Federation Participates in Annual P2G Summit in Israel

Pictured from left to right: Lisa Long, Andy Lipkin and Nancy Burnett at the Akko Naval Schools

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Liptalk
New Monthly Feature from Executive Vice-President
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Inaugural Event
Joshua Malina to Speak at September 13 Event
See page 10
Commentary

Condemning Hamas Eco-Terrorism

Join JCPA and COEJL in condemning Hamas eco-terrorism attacks against Israel and its people. We urge the international community to do everything in its power to preclude future such attacks.

For more than three months, Hamas has carried out eco-terrorism attacks against Israel and its people. With the use of incendiary devices attached to kites, balloons, and even protected birds, such as kestrels, these acts of arson have set fire to approximately 8,000 acres of land, which includes sensitive ecosystems. These fires have caused devastating damage to fragile ecosystems, some 1,500 acres of important farmland, and human communities. Most of this damage has occurred in nature reserves and parks, destroying habitats and killing many animals. The fires have also led to severe air pollution, exposing increasing numbers of children and their families to toxic smoke, which can lead to serious health problems.

For many years, environmental cooperation across Middle East borders has been a bright spot amid continued political unrest and armed conflict. From joint efforts to curb water contamination and preserve safe drinking water to “birds across borders” programs that have helped Palestinian, Jordanian, and Israeli farmers protect their crops using barn owls instead of toxic pesticides, governments and environmental groups have worked together to improve the health of the environment and the human communities that depend on it.

These acts not only threaten environmental cooperation, but inspire other terrorist groups to copy these attacks in other regions of the world.

We call on governmental and environmental organizations, here in the U.S. and around the world to join with us in condemning these attacks and putting a stop to them before the damage spreads further.

Editor’s note: This commentary is from the Jewish Council of Public Affairs and the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life.
Richard Marlin is New President of Federation Board of Directors

By Elise Skolnick

The new president of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation board of directors is no stranger to volunteer work. Richard Marlin has been involved with the Federation and its agencies for many years, serving on the board of directors, the investment committee, the long-range strategic planning committee, and more. He was president of the Commission for Jewish Education, the Youngstown Israel Investment Club and the Youngstown Zionist District Chapter of the Zionist Organization of America. He serves as co-trustee of the Frances and Lillian Schermer Trusts.

He has contributed to many other organizations, including serving on the board of the Mahoning Valley Epilepsy Fund and the Trumbull County Career and Technical Center Medical Programs Advisory Committee. He and his wife, Ronna, recently finished a term as co-presidents of Temple El Emeth.

Rick took on the role of Federation board president in June.

“IT’s one of those things where when you’re asked and it’s for the community that you think long and hard about it,” he said. “And I think we all have a responsibility to try to do our part.”

He plans to work with staff and the board to ensure all agencies are working well, and providing services that the community needs.

“There are a lot of wonderful things that we’re improving upon and we have to make sure we’re doing the best job we can in all of our agencies,” he said.

He also says it’s important to work on economic development, helping to make the Youngstown area attractive to Jewish individuals and families.

“We’ve got a lot of work to do in that area,” he said.

The Youngstown Jewish community offers more than virtually any other city of its size in the country, Rick feels.

“We need to look at communicating that to the total community - the Jewish community and the non-Jewish community,” he said.

He graduated from the University of Michigan College of Pharmacy in 1972 with a bachelor of pharmacy degree. After moving to this area with his wife Ronna, Rick worked for Allen’s Drugtown. Eventually he assumed the position of director of pharmacy for Allen’s PharmaServe, Inc. He also taught at Youngstown State University, served as a drug use evaluator for the Ohio Department of Human Services and as a member of the Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation Health Partnership Program Stakeholders group.

Rick is originally from New Castle, Pa. He and Ronna have one son, Marc. Marc and his wife, Alyson, live in Bethesda, Md. with their three children, Rory, Zoe and Finley.

“Of course, [family’s] more important than anything else,” Rick said.
El Emeth Holds Annual Meeting

The Temple El Emeth annual meeting was held at the synagogue July 10. Those present heard reports from chairmen and a video of the last year’s programs and events was presented by Elyse Silverman, program director. New officers and board members were installed. Phyllis and Art Friedman were installed as co-presidents for the 2018-2020 term. Other officers are Jeffrey Solomon, president-elect; Alice Franklin, vice-president; Diane Finesilver, secretary; Alan Mirkin, treasurer; Mark Perlman, member-at-large; Neil and Harriet Schor, immediate past presidents; and Ronna and Rick Marlin, second past presidents. The Sisterhood provided refreshments.

Rodef Sholom Calendar

Friday, Aug. 3
Outdoor Shabbat Service honoring our high school graduates at the home of David & Karie Newman at 6 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 10
Shabbat Service in Tamarkin Chapel at 6 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 24
Shabbat Service with Rabbi Muller and Cantor Rita Glassman in the Sanctuary at 6 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 25
Tot Shabbat Service with Rabbi Muller and Cantor Rita Glassman in the Wilkoff Library at 9 a.m.

Ohev Tzedek Rabbi’s Message

Rabbi Dario Hunter
Ohev Tzedek-Shaarei Torah

Justice by Any Other Name

Parshat Shoftim, which will be read on the Shabbat of August 18 this year, commands that “justice, justice you shall pursue.” The word for justice in Hebrew, tzedek, can also be translated as righteousness, underlining the necessary presence of a firm moral compass behind the meting out of justice.

Several parshiot back in Parshat Pinchas, the daughters of Zelophe had called upon Moses’ moral compass to resolve their grievance. Their father had died and they hoped to inherit his property despite the prevailing rule at the time that only male kin could do so. Moses did not dismiss the plea of the daughters; he took that plea seriously and then consulted Hashem for a remedy. After seeking Hashem’s word on the matter, the women were granted their request.

While 1 Samuel 15:29 tells us that G-d is “not a man that he should repent” or change his mind, the nature of what we as human beings see as justice indeed changes. And it doesn’t simply change by passive acceptance – it changes by an active grappling with the questions of inequality and injustice that face us.

Decades ago we felt we had firm and justifiable answers on the roles of women, racial minorities, members of the LGBT community and other socially marginalized people in our society. Over time we have witnessed the challenging of our assumptions and our unfortunate willingness to keep some of our fellow human beings in the margins. Quite recently, the ‘MeToo’ movement has compelled us to condemn the abusive behavior towards women to which our society has often turned a blind eye. Our hearts are being changed through an evolving and growing recognition of our moral responsibilities.

In contradiction to some perspectives about the connection between faith and justice continued on page 5
Justice, continued from page 4

President’s Message
By Neil Yutkin, Co-President

This is the reason that we are forming a committee to proactively examine our policies at the Temple rather than react to them, with limited time, because we have had a situation that requires a near immediate response. Our goal remains to honor and respect our traditions while updating our policies to meet the needs of our congregants. Appropriately, this committee has been named the policy committee. Under the direction of my co-president Francie Varwood, the committee is still accepting members and trying to create a balance between those who are more traditional and those who are seeking change. This committee make-up will hopefully allow us to predict what issues might arise and discuss them before they pop-up before the board.

Which brings me to the final item that brought the quote to my mind recently. As I write this, Tish’ah B’Av looms heavily upon my mind as it was July 21. At our board meeting last night, Art Einzig mentioned that Jeremiah had prophesized the destruction of Temple and the exile in Lamentation. While we no longer have Hashem to show us our future problems, we can hopefully make the right decisions that will prevent them. Indeed, we shall “hope for the best, but prepare for the worst,” and pray.

We’re not throwing everything out,” he added. “Or as the popular phrase goes, we’re not throwing the baby out with the bath water. We’re going to want to really take step-by-step looks at each item and make our decision.”

Break Bread Together
By Neil Yutkin, Co-President

Ohev Tzedek invited the Jewish and Muslim communities to join our synagogue in a Kabbalat Shabbat potluck service and dinner at the Chester Long Pavilion in Boardman Park Friday, July 20.

Rabbi Dario Hunter and spiritual leader Sandy Kessler began the service with traditional songs accompanied by Mindi Einzig on guitar. What followed was a peaceful Kabbalat Shabbat service celebrated by 40 some people of three different faiths coming together to “break bread.” While there were mainly Jews and Muslims, we were also joined by some of our Christian friends. The meal was limited to dairy and vegetarian dishes and was a truly mixed bag of food from different cultures.

Before eating, blessings were said in both Hebrew and Arabic. During the meal, the conversations allowed us to realize not our differences but the similarities between our cultures. There are many more than most people would think. Many thanks to Dr. Khalid Iqbal for making the arrangements for the Muslim community to join us.

Ohev Tzedek-Shaarei Torah Updates Mission

By Elise Skolnick

Ohev Tzedek-Shaarei Torah members voted at its annual meeting to update its constitution and change the mission statement.

The new mission reads:

Ohev Tzedek-Shaarei Torah is an egalitarian congregation combining Conservative, Reconstructionist, Reform and Orthodox Judaism. Founded in 1953, our congregation cultivates a rich, vibrant tradition by dedicated spiritual leaders, caring support staff and active congregants.

It is our mission to create and provide a dynamic, inclusive and spiritually enriching environment for its members, to cultivate and strengthen the bonds of understanding of our Jewish heritage, to foster meaningful connections for Jewish learning, celebration, social activism, and to help build and sustain a vibrant Jewish community in the greater Youngstown area. We are guided by the Torah and are committed to our community, the State of Israel, and to Jews around the world. Our vision is to foster a spiritual community dedicated to preserving our Jewish heritage while injecting inspiration from current and future generations.

“We’ve discovered over the years that our needs are changing,” said Neil Yutkin, president. “And that our members are changing. We want to keep the traditions, but we don’t want to lose some of the advancements that are being made within religion. And we still look to the Torah as our guide.”

The response to the suggested changes was positive, he said. The updates passed without dissension.

Ohev’s membership totals between 92 and 100 families. A committee – that any Ohev member can join – will be tasked with determining any changes to rituals that are made.

“Now we’re trying to be accommodating, but to hold with tradition,” Yutkin said. “We don’t want to do anything to offend our long-time members, but we want to be able to show people that we’re not hung up on rules that are thousands of years old strictly because the people at that time made that determination. We live in a different society today.”

An example is a woman whose mother was recently cremated after death, but wanted her to be buried in Ohev’s cemetery. Cremation is against Jewish tradition and Ohev’s policy. However, after researching Rabinic and Biblical law and a lengthy discussion, the change was approved.

“To this point we had been reactive,” Yutkin said. “We don’t move on any of this type of stuff until somebody brings it up and has a need for it. And then we’re under the gun.”

Now, however, the policy committee will look at different issues coming up in Jewish society today and what other temples are doing to be active rather than reactive.
Partnerships Matter

A Message from Andy Lipkin
Federation Executive Vice-President

Welcome to my first monthly article. I’ll be sharing my thoughts about what’s going on at the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation and its agencies in a regular email. I look forward to this chance to share a little about our programs, staff and volunteers.

I recently returned from a trip to Israel that, though short, was full of opportunities to meet people and plan for future partnerships. That’s something we try to do regularly at the Federation. On this trip, among other things, we discussed possible collegiate partnerships with Youngstown State University and had a chance to see what’s happening with Partnership2Gether-Western Galilee, a group we’re part of. It was exciting to see first-hand the projects we help fund.

Right here in our own community, we can also see the impact our partnerships have. In June, the JCC hosted two big events – the 20th annual Suzi Solomon Golf Classic and the first Dash and Splash, a 5k run/walk and party at the Logan campus of the JCC. Around 130 golfers participated in the Classic and over 120 runners took part in the inaugural Dash. These events wouldn’t have been possible without the generous support of sponsors and participants, as well as our dedicated volunteers and staff. A video of the impact the JCC had in 2017 can be viewed on the JCC website at jccyoungstown.org. Photos from both events are on the JCC Facebook page.

Partnerships are playing an important role in an upcoming Federation event at the JCC. In August, Federation, Israel Tennis Centers Foundation (ITC), Youngstown State University and the United Way of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley will host an ITC team from Israel.

Through the discipline of tennis, the Israel Tennis Centers strive to improve the lives of children.

By teaching self-reliance, perseverance and focus, the ITC fosters sustainable values of self-esteem, character and tolerance.

Our partnership with the United Way goes beyond the ITC program. The Thomases Family Endowment of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation recently donated $15,000 to the United Way’s Success After 6 program which provides wraparound services and academic support to children and families in need. (See full article, page 11.)

In addition, the Jewish Community Center of Youngstown is a Success After 6 partner agency, providing programming to afterschool students as well as opportunities to learn tennis and attend Camp JCC this summer.

The Thomases Family Endowment is a partner in an organization that recently received a significant prize. Jewish Funders Network awarded the 2018 Shapiro Prize for Excellence in Philanthropic Collaboration to the Social Venture Fund for Jewish-Arab Equality and Shared Society. The biennial Shapiro Prize recognizes alliances of forward-thinking Jewish funders who collaborate to have an impact in their chosen fields of interest. SVF is a philanthropic collaborative that brings together individuals, foundations, and federations who support an equal and inclusive shared society in Israel for the benefit of all of its citizens. Working together through SVF allows members to learn from each other and from leading experts in the field, and to have greater impact than they could have by acting individually. Partnerships matter.

It’s amazing what we can do when we work together.
Heritage Manor Honors Its Volunteers

Heritage Manor volunteers were honored in July. Volunteers help with arts and crafts, bingo, baking and more. Thomas Lareau and Manya Tsitrin received special recognition for their many hours of service.

 Volunteers recognized were Frances Allen, Ted Aron, Les Apple, Jordan Cohen, Luis Santiago Castro, Henry Diamond, Aaron Duval, Art Einzig, Paula Ferguson, Ben Gomez, Darrell Gordon, Jerry Haber, Booker Kessler, Sam Kooperman, Sanford Kessler, Thomas Lareau, Elliot Legow, Eugene Mallen, Florence Mirkin, Dr. Mark Perlman, Neil Schor, Allan Sharapan, Marilyn Sniderman, and Manya Tsitrin.

Heritage Manor Family Picnic Brings Smiles

Heritage Manor hosted its 3rd annual family picnic in June. Around 100 residents, their family members, friends and staff enjoyed hamburgers, hot dogs and more while the Jim Frank Trio entertained.

“Our residents and families thoroughly enjoy this celebration every year,” said Cristal Vincent, Human Services CEO.

"It’s a change from their normal dinner setting and is more like a party."

Bobbie Berkowitz, activities director, coordinated the event held in Heritage Manor’s multipurpose room.

"People clapped to the music, talked with each other, and shared a lot of smiles," she said.

Korean War Veteran Visits Levy Gardens to Share Honor Flight Experience

Dr. Larry Glass and his niece, Carol Mirkin, visited with Levy Gardens Assisted Living tenants to share details from their recent Veteran’s Honor Flight.

Dr. Glass and Carol were given a tour of Washington and the war memorials there. Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization created to honor America’s veterans for their sacrifices.

They fly them to Washington, D.C. to visit and reflect at the memorials. Dr. Glass is an Army veteran who served in the Korean War.

Dr. Glass said the most remarkable moment of the trip was looking out over Arlington National Cemetery in awe at the number of white headstones. He also said it was interesting to learn how soldiers are selected to guard the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

JFS Partners with TCBDD for Help with Meals on Wheels Program

Earlier this year, Jewish Family Services entered into a partnership with Trumbull County Board of Developmental Disabilities (TCBDD) for help with the packing and delivery portions of the Meals on Wheels program.

A TCBDD staff member works with a person enrolled in their program to pack the frozen meals and deliver them. The meals are prepared by staff at Heritage Manor. The position was previously filled by a part-time employee who left to pursue full-time work. "JFS was able to train the two individuals from TCBDD and they were quickly on their way to independently packing and delivering our frozen meals throughout Mahoning and Trumbull County," said Ken Bielecki, director of Jewish Family Services. Currently, Jimmy Tricomi of TCBDD works with a job coach to pack and deliver the meals.

He sorts the meals, based by name and likes versus dislikes of meal types. The job coach, who is a paid TCBDD staff person, delivers the meals on a volunteer basis.

"Jimmy is a very welcome addition to JFS," Ken said. "Jimmy is so efficient with his work with our Meals on Wheels program that JFS decided to hire and pay for his time with us every Monday and Tuesday when he packs our frozen meals."

Jimmy also works at an adult work shop in Trumbull County, has a part-time position at a concession stand at Willow Lake in Champion, and is an avid golfer who enjoys league play. He participates in Special Olympics events, including golf and bowling. He said he enjoys the position at JFS, and likes meeting new people.

"This is another wonderful example of JFS creating partnerships with other agencies to work together to serve the community," Ken said. "We look forward to expanding our partnerships with places like TCBDD in the future."

"It’s a change from their normal dinner setting and is more like a party."

Bobbie Berkowitz, activities director, coordinated the event held in Heritage Manor’s multipurpose room.

"People clapped to the music, talked with each other, and shared a lot of smiles," she said.

A family picnic was held at Heritage Manor in June.
Delegation Sees First-hand How Federation Makes an Impact in Western Galilee

By Nancy Burnett

Partnership2Gether chair, Youngstown Area Jewish Federation and Partnership2Gether Community Engagement co-chair, U.S.

Editor’s note: In June, the Partnership2Gether (P2G) Central Area Consortium comprised of 14 U.S. cities, plus Budapest, Hungary, and Israel) held its annual Summit in the Western Galilee area of Israel. Three people represented the Youngstown area: Andy Lipkin, executive vice-president, Youngstown Area Jewish Federation; Lisa Long, financial resource development director, Youngstown Area Jewish Federation; and Nancy Burnett, Partnership2Gether chair, Youngstown Area Jewish Federation and Partnership2Gether community engagement co-chair, U.S.

What is Partnership2Gether?

Partnership2Gether is an organization under the umbrella of the Jewish Agency and the Jewish Federation of North America that has the goal of connecting people in order to foster Jewish identity and create strong bonds among the people in our communities.

The Youngstown Area Jewish Federation is one of the communities involved with Partnership2Gether. The partnership works directly in the Western Galilee to create cultural, educational, social, medical and economic programs that connect people and establish personal relationships. The Western Galilee, in northern Israel, is home to six religious and ethnic groups that co-exist with one another: Baha’is, Circassians, Christians, Druze, Jews, and Arabs - all living within mere miles of both the Lebanese and Syrian borders. In a country the size of New Jersey, where the population is often

Biking Event Will Strengthen Connections Between Partnership2Gether Cities

Federation is a P2G-Western Galilee partner

Partnership2Gether and the Jewish Federation of Louisville will hold Bike2Gether: Bikes & Bourbon – Louisville from Oct. 5 to 8.

Bike2Gether is a four-day, fully-supported bicycle tour of Kentucky’s signature landmarks, bourbon distilleries, beautiful back roads, and thoroughbred horse farms. Riders from Israel, Budapest and throughout the U.S. will participate.

In honor of Israel’s birthday, each day will feature a 70-mile ride, as well as shorter rides, combined with distillery stops. Riders will have a unique Kentucky experience while strengthening connections between the Western Galilee, Budapest and U.S. Central Area Consortium P2G cities.

The cost is $600. One- and two-day options are available as well. To register, go to jewishlouisville.org/bikes-bourbon.

The Youngstown Area Jewish Federation is a partner in Partnership2Gether-Western Galilee.
Darlene Muller Made an Impact Before Retiring

By Elise Skolnick

Darlene Muller is a familiar face at the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation and its agencies.
She held several positions within the organization and accomplished a great deal before her retirement in June.
Darlene began teaching preschool at the Jewish Community Center in 1982.
“The most gratifying thing is that the children I taught years ago still come up to me today and have fond memories of me as their preschool teacher,” she said.

Marsha Fader, preschool director at the time, said Darlene was a dedicated team player and wonderful with the kids.
“My favorite word to use is fabulous,” she said. “And that’s what she was.”

Darlene was creative with lesson plans and fun, Marsha said. She was also kind, understanding and patient.
“I totally enjoyed my experience of having her on my staff,” Marsha said.

Though Darlene left the Federation for a while, she returned in 2006, happy to have the opportunity to directly impact the Jewish community by working with senior citizens and providing adult programming.

As director of senior outreach, Darlene worked with residents of the Youngstown and Sharon Jewish communities who were 65 and over, ultimately establishing a clientele of over 150 people.
She assessed the needs of each client and found the appropriate programs and services offered by the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation. She also delivered holiday baskets for Rosh Hashanah and Purim and visited with them in their homes throughout the year.
“I think it is so important to maintain a connection with the elderly Jewish residents who live here, in many cases having spent their whole lives in the Youngstown area,” she said.

Sandy Kessler, former JCC director, said Darlene was a pleasure to work with.
“She is an absolute jewel of a person.”

Darlene worked tirelessly to visit individuals who were housebound and those who needed some cheering up, he said.
“She just did a lot of good for a lot of people,” he said. “And this community should be very grateful to her.”

As director of adult programming, Darlene planned and coordinated adult activities held at the Jewish Community Center. These included the J Café, which featured a wide variety of guest speakers and lunch prepared by a community leader; the Lunch and Learn program; and the Florence Melton class, a two-year intensive Jewish educational program.
She also organized monthly theater trips to Cleveland and Pittsburgh to see traveling Broadway shows and four-day trips to Chicago, New York City, Philadelphia and Toronto, where participants explored Jewish sights and places of interest in those cities.

As volunteer coordinator, Darlene recruited volunteers to help with tasks such as folding the quarterly JCC program guide. Many of the volunteers were her senior outreach clients.
“We always had a lot of fun talking and catching up every time they would come in to do this mitzvah for us,” she said.

Darlene’s husband, Rabbi Franklin Muller, has been the rabbi at Congregation Rodef Sholom for 23 years. She enjoys being the rebbetzin and volunteering at the synagogue.
“I have three amazing daughters, three wonderful sons-in-law and six beautiful grandchildren who live in the Cleveland and Columbus areas,” she said. “Now that I’m retired I hope to be spending a lot more time with my family, my friends, my husband, and at our home in Florida.”

A retirement party will be held for Darlene from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, August 7 in the JCC multipurpose room. The public is invited. Please RSVP to Nancy Sentelik at 330-746-3250 ext. 108 or nsentelik@jewishyoungstown.org.

Wish Your Family and Friends a Happy New Year!

September will be the Rosh Hashanah issue of the Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine. Take the opportunity to greet members of the community by submitting a greeting. Greetings and payment are due Aug. 15. Email journal@jewishyoungstown.org for a greetings form. Forms are also available on the Federation website – jewishyoungstown.org.

SAVE THE DATES
YOUNGSTOWN AREA
JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

SEPTEMBER 16: The Testament
Boardman Movies 8 6:30 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 20: Sammy Davis, Jr. I’ve Gotta Be Me
Encore Cinema, Niles 7:00 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 27: Wrestling Jerusalem
Encore Cinema, Niles 7:00 p.m.

OCTOBER 4: Who’s Gonna Love Me Now?
Boardman Movies 8 7:00 p.m.

OCTOBER 14: Footnote
Encore Cinema, Niles 4:30 p.m.

OCTOBER: The Invisibles (Second Showing)
Youngstown Cinema 3:00 p.m.

OCTOBER: The Invisibles (First Showing)
Youngstown Cinema 3:00 p.m.

Students: $5 | Pre-Order: $7 | Door: $10 | Season Tickets: $40

For more information, contact Sarah Wilschek
330.746.3250 ext. 123 | swilschek@jewishyoungstown.org
Joshua Malina will be the speaker at the 2018 Inaugural Event of the Combined Jewish Appeal to be held Sept. 13 at the DeYor Performing Arts Center in Youngstown. He will share “How to Make it in Hollywood and Remain a Mensch.”

After graduating from Yale University with a bachelor of arts in theatre studies, Malina made his professional acting debut in the Broadway production of Aaron Sorkin’s A Few Good Men. He went on to star as Jeremy Goodwin in Sorkin’s critically acclaimed television series “Sports Night.” Later, Josh co-starred as Will Bailey in Sorkin’s multi-Emmy winning show “The West Wing.” Other Sorkin credits include the hit features “The American President” and “Malice.”

He recently co-starred in ABC’s hit drama “Scandal.”

A co-creator of Bravo’s hit show “Celebrity Poker Showdown,” Josh wrote, produced, and co-starred in the comic web series “Backwash.” It is available for free viewing on Crackle.com and YouTube. Co-stars in the project include Jon Hamm, Michael Ian Black, Sarah Silverman, Hank Azaria, and many others.

A graduate of Westchester Day School, Josh has been active in Jewish affairs for some time.

He appeared in the Jewish Federation’s “Live Generously” campaign, and starred in a video preparing Jewish high school students for the possibility of facing an anti-Israel climate on college campuses.

In an appearance on “Celebrity Jeopardy,” Josh won $50,000 for Bet Tzedek, a pro bono law firm in Los Angeles. This July he took Mazon’s SNAP Food Stamp Challenge, and discussed the experience on Current TV’s “The Young Turks.” Over the last few years, Malina has spoken at dozens of Federations and Hillels across the country.

Raised in New Rochelle, New York, Josh now resides in Los Angeles with his wife and two children.

Gerry and Jeannie Peskin will host the Inaugural Event. The chairperson for the 2018 campaign is Dr. Mark Perlman. Invitations for the event will be mailed. For more information, contact Lisa Long at llong@jewishyoungstown.org or 330.746.3250, ext. 175.
Thomases Family Endowment Supports Success After Six Program

The Thomases Family Endowment of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation recently presented the United Way of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley with $15,000 for its Success After 6 program. The funding will support the expansion of United Way's education initiative, Success After 6, in the Youngstown City School District. Success After 6 provides wraparound services and academic support to children and families in need.

"It is with great pleasure that the Thomases Family Endowment of The Youngstown Area Jewish Federation has the opportunity to participate in such a worthwhile cause such as United Way’s Success After 6 program.” said Andi Baroff, Thomases Family Endowment Committee Member and Irwin Thomases stepdaughter. "Helping children learn and gain confidence while enjoying what they’re doing would put a smile on Irwin’s face.”

YSU Nursing and Criminal Justice Students Take Life-Changing Israel Trip

A group of 20 students from the Youngstown State University departments of nursing and criminal justice visited Israel during their spring break. During this new opportunity, students spent 10 days visiting sites that provided educational opportunities related to their major and toured both Jewish and Christian sites, providing life-changing experiences.

Dr. Nancy Wagner, chairperson of the department of nursing, facilitated the trip for the nursing students at Western Galilee Medical Center, a hospital in the Youngstown partnership region, along with nursing faculty Dr. Kim Ballone and Mary Ann Cosentino. The faculty presented their nursing simulation research to staff and students at the medical center.

The YSU nursing students toured and participated in activities on several patient units. The students saw the impact of the war after meeting Syrian children who were injured due to bombings and warfare. The YSU nursing group also toured the Western Galilee Medical Center underground hospital, a full 500-bed hospital space to be used in the event of war near the Lebanese border. Student highlights included spending time in the emergency department observing care of Jews, Arabs, Druze and Christians.

"The students loved visiting the holy sites, but observing the staff’s cultural competency and care of all was the highlight of the trip,” Wagner said. “Our students also had the opportunity to share school experiences and community projects with students at Hadassah’s Henrietta Szold School of Nursing in Jerusalem.”

Ten YSU criminal justice students learned about the similarities and differences between the Israeli criminal justice system and the U.S. criminal justice system on a visit to Israel.

In addition to the support from the Thomases Endowment, the Jewish Community Center of Youngstown is a Success After 6 partner agency providing programming to the afterschool students as well as opportunities to learn tennis and attend Camp JCC this summer.

Success After 6 is growing from eight schools last school year to 12 in the Valley for the upcoming 2018-2019 school year. The education initiative will serve 800 students through an afterschool program, and provide hundreds of other students in five school districts with important wraparound and academic services.

“My father, Irwin Thomases, believed strongly in the power of education, and he fostered a love of learning in me,” said Martha Thomases, Irwin Thomases daughter. “He would be very proud to be part of the Success by 6 program. Thank you for this opportunity.”

YSU criminal justice students learned about the similarities and differences between the Israeli criminal justice system and the U.S. criminal justice system on a visit to Israel.
Impact, from page 8

segregated by language barriers, peaceful co-existence is dependent upon people-to-people outreach, recognition and celebration of diversity, and the unified longing for peace among residents.

Our Partnership works diligently on a multitude of social justice programs. A network of over 200 volunteers in Israel alone provides outreach in the areas of education, academia, youth programming, community engagement, the arts, medical, and resource development.

Partnering with U.S. and Hungarian volunteers, our Partnership builds people-to-people relationships that promote mutually beneficial programs strengthening and enhancing the Jewish spirit of Tikkun Olam.

As our partnership celebrates 20 plus years, we continue to support areas of cultural exchange and understanding, building bridges of co-operation across the cultures with a unified goal of true partnership through Jewish identity.

Connect and Make a Difference is more than our motto; it is our mission.

People-to-People: Connecting and Making a Difference

The four-day Summit, held in Akko, included many opportunities for delegates from the U.S. and Hungary to visit some of the sites with which we are associated.

The Orot Hesed Food Pantry provided the first hands-on opportunity for delegates to make a meaningful difference in helping the less fortunate in the area. A large warehouse in the industrial area of the city is the recipient of truckloads of fresh produce from the surrounding agricultural farms. Partnership Consortium attendees spent the morning sorting and packaging bags of fresh produce - onions, potatoes and eggplants - for distribution to families in need.

Working alongside Akko residents, food staples were also packaged and readied for delivery on Friday before Shabbat.

A visit to Kivunim’s Shop for Meaning provided a unique shopping experience while making a contribution to both society and the environment. Shop for Meaning is an informal, professional training center for young people with physical and sensory disabilities focused on training, trading sales, and customer interaction. The shop provides a practical opportunity for the team of youth working at the shop to use and develop skills necessary to transition from their status of ones who receive help and support to becoming those who themselves give assistance.

The project employs various innovative programs for development of skills necessary for self-management, independence and involvement with the community by encouraging youth and adults with special needs to take responsibility for their own lives, make independent decisions and become productive citizens. The shop is filled with gifts, souvenirs, crafts and art objects with an environmental and social message, many of which are hand crafted by the shop staff.

Meeting and interacting with these Shop for Meaning participants provided P2G delegates with a first-hand look at how our sponsorship and involvement make a meaningful difference in the lives of those too often underserved in society.

Real Solutions to Real Problems

The Partnership2Gether delegation was privileged to visit the Akko Naval Training Center for young people with special needs to take responsibility for their own lives, make independent decisions and become productive citizens. The shop is filled with gifts, souvenirs, crafts and art objects with an environmental and social message, many of which are hand crafted by the shop staff.

Meeting and interacting with these Shop for Meaning participants provided P2G delegates with a first-hand look at School where youth in grades 9-12 are identifying real world problems and applying their educational expertise to projects that provide solutions.

A group of these students have devised a “smart solution” to the universal problem of young children being left in backseat car seats and subjected to sweltering, life-threatening temperatures. The students devised a key fob that alerts parents/caregivers to the presence of an unattended child by setting off an alarm. With the aid of P2G sponsorship, this product will be readied for international marketing, proving again that connecting and making a difference contributes to a global society.

Journeys

My recent journeys to Nepal (within sight of Mt. Everest, the highest point on earth) and Israel (to the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth) have caused me to think about journeys in general.

All of life is a journey whether or not we step outside of our Mahoning Valley comfort zone - a journey of time and boundaries, of chaos and order, of uncertainty and predictability.

Just as the Israelites, thousands of years ago, ventured out into the wilderness on their journey to the Promised Land, we too venture into the unknown daily. We too encounter pitfalls and peaks - highs and lows - as we maneuver through relationships and mundane activities. We too mutter and complain, we idealize “the good old days,” we seek and value materialistic goals at the expense of recognizing each day as a gift and an opportunity to make the world a better place.

Whether our journeys take us around the world or around the block, we encounter strangers - people who just like us have families and responsibilities and problems, people who are seeking meaning and comfort in their lives, people who are hoping to shed the mantle of uncertainty and live in a world of peaceful co-existence.

Our ability to communicate with each other is hampered by linguistic barriers, but lending a helping hand, volunteering, and just smiling are universal. When we can learn to acknowledge differences but seek commonalities, we can blend together a fabric of inclusiveness and cooperation - a unified journey toward compassion and morality. Whether our journeys are long or short, our task is to find meaning and provide comfort along the way.

My journeys to the Himalayas and the Dead Sea are symbolic of life’s journey - peaks and depths, hills and valleys - but always looking forward and being thankful for each new opportunity that presents itself.
Laura Weymer is New JCC Health and Wellness Director

The new Jewish Community Center Health and Wellness Director will combine her passion for health and wellness with her previous experiences in development and fundraising.

In this position, Laura Weymer oversees the Health and Wellness Department, which includes Aquatics, Fitness, Wellness, Logan Campus, the School of Dance and more.

“The JCC is very lucky to have Laura,” said Mike Rawl, JCC executive director. “The Health and Wellness Director position is a new investment that will provide additional oversight over our largest revenue producing department and will create several outcomes - excellence in member service, greater operational efficiency and development of new and diverse revenue sources.

Laura is a self-starter who is highly capable and who has already demonstrated her worth, after less than one month on the job. Furthermore, she has an excellent personality that makes her a pleasure to work with and a perfect fit for our team.”

Laura grew up in the Columbus area, but moved to Liberty in 2011 to be with her then-future husband. The couple met in college and married in 2013. Her husband, Matt, is a teacher in the Springfield local school district. They are expecting their first child in November.

“Living in Liberty, I have always admired the Jewish Community Center and all of the services it offered to the community that I live in,” Laura said. “I have been working in development and fundraising for a while and I enjoy it, but my passion is health and wellness. It’s what I got my degree in, and so finding a way to be able to utilize some of the skills I’ve learned in my other jobs with my passion just kind of seemed to be the perfect opportunity.”

When she moved to the Youngstown area, Laura didn’t know anyone, but went door-to-door looking for jobs, ultimately landing at the YMCA. Her most recent position was director of development for the Boys & Girls Club of Youngstown.

Youngstown, she said, “has become home and I’m really excited to have a family here.”

At the JCC, she’s looking forward to working with other staff members and collaborating with community partners. She would also like to see more youth sports programming.

“I love sports and the way that it brings people together,” Laura said. “And it’s the same with fitness and health. It’s just a community that you don’t get everywhere.”

In her spare time, Laura is a referee for varsity basketball.


**EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

For more information on the Early Learning Center, contact Ben Katz, Director of Early Learning at 330.746.3250 ext. 119 or bkatz@jewishyoungstown.org.

*Ages: 6 weeks - Prekindergarten*

**Hours:**
- Monday - Friday
- Half day: 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- Extended day options: 6:45 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

**Infant**
- Individual lesson plans geared to each child’s development
- Flexible schedules
- Library visits as part of our curriculum
- Engaging classroom environments
- Strong language development
- Problem solving & self help skills

**Toddler**
- Individual lesson plans geared to each child’s development
- Library visits as part of our curriculum
- Hands-on learning activities
- Strong literacy and math focus
- Problem solving & self help skills
- Preschool readiness program

**Preschool**
- Thematic learning
- On-site Library
- Swim lessons
- Gym class/fitness program
- Learning center instruction
- Kindergarten readiness
- The Valley’s best outdoor playground

**School Age Care**

Hours: 3:00-6:00 p.m.  
(All day care is available during holiday breaks)

- Focusing on child’s cognitive development
- Enhancing learning by concentrating on physical, creative & social development
- Daily activities including swimming, arts & crafts, fitness program, and designated homework time

The **NEW Infant and Toddler Playground is finished!**
Get fit fast with Personal Training at the JCC!

Personal Training Benefits:
• personalized safe and effective fitness programs
• achievement of goals in a short time period
• improved muscle coordination, strength, endurance, and flexibility

To register for personal training, call 330.746.3250 ext. 182

Pickleball Play Schedule
A paddle sport created for all ages and skill levels. The rules are simple and the game is easy for beginners to learn, but can develop into a quick, fast-paced, competitive game for experienced players.

Tuesday & Thursday: 4:30–7:30 p.m.
Sunday: 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Open Gym Youth Basketball
Children ages five and up can join us for kid-friendly basketball time in our gym. Bring your own ball, or borrow one of ours.

Date: Fridays
Time: 4:00–5:30 p.m.

Wallyball
A fantastic way to get in shape and have fun! Play in our racquetball court. Equipment is provided.

Tuesdays: 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Fridays: 5:00–7:00 p.m.

Racquetball
A great way to make friends and stay in shape. Call or visit the JCC Welcome Desk to reserve your court. Equipment not provided.

Ping-Pong
Want to play ping-pong with your friends? The JCC ping-pong table is now in the lower level Multi-Purpose Room. Paddles and balls are provided.

JCC Fitness Team Meet and Greet
Spend your lunch getting to know our personal trainers, group exercise and aquatics instructors. They will discuss the various benefits of participating in these programs and also answer any questions.

Date: Friday, August 17
Time: 12:00 - 1:00 pm
Location: Multi-Purpose Room
Free Event

Register at jccyoungstown.org by August 15

Boot Camp Blitz
Join us for an intense circuit class that will work every muscle in your body. We’ll move through a variety of body weight exercises designed to build strength and endurance while raising your heart rate. We’ll also incorporate cardio intervals for a full body blast! This class will utilize the Group Exercise Room and the Gymnasium.

Date: Monday, Wednesday & Friday
Time: 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Date: Tuesday
Time: 4:30- 5:25 p.m.

Zumba Gold®
Specialty course designed to meet the anatomical physiological needs of our growing population. This workout incorporates many of the dance/fitness routines set to Latin and international rhythms but is performed at a lower intensity. “Ditch the workout, join the party!”

Date: Tuesday/Thursday
Time: 10:00-10:55 a.m.

Aquatics
For more information on Aquatics, contact Shawn Chrystal at 330.746.3250 ext. 112 or aquatics@jewishyoungstown.org

The JCC Aquatics department offers swim lessons throughout the year in private and small group settings. Classes are taught by trained Learn-to-Swim Instructors.

To enroll in any of our group or private swim lessons call 330.746.3250 ext. 112

P.A.L.S.+ Private Swimming Lessons
The JCC offers free one-on-one swim lessons that are geared towards persons on the autism spectrum and have developmental disabilities. Our instructors will be using advanced techniques to connect with the children and young adults during lessons. This program is funded by the Thomas Family Endowment of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation. To apply for the P.A.L.S.+ program visit jccyoungstown.org/pals.

SwimSafe 500
This program provides free swimming lessons for children in kindergarten through eighth grade who receive free or reduced school meals. Lessons will be taught in a group setting with a low student-to- teacher ratio. This program is supported by The United Way of the Mahoning Valley, The Thomases Family Endowment of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, and The Redwoods Group. Visit jccyoungstown.org/swimsafe500 to register.

Group Lessons

You & Me Baby
This is a monthly class where parents assist their children in the water. Children will learn how to float and improve their water skills. Recommended ages: 6 - 36 months. Swim pants or swim diapers are required.

Date: Saturdays
Time: 9:30 -10:00 a.m.
Cost: $30/Member | $40/Non Member

Learn-To- Swim: Ages 3+
Children will be placed into the appropriate level by the swim instructors

Level 1: Basic swimming skills will be taught such as floating, blowing bubbles and the correct body positions for freestyle and backstroke.

Level 2: Children will learn arm motions for freestyle and backstroke as well as the correct breathing patterns for both strokes.
African-American Heritage.

Ervin! Ervin is a multiple gold medalist and is of Jewish descent and is the first U.S. Olympic swimmer of African-American Heritage.

Olympian Anthony Ervin Swim Clinic

Join the Jewish Community Center of Youngstown for a swim clinic with 3-time Olympian, Anthony Ervin! Ervin is a multiple gold medalist and is of Jewish descent and is the first U.S. Olympic swimmer of African-American Heritage.

Private Swim Lessons

Private lessons are great for swimmers of any age from the beginner trying to learn the basics to the seasoned swimmer looking to improve their skills. Private lessons are also great for adults who want to learn-to-swim or even triathletes looking to improve their skills. Starting in June outdoor private lessons available at our Logan Campus

Four 30-minute lessons
Cost: $82/Member | $110/Non Member

Step It Up Flow

Walking is one of the best forms of exercise, and it’s even better in the pool! You will be walking the length of the pool while incorporating exercises to build muscle, improve balance and enhance flexibility. No swimming ability required. * The unique qualities of water provide exceptional benefits to people with MS and other lower body muscular issues. Water helps people with MS move in ways they may not be able to on land.*

Date: Monday & Wednesday
Time: 11:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.
Date: Friday
Time: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Mixed Doubles Night
Date: Wednesdays
Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Free/Member | $10/Non Member

Swim Lessons
Beginner Group Lessons
Wednesdays | 10:30 -11:30 a.m.
Cost: $30/Member | $40/Non Member

Swim Team Tutors
1:1 student/coach ratio
Four 30-Minute Lessons

For more information on our Logan Campus, contact Shawn Chrystal at 330.746.3250 ext. 112 or aquatics@jewishyoungstown.org

JCC Logan Campus, 3245 Logan Way, Youngstown, OH 44505

Hours:
Monday-Saturday
11:00 a.m.- 8:00 p.m.
Sunday
12:00-8:00 p.m.

Men’s Open Play Tennis
Date: Mondays
Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Free/Member | $10/Non Member

Women’s Open Play Tennis
Date: Thursdays
Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Free/Member | $10/Non Member

Cost: $82/Member | $110/Non Member
To enroll in private swim team tutoring or beginner group lessons, call 330.746.3250 ext. 112

Saturday Night S’mores
Join us rain or shine every Saturday night at 7:00 p.m. around the fire-pit to make delicious s’mores!

Mark Sioni Blues Night
Join us for an evening of swimming and listening to local blues musician, Mark Sioni. Food will be available for purchase at the snack shack.

Date: Thursday, August 2
Time: 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Early Morning Lap Swim
Date: Mondays-Fridays, July & August
Time: 5:30-9:15 a.m.
Free/Member

Family Late Night Movie & Swim
Jumanji
Date: Saturday, August 11
Time: 7:30-10:00 p.m.

Cost: $25/Member | $30/Non Member
Each clinic will include a pool session, an inspirational talk as well as a photograph/autograph session all conducted by Anthony.

In order to participate in the clinic, all children must be able to swim a 50 yard freestyle and at least a 25 of one other stroke. This clinic is for proficient swimmers.

Participants should bring a suit, cap, water bottle, and towel to the event. Parents of participants will be emailed at least 2 days prior to the event as a reminder and with any additional information that is needed for the event.

Registration is first-come, first-served and no refunds or transfers will be issued.
To register visit jccyoungstown.org/ervin

Logan Campus, 3245 Logan Way, Youngstown, OH 44505

Hours:
Monday-Saturday
11:00 a.m.- 8:00 p.m.
Sunday
12:00-8:00 p.m.

Movie & Lunch Bunch: Going in Style
Lifelong buddies Willie (Morgan Freeman), Joe (Michael Caine) and Albert (Alan Arkin) decide to buck retirement and step off the straight and narrow when their pension funds become a corporate casualty. Desperate to pay the bills, the three men risk it all by embarking on a daring adventure to knock off the bank that absconded with their money. A light lunch will be served. This film is rated PG-13.

Date: Wednesday, August 15
Time: 12:00-2:30 p.m.
Location: Multi-Purpose Room

Cost: $8/Member | $11/Non Member

Newman Levy Speaker Series
“The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg” Film Screening and Talk-Back with Producer

Hank Greenberg, also known as the “Hebrew Hammer”, was an American professional baseball player. He left baseball to enlist in the U.S. Army. Greenberg was the first major league player to return to the MLB after the war. Join us for a screening of the movie “The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg” followed by a discussion with the producer, Ms. Aviva Kempner. Light refreshments will be served. This event is free and open to everyone.

Date: Monday, August 27
Time: 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.
Location: Multi-Purpose Room
Register online at jccyoungstown.org
Volunteer Opportunities
Social Action Committee of the Jewish Community Relations Council
330.746.3250 ext. 123
Swilschek@jewishyoungstown.org

Churchill United Methodist Food Pantry
The CHUM Food Pantry aims to feed families in Liberty Township that are in need of extra assistance. Since first starting in 2016, the pantry now feeds over 70+ families. Volunteers will help distribute food and make guests feel welcome during their visit.
Dates: Aug. 3, Sept. 7
Time: 9:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Location: 189 Churchill Rd, Youngstown, OH 44505

Diaper Packing with Making Kids Count
The Making Kids Count Diaper Bank Volunteers repack diapers in quantities of 25 diapers per size with saran wrap and labels. This ensures that more people are able to receive a pack of diapers and that the diapers are being distributed as more of an “emergency” supply. Volunteers wrap 10,000 diapers into 400 packs a month!
Dates: Aug. 17, Sept. 14
Times: 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Location: 7178 West Blvd, Ste E, Youngstown, Ohio 44512

2018 Youngstown Area Jewish Film Festival
Our mission is to take you on a cinematic cultural journey that depicts a broad spectrum of Jewish life. The films shown at the Youngstown Area Jewish Film Festival come from all over the world, providing diverse audiences with a glimpse into the Jewish experience.
September 16, September 20, September 27, October 3, October 4, October 11, October 14
Tickets now on sale at jccyoungstown.org/yajff
For more information, contact Sarah Wilschek:
330.746.3250 ext. 123 or swilschek@jewishyoungstown.org

For more information or to book a rental contact
Kelli McCormick at 330.746.3250 ext. 284 or kmccormick@jewishyoungstown.org

Multi-Purpose Room
Equipped with an overhead motorized projection theater screen, state-of-the-art audio/visual system, movable module stage, and commercial kitchen. Catering packages are available for up to 250 guests.

Adult Lounge
Accommodates 50 guests. An in-house kosher caterer is available.

Meeting Rooms
Our small conference room seats up to 10 guests, while our boardroom seats 35 and is equipped with a built-in projector and screen.

Gymnasium
Our full size gymnasium is equipped with six regulation height basketball hoops, bleacher seating and a dividing curtain.

Cost: $50/hr

Pool Party
Enjoy time in our full-size indoor heated pool and one hour in the party room.
Cost: $165/Members | $220/Non Member
$50/hr, for additional time
15 people per lifeguard and $25/ additional lifeguard

Under the Sea Splish Splash Mermaid Bash
Experience swimming and storytelling with the JCC Mermaid in our pool and enjoy time in our party room.
Cost: $225/Members | $281/Non Member
Pricing includes: One hour in the pool and one hour in the party room

Game Time-Birthday Bash
Play basketball, volleyball, kickball, soccer, or wiffleball in our gymnasium then enjoy time in our party room.
Cost: $150/Member | $188/Non Member
Pricing includes: One hour in our gymnasium and one hour in our private party room.
$50/hr for additional time in the gymnasium

For more information or to book a rental contact
Kelli McCormick at 330.746.3250 ext. 284 or kmccormick@jewishyoungstown.org

Pool Party
Swim in our full-size heated pool and enjoy time at our onsite pavilion. Maximum party size is 50. Lifeguards will staff the pool at all times.
Party Size up to 25 Guests- Party time: 12:00-3:00 p.m. or 4:00-7:00 p.m.
Cost: $165/Member | $220/Non Member
$255/Members | $340/Non Member - all day rental

Pool Bash
Swim in our full-size heated pool and enjoy our onsite pavilion. We will provide pizza, chips and drinks. Maximum party size is 50. Lifeguards will staff the pool at all times.
Party Size from 25 to 50 Guests- Party time: 12:00-3:00 p.m. or 4:00-7:00 p.m.
Cost: $300/Member | $400/Non Member
$375/Members | $500/Non Member - all day rental
*Add a mermaid to your party for $75/hour

Pavilion at Logan Campus
A large, covered, outdoor pavilion with round tables you can decorate to suit your theme. Invited guests who are non members must pay price of admission. Maximum capacity is 50. Lifeguards will staff the pool at all times.
Pavilion Time: 12:00-3:00 p.m. or 4:00-7:00 p.m.
Cost: $525/Member | $700/Non Member
$600/Members | $800/Non Member - all day rental
*Add a mermaid to your party for $75/hour

Paintings by Bud Gibbons
An exhibition of works by the artist Charles “Bud” Gibbons, ranging from large scale landscapes, figurative works, and still lifes
Show dates: August 23- October 11
Opening reception Thursday, August 23 from 5:30-7:00 p.m.
For more about the artist visit bud-gibbons.square-space.com/
INTRODUCTION

The Trusts have distributed approximately $5 million dollars during its 39 year existence to hundreds of non-profit beneficiaries. The majority of the grants are paid from the Frances Schermer Charitable Trust, the larger of the two trusts. It was an ongoing challenge to maintain the integrity of the Trusts due to certain restrictions in the original Trust instruments. We are pleased to note that while the original value of the two Trusts approximated $1.9 million dollars in 1978, the current value of the combined trusts is in excess of $2.7 million dollars after distributing approximately 5% each year.

For the first 25 years of its 40 year existence, the Schermer Trusts were the major outside Jewish funding source in the Mahoning Valley supporting both Jewish and non-Jewish causes. The Trusts were the driving force behind the establishment of the Kent State and Youngstown State Jewish Studies Programs as well as the expansion of the Youngstown Jewish Center.

TRUST HISTORY

Charles I. Schermer was a Youngstown attorney who served on the board of the Youngstown Jewish Federation and was President of the Youngstown Zionist District. He was a member of Rodef Sholom Temple and an active member of B’nai B’rith Mahoning Lodge #339 now Aaron Grossman Lodge. Mr. Schermer was one of the founders of a tri-city summer camp for Jewish youth located in Pennsylvania in 1942. After he relocated to California, Mr. Schermer continued his philanthropic interests providing funds to the Los Angeles Federation, several institutions for the blind, the Salvation Army, a number of children's homes, and the Los Angeles Jewish Home for the Aged. Although he had been away from Youngstown for more than three decades he never relinquished his strong ties to the Youngstown community.

When Charles Schermer died in 1976, his Last Will and Testament established a charitable remainder trust honoring his mother, Frances. He stipulated that the Youngstown chapters of B’nai B’rith and the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), each nominate a trustee who were to be appointed by the Probate Court of Los Angeles. The Will required a third financial trustee and named Security Pacific National Bank of Los Angeles.

Frank Schermer of Youngstown, Charles’ brother, was named Co-Executor of the estate. Frank Schermer whose son was a staff attorney for an insurance company in Youngstown represented his father’s interests. Their sister, Lillian, died in 1976 shortly after Charles’ death. Frank Schermer died in 1978. Frank Schermer’s son has also passed away. Lillian Schermer’s Will contained a separate significantly smaller similar charitable trust which she directed to be administered under the same terms and conditions as the Frances Schermer Charitable Trust. The two Trusts have been operative since 1979, generating distributable income between $100,000.00 and $220,000.00 each year. Both Trusts are under the continuing jurisdiction of the Los Angeles County Probate Court.

The trust instruments required that the trust income be distributed each year and that no single beneficiary could receive more than 10% of the income in any one trust year. No trust principal could be distributed other than to comply with certain minimum distributions required by IRS regulations. All beneficiaries must be non-profit, charitable institutions which hold 501(C)(3) IRS tax exemptions. Income could not be reinvested to increase the trust principal.

All administrative expenses of the trust were to be taken from principal, i.e. trustees fees, federal and state taxes and administrative expenses. While this limitation tended to limit the trusts from realizing major growth, prudent investment policies adhered to by our financial trustee have been very successful in providing both income and growth over the years. With the changes in IRS regulations, 5% of the total trust value is now distributed each year.

Dr. Saul Friedman, past President of the Youngstown District ZOA and Attorney James L. Pazol, past President of the Mahoning Lodge 339 B’nai B’rith, were appointed by the Los Angeles County Probate Court as trustees in 1979. Security Pacific Bank of Los Angeles was named the financial trustee in the trust instrument.

In 1990 after Security Pacific was purchased by Wells Fargo the Youngstown trustees exercised their powers under the Will to change the custodial financial trustee from Security Pacific to City National Bank of Los Angeles. Any changes in the Financial Trustee are with the sole discretion and direction by the B’nai B’rith and ZOA nominated trustees. This process had been under discussion for more than two years with the change resulting in better operations, greater stability, accounting and investment policies. While there have been differences and major changes in personnel at the Bank over the years, the trustees continue to be satisfied with the investment performance of City National Bank.

Attorney Pazol and Dr. Friedman were the trustees for over 20 years. James Pazol resigned as trustee of the Schermer trusts effective December 31, 1998. Mahoning Lodge 339, (now Aaron Grossman Lodge 339) nominated Bruce Sherman, to succeed him effective January 1, 1999 subject to the approval of Probate Court of Los Angeles County. Transitioning began in July, 1998. However, Probate Court approval was not finalized until July 14, 1999 relating back to June 1, 1999 for the Lillian Schermer Trust and July 1, 1999 for the Frances Schermer Trust.

During this period Pazol continued as Schermer Trustee.

Following approval of Bruce Sherman as Trustee, Pazol was asked by the Trustees to act as investment advisor to the City National Bank and to oversee the local administration of the trusts for the Youngstown based Trustees.

Dr. Friedman, after a long and debilitating illness retired as the ZOA nominated trustee in 2013. Dr. Friedman served with distinction for 33 years.

The Youngstown District ZOA nominated Richard Marlin, as his successor and was appointed by the Los Angeles Probate Court.

PHILOSOPHY AND OPERATIONS

The Trustees are committed to advancing and where possible, expanding the guidelines established by Charles Schermer. No organization, including those named in the original trust, have a vested or automatic right to distributable income. The trustees have recognized Schermer’s special concern for institutions in California, Ohio and Israel. In the past calendar year, many of the 11 original beneficiaries named in Mr. Schermer’s Testamentary Trust (Salvation Army of California, Braille Institute of Los Angeles, Midnight Mission, Foundation for Junior Blind, B’nai B’rith and ZOA) were assisted with grants. The Youngstown based trustees have sole discretion to determine which organizations the trusts will fund.

FINANCIAL TRUSTEE, CITY NATIONAL BANK

The Trustees have periodically met with representatives of the financial trustee, City National Bank to discuss portfolio changes and options and are in contact with our portfolio manager to discuss our continued relationship. In June 2015 our CNB Vice President and Trust Officer Sahar Pouyanrad together with the bank’s investment advisor attended the Guardian of the Menorah Tribute to Carol Sherman and to meet with the Trustees. Currently, the meetings between the Youngstown trustees and City National Bank are held by teleconference and email.

DISTRIBUTION

When reviewing grant applications, priority is given to those of concern to the Jewish people.

Over the past trust year the trusts approved grants to Youngstown State University for the Chair of Jewish Studies and the Schermer Scholarship in Residence Program, Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, BBYO, B’nai B’rith, ZOA, Kent State University Hillel, Kent State University Jewish Studies Program for...
Israel Scholarships, National Council of Jewish Women- Cleveland project for post foster care young adults; Belfaire, American Committee for the Weizmann Institute of Science, American Friends of The Hebrew University, Jewish Community Center, Project Chicken Soup, Anti-Defamation League, JBI International, and Yiddish Book Center.


APPLICATIONS

The Youngstown trustees are guided by the philosophies of their respective organization, B’nai B’rith and Zionist Organization of America:

The trustees are always pleased to receive and encourage both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations to apply for grants and to consider non-profit (501(C)(3)) charitable and educational institutions suggested by our community members.

Direct inquiries to:
Frances and Lillian Schermer Charitable Trusts, c/o Bruce Sherman and Richard Marlin, 21 N. Wickliffe Circle, Youngstown, Ohio 44515. Email submissions should be sent to James L. Pazol, Administrator at jlpazol1@gmail.com. Applications may be in letter form and must include a copy of the organizations 501(C)(3). Specificity is appreciated.

Israel Tennis Centers Exhibition Team Will Be in Youngstown

Event Will Celebrate Partnership Between Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, the United Way, Youngstown State University and the ITC

The Israel Tennis Centers (ITC) exhibition team will perform in August for an invite-only audience at the Jewish Community Center.

The event is meant to celebrate the partnership between the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, the United Way, Youngstown State University and the ITC, said Amy Hendricks, ITC board member.

Through the discipline of tennis, ITC works to improve the lives of children. The ITC fosters sustainable values of self-esteem, character and tolerance. A program modeled on the Israel Tennis Centers has been offered in this area for three years to children who attend Youngstown Community School. The last two years the program was held at the JCC.

“The model of the Israel Tennis Centers teaches life skills through tennis as a vehicle,” Hendricks said. “Life skills meaning perseverance and discipline and decision-making and hard work with tennis as the vehicle. So we took that model and we brought it to Youngstown.”

The ITC exhibition team members range in age from 9 to 18. They will demonstrate their tennis skill and share their stories.

“They all come from different backgrounds and different challenges,” Hendricks said.

Also included in the event will be cocktails and appetizers.

The program in Youngstown is growing to include students in other schools, Hendricks said.

Youngstown State University is in the process of building an indoor tennis facility and will allow the students to use it. Also, students from the education department will offer tutoring, social services students will offer counseling and dietary students will provide nutritional counseling.

“It’s going to be a very well-rounded program to improve the lives of the disadvantaged kids in our city,” Hendricks said.

A fundraiser for ITC will be held Aug. 22 at a private home. For more information about that event, email Hendricks at amyruns@yahoo.com. Other events will be held at Akiva Academy, JCC Preschool, and Youngstown Community School. Founded in 1976, ITC is one of the largest social service organizations for children in Israel, serving over 20,000 Israeli children every year. The ITC’s 14 centers stretch from Kiryat Shmona in the North to Beer Sheva in the South. Many of these centers are in underprivileged neighborhoods, providing disadvantaged children with a safe, structured and nurturing environment.
Here’s How Birthright Guides Talk About the Palestinians

(JTA) By Ben Sales

When Samuel Green talks about Israel’s West bank security barrier with the Birthright groups he guides, he first explains the Israeli view that the barrier was built to prevent Palestinian terrorists from breaching Israeli territory and that Israelis generally feel it has saved lives.

But then he’ll talk about what the barrier – which is part wall, part fence – means for Palestinians: how it cuts into West Bank territory, how it has separated people from their farmland, how they see it as an imposing wall.

“It’s a disservice to the people in front of me to leave out such information,” Green said. “So if you’re trying to understand why there’s conflict, you have to understand why people are annoyed. It’s important to talk about.”

That approach contrasts with the one viewed by 2.7 million people in a viral Facebook video taken by activists of IfNotNow, a group of young American Jews who oppose Israel’s occupation of the West Bank. In the video, a Birthright tour guide spars with a participant on a Birthright bus over the status of the West Bank.

Rather than aim to present a range of views on Israel’s control of the territory, the guide says “Israel sees the West Bank as part of Israel” – a misleading claim that does not accord with the legal status of the territory or encompass the variety of ways Israelis see it.

Soon after the bus argument, several participants on that Birthright trip staged a walk-off from the tour and visited Palestinian areas. It was one of three such walk-offs conducted in recent weeks – all organized by IfNotNow – to protest what the group calls Birthright’s silence on Israel’s occupation.

The walk-offs have sparked a debate over whether Birthright – a popular 10-day free tour to Israel for young Jews – has a responsibility to grapple with Birthright trip. “As educators, it’s our job to teach what the various players in this region, in this conflict and in this shared society are saying, and for us to articulate the basic vision of Zionism as well as Palestinian national identity.”

In addition to completing Israel’s two-year certification course for tour guides, most Birthright guides must complete a three-week course run by Birthright. Guides said the course focuses on how to engage groups in discussion, how to make Israel’s history and nature come alive, and how to relate to a North American audience.

But the guides said the Birthright training course was light on politics. It instructs guides to represent a range of perspectives, they said, but doesn’t provide a list of Israeli talking points on contentious issues like the status of Palestinian refugees or the security barrier. Green scoffed at the idea that right-wing donors to Birthright, like casino mogul Sheldon Adelson, dictate how they conduct their tours.

“They don’t have a lot of control over what guides say in the field,” Green said regarding Birthright. “They’re trusting the guides to execute their vision. It’s not like Birthright says ‘do this’ and the guide parrots something.”

“In the Birthright training we were encouraged to represent different points of view. So this idea that Adelson is dictating how we talk about the conflict is bonkers.”

The guides acknowledged that their tours are inevitably given from an Israeli perspective. One of Birthright’s explicit goals is to strengthen American Jews’ connection to the country, along with the Jewish identity of participants. And most, if not all of the guides are either native-born Israelis or Diaspora Jews who chose to make their lives in Israel.

“Personally, I’m going to value and weigh some perspectives differently than others,” said Rubenstein, who worked at the pro-Israel lobby AIPAC in Washington, D.C., before becoming a guide after moving to Israel. “I’m an Israeli by choice, so I’m not Wikipedia-neutral, but people are looking to engage with me because of who I am. I strive to represent different perspectives and make sure all voices are heard.”

The tour’s itinerary is transparently geared toward giving participants an appreciation of Israel’s natural, historical and cultural attractions. All trips must visit a series of sites, from the beachfront metropolis of Tel Aviv to the Western Wall in Jerusalem’s Old City to Masada, the ancient hilltop fortress where a group of Jewish rebels held out against an invading Roman army before committing mass suicide.

Groups will also visit the City of David, a Jewish archaeological site and community in a Palestinian neighborhood in eastern Jerusalem, over Israel’s pre-1967 border. Palestinians condemn the site’s presence as an illegal settlement.

All groups receive a lecture on geopolitics from an Israeli expert. Meeting Palestinians, and seeing Palestinian life, is not part of the itinerary. Optional programs that take place immediately following the trip offer Birthright participants the opportunity to see Palestinian society.

“Part of tour education is that you’re educating about the things you see in front of you,” said Ilan Bloch, a Birthright guide who grew up in Australia. “If the route of your trip didn’t take the road next to the Israeli [security] barrier, you’re not going to start a discussion about the Israeli barrier.”

Bloch said he presents Palestinian viewpoints, but that “it’s clearly not a...
Increase Your Donation to Federation Through the Youngstown Foundation Support Fund

Donations to the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation of more than $100 will be increased by 10 percent if processed through the Youngstown Foundation Support Fund.

“The Youngstown Foundation is a community foundation,” said Jan Strasfeld, executive director.

“It’s been around for a hundred years. The purpose of the foundation is to enhance the quality of life for the residents of Youngstown.”

The foundation funds a broad range of organizations that provide direct services locally, including those involved with arts and culture, economic and community development, education, environment, and health and human services.

“The Federation’s programs obviously fall under that umbrella,” Strasfeld said.

The support fund of the foundation, established 35 years ago, allows donors to direct money to organizations of their choice. Originally, the foundation matched 5 percent of any gift over $100, but in April, in honor of the foundation’s 100th anniversary, they began matching 10 percent of any donation over $100. There is a cap of $5,000 per donor per agency.

“Fundraising is challenging these days,” Strasfeld said. “We’re giving a little value-added development support.”

In addition, the foundation promotes the support fund through publications and their website, which promotes the organizations they fund.

“The Federation has done incredible things for the community and serves a broad population, and we’re happy to support their programs,” Strasfeld added.

To make your donation to the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation through the Youngstown Foundation’s support fund, click the “Donate Today!” button on the homepage of the foundation website – youngstownfoundation.org. The Youngstown Foundation does not subtract any credit card processing fees. One hundred percent of your donation will go to the Federation. You can also write the Federation’s name in the memo line of the check and mail to The Youngstown Foundation, City Centre One Building, P.O. Box 1162, Youngstown, Ohio 44501.
Condolences

Kaila Fine Gluck

Kaila Fine Gluck, a resident of Boca Raton, Fla., was born in Youngstown. She is survived by her daughters and son-in-law, Dana Levy-Germain, Heidi Wiegand and Ken Wiegand Jr., and Dori Levy Leib; son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Mindy Levy; grandchildren Alegra, Ryker, Ellery, Davis, Ethan, Madison, Gabriel, Maxwell, Ely, Caitlin and Jenner; and sister Karen Rubin.

She is also survived by her devoted dogs, Muffin and Addis, and many other loving family members and friends. Kaila was the beloved wife of the late Dr. Edward J. Gluck and mother-in-law of the late Richard Germain. Interment was at Tod Homestead Cemetery.

Birthright, from page 20

comprehensive exposure to Palestinian views if you’re not meeting a Palestinian.” IfNotNow activists, unsurprisingly, take a far less generous view of the tours’ approach.

Rebecca Oliver, one of the participants who walked off the bus shown in the viral video, said their guide did willingly answer their questions and discuss the conflict with them. But she said Palestinians were mentioned only when she and other participants asked about them. And she said the guide did not present a spectrum of Israeli views on sensitive issues.

In the video, the guide does not appear to attempt to be evenhanded when discussing the West Bank. He inaccurately claims that Israel sees the West Bank as part of the country (While Israel controls the West Bank to varying degrees, it has not annexed the territory and treats it differently, in legal terms, than its recognized territory.). He also claimed that Israel does not demarcate the West Bank on its maps, which is true of some maps but not all.

“They provide a really, really biased version of what Israel is and what that education is, and in doing so, they are upholding the Israeli government and the military occupation in Palestine,” Oliver told JTA. “They either provide misinformation or biased information without clarifying that it’s biased, or omit it.”

Tour guides chafed at the suggestion that discussing the conflict should be more of a focus. They said that not all participants are interested in a political debate. And they appreciate that the trip’s focus is on Jewish identity.

“When IfNotNow says, ‘Oh, Birthright doesn’t present the full picture of the Palestinian occupation,’ well OK, but that’s not the purpose of this trip,” said an American Jewish communal official who has organized and co-led many Birthright trips, but who didn’t want to be named without approval from Birthright. “The point of the trip is not to learn all of every single aspect of the occupation. It’s to learn about Judaism and Jewish heritage and make friends and have a good time.”

Plus, the official added, if Birthright is seeking to drive American Jews politically rightward, it’s doing a bad job. American Jews tend to hold markedly more liberal views on the conflict than their Israeli counterparts.

“I’m sure the Israeli government gives money [to Birthright] because they have whatever their goals are,” the official said. “I’m not sure how much that translates to a micro level. If their goal is to transform a generation of Jews into Likud supporters, they’ve clearly failed.”
Federation Board Passes Policy Statements Related to Immigrant Family Separations and Gun Violence

The Youngstown Area Jewish Federation board of directors in July passed two Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) policy statements.

The statement on immigration/family separations states the Federation is strongly opposed to the recently expanded “zero-tolerance” policy that includes separating children from their migrant parents when they cross the border because this policy undermines the values of the nation and jeopardizes the safety and well-being of thousands of people. It also says separating families is a cruel punishment for children and families simply seeking a better life and exacerbates existing challenges in the immigration system and adds to the backlog of deportation cases and legal challenges in federal courts, places thousands more immigrants in detention facilities and shelters, endangers the lives of more children, and instills additional fear in people seeking safety in this country.

The statement on gun violence calls for action to address and end gun violence in America. It acknowledges the breadth, diversity, and passionate depth of feeling and informed opinion on gun ownership and gun control, both nationally and in the local community. It also recognizes and supports the second amendment of the Bill of Rights, integral to the U.S. Constitution, which permits law abiding Americans to own handguns and rifles for legitimate purposes.

However, the Federation is heartbroken by the horrific deadly shootings this year at a high school in Parkland, FL, and at a newspaper office in Annapolis, Md, as well as at many other locations targeting children at schools, students and faculty at institutes of higher education, patrons at local businesses, congregants at houses of worship, and employees at work, dating back to the Columbine shootings nearly two decades ago.

Driven by a strong fundamental moral belief in the sanctity of life and commandment against murder, (“whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world,”) the Federation is committed to a comprehensive approach to confronting gun violence and believe it is a moral obligation to advocate for change in the nation's laws in order to save innocent lives and prevent needless injuries. Since no single solution will prevent all future tragedies, the policy advocates for a balanced, multipronged approach.

The statement offers recommendations on gun regulations and school safety regulations. To advocate for these regulations, the Federation, through the JCRC, will communicate with elected officials about existing and potentially new legislation; communicate with the Jewish and general communities through conventional and social media; participate in coalitions with other faith-based and community groups, as well as with law enforcement agencies, to advocate for jointly held positions and for reducing gun violence; will monitor developments at the federal, state, and local levels; and will evaluate other possible measures to reduce gun violence.

“The process to develop these statements was thorough and time-consuming,” said Bonnie Deutsch Burdman, Federation director of community relations/government affairs. “I want to thank Suzy Schwibel Epstein, chair of the JCRC; Andy Moyer, chairperson of the Government Affairs Committee of the JCRC; and the lay leadership involved for their thoughtful, hard work on these important issues.”

To read the full statements, visit the Federation website—jewishyoungstown.org.

The JCRC, the public affairs department of the Federation, represents the Jewish communities of Mahoning and Trumbull Counties and of the Shenango Valley. Its mandate is to protect, preserve, and promote a just, democratic and pluralistic American society, and to safeguard the rights of Jews here, in Israel, and around the world.

Israel Trip, from page 11

YSU nursing students visited Western Galilee Medical Center on a recent trip to Israel.
Jewish? Democratic? Israel’s Nation-State Law Raises Questions Over the Country’s Purpose

(JTA) By Charles Dunst

On July 19, Israel’s right-wing coalition government passed, by a narrow 62-55 margin, its controversial nation-state law, which declared Israel as the “nation-state of the Jewish people.” Scores of liberal critics denounced the measure as an unnecessary and racist provocation, while defenders called it a statement of the obvious.

Akin to a constitutional amendment, the “basic law” declares -- much like the country’s Declaration of Independence -- that Israel is “the home of the Jewish people.” Unlike the declaration, however, it asserts that Jerusalem is its capital, that Hebrew is its only official language and that national self-determination is “unique to the Jewish people.”

As CNN noted, “Though the law is fraught with controversy and highly symbolic, much of it has little practical impact.”

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the passage of the law “a pivotal moment in the annals of Zionism and the State of Israel,” while Ahmad Tibi, an Arab Knesset member, denounced it as “the end of democracy” and “the official beginning of fascism and apartheid.”

Reactions to the law reflect the wide divides within Israeli society itself and among observers abroad. Here’s a sampling:

Do Arab citizens have a place in Israel?

The bill “failed to grapple with Palestinians’ insistence that they have a right to live in Israel with full and equal rights, and that they will not give up their Palestinian national identity to do so,” Maha Nassar, an associate professor at Arizona University, said in the Forward. “It’s time that we have a serious conversation about whether it was ever really possible to have a ‘Jewish and democratic state’ that took seriously Palestinians’ national identity and ties to their land.”

Noah Kulwin, senior editor of the left-wing Jewish Currents magazine, said the bill codifies discrimination against Arabs, comparing Israel to apartheid South Africa and noting that the country is “finding common cause with the European far right.”

Stating the obvious

David Hazony, founding editor of The Tower magazine, says the critics are distorting what the bill actually states.

“Building a Jewish homeland—through sovereignty, through culture, and through settlement — has always been the core purpose of the country,” Hazony wrote in the Forward. “The bottom line is that Israel is the Jewish State, and this law tells us what that means, just as other Basic Laws tell us what goes into its democratic foundations.”

Avi Dichter, the Likud party Knesset member who sponsored the bill, suggested it was meant as a response to Arabs -- both Israeli citizens and living in the West Bank -- who believe that Israel would one day become a binational state of all its people.

“We are enshrining this important bill into a law today to prevent even the slightest thought, let alone attempt, to transform Israel to a country of all its citizens,” he said.

In remarks to the Knesset, Dichter responded to members of the Joint List, the Arab Israeli bloc in the parliament.

“When I listened attentively to the Joint List MKs, it was impossible to miss their clear words: We, the Arabs, will win, we are in our homeland, we were here before you and we’ll be here after you.”

This Basic Law is the clear-cut answer to those who think that and it is clear: You were not here before us and you will not be here after us,” he said.

Jewish and democratic? Jewish or democratic?

The arguments on both sides get at an implicit tension that has hounded Israel since its founding in 1948: The Jewish state, founded as such, wants to privilege and shelter Jews and explicitly be a homeland for the Jewish people while simultaneously maintaining a democracy that supports all of its citizens — non-Jews included. Israel aimed to tolerate its minorities in a way the world, including Europe and the Middle East, had not previously tolerated Jews. The tensions are seen in the Declaration of Independence, Israel’s foundational text is fiercely ethnonationalistic, saying that the recognition of Israel by the United Nations General Assembly is irrevocable. This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

At the same time, the declaration ensures “complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex.”

Riding a wave of ethnic nationalism

Max Fisher of The New York Times insists that the bill puts Israel firmly on the nationalist side of the equation, comparing countries like Hungary that “have overtly embraced an old-style national identity, with leaders championing the ethnic origins of the state, warning darkly of foreigners and curtailing basic rights.”

Fisher also cites polling in Israel that suggests Jewish identity is winning out over democracy.

“Those who say Israel should be Jewish first overwhelmingly belong to the political right, which pushed through this week’s national self-determination law,” he wrote. “But even those who say democracy should prevail express support for some caveats. In 2014, most Jews said that crucial national decisions” — like, say, self-determination — “should be left to the Jewish majority.”

Words have meaning

Israel still remains a democracy, with Freedom House deeming the Jewish state a fundamentally free “multiparty democracy with strong and independent institutions that guarantee political rights and civil liberties for most of the population,” referencing political moves against minorities. There is a large Arab bloc in the Knesset, and a robust NGO culture of Jews and Arabs that promotes a “shared society” for all Israelis.

And the nation-state bill won’t change that in a single stroke. Still, “the law could eventually have far-reaching implications for Jewish-Arab relations within Israel and for Israeli-Palestinian relations,” wrote Dov Waxman, professor of political science, international affairs and Israel studies at Northwestern University.

Gila GamlieI, Israel’s minister for social equality, said Monday on Israeli TV that the nation-state law will act as a counterweight to a previous Basic Law that enshrines human rights, freedom and dignity. That law, GamlieI said, ensures Israel’s democratic character and this law will place the state’s Jewish character on the same level.

Lucy Aharish, an Arab-Israeli news-caster who broadcasts in Hebrew, offered a fiery monologue against the law on Monday.

“They’re taking the state and excluding me from the community of Israelis that you so want me to belong to. It hurts me because you’ve excluded me and 20 percent of the population.”