The 2017 Inaugural Event

Tuesday, Sept. 12 at 7 p.m.
at the DeYor Performing Arts Center
See story on page 5.

JCC campers celebrate Israel Day, one of the many theme days enjoyed this summer.

Four generations of his family gather at Heritage Manor to celebrate Dr. Milton Yarmy’s 106th birthday. See story on page 5.
These rabbis don’t know why they’re on the Chief Rabbinate’s ‘blacklist’

By Ben Sales

NEW YORK (JTA) — In 2012, Rabbi Jason Herman wrote a letter to Israel’s Chief Rabbinate certifying that a friend of his who wished to get married was Jewish and single.

The letter was declared invalid.

But several months later Herman, spiritual leader of the Orthodox West Side Jewish Center in Manhattan, obtained a license from the Chief Rabbinate to conduct that wedding in Israel — and did so, legally, with no problem.

Herman’s case illustrates the bureaucratic confusion that has accompanied the publishing of the Chief Rabbinate’s so-called “blacklist,” including some 160 rabbis from 24 countries whose letters confirming the Jewish identities of immigrants were rejected by the Chief Rabbinate in 2016. The list contains the names of 78 North American rabbis from all three major denominations, and its publication last week has led to outrage, defiance and lots of head-scratching.

Itim, the Israeli organization that obtained the list from the Chief Rabbinate, calls it a blacklist meant to delegitimize rabbis who do not meet the rabbinate’s cryptic standards. The rabbinate claims the list is more innocuous and not meant to impugn the rabbis’ reputations. Rather, according to the rabbinate’s director-general, Moshe Dagan, the problem was with the letters sent by the rabbis, not the rabbis themselves.

But a handful of rabbis on the list told JTA that they had never heard of any problems with their letters. None had received calls from the rabbinate in 2016, the year their letters were ostensibly rejected. And some wondered why, if the rabbis’ credentials were not at issue, the list was solely of rabbis’ names.

“If there is a problem, and the rabbinate is dealing with so many of these letters, isn’t it their responsibility to share with rabbis in the Diaspora what they’re looking for, how they expect the letter to be written?” asked Rabbi Avi Weiss, a liberal Orthodox rabbi from Riverdale, New York, whose name is on the list.

“This is not about documentation. This is about a blacklist.”

The rabbinate is the only body authorized to conduct Jewish marriages in Israel. Rabbinate spokesman Kobi Alter said every immigrant who wishes to wed must provide a proof-of-Judaism letter from a rabbi, as well as their parents’ Jewish marriage certificate, called a ketubah.

Alter told JTA that the list indicated errors in documents sent in 2016, not problems with the rabbis. He declined to discuss the cases of specific rabbis, but said one letter was dated 2016 when the rabbi in question died in 2012. In another case, only one witness had signed the ketubah rather than the two required by Jewish law.

Alter said the list should not have been published with the rabbis’ names, and referred to a letter Sunday from the office of Chief Rabbi David Lau apologizing for its publication.

(Continued on page 9)

Nuclear-qualified, Navy veteran, transgender rabbi unhappy with the president’s tweets

By Anna Selman

WASHINGTON, D.C. (JTA) — On Wednesday, in our offices near this city’s Dupont Circle, the staff at Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. were opening the mail when a request came in from a veteran asking that we change her first name on our records from Jaron to Rona.

“I just immediately did it without a second thought,” said Lauren Hellendall, a membership team member, said Thursday. “Then I thought about the significance of it because of the president’s announcement yesterday. I found out after doing some research that Rona Matlow was a Life Member of Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A., and I thought it would be invaluable to share her story as a dedicated Jewish veteran.”

On Wednesday morning, President Donald Trump tweeted that transgender individuals would no longer be allowed to enlist or serve in the military, surprising both service members and Pentagon leaders.

“I went upstairs to our public relations department, and they just took it from there,” Hellendall said.

Rona served 22 years in the Navy as both enlisted and as an officer in its nuclear power program -- in submarines, nuclear cruisers, frigates and a destroyer. She retired with the rank of lieutenant commander when she decided that the Navy had taken too much of a toll on her.

After leaving the Navy, Rona was ordained as a rabbi by the Academy for Jewish Religion and started volunteering as a chaplain for the veteran community. In 2015, she started to address her gender dysphoria and begin her transition.

I asked Rona, who lives in the Greater Seattle area, how she felt about the president’s announcement.

“I was absolutely devastated and furious,” she answered. “Immediately I was very worried about the 15,000 active-duty trans personnel that are currently serving in the military. I have talked to service members with 19-plus years of service who would be kicked out of the military without a pension.”

Rona also told me that since the announcement, she has been reaching out to people in the Jewish and transgender community — making sure that their needs are met. She says she is available to anyone in the transgender community who needs support right now.

“It costs well over a million dollars to train a pilot. Kicking these people out is incredibly more costly than keeping them in,” she said. “Even if [the military] paid $30,000 for the surgery, they would have to pay a million dollars training a new pilot. That’s absurd.”

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Commentary

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Advertising Director: Phyllis Friedman
Office: Kathy Schell

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The Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine is sent monthly to members of the Jewish communities in Mahoning and Trumbull counties in Ohio, and Mercer County in Pennsylvania, and all Jewish Community Center members at no charge.

To contact the JJMM:
Phone 330-746-3250
Fax 330-746-7926
Email journal@JewishYoungstown.org
Mail: 505 Gypsy Lane, Youngstown, OH 44504-1314

JJMM Mission Statement

The Youngstown Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine, a publication of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, strives to —

Provide a major tool of community communication for the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation and its affiliated agencies;

Present current local, national and world news of Jewish interest;

Offer timely commentary, interpretation, analysis and authentic background on events of the day for the purpose of encouraging the concern and response vital to our responsibilities as Americans and Jews;

Enrich the cultural interest of individuals and the community through articles, features, reviews and other material of both local and national Jewish content and interest;

Provide a communication tool to enable all members of the Jewish community to express their viewpoints on issues of Jewish importance and interest;

Demonstrate commitment to the progress and continuity of Jewish life in the U.S., especially our local area, Israel and around the world.

The JJMM does not assume the responsibility for the Kashruth of any product or service advertised on its pages.

August 15 is the deadline for articles and ads for the September 2017 Rosh Hashanah issue.

Candle-Lighting Times

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Bagels Over Berlin
Thursday, July 27, 2017 | 7:00 P.M.
Jewish Community Center
Discussion following the film with Director, Alan Feinberg and WWII Veteran Irwin Stovroff
Documentary
Runtime: 94 min | Country: USA | Release Date: 2017

To Life!
Sunday, August 20, 2017 | 7:00 P.M.
Encore Cinema, Niles
Narrative
Runtime: 86 min | Country: Germany | Release Date: 2015

The Pickle Recipe
Wednesday, August 23, 2017 | 7:00 P.M.
Encore Cinema, Niles
Discussion following the film with Director, Sheldon Cohn
Narrative
Runtime: 97 min | Country: USA | Release Date: 2016

Rosenwald
Sunday, August 27, 2017 | 4:00 P.M.
Movies 8, Boardman
Documentary
Runtime: 90 min | Country: USA | Release Date: 2015

Rock in the Red Zone
Thursday, August 31, 2017 | 7:00 P.M.
Encore Cinema, Niles
Documentary
Runtime: 92 min | Country: Israel/USA | Release Date: 2014

Once in a Lifetime
Thursday, September 7, 2017 | 7:00 P.M.
Movies 8, Boardman
Narrative
Runtime: 105 min | Country: France | Release Date: 2014

In Search of Israeli Cuisine
Sunday, September 10, 2017 | 7:00 P.M.
Authentic Israeli Dinner with Jeffrey Chrystal Catering | 5:00 P.M.
DeYor Performing Arts Center
Documentary
Runtime: 97 min, Country: USA, Release Date: 2015

TICKET PRICING:
Students: $5 | Pre-Order: $7 | At the Door: $10 | Season Pass: $40
Dinner prior to In Search of Israeli Cuisine (includes movie ticket): $27
To purchase tickets,
visit www.jccyoungstown.org/yaJFF or call (330) 746-3250 x 195
An evening of Jewish humor with comedian Joel Chasnoff

Jewish comedian Joel Chasnoff will be the keynote speaker at the 2017 Inaugural Event of the Combined Jewish Appeal, on Tuesday, Sept. 12 at 7 p.m. at the DeYor Performing Arts Center in Youngstown.

Sam Shapiro and Jeff Simon are the 2017 general campaign co-chairs and Dr. Mark Perlman general campaign chair-elect. Suzyn Schwebel Epstein and Bruce Epstein are serving as co-chairs of the Inaugural Event.

Chasnoff’s comedic memoir about his tour of duty in the Israel Defense Forces, which the Los Angeles Jewish Journal called “laugh-out-loud funny” and Kirkus Reviews dubbed “horrifyingly hilarious.” Chasnoff has also contributed to The Big Book of Jewish Humor: 25th Anniversary Edition and The Idiot’s Guide to Jokes and is currently co-authoring The Balaboosta Way: A Mediterranean Cookbook with two-time “Chopped!” champion Chef Einat Admony.

Invitations will be mailed. There is no charge nor minimum contribution to attend the Event, which includes a dessert reception, but advance reservations are requested by Sept. 6, to NSentelik@jewishyoungstown.org.

A major donor’s dinner will precede the Event beginning at 5 p.m. at the DeYor Performing Arts Center.

For further information, call the Campaign office at (330) 746-3250 x114.

Writing for the Times of Israel Caryn J. Prince reports that at 43, Chasnoff finds humor in all things Jewish: mothers, keeping kosher, bar mitzvahs, Israel, and even tefillin. “Unlike Jewish comedians of years past (think Mel Brooks and George Burns) who played on their ‘otherness’ for laughs, Chasnoff’s humor comes from Judaism’s quotidian quirkiness,” Ms. Prince says.

“For me it’s about being Jewish, it’s about the observations of leading a semi-traditional life, the quirks in Judaism,” Mr. Chasnoff told Ms. Prince over a mint tea. “Comedy in general is taking a step back from the ordinary and seeing the small things for what they really are, Seinfeld did that wonderfully. I like to think my Jewish comedy is like that.”

Of course just as the style of jokes has changed, so have the venues. With Borscht Belt resorts such as Kutshers and the Concord gone, Mr. Chasnoff performs in schools, summer camps and synagogues across the United States. And nostalgic for his days in a tank unit, he particularly enjoys riffing with lone soldiers who are newly arrived in Israel.

Dr. Milton Yarmy celebrates 106

When you ask Dr. Milton Yarmy the secret of doing so well at the age of 106, he’s quick to answer, “It wouldn’t be a secret if I told you.” “But,” he says, “You have to keep doing what you’re doing.”

In his Heritage Manor room, his tray has the current issue of The New York Times and a stack of books from the Liberty library.

The Liberty librarian asked Bobbie Berkowitz, activities director at Heritage who checks-out the books for Dr. Yarmy, to bring her to meet him. She didn’t believe someone age 106 was reading all these mysteries.

Dr. Yarmy knows what he prefers. “I like my stories plain, cut and dry,” he says. “I don’t pay attention to really involved things.

It’s not just that Dr. Yarmy is the oldest resident at Heritage Manor. He’s also the last living member of the Heritage building committee, and the oldest living member of Rodef Sholom.

He said that a Jewish old-age home had been discussed within the Jewish Community. Then a grant was made that established the home. “However,” he says, “I never dreamed I’d be in it.”

In the early days, he explains, “You had to be ambulatory to become a resident. No one was allowed in a wheelchair, and there were no walkers permitted.”

His wife Lillian was also a Heritage resident until she fell and died 2 1/2 years ago.

His son, Rick Yarmy, now 74, also lives at Heritage. They eat lunch and dinner together. Dr. Yarmy jokes, “He keeps an eye on me.”

Until about three years ago, Dr. Yarmy was still driving — with a license that only was set to expire this year. But his daughter Janie Yarmy made him stop after he had a TIA.

Dr. Yarmy is also the oldest alumnus of Wayne State University Medical School. For 53 years he practised in the Youngstown area as an internist — at a time when physicians still made house-calls.

As well as son Rick, daughter Janie lives locally and visits frequently. Another daughter, Karen Fellhimer lives not too far away in Illinois. He also has grandchildren and great-grandchildren who come to see him when they can.
2017 campaign training focuses on getting to know the Federation

The 2017 Campaign Briefing will be held on Monday, Aug 21, at 5p.m. at the Jewish Community Center. Attendees will participate interactively to learn about the services and opportunities YAJF agencies offer.

The Thomases Family Endowment Fund will donate $500 to the 2017 Federation Campaign in the name of each person attending the Campaign Education Workshop.

According to workshop organizers, the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation continues to be a thought leader in the greater Jewish and general communities.

At the Campaign Training participants will see how Heritage Manor, the Jewish Community Center, Jewish Family Services, Levy Gardens, the Endowment Department, the Jewish Community Relations Council, and all of other services continue to create an impact.

Cocktails, Hors d’ ouvres, and a light dinner will be served.

There is no charge for the briefing. Responses are due by Aug. 17 to Bea Blue bblue@jewishyoungstown.org. For future information, call the Campaign office (330) 746-3250 x114.

Meet more Federation Fellows

The Federation Fellows are a group of 28 young Jewish leaders ranging in ages from 25-50 who all want to see our Jewish community thrive. The Fellows program is for the entire family, for the first time engaging non-Jewish spouses too.

Megan and Jeff Vickers

For Megan Vickers, the love, support, and sense of purpose that Youngstown’s Jewish community brings to its members and the area as a whole is truly something special. Growing up in the community and being active in the JCC has shaped Megan Vickers’s life in countless positive ways, and she is proud to see her children also grow and thrive in the Jewish community.

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(Continued on page 20)
From Youngstown to Kiev to Israel

Last month the 2017 the Financial Resource Development Leadership Mission brought a small group of men and women from Federations around the United States to witness firsthand the dire situation in Ukraine, home to 350,00 Jews, 110,000 of them in Kiev and the more hopeful conditions in Israel.

Richard Marlin and Andy Lipkin were part of the group. The photos here are illustrative of what they found and learned. A larger story, with more photographs will appear in September's Journal.

PHOTOS
Center: In Israel, Rick Marlin meets with Ethiopians girls who are participating in the SPACE program which assists Ethiopian teens in school.
Upper right: Preschoolers at JCC Halom (the dream) in Kiev.
Lower right: Lidya Korotina with Rick Marlin and Andy Lipkin in Kiev. Mrs. Korotina, 95, was born into a traditional Jewish family, served as an educator, and military translator.
Now suffering from heart trouble and cerebrovascular disease, she cannot live independently. Unable to afford basic goods and essential home repairs, the necessary financial and medical help she receives, makes her life liveable.

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August 2017
The Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine
The Jewish Community has something to crow about

For the first time in more than two decades, the Jewish community will have an official presence at the Canfield Fair, and volunteers are needed to staff the booth.

The 2017 Fair runs from Wednesday, Aug. 30 through Monday, Sept. 4. The booth, which will be strategically located right in the middle of the fair on Miller Drive, will be open from 10 a.m. each morning until 10 p.m. each night. The Fair itself is open from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. each day Saturday until 8:35 p.m., the end of Shabbat on Sept. 2.

Four three-hour shifts will need to be filled each day: 10-1; 1-4; 4-7; and 7-10. Non-Jewish volunteers will be sought to fill the shifts on Friday evening and all day Saturday until 8:35 p.m., the end of Shabbat on Sept. 2.

The booth will contain displays, and volunteers will hand out information about Israel and about agencies in our regional Jewish community. There’ll also be Israeli snacks for sale.

For additional information or to sign up for a shift at the Fair, contact Bonnie Deutsch Burdman, 330 746-3250, x183, or via email to bdburdman@jewishyoungstown.org.

A taste of Finesilver history

By Mary Lou Finesilver

I married in to the Finesilver Family in 1956, and I was so lucky to have had such a wonderful life with all the Fineslivers: my lovely husband Alvin, his parents Abe and Ida, sister Joy and Stanley, Malkoff, sister Sylvia and Harry Schwartz and their great families.

I won’t mention any more names, because I’m not sure how they would feel about their names in print. Anyway, this story is really about Abe and Ida Finesilver and their grocery store on Delaware Avenue. They bought the store about 1930, though Abe continued as a salesman elsewhere for about another year.

This was a small store catering to the neighborhood in Briar Hill. From the beginning, produce and eggs were fresh from the farm, Joy remembers getting potatoes out of a barrel to sell to customers. This was during the Depression which was a hard time for the families in the neighborhood to exist so the store became their lifeline.

Abe was born in Russia and of course knew Russian, but he also knew Polish and Hungarian, languages that endeared him to his customers. Eventually he added Italian to his vocabulary and a smattering of some other languages to make people feel welcome.

Abe and Ida kept a little book and whenever a customer needed credit, they would write it in the book and never asked for payment. They would carry them on the books, no interest charge, and when people could pay, it was fine. Eventually, according to Joy, most of them did repay the loan. Try that these days. I believe that was true of a lot of the small grocers. As the bigger supermarkets began to roll in, the smaller grocers banded together and the United Grocers was formed to enable them to get specials and advertise together.

I only know a few of them: the Solomon, Lazars, Cohens, and Malkoffs. We shopped at the store, of course, and I once made the mistake of taking my son. Being an old-fashioned store, there was a store cat that just had kittens. As you can imagine, putting together a small boy and a kitten equals taking that kitten home and naming her Ickey, because someone couldn’t pronounce kitten. Not sure how his father felt, but I think his grandfather was happy for one less to give away.

Our dachshund loved her, especially when she brought home live mice to chase around the house. How would you feel about a cat running around a grocery store in this day and age?

All the Finesliver kids worked in the store at one time or another. Sylvia, but mostly Joy, would step in and run the grocery anytime they went on vacation. Joy thinks she did it most of the time because Sylvia was going to college and then teaching school. I did it for them once, but never was asked again. Not sure why, could be because the cash register and I did not get along too well. Oh well.

Now Alvin did learn a little about the butchering end and for sure, did deliveries after school. It was a panel van with a driver seat. If you had to take someone with you, there was a box to sit on. Once in a while, a friend would go with AL to deliver. Every now and then, they would go on a lark without permission. Those were the days.

My in-laws retired about 1964, Abe to sell insurance and Ida to work with Pioneer Women and Anshe Emeth Sisterhood. Once in a while Diane, Beth, Marshall, and I meet someone who remembers the store with a lot of love and some tears to have known Abe and Ida. It was and is my pleasure to have been part of that great family.
August at Temple El Emeth

Klezmer Shabbat
Klezmer Shabbat will take place on Friday evening, August 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Terry and Sam Roth. Lori Cahan-Simon, Walt Mahovich and Dmitro Isakov will accompany Rabbi Schonberger in the musical Shabbat evening service.
A complimentary dinner hosted by the Roths will follow the service.
R.S.V.P. to the Synagogue at 330-759-1429 so plans can be made accordingly.

Jewish Christian Dialogue
In conjunction with Jewish Christian Dialogue, a program in commemoration of the anniversary of Nostra Aetate will be held at the Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center, in Villa Maria, Pa. on Thursday evening, Aug. 24.

The program, which begins at 7 p.m. will feature Dr. Tim Crain, director of the National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education and assistant professor of history at Seton Hill University. Dr. Crain will give a virtual tour of the Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem for those who are not able to travel there.
R.S.V.P. to Villa Maria at 724-964-8886 or visit their website at www.vmesc.org

Schmoozing with Shmulik
The Schmoozing with Shmulik program is on vacation and will return next month.

From Broadway to Logan Way
Temple El Emeth presents From Broadway to Logan Way — ”The Cemetery Club” on Wednesday evening, Sept. 6. This play tells the story of three Jewish widows who meet monthly to have tea and then visit their husband’s graves, all the while meddling into each other’s personal lives. The show will be directed by Paula Ferguson with the cast from the New Castle Playhouse show running in late August.

A deli dinner will begin at 6 p.m. with the show following at 7 p.m. Tickets are $15 per person and must be purchased in advance of the show. No tickets will be sold that evening at the door.

Services
Daily Minyans take place at 5:45 p.m. including Shabbath afternoon. Shabbat morning services are at 9:30 a.m.

Transgender war veteran (continued from page 2)

"I was also happy to see that Dunford and Mattis are supporting our service members," said Rona, referring to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Marine Gen. Joe Dunford, and Secretary of Defense James Mattis.

Immediately after the president tweeted about the ban, Dunford said there has been no change in policy "until the president's direction has been received by the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary has issued implementation guidance. In the meantime, we will continue to treat all of our personnel with respect."

Mattis, who was on vacation and caught off guard by the president's tweets, reportedly was "appalled" by Trump's call for a ban.

"These tweets are ill-informed, ill-advised, and they were made without the backing or consultation of the Chiefs of Staff or Congress -- such a policy has to be made with both of them," said Rona.

Rona is right. Tweets are not the way to make policy. We urge the president to sit down with his Joint Chiefs of Staff and defense secretary to develop a policy with the backing of research as well as regard and respect for the individuals who have served our nation with honor.

Until then, Rona will proudly tell anyone that she is "the only nuclear-qualified, transgender rabbi," and we're proud to have her.

Editor's note: Writer Anna Selman is the programs and public relations coordinator for Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. and an Army veteran.

Rabbis ‘blacklisted’ (continued from p. 2)

the rabbi still made the list. Alter said the rabbis should feel free to contact the rabbinate to ask why their names appeared on the list.

Herman told JTA that in 2013, he did speak with Rabbi Itamar Tubul, the bureaucrat who alone approves or rejects every letter. Tubul asked him a few basic questions — whether his synagogue was Orthodox (yes), whether it had a barrier dividing men and women (yes), where he received his rabbinic ordination (Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, a liberal Orthodox seminary founded by Weiss) — and thanked him for his time.

Herman found out his letter was rejected only when his friend, the bride to be, called him in tears with the news.

But that didn't stop Herman from being able to conduct the wedding with a license from the Chief Rabbinate — approved by someone other than Tubul.

"It's ridiculous," Herman said. "You're willing to let me do a wedding, but not willing to let me say the bride is Jewish for the same wedding. I understand it's a different person in the bureaucracy, but it's ridiculous. There's a culture there that allows for the bureaucratic screw-up."

Several rabbis on the list said the problem is a lack of transparency. Tubul's office has no set criteria for judging whether a rabbi is authorized to write a proof-of-Judaism letter. In December, the rabbinate announced it was drafting criteria, a process that's ongoing. What that means is that some rabbis have written letters that were approved by the rabbinate in the past, only to find their names on the list this week.

"I've never gotten anything in response saying, 'There's a problem with this letter for this particular person,'" said Rabbi David Seed of the Conservative Beth Jacob Congregation in Minnesota, which was put on the list not because of an error but for the same wedding. I understand it's a different person in the bureaucracy, but it's ridiculous. There's a culture there that allows for the bureaucratic screw-up."

Sometimes the letters in question aren't even written for the rabbinate. Rather they are written to certify that someone is Jewish for the purposes of immigration to Israel, and then forwarded to the rabbinate once the immigrant wants to marry. That's why some of the rabbis -- including rabbis who died a few years ago -- appear on the list even though they did not write any letters in 2016.

Rabbis told JTA that their process for writing immigration letters is straightforward. Often the person they are certifying is a congregant or close acquaintance. The letter simply states that the prospective immigrant is Jewish, born to a Jewish mother and a member of their local synagogue.

One 2015 letter, by Rabbi Morris Allen of the Conservative Beth Jacob Congregation in Minnesota, reads: "I attest that [name redacted], son of [redacted], is Jewish and born of two Jewish parents who are and have been members of Beth Jacob Congregation for several years. [Redacted]'s bris, which took place at Beth Jacob Congregation, was presided over by Rabbi Asher Zeitlengold, a local Chabad rabbi in town. [Redacted] celebrated his bar mitzvah with us in December of 2004 …"

Allen and Herman believe they were put on the list not because of an error in the letters but because of their rabbinic backgrounds and careers. Herman's seminary is not recognized by Orthodox rabbis on the right wing of the movement, while Allen is a vocal opponent of traditional kosher supervision agencies when he founded Magen Tzedek, an effort to bring ethical standards to kashrut. He is also a vocal opponent of the rabbinate.

"I believe I was probably included on this list because of my work as a rabbi on behalf of the Jewish people," Allen said. "I have been a passionate defender of pluralism in Israel, and I am not quiet about my belief that the Chief Rabbinate needs to be dissolved."

The rabbinate's criteria for marriage are stricter than those for Israeli citizenship. While people with only one Jewish grandparent may gain automatic citizenship in Israel, one must be Jewish according to Orthodox interpretations of Jewish law, or halachah, to register for marriage with the rabbinate. The rabbinate controls all Jewish marriage in the country.

The Chicago Rabbinical Council, an Orthodox body that provides a service writing proof-of-Judaism letters to the rabbinate, requires applicants to provide statements from two acquaintances (Continued on p. 11)
Bat Mitzvah of Sarah DeRosa
Saturday, Aug. 19, 10 a.m.

Sarah will be entering the seventh grade at Canfield Village Middle School in the fall. She is a high honor roll student and has received numerous high placement awards throughout her education. Sarah participates in the Canfield Village Middle School Band as a flautist and plans to join the track and volleyball teams in the upcoming school year.

Besides school, Sarah has received special recognition awards for competitive dancing. Sarah attends competitive dance at Judy Conti Dance Studio in Canfield, where she participates in tap, hip-hop, musical theater, jazz, jazz line, and production.

In her spare time, Sarah enjoys spending time with her friends.

Sarah’s parents are Drs. Michael and Phyllis DeRosa. She is the granddaughter of Dr. Ronald and Arlene Trust and Dr. Anthony and Patricia DeRosa.

The family invites you to celebrate with them as Sarah is called to the Torah for her Bat Mitzvah and to the Kiddush luncheon in Strouss Hall.

R.S.V.P. for luncheon by Tuesday, Aug. 15 to the Temple (330) 744-5001

Congratulations and Mazel Tov to these fine young people and their families on the occasion of their B’Nai Mitzvah.
May they go — and grow — from strength to strength.

B’nai Mitzvah of Arthur Lamb and Esther Lamb
Saturday, Aug. 26, 10 a.m.

Arthur and Esther will be entering seventh grade at Akiva Academy next fall. They have both participated in the National Honor Society since 2015.

Arthur was the ‘Math 24’ school champion in the 2015/2016 school year. In addition, he placed fifth in the National Geographic Bee at school the past two years. Arthur is on the Akiva/Girard Middle School Robotics team. In its first year of participation they came in fifth out of over 30 contenders, missing a place at the regional finals by one spot.

At Akiva this past school year, Arthur held the highest GPA for his math and social studies classes while Esther held the highest GPA for her sixth grade science and language arts classes. Esther is an avid reader and throughout the school year takes hip hop classes and piano.

Last summer, Esther played ‘Scuttle the Seagull’ in the Liz Rubino’s production of "The Little Mermaid."

She will be participating again in Youngstown State University’s Playmaker’s Camp as well as another Liz Rubino musical production through Camp JCC.

Both Arthur and Esther performed in "Circus of the Kids" the past two years through Camp JCC.

They also are members of the local Anime Club at the YWCA and are looking forward to taking a Manga (Japanese graphic novel) drawing class at the Butler for the first time this summer.

In his free time, Arthur enjoys reading Manga, building with Legos and, of course, playing Xbox with his friends.

Esther also enjoys anime, singing and listening to music, especially from the Broadway show Hamilton. She loves writing original fiction with her friends on the Watt Pad App, drawing anime and dancing.

Arthur and Esther are swimming on the Logan Swim team this summer and look forward to practicing tennis at the JCC.

Esther and Arthur volunteer with the Social Action committee at Second Harvest Food Bank. In addition, they are summer volunteers at Animal Welfare League of Trumbull County R.E.A.D. Program which enriches the lives of homeless cats and dogs.

Arthur and Esther’s parents are Sascha Lamb and Ellen Zlotnick Lamb. They are the grandchildren of Helene Zlotnick and the late Judge Julius A. Zlotnick.

The family invites you to celebrate with us as Arthur and Esther are called to the Torah for their B’nai Mitzvah and a Kiddush luncheon in Strouss Hall.

R.S.V.P. to the Lamb family at 234-855-0237 by Friday, Aug. 18 for the luncheon. Charitable donations may be made to the Second Harvest Food Bank.
A message from Rodef’s ‘Tzedek’ committee

We know that Temple is a place to pray, learn, and socialize. Perhaps even more important, Temple is also a place to channel our spiritual energy to engage in acts of social justice.

Temple provides us the opportunity to build up our moral muscle, to strengthen our moral fiber, so to speak. We do this best by performing mitzvot that help others. We learn from the time we begin Sunday school as small children and bring Keren Ami, that being Jewish means we have an obligation to give tzedakah to assist the less fortunate.

Should this obligation cease after we become confirmed, or is the act of helping others supposed to be inculcated in us by then so it will be a lifelong commitment? The answer, of course, is the latter.

The Rodef Sholom Social Action committee, has been renamed the Tzedek — the Hebrew word for justice, — committee, and is dedicated to providing opportunities to engage in acts of Tikkan Olam.

Beginning in September, please bring an “item of the month” and deposit it in the bin or on the table directly outside the Tamarkin chapel.

In this way, the entire congregation can carry forward the wonderful experience of our year-long celebration of the synagogue’s 150th anniversary.

The goal is to collect at least 150+1 of each item. All items must be new.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>High Holy Days canned and boxed food donations for Second Harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>Children’s books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>Mittens, gloves, warm hats, all sizes for all ages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>Socks — all types for all ages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan.</td>
<td>School supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb.</td>
<td>Facial tissues (Kleenex)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

March | Diapers |
April | Sanitary/Feminine Items |
May | Toiletries (shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, etc.) |
June | Toilet Paper |
July | Dog and Cat Food and Cat Litter |
August | Random Acts of Kindness |

The committee is reviewing which agencies will receive the items we’ll collect, and expect to finalize that at our next meeting, which will be Wednesday, Aug. 16 from 3:30-5 p.m. in Handler Hall.

The committee will continue to volunteer at Second Harvest quarterly from 5-7 p.m. on Wednesdays — Aug. 16, Nov. 15, and in February, and May. Those planning to volunteer should let Nancy know that you’re coming. She can be reached at (330) 647-2370 or at burnettbc@yahoo.com.

If any congregation members would like to volunteer at the food pantry at Churchill United Methodist Church, held the first Friday of each month from 9:30 a.m. to noon, at their location on Belmont Avenue and Churchill in Liberty. This requires notification one week in advance to Nancy if you plan to come.

Gene Mallen has asked for donations of used postage stamps for veterans who are in the hospital, and for empty pop cans and pop tops, which raise money for kidney dialysis or Ronald McDonald House. You can bring stamps to Temple and cans to Richard Brown Methodist Church.

Please join the Tzedek Committee! We thank you in advance for your desire to help.

Sincerely,

Mari Alschuler, Co-Chair
Nancy Burnett, Co-Chair

Rodef Sholom Cemetery Chapel at 1:30 p.m.

High Holy Day Schedule 2017

Rosh Hashanah
Wednesday, Sept. 20
Holiday dinner in Strouss Hall at 6 p.m.
Evening service in the Sanctuary at 8 p.m.
Reception in Strouss Hall at 9:30 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 21
Morning service in Tamarkin Chapel at 10 a.m.
Tashlich Service at Crandall Park at 12:30 p.m.
Children’s Service in the Sanctuary at 2 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 24
Memorial Service
Rodef Sholom Cemetery Chapel at 1:30 p.m.

Aug. 2017 The Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine

Yom Kippur
Friday, Sept. 29
Holiday dinner in Strouss Hall at 6 p.m.
Kol Nidre Service in the Sanctuary at 8 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 30
Yizkor Memorial Service at 10 a.m.
Break-fast at 6 p.m.

Please note: Babysitting will be available at Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services. If you need babysitting, please call the Temple office at 330 744-5001 to make your reservations.

Black listed rabbis (from p. 9)

Attesting to their Jewish identity. It also asks applicants to list their parents, grandparents and great-grandmothers. Applicants must also sign a sworn statement that they are single.

The rabbis who spoke to JTA acknowledge that it’s possible that a letter they wrote several years ago for immigration purposes was sent to the rabbinate last year and rejected without their knowledge. But they all wondered, if the problem was with the documentation and not with them, why the rabbinate never reached out to them to clear up errors in the letter.

“The only conclusion I can reach is: If a congregant of mine was rejected, it was because of me and not because of the case particulars,” Adam Scheier, a past president of the Montreal Board of Rabbis, wrote in an email Wednesday to JTA. “If that’s not the definition of a blacklist, then I don’t know what is.”
**PERFORMING ARTS**

**Liz Rubino Studios**

For more information on the studio offerings contact Liz Rubino at 330-509-0891 or coaching@lizrubino.com

**Private Sessions**

Liz Rubino offers private sessions in voice, acting, drama therapy, junior voice, and junior acting. All sessions are 55 minutes long with the exception of junior lessons which are 30 minutes long.

**Triple Threat**

An elite training and national performance troupe for ages 10-21. Studio students study voice, drama and dance both privately and in a group atmosphere over two semesters with opportunities for local as well as nationwide performances in NYC, Walt Disney World and more.

**JCC School of Dance**

Erianna Raib-Pitchkin is a well-trained and experienced local dance teacher collaborating with the JCC as the Artistic Director of the new School of Dance. This program teaches children the technique, artistry and discipline of dance in a cheerful and positive learning environment. Children develop a variety of transferable listening and learning skills in a classroom setting while being physically healthy and having fun! Visit jccyoungstown.org to learn more.

**Open House & Registration Dates:**

Thursday, Aug. 10, 5 - 7 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 26, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
**Winter Session Dates:**

Wednesday, Sept. 6 – Saturday, Dec. 16

**Baton Mini**

A concentrated four-day fun camp where students will learn baton twirling, marching, tosses, and more! Local majorettes will join the camp each day to dance with the students. This camp is geared towards beginner and intermediate baton twirlers. Active wear required. Batons available to borrow for the duration of camp.

**August 7 - August 10**

Tiny Twirlers (ages 4-7)
5:15 - 6:30 p.m.
Baton Basics (ages 8-11)
3:45 - 5:00 p.m.

$45/Member | $60/Non Member

**School of Music**

The Jewish Community Center of Youngstown School of Music. This exciting program features piano, violin, guitar, percussion, and voice lessons housed at the JCC! Visit jccyoungstown.org to learn more. To register for JCC School of Music lessons contact the JCC Bursar's Office: 330 746-3250 Ext. 195.

**FIsh**

**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

**Lunch & Learn: Heart Disease**

Dr. Hayah Kassis-George, M.D. of he Heart and Vascular Institute, Youngstown Cardiology, Mercy Health will speak about managing heart failure from home: smart technology and old fashioned note books. What works best? Free and open to the public

**Thursday, August 24**

Time: 12:00 – 1:00 pm
Location: JCC Multi-Purpose Room
R.S.V.P. to Shelia Cornell at (330)746.3250 ext. 182 required by August 16.

**GROUP EXERCISE**

**Cardio Kickboxing**

This class will get beginners into shape, while challenging advanced athletes. The class integrates combinations of punches and kicks. Additional muscle and motion exercises are incorporated to strengthen and tone. You will have fun, reduce stress and get an awesome workout. Men and women welcome!

**Date:** Thursdays
**Time:** 4:30-5:25 p.m.

**Total Body Strength and Endurance**

A mixture of cardio and strength exercises utilizing your own body weight. Various modes of training such as pyramids, circuits and AMRAPS (as many
reps as possible) will be used for a high calorie burn! All fitness levels welcome. No weights required.

**Date:** Wednesdays  
**Time:** 4:30 - 5:25 p.m.

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**AQUATICS**

For more information on Aquatics, contact Shawn Chrystal at 330-746-3250 Ext. 112 or aquatics@jewishyoungstown.org

**Aquatic Classes**

**You & Me Baby**

In this monthly class, 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, 9:30 – 10:00 a.m.  
**$30/Member | $40/Non Member**

**Learn-to-Swim ages 3 & up**

Children will be placed into the appropriate level by the swim instructors.

- Level 1: Children are taught basic swimming skills such as floating, blowing bubbles and the correct body positions for freestyle and backstroke.
- Level 2: Children are taught the arm motions for freestyle and backstroke as well as the correct breathing patterns for both strokes.
- Level 3: Children are taught the basics of breaststroke, butterfly, and diving as well as refining freestyle and backstroke techniques.
- Level 4/5: Children will continue to refine the four swim strokes and diving.

**Date:** Saturdays, 8:50 – 9:30 a.m. or 10:00 – 10:35 a.m.  
**$30/Member | $40/Non Member**

**Indoor & Outdoor Private Swim Lessons**

Private swim lessons provide the greatest flexibility among lesson options. The one-on-one attention provided through these lessons creates a personalized setting for learning. Private lessons are great for swimmers of any age from the rookie swimmer 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.

**1:1 student/teacher ratio**  
**4 lessons @ 30 minutes**  
**$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:** Mondays/Fridays  
**Time:** 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
**Date:** Wednesdays  
**Time:** 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

**Mobility Plus**

This class is approved by the Arthritis Foundation. People who have arthritis, chronic orthopedic conditions or those who are returning to exercise after injury will benefit greatly from this class. The concentration is on stimulating joint movements, improving range of motion and increasing balance. No swimming ability required.

**Date:** Tuesdays/Thursdays/Fridays  
**Time:** 8:30 - 9:15 a.m.

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**SHLICHIM**

**Lunch and Learn- “Walking a Tight Rope”**

Join us for a fascinating, interactive lecture where we will explore the Supreme Court’s role in defending human rights and reshaping Israel’s Democratic yet Jewish identity.

About the speaker: Both a licensed attorney and a teacher, Rotem Malac currently works as the central emissary in North America for the World Zionist Organization’s Department of Diaspora Activities.

**Date:** Tuesday, August 22  
**Time:** 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
**Location:** JCC Multi-Purpose Room  
**The event is free and open to the public. A light lunch will be served.**

R.S.V.P. is required by Aug. 18 at jccyoungstown.org or to Gon Erez (330) 746-3250 Ext.159.

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**RENTALS — JCC MAIN CAMPUS**

For bookings and more information on rentals, contact Kelli McCormick, (330) 746-3250 ext. 204 or kmccormick@jewishyoungstown.org

The JCC is the perfect place to host your next party, meeting or corporate event. With several venues to choose from, the JCC can accommodate most functions, large or small throughout the year.

Our Multi-Purpose Room seats up to 250 people and has an adjoining commercial kitchen, state-of-the-art audio visual system, overhead motorized theater screen, and more.

A number of convenient and well-appointed break rooms are also available throughout our building.

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**Outdoor Tennis**

Register online at jccyoungstown.org

**Beginner Clinics**

**Date:** Mondays & Wednesdays  
**Time:** 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (ages 8-10)  
**12:00 – 1:00 p.m. (ages 11-16)**

**Men’s Night Tennis**

**Date:** Tuesdays  
**Time:** 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**Women’s Night Tennis**

**Date:** Thursdays  
**Time:** 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**Outdoor Zumba®**

We’ll dance to an upbeat mix of Salsa, Merengue, Mambo, Hip Hop, and much more. Come join the party in the sun and burn some major calories!

**Date:** Wednesdays  
**Time:** 10:30 – 11:15 a.m.

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**Friday Night S’mores at the JCC Logan Campus**

Join us around the fire pit at 6:00 p.m. every Friday night for S’mores making fun!

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**JCC Logan Campus Pavilion Rental**

The JCC Logan Pavilion is a large, covered, outdoor pavilion that sits next to our tennis courts and a short walk from the full-size heated pool. Round tables outfit the pavilion and you can decorate to suit your theme. Swim in our heated pool or take time out of the pool and shoot hoops on the basketball court, play volleyball, tennis, shuffleboard, bocce, or whatever you would like on our spacious grounds. 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 – 7 p.m.  
**$75/Member | $100/Non Member**  
**$150/Member | $200/Non Member – all-day rental**

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**JCC – Pool Party at Logan Campus**

You and your party guests can swim in our full-size heated pool and enjoy time celebrating at our on-

(Continued on p. 15)
During the last few days of June, Israelis, Americans, and Hungarians, gathered to eat, drink, dance, plan programs and celebrate the commitment, love, and friendship among the three countries — a friendship that has lasted almost 20 years.

The Youngstown Area Jewish Federation hosted the meeting of the U.S. Central Area Consortium which comprises 14 U.S. Jewish Federation communities; Budapest, Hungary; and Israel’s Western Galilee.

Of the more than 80 participants, 20 were international visitors, 45 came from other U.S. communities, and 15 represented the local area.

A welcome party at the MVR in Youngstown introduced participants to Youngstown-style food and live music.

Sunday evening brought a change of pace at where, according to local chair Nancy Burnett, “Almost everyone went on in a hike around Mill Creek Park.”

After the hike, the local P2G organization hosted a BBQ at Pioneer Pavilion in the park with live entertainment by Yiddishe Cup, a Cleveland klezmer band, and kosher catering.

In their evaluations of the event, one Hungarian participant wrote, “This introduction to Partnership and visit in Youngstown was truly life changing.”

“Kol Hakvaod!” said an Israeli participant, while a representative from Dayton, OH said, “I just want to thank you for a wonderful time I had in Youngstown. Everything was phenomenal and for the largest meeting we’ve ever had, set the standard. Personally, I had no doubt of the wonderful way everything would turn out.”

**P2G summit a Federation success**

**Rare heart surgery performed in utero to to save sick baby**

**By Abigail Klein Leichman**

Jerusalem July 6, 2017) In a risky and delicate procedure performed for the first time in Israel this week, an interdisciplinary team of Hadassah Medical Center physicians fixed a severe heart defect in a 28-week-old fetus in the womb.

The medical team widened the baby’s aorta using a balloon technique similar to adult catheterization.

“In the process of catheterization, under epidural anesthesia for the mother and anesthesia for the fetus as well — because we do not want him to feel pain — we inserted a very delicate needle through the mother’s abdominal wall, directly to the left ventricle of the fetal heart,” said Dr. Yuval Gielchinsky, head of fetal medicine at Hadassah’s Ein Kerem campus.

The pregnant mother had approached Dr. Azaria Rein, director of Hadassah’s pediatric cardiology department, after tests showed her baby’s heart defect.

“The diagnosis was a critical narrowing of the aortic valve, which is also accompanied by severe damage to the function of the left ventricle, which was barely able to contract and perform its function,” said Rein.

The baby’s parents were told that without treatment, the left ventricle would likely degenerate and not be able to transfer blood to the baby’s body after birth. They decided to try the catheterization procedure.

Dr. Gielchinsky said this specific complex surgery is performed in only a few medical centers around the world but had never been done in Israel before.

“We are in a new medical era in the field of embryology and cardiology, which offers not only diagnosis but also prenatal care. The operation carries an increased risk to the fetus, but we believe that its success will greatly improve the baby’s chances of a healthy and long life.”

The full success of the surgery can be assessed only after the baby is born, but the doctors were pleased with initial results. Fetal echocardiography shows that the function of the left ventricle in the baby’s heart has improved significantly.

“The operation went through without complication,” noted Dr. Sagi Gavri, director of pediatric catheterization. “Immediately after the operation we saw an improvement in blood flow through the valve.”

Other members of the surgical team included Dr. Simcha Yagel, head of OB-GYN at Hadassah, senior OB-GYN Dr. Nili Yanai and anesthesiologist Dr. Carolyn Weiniger.

This article is reprinted with the permission of israel21c.org a non-partisan, nonprofit organization and the publisher of an English-language online news magazine recognized as the single most diverse and reliable source of news and information about 21st century Israel.

In a separate announcement about the life-saving surgery, Ellen Hershkin, the national president of Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America, Inc. said, “HMC’s brilliant medical teams continue to provide Israel with the most innovative, life-saving surgical procedures. We take great pride in the talent, commitment and ingenuity of thesurgeons who solidify HMC’s reputation as a world-class research and medical facility.”

Hadassah supports the delivery of exemplary patient care to more than a million people every year.
Lunch and Learn
“Walking a Tight Rope:” Human Rights and Social Justice

Join us for a fascinating, interactive lecture where we will explore the Supreme Court’s role in defending human rights and reshaping Israel’s Democratic yet Jewish identity.

About the speaker:
Both a licensed attorney and a teacher, Rotem Malac currently works as the central emissary in North America for the World Zionist Organization’s Department of Diaspora Activities. In this lecture we will explore the Supreme Court’s role in defending human rights and reshaping Israel's Democratic yet Jewish identity.

August 22, 2017 | 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Jewish Community Center
The event is free and open to the public. Light lunch will be served.

R.S.V.P. is required by August 18, 2017
Online at jccyoungstown.org or contact Gon Erez:
Gerez@jewishyoungstown.org | 330-746-3250 ext.159

To be a free people in our country — about the Western Wall resolution

By Gon Erez

I admit that if I had heard a conversation about the Western Wall layout two years ago, I probably would not have delved into it too much, or I would not have understood the profound implications these moves actually create.

The Judaism I have always known is the Judaism known in Israel, the Orthodox. Yes, I am a proud Jew, but not because of religion, and this is one of the greatest dissonances there is.

Many of the concepts of Judaism I knew challenged me on a personal level, but it never diminished my Jewish identity, which was built on values, culture, and the memory of the Holocaust.

It’s easy to be a Jew in Israel. After all, it is the Jewish state. So what if I don’t keep kosher or go to temple? And who cares if the thought of some of the religious rituals don’t really go down my throat?

I am Jewish, and I’m an Israeli. And no one can take that away from me.

When I moved to the United States as a shaliach and worked on promoting dialogue and creating content related to Israel, I discovered the whole world of Judaism from an entirely different perspective. and there are different types - Reform, Conservative and Reconstructionist, each of which is more liberal than the mainstream in Israel, only in varying degrees and in different fields.

I discovered Judaism that went through processes, sometimes because they chose it and sometimes because they had to respond to changes in the society they lived in; A society that for the most part is not Jewish, and has not always loved and accepted Jews. But they (Diaspora Jews) have struggled to preserve their identity, the same Jewish identity they share with us. Throughout thousands of years of exile, they kept the same God and the same values.

As part of my work, I learned a lot about the development of Jewish identity in Israel as opposed to that abroad (and specifically in the United States).

For most Israelis, Judaism is self-evident, we grew up around it. Our annual calendar is Jewish, classes and vacations in school as well, free synagogues - and let’s not forget- we are the majority here.

In contrast to us, an American Jew who wants to preserve his identity chooses every day a conscious choice to be Jewish and to define himself as a Jew.

Public schools here have no religion in them (separation of church and state). There are very few private Jewish schools, and it takes a small fortune to send your children to earn some Jewish education. The government does not subsidize religious institutions.

Want to be a member of Temple? Pay! Want your child to know something about Judaism? Want her or him to know other Jews? Send them on your day off (Sunday) for one day of study in the synagogue. Families must make an active and daily effort to preserve their Jewish identity.

I could write a separate article (or book) on the challenges of Diaspora Jewry. I could also write about how different Americans Jews are from Israelis - Prayers without a Mehitza (Gender Shlichim)

To be a free people in our country — about the Western Wall resolution

(Continued on page 17)
This Yiddish film is a rare look into Hasidic Brooklyn life

BOSTON (JTA) — With more than a decade’s worth of experience in the film industry, mostly in documentaries, director Joshua Weinstein has released his first feature-length narrative film.

What’s surprising is that Weinstein, a secular Jew, has made a movie entirely in Yiddish.

“Menashe,” about Hasidic Jews in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn, is among the first full-length Yiddish language films to hit the big screen in more than 70 years.

“I love going into small, closed societies and trying to understand and to represent them, and to tell all sides of their stories – the good and the bad – with honesty,” Weinstein, 34, told JTA recently when he and the film’s Hasidic star, Menashe Lustig, attended a screening at the Boston International Film Festival.

Though Weinstein knew he wanted to do a film about the Hasidim, he was not sure at the outset about the topic. He began to spend time among them in Brooklyn — to gain their trust and become familiar with their world.

“You can’t cast a film like this in the usual way – you put on a yarmulke, hang out and show up every single day,” he said. “I was researching and meeting people. I was also trying to find actors because you can only make a film if you can cast it.”

Lustig said a minor miracle occurred when he and Weinstein crossed paths.

“I had been acting very locally in the Hasidic community in a nonprofessional way when Josh approached me after he saw me appear in a short Hasidic commercial,” Lustig said. “We talked together and he said he’d like to make a film with me.”

As Weinstein got to know Lustig and began to hear the details of his life, Weinstein realized he had found his story. A recent widower, Lustig had been pressured by his religious community of Skver Hasidim to yield the rearing of his 9-year-old son to others until he remarried.

“Menashe” tells the story of a 30-something widower and single father, and contrasts the title character’s urge toward self-sufficiency with the demands of traditionalism in a small, tightly knit religious community.

“The whole movie is a 95 percent true story,” Lustig said. “We just touched it up a little bit.”

The film focuses on the decision by the community’s rabbi that Menashe yield the rearing of his son, Rieven, to the family of his late wife’s brother. The decision causes Menashe much anguish, which is made considerably worse by his brother-in-law’s severe and self-righteous demeanor.

In the eyes of the community Menashe, a grocery clerk, is a schlemiel. He bucks authority but, at the same time, does not carry himself in a way that garners respect. Menashe doesn’t want to marry just anyone, however, and he wants to prove he can adequately provide a home for his son.

“It is an emotionally true story,” Weinstein said. “The film expresses how Menashe Lustig actually felt when he went through what he did.”

With the exception of a few lines in English and Spanish — this is Brooklyn, after all — the film’s dialogue occurs entirely in Yiddish.

“The sheer challenge of making a new and unique film about Hasidim in Yiddish was very exciting,” Weinstein said.

It was just one of many challenges facing Weinstein.

The production schedule, for example, was frequently thrown off schedule — some actors who originally signed up, including Lustig, were pressured by their communities not to participate. Fortunately, Weinstein said his background making documentaries, which often depends on bending to the unexpected, gave him the flexibility to see the process through.

Another challenge: Weinstein doesn’t speak Yiddish. And yet, “You couldn’t really make this film in English,” he said. “If it weren’t going to be in Yiddish, then why not just make ‘Home Alone 7?’” (As it happens, one of the executive producers of “Menashe” is Chris Columbus, the director of the wildly successful 1990 movie “Home Alone.”)

Much of the script was written, in English, before filming started, said Weinstein, with translators providing a Yiddish version. Lustig developed some scenes by improvising in English — so Weinstein could understand — then would translate them into Yiddish. After that, with the help of translators, the dialogue was again reviewed carefully.

The accuracy of the words was not taken lightly. In post-production, a team of translators worked on the subtitles — many debates over word choices ensued.

“It was almost like translating the Talmud in some way,” Weinstein said.

“Menashe” will be in theaters in New York and Los Angeles on July 28, with a national rollout to follow.

Authors to speak

The St. Charles Parish Library Committee will sponsor a presentation on local Jewish history at 7 p.m., on Thursday, Sept. 7, at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, 7345 Westview Dr.

Speakers Thomas Welsh, Joshua Foster and Gordon Morgan, coauthors of A History of Jewish Youngstown and the Steel Valley will share highlights of their recently released book. The program is free and open to the public. For further information, please call St. Charles Parish office at 330-758-2325.

What’s happening at the Holocaust and Judaic Library this summer?

By Jesse McClain

YAOF Holocaust Educator

Thanks to Marsha Levy, who has organized a project through which children and grandchildren of survivors who belong or have belonged to Rodef Sholom are being videotaped and their testimony transcribed for research and preservation so future generations can access testimony about the Holocaust.

Toni Schildcrout was the first to tell her family’s story.

Thanks to a grant from the Thomas Family Endowment, this month a Youngstown State graduate student will start working with me to archive, preserve and catalogue the materials of Holocaust scholar Dr. Saul Friedman, which were donated to our library by his wife and son last year.

The Holocaust and Judaic Library will soon be undergoing major construction to house its enormous collection of Holocaust books and media for community use.

During the summer, the Holocaust Resource Center and Library is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9-11 a.m.

The Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine
Shlichim (continued from page 15)

separation), girls reading the Torah on their Bat-Mitzvah, recognition of LGBT rights and more.

But they also identify and sanctify their connection as Jews to Israel when they pray for the state of Israel every week, sending delegations to Israel, holding important ceremonies, and being involved in Israel’s daily life. Furthermore, they contribute for Israel — emotionally as well as economically and politically.

This is our common denominator: Israel is in the heart.

And what did they ask for? A small space in this heart.

They do not seek to take away the rights or place of others. They just ask for a part of their own, where they can practice Judaism in their own way a father with his daughter, a mother with her son, and a family together in the egalitarian manner in which they believe.

In our community, there are four synagogues: Orthodox, Reform, and two Conservative. Each gave me a chance to see Judaism from a different angle: the ability to accept, the ability to argue, the ability to love, the ability to ask and to appreciate. I usually don’t identify with all the different streams of Judaism, but I respect them and learn from them with admiration.

The last Israeli government decision, to halt the recognition of the mixed platform at the Western Wall is not only disrespectful to Reform and Conservative Jews, but is also a formal statement from the only Jewish state saying one Jew is better than another.

I resent this decision in every possible way. I feel ashamed of my government for (once again) submitting to the Ultra-Orthodox parties’ extortion. I hope with all my heart that this decision will change sooner than later.

And I could only hope this will not hurt the support we’re getting from American Jewry — although it’s really hard to expect this from them anymore.

Dr. Janan Faraj Falah: winner of the Jerusalem Unity Prize

By Prof. Livia Bitton-Jackson

Dr. Janan Faraj Falah, an Israeli Druze, a senior lecturer at the Academic College of Education in Haifa and a researcher at the University of Haifa and at the International Academic Center for Conservations, is the first non-Jewish recipient of the 2017 Jerusalem Unity Prize.

Israel’s President Reuven Rivlin recently hosted the four winners of the third annual Jerusalem Unity Prize, honoring the memories of the three yeshiva students terrorists kidnapped and murdered near Hebron during the summer of 2014.

In addition to receiving the “Jerusalem Unity Prize,” Dr. Janan Faraj Falah is the first Israeli Druze woman to receive a Ph.D. and become a professor of literature at an Israeli university.

Dr. Faraj Falah established the Women’s House of Peace in Akko which serves as a center for culture, research and art, seeking to promote the activities of both Jewish and Arab women in the northern region of the country.

The motto of the Foundation is “Women bring life into the world” and in practical terms, the Foundation enhances the quality of life, provides proper education, empowers women’s leadership and encourages women everywhere.

The Foundation works to bring Jews and Druze closer together. It recently led a first-of-its-kind project in Israel, and a first in the field of medicine: providing support to Arab and Jewish patients who suffer from diabetes.

The Druze are a unique religious and ethnic minority in Israel. Although their faith originated from Ismaili Islam, the Druze are not considered Muslims. The Israeli government has designated them a distinct ethnic group.

They are a community of loyal Israeli citizens who serve in the Israel Defense Forces and many have attained top positions in Israeli politics and public service. Today, tens of thousands of Israeli Druze belong to “Druze Zionist” movements.

There are more than 500,000 Druze worldwide. About half of them live in Syria, most of the rest live in Lebanon and about 40,000 live in Israel. Some have immigrated to the United States and Canada.

Their social customs are notably different from those of Muslims or Christians. They are known for close-knit, cohesive communities that don’t allow anyone in, while fully integrating in their adopted homelands. If one marries outside of the faith, he or she is no longer considered Druze.

Dr. Faraj Falah also serves as the chairperson of the Academic Committee of Galilee College, the Ghetto Fighters’ House (Beit Lohamei HaGetaot) and the International Academic Center for Conservation in Akko.

In addition, she is an activist at the Golda Meir Center in Haifa, which operates on behalf of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote the activities of women from third-world countries.

Dr. Faraj Falah is the author of the book The Druze Woman, which discusses the status of the Druze woman in Israel, particularly in the context of Druze religion and Druze law.

In line with her personal motto – “If you believe in something, you must create circles of people and link them together until your goal is attained” – she also founded and has managed the Women’s Vision of Akko Foundation since 2003. The Foundation brings both Jewish and Arab women together to work towards promoting the status of women in Israel.

Her belief that women have the power to lead transformations and to change the fate of humankind is truly admirable.

Editor’s Note: Dr. Janan Falah, the chair of Partnership2Gether central consortium academic task force, was a leader in the Jan/Feb P2G meeting in Israel.
A bittersweet farewell to the Oreskys as they return to Maryland

By Neil Yutkin
Co-President Congregation Ohev Tzedek-Shaarei Torah

As you read this, Rabbi Saul and Rebbetzin Phyllis Oresky are on their way to their new-old home: Congregation Mishkan Torah. I say “new-old” because Rabbi Saul had been a member there since he was 19. To honor them, a going away party was held on July 22 at the synagogue and was attended by 70 people from the community.

The dinner was catered by Art Einzig. Co-president Francie Yarwood began the program by reading a letter from her son Ian, who was Rabbi Saul’s first Bar Mitzvah at Ohev Tzedek.

Then Francie introduced her daughter, Carys, a current Bat Mitzvah student of Rabbi Saul who choreographed and performed a dance piece to the music of “I’ll Always Remember You,” by Miley Cyrus, while a slide show of pictures of Rabbi and Phyllis looped in the background, also Carys’s idea.

Fred Dixon, one of the Rabbi’s oldest friends from high school spoke.

Nancy Burnett talked about the meaning of the Tree of Life and then gave the Rabbi and Phyllis an artwork of the Tree of Life that had been done by Art Einzig.

Rabbi and Phyllis were given his and her cowboy hats (pink and brown) and song sheets to lead the singing of “Happy Trails to You,” the closing theme to the old Roy Rogers show, accompanied by Mindy Einzig on the guitar.

As a memento of his time here, the Temple gave Rabbi an Ohio-shaped cutting board engraved with, “Ohev Tzedek, Boardman Ohio.”

In response, the Rabbi’s emotional speech described how torn he is in leaving. He said he will miss this community and the friends he made here. He further expressed gratitude to the congregation for giving him his first opportunity as Rabbi.

Rabbi closed the evening by leading everyone in the Havdalah.

Never can say goodbye

By Rabbi Dario Hunter
Congregation Ohev Tzedek-Shaarei Torah

In Parshat Va’etchanan, which is read for the second Shabbat of the month of Av, Moses bids farewell to his people. In his parting words, he reminds them of the central role of Torah and its commandments in their future progress.

He notes his responsibility to instruct Joshua, the next generation of leadership, so that he might lead the people to the Promised Land. Moses’ passing of the torch reminds us that no leader, regardless of how great, ever leads forever. And yet how can a figure who looms so large over the development and destiny of the Jewish people ever truly say goodbye?

“Goodbye” in the sense of a final farewell is a concept that doesn’t really work in Judaism. The deep reverence and ongoing remembrance we show for those who precede us, the living as well as those passed, belies the notion that we can ever really say goodbye so long as their memory and positive impact live on in us. We use the same Hebrew word for hello as goodbye — Shalom — a fact that underlines the touching belief (expressed in Midrash) that all Jews we meet are fellow souls who accepted Torah on Mount Sinai. We are all merely reacquainted kinsmen and not strangers.

Despite the inevitable farewell each leader must make, a leader leaves a mark that often far exceeds his or her tenure. A talented spiritual leader leaves enduring wisdom, a reverence for tradition and a strengthened sense of fellowship that draws us closer to each other, to Hashem and to our destiny as a community.

Rabbi Saul Oresky has said farewell to his role as spiritual leader of Ohev Tzedek – Shaarei Torah synagogue, but his wisdom, his caring, and the wonderful sense of fellowship he fostered will endure and continue to form a part of our progress.

It is my distinct pleasure to be a religious leader of Ohev Tzedek alongside Sandy Kessler and the continued support of numerous volunteer leaders who tend to the continuity of Jewish wisdom and tradition in our shul.

I humbly draw upon the guidance of those who have preceded me, but I am also cognizant that if a leader does his or her job well, then such skilled leadership prepares a path for future leaders and the continuity of the tribe.

The passing on of leadership reminds us that leadership is not a spectator sport and that we all have roles to play in moving our community forward.

In the parshah that follows, Eikev, Moses reminds the people that, “With seventy souls, your forefathers descended to Egypt, and now the Lord, your God, has made you as the stars of heaven in abundance.” (Devarim 10:22)

Though we have grown much from our humble beginnings, we are a comparatively small people. We need leaders to step forward and add to our growth, not just in numbers but also in spiritual and moral resolve.

With Hashem’s guidance, may we all rise to our roles as leaders of a vibrant community with a bright common future.

Ohev Tzedek’s August activities can be found on page 21.
650-year-old French synagogue survives centuries of anti-Semitism

By Cnaan Liphshiz

CARPENTRAS, France (JTA) — The synagogue in this Provence town is Western Europe’s oldest functioning Jewish house of worship — and one of the prettiest on the continent.

The Synagogue of Carpentras, which this year is celebrating its 650th anniversary, has a Baroque-style interior and a gold-ornamented hall with a blue domed ceiling. The rabbi’s pulpit is, unusually, on a balcony that overlooks the pews and the Torah ark — the work of the non-Jews who built the synagogue in a Christian style in the 16th century atop its earlier structure, which was first established in 1367.

Most impressive of all is that the synagogue is housed within a larger building that once functioned as an ancient Jewish community center of sorts. The space boasts spectacular facilities, including a 30-foot-deep ritual bath, or mikvah, fed by turquoise waters from a natural spring, another heated bath, a kosher abattoir and a bakery with large ovens that burned year round.

Yet the architects did their best to conceal the building’s splendor. The small, wooden front door is but a drab opening in a simple facade that unlike Europe’s other majestic synagogues does not even hint at the bling inside.

The juxtaposition between the majestic interior and basic exterior is the result of French Jewry’s long-held desire to celebrate its greatness without attracting too much attention.

The Synagogue of Carpentras, Rabbi Korsia said, “is proof of that.”

“At a time when on some streets in France people are shouting ‘Jews, get out, France is not yours,’ the Synagogue of Carpentras and its 650th anniversary are proof of just how deep our roots run here,” he said, noting that a Jewish presence has been documented in Provence since the first century.

In his speech, Rabbi Korsia recalled a different slogan — one used several times by France’s former prime minister, Manuel Valls, following a wave of terrorist attacks on Jews. Valls had said that without Jews, “France isn’t France.”

The Synagogue of Carpentras, Rabbi Korsia said, “is proof of that.”

“I still have goose bumps from his speech,” said Françoise Richez, a Carpentras Jew who gives tours of the synagogue.

But Carpentras, she added, is also a testament to the “long and, unfortunately, unfinished history of anti-Semitism.”

Carpentras was one of only four locales in present-day France where Jews were allowed to stay even after the Great Expulsion of French Jewry, decreed by King Philip IV of France in 1306, according to Ram Ben-Shalom, a historian and lecturer at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem specializing in the Jewry of Provence.

Jews were allowed to live in closed, guarded and crowded ghettos, known as “carrieres,” in Carpentras, Avignon, Cavaillon and L’Isle-sur-la-Sorgue because these locales in Provence were on lands owned by the pope, who took in Jews in exchange for payment. Additionally, he said, Jews were made to wear distinctive clothing, often a cape.

As for the synagogues serving the carrieres, they were designed by Christians because the Jews were only allowed to work as traders or moneylenders, according to Yoann Rogier, a guide at the Synagogue of Cavaillon, which was built.

(Continued on page 21)
Federation Fellows (cont’d from p.6)

and fellowship with as many people—especially young families—as possible.

Jeff Vickers became a part of Youngstown’s Jewish community through his wife, Megan. The warmth, energy, public engagement, and genuine care within the community impressed him from the very beginning. He is glad to have his children grow up in such a positive environment, and he is honored to further the mission of the Jewish Federation by being a part of the Fellows program.

Lisa Long

Lisa Long is the associate director at OH WOW! Originally from Chicago, Lisa and her husband, Grady, moved back to the Valley in 2012 when Grady was offered the opportunity to teach at his alma mater.

Lisa and Grady have two young children. Lisa says, “I grew up in an area that was predominantly Jewish. Here, my children and I are definitely in the minority, and I want them to be proud of their Jewish heritage and learn the same traditions I was raised with.

I was overjoyed to find such a vibrant and strong Jewish community in the Valley. My children and I have loved the PJ Library events and becoming increasingly involved with the Jewish Federation through programs like the Fellows has really helped us feel at home here.”

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in 1494 but now functions as a museum of the town’s historic Jewish population, its door frames lacking a mezuzah.

As such, in both Carpentras and Cavaillon, congregants must turn their backs to the Torah ark if they want to face their rabbi, and vice versa. To read from the Torah, the rabbis of both synagogues had to carry the Torah scroll up to their balcony. The Cavaillon synagogue still has a portable ark with wheels for this purpose.

Despite the imperfect circumstances, the Jews of Carpentras ingeniously turned their synagogue into a labyrinthine community center, making maximum use of the limited space allotted to them thanks to partitions, underground passages and interior courts that offered facilities for every aspect of Jewish life. The synagogue complex even had a special matzah bakery.

To Mme. Richez, whose husband is descended from a Jewish family forced to convert to Christianity in Spain during the Inquisition, the Carpentras synagogue “shows that despite everything, we prevailed,” she said.

Today, Carpentras is one of the few active synagogues in France without army protection. Unlike most French synagogues, visitors may enter without first undergoing a security inspection. While this is good for tourism, “the important thing is that the tourism stops at 6 p.m. and this returns to being an active Jewish synagogue,” said Mme. Richez, a mother of two. “We don’t want to end up with just a museum, like in Cavaillon.”

“All in all,” she said, “I think we’re pretty privileged here.”
Creating an environment in Akko where people flourish

By Barbara Bamberger

The city of Akko recently celebrated the opening of the Akko Center for Arts and Technology (A-CAT), the first affiliated center of Manchester Bidwell Corporation (MBC) to be established outside the United States. MBC is an American NGO offering art education and career training to at risk youth and adults “in transition” – going through job changes or reentering the workplace after a break.

In Akko the goal is even wider: to facilitate connections among Akko’s diverse, and sometimes divided, population. MBC was founded on the belief that art education can enrich and empower the disadvantaged. This was the personal experience of MBC president and CEO Bill Strickland, who grew up in a poor neighborhood of Pittsburgh, PA. He describes himself as “disengaged” until his high-school art teacher introduced him to pottery and changed his life.

Mr. Strickland was accepted to university on probation, became an airline pilot, opened a pottery studio for neighborhood kids while still a student, and proceeded to grow his original studio into nine centers around the United States, serving thousands of teens and adults. Each center reflects the needs of a specific community. Offerings have expanded to include training in pharmacy technology, medical coding, food services, horticulture and more.

The Akko location adds a whole new dimension to the organization’s core vision. Akko’s 55,000 residents are made up of 72% Jews and 28% Arabs. The goal of A-CAT is not only to provide vocational opportunities in a city located in Israel’s social and economic periphery, but to “bridge the divide among Jews and Arabs through art, environment, career training and collaboration.”

The person who made the connection between MBC and Akko is lawyer Mark Frank, born and raised in Pittsburgh. He first came to Israel in 1996 for his daughter’s bat mitzvah and has known Strickland since the early days. While still in law school, Strickland hired him to represent those students who were in trouble with the law.

Frank now works in a private firm, but he’ll never forget the beginning. “The very first day after I passed the bar exam I got a phone call from Bill, ‘Get down here. I need you.’ Today I’m a ‘Friend of the Organization.’ It’s in my DNA.”

“Environment is transformative. Our aspirations are more important than our differences. I wanted to take that idea to Israel. Bill thought I was out of my mind,” Frank says. “Akko really embraced us. Now Akko is my second home. It’s the ‘mixed city’ aspect – it’s on the sea; it’s a fascinating and historic place. This is rich soil for this type of program.”

A-CAT currently rents space in Akko’s industrial area. Since way back, when Strickland noticed that buildings for “rich people” have fountains, there has been one in every MBC center. In Akko, a gorgeous, floor-to-ceiling waterfall faces the entrance.

“This is about making a place for our students,” explains Frank. “We’re telling them ‘You deserve this.’”

The stunning interior was designed by Italian architect Michele Simeone. Much of the initial funding came from private donors. “Before, my job was to get the center going. Now my job is to sustain it,” Frank says. “The goal is to get as much local funding as possible. I’d like it to be an Israeli program.”

Akko city manager Ohad Segev, together with Mayor Shimon Lankri, immediately recognized the value of Frank’s proposal. “The municipality promotes the project with our blessings because of the two goals: to encourage weak populations and to promote connections between Jews and Arabs,” says Segev. He believes that Akko provides “the very best platform for this program. We have social difficulties, economic difficulties, but there’s no other mixed city in Israel where the relationships between Jews and Arabs are so good, and there’s almost no other city where the residents, as a community, are treated as an asset. And this is before A-CAT. A-CAT is an addition of power.”

About future funding Segev says, “The minute the correct programs are in place and it’s proven they work, then you can start raising money from government institutions.

That’s how it works: through philanthropic donors and the government offices that deal with these programs.”

A-CAT CEO Naim Obeid is a Christian and an Akko native. He had his own business as a sound engineer for almost 30 years. “I met Bill Strickland, asked a lot of questions, and was very impressed by the project,” he says. “I became a board member and when I was offered the position as CEO I decided to take it, though it meant leaving my business.”

“It’s working well – with all the challenges,” says Mr. Obeid. “No program opens that doesn’t have 50% Arabs and 50% Jews. No one should be a minority.

“They wouldn’t feel comfortable, especially the young people. Sometimes this is the first opportunity for them to be in the same room with each other.

(Continued on following page)
CAT is something special. It’s opened up a world I wasn’t familiar with,” says Ms. Cynkus, who invites the public to come visit. ”We’re a small team, very budget-oriented. Each of us does our own task and more.”

“We have 28 adult students – half Jews, half Arabs – in the tourism and hospitality course, done in conjunction with Raya Strauss’s ‘Treasures of the Galilee’ initiative and the University of Haifa’s Israel School of Tourism,” she explains. Classes meet in the evenings and include lectures and excursions.

“We’re the shell that facilitates the potential for people to enter the workforce and to open small businesses.” The training people receive here will enhance the Galilee’s already strong tourism economy.

“In July we’re opening a course in industrial quality control with Erez College in Shlomi. We’ll have 15 to 20 students. Some are workplace referrals,” says Cynkus. The center also plans to help with job-hunting.

Students aged 14 to 18 choose between 3-D printing and photography. Equipment is state-of-the-art. 3-D printing lab manager Sogood Zeini, an observant Muslim, is also youth program coordinator.

She studied industrial engineering and management at the Technion, worked in logistics, and knew almost nothing about 3-D printing when she started.

“I learned a lot from the suppliers and I watched a lot of You-Tube,” she says. But course content goes way beyond the technical. Jewish and Arab students are encouraged and, when necessary, pushed into interacting with each other.

“On a typical day, the kids arrive and eat a sandwich in the auditorium – Jews and Arabs at the same tables. They come into the classroom where we cover theoretical material and the task. Then they sketch on a piece of paper. From that they use a modeling program to make a computer sketch. This gets sent to the printer which “prints” in layers,” says Zeini.

“During class, we insert social activities. Printing is just a way to reach the goal. The goal is for Jews and Arabs to sit together, for kids to learn to use their time wisely, to work in groups, to create something, and to receive positive feedback.”

Each course consists of 12 two-hour sessions and each class is taught in both Hebrew and Arabic. Fluent in both languages, Zeini teaches with a Jewish assistant. “What is important is that when I speak in Hebrew, everyone listens. When I speak in Arabic, everyone listens.”

In May, the first graduation ceremony took place with 57 young alumni. Some 120 teenagers are currently enrolled in the second round. “We don’t always notice the significance of what we’re doing here because we see it every day,” says Zeini. “But I know we’re doing something. I get calls all the time from students asking to volunteer here.”

According to Segev, A-CAT will be a flagship project for the State of Israel. “Every city has vulnerable residents and Israel is a mixed country,” he says. “We need to live together, to respect each other, to know one another – and to not be afraid. In the end, we have no other alternative. So, for that, it’s always good to be the pioneer.”

Editor’s note: “This article originally appeared in The Jerusalem Post’s Metro section on July 14, 2017. The Journal expresses its thanks to the Post for allowing us to reprint this story.

Marina Ratner, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics

Marina Ratner passed away on July 7, 2017, at her home in El Cerrito, California. Professor Ratner was educated in Moscow, obtained her doctoral degree at the Moscow State University in 1969 under the direction of Yakov Sinai.

In 1971, Prof. Ratner immigrated to Israel where she was on the faculty at Hebrew University for four years before moving to the United States and joining the mathematics faculty at Berkeley in 1975. According to the New York Times, Dr. Ratner’s daughter, Anna Ratner, said her mother “really thrived” at Berkeley because “that’s when her career developed.”

Her work was mainly in ergodic theory and its connections with other parts of mathematics, and earned many honors, including the Ostrowski prize and the John J. Carty Award.

She was a plenary speaker at the International Congress of Mathematicians and a member of the National

(JTA) Margaret Bergmann Lambert, a high jumper who was barred from the 1936 Berlin Olympics because she was Jewish, died in New York at 103.

Her niece, Doris Bergman, confirmed that Lambert died Tuesday, The New York Times reported.

In June 1936, just a month before the Olympics, Lambert, then a German citizen known as Gretel Bergmann, won a meet against some of the best German high jumpers with a leap of 5 feet, 3 inches — a height tying a German record and good enough to win the gold medal.

Margarethe Minnie Bergmann was born April 12, 1914, in the small town of Laupheim, in southwest Germany, about 65 miles from the Swiss border. She excelled in the shot put, the discus and other events as well as the high jump.

“I was ‘The Great Jewish Hope,’” she often said.

With anti-Semitism on the rise in Germany — she recalled signs in shops declaring “No dogs or Jews allowed” — Bergmann left home at 19 and moved to England, where she won the British high-jump championship in 1935. But when the Nazis pressured her father to bring her home, she returned to Germany to seek a position on the Olympic team.

The Nazis did this to deflect allegations that they were allowing their party’s race theories and policies to compromise Olympic principles, making Germany unsuitable to host the games.

But shortly after her record-setting performance at the meet in Stuttgart, at Adolf Hitler Stadium, she received a letter from Nazi officials informing her that she had not qualified.

“Looking back on your recent performances,” the letter said, “you could not possibly have expected to be chosen for the team.” Her accomplishment was removed from the record books.

Hurt and angry, she turned down the officials’ offer of a standing-room ticket “free of charge” for the Olympics track and field events. Travel expenses and hotel accommodations were not included in the offer.

“I never replied,” she said.

In 1937, Gretel Bergmann was able to obtain papers that allowed her to immigrate to the United States. She landed in New York City, where she worked as a masseuse and housemaid, and later as a physical therapist, according to the Times. In 1938, she married a fellow German refugee, Bruno Lambert, who was a sprinter. He died in 2013.

Lambert continued to compete in track and field events, but for only a few more years. She won the U.S. women’s high jump and shot put championships in 1937 and the high jump again in 1938. She was preparing to try out for the 1940 Olympic team when war broke out in Europe, after which she focused her attention on trying to get her parents out of Germany, which she was ultimately able to do.

She is survived by two sons, Glenn and Gary, two grandchildren and a great-grandson.

In Memorium

Margaret Bergmann Lambert, a high jumper who was banned from the 1936 Berlin Olympics, died in New York at 103.

(Continued on page 24)
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Dr. Marina Ratner (continued from p. 23)

Academy of Sciences. She was also an outstanding and beloved teacher and cared deeply about mathematics education.

She was also awarded the Donald Sterling Noyce Prize for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching in 2004.

A quote from her biography at the MacTutor History of Mathematics archive reflects her love of mathematics and her dedication to her students: “For me mathematics is a part of Nature's beauty and I am grateful for being able to see it. Whatever mathematics I happen to teach, I love to communicate its beauty to my students.”

“It seemed like everybody really wanted to take her class. She tried really hard to explain things to the students and really cared for their understanding,” Anna Ratner said.

Dr. Ratner is survived by daughter Anna Ratner, son-in-law Charles Cox, grandchildren Bryan and Maya, and nephews Michael Bialy, a professor of mathematics at Tel Aviv University, and Alex Bialy.

The funeral was held on Tuesday, July 18 at the Home of Eternity Cemetery in Oakland, CA. Professor of mathematics at Penn State University.

Marty Sklar: Disney ‘Imagineer’

Marty Sklar, who served 54 years as an “Imagineer” for the Walt Disney Co. and led the creative team behind the company’s theme parks, attractions and resorts, has died.

The company announced his death in Los Angeles Thursday night. He was 83.

Sklar served as principal creative executive of Walt Disney Imagineering, turning the company founder's ideas into reality.

"Everything about Marty was legendary — his achievements, his spirit, his career," Disney CEO Robert Iger said in a statement. "He embodied the very best of Disney, from his bold originality to his joyful optimism and relentless drive for excellence. He was also a powerful connection to Walt himself. No one was more passionate about Disney than Marty, and we'll miss his enthusiasm, his grace, and his indomitable spirit."

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After the book was published, "Walt was from the Midwest, he wasn't used to being around Jews. And then he came out here, [where] most of the people in the entertainment business were Jews, so he was the guy out in the cornfield; he was different, and I think that's where it came from. It never came from anything he said. Not ever."

In his final years at Disney, Sklar served as a company "ambassador," teaching a list of Disney principles called "Mickey's Commandments" that he had distilled from his time with the company founder. The list included "Know your audience" and "Take time to teach — mentors are mensches."

"That was what I learned: It's the details that make the Disney parks work, that attention to detail," Sklar told the Jewish Journal. "And you have to make it a complete story, which means striving to be accurate about whatever story you're telling, down to the smallest details."

Sklar is survived by his wife of 60 years, Leah; son Howard and his wife, Katriina Koski-Sklar; grandchildren Gabriel and Hannah; daughter Leslie; and grandchildren Rachel and Jacob.