
Fredi Bleeker Franks, vice president of development and special projects for Women of Reform Judaism, presents to Sally Blau, president of Rodef Sholom’s Sisterhood, its WRJ charter. Although at least one Rodef Sholom Sisterhood member was among the 156 delegates representing 52 congregational women’s groups which met in Cincinnati, OH, on January 21, 1913, to organize the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, Rodef’s Sisterhood finally received its charter. Ms. Blau is a member of the national WRJ board of directors. See more on page 7.

Malagasy women getting ready to immerse in the river before converting to Judaism, near Antananarivo, Madagascar. See story on page 17.
Commentary

Boston’s JCRC speaks for many Jews

By Jeremy Burton, executive director, and Adam Suttin, president Jewish Community Relations Council (Boston)

We join with millions of Americans, President Obama, and Secretary Clinton in congratulating President-Elect Donald Trump upon his election yesterday.

As Civil Rights activist and Congressman John Lewis has stated, “The right to vote is precious, almost sacred” and confidence in the electoral process is a bedrock principle for our constitutional democracy.

As our nation prepares for the peaceful transition of executive power, we hope that our new President will lead with wisdom and a commitment to the welfare of all who live in our great nation. We affirm our commitment to working with the elected and appointed officials of our government to advance and protect the values we cherish and that define our nation.

Now we are called to begin the difficult work of healing the wounds that threaten to pull our nation asunder, and to remain vigilant in promoting our nation’s commitment to civil liberties, equality under the law, and social justice, the mighty pillars on which our nation stands.

We are reminded of the words of President Abraham Lincoln in his first inaugural address:

“We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.”

The organized Jewish community of Boston echoes those words and affirms our commitment to stand together with those who feel vulnerable and frightened, ignored and oppressed, powerless and speechless. It is essential that we recognize our common humanity and resist the urge to turn away from each other so that we can move forward together.

Since its founding, the United States has aspired to be a force for stability and good throughout the world, even while struggling against contradictory forces within our own borders. It is imperative that we continue to be a beacon of hope for people around the globe; for those seeking a better life for their families or to be a welcoming sanctuary from oppression and bigotry. These values have allowed the Jewish community to live and thrive in the United States, to make a home, to raise families, and to dream

(Continued on page 4)

A ‘Trump effect for Europe’s far right?

By Cnaan Liphshiz

JTA) — European far-right politicians were quick to hold up Donald Trump’s victory in the U.S. presidential election as a harbinger of their own impending triumphs.

Marine Le Pen, head of France’s far-right party, said that what Europeans call “the Trump effect” — that is, right-wing nationalism fueled by anger toward political elites and mistrust of immigration — heralds the upset she is seeking in her own country’s presidential elections in May. She called Trump’s election “good news” for France.

Geert Wilders, a far-right Dutch politician whose party is leading polls ahead of March’s general elections, called Trump’s victory a “revolution” that will come to the Netherlands.

And Norbert Hofer, the far-right candidate many believe will win Austria’s Dec. 4 presidential election, cited Trump’s victory in predicting his own.

But nearly two weeks after Trump’s success, little evidence suggests that these statements are more than posturing by career politicians eager to rebrand themselves as change-makers despite the fact that they are viewed, even by many of their supporters, as obsolete or deeply compromised.

In Le Pen’s case, polls conducted before and after Trump’s victory project that she will receive about 25 percent of the vote. And while this would certainly be a new record for her National Front party, it is difficult to tie such a result to Trump’s victory.

Indeed, there is reason to believe that Le Pen’s solidarity with Trump is a double-edged sword. In an Odoxa poll conducted among 1,004 French adults a day after Trump was elected, 76 percent of respondents said they lamented his election. Even among National Front voters, the poll found only 54 percent supported him.

In the Netherlands and Austria, Trump’s election also revealed no discernible shift in polls. Wilders’ party, which is running neck and neck with the center-right ruling party, dropped by one point after Trump’s victory in one poll (I&O Research), remained unchanged in another (Politieke Barometer) and rose by one point in a third poll (Maurice de Hond.)

As for Hofer, Wilders’ counterpart in Austria, he rose by one point in polls since Trump’s election, remaining within the margin of error in a race pollsters have said is too close to call.

The polls further show no correlation between the popularity of far-right parties like National Front and the “Brexit” referendum of last June, when British voters supported leaving the European Union.

Undoubtedly, there are some similarities between the message of Europe’s

(Continued on page 20)

Rabbi under the chuppah boost Jewish engagement in intermarried homes

By Leonard Saxe and Fern Chertok

WALTHAM, Mass. (JTA) — At a recent summit meeting held at the National Museum of American Jewish History, several hundred communal professionals, rabbis, scholars, philanthropists and young intermarried couples gathered to discuss engagement of interfaith families in Jewish life.

There is widespread communal agreement that intermarriage has reshaped the landscape of American Jewish life, but a lack of consensus regarding how best to respond to this development. At the forefront of the controversy has been rabbinic officiation at intermarriage ceremonies.

For some, the debate over whether a rabbi or cantor should conduct an interfaith wedding hinges on theological questions. But for many the debate is also about the impact that rabbinic officiation might have on the Jewish character of the homes and families these couples create. Contrary to the long-held assumption that choosing a Jewish officiant is a symbolic, not a substantive act, we now have strong evidence of the association between rabbinic officiation at intermarriages and the couples’ subsequent involvement in Jewish life.

Our new report, “Under the Chuppah: Rabbinic Officiation and Intermarriage,” explores the trajectories of Jewish engagement of a large group of young adult Jews married to Jewish and non-Jewish spouses. As part of a long-term follow-up study of 2001-2009 applicants to Birthright Israel, we surveyed 1,200 married young adults. We explored differences among three groups of couples: inmarried couples, intermarried couples who had a sole Jewish clergy officiant (i.e., no non-Jewish co-officiant) and intermarried couples who married under other auspices such as a justice of the peace, friend or family member.

The data are unequivocal that intermarried couples whose weddings were officiated by Jewish clergy as the only officiant are more highly engaged in Jewish life than other intermarried couples. Among the intermarried couples married by a rabbi or cantor, the overwhelming majority (85 percent) of those who now have children reported that the religion in which their children are being raised is Judaism.

This is in stark contrast to the inter-

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## What’s in this month’s *Jewish Journal*?

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### Candle-Lighting Times

**Shabbat**
- December 2: 4:37 p.m.
- December 9: 4:36 p.m.
- December 16: 4:37 p.m.
- December 23: 4:41 p.m.
- December 30: 4:45 p.m.

**Hanukkah**
- December 24: First candle (after Havdallah)
- December 25: Second candle
- December 26: Third candle
- December 27: Fourth candle
- December 28: Fifth candle
- December 29: Sixth candle
- December 30: Seventh candle (before lighting Shabbat candles)
- December 31: Eighth candle

*The staff of the Jewish Journal wishes its readers a bright and beautiful Hanukkah!*

## About the Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine

**Publisher:** Andrew L. Lipkin  
**Editor:** Patricia R. Kelvin, Ph.D., APR  
**Advertising Director:** Phyllis Friedman  
**Office:** Kathy Schell

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**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.*

**Dec. 15 is the deadline for articles and ads for the Jan. 2017 issue.**
One of the best ways to fight terrorism in Israel is to help save its victims.

With Israelis grappling with nearly daily acts of terrorism, you can help ensure that those injured don’t join the list of those killed. Your support of Magen David Adom, Israel’s national EMS service, provides the equipment, supplies, and on-going training to keep MDA the preeminent mass-casualty medical response organization in the world. Your donation saves lives.

YAJF creates new position for implementation/manager planner

Following a recommendation from the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation’s 2016 Strategic Plan, the YAJF has created a new position — that of Implementation Manager/Planner — who will work closely with the Federation and its constituent agencies; between the Federation and area synagogues; and between the Federation and other general community organizations, institutions, and businesses.

The planner will be a creative and dynamic leader who will create and staff various task forces and committees around strategies emerging from the 2016 Plan:

- Addressing the Federation’s role as the primary unifying force for the regional Jewish community;
- Fostering the Federation’s imperative to engage with the general community locally and in Israel;
- Establishing and maintaining excellence in governance for and cooperation between the Federation and its agencies;
- Recognizing and addressing, along with various task forces and committees, emerging needs within the Jewish and general communities;
- Working on initiatives to attract Jews to the region.

Further, the planner will develop co-operative relationships with professionals and lay persons at the Federation and its agencies, and with synagogues and community organizations.

Those interested in this new position, which will report to the Federation’s executive vice president, should have at least eight to 10 years relevant work experience; knowledge of the Jewish federated system and of Jewish communal leadership; a bachelor’s degree, but preferably a master's degree; and highly effective writing and oral communications skills.

The individual must be highly organized, self-motivated, positive and outgoing; demonstrate both excellent attention to detail and the ability to see the “big picture”; and to think strategically, transforming strategy into action.

She or he must have proven experience with implementing successful large scale initiatives.

For further information or to apply, contact Humanresources@jewishyoungstown.org.

JCRC commentary (continued from page 2)

of a better future. That dream and our commitment to it is an essential element of the social contract that binds our nation together.

We will continue to work to welcome the immigrant, to defend the civil liberties of every American, and to protect the poor, the defenseless and the needy. We will continue to work for a nation that is steadfast with its allies and resolute in its responsibilities around the world.

We must not ignore Anti-Semitism, racism, Islamophobia and other forms of bigotry that have been on display throughout the course of the election and its immediate aftermath. We call upon President-elect Trump and all of our leaders to disavow this rhetoric and strongly reject the nationalistic sentiments that have been unleashed.

Finally, at a time when so many in our community here in Boston feel great despair, we are reminded of the words of our late great Senator Edward Kennedy at a moment of his own personal loss:

“The work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives and the dream shall never die.”

Editor’s note: The Jewish response to the election, range from the outrage at President-elect Trump’s cabinet nominees, who are outspoken in their opposition to many American Jewish ideals, to the enthusiasm of Jewish Republicans, who see in the new administration a better approach to business and trade and greater opposition to the Iran nuclear agreement, and greater support for Israel.

This conciliatory commentary from the JCRC of Boston reflects the view of many in Jewish communities across the country.
Now in the Thomases Gallery at the JCC

BETSEY GRAVATT
1999

Works of Betsey Gravatt are on display in the Thomases Family Endowment of the YAJF Gallery until Dec. 21.

Ms. Gravatt is a painter, sculptor, and printmaker based in North Texas. She received her BFA in studio art, with a concentration in drawing and painting, from the University of North Texas. In August of this year, she began undertaking her MFA at Texas Woman’s University.

Ms. Gravatt has participated in group shows such as the Annual Voertman’s Competition, where her piece received the 55th Annual Voertman’s Award, and Art in the Metroplex at the Fort Worth Community Art Center, where her painting was awarded the Cindi and Mike Holt Award.

Recently, she has been giving lectures at Texas high schools on how emerging artists can promote and sustain themselves in the art world.

In her artist’s statement Ms. Gravatt says, “In my sculptures and paintings I tend to use over the top, bright colors that I associate with happy memories, as well as toys or cartoons I liked as a child.

“My paintings are exploratory rather than didactic, and one of my goals is to create another reality for myself and my viewers to explore, that appears to be friendly and playful, but upon further investigation can start to seem ambiguous or unsettling.”

Two new Jewish-themed books worth a look

By Patricia R. Kelvin, Journal Editor

Death Steals a Holy Book debuted in July, but the paperback and Kindle versions are new, which makes it an ideal Jewish Book Month/Hanukkah gift.

I’d recommend it for Jewish teen mystery fans home on winter break or older mystery buffs who need a light detective story to read on planes, trains, or the time waiting at airports and stations.

Detectives Dan and Rivka Sherman, the alter-egos of authors Rosemary and Larry Mild, are Jewish bookstore owners who come into possession of a rare Menorat ha-maor.

The required murder, various — and somewhat convoluted — plot twists, and the hint or a true story, make this an enjoyable way to spend a few hours.

Dreidels on the Brain is being marketed for ages 10 and up, but perhaps because I, too, grew up in Southern California (though a few years before the author), I found the story of 12-year-old boy who is looking for Hanukkah miracles in Temple City, CA, a charming recollection of the days when a kid in Los Angeles could be the only Jew in his school and whose family is blessed — or cursed — to light the menorah in front of the whole school.

Author Ben Izzy is a professional storyteller, who has traveled the world and performed in 35 countries. To me, Dreidels on the Brain would be an ideal story to read to your children or grandchildren every night of Hanukkah.

Editor’s note: The Journal frequently receives books of Jewish interest from their publishers. There is rarely enough space to review even some of them adequately. These two struck me as worth a little notice.
Christmakah Musings

By Francie Yarwood
Co-President, Congregation Ohev Tzedek

As I walked into a store the other day, I saw that they already had Christmas decorations up. Since school had just started and we hadn’t even gotten through the High Holy days, this was a little bit of a shocker.

Then a little bit of panic ran through me. Panic of the “holiday” season. A hundred thoughts ran through my mind. Where am I going to get enough Chanukah gelt for my family of seven (my in-laws always participate)? How many Chanukah candles for my family? Where am I going to get enough Chanukah for my family? How am I going to get a lot of other presents from my children’s classes to latkes, donuts, gelt, and a game of dreidel.

Like many of us in the community, I have a blended family. I was raised in a Conservative Jewish household, and my husband was raised in a Christian household. I was raised in a household where I was taught that you buy household. I was raised in a house where I was taught that you buy presents being exchanged during the Christmas season. Even after twenty-some years of being with my husband and being so welcomed by his parents, Christmas is still foreign to me. So the thought rises of how many Chanukah presents do I get my children? Not really a true tradition of the holiday, but an American tradition since it falls so close to Christmas. A lot of stress for a fun time of year.

As I drove home, I remembered when RJ was little. I had gotten him a remote control car for Chanukah. He was so excited to get eight presents, one for each night. Little did he know that Ron and I had already agreed that we would do one Chanukah present since he was going to get a lot of other presents from his grandparents. Not wanting to disappoint him, I took apart the car and gave him a different part each night, so on the final night he could enjoy his present. That memory made me remember how joyous and fun the holiday is.

OH! The school! My school district has a total of three Jewish students; all three are my children. They teach Christmas around the world. They try as hard as they can to teach about Kwanza and Chanukah. So, every year since RJ was in kindergarten, I go into the school for any teacher that asks (especially the teachers that have my children) and try to explain what Chanukah is: what the story is, how we celebrate, and what a chanukiah is. Of course, I have to treat my children’s classes to latkes, donuts, gelt, and a game of dreidel.

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Since we do not take ourselves very seriously, we have had many jokes through the years about celebrating both holidays. There was a joke in my town for a few years that if you want to see a lot of Christmas lights go to the Jews’ house. (We live in a small town – everyone knows everyone and where they live.) We used to have a giant blow-up dreidel among the Christmas lights. My kids had a small blue fake Christmas tree that they would decorate with silver ornaments. They, of course, called it their Chanukah bush, so Hanukkah Harry would know where to leave their gifts.

Once I got home, I looked at the calendar and what a wonderful surprise! For the first time in many years, the entire holiday of Chanukah falls during “winter break.” No homework, no Christmas concerts at the school they need to participate in, no practices. NO WORRIES. So I look forward to lighting our candles, playing dreidel, and celebrating at our Temple Chanukah party. But most of all I look forward to celebrating the time with my family.
Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas: Do they have anything in common?

By Rabbi Franklin Muller
Congregation Rodef Sholom

I’m sure you will all remember three years ago when the first night of Hanukkah coincided with the eve of Thanksgiving. The date was Wednesday, Nov. 27, 2013.

The menorah was transformed into the “menurkey” by a few savvy entrepreneurs, and lo and behold Jews had a new ritual object to celebrate the Festival of Lights. I still have my menurkey, although the plaster of Paris from which it was made broke in half some time ago.

Hanukkah falling so early on the secular calendar had not occurred since 1888, so it was indeed a rare phenomenon, what I referred to back then as the religious equivalent of Haley’s Comet.

This year Hanukkah comes very late. The first candle of the holiday will be lit on Christmas Eve, something that has occurred only three other times going back to 1900, in the years 1978, 1940 and 1902.

So if Hanukkah can begin as early as the eve of Thanksgiving or as late as the day after Christmas, just for arguments sake, is there any comparison we can make between the three holidays? Not hardly, you might think, given the fact that Thanksgiving is a major secular American celebration, Hanukkah is a Jewish religious festival, albeit a minor one halachically speaking, and Christmas is a holy commemoration honoring the birth of the Christian savior.

The three seem so completely different in origin, historical development and modern-day observance. What could they possibly have in common?

I will admit that there are some similarities between Hanukkah and Christmas. Both occur on the 25th day of the month, either December or Kislev on the Jewish calendar. Also, both involve the giving of gifts.

In this connection, I must add that the practice of Jews giving presents on each of the eight nights of Hanukkah has a very weak basis in our tradition. The only time during the year when we Jews are mandated to give gifts is on Purim, not on Hanukkah. Moreover, we are required to send portions of food, primarily baked goods, to at least two poor people. In short, designating Hanukkah as a sort of Jewish Christmas (Continued on page 11)

Report from the WRJ Central District Convention

The Women of Reform Judaism Central District convention was held in Louisville, KY on Nov. 3-6. It was an honor for me to represent our congregation’s Sisterhood as your president and as a national board member. The central district includes sisterhoods in Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee and West Virginia.

The weekend was filled with friendships, laughter, spirituality, learning and conversations. We spent time together as Reform Jewish women studying Torah, strengthening our commitment to Reform Jewish values, and increasing our knowledge about WRJ, Central District, and Sisterhood.

On top of all this, we had time to network and share ideas about our sisterhoods, drawing strength and support from one another as we continue to grow “Stronger Together.” During the Kiddush lunch Saturday, we were privileged to hear Tori Murden McClure, the president of Louisville’s Spalding University and the first women and first American to row solo across the Atlantic Ocean.

Those experiences are shared in her book A Pearl in The Storm: How I Found My Heart in the Middle of the Ocean. I highly recommend the book; it is filled with individual courage and commitment.

Rabbi Sheryl Katzman and Galya Greenberg spoke on “Mindfulness/Conscious Living,” a workshop sponsored by “Chai Mitzvah — Grow Your Judaism.” Their thoughts viewed the world through the lens of Abraham Joshua Heschel who wrote, “The Every day Occurrences in G-d’s creation are miraculous. But we humans who see the sun rise and set everyday: we have lost our sense of awe.”

Drawing from Heschel, we must try to take the moments of Amazement, and be more Mindful/Conscious of our lives. The lyrics of Colton Dixon’s song “Through all of it” prompt me to ask, Have I given more than I’ve taken or taken more than I’ve given?

With love and Sisterhood,
Your Sisterhood President
Sally Blau

The Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine 7
Joint Ohev Tzedek & El Emeth Hanukkah Party!

Hosted by Ohev Tzedek

Thursday, December 29
6:00-9:00 p.m.
Sixth Night of Hanukkah

The entire community is invited to attend the celebration in the Ohev Tzedek Social Hall (RSVP necessary).

6:00 – Candle lighting and sing-along (please bring your own menorah and candles)

6:45 – Dinner with homemade latkes, salad bar, and ice cream bar

7:30 – Family-friendly dancing and lessons with Lyndall McPhail

Finally, let the games begin! Seventh Annual World Series of Dreidel – games, prizes, and family fun for all!

R.S.V.P. to Ohev Tzedek office by Tuesday, Dec. 20. Call 330.758.2321 or email office@ohevtzedek.org.

Ohev Tzedek

Torah Study for Christians

Rabbi Oresky and Father Balasko will continue to lead their monthly Torah Studies for Christians program on Wednesday, Dec. 21 at Villa Maria from 1-2:30 pm. This month’s topic is Hanukkah.

Read Hebrew America

Ohev Tzedek-Shaarei Torah will be participating in the NJOP Read Hebrew America program on Sunday, Dec. 4 from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. with the intention of furthering our appreciation and knowledge of Hebrew, the most important Jewish language.

We can accommodate beginning to intermediate students and will have additional teachers on hand to help. Please let us know your needs so we can better tailor the class to you.

The class is free, but a reservation to the Ohev Tzedek office (office@ohevtzedek.org or 330.758.2321) is required.

A typical Jewish Christmas


We will be honoring Gene Wilder this year, showing Silver Streak and The Producers beginning at 10 a.m. in the OT social hall.

Stick around for a special lunch of house-made Chinese food, prepared by our own Chef Art Einzig.

Movie admission is free, but a fee will be charged to cover our costs for the meal (menu and price TBD). R.S.V.P. to the office by Monday, Dec. 19.

Services

Morning Minyan services are held each Thursday at 7:30 am.

Shabbat services are held every Saturday at 9:45 am. Rabbi Saul leads a Torah study session after each service.

Adult Education

Rabbi Oresky’s proposed adult education courses for winter 2016-17 are listed below. Please contact the Ohev Tzedek office if you are interested in these classes, or to suggest ones that you would like to see.

Jewish Composers from Biblical to Classical to Pop – A treat for the mind and the ears: we will learn about Jewish

(Continued on page 14)
Whatever happened to 2016?

By MaryLou Finesilver

I can’t seem to get a handle on this time thing. It flashed by me like a streak of lightning.

Wasn’t yesterday January 2016? What happened to all the other months? I remember some of them, I think. I know in February I flew with my niece Shelly and my nephew, her husband David, to Florida for a three-day trip. Wonderful!

I sort of remember Pesach: April, I think. I know we had Seder here the first night then went to Temple the second night for the congregational Seder. Most enjoyable. The fourth of July came and went, and of course, the big event of the year was Aug. 11, 2016 when Marshall and Candy moved to town. Wow! I still can’t believe it. I’m afraid I will blink, and it will all be a dream.

Then the High Holidays and we were gifted with Katie’s being with us; we all attended the Kol Nidre dinner at Temple. Stuff dreams are made of. I know Alvin would have been thrilled to have our family together.

We just left November, and I would love to tell you how amazing our Thanksgiving was with Shelly and David and their three kids, and maybe Rachel’s boyfriend Matt. I am sure it was delightful when I think that all my kids are going to be with us, except Katie, of course. She can’t quite fly here from her home in Hawaii. But she will be with us in spirit of course.

These Thanksgiving dinners have been happening for at least 15 or 16 years. I remember the first one we attended. Al’s sister Sylvia and her husband Harry drove up with us. I think we refused a couple of times because we always wanted to be home for Thanksgiving. How else do you get to have leftovers and crash after dinner because we ate too darn much? I’m sure you know the feeling. Eventually we learned to cook our own leftovers for Friday. The Friday cut-up turkey may not have been as succulent as the actual ones from Solon, but not bad.

We have two turkeys in Solon, one deep fried and the other roasted. It is almost a contest which is better, but it always comes up with a tie. Yum! Besides stuffing, pumpkin pie, macaroni and cheese, and “Not your mother’s banana pudding,” we have “pink sauce.”

Now you may well ask, what is “pink sauce”? It all started with Rabbi and Fay Meyer and their Passover cookbook and cooking classes. It is a sauce with red horseradish, chopped green onion, and mayo to start. We have had this at our Passover Seder for years, and then the demand came to have it for Rosh Hashanah dinner, and then Thanksgiving. I started out making it, but the job has been taken over by Beth, who does a great job. Sound interesting? Let me know, and we will share the entire recipe. This is a beautiful holiday and I am always grateful to be together with my wonderful family.

Now we will get ready for Hanukkah at home. Not sure what the plans are, but there is still time for making plans, I think. I usually buy my family calendars and calendars for the Temple.”

(Continued on p. 14)
OMAHA, Neb. — Berkshire Hathaway Chairman and CEO Warren Buffett welcomed 43 U.S. Israel bond investors to Omaha recently, each of whom made a minimum $1 million new investment to participate in an exclusive evening with the famed “oracle of Omaha.”

The evening opened with a tribute video from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who said, “Warren is one of the most brilliant and successful investors of our time. He knows a good investment when he sees it. That’s why he invests in Israel.”

Mr. Buffett, who made the Israeli company Iscar his first overseas acquisition, spoke warmly of the Jewish state, calling it “a remarkable country.” He stressed that “The United States and Israel have a common destiny,” saying, “If you are looking for brains, energy and dynamism in the Middle East, Israel is the only place you need to go.”

Mr. Buffett also spoke positively of investing in Israel bonds, calling the investments “a terrific tribute to the country,” He said he would invest $5 million in Israel bonds in his personal portfolio if participants at the event matched his investment. In doing so, Mr. Buffett said, “I wanted — through the last-minute challenge — to set the bar even higher for future events.”

He added, “You can tell prospective investors that I would have taken a perpetual bond if you had offered one. I believe Israel is going to be around forever.”

As a result, Israel bond sales directly attributable to the event totaled $60 million. In addition to Buffett’s $5 million investment, Berkshire Hathaway’s portfolio has included Israel bonds since its acquisition of GUARD Insurance in 2012, now known as Berkshire Hathaway GUARD Insurance Companies.

The evening was the result of an April meeting held in Omaha between Mr. Buffett and then-Bonds President and CEO Izzy Tapoohi, Vice President for Sales Stuart Garawitz, and Pennsylvania Region Executive Director Harold Marcus. In commenting on the meeting, Mr. Buffett said, “I learned quite a bit more about the Bonds program and said I’d love to do (the event).”

In expressing appreciation to Mr. Buffett, new Israel Bonds President and CEO Israel Maimon said, “This event tells me that Warren Buffett, famed for his investment expertise, continues to view Israel as a sure bet.”

The evening was hosted by Henry Davis, president and CEO of Greater Omaha Packing.

Thomas A. Lockshin is executive director of the regional office located in Cleveland.

Israel bonds are debt securities issued by the government of Israel. Israel Bonds is also the commonly known name of Development Corporation for Israel (DCI), which underwrites the bonds in the United States. Capital provided through the sale of Israel bonds has helped strengthen every aspect of Israel’s economy, enabling the development of key national infrastructure. Today, expanded ports and transportation networks help facilitate the shipment of “Made in Israel” technology around the world, enhancing national export growth. Capital accrued through the sale of Israel bonds has enabled cutting-edge innovation that saves lives and changes the world every day.
Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, and Christmas (continued from p. 7)

greatly misses the mark. In addition, both Hanukkah and Christmas are holidays of light. Both are probably based on an even older winter light festival before Judaism and Christianity even began. When the days became short, and the nights got long, ancient peoples feared that darkness would overtake them permanently. Therefore, they lit bonfires and torches to assure themselves that there would always be light in their midst.

Hanukkah and Christmas probably grew out of a common pagan celebration of light. Of course we Jews have the menorah, and in the Christian community, light is the dominant feature of the Advent wreath, which is kindled weekly for the month before Christmas, as well as the Christmas tree.

Yet beneath these superficial similarities, the minor Jewish holiday of Hanukkah and the major Christian holiday of Christmas have very little in common. They celebrate two entirely different historical events. Hanukkah marks a triumph over religious persecution, while Christmas recalls, as I mentioned, the birth of the Christian savior.

There is, however, a strong link between Hanukkah and Thanksgiving. First of all, the ideal of giving thanks is bound up in our very name as a people. The word “Jew” comes from a Hebrew root, which means “to render thanks”. The first action we are obligated to perform upon awakening each morning is thanking God for restoring our soul to us. In our traditional Jewish liturgy, we thank God for our bountiful benefits three times each day.

In addition, traditional Jews offer 100 blessings every day. The purpose of this mandate is to sensitize us to the wonders of the world which we would otherwise take for granted, like seeing a rainbow, tasting a new fruit in season, or reuniting with a long-lost friend. In other words, we must discover the extraordinary in the ordinary. Being grateful to God, in short, is central to our identity as Jews. Thanksgiving, by its very name, compels us to be thankful.

But there is also a second reason for tying Hanukkah so closely to Thanksgiving. Both holidays celebrate the efforts of religious groups to preserve their spiritual identity. Thanksgiving recalls the Pilgrims, who came to these shores in revolt against the Church of England. This state church persecuted them for refusing to subscribe to the doctrines of the dominant Anglican faith. The Pilgrims had to leave England in order to carry on their religious traditions as they believed.

Similarly, the Maccabees in Palestine valiantly fought against the paganism that their Syrian Greek overlords tried to impose on them. Antiochus sent his soldiers to Jerusalem to convert the Holy Temple into a pagan shrine and to outlaw the practice of Judaism. Antiochus set up altars and idols throughout Judea. He forbade Jews to follow their sacred traditions, like Shabbat, circumcision and the dietary laws. He insisted that the Jews of Palestine bow down and sacrifices to these idols. The Syrian Greeks took the Torah, spattered it with pigs’ blood, and then burned it.

Essentially, Antiochus gave the Jews a choice: either convert to Greek idolatry or die. Most Jews went along with Antiochus. However, a minority, known as the Maccabees, fought against the Syrian Greeks and rescued the Holy Land from idolatry. Like the Pilgrims, the Maccabees were religious non-conformists. Both resisted the coercion of the leaders of the dominant culture and insisted on worshiping God as they believed to be right.

It would be a mistake, however, to call Hanukkah and Thanksgiving holidays of religious freedom. The Maccabees fought for the right of the Jewish community to practice Judaism according to the dictates of the Torah. However, they would not tolerate non-observant Jews within their community. The Maccabees were zealots. They would not allow any Jew within their group to violate Jewish law.

Similarly, the Pilgrims, also known as the Puritans, wanted rights only for their community, not for individuals within the community. They were intolerant of any member of their community whose beliefs or practices were deviant. They enforced a rigid observance of Sunday as the Sabbath. They originated the Blue Laws.

They also created a sexually repressive society. They even conducted the Salem witchcraft trials to deal harshly with those whom they considered sinners. It was only with the Enlightenment 200 years ago that the notion of individual religious freedom, as we understand it today, emerged. The idea that one could worship any God that he or she pleases, or not believe in any God at all, would have been foreign both to the Maccabees and the Pilgrims or Puritans.

Thus, we must conclude that both Hanukkah and Thanksgiving are not holidays of religious freedom, as we so often have been taught. They are, rather, holidays of religious survival. Both celebrate the stubborn refusal of religious groups to submit to the ways of the majority. Both represent the victory of spiritual integrity and continuity in a world hostile to their messages.

Darlene and I both wish all of you a very happy Hanukkah.
Darlene’s Destinations
Into The Woods
The beloved re-imagining of fairy tales centers on a childless Baker and his wife, who embark on a quest to find the four items required to break a witch’s spell. The new production ditches the original orchestrations for a single piano, with the performers chiming in with everything from a bassoon to a waterphone.

Price includes orchestra seat, transportation and tip for bus driver. Dinner on your own.
Date: Sunday, Jan. 29, 2017
Leave JCC: 11:00 a.m. • Return: 7:30 p.m.
Cost: $75/Member $85/Non Member

Movie and Lunch Bunch
The Time Traveler’s Wife
Lose yourself in timeless love with this gloriously romantic story of the journey of two hearts. Artist Clare Abshire shares a deep emotional bond with Henry De Tamble, a handsome librarian who travels involuntarily through time. Knowing they can be separated without warning, Clare and Henry treasure the moments they have together. The Time Traveler's Wife is a 2009 American romantic drama film based on Audrey Niffenegger’s 2003 novel of the same name.

Price includes movie and light lunch.
Date: Wednesday, Dec. 7 • Time: Noon-2 p.m.
Location: Multi-Purpose Room • $5/Member $7/Non Member
$10 after Dec. 5

PJ Library
This is a Jewish engagement program implemented on a local level throughout North America. Through the program, we mail free, high quality Jewish children’s literature and music to families every month.

For more on Youth Programming, contact Emily Collins 330-746-3250 Ext. 152 or Ecollins@jccyoungstown.org

For more on Shlichim programming, or to make reservations for any of the programs, contact Gon Erez: 330-746-3250 ext. 195 or gerez@jewishyoungstown.org

The Secret Lost Tribes of Israel
Join us for an amazing journey with an exciting multimedia presentation entitled, “One nation, many faces — Jewish demography and destiny.” Our presenter, Laura Ben-David, will discuss her work with “lost” and “hidden” Jewish communities in some of the most far flung spots on the globe. Laura Ben-David is the director of marketing and new-media in “Shavei Israel”- an organization that aims to help descendants of Jews reconnect with the people and State of Israel.

Date: Thursday, Dec. 8,
Location: Multi-Purpose Room
Dinner - 6 p.m. | Lecture - 6:30 p.m.
Price: $10 for dinner | The lecture is free.
A reservation is required to attend this event.
suing certifications in Fitness Nutrition and Corrective Exercise. Adam is beyond excited to start his personal training career with the Jewish Community Center.

**Patrick Dittman** is a Certified Personal Trainer from New Galilee, PA. He is also working on his bachelor’s degree in dietetics at Youngstown State and plans to become a Registered Dietitian. As a former overweight child, Patrick worked hard to create a healthy lifestyle for himself. It is his goal to use his knowledge and personal experience to help as many people as possible improve their lives through diet and exercise.

**Get fit fast with Personal Training at the JCC!**

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- Personalized safe and effective fitness programs
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- Improved muscle coordination, strength, endurance, and flexibility

**GROUP EXERCISE**

**Group Exercise Classes of the month**

**Cardio Low**
This low-impact fitness class will challenge your cardiovascular system and strengthen your muscles without putting stress on your joints.

**Date:** Mon/Wed  
**Time:** 9:00-9:55 a.m.

**Noontime Blitz**
This Pilates-based class will focus on core strength and stretching. Spend your lunch break building long, lean muscle while gaining flexibility and burning calories.

**Date:** Tues/Thurs  
**Time:** 12:05-12:55 p.m.

**AQUATICS**

For more information on Aquatics, contact Shawn Chrystal, 330-746-3250 ext. 112 or aquatics@jccyoungstown.org.

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

**Date:** Saturdays, 9:30-10 a.m.  
**$25/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 10-10:35 a.m.  
**$25/Member $40/Non Member**

**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**

**P.A.L.S. – Persons with Autism who Love to Swim**
The JCC offers free swim lessons especially geared towards persons on the autism spectrum. Our instructors have gone through special training and will be using advanced techniques to connect with and aid autistic children during lessons. Those wishing to enroll in the JCC P.A.L.S. program must apply to be on the waiting list by visiting our website at www.jccyoungstown.org and finding the PALS program under the aquatics tab.

**Rave in the Waves**
Join us in the pool for a fun-filled glow stick party. Kids of all ages are welcome! There will be music, games and light refreshments.

**Date:** Friday, Dec. 16  
**Time:** 4:30-6:30 p.m.

**Cost:** Free for member $5 Non Member  
Register online at jccyoungstown.org

**Rentals**
The JCC is now booking Graduation Parties in our beautiful Multi-Purpose Room. We can accommodate up to 250 people. Dates are filling up fast. Contact Kelli McCormick to book your party today 330-746-3250 ext. 284.
composers from King David to Carole King and listen to and discuss their music. Feel free to suggest composers and musical selections when you register for the class.

*What's So Funny about Being Jewish?: A Study of Jewish Comedians* — Who doesn't have a favorite Jewish comedian? Why has this been a Jewish occupation for so long? How can a people with an often-tragic history produce such a large number of really funny people? We’ll watch and listen to comedy routines both old and new and search for common threads.

*Biblical Poetry* — Poetry is found throughout the Tanakh—in the psalms, of course, but also, notably, sprinkled throughout the Five Books of Moses and the Prophets. We will read selections illustrating the types of Biblical poetry and analyze their language and structure to understand how these gems of the ancient world work their magic.

*Saying Kaddish* — Using The Kadish Minyan and several other excellent sources and classroom discussion, we will explore “the time after” a loss of a dear one; saying Kaddish can be far more than a rote exercise—it can be a path to reconnection with the past, a meaningful activity of the present, and an important link to the future.

*Selected Books of the Prophets* — Read beyond the haftarah! By delving deeper into some of the prophetic writings, we’ll begin to access the wisdom of this crucial middle third of the Tanakh.

*The Sh'ma and Its Blessings* — Using Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman’s excellent volume in the My People’s Prayer Book series as a guide, we will explore this central prayer as an entry into exploration of tefilla, Jewish prayer.

![Image](image.png)

## ‘This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine’

**By Shai Erez, Israeli Shlicha**

At the end of December we will celebrate the story of Hanukkah. We start to teach our students in Akiva Academy about the Hanukkah story.

One special moment will always stay with me. I asked the children what is the power of light? One beautiful little girl raised her hand and replied: “light helps us see better”. I was taken aback because she was so very right. She was able to put her finger on what we sometimes forget. That is, our personal ability to see the light through the darkness.

Every one of us knows people who have encountered great darkness. It could be Holocaust Survivors, refugees who fled oppression, family members plagued with illness, and others to whom life has dealt cruel blows. Some of them lost everything and had to begin again. Despite many reasons to despair and dwell in darkness, we all have a choice. That is the “Hanukkah light” moment which is the inspiration we all need. Everyone fails in ways large and small, and needs the strength to rise anew.

Hanukkah is a winter holiday. It shines light in the darkest time of year. Each night we add another light, increasing until the entire Hanukkah menorah is illuminated.

The lights have been kindled in millions of Jewish homes over thousands of years. At times, it wasn’t easy but the Jewish people kept shining light into the darkest of times. I bless us all to remember that light is there to help us see better. We have the power to choose between right or wrong. We can use our light to help others out of darkness. Gon and I bless you all with a year full of light, health and happiness. Happy Hanukkah!

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## Top U.S. firefighters help Israel battle blazes

**By Andrew Tobin**

TEL AVIV (JTA) – Call them Israel’s American volunteer fire brigade.

Dozens of firefighters from across the United States put their lives on hold – leaving behind jobs and families – to help subdue the wildfires that swept Israel over the past week. While they all share a love of Israel, only a handful of them are Jewish.

“We’re just firefighters. When guys hear about a situation like this one, where the Israelis are working as hard as they can, they want to come help,” said Billy Hirth, a Protestant who retired last year after a 24-year career as a firefighter in Arlington, Texas, and has been coordinating the American effort from Jerusalem.

“It’s a brotherhood. Firemen are firemen,” he said.

Hundreds of fires flared up in Israel starting Tuesday, forcing tens of thousands of people to flee. Some 32,000 acres of forest and brush burned along with hundreds of homes and businesses.

Israeli authorities said the fires started because of an unseasonably long dry spell and high winds, and then were exacerbated by Palestinian and Arab-Israeli arsonists with nationalist motives.

Last Friday, Israel’s Public Security Ministry formally requested firefighting help from the Emergency Volunteers Project, a network of over 950 American volunteers and professional first responders. By Saturday evening, with the fires coming under control, the fire responders. By Saturday evening, with the fires coming under control, the fire

In addition, the international community formally requested firefighting help from the Emergency Volunteers Project, a network of over 950 American volunteers and professional first responders. By Saturday evening, with the fires coming under control, the fire responders. By Saturday evening, with the fires coming under control, the fire responders. By Saturday evening, with the fires coming under control, the fire responders. By Saturday evening, with the fires coming under control, the fire

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### Religious school director position NOW OPEN

- Chadash, the Canton community religious school is accepting applications for director.
- Develop Judaic and Hebrew curriculums, holiday programs, and manage teachers.
- Approx. 38 students from Conservative and Reform backgrounds.
- 30 hours per week, 6 weeks off/year, no benefits.
- Application deadline: February 1, 2017
- Send resumes to ChadashApps@gmail.com

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The Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine
December 2016
Muslim Zionist: ‘Israel represents survival’

Kasim Hafeez, was born in the UK and grew up in Nottingham, a city in central England. His grandparents were observant Muslims, but not extreme, he told an audience of Jews and Christians attending a JCRC Lunch and Learn last month.

But within his community, he said, "Israel engendered anger." Everywhere he went, he said he heard, "You can't trust Israel, you can't trust the Jews."

He said graphic representations that were "emotive and manipulative shocked, horrified and disgusted us. You don't ask questions when you look at what are supposed to be badly hurt children."

He visited Pakistan — his family's home nation — in 2000, where organized terror groups openly recruited everywhere, burning Indian, American, and Israeli flags.

Mr. Hafeez said, "Looking through the radicals' lens, it didn't matter if you followed Sunni or Shia Islam, everyone agreed the goal was to wipe out Israel and the Jews."

Then he read Alan Dershowitz's The Case for Israel, a 2003 work that extensively addresses criticisms of the Jewish State.

After Hafeez's own research, he said he was no clearer on what to believe. "I decided I would have to go to Israel, though I anticipated the worst possible experience."

But to his surprise, he found that people were nice to him. He realized that Israel was not a new nation, but a reborn one. "There would be no Christianity, no Islam, if it were not for Judaism."

He said, "Israel changed human history for the better. It stands on the front line of humanity."

El Emeth (cont’d from p. 9)
as follows: Dec. 3, 10, 17, and 24 and at 5 p.m; Dec. 31 at 5:15 p.m. Friday morning Minyans are at 7 a.m. and Shabbat morning services begin at 9:30 a.m.

Visit us at templeelemeth.org.

M.L. Finesilver (cont’d from p. 9)
sometime in September, but you know that time thing, I haven't done that yet either. Better start getting my head together now.

From our house to your house have a wonderful Hanukkah and a happy, healthy new year, and we can talk again in 2017.

Fires (cont’d from page 14)

Community, including several of Israel's Arab and Muslim allies, were instrumental in helping the Jewish state combat the flames.

Egypt, Jordan, Azerbaijan and Turkey all sent firefighting equipment to Israel. The Palestinian Authority (PA) also pitched in, sending several fire trucks to the Jewish state. Netanyahu phoned PA President Mahmoud Abbas to thank him for his assistance, marking a rare direct conversation between the two leaders.

Israeli opposition leader Member of Knesset Isaac Herzog also thanked the Palestinians for their help, saying that "from this tragedy, there is a glimmer of hope that things can be different."

Among those nations sending firefighters and equipment were Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Palestinian Authority, Romania, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine.

The U.S dispatched a Boeing 747 Super tanker, the largest aerial firefighting aircraft in the world.

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Interrmarriage (continued from page 2)

married couples who did not have a sole Jewish officiant, of whom 23 percent are raising their children Jewish. Consistent with these findings, one-third of intermarried couples who had a rabbi or cantor as sole officiant are synagogue members. This number is more than four times higher than the rate for intermarried couples married by another type of officiant. These differences persist even when the gender, Jewish background and college Jewish experiences of the Jewish spouse are taken into account.

On the two measures that have been at the heart of the controversy about Jewish officiation at intermarriages -- synagogue membership and raising children Jewish -- intermarried couples with sole Jewish clergy officiation are not very different from inmarried couples. The rates of synagogue membership are 34 percent for the former vs. 41 percent for the latter, and for raising children Jewish 85 percent vs. 94 percent.

Sole Jewish officiation at intermarriages does not, however, fully level the playing field between intermarried couples with a sole Jewish officiant and inmarried couples on all measures of Jewish engagement. For example, intermarried couples who had sole Jewish officiation are somewhat less likely to have a special meal on Shabbat.

Our study does not provide a full explanation of the reasons for the differences between intermarried couples with a sole Jewish officiant and other intermarried couples. In part, the decision to have a Jewish officiant likely reflects a continuation of the already existing Jewish trajectory of these couples. But it may also be that the involvement of Jewish clergy has an independent impact on the lives of intermarried couples. Interactions with Jewish clergy in preparation for the wedding may serve to welcome the non-Jewish partner into Judaism, establish the groundwork for a continuing relationship and affirm the couple’s prior decision to raise a Jewish family. Conversely, rejection by clergy, even with a referral to another rabbi, may have a negative effect.

Rabbinic officiation at intermarriage is a relatively new phenomenon, and we are only now beginning to see its effects. What does seem apparent from our research is that most couples who engaged rabbis for officiation purposes appear to have Jewish commitments that carry over past the wedding ceremony.

Marshall McLuhan famously cautioned, “We drive into the future using only our rearview mirror.” In contrast to demographic studies which, while valuable, tell us more about the past than the future, our socio-psychological studies of intermarried young couples shed light not only on the lived experiences of contemporary Jews, but also provide critical data for thinking about the future.

We would like to think that our research, rather than viewing Jewish experience through a rearview mirror, is looking forward. We are discovering that the consequences of intermarriage that we have long expected to be devastating vis-a-vis the Jewish future may not be inevitable.

Leonard Saxe is the director of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University. Fern Chertok is a research scientist at the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies of Brandeis University. Ottavio Musumeci is the director of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies of the Steinhardt Social Research Institute at Brandeis University. Fern Chertok is a research scientist at the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies.

Rodef Sholom

150th Anniversary Celebration
Speaker
Sunday, Dec. 10
Tamarkin Chapel

Featuring Dr. Kurt Malkoff speaking on “My personal journey of 70 years of Judaism: Can you be a practicing Jew without embracing the concept of god”.

All are cordially invited to attend. A luncheon will follow the presentation.

There is no charge for the event. However, a reservation is required for the luncheon by calling the Temple at (330) 744-5001 or email rodefsholom@ sbcglobal.net by Tuesday, Dec. 6, at 4 p.m.

Sisterhood: Cooking with Kandy
Sunday Dec. 11 10 - noon

MSJS/Akiva Hanukkah Party
Tuesday Dec. 13 6:30 p.m.

Shabbat Services
Friday Dec. 2 6 p.m.
Saturday Dec. 10 10 a.m.

150th Anniversary Speaker
Friday Dec. 16 6 p.m.

Hanukkah Shabbat Service & Dinner
Friday Dec. 23 6 p.m.
Friday Dec. 30 6 p.m.

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In Madagascar, ‘world’s newest Jewish community’ seeks to establish itself

By Josefín Dolsten

(JTA) — Though there is no synagogue, mikvah or Jewish school in Madagascar, visitors to the African island nation can enjoy a strictly kosher meal, Shabbat services and weekly learning programs.

The Jewish community of 121 people — all of whom converted to Judaism earlier this year — can’t afford to build a synagogue. So now, one member is touring the U.S. to raise awareness and funds to bolster a Jewish presence there.

“If people were rich enough, maybe each family would save money and we’d gather this to raise a synagogue — [but] that’s [the] kind of thing we can’t afford to do,” said Elysha Netsarh, a university lecturer in plant chemistry and a prominent member of the Jewish community, which is based in Madagascar’s capital, Antananarivo.

Over three-quarters of Madagascar’s population lives below the international poverty line ($1.90 per day), according to 2012 World Bank data. The Jewish community is mostly middle class, said Netsarh — most members earn enough to make ends meet but not to put aside any savings.

Some members of Madagascar’s fledging community started practicing Judaism around 2010, but they became officially Jewish in May, when three Orthodox rabbis traveled to the island off the coast of southeast Africa to conduct the conversions. The conversions make Madagascar home to the world’s newest Jewish community, according to the nonprofit group Kulanu, which supports the community as well as other isolated groups around the world looking to learn about Judaism.

In what Netsarh termed an “extraordinary event,” 121 Malagasies, as the locals are called, answered questions in front of a rabbinical court and immersed in a river, which served as a ritual bath. Men underwent symbolic circumcisions, and 12 couples wed according to Jewish tradition.

Netsarh, like most Malagasy Jews, arrived at Judaism through Christianity. Although she was raised Catholic, she found herself unsatisfied with her faith and tried exploring other Christian denominations. None of them clicked.

“I had this deep thirst inside of me, it was a feeling of something lacking,” she told JTA last month at the Upper West Side apartment of Kulanu’s president, Harriet Bograd, which also doubles as the organization’s office.

Judaism had always lingered in the background for Netsarh. Her grandfather had told her as a young girl that he had Jewish ancestry. Though it wasn’t until years later that she explored Judaism, when she did, it felt right.

“I wanted to seek for something to fulfill me, and I didn’t get it until I had Jewish life,” she said.

Netsarh, 40, isn’t alone in believing she has Jewish roots — a vast majority of Malagasies believe they are descended from Jews, and some community members were hesitant to convert in May because they believed they were already Jewish.

Genetic research hasn’t been able to corroborate their stories, instead showing that the first people to settle on the island were of Malayo-Indonesian origin, explained Nathan Devir, an associate professor of Jewish studies at the University of Utah, who has studied the group since 2012. Later, African Bantu migrants also settled on the island.

Bograd considers the authenticity of the “Malagasy secret” — as the belief in Jewish heritage is referred to — irrelevant to her work with the group.

“Kulanu’s position, and my position as president, is that when people want to practice Judaism, we welcome them, and if they have sacred stories we honor those … but it is not our job to prove or disprove what actually happened,” she said.

Through December, Netsarh will be speaking at synagogues and Jewish organizations around the United States in order to raise money for Kulanu’s efforts in her community and around the world. Kulanu is in touch with two potential donors to build a synagogue and mikvah in Madagascar — but plans have yet to be finalized, said the group’s vice president, Bonita Nathan Sussman.

Kulanu leaders are hoping Netsarh can shed light on the organization’s work in Madagascar and around the world. In the last five years, the organization has seen an increase in groups reaching out to them to learn more about Judaism, Sussman said.

“We’re getting emails every week from individuals and new communities … People [are] clamoring at the door for Jewish attention,” Sussman said, citing contact with interested individuals and communities in Rwanda, Malaysia, Afghanistan, India and Côte d’Ivoire.

Sussman’s motivation stems from Jewish history — she sees her work as a way to “rebuild the Jewish people” following the Holocaust and the persecution of Jews in Arab countries.

Meanwhile, the newly “rebuilt” community in Madagascar continues to balance daily struggles and responsibilities with a serious commitment to learning more about their new religion.

(Continued on page 20)
WARSAW—KRAKOW—BRATISLAVA—BUDAPEST: MAY 8-16, 2017

P2G JEWISH JOURNEY TO POLAND, BRATISLAVA & BUDAPEST
(Depart U. S. May 7, arrive Warsaw May 8, Depart Budapest May 16)

*with optional extensions to BERLIN or ISRAEL (see back for details)

$2950 double occupancy LAND ONLY*  
($550 Single Supplement)
*A $2,000 subsidy is available for first time mission participants, and a $1,000 subsidy is available for prior mission participants.

**Suggested minimum $500 increase over 2017 and 2018 pledge to the 2017 and 2018 Combined Jewish Appeal Campaigns to qualify for subsidy.

Tips and individual transfers not included (other than with group arrival and departure). Trip price based on a minimum of 28 participants. We encourage all trip participants to buy trip insurance. Space is limited.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Museum of History of Polish Jews, Warsaw
- Warsaw Train Station and Old Town
- Warsaw Ghetto and Memorial
- Majdanek Concentration & Extermination Camp
- Kazimierz Jewish Quarter
- Krakow Synagogue and Jewish cemetery
- General city sites of Warsaw and Krakow
- Auschwitz - Birkenau
- Meet young adults building Jewish Budapest

- Budapest city sites including the Castle District
- Dohany synagogue
- Budapest Jewish Quarter
- Partnership Friends
- Balint JCC
- Israel Cultural Institute
- Szentendre artist village
- Boat ride on the Danube
- Bratislava Museum of Jewish Culture
- Tour Jewish Bratislava and synagogue

PRICE INCLUDES:

- Deluxe air-conditioned motor coach for all touring and sightseeing
- English speaking tour guides & guided tours
- Daily breakfast buffets in hotels
- 6 Lunches
- 6 Dinners
- Porterage in hotels
- Entrance fees (including Majdanek and Auschwitz - Birkenau)
- Boat tour on Danube
- Hotels:
  5★ Hotel Sofitel Victoria (Warsaw)
  5★ Hotel Holiday Inn City Center (Krakow)
  4★ Regency Suites Hotel (Budapest)
  5★ Kempinski Hotel Corvinus (Budapest)

Registration Deadline: January 6, 2017
($1000 Deposit to your Federation required, cancellation fees apply after Jan. 15, final payment required by March 10.)

Contact Andy Lipkin, ALipkin@JewishYoungstown.org (330) 746-3250 x 111 or Sarah Wilschek, SarahWilschek@JewishYoungstown.org (330) 746-3250 X 123 for more information.

www.westerngalilee.org.il
BERLIN EXTENSION:
May 16 - May 19, 2017

$1498 per person (double occupancy)
$250 single supplement
*Trip based on minimum 8 participants

(Depart Budapest morning of May 16; Depart Berlin morning of May 19)

HIGHLIGHTS:
• Jewish Berlin Tour—Jewish Quarter, New Synagogue, and Cemetery
• Brandenburg Gate
• Reichstag Boulevard Unterden Linden
• Berlin Wall
• Checkpoint Charlie
• Holocaust Memorial
• House of Wannsee Konferenz

INCLUDED:
• Hotel Palace Berlin
• English speaking guide
• Daily breakfast buffet
• Deluxe air conditioned coach
• All entrance fees
• 1 lunch
• Farewell Dinner

*Some special transfers may not be included

WESTERN GALILEE EXTENSION:
May 16 - May 19, 2017

$500 per person (land only - double occupancy)
$160 single supplement

HIGHLIGHTS:
• Culinary Workshop
• Galilee Medical Center Tour and Briefing
• Malka Beer Tasting
• Command Centers and Israel/Lebanon Border Tour
• Tikkun Olam Project with P2G Twinning School
• Rosh Hanikra Club Car Rides
• Dinners with Israeli Friends

WHAT IS PARTNERSHIP2GETHER?
PARTNERSHIP2GETHER is a program of the Jewish Agency and the Jewish Federations of North America, promoting people-to-people relationships through cultural, social, medical, educational and economic programs. This Partnership is between the 14 communities of the Central Area Consortium, Budapest, Hungary and Israel’s Western Galilee.

Our Partnership2GETHER Communities: Buffalo, NY, Dayton, Toledo, Youngstown, Ohio; Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, Northwest Indiana, South Bend, Indiana; Louisville, Kentucky; Des Moines, Iowa, Omaha, Nebraska; Austin, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Texas and Budapest are linked with Akko and Matte Asher in the Western Galilee.

Contact: Andy Lipkin at ALipkin@JewishYoungstown.org or Sarah Wilschek at SarahWilschek@JewishYoungstown.org

CONNECT & MAKE A DIFFERENCE

www.westerngalilee.org.il

All deposit and cancellation policies apply.
Europe’s Trump effect (cont’d from p. 2)

rising far right and Trump’s campaign strategy. Both leverage financial inse-
urity while warning about Muslim im-
migration and jihadism in campaigns th-
ed around nostalgia, xenophobia and popular resentment of the seem-
ingly detached ruling elite.

But there are also considerable dif-
fferences.

Both Wilders’ Party for Freedom and Le Pen’s National Front are seek-
ing greater taxation on some earners (Le Pen wants to raise the income tax on high earners as much as 46 percent) than the policy favored by the countries’ ruling governments. In this regard, the European far right diverges significantly with Trump.

Additionally, Trump was an outsider to American politics; Le Pen, Wilders, Hofer and most of their counterparts elsewhere in Europe have been in politics for at least a decade. Even to poten-
tial supporters, they are associated with the very political structures they have for years been promising to tear down.

In France, Le Pen has been trying to mainstream her party and move it away from the more radical anti-establish-
ment message of her father and party founder, Jean-Marie Le Pen. When she kicked him out of the party last year for saying the Holocaust was insignificant — a statement for which he was convict-
ed of genocide denial — it cause a split within the party, costing her the votes of many supporters who now view her as a sellout. As for Wilders, he agreed in 2010 to briefly join a coalition led by Holland’s centrist ruling party — a com-
promise that disappointed many of his hard-core supporters.

Nevertheless, Trump’s victory is in-
vigorating supporters of these far-right parties who are finding themselves in the spotlight of left-wing media that are now much more willing to “listen to angry white voters,” as the Dutch NRC Handelsblad put it last weekend.

“If the Americans did it, so can we!” one National Front voter and activist, a former train conductor in his fifties named Fredy Deguin-Dawson, told Le Monde. The article surveyed attitudes toward Trump’s victory in the Hauts-de-
France region, which is France’s rust belt with 14 percent unemployment.

Even he, however, recoiled from some of Trump’s xenophobic remarks. “That Trump called Mexicans thieves and rapists … No. I find it unacceptable,” said Deguin-Dawson. His rejection of racism, typical of many Europeans with bitter memory and collective guilt over the Holocaust, is another social inhibi-
tor for the far right.

Jersey community leaders, along with leaders of other minorities, are also wary about the meaning of Trump’s victory.

“We are not the only ones, we hear this all over Europe,” Pinchas Goldschmidt, the president of the Conference of Euro-
pean Rabbis, told JTA last week. “There’s concern of the rise of the extreme right on the coattails of the Trump victory.”

While such alarm is understandable coming from vulnerable minorities, centrist and left-wing politicians have also warned about a “Trump effect.”

French Prime Minister Manuel Valls shocked many of his citizens when he said last week during a visit to Berlin that “Le Pen could become president in 2017.” He injected Trump into the equation by adding: “Of course, I’m not comparing: Trump headed the Repub-
lican Party, which already controlled Congress and numerous states, but of course his rhetoric and proposals are disturbing.”

Valls, a Socialist, may have politi-
cal reasons to establish a connection between Le Pen and the “Trump ef-
fact.” After all, French centrists, wor-
ried about the National Front, have for decades rallied voters to vote for other candidates just to keep that party out of power. It’s such a common strategy that it even has a name — the “Republican Front” — and it has allowed both the Socialists and their center-right rivals to increase voting participation and keep the National Front in opposition.

Olivier Faye, Le Monde’s expert on the far right, says he does not recognize any “Trump effect” in French politics at this time.

“It’s difficult to draw conclusions on any effect, negative or positive, of Trump’s victory on how Le Pen will perform in the French presidential elections,” he wrote last week. What is clear, he said, is that “she’ll happily use any populist vic-
try abroad” to her advantage.

Madagascar (cont’d from p. 17)

In Netsarh’s case, that means finding time to study Torah in between two jobs, family duties, and helping to take care of her sister’s children — waking up around 4:30 a.m. to do so.

“Each morning when I have my To-
rah reading it’s like I am drinking en-
ergy,” she said.

Most of Madagascar’s Jews cannot study Jewish texts with such ease. Only one other person in the community speaks English, and while most people understand some French, reading complex texts in the language is a struggle.

To that end, Netsarh is working on producing the first-ever Malagasy trans-
literation of the Five Books of Moses and the Jewish prayer book. So far, she has completed the book of Genesis, but she says her work schedule keeps her from progressing as quickly as she would like.

“All the people in the community want to progress in a spiritual level so getting a higher spiritual level is much more important [than eating meat],” she said.
Sarasota's Selby Gardens offers first-time exhibition of works by Marc Chagall

SARASOTA, Fla., Beginning in February 2017, an exhibition of Marc Chagall’s nature-inspired artwork will be on view in a world-renowned Florida botanical garden in an immersive exhibition that introduces a new way of examining the artwork of the prolific artist.


Included in the exhibition will be the masterwork painting The Lovers (1937), on loan from the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, along with two additional paintings, loaned from a private collector, that have not been publicly exhibited before.

“For this artist, flowers were life itself,” said Dr. Carol Ockman, curator at

large for Marie Selby Botanical Gardens and Robert Sterling Clark professor of art at Williams College. “They [flowers] are a response to Chagall’s traumatic life experiences, as well as the source of his boundless hope displayed in his artwork.”

Visitors to the bayfront garden will wander through a glass house conservatory where reproductions of Chagall’s nature-inspired stained glass will be displayed among living plants. Accompanying cultural performances, special events, classes and lectures will be part of the exhibition, which encourages visitors to use all five senses, immersing themselves in the dream world created by Chagall in his artwork.

“Evoking Chagall’s last home, the fairy-tale village of Saint Paul de Vence, The Color of Dreams capitalizes on the sun-kissed climate of Sarasota to conjure the French Riviera, which long has had a special lure for artists,” Dr. Ockman said.

While Chagall’s work has been examined many times and in many ways, from his Jewish upbringing to his origin in the distant sunlit village framed in the background, and a figure stretched out in the left foreground.

Bouquets de Lilas à Saint Paul de Vence (Bouquets of Lilacs at Saint-Paul) (1978) is on public display for the first time. It features two large vases containing lilacs that tower over the distant sunlit village framed in the background, and a figure stretched out in the left foreground.

of the exhibition with the loan of The Lovers, said he is thrilled with how this significant exhibition has developed.

“We look forward to seeing our painting presented through the lens of Chagall’s inspiration from nature, which will shed new light on his pioneering career, as well as providing a first opportunity for us to lend to a major exhibition in a botanical garden setting, making us that much more appreciative of Selby Gardens’ innovative approach in this new exhibition,” Snyder said.

Snyder will present a lecture in January 2017 in advance of the exhibition’s opening. Dr. Ockman is the guest speaker at the keynote lecture, Feb. 13, also at the Gardens. Tickets for Dr. Ockman’s lecture are available at www.selby.org, along with additional information about complementary programming throughout the six-month exhibition.

“Our Gardens have the opportunity to immerse people into the landscape of flowers and seaside beauty that creates the inspirational dreamscape of Marc Chagall,” said Jennifer O. Rominiecki, president and CEO of Selby Gardens.

The garden is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily except Christmas. Regular admission is $20 and $10 for children ages 4-17; members and children 3 and under enter free. Contact: (941) 366-5731 or selby.org.
Ruth Gruber, journalist who helped Holocaust Survivors, dies at 105

(JTA) — Ruth Gruber, an American journalist who escorted 1,000 Jewish Holocaust refugees from Europe to the United States, has died. She was 105.

Gruber died on Nov. 17 in her Manhattan home, The Washington Post reported.

She was known for her 1944 journey from Italy to New York aboard a ship carrying refugees from the camps.

Despite the risk of sailing on waters patrolled by German submarines, then-Interior Secretary Harold Ickes appointed Gruber to travel with the refugees to “hold their hand,” as she recalled him telling her in Inside of Time, a book she wrote about that journey.

Aboard the ship, the refugees, some of them too old to walk, called Gruber, then 32, “Mother Ruth,” according to the Post’s obituary of her. Fluent in German and Yiddish, she organized English lessons, cared for the seasick and taught at least one refugee her first English song — “You Are My Sunshine” — the Boston Globe reported.

Together they made the two-week journey without attack, and the refugees arrived in the United States “safe beyond their most roseate dreams,” according to a New York Times account at the time.

Until the end of her life, Gruber remained convinced that the United States could have saved many more refugees.

Gruber worked as a photographer and reporter for the New York Herald Tribune in 1947, when she became the first Western journalist to visit the Soviet Arctic and the gulag.

In 1947, she watched as a ship carrying 4,000 Holocaust survivors and displaced persons was turned away from Palestine. She photographed and later chronicled those events in a book that Leon Uris used to write his best-selling novel Exodus.

In her 70s, she was the only foreign correspondent to observe Operation Moses, the airlift of Ethiopian Jews to Israel during famine.

Gruber, the daughter of Russian Jewish immigrants who settled in Brooklyn, graduated from high school at 15 and from New York University at 18. After earning a master's degree in German literature, she went to Germany and, at age 20, earned a doctorate from the University of Cologne with a dissertation on the author Virginia Woolf. The New York Times reported at the time that she was the youngest German doctor of philosophy.

In Memoriam

Joseph H. Hume

BOARDMAN - Mary Ann Cmil, 84, passed away at Hampton Woods on Tuesday, Nov. 15.

She was born on July 7, 1932, in Youngstown, a daughter of Michael and Veronica Staron Cmil.

Mary Ann attended St. Nicholas Elementary School and graduated in 1949 from Struthers High School. She went on to attend Youngstown College. She also earned a Designation Degree in Real Estate, a profession she enjoyed for several years.

Mary Ann was converted to Judaism in 1979 by Rabbi Sydney Berkowitz at Rodef Sholom Temple. She joined Ohev Tzedeck Congregation in Boardman, where she remained an active member of the Jewish community.

She lived and worked in Dallas from 1979 to 1989.

Mary Ann is survived by several nieces and nephews.

At Mary Ann’s request, simple, private services were held.

Contributions may be made to Ohev Tzedeck Temple, 5245 Glenwood Ave., Boardman, OH 44512.

Mary Ann wanted to thank all those who knew her for sharing a part of her life.

Arrangements were handled by the Shriver Allison-Courtley-Weller-King Funeral Home.

Mary Ann Cmil

In Memoriam

Joseph H. Hume

DELRAY BEACH, FLA. - Joseph H. Hume, 91, formerly of Youngstown, died Nov. 19, 2016, at his home.

Joseph was born in Sharon, PA, on June 13, 1925, the son of Abraham Hume and Helen Rubenstein Hume.

He was a 1943 graduate of The Rayen School and graduated in 1948, cum laude from The Ohio State University, where he majored in business.

He was an owner of Hume’s Fine Furniture and Hume’s Carriage House in Youngstown, and Holly’s Restaurant in Hackensack, N.J.

He had a passion for traveling, and after his retirement from business, became a travel agent. He traveled the world, visiting six continents, and brought back beautiful photographs of each place he visited.

He served as a pharmacist’s mate in the U.S. Navy during World War II, and was awarded the Point System Victory Medal, Philippine Liberation Ribbon, Asiatic Pacific Area Campaign Medal and American Area Campaign Medal.

He was a member of Congregation Rodef Sholom, the temple Brotherhood, and B’nai B’rith.

Joseph is survived by his sister, Eleanor Katz; his children, Roslyn Hume (Ira Copperman), Richard Hume (Lesley Hume), and Martin Hume (Kimberlyn Hume); six grandchildren, Michael Hume, Rebecca Hume, Jonathan Hume, Jeremy Hume, Jamie Copperman and Willie Copperman; and three great-grandchildren.

His wife, Helen Solowey Hume, whom he married on Sept. 12, 1948, passed away April 9, 1981. His brother, Arnold Hume and his daughter, Elizabeth Hume O’Donnell, also predeceased him.

He will be missed by his friends, his numerous beloved nieces and nephews, and by his loving companion, Phyllis Traberman, of Delray Beach.

Funeral services were held at 11 a.m., Tuesday, Nov. 22 at the Shriver Allison-Courtley-Weller-King Funeral Home, 292 Madison Ave. in Youngstown. Burial will follow at the Congregation Rodef Sholom section of Tod Homestead Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the American Cancer Society or any other charity of your choice.
Leonard Cohen

By Ron Kampeas

(JTA) — Leonard Cohen, the Canadian singer-songwriter whose Jewish-infused work became a soundtrack for melancholy, has died. He was 82.

He died in his sleep following a fall at his home.

Cohen, a Montreal native born in 1934, was playing folk guitar by the time he was 15, when he learned the resistance song “The Partisan” while working at a camp from an older friend.

“We sang together every morning, going through The People's Song Book from cover to cover,” he recalled in his first “Best Of” compilation in 1975. “I developed the curious notion that the Nazis were overthrown by music.”

As a student at McGill University, he became part of Montreal's burgeoning alternative art scene, one bursting with nervous energy at a time that tensions between Quebec's French and English speakers were coming to the fore.

His influences included Irving Layton, the seminal Canadian Jewish poet who taught at McGill and, like Cohen, grappled with the tensions between the secular world and the temptations of faith.

Cohen began to publish poetry and then novels, and was noticed by the national Canadian press. Moving to New York in the late 1960s — his song “Chelsea Hotel” is about his stay and that notorious refuge for the inspired, the insane and the indigent — he began to put his words to music.

“Suzanne,” about the devastating platonic affair with a friend's wife that was a factor in his leaving Montreal, was recorded by Judy Collins and became a hit, launching his career.

Cohen sang in his limited bass and wrote his songs so he could sing them. They would have been dirges but for their surprising lyrical turns and reckoning with joy in unexpected places.

Cohen embraced Buddhism but never stopped saying he was Jewish. His music more often than not dealt directly not just with his faith but with his Jewish people's story.

His most famous song, covered hundreds of times, is “Hallelujah” — he has said its unpublished verses are endless, but in its recorded version is about the sacred anguish felt by King David as he contemplates the beauty of the forbidden Bathsheba.

Cohen's version, released in 1984, did well in Europe (in a video on German TV he is backed by a children's choir hiding behind a faux Greek set). John Cale recorded a piano-driven version for a Cohen tribute album in 1991. Jeff Buckley heard that version and used it as the basis for his own six-minute cover, reinterpreting on his guitar the arpeggios Cale had used to accompany the song.

Running longer than six minutes, Buckley's version became the go-to song in the late 1990s for extended TV show montages depicting trauma and melancholy. Cale's version was used in “Shrek” in 2001, and that did it: The song became inevitable.

Cohen was droll, but also reverent: Each of his explanations of his songs on 1975's "Best Of" is sardonic except for one, for “Who by Fire.” “This is based on a prayer recited on the Day of Atonement,” was all he wrote.

Cohen, in his 70s in the late 2000s, again began to tour and record; a manager had bilked him of much of his fortune. He released his final album, “You Want It Darker,” last month.

He often toured Israel, and he expressed his love for the country — Cohen toured for troops in the 1973 Yom Kippur War — but he also expressed sadness at the militarism he encountered there. Under pressure from the boycott Israel movement to cancel a 2009 concert, he instead donated its proceeds — much needed by him — to a group that advances dialogue between Palestinians and Jews.

Tickets to the stadium at Ramat Gan sold out in minutes. His Israeli fans embraced him that September night, and he returned the love, sprinkling the concert with Hebrew and readings from scripture and ending it with the priestly blessing.

Last month, in a profile of Cohen in The New Yorker, Bob Dylan compared his fellow singer-songwriter to Irving Berlin — linking three iconic Jewish musicians in one poignant assessment.

Cohen is survived by a son and a daughter.
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