23,450 Jews living in Pinellas County and 4,450 in Pasco County. Over the two-county area, Jews comprise just 1.9 percent of the total population, slightly below the national average of 2.1 percent.

While some neighborhoods do have higher concentrations of Jewish households, the recently completed 2017 Pinellas/Pasco Jewish Population Study concluded that "the Jewish population of Pinellas/Pasco is geographically dispersed and that there is no 'core area' of Jewish settlement" here. No similar demographics study has been done in Hillsborough County.

The point of the study was not to learn what Jews here already knew, but to determine just how many Jews are out there, where we live, how "Jewish" we are in terms of synagogue membership

MAP continued on PAGE 10

How the study was done

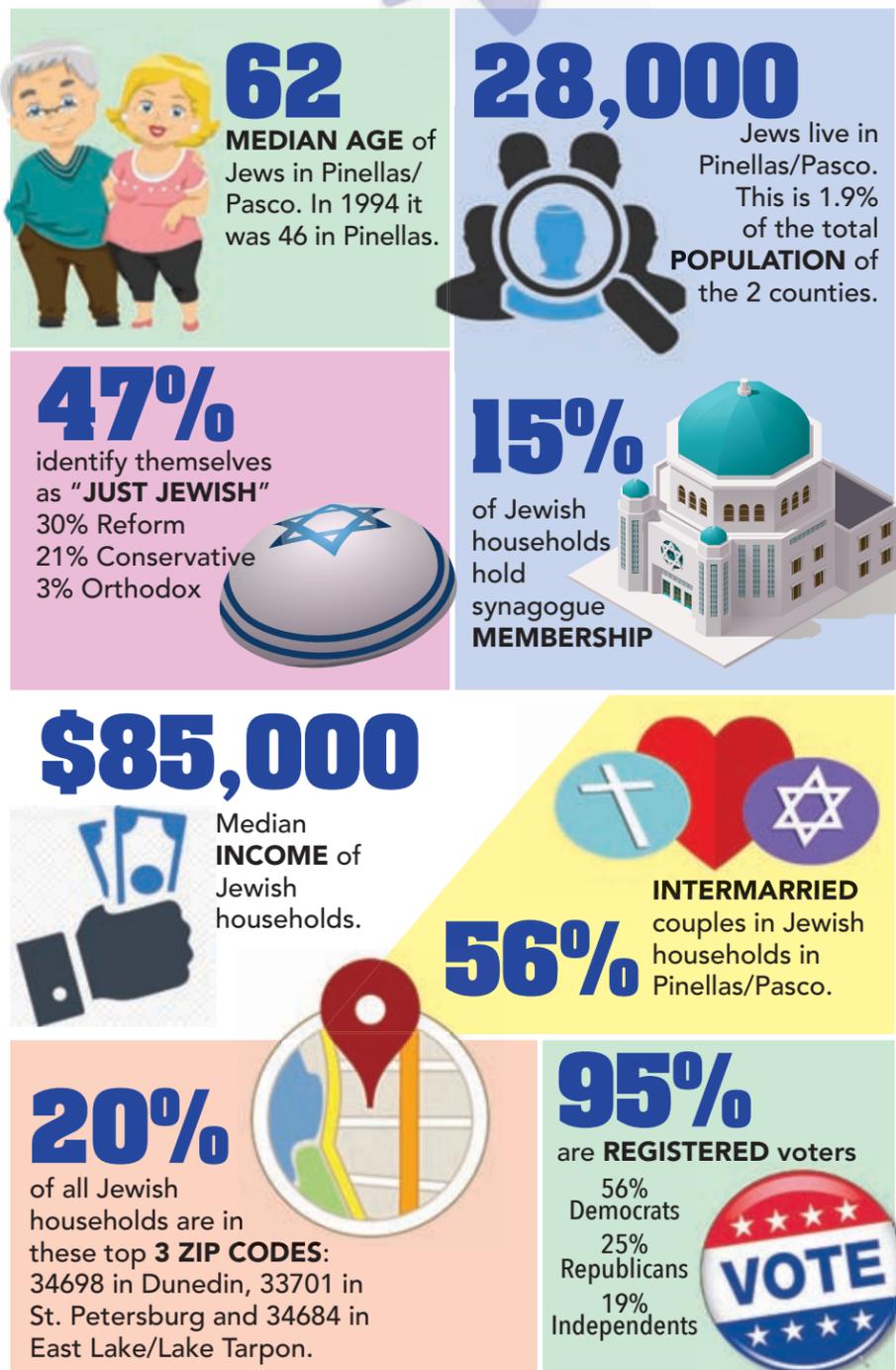
It took 230,000 phone calls to more than 70,000 phone numbers to complete the 2017 Pinellas/Pasco Jewish Population Study conducted over a three-month period by a staff under the direction of University of Miami Department of Geography chair Ira Sheskin.

The calls were done using a "random digit dialing" method. Also used were call lists from the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties and calls to phone numbers in published phone directories of those with distinctive Jewish names. The effort resulted in 550 interviews of people in Jewish households. Of the 550 completed interviews, 192 were from randomly dialed numbers, 302 from the Federation call list and 56 from those called because

STUDY continued on PAGE 9

Who We Are*

PINELLAS AND PASCO JEWISH COMMUNITY



*Source: 2017 Pinellas/Pasco Jewish Population Study.

Local man leads simple life; leaves millions to college

By BRUCE LOWITT
Jewish Press

All it took was a visit 18 years ago – the only visit Seymour Bluestone ever made to Brandeis University – to convince him that the university in Waltham, MA., was where he wanted to establish his legacy.

It began when Bluestone, a retired pediatrician born in Brooklyn, made some small gifts to the school in the 1990s at the request of family friends. In 2001 he created the Jesse F. and Dora H. Bluestone Scholarship in his parents' memory.

And when he died Sept. 29 at age 96, he left the university an \$8.4-million bequest.

"He was so frugal. He wouldn't spend a dime on himself," said Merrienne Sotnick, a neighbor, friend and retired hospice nurse. "He had old shoes. He had an old jacket. I said, 'Can we buy a new jacket?' He said, 'There's no need. I'm



Seymour Bluestone

going to be gone before I can use it.' We had no idea how much money he had. He lived almost like a pauper."

The Sotnicks, Chris and Merrienne, lived in the apartment next to Bluestone's at the Hampton, a senior residence in Clearwater, for his last six years (he had moved in four years earlier).

"He was already 90 but pretty okay when we first met him," she said. "He got around without the need for a walker. He'd work out daily on an exercise bicycle but

MILLIONS continued on PAGE 8

Just a nosh..

Compiled from JTA news service

Putin inherits former teacher's apartment in Tel Aviv

JERUSALEM – Russian President Vladimir Putin is now the proud owner of an apartment in downtown Tel Aviv. He inherited the 1½-bedroom apartment from his former high school German teacher, Mina Yuditskaya Berliner, who died in December at 96, Ynet reported. Berliner left the apartment to Putin via the Russian Embassy. It was Putin, in fact, who bought the apartment for her in 2005.

Berliner immigrated to Israel from the Soviet Union in 1973. But she had followed her former student's rise through the political ranks in Russia. According to Ynet, Putin and his teacher were reunited in 2005, when the Russian president visited Israel. She had asked the Russian Embassy whether she could attend a reception in Putin's honor. Afterward he invited her to have tea with him in private.

A short time later, Berliner, who was a widow, began receiving gifts from the Russian president: a watch and Putin's autographed 2000 biography. Then an employee of the Russian government showed up at her doorstep and took her to see some apartments in the center of Tel Aviv, she told Ynet. "Putin is a very grateful and decent person," Berliner said at the time.

The Russian Embassy sent a representative to the funeral and covered the costs of her burial, Ynet reported.

JCC bomb hoaxer briefly escapes Israeli police custody

The American-Israeli man charged with making hundreds of bomb threats to Jewish community centers in the United States – including two JCC preschools in Tampa – briefly escaped from police custody in Israel.

The computer hacker, Michael Kadar, 19, from Ashkelon in southern Israel, attended a hearing in Jerusalem District Court on Monday, Feb. 5. Following the hearing, he was taken to an interrogation and detention center in Jerusalem. After exiting a police car, Kadar managed to loosen a leg shackle, push away the security officer accompanying him and make a run for it, according to reports. He was chased for a short time, tackled and then returned to custody.

Kadar was arrested in Israel in March 2017 in a joint operation with the FBI. He has been charged in both Israel and the U.S. According to the indictments, Kadar made threats to 2,000 institutions around the world, including the Israeli Embassy in Washington, D.C., and other Israeli diplomatic missions, JCCs, schools, malls, police stations, hospitals and airlines. The offenses charged include publishing false information, causing panic, computer hacking and money laundering.

The Jerusalem Post reported that the U.S. has backed away from seeking the hoaxer's extradition, but may seek to have him extradited and tried in the U.S. after he finishes his trial in Israel.

Convictions upheld for 3 Jewish Israelis who burned a Palestinian teen alive

JERUSALEM – Israel's Supreme Court upheld convictions of three Jewish extremists who burned a Palestinian teen alive in a 2014 revenge killing.

The court upheld life sentences for two of the killers and a 21-year prison term for a minor involved in kidnapping and burning Muhammad Abu Khdeir, 16, after three Jewish teens were kidnapped and murdered by Palestinian terrorists.

After Khdeir's murder an Israeli police officer was caught on film beating Khdeir's cousin, Tariq Abu Khdeir, 15, of Tampa. The police officer served 45 days of community service.

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Jewish Press Online
Ticket Contest
See inside for details.

Palm Harbor temple panel to discuss origins of opioid crisis and where we go now

By **BRUCE LOWITT**
Jewish Press

Barely a generation ago, the problem with pain-killers was that they weren't readily available and doctors were reluctant to prescribe those that were.

Today the reverse is true – too many of them and just about anyone can get them whether or not they're needed.

Dan Zsido, training and educa-

tion coordinator for the National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators, said 2016, the last year for which complete statistics are available, "was the worst year ever in the United States for drug overdose deaths, more than 64,000 of them due to another huge increase in prescription opioid medication."

In the 1990s, "articles appeared in medical journals that doctors

were under prescribing pain medication," said Dr. Richard Maza, a Clearwater internist who has had experience in his practice with substance-abuse issues.

"Coincidentally with that, drugs came on the market which were the bulk of the opioids. Purdue Pharma developed a synthetic opioid called OxyContin and marketed it as a safe and effective way to treat pain with no or very little

addiction potential. Physicians got lulled into feeling that prescribing opioids was a safe thing to do. And what they did was prescribe too many at a time, or for pain that could be handled by lesser drugs like Tylenol, Advil, Aleve ...

"They wrote prescriptions for, say, 30 (pills). The patient used five, there were 25 left and those 25 somehow got out into the general community and were used as what

they call 'diversionary drugs,' meaning they became available to people who didn't need them for pain. And it addicted them because one of the side effects is euphoria," Maza said.

Zsido, a retired lieutenant from the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, where he commanded the Narcotics Division, and Dr. Maza, will speak Wednesday evening, March 14, at Temple Ahavat Shalom, 1575 Curlew Road, in Palm Harbor, on "The Opioid Epidemic and How It Hurts You." The free community program starts at 7 p.m.

"It is clear that the opioid addiction crisis impacts every community, including the Jewish community," said Ahavat Shalom's Rabbi Gary Klein. "Over the years I've encountered numerous Jewish people who have told me that they or someone in their family is suffering from an addiction, and I have officiated over the past few years at more than several funerals where family members have indicated that the cause of death was an overdose."

Also speaking are Rochae Zwicharowski, a Certified Recovery Support Specialist and herself a recovering addict, and Laurie Serra, who started the Pinellas County chapter of the Narcotics Overdose Prevention & Education task force after her 28-year-old stepson died in 2008 of an unintentional overdose of OxyContin and other drugs. The program is free and open to the public.

Zsido said data is starting to show that the longer someone is on prescription medication the greater the chance the user will fall into misuse of the drug.

"We've seen people who have an accident, say they slip and fall, or undergo some sort of procedure and they were on a medication and it resulted in a tolerance, which rolled into an addiction, which rolled into making poor decisions," Zsido said, "and ultimately they crossed the line and did something and got in trouble. Then there are people who are just experimenting with it."

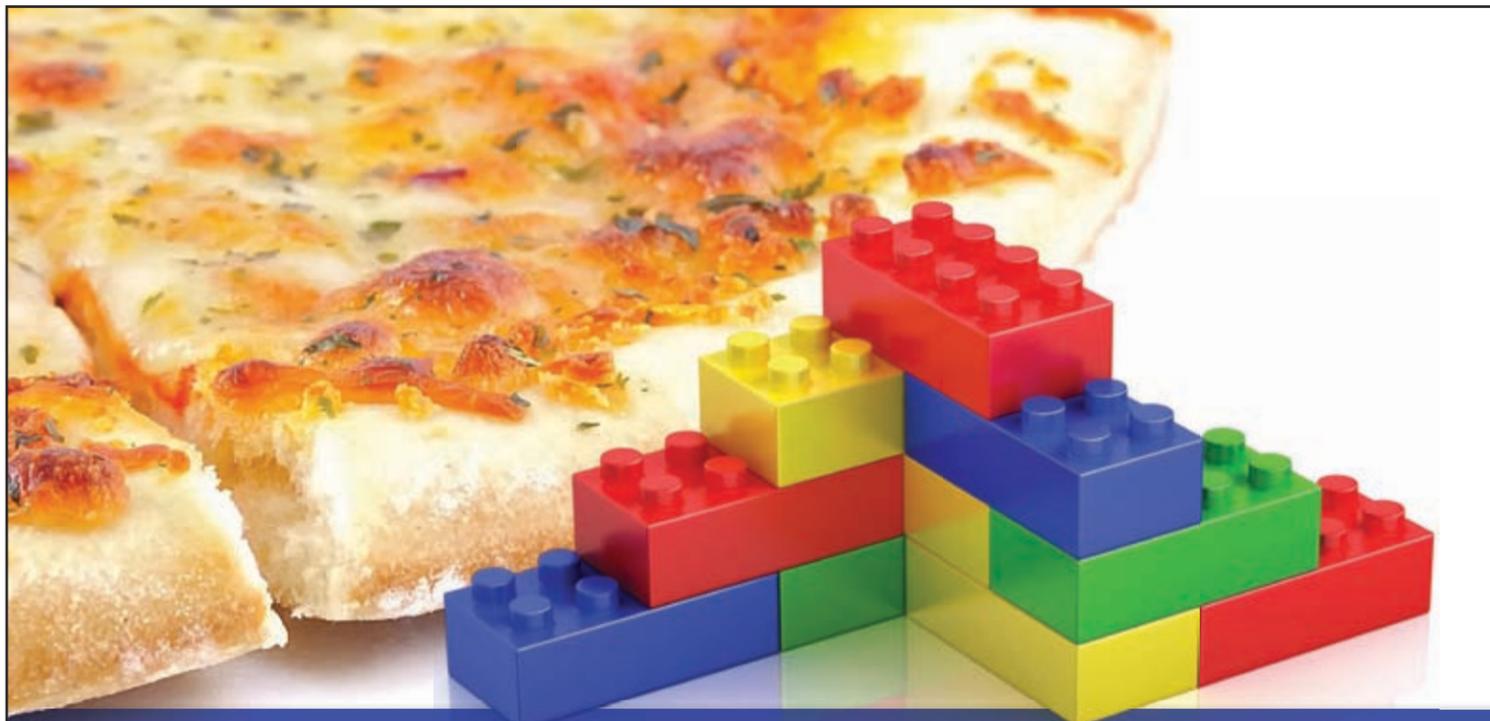
Zwicharowski said her message is that addicts "do recover, coming from whatever background."

"Yes, I am an addict, I am always going to be an addict. But the woman I am today is not the woman I was. I'm a good mother, I'm clean. I'm a productive member of society."

She is 38, says she's been sober for 10 years, and has children ages 20, 18 and 16, all of whom she had before she was married.

Before then her children ended up in foster care for a time and she faced large prison sentence for trafficking hydrocodone. But she ended up going into treatment because "the judge saw in me that I really wanted to change."

Zwicharowski is now an outreach coordinator for Associate Recovery Communities, which provides transitional homes that bridge the gap between substance abuse treatment centers and independence.



Family LEGO® Building Event & Pizza Dinner!

Sunday, March 4, 2018 | 4:00 – 6:30 PM | Bryan Glazer Family JCC

This **FAMILY EVENT** is for friends ages 4+ and everyone who simply loves LEGO®s!

70,000 LEGO blocks will create highlights of Jerusalem including the Kotel, David's Tower, Second Temple, The Montefiore Windmill, all the Gates going into the Old City and 80 buildings inside the walls. Completion will be a 400 square foot model, exactly to scale!

Event Fee: \$12 per individual | Group rates available

ALL ABOUT THE LEGO EVENT

Building Blocks Workshops is a model building "large group activity" that is presented through the vision of an Architect. Participants are encouraged to build structurally sound, interesting, and whimsical models that have an architectural character worthy of the history they represent.

The Jewish History Construction Series using LEGO building blocks is a hands on activity for children, parents and grandparents. Under the direction of Stephen W. Schwartz, AIA, architect of SWS Architects in Livingston, NJ, the participants are guided through a collective effort to build a huge scale model of one of the selected building projects. The projects are intended for children 8 and older, however, inter-generational when done with participating parents the children can be as young as 4. The architect brings approximately 70,000 LEGO building pieces together with a huge scale drawing of the selected project.

The program consists of 10 minutes of information and approximately one and one half (1½) hours of actual LEGO® construction, followed by an in-depth tour of the completed model plus a pizza dinner for all.

This event is supported by and

To register, go to www.BryanGlazerFamilyJCC.com/LEGOnight

For more information, contact Brandy Gold at (813) 769-4725 or brandy.gold@jewishtampa.com.



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Memphis congressmen from opposing parties show it's possible to get along – their rabbi approves

By **RON KAMPEAS**
JTA news service

WASHINGTON – When the two congressmen representing Memphis meet on the plane home from the nation's capital, the lawmakers catch up on what they have in common: the NCAA Division I basketball team at the University of Memphis; mutual friends in the legal communities; and what's up at Temple Israel.

Despite a shared affection for the university's Tigers, a shared alma mater and a shared faith, Steve Cohen, a liberal Democrat, and David Kustoff, a conservative Republican, are polar opposites in Congress. Cohen is leading an effort to launch impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump. Kustoff enthusiastically embraced Trump during his freshman run for Congress in 2016.

That hasn't stopped them from working together on issues they care about, and both say they wish there were more cross-party partnerships like theirs in the U.S. House of Representatives. Their most significant collaboration was on a bill last year that would enhance penalties for attacks on religious institutions. They've also worked to get federal assistance to preserve Clayborn Temple, a focal point of the 1968 sanitation workers strike that culminated in the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Most of the voters that sent Kustoff to Congress are outside the Memphis area, but the city still ranks high on his priorities.

"I was born in Memphis, grew up in Memphis, went to school in Memphis, went to college in Memphis," he said in an interview in his congressional office here. "I'm a Memphis and West Tennessee guy, and I want to be as supportive as I can of the city of Memphis."

"We have issues in common," Cohen said a week earlier in his congressional office. "To help the Memphis community."

Their rabbi at Temple Israel, Micah Greenstein, said their shared love of Memphis is a function of a city that has always been gracious to its Jewish minority (10,000 strong) and of a community that has returned the affection.

His synagogue, Greenstein says, has been a locus of civil rights activity for going on a century. One of his rabbinical predecessors spoke out against lynchings in the early 20th century; another was a leader in integrating the city in the 1960s. (The temple is in Kustoff's district, but perched on the border of Cohen's, with a satellite for millennials inside the latter's district).

"Our mission statement is to be a force for good not only for the Jewish community but for the greater community," Greenstein

said in an interview.

Cohen and Kustoff share that commitment, Greenstein said, but in districts that reflect their respective values. Cohen's 9th district, which includes the lion's share of Memphis, is majority African-American. Much of Kustoff's 8th is rural and white.

"Steve Cohen's district is home to Beale Street," the legendary blues music district, "and poverty," Greenstein said. "His priorities are different than the farmers and the suburbs in David Kustoff's district."

Kustoff, 51, and Cohen, 68, knew each other long before either entered national politics.

"His father and I were friends," Cohen said. "We practiced law."

And they were products of a Jewish community and a city of under 700,000 where everyone seems to know everyone else."

Cohen, first elected in 2006, said he and Kustoff had a passion for retail politics.

"We share a commitment to fortitude and pursuing politics and working hard and having a good base," he said.

Each acknowledged brushes with anti-Semitism. In 2008, a Democratic rival of Cohen's said he "hates Jesus," and in 2016, a Republican rival of Kustoff's reminded voters that he was the "Christian conservative" in the race. But each also said that the support they have garnered is not simply despite their Jewishness but because their constituents actively reject bigotry.

Cohen said some have tried to convince African-American voters to reject him because he was a white Jew. Such appeals fell flat, he said, because black voters recognized the dangers of appeals to race.

"Although there are some people" in the black community "who think they want someone who 'looks like them,'" he said, "for so many more it's alien to be told to have someone who 'looks like them.'"

Kustoff, a former U.S. attorney, said that when constituents did ask him about faith, it always turned out well.

"When I campaigned for this office, I would literally knock on constituent doors, and I would get asked by some, 'Where do you go to church?,' and my response would be 'Temple Israel,'" he recalled. "Virtually every time I would give that response, the person would say 'I love Israel, what can I do to help?'"

The redistricting after 2010 removed most of the Jews from Cohen's district and placed them in Kustoff's – something Cohen clearly regrets.

The Jewish community is immensely proud of both lawmakers, said Andy Groveman, a Memphis businessman who chairs the United Israel Appeal nationally.



U.S. Rep. David Kustoff, far left, and U.S. Rep. Steve Cohen share a hometown and a temple, but not political ideologies. Kustoff supports the president, Cohen wants to start impeachment proceedings. Still they have found common ground on some issues.

"They have differences, but they have worked together and have really shown that while you can be from different parties, the interests of the community should be first," he said.

Kustoff and Cohen, when they have worked together, complement each other. Cohen helped garner Democratic support for Kustoff's maiden bill as a lead sponsor, on protecting religious institutions (the lead Democratic sponsor was Derek Kilmer of Washington state). Kustoff framed the final

tally card – 402-2 in favor – and keeps it in his office.

Kustoff, who has naturally better ties to the Trump administration, used contacts in the Interior Department to help secure the naming of Clayborn Temple as a National Treasure by the National Trust, which extends to the building federal assistance for renovation. The former church was a staging ground for marches by over 1,000 striking sanitation workers in 1968, which became a focal point of the civil rights movement.

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Why Judaism needs pluralism

By **RABBI NATHAN FARB**
Congregation Schaarai Zedek

“As steel sharpens steel, so one person sharpens the wit of another.” (Proverbs 27:17) There is a deeply rooted principle in Judaism that disagreement makes us stronger, rather than weaker.

Celebrating a diverse set of practices, beliefs, approaches, and interpretations enriches us and makes Judaism unique among religions. Many converts to Judaism say that part of what draws them to choose Judaism is our openness to questioning. While many religions expect unchallenged faith in rigid dogma, Judaism demands that we think most critically about those things that are most sacred.

Our Torah is not unique to us; Christians, Muslims, Karaites, Bahá'ís, and even Rastafarians consider the books of Moses a part of their holy scriptures. Yet the particular way that we read and understand the text makes Judaism special. For starters, we only study the Torah (especially the Oral Torah) in pairs or groups, so that no one person will come to a conclusion in isolation. Learning in pairs (known as *chavruta*) makes both partners think more deeply and arrive at a better understanding of the Torah, and means we are more than the sum of our parts.

The entire Oral Torah is recorded as a series of discussions and disagreements between the great scholars of each age. When Rabbi Yohanan lost his *chavruta* (partner), Rabbi Elazar ben Pedat was assigned to study with him. Whenever Yohanan would make a point, Elazar would find evidence to agree. “Don’t you think I already know that I made a good point?” Rabbi Yohanan cried in exasperation. What he really wanted was someone to try and prove him wrong, and in as many ways as possible.

The Talmud is full of robust disagreements and different practices. Under the rabbinic authority of Yosei HaGelili, it was permitted to eat milk and poultry. Rabbi Eliezer permitted certain work on Shabbat while Rabbi Akiva forbade it. Rabbi Hillel permitted certain marriages and performed conversions that Rabbi Shammai refused.



RABBINICALLY — SPEAKING —

They even disagreed about whether to stand, sit, or lay down while reciting the Shema. The Talmud itself begins not with a statement, but with a question, “At what time is the evening Shema recited?” Some of these debates are ongoing even now, hundreds of years later.

The ongoing innovation of Judaism is our ability to incorporate and synthesize varying points of view into our faith. Before the Rabbis became the dominant leaders of Judaism, there were Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes. Before them, the Hasmonians instituted reforms, and even before them were the reforms of King Josiah, dating all the way back to the biblical period. Among the early Rabbis, there continued to be intellectual diversity, and Judaism got the Talmud out of their wonderful discussions.

They debated every imaginable detail of Jewish practice, but even so they recognized that there was a limit. Rabbis who were too inflexible, too strict, or too literal were regularly chastised. Once, the rabbis of the Talmud were debating what to do with a lost chick that was found in the vicinity of a henhouse (technically a dovecote). They engaged in a lengthy debate about the hopping distances of small birds, at what age a chick begins to fly, the varying sizes of coops, and what crops are appealing enough to lure a domestic bird far away from home. They finally determined that if the chick were within 50 cubits (about 75 feet) of the nearest coop, it should be assumed that it wandered from the owner. Rabbi Yirmeya spoke up and asked, “What if one foot of the chick is within 50 cubits, and the other is more than 50 cubits?” The other rabbis immediately expelled him.

Judaism was never a monolith. Today, there continues to be plenty of room in Judaism for many perspectives and practices, with differences between Americans and Israelis, Ashkenazi and Sephardic, or Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox. There is ongoing debate and discussion between various streams, and even within streams of Judaism. In true Jewish fashion, we continue to strengthen and sharpen one another where we allow respectful exchange.

Rabbinically Speaking is published as a public service by the Jewish Press in cooperation with the Tampa Rabbinical Association, which assigns the column on a rotating basis.

Congregations

Cong. Schaarai Zedek

Interfaith study: Congregation Schaarai Zedek will join with Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church to engage in an interfaith study program with a series of talks on “Jesus and His Jewish Influences.” **Pastors John DeBevois, Nicole Abdenour, and Will Wellman** along with **Rabbis Richard Birnholz and Nathan Farb** will participate in the six weekly sessions starting Feb. 21 from 7-8:30 p.m. We know that Christianity arose out of Judaism, but we know little about the way Jesus’ Jewish background might have contributed to this progression.

The sessions at Schaarai Zedek will be on Feb. 21 and 28 and March 7 and will deal with these topics: “Jewish Law Giving: The Golden Rule – are you supposed to hate your enemies?; “What does Jewish scripture mean by “The Son of Man;?” “Was Jesus the expected messiah from the Davidic line?” and “Was Jesus a Pharisee? A ‘Son of Light?’ The Son of a Virgin?”

The sessions at Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church, 3501 W. San Jose St., on March 14, 20 and 28 will deal with “Jesus’ arrest and crucifixion and who was to blame; “What did the ancient Rabbis say about Jesus;” “What kind of Messiah did Jesus consider himself to be?” and “His Teachings in Context.” Register online at www.zedek.org/rsvp or call the temple at (813) 876-2377

Teen band Shabbat: The teens at Schaarai Zedek will present their first Teen Band Shabbat with music for this Shabbat led by teenagers from grades 7-12 on Friday, Feb. 23 at 7:30 p.m.

Winter wonderland: Put on your mittens and jackets and come to Schaarai Zedek to play in the snow on Saturday, Feb. 24 from 3:30-5 p.m. In addition, there will be a dessert truck, juice and pizza. This free event is for families with young children and their siblings. RSVP to www.zedek.org/rsvp or call the temple at (813) 867-2377.

S’more snow: The 20s+30s group will host “Snow and S’mores,” featuring a campfire, doughnut dessert truck, “adult” hot chocolate bar and a chance to play in what is left of the temple’s “snowstorm” on Saturday, Feb. 24 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. RSVP at www.zedek.org/20s30s or contact **Lindsey Dewey** at (813) 876-2377 or LDewey@zedek.org.

YES Fund Brunch: The Sisterhood will honor **Donna Birnholz** at its annual Youth, Education, and Special Services Fund Brunch on Monday, Feb. 26 at 11 a.m. at the temple. The event will recognize Birnholz for her 30 years of service as the Flom

Shabbat Candle Lighting Times



Feb. 16	•	6:04 pm
Feb. 23	•	6:09 pm
March 2	•	6:14 pm
March 9	•	6:18 pm

Religious School administrative secretary, the support and strength she has provided to her husband, **Rabbi Richard Birnholz**, as well as aid to various religious school activities, to the students, to the temple, and to the Sisterhood. The annual brunch is a fundraiser for Women of Reform Judaism’s YES (Youth Education and Special Projects) Fund. All who attend will be expected to make at least a minimum donation of \$36 to the fund in addition to \$18 for brunch.

For more information, call the temple office.

Hamantaschen sale: Sisterhood members will be baking and selling apricot, prune, poppy, cherry and chocolate chip varieties of hamantaschen for \$10 a dozen. All proceeds will go to the Schaarai Zedek religious school.

Call the temple at (813) 876-2377 for more information.

Go Bolts: The Brotherhood is going on an outing to see the Tampa Bay Lightning take on the Buffalo Sabres on Wednesday, Feb. 28, with a bus leaving the synagogue parking lot at 6 p.m. The cost is \$130 for brotherhood members and \$150 for non-members and includes a bus from Schaarai Zedek, ticket, buffet and drinks.

For more information, call the temple.

Cong. Kol Ami

Meet the doctor: As part of the congregation’s “who NU” program where individual members of the congregation get a chance to tell others about themselves, **Dr. David Berger** will be on hand to talk about his life and work on Sunday, Feb. 18 from 10 a.m. to noon. He is a board-certified pediatrician with the Wholistic ReLeaf Family Care Clinic, a Division of Wholistic Pediatrics and Family Care in Carrollwood. He will talk about the use of medical marijuana, who can obtain it, who can prescribe it and treatments and regulations regarding it.

• CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Religious Directory

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY Reform

BETH ISRAEL/ JEWISH CONGREGATION OF SUN CITY CENTER — 1115 E. Del Webb Blvd., Sun City Center • Mailing Address: P. O. Box 5203, Sun City Center, 33571 • Rabbi Carla Freedman • Shabbat Services: Friday 7:30 p.m., 2nd and 4th Saturday 10 a.m., Torah Study: noon • Telephone: (813) 634-2590 • Web address: www.jscoc.org. • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

Congregation BETH AM — 2030 W. Fletcher Ave., Tampa 33612 • Rabbi Jason Rosenberg • Joy Katzen-Guthrie, Cantorial Leader • Shabbat Services: 1st, 3rd and 5th Fridays, 7:30 p.m.; 2nd and 4th Fridays, 6:30 p.m., potluck dinner to follow; Saturdays, 9 a.m. • Torah study 3rd Saturday, 10 a.m. • Telephone: (813) 968-8511 • Website: www.bethamtampa.org. • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

Congregation BETH SHALOM — 706 Bryan Road, Brandon, 33511 • Rabbi Richard Address (visiting) • Cantor Moshe Friedler (visiting) • Shabbat Service: Friday 7:45 p.m., • Telephone: (813) 681-6547 • Website: <http://bethshalom-brandon.org>. • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

Congregation SCHAARAI ZEDEK — 3303 W. Swann Ave., Tampa 33609 • Rabbi Richard J. Birnholz, Rabbi Nathan Farb • Cantor Deborah Cannizzaro • Services: Friday, 7:30 p.m., Saturday, Torah study, 9 a.m. • Telephone: (813) 876-2377 • Website: www.zedek.org. • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

Conservative

Congregation KOL AMI — 3919 Moran Road, Tampa 33618 • Rabbi Howard Siegel • Cantor Beth Schlossberg • Services: Friday 6:30 p.m. (Family Service first Friday of the month); Saturday 9:30 a.m.; Sunday, 9:15 a.m.; Monday-Thursday, 7:30 p.m. • Torah study every Saturday, 8:30 - 9:25 a.m. • Telephone: 962-6338 • website: www.kolami.org. • Affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

Congregation MEKOR SHALOM — 14005A N. Dale Mabry Hwy., Tampa, 33618 • Hazzan Jodi Sered-Lever, Spiritual Leader • Services: Friday 6:30 p.m., Saturday, 9:30 a.m. • Telephone: (813) 963-1818 •

Website: www.mekorshalom.org. • Unaffiliated
Congregation RODEPH SHOLOM — 2713 Bayshore Blvd., Tampa 33629 • Rabbi Josh Hershman • Cantor Andres Kornworcel • Services: Friday, 6 p.m.; Saturday service, 9:30 a.m.; Mon. - Fri. 7:15 a.m., Sunday, 9:15 a.m. • Telephone: (813) 837-1911 • Website: www.rsholom.org. • Affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

Orthodox

BAIS (TEMPLE) DAVID CHABAD — 2001 W. Swann Ave., Tampa 33606 • Rabbi Lazer Rivkin • Shabbat Services and meal: Friday 7:30 p.m., Saturday 9:45 a.m., 7:30 p.m. • Telephone: (813) 966-8770 • Website: www.chabadofcentralflorida.com. • Email: Drivkin52@gmail.com

CHABAD LUBAVITCH of TAMPA BAY — 14908 Pennington Road, Tampa 33624 • Rabbi Yossie Dubrowski, executive director • Telephone: (813) 963-2317 • Website: www.chabadoftampabay.com

CHABAD of BRANDON / JEWISH DISCOVERY CENTER — 1578 Bloomingdale Ave., Valrico, 33596 • Rabbi Mendel Rubashkin • Services: Saturday, 10 a.m. • Call for location, Telephone: (813) 571-8100 • Website: chabadbrandon.org.

CHABAD CHAI of SOUTH TAMPA — 2511 W. Swann Ave. #201, Tampa, FL 33606 • Rabbi Mendy Dubrowski • Services: 1st and 3rd Saturday of month, 10 a.m. • Telephone: (813) 922-1273 • Website: www.ChabadSouthTampa.com

BAIS MENACHEM CHABAD — 1319 North B. St., Tampa, 33606 • Rabbi Levi Rivkin • Shabbat dinner, 8 p.m. • Shacharit service: Mon. & Thurs., 8:15 a.m., Weinberg Village. Mincha service: Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m., • Telephone: (813) 375-9799, (813) 504-4432 • Website: www.bmchabad.com

Congregation BAIS TEFILLAH — 14908 Pennington Road, Tampa, 33624 • Rabbi Yossie Dubrowski • Shabbat Services: Friday, 8 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. • Sunday Shachrit, 9 a.m. • Telephone: (813) 963-2317 • Website: www.chabadoftampabay.com

YOUNG ISRAEL of TAMPA - 13207 N. 52nd St., Tampa, 33617 • Rabbi Uriel Rivkin • Services: Monday - Friday 7 a.m., Friday, 7 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. • Sunday, 9:00 a.m. • Evening services every night at sunset • (813) 832-3018 • Website: www.youngisraeloftampa.org

MERKOS CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF CENTRAL FLORIDA — 613 S. Melville Ave. Tampa, 33606 • Director: Rabbi Lazer Rivkin • Telephone: (813) 966-8770 • Website: www.ChabadOfCentralFlorida.com

Campus

CHABAD HOUSE JEWISH STUDENT CENTER at USF — 13287 Arbor Point Circle unit 102, Tampa, 33617, Mailing address: USF Marshall CTR. Box 310, Tampa, 33620. • Rabbi Levi Rivkin • Shabbat Services and meal: Friday 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. • Housing Available • Telephone: (813) 504-4432 • Website: www.chabadhouseusf.org • Email: bmchabad@gmail.com

CHABAD JEWISH STUDENT CENTER at UT — 401 W. Kennedy Blvd. Box P., Tampa 33606 • Rabbi Levi Rivkin • Telephone: (813) 504-4432 • Website: www.chabadut.org

HILLELS OF THE FLORIDA SUNCOAST — 13101 Sycamore Drive, Tampa, 33620 • Rabbi Ed Rosenthal • Shabbat Services: (during academic year) Friday 6:30 p.m. • Telephone: (813) 899-2788 • Website: www.suncoasthillels.org.

USF CHABAD on CAMPUS — 4506 Sweetwater Lake Drive, Tampa, 33620 • Rabbi Piny Backman • Website: www.USFChabad.com • Telephone: (813) 978-8723

Jewish Renewal

Congregation OR AHAVAH — Rabbi Debrah Shenefelt, spiritual leader • Monthly gathering — see website for more information • Telephone: 813-968-7850; email: D.shenefelt@att.net. • Website: www.Orhavah.org • Affiliated with Aleph.

CITRUS COUNTY Conservative

Congregation BETH SHOLOM — 102 Civic Circle, Beverly Hills • Mailing address: Beverly Hills Jewish Center, P. O. Box 640024, Beverly Hills, FL 34464-0024 • Shabbat services: Friday, 6 p.m., Saturday, 9:30 a.m. Telephone (352) 746-6258 • Website: www.bethsholomcitrus.org

PASCO COUNTY Orthodox

CHABAD JEWISH CENTRE at WIREGRASS — 2124 Ashley Oaks Circle, Wesley Chapel, 33544 • Rabbi Mendy Yarmush • Services: First and Third Saturday of the month, 10:30 a.m. • Telephone: (813) 642-3244 • Website: www.ChabadatWiregrass.com.

NORTH PINELLAS COUNTY Reform

Temple AHAVAT SHALOM — 1575 Curlew Rd., Palm Harbor, 34683 • Rabbi Gary Klein • Services: First Friday: 6:00 p.m., All other Fridays: 7:30 p.m., call for Saturday service time • Telephone: (727) 785-8811 • Website: www.ahavatshalom.org. • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

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

POLK COUNTY Reform

Temple BETH SHALOM — 1029 Bradbury Road, • P.O. Box 313 Winter Haven, 33882-0313 • Rabbi Garson Herzfeld • Shabbat evening services: (usually 2nd and 4th Shabbat of the month at 7:30 p.m.) Torah study-Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. • Telephone: (863) 292-0722. • Website: www.templebethshalompolk.org. • Affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism

Conservative

Temple EMANUEL — 600 Lake Hollingsworth Drive, Lakeland, 33803 • Rabbi David Goldstein • Shabbat Services: Friday 7:30 p.m.; Saturday 9:30 a.m. Telephone: (863) 682-8616. • Website: TempleEmanuelLakeland.com. • Affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

Orthodox

CHABAD JEWISH CENTER — 2270 Griffin Road, Lakeland, 33810 • Rabbi Moshe Lazaros • Shabbat Services: Saturday 10 a.m. • Telephone: (863) 937-5565 • Website: www.chabadlakeland.org.

Congregations

• CONTINUED from PREVIOUS PAGE

Purim carnival: Mordecai's Miraculous Masquerade will take place on Sunday, Feb. 25 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. This is a family-friendly outdoor Purim carnival, featuring a petting zoo, 41-foot inflatable obstacle course, bounce house, DJ music and dancing, hamster ball races, inflatable basketball challenge, jugglers, games and prizes galore. There will also be hamantashen, hot dogs, popcorn, candy, and more. Students of the religious school will perform a Purim shpiel, *The Story of Purim*.

Tickets will be sold in advance or at the door. It is \$20 for an all-access wristband that includes activities and 1 meal ticket. Just a meal ticket is \$5 and includes hot dog, drink, and hamantashen. There is also a pay-as-you-go option. For more information, contact the Kol Ami front office at (813) 962 - 6338 or email CantorBeth@kolami.org.

Pizza & PJ Shabbat: All young families are welcome to join in on Friday, March 2 from 6-7 p.m. for a celebration of Shabbat filled with guitar playing, singing, dancing, friendship and food. Enjoy a pizza dinner followed by a child-friendly musical service, led by **Rabbi Howard Siegel** and David Berger, and then ice cream for dessert. PJs not required, but children, and adults, should dress comfortably. Cost is \$5 per person, with a \$25 family maximum. Children 3 and younger are free. RSVP to the Kol Ami office at frontoffice@kolami.org by Wednesday, Feb. 28.

L'Chaim: A class, "Sharing Life's Lessons," is offered on Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to noon. Topics, readings and a different leader are chosen for each weekly session.

Talmud: A Talmud study class with Rabbi Siegel is offered on Thursdays from 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. Jewish law confronts everything from capital punishment to how to make rain. This is open to everyone from beginners through experts. Texts are provided.

Jewish ethics: Rabbi Siegel leads a course in Jewish ethics on Wednesdays from 11 a.m. to noon. This course will use *Pirke Avot: Ethics of Our Ancestors* as a springboard to discussion and debate on issues of the day in the light of Jewish moral/ethical demands.

Cong. Beth Am

Havdallah on the beach: Enjoy the beach at Pass-a-Grille for Havdallah with Congregation Beth Am as members say "goodbye" to Shabbat as the sun sets over the Gulf of Mexico on Saturday, Feb. 24 at 6 p.m. Look for Beth Am members just south of Paradise Grill at 10th Avenue. For more information, contact Admin@BethAmTampa.org.

Purim carnival: Dress up in your favorite costume and join in games, face painting and more during the Beth Am annual Purim Carnival on Sunday, Feb. 25. This is open to the community. For more information and to confirm start time, contact Admin@BethAm-Tampa.org.

Author to speak: The Beth Am Brotherhood will present a program, "Escape From Nazi Austria" with author **Robert Josef Konig** on Sunday March 18 at 3 p.m. in the temple sanctuary. The 90-minute program will include a screening of the documentary film, *Haven - The Dramatic Story of 1000 WWII Refugees and How They Came to America*. Konig will also discuss his novel *Of Good and Evil: Prelude to the Holocaust*, the first in a two-volume set of historical fiction about his family and the

Holocaust. There is not charge, but donations are welcome. Complimentary light fare and refreshments will be provided and there will be a full bar with setups with suggested donations for adult beverages. After the presentation there will be a meet and greet and book signing with Konig. A portion of sales of his book will go to the congregation.

Tot Shabbat: Every third Friday of the month there is a Tot Shabbat service at 6:30 for tots up to age 5 and their families as they welcome in Shabbat with music, prayer and a story. This casual service is followed by an oneg Shabbat.

Cafe Shabbat: Join in a monthly opportunity to come together, eat food, engage in Shabbat in fun, different ways, and then top it off with some time to pray together on Saturday, March. 3 at 9 a.m. Email Admin@BethAm-Tampa.org for more information.

Israeli dancing: Lessons in Israeli dancing are offered every Tuesday at 7 p.m. For more information, contact **Irma Polster** at Ipolster@TampaBay.rr.com or call the temple office.

Cong. Rodeph Sholom

Purim carnival: Carnival games, pony rides, a petting farm, face painting, a photo booth, pizza lunch, popcorn, snacks, hamantashen, prizes and more will be offered during the Purim Carnival on Sunday, Feb. 25 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Advance ticket package for \$8 includes lunch ticket, 15 game tickets, 10 prize tickets and one ticket for a chance to win a prize. All are welcome and costumes are encouraged. At the door, the cost for tickets is \$1 for four and lunch is \$5 per person. Purchase advance tickets online at www.rsholom.org. For more information, call Judy at educator@rsholom.org or (813) 837-1911.

A Very Potter Purim: Enjoy an evening of Purim celebration at the synagogue on Wednesday, Feb. 28, with dinner, a bounce house, crafts and more from 5-6 p.m. For those who wish, there will be a "Purim in a box" option for dinner - wrap sandwich, chips, drink, fruit, and you can order online at www.rsholom.org. At 6 p.m. there will be a Megillah reading and a Purim play titled *A Very Potter Purim Play*. At 7:15 p.m. folks can enjoy hamantashen and fun activities, then at 8 p.m. there will be a traditional Megillah reading.

Cong. Bais Menachem Chabad

Hypnotic Purim: The Chabad Jewish Student Union will present a Purim celebration, Hamantashen and Hypnosis, on Wednesday, Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. on the University of Tampa campus. Entertainment will be feature hypnotist **Larry Silver**. Silver is a seasoned actor, stand-up comedian and master hypnotist, who allows the audience to volunteer to become the stars of his show. The event will be held in the Sykes Chapel and Center for Faith and Values, 601 Frederic H. Spaulding Drive, Tampa. All are welcome. For more information, call (813) 504-4432 or email bmchabad@gmail.com

Torah class: Join a weekly Torah class on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. at the University of Tampa. The class explores contemporary issues through a Torah perspective. For more information, contact **Rabbi Levi Rivkin** at (813) 504-4432 or email bmchabad@gmail.com.

Practical kabbalah: Enrich

the soul and mind with a touch of kabbalah. Learn practical spirituality for everyday life. Classes are held on Wednesdays, 6:15 - 7 p.m.

Cong. Young Israel of Tampa

Guest Poet and a meal: Acclaimed poet **Yehoshua November** will read selections from his two volumes of poetry, *God's Optimism* (a finalist for the *L.A. Times Book Prize*) and *Two Worlds Exist* (a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award and the Paterson Poetry Prize) at the next Festive Meal and New Moon event. His presentation will be in the Norman Jewish Library, 13207 N. 52nd St., Temple Terrace, on Saturday, March 10 at 8 p.m. November will also share some of the experiences and teachings that inspired him to choose a life rooted in the unlikely combination of contemporary poetry and Orthodox Judaism. His poems have appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Sun Magazine*, *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*, *VQR*, and on National Public Radio. November teaches writing at Rutgers University and Touro College. The poetry will be accompanied with food, drink and song. Suggested donation of \$18 will help defray the expenses of the evening.

For more information, and to RSVP, call Zev at (917) 439-5888 or email youngisraelatampa@hotmail.com

Cong. Beth Shalom Brandon

Piano man Purim: Join a Purim celebration on Wednesday, Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. for a Megillah reading, Western shpiel titled *Persian Giddy-Up*, and hamantashen. This year's original shpiel, written by **Michael Lubin**, uses melodies of Billy Joel. The congregants are the players. All are invited to join in as we pump up the volume when hearing Haman's name.

Mardi Gras gala: The congregation will hold its annual fundraiser, "Mardi Gras Gala for a Cause," on Saturday, Feb. 17 at 7 p.m. This year's event will feature games, prizes, and silent and live auctions, a buffet dinner and dancing. Once again, the congregation is partnering with the Special Olympics Florida Healthy Community Program to raise funds for the congregation and the Special Olympics program. The gala will be at the River Hills Country Club, 3945 New River Hills Parkway in Valrico. Tickets, which include



Yehoshua November

buffet dinner and entertainment, are \$30 for adults and \$15 for children 5-12. Children under 5 are free. Purchase tickets on www.bethshalom-brandon.org.

Chabad of Brandon

Israeli style Purim: Celebrate "Purim in Israel" on Thursday, March 1 at 5:30 p.m. at the Regent (lower level), 6437 Watson Road, Riverview. The celebration will feature authentic Israeli delicacies such as falafel, shwarma, beef kabobs. Additionally, there will be a multi-media Megillah reading, Israeli wine tasting and Israeli music. Folks can make sand art in the "Negev," squeeze their own juice in "Jaffa" and take a photo at the "Kotel." This event is for all ages. The cost is \$15 per person, \$10 for those 55 and older, or \$50 per family. RSVP to jewishbrandon.com/rsvp or call (813) 571-8100.

Mega challah bake and concert: Women are invited to participate in a huge challah baking party, with each participant baking one challah for herself and one to give to someone in need of extra love and care. Make dough from scratch and pick from a variety of recipes. Participants will discover the secret to great tasting challah and explore the beauty of this tradition unique to Jewish women. The program will also feature workshops on braiding challah, a Shabbat-themed light buffet, and live musical performance with Israeli singer **Naama**. The event is on Thursday, March 8 at 7 p.m. at the Jewish Discovery Center, 1578 Bloomingdale Ave. in Valrico. Reservations are required to attend; admission is \$18 per person. RSVP to **Tzippy Rubashkin** at (813) 571-8100, email her at Tzippy@JewishBrandon.com, or log on to www.Jewishbrandon.com/rsvp.

Cong Beth Israel Sun City Center

Purim shpiel: The congregation's Purim shpiel, *Where is Bert Parks?* will be presented on Wednesday, Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. There will be hamantashen and wine tast-

ing after the shpiel.

Book talk: There will be a discussion of *And After the Fire*, by Lauren Belfer, will be held in the social hall on Monday, Feb. 19 from 10 a.m. to noon.

Chabad of Wiregrass Wesley Chapel

Purim in the Shtetl: Visit the European old Shtetl of Anatevka at Chabad at Wiregrass on Thursday, March 1 at 5 p.m. Travel back in time to a Yiddish marketplace, listen to music by the village fiddler, care for the animals at Tuveys Farm, then visit Zelda's Bake Shop and Berl the Scribe. Enjoy this and many more games and activities for children and adults. For more information and to RSVP, visit www.ChabadatWiregrass.com.

Spa for the Soul: Join Chabad Women at Wiregrass for their 10th annual Spa for the Soul on Sunday, Feb. 25 at 5 p.m. Pamper yourself with a variety of mini spa treatments from massages to facials and everything in between. The evening also will include a live musical performance.

For more information and to RSVP, visit www.ChabadatWiregrass.com/SPA.

Temple Emanuel Lakeland

Live Artfully: Temple Emanuel's Live Artfully fundraiser will take place on Saturday, Feb. 17 at 7 p.m. at the temple. The public is invited to attend and bring family and friends. This year's theme is "Live Artfully ... A Taste of Spain." There will be hors d'oeuvres, live entertainment, a silent auction, cocktails, desserts, and more. Admission is \$50 per person and dress is party chic. The fundraiser will benefit Temple Emanuel and Pace Center for Girls Inc. Polk. RSVP to the temple at (863) 682-8616 or office@templeemanuellakeland.com or by paying online at <http://templeemanuellakeland.com/events/annual-fundraiser/>.

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New congregation forms in Pasco

Pasco resident Alan Stern saw a need and took matters into his own hands to find a solution.

Stern grew up in a Reform Jewish family. His wife's family was more Conservative/Orthodox. They live in Land O' Lakes between two congregations, each one about 15 miles away.

Feeling that neither synagogue offered something for the Sterns and their extended families, Stern did the next best thing: he started holding services of his own.

Under the name Family Friendly Temple, Beth Chevarim (House of Friends,) the Sterns have opened their home to local Jews that want to worship with their whole families.

"I have grandchildren from age 5 to 15," said Stern. "I want them to come and enjoy the services and I want to sit next to my wife."

Wife Nayda Stern creates the

home cooked fare for the services held the third Friday of each month and members chip in \$10 to alleviate the cost. During the January gathering, members also decided on the official name and began choosing a board of directors.

Fifteen families responded to the ad the Sterns put in the local paper and more responses have been pouring in.

"We need to be united as a group," said Stern. "Pasco is a growing area. I want to reach as many Pasco Jews who are unaffiliated to get a feeling of where to go from here."

The next service will be Feb. 23 and runs about a half an hour. Dinner, which is kosher, will be served afterward. All community members are invited.

For more information, email FamilyFriendlyTemple@yahoo.com.



Architect Stephen Schwartz of New Jersey, helps direct the Lego construction of the city of Jerusalem at a previous event elsewhere. The project will be repeated in Tampa on March 4.

LEGO

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

The Lego-building program is geared for participants age 8 and older; however, when participating with parents, the children can be as young as 4.

Once the Lego city is built, participants will sit around the model and be taken on a tour of the city, so everyone learns about Jerusalem with a whole new vision.

Those who have hosted the Jewish History Construction series have shared that the educational value of this program is exceptional and it has been hailed by educators as a meaningful way to teach, have fun, and retain knowledge.

Participants can be both "builders" and "observers." The actual builders can number as many as 150 participants. During the project, each group is working on a small section of their own. The architect orchestrates the entire construction so that at the end of the two hours there is a completed

model made up of everyone's individual and group efforts.

"It has never failed that the project is complete and everyone is absolutely in awe that they were able to accomplish so much in such a short period of time by working together as a team," says Schwartz.

It is recommended that all "builders" wear comfortable clothes because they will be working on the floor. Shoes are not allowed on the drawing that serves as a template for the city, so participants should plan to wear socks.

To celebrate the culmination of the final project, participants can share their experience with a pizza dinner in the ballroom of the JCC, 522 N. Howard Ave., Tampa.

This event is supported by PJ Our Way and TweenConneX. Tickets are \$12 per person and can be purchased at www.BryanGlazerFamilyJCC.com/LEGONight.

For more information, contact Brandy Gold at brandy.gold@jewishtampa.com or (813) 769-4725.

Make (business) connections in March get together

The Tampa JCCs & Federation will host its next networking social, Professional Community Connection (PCC), on Tuesday, March 13, from 6-8 p.m. at Platt Street Borough Bar & Eatery, 1809 W. Platt St., Tampa.

The event is open to the community with pre-registration highly encouraged.

Complimentary hor d'oeuvres will be served and valet will be available for all guests, courtesy of Platt Street Borough.

Professional Community Connection is an endeavor of the Tampa JCCs & Federation to foster the development of networks and relationships between like-minded Jewish professionals and businesses in the Tampa area.

Tucker/Hall public relations firm is the presenting sponsor of the evening.

To register, go to www.jewishtampa.com/pcc. For more information, contact Michelle Gallagher at michelle.gallagher@jewishtampa.com or (813) 739-1687.

Letter to the Editor

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

Respect needs to be earned

Dear Editor:

Rabbi Josh Hearshen (Rabbinically Speaking, Jan. 12) asks that we not merely "tolerate" members of the Jewish denominations, heterosexuals and homosexuals, Muslims, Christians, "or any other religion." (He doesn't say how he feels about agnostics and atheists.) Rather, we should "respect" them.

But respect is something we can give only to individuals, and it is something that has to be earned. I respect people because of their accomplishments or the way they treat others.

We shouldn't denigrate toleration. The world could use a great deal more of it, particularly college and university students and their professors.

I wish Rabbi Hearshen would tell us why we should automatically respect someone merely because he or she believes in a religion whose founder murdered around 600 Jews for refusing to give up their religion. The massacre of the (Jewish) Banu Qurayza tribe in Arabia raises a question about the limits of toleration. Should we tolerate those who are unwilling to tolerate others?

Substituting respect for tolerance gives a carte blanche to groups, or to their spokespersons, to define respectable behavior. Their definition may not be compatible with our rights to freedom of expression.

Jeff Lipkes
Wesley Chapel

LET US GUIDE YOU HOME

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Orestes Destrada poses with Jack and Rochelle Rudowsky. Jack is Post 373 commander.

Rays TV, radio personality Destrada shares life story

Orestes Destrada, a former Major League baseball player who gives pre- and post-game television and radio analysis of Tampa Bay Rays games, recently addressed members of the Tampa Post 373 of the Jewish War Veterans as well as Men's Club members and guests at Congregation Beth Am in Tampa.

Destrada shared warm and amusing tales of his life story, a journey of escape from the revolution in his native Cuba, to a career as a professional baseball player in the U.S. He played with the New York Yankees, Pittsburgh Pirates and Florida Marlins and spent five years playing in the Japanese Pacific League with the Seibu Lions, where he led the league in home runs for three consecutive years and was MVP of the 1990 Japan Series.

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Holocaust survivors and students plant trees for Tu b'Shevat.



(L-R) Eduardo Kornworcel and Ezra Gamson in the garden.

With help of Holocaust survivors, students tend garden

Two Holocaust survivors joined sixth-grade students at Hillel Academy to work in the school's garden on Jan. 30 as part of the school's open house program.

Together they planted parsley in the hydroponic garden installed by Tampa Urban Benefit Farms (Tub Farms), hoping it will be ready to harvest for Passover. In addition, they planted a tree in celebration of Tu B'Shevat.

"I had the joy of spending my morning with two Holocaust survivors (who asked to remain anonymous) as they spent time with the children and planted in the hydroponic garden," said Tub Farm founder and Hillel alumni Nava Kirk. "I personally was so moved just to spend a little time with both ladies, who are as kind as can be."

Hillel students have been planting in the garden and donating the produce since 2015. Originally, each class had 16 plants, which they monitored frequently. Crops have included cucumbers, Swiss chard, lettuce, squash, green beans and basil.

The garden can now hold close to 400 plants, said Kirk. Over the three years TUB Farms has worked with Hillel Academy, they have donated "hundreds of pounds of produce" to Meals on Wheels and Hillsborough County Family Partnership Alliance (HCFPA), which helps people in the dependency system, including foster parents and relative caregivers.

This year, donations are going to local Holocaust survivors as well. There are nine survivors who receive vegetables every two to three weeks, and there is enough food to support more, said Kirk.

For more information on the TUB Farms program, visit www.tubfarms.org or email tubfarms@gmail.com.



A Holocaust survivor plants parsley in the Hillel Academy tub farm.

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Engagement

Eisenberg/Wasserberger

Michael Eitan Wasserberger and Julie Dora Eisenberg announce their engagement.

The perspective bridegroom is the son of Manya Rubenstein of St. Petersburg and Abe Wasserberger and Lissa Abrahams of Baltimore. He spent much of his childhood in Tampa and Palm Harbor and is a graduate of Towson University in Maryland. He is a commercial pilot for Spirit Airlines.

The bride-to-be is the daughter of the late Debbie Kieffer Eisenberg and Stan Eisenberg and Nance Alexander of Minneapolis. She is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, and is a registered nurse at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

A June wedding is planned at Temple Israel in Minneapolis, with a honeymoon in Tuscany.

The couple will reside in Chicago.



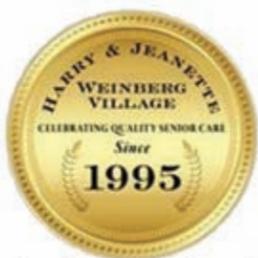
Students from Brandeis University meet with Seymour Bluestone at his Clearwater home in 2013. (L-R) Bluestone's neighbor Chris Sotnick, a student from Kenya, Bluestone, a student from India and Brandeis professor Laurence Simon.

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MILLIONS

• Continued from FRONT PAGE
after a while he started getting short of breath. He needed a pacemaker. I went with him to the hospital so he wouldn't be alone. ... Then there was a bout with cancer. That's probably when I started being a nurse as well as a friend."

"He watched the news every day – and Lawrence Welk. He loved Lawrence Welk," Chris said. "He was extremely intelligent, started college when he was 16, and he was all about education, all about knowledge and all about world peace. It disturbed him so much, things that were going on in the world and how people were treated."

Prof. Laurence Simon, founding director of the Sustainable International Development (SID) program at Brandeis' Heller School for Social Management, said from his office that Bluestone "had come up to consider the possibility of a gift to the university, and he was introduced to a few people on campus who were in programs that (the school) thought he might be interested in."

A lunch with Simon at the faculty club was the beginning of a long friendship. "I knew it would be an excellent relationship when he handed me a business card – he was retired by then so I guess it was more of a calling card – and along with all his contact information was a little phrase, One World," Simon said.

"I told him that at orientation every year I had an event for incoming students from all over the world that I called the One World Cafe. So that phrase was part of the attraction for

each other, that we had this rather idealistic view of putting people together from all faiths and nationalities and walks of life."

Bluestone's bequest will provide financial aid for up to five students in the SID program in future years, and support research and program development in the Center for Global Development and Sustainability, also at the Heller School.

Bluestone graduated from Cornell and the New York University School of Medicine and held a number of medical positions, including serving for 10 years as director of the New York State Rehabilitation Hospital.

He spoke French, German, Italian, Spanish and Hebrew as well as English, the Sotnicks said. He loved his computer, was on it all the time, receiving and sending jokes to people all over the world. He was never Seymour. Always Sy, "and he would sign his e-mails 'Sigh,'" Merrienne said. "Con amore (With love), Sigh."

Simon visited Bluestone annually, often bringing along a couple of his international students. "He just adored these visits. ... Even in his old age Sy would sit there speaking to them in French or Spanish. He was incredibly intellectually curious and had a tremendous knowledge of world history and cultures. I don't think it's an exaggeration to say he considered those visits among the highlights of his year."

Bluestone also served as a medical officer in the U.S. Army in Korea during 1945-47, reaching the rank of captain. "He married at age 39 in Jamaica – the island, not Queens," Chris Sotnick said. "His wife died many years ago – I don't think he ever mentioned her name – and they had no children.

"He was very political, ultra-liberal. He gave to charities, to hospice, and to Democratic causes. He voted for Bernie Sanders. He could not stand the current president. Loved Obama. And he was very agnostic. He lost his religion. He saw what was going on in the world and he lost his faith."

Still, the Sotnicks said, Bluestone observed many Jewish traditions. He kept strictly kosher, and he would light Yahrzeit candles on the anniversary of family deaths.

"He did not want anybody to know he was a doctor," Merrienne said. "He was very humble and very private. ... He just didn't want any attention at all. He didn't want any (funeral) service. No memorial, no obituary, nothing.

"He left very specific instructions," Merrienne added. "He wanted to be cremated, and we took his ashes to Bay Pines (Veterans Hospital in St. Petersburg), where his brother's ashes were buried."

The Sotnicks put a Star of David on his grave marker. "He would have liked that," Merrienne said. "He lost his religion but he was proud of his heritage."

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Tampa-Orlando-Pinellas Foundation extends reach to Jewish families, organizations elsewhere

The Tampa-Orlando-Pinellas Jewish Foundation (TOP) ended 2017 with assets supporting the Jewish and general nonprofit communities approaching \$50 million.

The TOP portfolio includes \$3.7 million in Israel Bonds and net investment performance of 9.57 percent.

“The past 12 months mark a banner year for the Foundation and its donors as we together embarked on an expansion program to bring our philanthropic and investment management services to organizations and families outside Central Florida where no Jewish Foundation currently exists,” said Emilie Socash, TOP’s executive director.

TOP also successfully completed a two-year legacy program with the nationally recognized Harold Grinspoon Foundation, yielding over 400 new legacy commitments with an estimated future value of more than \$15 million. The Life & Legacy program further ensures and protects the financial strength

and stability of the local Jewish community, a parallel mission of the Foundation.

“The beauty of creating legacy gifts, an investment in our next generations, is that they provide the permanent financial resources to protect and sustain the Jewish community in the midst of a rapidly changing world,” said Jeffrey Herman, TOP Jewish Foundation president.

Of the nearly \$50 million in assets at TOP, approximately 40 percent – or \$20 million – are held in endowments. An additional 28 percent are invested for Jewish agencies and synagogues throughout Tampa, Orlando, Pinellas and Gainesville, the newest community to join TOP as a result of its expansion program. The remaining 32 percent are held in over 250 donor-advised funds for individuals and families throughout Central Florida and a handful of other states.

From all TOP funds, the Foundation distributed 1,822 grants totaling \$7.4 million,

supporting both Jewish and secular causes throughout the country and around the globe.

“Our level of reach continues to grow as we work with donors and supported organizations in a truly global fashion,” Socash said, “and yet we maintain our commitment to making giving easier and developing the personal, one-on-one relationships that all of our donors and community partners have come to expect.”

TOP’s asset base grew 6 percent between 2016 and 2017 due to the confidence of donors in using TOP as their primary charitable investment partner as well as strong growth in market performance.

“Our goal is to grow the Foundation to \$100 million in the next five years. We are confident that with the proper investment and management decisions, the communities who choose TOP will continue to be bolstered by the Foundation,” said Al Schiff, vice president of TOP’s Investment

Committee.

Six years ago, TOP selected investment manager Goldman Sachs and adopted a new forward-thinking investment policy with a strict anti-terror and now anti-BDS preventative screening approach. As a result, TOP’s primary investment pool (called the “Balanced Pool”) has seen strong returns. “In a nutshell, a donor who had given \$10,000 to TOP last year would now have \$957 more to give to charity in their fund. Considering larger gifts in funds that total \$100,000 or greater, the ability to give more is that much greater,” said Socash.

To further serve the interests of savvy philanthropists, TOP added another investment pool comprised of strictly equities, allowing for further customization of the risk tolerance (and return) of funds.

To learn more about TOP, visit topjewishfoundation.org or email Ellen@topjewishfoundation.org.

Rabbi who served as U.S. ambassador for religious freedoms to speak at St. Leo’s

The public is invited to a free presentation on religious freedom issues globally – including the persecution of religious minorities – from the nation’s former top diplomat on religious freedom issues, Rabbi David Saperstein.

The rabbi will speak from 1-3 p.m., Thursday, March 8, at the Saint Leo Abbey Church, 33701 SR 52, St. Leo.

The Saint Leo University Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies is sponsoring Rabbi’s Saperstein’s talk.

From 2015-17, Rabbi Saperstein was the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious

Freedom, the first non-Christian to hold that post. He is senior advisor to the Union of Reform Judaism for policy and strategy and director emeritus of its Religious Action Center, where he served for more than 30 years.

To reserve seating, contact Megan Orendorf by email, jennifer.orendorf@saintleo.edu, or call (352) 588-8401.

The mission of the Saint Leo University Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies is to build mutual respect, understanding, and appreciation among different faiths by providing opportunities for interfaith education and dialogue.

STUDY

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

they had distinctive Jewish names such as Levy or Goldstein.

Sheskin and his staff have conducted scores of similar Jewish community studies throughout the country. While some of the questions in the survey were specific to Pinellas and Pasco counties, a number of them were general questions that could apply to many Jewish communities, and it is through those questions that comparisons were drawn between our local Jewish community and, in some cases, up to 60 other Jewish communities.

Topics covered in the survey include geographic profile, migra-

tion, age distribution, household size and structure, marital status, secular education and employment status, household income, Jewish identification, religious practices, intermarriage, synagogue attendance/membership/attendance, sense of involvement/feeling part of Jewish community, Jewish education, familiarity with and assessment of local Jewish organizations, social service needs, the Jewish elderly, Israel, anti-Semitism, philanthropy, and a political profile.

To read the full study or summaries, go to Berman Jewish Databank, a project of the Jewish Federations of North America at jewishdatabank.org.

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How Jewish Are We?

PINELLAS AND PASCO JEWISH COMMUNITY

Here is a sampling from findings of the Pinellas and Pasco Counties Jewish community study. Because the demographer conducted the 1994 and 2017 studies, we can see how the community has changed over time. Because he also has done scores of similar studies in Jewish communities throughout the nation, sometimes using common questions, it is possible to see how we stack up against other Jewish communities on certain issues. For full details, go to www.jewishdatabank.org.

Size, distribution of Jewish population

- There are 18,000 Jewish households in Pinellas and Pasco with a total of 28,000 Jews and 8,000 non-Jews living in those homes.
- In Pinellas County the number of Jews dropped from 25,200 in 1994 to 23,450 in 2017.
- Pinellas/Pasco is the 39th largest Jewish community in the U.S.

Geographic profile

- 8% of Jewish households are in the top ZIP code, 34698 – Dunedin and 20% live in the top three ZIP codes: 34698 - Dunedin, 33701 – downtown St. Petersburg, and 34684 - Lake Tarpon. This reflects the fact that the Jewish population of Pinellas/Pasco is geographically dispersed and that there is no “core area” of Jewish settlement.

Migration

- 5% of Jewish households have always lived in Pinellas/Pasco. In total, 36% moved from other parts of the South (including 5% from Tampa), 35% from the Northeast (including 20% from New York, 7% from New Jersey), 17% from the Midwest (including 5% from both Michigan and Ohio) and 5% from the West.
- 56% have lived here for 20 years or more. In 1994, that figure was 26%.
- Based on the migration of Jews into and out of the area, the number of Jewish households in Pinellas/Pasco is expected to remain about the same for the next few years.

Age distribution

- The median age for Jews in the Pinellas/Pasco is 62, up from 46 in 1994. The median age for all Americans is about 38.

Household size and structure

- The average Jewish household size is 2.03 persons, down from 2.37 in Pinellas in 1994.
- 10% of those households have children up to age 17. In 1994 in Pinellas it was 25%.

Intermarriage

- 56% of couples in Jewish households are intermarried.
- 66% of the children in those households are being raised Jewish or partly Jewish.

Jewish identification

- 3% of the Jewish respondents identified as Orthodox (the same in '94), 21% as Conservative (23% in '94), 30 percent as Reform (39% in '94) and 47 percent as “Just Jewish” (36% in '94)
- 98% said they were proud to be Jewish, 85% said they have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people and 70% said they have a “special responsibility” to care for Jews in need.

Part of Jewish local community

- 9% feel very much part of the Jewish community, 25% somewhat, 25% not very much and 43% not at all.

Overall involvement

- 81% of Jewish households are involved in Jewish activity in that they are either associated with the Jewish community, observe a religious practice, contain a Jewish respondent who attends services at least once a year, or donated to a Jewish charity in the past year (88% in '94).

Israel connection

- 34% of Jewish households have a member who visited Israel.
- 17% of respondents are extremely emotionally attached to Israel, 26% very attached, 38% somewhat attached and 19% not attached.

Philanthropy

- 22% of Jewish households donated money to the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties in the past year (34% in '94). The average donation per household was \$66.

Here is how we fared when compared to other Jewish communities (between 40 and 55 communities were surveyed on the topics below, except where noted).

Religious practices

- 49% – always/usually participate in a Passover Seder (ranked lowest)
- 58% – always/usually light Hanukkah candles. (ranked third lowest)
- 52% – have a mezzuzah on the front door (ranked fourth lowest)
- 17% - light Sabbath candles. (ranked eighth lowest)
- 44% – always/usually have a Christmas tree at home (ranked third highest)

Synagogue attendance

- Second lowest - 14% - attend synagogue services once a month or more
- Second highest - 45% - never attend synagogue services.

Jewish organization membership

- 15% - hold a membership in a Jewish organization. (ranked third lowest). Jewish organization membership was 36% in Pinellas in 1994.

Jewish education – children

- 54% of children from 5-17 who have received some formal Jewish education (ranked lowest)
- 46% of children from 13-17 have received some formal Jewish education (ranked lowest)

Social service needs

- 18% of Jewish children age 0-17 in need of programs for children with learning disabilities or other special needs. (ranked highest among 30 communities)
- 18% of those 75 and older are need in-home health care. (ranked third highest among 35 communities)

MAP

• CONTINUED from FRONT PAGE

or participation in Jewish religious or cultural activities, how philanthropic we are, and what our needs are.

The study was commissioned by the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties and Gulf Coast Jewish Family & Community Services and conducted by Ira Sheskin, chair of the University of Miami Department of Geography. Sheskin has done scores of demographic studies of Jewish communities throughout the nation and did the last comprehensive study in Pinellas, in 1994.

Painting a picture

The findings of the 2017 study not only provides a picture of today’s Jewish community here, but also tells us how we have changed from 1994 and how we stack up to Jewish communities throughout the United States.

Sheskin told the *Jewish Press*, he found the 2017 study “depressing.” If you are looking for the utopian Jewish community, it is certain you won’t find it here.

When compared to other Jewish communities, the Pinellas-Pasco Jewish community is older, less religious and less philanthropic than many, Sheskin said.

“You want people to feel connected to the place, but no one feels connected here,” he told a community presentation on the survey results. Without certain communal facilities like a JCC or day school, “there is a lack of a central Jewish community,” Sheskin said.

One thing Sheskin had never seen in a demographic study before was that the number of Jewish households went up, while the overall number of Jews actually went down by 1,750 since 1994. As a way to explain this phenomena, Sheskin said, “The community got older so there are fewer Jews per household. Also, there is more intermarriage.”

Though the study showed a high percent of folks who identified as “Just Jewish” and did not seem to be engaged with, or sometimes not even aware of, local Jewish institutions, he said the fact that they would spend up to 45 minutes on the phone to participate in the study shows an encouraging degree of connection to their Jewish identity.

The 1,090-page report include hundreds of findings. Among those that stand out: a low percentage of synagogue membership and attendance and a low percentage of those in Jewish households who donate to Jewish organizations.

Findings also show there is a high percentage of intermarried families, a high divorce rate and a low percentage of children up to age 17 living in Jewish households.

One very telling finding: from 1994 to 2017, the median age of local Jews increased from 46 years old to 62 years old.

On the bright side

The report did contain some positives. For instance:

- 98 percent said they were proud to be Jewish, 85 percent said they have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people and 70 percent said they have a “special responsibility” to care for Jews in need.

- 81 percent of Jewish households are involved in Jewish activity in that they are either associated with the Jewish community, observe a religious practice, contain a Jewish respondent who attends synagogue services at least once a year, or donated to a Jewish charity in the past year. As good as that figure looks, it was even better at 88 percent in '94.

- The level of anti-Semitism experienced is appreciably lower now than in 1994. In the case of the 6-17 age bracket, the percentage of those who experienced anti-Semitism dropped from 30 percent in 1994 to just 3 percent in 2017.

- For most age groups, the level of attachment to Israel has increased since '94.

While some findings may prompt people reading the study to see the glass half empty, Emilie Socash, executive director of the Pinellas/Pasco Federation, found room for optimism.

“The thing that stood out to me was how connected to the Jewish community were those who may not have synagogue affiliations. More than 40 percent attended a Jewish event in the past year and more than 80 percent had done something Jewish in their home. That makes me feel there is a level of Jewish engagement that can grow,” Socash said.

As for whether the findings are good or bad, Socash said, “It is all just data. There is no place for judgment, or even worry; it is all just data.”

Socash said what the data tells her is, “We have the opportunity to be a welcoming and inclusive community, one that is known for offering programs for the reality of our community vs one that is stuck in a belief of how communities should be.”

In regard to the increase in the median age, Socash said, “We have a lot of adults who would appreciate even more activities ... We spent a lot of time programming for young families and we need to recognize those adults also need events, programs and services.”

Given how Jews here are scattered throughout the area, Socash said, “We need to go where they are.”

While not ignoring the local Jews already plugged in and engaged in Jewish life, the challenge is to reach out and try to engage the significant number who identified themselves as “Just Jewish” as opposed to particular streams of Judaism such as Orthodox, Conservative or Reform.

Recently the Federation promoted a Hanukkah family event that aimed to be inclusive of all types of families, including LGBT, single parent and intermarried families. The Federation also has held PJ Library events at local public libraries. Given the results of the study, it is likely more attempts like this, to reach those who might not be as likely to show up at a synagogue, will be held, Socash said.

Five “areas of concentration” emerged from recent discussions of the study results: Israel, Jewish culture, demographics, children and education, and public relations. The Federation created committees to address these five topics and it will likely be months before an overall strategic plan is developed to address needs indicated by the study. (See Federation statement on these topics, page 11.)

From a rabbi's perspective

Understandably, from the perspective of a longtime rabbi in the community, the low percentage of synagogue membership and low percentage of those attending synagogue or other Jewish religious events is not ideal, says Rabbi Gary Klein of Temple Ahavat in Palm Harbor.

He said he was originally okay with the population study being done, but in hindsight feels it revealed little that the local Jewish community did not already know, and that the funds could have been better used to enhance synagogue programming.

In order to build a stronger Jewish community here, he said synagogues need to be the heart of Jewish life and they need to work hard to that end. He also noted that the community has been hurt by the closing of the Pinellas County Jewish Day School in 2010 and the JCC of Pinellas a few years later. Those institutions are the sort that families look for when choosing a community in which to live where to move. But synagogues with strong programming can help mitigate the lack of a JCC and Jewish day school, he said.

“While I am concerned about the trends here and in other communities, I think we have a wonderful community and can sustain it into the future,” Rabbi Klein said, “I think the synagogues play a disproportionate role in sustaining it. I am firmly committed to help make it as vibrant a community as it can be.”

Rabbi Klein said the Federation is “doing a good and appropriate job. They do not need to do more, but I think we need to strengthen our synagogues.”

Federation President Steve Klein noted that the Federation is already working in that direction, “helping expand synagogue programming through innovation grants.”

With the Federation’s lead in completing the first comprehensive demographics study in more than 20 years, Steve Klein said, “So many more firsts will be tackled as we are armed with this new data.”

Socash said, “Doing the survey at a time when the community does not have a JCC and Day School, gives us an interesting perspective about the needs and wants for these type institutions. When we look at the behaviors people reported, the data shows our community wants to gather and to learn together and we need to consider how our entire institutional structure can meet these needs and wants.”

Exploring new models

The Federation is actively exploring models used in other Jewish communities without such institutions, she said. “What we had, did not work, so it would be irresponsible to try to resurrect what we had that did not work. But that does not mean we cannot have what our community needs in the future.”

Does that mean we won’t have a brick and mortar Day School in the future? Socash would not rule out the possibility of a new Day School, but said “I think the better use of our creative energy is not what could have saved the old model but what we might come up with in the future to meet the needs of the future.” She said she has “a lot of hope and inspiring ideas to examine.”

Two Federation board members voiced ideas as to how to address the study findings.

Toni Rinde feels the study shows the need to create a Jewish identity among children. “Camp, programming, and community involvement shape the Jewish identity of young people in order to assure the endurance and perpetuity of the Jewish people for years to come,” she said.

Louis Orloff pointed to study data that showed many who identified themselves as Jewish are not getting news about the local Jewish community through the *Jewish Press*. Finding a way to reach those folks, he said, “will help bring our community together and build pride for all that we have.”

To find the full report on the demographics study, go to www.jewishdatabank.org.

Tampa Jewish Family Services expands counseling, testing and seniors services

Tampa Jewish Family Services has expanded its offerings at its newly launched Psychological and Social Wellness Center.

The Wellness Center will provide psychological testing, senior services and counseling for individuals and families of all faiths.

The catalyst for this growth is TJFS' move to open offices at the Bryan Glazer Family JCC last year, while still keeping an office at the JCC's Cohn Campus. With this expansion, TJFS has been able to grow a more robust program, offering services for those in all stages of life.

Last month the Wellness Center brought on two new therapists who will provide both counseling

and testing for all ages as well as lead the senior care offerings.

Allison Haig, PsyD is a licensed psychologist and clinical director at Tampa Jewish Family Services. She has experience providing assessment and therapy services to children, adolescents and adults. Jennifer Bloom is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW). Bloom uses a tailored approach to work with adolescents, young adults, adults and seniors.

"Our expansion into South Tampa is a great thing as it gives us the opportunity to help even more people throughout the community," said TJFS CEO Michael Barnett. "Our goal has always been to help anyone in the community, and

with the Psychological and Social Wellness Center, we are able to do this in so many different ways."

Under the Psychological and Social Wellness Center's umbrella, TJFS offers child assessments including gifted program testing; Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder; academic difficulties/learning disabilities; behavioral and emotional difficulties; developmental concerns; and Autism Spectrum Disorder testing.

Counseling is available, including individual, couple, family and group counseling with expertise in the following areas: aging; anxiety; depression; domestic violence; economic issues; grief and loss; life transitions (including ill-

ness and unemployment); parenting; marital/family relationships; special needs/disabilities; and stress management.

Senior Services, include: a free initial phone consultation; an in-home assessment; senior care facility resident assessment; crisis intervention; continuing care management and counseling of a senior loved one; assistance with long-term residential placement; and support for family members.

In addition, the Wellness Center is planning a monthly parenting series led by Dr. Haig. The series will launch this spring and offer education and advice on topics including why and when to assess your child, self-care, and caring

for aging parents.

The Wellness Center continues to offer services at a low-cost or with sliding scale pricing, helping anyone in need with no restrictions.

"This is a wonderful addition to the offerings provided by Tampa Jewish Family Services. Everyone faces struggles in life and we're able to provide services that enrich individuals and families lives throughout every stage," said TJFS Board Chair Beth Gemunder. "We currently serve more than 14,000 people ..."

For more information on the Psychological and Social Wellness Center, visit www.tjfs.org/wellness.



for youth entering Grades K - 8

NEW! INTRODUCING KINDERGARTEN AT CAMP J

KEFF AT BRYAN GLAZER FAMILY JCC (KINDERGARTEN - 1ST GRADE)

WEEKLY SESSIONS* | June 4th - August 10th
 Member: \$200 | Non-Member: \$250 (per week)
 A traditional camp designed for campers entering Kindergarten and 1st grade that includes instructional/free swim daily and special activities each week.

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3, 6 or 9 WEEK SESSIONS | June 4th - August 3rd
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SPECIALTY CAMPS AT BRYAN GLAZER FAMILY JCC

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Provides a day camping experience like no other day camp in the area. Participate in field trips, overnights and ziplining. Two lakes provide opportunities to fish, canoe and more!

SUMMER CAMP FAQs

Camp J will run June 4, 2018 – August 3 or 10*, 2018.
 Drop off is at 9:00 AM, pick up at 4:00 PM, with extended hours available from 7:30 AM – 6:00 PM.

IMPORTANT DATES

May 31, 2018 | 6:30 PM – Open House for Camp J at Bryan Glazer Family JCC
June 3, 2018 | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM – Open House for Camp J at JCC on the Cohn Campus

CAMP J SUMMER CAMP SAVINGS START HERE!

- ➔ **JCC Membership Discounts of up to \$450**
 - ➔ **Sibling Discounts of 10%**
 - ➔ **Financial Assistance Is Available**
- Please contact CampJ365@jewishtampa.com for application or questions regarding financial aid.

HOW TO REGISTER

Registration for both camps is done online by visiting the following websites:

Bryan Glazer Family JCC
www.bryanglazerfamilyjcc.com/camp

JCC on the Cohn Campus
www.jcccohn-campus.com/camp



522 N. Howard Avenue
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 813.575.5900



13009 Community Campus Drive
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Obituaries

MARVIN E. BARKIN, 84, of Tampa, died Feb. 7. Born in Winter Haven, he was a graduate of Emory University, with a degree in political science, where he was president of Tau Epsilon Pi fraternity and editor in chief of the Emory Phoenix. After graduating from Harvard Law School with honors in 1958, he moved to Miami to clerk for a judge. He then moved to Tampa where he joined the Fowler, White Law Firm as a litigator. He quickly became a partner, and in 1970 he and nine others left to create the firm now known as Trenam Law. Renowned as a litigator, he was often referred to by his peers as a "lawyer's lawyer." He was named by various organizations "Lawyer of the Year" and frequently included in the published listing of the Best Lawyers in America and Florida Super Lawyers. A member of the American College of Trial Lawyers and the American Law Institute, he led Trenam Law for decades and remained active there until his death. He served as president of the Florida Board of Bar Examiners and as president of the National Board of Bar Examiners. He also chaired Florida's Judicial Qualifications Commission. He was a member of Congregation Schaarai Zedek. Survivors include his wife of 58 years, Trudy; his children, Thomas and Robyn Barkin, Atlanta; Michael and Chantal Barkin, Ottawa, Canada; Pamela and Daniel Vargo, Falls Church, VA; and six grandchildren. The family suggests memorials to Bay Area Legal Services. (Segal Funeral Home, Beth David Chapel)

MELVIN J. MYERS, 89, of Clearwater, died Jan. 23. Born in New York, NY, he was a veteran of World War II. A graduate of Oklahoma State University, he earned his degree in mechanical engineering. He moved to Florida in 1977 and established Plenums, Inc. which he ran until the early 1990s when he turned the company over to his children. He was a long-time lay leader at Menorah Manor, serving on its board of trustees, and a member of Temple B'nai Israel in Clearwater. Survivors include his daughter and son-in-law, Audrey and Shawn Hollander of Clearwater, son and daughter-in-law Rick and Ellyne Myers of Tampa; four grandchildren; and his companion Toby Nastir. The family suggests memorials to ALE FOR ALZ www.aleforalz.org, Menorah Manor or Temple B'nai Israel. (Curlew Hills Memory Gardens)

STACI SACHS, 45, of Clearwater, died Jan. 23. Previously from Providence, RI, she moved to the area in 1979. A graduate of the University of Florida, she was a certified paralegal, active in politics, her cancer survivors group at Mease Hospital and at Camp Living Springs. Survivors include her daughter and son-in-law Morgan and Stephen Green, Riverview; parents, Paul and Elaine Sachs, Clearwater; sister Kyli Sachs. The family suggests memorials to Suncoast Hospice. (Curlew Hills Memory Gardens)

OBITUARIES are published as a public service at no charge in the *Jewish Press of Pinellas County* based on information supplied by the family to the funeral home. However, the information contained in the free obituary is at the discretion of the Jewish Press.

Bat Mitzvah

Lauren Maye Alexander

Lauren Maye Alexander, daughter of Faith and Brian Alexander of Tampa, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, Feb. 17 at Congregation Schaarai Zedek in Tampa.

A seventh-grade Headmaster's List student at Tampa Preparatory School, Lauren was invited to participate in the Duke University Talent Identification Program. She is a member of the middle school chorus and in a theater program at The Studio.

Active in Jr. Schzfty youth group, Lauren is also a camper in the summer at Camp Coleman.

Faith and Brian Alexander will host a celebration at the Hilton Downtown Tampa on Saturday evening, Feb. 17.

Special guests will include grandparents Joan and Martin Schwebel from Winter Park and Ron Alexander from Boca Raton, along with family and friends from throughout the Southeast.



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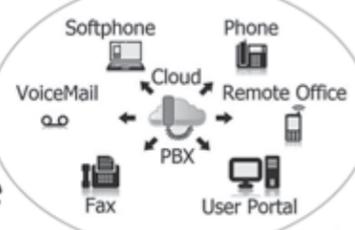
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Organizations

Genealogical Society

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

Jewish War Veterans

Volunteers needed: The Jewish War Veterans Post 373 is seeking members who would like to help ill and disabled veterans. Contact **Commander Jack Rudowsky** at (813) 598-8061 or email rochelletrs@gmail.com.

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. On Feb. 19, the topic is "Staying Optimistic During Career Transition." On Feb. 26 the topic is "Why the Most Qualified Candidate Doesn't Always Get the Job." Monday Morning Links is supported by the Vinik Family Foundation.

Job-search aids: There are Success workshops on select Thursdays to aid with job-search skills. On March 1 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. the topic is "Transferring Your Skills and Re-Careering." The workshops are free for TampaBay Job-Links full program participants and \$15 for guests. Reservations required for all programs. To RSVP, call (813) 344-0200, email RSVP@TBJL.org.

Young Adults

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

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

Wearable art: Take your rummaging skills to the next level at a "Junk Box Jewelry" event on Wednesday, March 7 from 6-9 p.m. at the visual arts center in the

Bryan Glazer Family JCC. Choose from a variety of unsuspecting items to combine, alter, fabricate and recombine into wearable jewelry. Dig through a treasure trove of metal, parts, pieces, leather, hinges, springs, zippers and other found and recycled options to create your very own piece of original jewelry. Bring snacks and wine to share during social hour. The cost is \$10 for members and guests.

Active Adults

*All programs listed are either at the Maureen & Douglas Cohn Jewish Community Campus, 13009 Community Campus Drive, or at the Bryan Glazer Family JCC at 522 N. Howard Ave. To RSVP or for more information on programs at either center, contact **Prina Levermore** at (813) 291-2253 or pnina.levermore@JewishTampa.com. All registrations should be completed before events begin. Advance registration is also required through the USF Osher Lifelong Learning Institute for Osher classes offered at the Cohn campus or Glazer JCC. For more information on those classes, contact the institute at (813) 974-8036.*

Bridge lessons: Those who want to learn how to play bridge or improve their game can take six-session bridge class at the Glazer JCC Fridays from March 2 through April 6. This is for players at any level and sessions are from 1-2:30 p.m. The cost is \$50 for members; \$60 for non-members.

The other four questions: **Rabbi Jason Rosenberg** of Congregation Beth Am will lead lunch and learn classes at the Cohn campus to explain the background and significance of the holidays. The next class on Wednesday, March 7 at noon will focus on Passover. Additional classes will be held in April and May, with topics to be announced later. The program is free, but a donation of \$5 is suggested to cover the cost of lunch.

Florida's forgotten heroes: Learn about some of the state's little known luminaries in a class at the Glazer JCC, led by **Lynne Mormino**, on Wednesdays, March 21 and 28 from 10-11:30 a.m. Meet **Alexander Darnes**, who rose from slave to physician; **Frank Adamo**, hero of the Bataan death march; **Mary Lou Baker**, who kept the legislative home fires burning during World War II, and **Marjorie Carr**, zoologist and environmental activist. Cost is \$20 for the two sessions.

The whole enchilada: Take a class at the Glazer JCC that offers fitness for body and mind on Wednesdays, April 4 - 25 from 10 a.m. to noon, taught by **June Kit-tay** and **Eric Pfeiffer**. Combine the advantages of physical and mental fitness exercises to produce exceptional fun and enhanced health. The cost is \$40.

Excursion: A tour of the Nielsen Media Research facility will be offered on Tuesday, Feb. 20 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., followed by a lunch. The tour will showcase Nielsen's history and its audience measuring systems. Participants can learn how the company collects information on what people watch on TV, personal computers and mobile devices and the methods they use to determine what people will buy in stores. The

tour includes a visit to the call center. Transportation for this event is provided.

Canasta: Meet in the senior lounge at the Cohn campus every Friday from 3-4:30 p.m. for friendly games of canasta.

Movie matinee: Enjoy a classic movie and popcorn on the first Wednesday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon on the Cohn campus. There is no charge to attend. On March 7, the movie will be *Driving Miss Daisy*.

Trivial Pursuit and pizza: This group meets at the Cohn campus on the second Thursday of the month from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. to exercise minds and enjoy some pizza. This event is free.

Yiddish nostalgia: Join **Ruth Weston** and other Yiddish enthusiasts on Thursday, Feb. 22 from 12:45-1:45 p.m. at the Cohn campus to share favorite expressions and reminisce. This program is free.

Crochet lessons: Learn crochet with **Judy Balber** every Monday on the Cohn campus from 10:30 a.m. to noon. Bring yarn, crochet hooks and any pattern you want. Cost is \$25 for members; \$30 for non-members with prorating options available.

Biblical literature: This course, which meets at the Cohn campus every other Wednesday from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m., provides an opportunity to see the Bible not from a religious perspective but as a piece of remarkable writing. The next class is Feb. 21. This is a discussion course with participation open to people of all faiths and backgrounds. Bring your own Bible so participants can compare different translations. Cost is \$3 for members and \$4 for guests.

Mah jongg: Folks can play at both JCCs. At the Cohn campus, there will be open play sessions every Tuesday and Thursday from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Also, at that location there will be guided instruction to learn the basics on Mondays from 1:30-3 p.m. at a cost of \$5 for members and \$10 for guests.

At the Glazer JCC, drop-in sessions are offered on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-3 p.m. This is free for all members. Novices and experienced players are welcome. Also at the Glazer JCC, lessons will be offered on Sundays, March 18 through April 15 from 9:30-11:30 a.m. The cost is \$65 for members and \$70 for non-members, with advanced registration required. Call the Glazer JCC for more information.

JetSetters: The Phyllis Borrell JetSetters social group for adults of all ages meets at both JCCs for an hour-long program followed by lunch. At the Glazer JCC, JetSetters meet on the second Wednesday of the month from 11 a.m. to noon. The lunch is free for members, but donations are welcome. On March 14 there will be a Touch of Irish presentation by the Treble Clefs.

The JetSetters group also meets on the Cohn campus on the fourth Thursday of the month from 11 a.m. to noon. On Feb. 22 the discussion topic will be the "Golden Days of Radio." The lunch is free for members, though a donation of \$5 is suggested.

News talk: This discussion group, meeting at both JCCs, is led by **Pat Renfro** and explores "hot button" issues of the day. Upcoming News Talk sessions at the Glazer JCC are Tuesdays from 7-8:30 p.m. Topics are: Feb. 20, voting in America; Feb. 27, the Florida Legislature's agenda. These sessions are free.

The group at the Cohn campus, meets the second and fourth Friday from 10:30 a.m. to noon. The Feb. 23 session is on the populist movement. There is no charge to attend.

Tampa history series: Learn about Tampa's history dur-

ing free sessions led by **Carl Zielonka** at the Glazer JCC. On March 7 from 1-2 p.m. the topic will be on Hyde Park, Tampa's first suburb west of the Hillsborough River.

Culture Café: Get a behind the scenes look on Wednesday, Feb. 28 from 7-8:30 p.m. as University of Tampa dance students and faculty show how they create choreography and prepare for performances. See pieces performed live and join in a question and answer session. The cost is \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members.

Guys gathering: This group will meet on Tuesday, Feb. 27 from 5-6:30 p.m. at the Glazer JCC for men to gather in relaxed and friendly surroundings. Potential activities include poker, billiards, ping-pong, sporting events, fishing or camping, community volunteering or discussions.

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.

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Author Maggie Anton makes the case in her newest book, *Fifty Shades of Talmud: What the Rabbis had to Say About You-Know-What*.

The book takes 50 Talmudic discussions, mixes in pithy quotes from comedienne Mae West and Amy Schumer to historical figures George Washington and Gandhi, adds a few cartoons, and produces a light-hearted, in-depth look at what the ancient Jewish sages say about our most intimate relationships.

Anton will make two appearances in Hillsborough County next month to discuss her book, one in Tampa and the other in Sun City Center.

During the programs, Anton will reveal how Jewish tradition, in many respects, is more progressive and more bawdy, than one might think.

The Tampa Ameet chapter of Hadassah invites the community to hear Anton at a program, "Talmud After Dark," on Wednesday, March 7 at 7 p.m. at Congregation Rodeph Sholom, 2713 Bayshore Blvd, Tampa.

On Thursday, March 8, at 11 a.m., the Beth Israel Sisterhood in Sun City Center will host Anton for coffee and conversation. The congregation is located at 1115 Del Webb Blvd.

Anton is the award-winning author of the historical fiction series *Rashi's Daughter* and *Rave Hisda's Daughter*. Considered a Talmud scholar, this is her first

work of non-fiction. Anton grew up in a secular household and discovered Judaism as an adult, beginning a lifetime of Jewish education and observance.

After Anton's Hadassah presentation there will be a question and answer period. Books will be available for purchase, and there will be a dessert buffet. Tickets are \$25; \$100 for patrons, which includes two tickets and a cocktail reception with the author. Proceeds will benefit Hadassah Hospital.

For further information, call event Co-Chairs Michele Norris (813) 352-8765 or Jane Strom (813) 334-6812.

For more information on Anton's Sun City Center appearance, contact Rochelle Lafer at RLafer@gmail.com.

Winter Olympics 2018: Jewish storylines to watch

By GABE FRIEDMAN
JTA news service

Jewish fans don't have quite as many standout athletes to cheer for at the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea as they did in 2016, when multiple American members of the tribe won medals at the Summer Games in Rio de Janeiro. But there are several compelling Jewish stories.

Israel sends its largest team ever

Before this year, the largest Israeli delegation at a Winter Olympics was five. That shouldn't sound too surprising, given that over 60 percent of the country's landscape is desert, and it isn't the best place for winter sports training.

This year, however, the record will double.

Seven of Israel's 10 representatives will compete in figure skating. That group is anchored by Alexei Bychenko, who in 2016 became the first skater to earn a medal for Israel at a European Championships event. Bychenko, 29, who skated for Ukraine until 2009 and has been ranked as one of the top 10 male skaters in the world, is likely Israel's best chance to win a medal (and like U.S. Jewish gymnast Aly Raisman, Bychenko has been known to perform to "Hava Nagila").

The Jewish state is sending another kind of skater, too – the faster kind. Vladislav Bykanov, who won a bronze medal earlier this month at the European Championships, will compete in speed skating. Itamar Biran, a 19-year-old born in London, will represent Israel in alpine skiing.

This American never dreamed she'd skate for Israel

Paige Conners is having her Olympic dream come true in about the last way she expected.

According to 13WHAM, the ABC affiliate in Rochester, NY, the 17-year-old Conners was ill when she was supposed to try out for the U.S. figure skating team. With her hopes of competing in peril, her mother, who has Israeli citizenship, pointed out another opportunity: skating for the Israeli team.

Conners jumped at the opportunity, but Israel



Photo by Frederick Breedon/Getty Images
Jonathon Blum playing for the Nashville Predators in 2013.

offered her a spot only if she competed in the pairs competition. She had never tried it before and figured she never would. But she quickly connected with Evgeni Krasnopolski, a 29-year-old pairs veteran, and in barely six months after Conners adopted the new style, the duo performed well enough at the Olympic qualifiers in September to make the cut.

"No one really believes it," she told 13WHAM.

Israel's first skeleton Olympian

A few years ago, A.J. Edelman was an MIT graduate who worked as a product manager for Oracle. Now the Brookline, MA, native will get a chance to make history for Israel as he becomes the country's first skeleton Olympian, steering a flimsy sled down the track at the Pyeongchang Sliding Center.

"I want to challenge the perception of what Jews and Israelis can do in sports," he told the *Forward*.

He is also clearly a fan of the comedy film *The Hebrew Hammer*, since he goes by the protagonist's nickname. While his teammates and friends love it, his mother apparently doesn't.

A former NHL player to play for the U.S.

Jonathon Blum probably longs for the time he spent playing in the NHL. These days, the Jewish 29-year-old plays for a team in Vladivostok, Russia – a city so remote that flights of six hours or more are required to play 24 of its 26 opponents. It is closer to Alaska than it is to St. Petersburg.

Blum, a former first-round NHL draft pick, played for the Nashville Predators from 2010 to 2012, again in 2012-13, and for the Minnesota Wild for stints in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 seasons. Those cities are just a little closer to where he grew up in Southern California.

This year, the NHL decided that it would not let its players participate in the Olympics to protect them from injuries. That opened the door for non-NHL players like Blum, a 6-foot-2 defenseman who has played on the U.S. team before, to represent his native country in South Korea.

Israel isn't the only country sending Jewish skaters

On the U.S. squad, look out for Jason Brown if he gets a chance to skate. After a disappointing performance at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships this month, Brown is the U.S. team's first alternate. But on the ice, the 23-year-old is known for skating to music from *Riverdance* and *Hamilton*.

And who would have thought that a certified Krav Maga instructor would skate for Canada and not Israel? Dylan Moscovitch helped Canada win a team silver medal in Sochi four years ago, and he's back competing in the pairs contest with partner Liubov Ilyushechkina.

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FIRST PERSON Rabbi humbled, inspired, educated during mission to Guatemala with American Jewish World Service

By RABBI DAVID WEIZMAN
Cong. Beth Shalom, Clearwater

On the road up to the mountain city of Quetzaltenango, our bus stopped at an idyllic rest stop where they served us, a cohort of 13 American rabbis, locally grown Guatemalan coffee.

I found there an artist from whom I bought a painting of a pair of tropical birds, and just as I was finishing the transaction, our guide and local liaison for the American Jewish World Service, Megan Thomas, walked by and offered the story of how this Quetzal bird got its red breast feathers. The Quetzal bird, after which the city is named, as well as the national currency, used to fly in great numbers throughout the forests. The legend is emblematic of the story of the indigenous people of Guatemala.

In the year 1524, there came from Spain a warrior named Pedro de Alvarado and he marched with his army into Guatemala. Alvarado found the Mayan world filled with many riches, but he had only come to take their gold. It came to pass that Alvarado battled the Maya chief Tecun Uman by himself. When Alvarado's lance cut through the chief's heart, the quetzal fell upon his prince, it's emerald green feathery breast drenched in Uman's blood. In the morning, the quetzal rose and flew up off of Uman's body. It's beautiful green chest feathers had turned crimson, and from that moment on, the chest feathers of the quetzals have been the color of blood.

At the Museum of National Memory in Guatemala City, we reviewed how the Mayan Kingdom had been populated by 70 million people, but after the Spanish Invasion, only 3 million were left. When Guatemala claimed its independence from Spain in 1821, the people continued to suffer under a series of ruthless dictatorships, until the first free elections were held in 1944. But the country enjoyed only one decade of democratic governance until a U.S. sponsored coup overthrew the government to protect the interests of the United Fruit Company. As a result of the coup, the country plunged into an armed conflict that spanned from 1960-1996, during which, the military dictatorships, with U.S support, carried out the systematic extermination of entire villages of the indigenous non-combatant Mayan people. A peace was signed finally in 1996, but the wounds of that conflict are still open.

One afternoon our group, *Global Justice Fellows*, met for lunch in Antigua, once the capital of the Mayan kingdom, and now somewhat of a tourist stop. We sat in the open-air section under a canopy of blooming vines, with the sound of falling water in the background. After the meal, we were introduced to Edward Canil, who will become the next liaison for AJWS in Guatemala. With tears in his eyes, he told us the story of his family, what happened to them when they fled from their village into the forest. He spoke Spanish, pausing to gather himself, and we listened through our interpreters to this story of a massacre, told in detail through the eyes of a 6-year-old child.

"After the shooting stopped, I came out from my hiding place. I didn't even know what dead meant. I kept shaking my mother and my sisters, saying, get up, we have to get out of here." Edwin's father and brother had been apart from the rest, looking for a safer place for the family, and managed to survive as well. They were united a day later. Because their village had been burnt to the ground and all of their animals slaughtered, they fled, along with many others across the swamps to a refugee camp in Mexico where he lived for the next 12 years. There were approximately 200,000 casualties during the armed conflict, most of them indigenous Mayan, and over 1 million people displaced from their land.

You might imagine what kind of stereotypes would be associated with a group of Americans traveling in Guatemala in January, only a few days after their president characterized countries like this, in less than favorable terms. In fact, one of the Mayan women remarked at the end of a session, "It



Rabbi David Weizman gets a warm greeting from a member of a midwives group in Guatemala.

was nice to see that not all Americans are the same."

These women had traveled for two days to meet with us. Grantees of AJWS, they were working for the inclusion of women's voices in civic governance. The example that they offered us was this: Their community was allotted a minimum budget for maintenance and development. The city council allowed one woman to sit on the board, but she could not be an officer. This woman proposed using the money to build a water system so that a pipe could bring water to the center of their village, if not their own homes. The men on the council decided to use the money to make a baseball field instead. So as it still stands, the women continue to spend hours carrying water vessels on their heads, from the source to their homes.

The mission of AJWS is to address the root causes that inhibit growth and advancement in the developing world. We know from experience what kind of contributions women have made to western society and what factors have enabled that. These Mayan women from *Neuvo Horizonte* spoke openly about the demands that large families have which keep women out of the work force, of early marriage that prevents higher education, of social norms that subjugate women like the example given above. The integration of more women outside the home can be a benefit to the whole society. *Neuvo Horizonte*, (New Horizons), is a group of 21 communities working to advance the political participation of women on various levels of government.

One of the ways that our Constitution ensures the honesty and efficiency of our government in the U.S. is through the transparency that is offered by the freedom of the press. Our group had the opportunity to meet with members of *Prensa Comunitaria*, the Community Press, on several occasions, a news source whose journalists suffer from false criminalization. In fact, the International Federation of Journalists reported six targeted killings of journalists in Guatemala in 2016, second only to Mexico in Central America.

We met Norma, who was taking photos with her phone of a river that was being dammed for hydro electric power without the consultation of the local residents, when she was arrested, beaten, blindfolded and put in jail in solitary confinement. She had no way to contact anyone, and didn't know where she was being held. Fortunately, for Norma, her co-workers were able to locate her, and with the help of another AJWS grantee which advocates for the security of human rights defenders throughout Central America, she was freed, and continues her journalism. We met another journalist later who had a warrant out for his arrest for writing about the same subject: Land grabbing by foreign companies.

When we met with the U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala, Luis Arreaga, at the U.S. Embassy, we were accompanied by two other members of *Prensa Comunitaria*. After hearing the presentation of their work and their challenges, Arreaga said he had been reading their articles online, but did not know who they were. Now that connection was made, the embassy was in a better position to advocate for their protection. "Although I am a U.S. citizen," he said, "I was born in Guatemala, and I want to see a better

life for the people here."

We asked Arreaga if there was any message that we could convey to our representatives when we visit Capitol Hill later this month. "Yes there is," he said. "We need to abolish the corruption in government here that plagues the country of Guatemala. And we need to continue the kind of foreign aid that will help people make a living in their country of origin, so they will not need to migrate."

Since my return from Guatemala, most people ask me this opening question: How was your trip? A difficult question to answer in 10 words or less. So I have come up with two words: Humbling, and inspiring.

Humbling to realize, by way of contrast, what freedoms and opportunity I enjoy in the USA.

Inspiring to see the resilience of a people who have suffered, the devotion to their people and their land, and the patriotic spirit that drives them to make their country a better home for all of its inhabitants. Inspired as well, to feel that way about my own country.

I will add one more word: educational. Maimonides taught us that it is better to teach a man to fish than to give him a fish. This is the work that AJWS does in 19 different countries around the world; it helps



Megan Thomas of AJWS listens as Edwin Cavil, right, shares painful memories of his mother and sister being killed during a raid on his village during a period when Mayans were being systematically exterminated.

photos: © 2018 Christine Hon Photography



Rabbi Weizman lights candles during a Mayan ritual with Nuevo Horizonte, a group seeking to involve more women in government.

people who are helping themselves. It was an honor to witness that holy work, and to see firsthand, how they accomplish their mission.

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Food Festival returns to satisfy the craving for authentic Jewish cuisine

A Jewish Press report

Last year organizers expected a turnout in the hundreds for the first ever Tampa Bay Jewish Food Festival at Temple B'nai Israel in Clearwater, but a couple thousand showed up and some food items were sold out before noon.

"We have increased all the food amounts, so we hope for enough to feed about 4,000 this year," said Barbara Bloom, temple coordinator for the event, which will take place on Sunday, Feb. 25 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the temple, 1685 S. Belcher Road. The Jewish Federation of Pinellas & Pasco Counties provided a grant to help boost this year's food fest.

Not only will there be more food, the list of foods offered has grown. In addition to the crowd favorite from last year – pastrami and corned beef sandwiches from Carnegie Deli in New York – the fare will include homemade matzoh ball soup, chopped liver, stuffed cabbage, latkes, bagels with the works, kugel, hamantaschen and a variety of other baked goodies. Sour pickles on a stick,

one of the first items to sell out last year, will again be offered.

There will also be kosher hot dogs served from a hot dog cart on loan from Joel and Ellen Goetz, owners of Jo-El's Delicatessen and Marketplace in St. Petersburg, plus falafel made in partnership with the temple and Mana Mana restaurant in Clearwater. A nosh-to-go booth will also be set up for those who want to grab take-out food.

Cost for food starts at \$2 for a whole pickle to \$15 for a corned beef platter that includes an oversized sandwich on rye, cole slaw and pickle.

"Using food as the excuse, it is our hope to create a greater feeling of a Jewish community in the Tampa Bay area," said Sharon Finkelstein, Festival chairperson. "But at the same time, we also hope to reach out to our non-Jewish neighbors to learn and be a part of this celebration of our culture."

Those attending are asked to bring a can of food for local food pantries.

Among the expanded offerings will be a tented beverage garden that will include

wine and beer tastings. Entertainment will be provided by a harmonica group and the Chai Notes klezmer band. The *Sunday Simcha* show on WMNF-FM radio will also broadcast live from the event.

Triple the number of vendors from last year are expected plus more Jewish organizations have signed up for booths including Hillel Academy in Tampa, Jewish Women International, Gulf Coast Jewish Family & Community Services, Hadassah, Tampa Bay Jewish Genealogy Society, the *Jewish Press*, and the Community Women's Seder.

In the Kid's Zone, there will be a Kona ice truck, a boutique cotton candy vendor, face painting, balloons, and bounce houses. Children are also invited to dress in costumes for Purim and prizes will be awarded for the best costumes.

More tents will be set up for the comfort of patrons and vendors.

Making it all come together are 200 volunteers, some of whom have been working on the 2018 Food Festival almost since the day the 2017 event ended.

One problem the organizers ran into last year and hope to have resolved this year is parking.

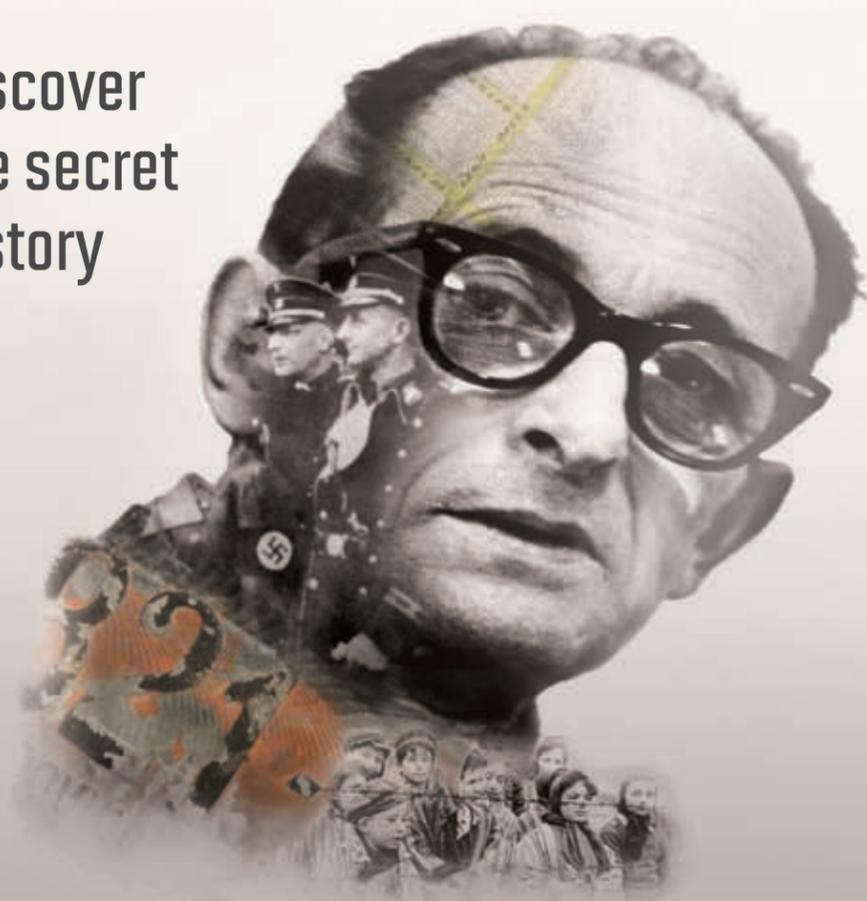
Hope Presbyterian Church and St. John's Episcopal Church, both across the street from temple, will once again be available for parking with police stationed to safely escort festival goers across Belcher Road.

In addition, this year remote parking lots with shuttle service will be offered from Oak Grove Middle School, 1370 S. Belcher Road, and St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church, 1955 S. Belcher Road.

Two senior communities, The Preserve in Clearwater (formerly Inn on the Pond) and the Palms of Largo, have donated use of their buses and the temple has hired the Jolly Trolley to shuttle festival goers from the remote parking lots. The temple parking lot will only be available for those with handicap permits.

The food festival will occur rain or shine and there is no admission fee; food prices are posted on the event website, www.tampabayjewishfoodfest.com.

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USF students sampling free homemade ice cream.

USF Hillel creates tasty (and free) way to enlighten students about Israel

What's the newest item on the University of South Florida Hillel menu? Homemade ice cream.

It is the latest addition to the kosher kitchen that opened last year when USF Hillel expanded its facilities. A commercial ice cream maker, donated to Hillel, resulted in the new treat: the USF Hillel Ice Cream Parlor.

Like other ice cream shops, this one serves delicious, homemade ice cream. Unlike other ice cream shops, USF Hillel's ice cream is free to any student who attends a fun, social and welcoming weekly event at the Morris and Bertha Escoll Center for Jewish Campus Life.

And the cherry on top, at the event, the general USF student population learns about the wonders of Israel at a time when anti-Israel sentiment is out-front on college campuses throughout the country.

Rabbi Ed Rosenthal, Suncoast Hillel's executive director and a self-proclaimed ice cream fanatic, explained how the idea for the Hillel Ice Cream Parlor was conceived.

"One of our donors offered to underwrite a commercial ice cream maker as part of our USF Hillel Kitchen Registry," said Rosenthal. "Not only was I extremely excited about the prospect of having our own homemade Hillel ice cream on campus, but I also realized that this would be a really creative and unique way to reach the 80 percent of USF students who don't know or care about Israel, Jews or Hillel beyond what they see in *The Oracle*, USF's weekly newspaper."

But that changes when students come to one of the weekly ice cream parlor programs. "They're greeted by Hillel students and staff, they see photos and videos of Israel on a high-definition monitor, they hear contemporary Israeli music and read large banners about Israeli innovations and contributions to the world," said Rosenthal. "They talk with USF Hillel students about Israel on a positive, one-on-one basis, which is what I hoped would happen with this program."

While the ice cream is free, in the spirit of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world,) students who come to the Ice Cream Parlor are encouraged to make a small donation to one of three charitable organizations: the Humane Society, the American Diabetes Association or the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society. This request is meant to teach students about the Jewish values of philanthropy and giving back to make the world a better place.

Since the USF Hillel Ice Cream Parlor opened in the fall, several hundred students have already taken part in the tasty weekly events.

Offering a variety of custom flavors that change weekly, Ice Cream Parlor nights have attracted different groups and organizations including: the Religious and Spiritual Life (RSL) Interfaith Leadership Council, multiple USF Medical School Student Association groups; the USF Campus-Wide Relay for Life Committee; and the USF World Study Abroad program. More student organizations are already on the schedule for future Ice Cream Parlor nights in the spring semester.

USF Hillel has also recently created a 36-flavors campaign, giving donors in the community an opportunity to design his or her own custom flavor, name it and become a part of this unique Israel education program.

For a donation of \$250, the donor's custom creation will be a featured Flavor of the Month at four weekly USF Hillel Ice Cream Parlors, and the donor will also receive two complimentary quarts of his or her ice cream.

The weekly USF Hillel Ice Cream Parlor is funded, in part, by a Hinenu mini-grant from Hillel International, the parent organization of Hillels of the Florida Suncoast.

For questions or additional information about the USF Hillel Ice Cream Parlor or Hillel's new 36-Flavors program, call Linda Wolf, Suncoast Hillel's assistant director, at (813) 899-2788 or email shalom@suncoasthillels.org.