Israel at 70

ON THE COVER:
The 70th Anniversary of the State of Israel
Pictured: The Knesset in Israel

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Volume 16, Number 5 • May 2018 • Iyyar/Sivan 5778
Musings with Mary Lou

Women’s Role?
By Mary Lou Finesilver

I have been a very strong supporter of women’s liberation. I have never particularly wanted to burn my bra, but sometimes after a long day, around 10 p.m., I wouldn’t mind—though what that would accomplish, I have no idea. I just started thinking about what maybe we have lost by becoming, or trying to become, equal to men. Equal pay for equal work I do understand, but even then you have to compare apples to apples—not apples to oranges.

There was a time when a woman was queen and ruler in her own home. Oh sure, she had to do the dirty work, like cleaning, sometimes chopping wood and definitely cooking the meals. However, it was her house! This was especially true in Orthodox Jewish homes.

It was the mother’s job to see that the home was her temple. She made sure the holidays were celebrated correctly by boys and girls. The men taught the boys about prayer in the synagogue, but the mother taught the girls how to make a house a home and keep that home kosher in observance of our dietary laws. The boys weren’t excused from these chores but were taught as the girls. Maybe not the cooking and cleaning but the ways of keeping the home kosher. Did you know that kosher means clean? No great mystery there.

But back to women’s liberation, the woman in the old days worked like a dog, but she also ruled the roost—and that included the husband and the children. She was the leader, the financial guide, the disciplinarian, she didn’t tell the kids to wait till Daddy comes home, and she took matters into her own hands. She knew her kids and her husband.

No mysteries then with personalities; she was in the middle. Maybe that’s what some of us missed in not being closer to our kids because there was a nanny or someone else to take care and raise the family while she worked.

My maternal grandmother, I guess, was a force to be reckoned with, according to my Mother. She was up before everyone else, baking bread and preparing breakfast and making lunches. She told the kids what to do and how, and I believe she also told my grandfather how to run the store. She was active in the synagogue if I remember the stories at all.

My mother was in absolute awe of Grandmna Bluma Raysa. I never had the chance to know her; she died before I was born. We think she was from Johannesburg, South Africa, and we never knew how she and Grandpa Max Beerman met.

She raised 8 kids, and they all did well as adults. They lived in a house with three stories and one bathroom. Just think about that one. She used to take the girls shopping, but they didn’t buy the clothes they saw. The girls would pick out an outfit and Grandma would go home and make it for them.

I don’t know if she was a typical housewife and mother of that era, but she was tough. She had a good heart, any stranger that knocked on the door looking for a handout was invited in to eat. She never turned anyone away. She would also periodically disappear for sometimes days at a time. No, she wasn’t having an affair; she was helping someone that was sick or having a baby. Since there were no cell phones and telephones were hard to find, her family would find out where she had been when she returned.

This woman was revered by her husband and her children and she ruled the roost. Her kids respected her and never talked back to her or any of their elders, and believe me they were always kept busy. So she lived a tough life, but don’t you wonder who had the better world.

Youngstown Residents Remember the Founding of Israel
By Elise Skolnick

Seventy years ago this month, Israel was established as the first Jewish state in 2,000 years when Jewish Agency Chairman David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel. Ben-Gurion became Israel’s first prime minister. U.S. President Harry S. Truman recognized the new nation the same day. This impacted people around the world, including those born and raised in Youngstown, Ohio.

Irving Lev was a young man about to graduate from college. Though born in Youngstown, he lived in California at that time.

But he was “hyped up” about the potential for a Jewish state and was rooting for them.

“I remember my wife and I talking about that and we were all excited about it,” he said.

The couple discussed making a trip to Israel, but didn’t at that time. Irv’s education had been interrupted by World War II. During the war, he was an airplane navigator flying bombing missions over Germany. In 1945, he left the military, got married, and moved to California. By 1948, he was finishing up his studies and looking to start a career.

He and his wife, Alice, moved back to Youngstown and had a family. Eventually, Irv found he needed to go to Israel to see what it was like to be there.

“This is our land,” he said. “I’m not religious and all, but that really didn’t matter.”

He has been to Israel about 15 times and has family living there. At this point in his life, Lev isn’t sure he’ll make another trip to Israel, but it still means a lot to him.

“I support them,” he said.

For Marilyn Oyer, 1948 and the establishment of Israel as a state was a scary time.

Her father, Marvin Itts, was traveling overseas as a delegate of the United Jewish Appeal. At the end of January, he and 25 other U.S. Jewish leaders had embarked on a four-week trip. The plan was for them to report to their respective communities for rehabilitation needs following the war. Itts and ten other delegates were shot at by snipers on their way to Jerusalem.

“We were scared to death at home because he was riding around with armored cars and we’d get pictures of people being shot at,” Oyer said.

Oyer was happy about a Jewish state being formed but was relieved that her father was safe.

“I was young then. I was a young teenager and I was more concerned about my dad than anything,” she said. “I was happy to know that he was alive and was going to be on his way home.”

Her father did make it home safely. And when the delegates returned, they began raising funds for a $250 million national drive. Itts spoke many times about his experiences overseas, including at a panel discussion held at Congregation Rodef Sholom.

“We went to Cleveland to get him, and we were very happy that he was home,” Oyer remembers.
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Candle Lighting Times

Shabbat
May 4 8:05 p.m.
May 11 8:12 p.m.
May 18 8:19 p.m.
May 25 8:25 p.m.

Shavout
May 19 9:26 p.m.
May 20 9:27 p.m.

About the Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine

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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.

May 15 is the deadline for articles and ads for the June issue.
Bat Mitzvah of Carys Yarwood

Carys Hannah Yarwood will be Bat Mitzvah on May 5, 2018. Carys, the daughter of Ron and Francie, is the youngest of three children and is a student at West Branch Middle School. She is a straight-A student and plays the trombone in the school band. Along with school, Carys enjoys dancing and spending time with her friends. She recently auditioned for the Joffrey School of Ballet and has been accepted to their summer program in New York City. She will be spending two weeks there this summer. She is a fun loving girl who can put a smile on anyone’s face.
Rabbi’s Message
Rabbi Joseph P. Schonberger
Temple El Emeth

History, Ghetto & Golden Rule

We read my favorite chapter of the Torah this week - Leviticus Chapter 19. Verse 18 contains the Golden Rule: love your neighbor as yourself.

This portion contains many more principles that humanize people’s lives. Nonetheless, Monday April 23, 2018 (Iyyar 8, 5778), the 23rd day of the Omer, corresponds in history to Iyyar 8, 5276 (March 29, 1516)—the day the first ghetto was created.

Venice, Italy became the first city in the world where the term “ghetto” became associated with the Jewish quarter. There the Jews were compelled to move onto an island, a restricted area surrounded by walls and a gate that was locked from the outside by authorities to prevent Jews from getting out. The area was formerly the site of a foundry which manufactured weapons for the government of Venice. The Italian term for “foundry” is ghetto. The first official document which uses the word ghetto to describe an area restricting the residency of Jews exclusively was a papal edict from 1562.

With G-d’s help, our People were freed from that, but not before Jews throughout the world suffered terribly. There was no Israel and there was no Jewish Government to advocate for Jews and to launch rescues. There was no better place for Jews to live for a long time. With the persistence of anti-Semitism, we need everyone to continue to pray, to be vigilant, to be strong and wise and to uphold our faith.

We can be grateful for Israel and to countries where Jews are free and can live and grow as Jews. Come to Minyan, help our Temple, come learn with us and be proud of who we are and what we achieve.

Let me know when you can be at Minyan.

email: rabbijps@gmail.com
 cell: 330-519-1797

Zai Gezunt and Good Wishing with Blessings to all
Rabbi Joseph P Schonberger

Temple El Emeth Sisterhood May 2018

Jewish Christian Dialogue will take place Wednesday, May 2 at the Synagogue. Refreshments are served at 12:30 p.m. with the session beginning at 1:00. The movie The Disputation will be shown. All are welcome to attend. Father George Balasko and Rabbi Joseph Schonberger will guide a discussion following the movie.

Liberty Food Pantry will need volunteers for their May distribution. Set up is Thursday, May 3 from 7-8:00 p.m. and distribution of food takes place Friday morning, May 4 from 9:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. at Liberty United Methodist Church. Call the Temple if you can help and we will pass your name on to the Pantry Chair.

The Israel 70th Celebration will take place at Temple El Emeth on Thursday evening, May 10. It will feature an authentic Israeli dining experience and The Wandering Israeli theatrical show. More information will be forthcoming.

Service and Kiddush Lunch honoring our graduating seniors is being planned for Saturday, May 12 beginning at 9:30 a.m.. Our High School Seniors, Sophie Alper, Lexi Burdman, Jacob Silverman and Shira Solomon will be honored at the service and a Kiddush Luncheon will follow.

Please RSVP to the Temple for lunch.

Shmoozing with Shmulik will gather at the Synagogue on Monday, May 14 for some fun in Yiddish. Sam Kooperman leads the group with jokes, stories, music and more. All are welcome to attend and refreshments are served.

Shavuot will be celebrated beginning Saturday evening, May 19 with services at 5:45 p.m. Services will also be held Sunday morning, May 20 and Monday morning, May 21 at 9:30 a.m. Yizkor will take place during the Monday morning service.

Sisterhood Shabbat is being planned for Saturday morning, June 2 at the Synagogue. Sisterhood members will lead the services and a Kiddush Luncheon will follow. TEE Sisterhood members who would like a part in the service are asked to contact the Temple office.

Temple El Emeth Sisterhood May 2018

The closing meeting for Sisterhood will be May 8, 2018 at noon. Installation for new officers and chairmen will take place during the meeting. Also, a treat for us: Fran Hildebrand, the Central Great Lakes Region Torah Fund Vice President will be with us. Our thanks to Holly Small for all her hard work with Torah Fund. The lunch will be $12 for members and reservations are due no later than May 3, 2018.

Which reminds me, it is always time to make a donation to Torah Fund, a very important Women’s League fund raiser.

Sisterhood Shabbat will be Saturday June 2. A representative from Women’s League has been invited and will be joining us for our Service and Kiddush lunch. We are looking for Sisterhood women to participate either in Hebrew or English. Please call the office and let them know if you will be taking part.

Don’t forget to get your Giant Eagle gift cards to pay for your grocery purchases. They come in $25 and $50 amounts and will be available at the May meeting and also in the office, so do yourself a favor and pick some up. An easy way to shop and help Sisterhood also.

Sisterhood Donor Luncheon

El Emeth Sisterhood held their annual Donor Luncheon on Sunday, April 22 at the Synagogue. Women who have been members of Sisterhood for 50 years or more were honored by Donor Chairwoman Rochelle Miller. Each “Golden Girl” was presented with a long stemmed rose and treated to lunch compliments of Sisterhood.

EL EMETH SISTERHOOD SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2018-2020

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 V.P. Program: Alice Franklin & Andrea Duval
 V.P Membership: Janine Silverman
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 Corresponding Sec/Sunshine: Lori Szoke

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GE Gift Cards: Terry Anderson
Leagrams: Roberta Berkowitz
Donor: Elaine Rusnak & Phyllis Perlman
Sisterhood Shabbat: Elyse Silverman & Ronna Marlin
Baking & Kitchen: Lenore Ackerman, Lucille Vegh Rochelle Miller
Hamantashan Baking: Paula Ferguson
Torah Fund: Holly Small
Mitzvah Committee: Rochelle Miller & Lucille Vegh
Judaica Shop: Laura Silverman
Presented by: Lenore Ackerman, Lisa Merman, Elaine Rusnak, Janine Silverman, Linda Sniderman, Rochelle Miller and Mary Lou Finesilver
Rodef Sholom Events

- Rodef Sholom Tzedek Committee at Liberty Food Bank
  Friday, May 4 at 9:30a.m.–12:00p.m.

- Simchat Shabbat Family Service and Dinner
  Friday, May 11 at 6:00 p.m. in Tamarkin Chapel/Handler Hall
  Our theme will be Jewish HQ.
  Dinner and program will follow the service in Handler Hall. Menu:
  Traditional Shabbat Chicken Dinner
  $8.50 per adult or $20.00 per family.
  The deadline for reservation and payment is Tuesday, May 8.
  No phone or e-mail reservations please.
  Please mail reservation form and payment to the Temple office
  at 1119 Elm Street, Youngstown, OH 44505.

- Annual Congregational Meeting
  Election of Officers and Trustees
  Wednesday, May 16 at 7:15 p.m. in Tamarkin Chapel

Rodef Sholom Services

- Saturday, May 5 at 9:00 a.m.
  Tot Shabbat Service

- Saturday, May 5 at 10:00 a.m.
  Brotherhood/Sisterhood Shabbat Service
  RSVP required by Tuesday, May 1 by calling the Temple office at
  330.744.5001

- Friday, May 11 at 6:00 p.m.
  Simchat Shabbat Service

- Friday, May 18 at 6:00 p.m.
  Shabbat Service of Installation

- Sunday, May 20 at 10:00 a.m.
  Confirmation Ceremony

- Friday, May 25 at 6:00 p.m.
  Shabbat Service followed by a Presentation by Itsik Saayag

Rodef Sholom Sisterhood

Congregation Rodef Sholom Annual Sisterhood Donor Lunch
Save the Date
Date: Tuesday, May 22, 2018
Time: 11:30 a.m.
Location: The Avalon Inn and Resort – 9519 East Market Street, Warren, OH
There will be Special Entertainment and Prizes! More information will be mailed separately to all Sisterhood members, Temple members and guests.

Rodef Sholom Gift Shop News

Inspired Generations contemporary giftware is available for weddings, hostess gifts, or just to update your home! Inspired Generations giftware is also being sold at local fine giftware stores, so why not support your Temple gift shop?

Please contact Darlene Muller at 330.759.4576 for inquiries regarding special item orders and new products. Thank you for your continued support!

True freedom must be accompanied by responsibility and obligation, which is what the covenant at Mt. Sinai accomplished. God gave the Israelites a set of rules by which to conduct their lives, and they collectively responded, “Na-a-seh v’nishmah,” “We will do and we will listen.” It wasn’t until the Israelites accepted the Covenant at Sinai that they became a true people, united in purpose to perform God’s commandments.

What makes the journey from physical freedom to spiritual commitment so compelling is the undeniable truth that without rules, boundaries and structure, life is meaningless. Think of how empty our lives would be if we were free to do anything we wanted at any time, with no restrictions or rules on our behavior. Such an existence would soon become an imprisoning nutshell, worse than bondage itself. We would become slaves to our wants, needs, and desires, no different from the animal world.

Freedom without limits is nothing more than anarchy. What makes the counting of the Omer special is that we are able to relive this journey from bondage to freedom to covenantal responsibility, to remind ourselves of the reason we became a people, the Jewish people, bound to God by the Mitzwot. This is the spiritual lesson of Sefirat Ha Omer, and also the idea that every day counts!

The Book of Leviticus (23:15-16) also commanded: “And from the day on which you bring the offering…you shall count seven weeks. They must be complete.” This commandment led to the traditional practice of Sefirat Ha’Omer, or “Counting the Omer”

The seven weeks of counting the Omer spans the forty-nine days between Passover and Shavuot. Thus, Sefirat Ha Omer links the Exodus from Egypt with the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai.

In addition to the historical and agricultural connections, every Jewish holiday has a spiritual connection too. Jewish mystics saw this period of counting the Omer as joining the Jewish people’s physical (Pesach) and spiritual (Shavuot) redemption. Liberation from Egyptian bondage gave the Israelites physical freedom. But freedom is not license to do whatever one wishes whenever the mood strikes.

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Reconsidering U.S. Recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s Capital

By Martin J. Raffel

How will I feel on May 14, 2018, when the United States, in honor of Israel’s 70th anniversary, relocates its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem? I’ve grappled with this question since December, when President Donald Trump announced U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and his intention to move the embassy.

I look at the move through a dual lens: First, I am a passionate, lifelong advocate of a secure, Jewish, and democratic Israel. More than just a supporter, I lived and worked in Israel for more than seven years, followed by a lengthy career in Jewish communal service, primarily devoted to building American governmental and public support for the Jewish state.

Second, I’m also a firm believer in the vision of two states, Israel and Palestine, existing side-by-side. While recognizing that the realization of this vision currently seems remote, in my writing and speaking I urge all sides to take concrete steps to preserve its future viability. I believe a two-state solution is the only pathway to peace. If Israel is unable to separate from the millions of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, I am convinced its Jewish and democratic identity — as well as its security — will be in grave jeopardy.

When confronting questions without clear-cut answers, I often look for insights from like-minded people. Although I am not a member of a Reform congregation, I was interested in seeing how the movement would respond to the change of U.S. policy on Jerusalem, as I’ve often found the movement’s leadership in sync with my own thinking on Middle East issues.

On Dec. 5, 2017, just after Trump’s announcement on Jerusalem and one day before the movement’s biennial began in Boston, Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) President Rabbi Rick Jacobs issued a statement on behalf of the movement’s many affiliates: “President Trump’s ill-timed, but expected, announcement affirms what the Reform Jewish Movement has long held: that Jerusalem is the eternal capital of the Jewish people and the State of Israel. Yet while we share the president’s belief that the U.S. embassy should, at the right time, be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, we cannot support his decision to begin preparing that move now, absent a comprehensive plan for the peace process.”

But after the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution condemning the recognition, the movement issued another statement, the tone of which was far softer than the first. “President Trump affirmed an age-old dream of the Jewish people … Jerusalem is, in fact, the capital of Israel. That is how it should and must be.” His statement went on to praise U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Nikki Haley for “affirming that American recognition of Jerusalem does not prejudge any final status issues including Jerusalem’s boundaries and does not preclude a two-state solution.”

Two December op-ed pieces by Reform leaders, both critical of the movement’s first statement, also contributed to my thinking. In Haaretz, former URJ president Rabbi Eric Yoffie wrote that he agreed with Trump for three reasons:

1) While Jerusalem is, and will remain, the capital of Israel regardless of U.S. policy, “it is comforting and gratifying when President Trump finally states what I know to be eternal and true.” Moreover, Yoffie expressed little sympathy for the Palestinians, whose leadership consistently has argued that Jews have no connection to Jerusalem.

2) Support for the president’s decision came not just from the Israeli right wing, but from across the political spectrum.

3) The president’s position did nothing to preclude negotiations that would result in the creation of a Palestinian state that would also have its capital in some part of the city.

In JTA, Rabbi Ammiel Hirsch, senior rabbi of Stephen Wise Free Synagogue in New York, wrote, “The world’s superpower finally did the right thing, and we opposed it — not on the principle, but on the ‘timing.’ Two thousand years later and it is still not the right time? As if there is a peace process that the Palestinians are committed to and pursuing with conviction.” He also acknowledged that “we are committed to a two-state solution that will require territorial compromises from both sides, including in Jerusalem.”

I recently contacted Yoffie and Hirsch, both longtime colleagues, to see if they still felt that way. They do, although Yoffie lamented “a major problem” — the continued absence of a well-thought-out peace plan.

I asked Hirsch whether, given his position in support of territorial compromise in Jerusalem, he would have welcomed some indication on Trump’s part that Palestinian interests in the city should be considered in future negotiations. “I probably would have welcomed that, too,” he told me.

For Reform Rabbi Bennett Miller of Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple in New Brunswick, the location of the embassy is critical. “This is a bold step on the part of the president,” he told me during a phone call. “I’d give him an A-plus if he avoids politicizing the Jerusalem issue.” That said, “if he chooses to place our embassy in a clearly disputed part of the city, I’d give him a C-minus.” Placement of the embassy requires a “strategic approach,” Miller went on to say.

“Unfortunately, this president tends not to think strategically.”

The views of these four leaders are not in alignment, but taken together, they helped me to accept the legitimacy of my ambivalence.

I’m skeptical about the president’s judgment on many things, not the least on an issue as complicated and sensitive as the Israel-Palestine divide. He seems to believe that recognizing Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and moving the embassy will contribute to the prospects for peace. Personally, I don’t see it, but I’d like nothing more than to be proven wrong.

On May 14 I will join Israelis, Jews, and people around the world in celebrating this important milestone toward international recognition that Israel’s holiest city is also its capital. My joy will be tempered, however, because the ultimate prize — peace — remains more elusive than ever.

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330-759-9502
Israel at 70: How 1948 Changed American Jews

By Ben Sales

One year after Israel’s establishment, in the dead of night, three students ascended a tower at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York and raised the Israeli flag.

The next morning, the Conservative rabbinical school’s administration took it down. That act of surreptitious Zionist protest was one of several at JTS during the years surrounding 1948, when Israel gained independence, Michael Greenbaum wrote in an essay in “Tradition Renewed,” a JTS history edited by Jack Wertheimer. Students supported the new Jewish state. However, the seminary’s chancellor, Louis Finkelstein, opposed Zionism.

But the students persisted. Once, they sang the Israeli anthem “Hatikvah” following graduation ceremonies. Another time, they convinced their colleagues at the Union Theological Seminary, the Protestant school next door, to play the anthem from their bell tower.

Today, nearly all American Jewish institutions are vocally, even passionately pro-Israel. But even in the years after the Jewish state won its independence 70 years ago, that feeling was not yet universal.

Before the Holocaust, Zionism itself was polarizing among American Jews. Many, especially in the Reform movement, felt support for a Jewish homeland would cause their loyalty to America to be called into question. The other side was represented by Louis Brandeis, the first Jewish Supreme Court justice, who saw no conflict between American values and Zionist aspirations.

By the time Israel declared independence on May 14, 1948, American Jews, scarred by images of the Holocaust and Nazism and inspired by newsreels of tanned kibbutzniks, were largely supportive of Zionism. But they were not yet turning out for organized political advocacy and mass tourism to Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Instead they were getting used to the idea of a Jewish sovereign state — gradually incorporating it into their culture, prayers and religious outlook.

“After the mid-1930s, the majority of American Jews had come to be positive one way or another about the idea of a Jewish homeland,” said Hasia Diner, director of the Goldstein-Goren Center for American Jewish History at New York University. “While 1948 on the one hand was very exciting and [had] lots of communal programming and celebrations, it was slightly anticlimactic in the sense that opposition had been gone for at least 10 years.”

North American Jewish support for Israel was turbocharged by the Truman administration’s quick recognition of the state, and by the Israeli army’s victory against the Arab states in its war of independence.

In February of that year, Golda Meirson (later Meir), raised $400,000 in one day (the equivalent of some $4 million today) on behalf of the provisional state on just one stop in Montreal. In the weeks following independence, she started a drive in the United States and Canada for $75 million more (or about $750 million in 2018 dollars).

“There was a sense that once America recognized the state, Zionism had won, and everyone wanted to link with the winners,” said Jonathan Sarna, a professor of Jewish history at Brandeis University. “It was growing very quickly, it took in all of these refugees, which solved that problem.”

After Israel secured its independence American Jews began to engage with the new nation in small ways. There was no rush of tourism, but American Jews would show their support by purchasing goods from Israel, reading books about Israel or holding Israeli dance classes in their community centers.

“Here’s this new state they had to kind of develop this relationship with, [and] the cultural realm was really the place it was happening,” Emily Alice Katz, author of the 2015 book “Bringing Zion Home,” told the New Books Network podcast. “There were these years in which it wasn’t as much about rallying the troops for these massive outpourings of aid or political influence, but it was more of this coming to know Israel.”

Part of the reticence to support Israel stemmed from the ethos of 1950s America, with its focus on suburban growth, the “melting pot” and assimilation. Against that backdrop, American Jews were trying to prove they belonged as social and cultural equals in American society. So again they were fearful of “dual loyalty” charges that could stem from vocal support for a Jewish state.

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$3.00 MEDIUM LOAF
Nevertheless, Israel began to show up in American Jewish religious practice. A Conservative prayer book published in 1949 had readings about Israel, but not the prayer for Israel that is now standard in many prayer books. Religious schools gradually shifted their pronunciation of Hebrew from European Ashkenazic to Sephardic-inflected Israeli. Non-Zionist religious leaders eventually were sidelined.

The biggest shift, Sarna said, was American Jewry viewing Judaism’s history as one of “destruction and rebirth.” That outlook posed the Holocaust and the establishment of Israel as its two poles and, Sarna said, remains dominant in American Jewish thinking today. He noted that Israel’s Holocaust Remembrance Day and its Independence Day are commemorated about a week apart by design.

“The theme of destruction and rebirth becomes very important in the lives of American Jews,” he said. “So much so that American Jews don’t know the history of Zionism going back, and have bought the idea that it’s all about the Holocaust being linked to the birth of the State of Israel.”

American Jews became more open in their celebration of Israel about a decade after 1948. “Exodus,” the 1958 novel by Leon Uris that painted Israel in heroic terms, was a national best-seller and was adapted into a popular movie in 1960 starring Paul Newman and Eva Marie Saint. In 1961, the Yiddish star Molly Picon starred in a Broadway musical about a visit by American Jews to Israel, “Milk and Honey,” which ran for over 500 performances. A few years later, the Israel Pavilion at the New York World’s Fair showcased the country’s charms. And as Cold War tensions continued into the 1960s, Israel began to be seen as a U.S. ally against the Soviet Union.

In 1967, Israel’s existence was again threatened by Arab armies. Between the anxious buildup to that war and Israel’s lightning victory, American Jewish acceptance of Israel had turned to adulation, placing the Jewish state at the center of their identity. The few dissenters are found on the non-Zionist left, among various haredi Orthodox movements, and in the quiet grumblings of some mainstream leaders and rabbis who think the emphasis on Israel has thwarted the development of distinctly American Judaism. “Slowly but surely, Israel became more important for American Jews,” Sarna said. “1967 is at once a reflection of Israel’s growing importance, but at the same time it is a great intensification of Israel’s centrality.”

Israeli Doctors Perform Lifesaving Spinal Surgeries in Ethiopia

By Josef Dolsten

Israeli doctors performed surgeries to fix severe spinal deformities as part of a weeklong medical mission to Ethiopia.

Eight doctors, two nurses and one physical therapist from the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem traveled on the mission last week to the city of Mekelle, in the African country’s north.

The Israeli medical team performed five surgeries at the Ayder Comprehensive Specialized Hospital, which serves some 8 million patients but does not have a spine surgeon, according to Dr. Josh Schroeder, a spine surgeon at Hadassah who led the mission with Dr. Allon Moses, the chairman of Hadassah’s Department of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Disease.

The patients, all aged 18 and under, had spine deformities so severe that they were causing potentially lethal complications, including pressure on internal organs and lung infections, Schroeder told JTA on Monday. The surgeries were complex, with some taking eight hours.

“The problem with pediatric cases is if you don’t treat them in time, they progress,” he said, “and these cases were so bad that if we wouldn’t have operated on these children, at least half of them would be dead by next year.”

In addition to performing the five surgeries, the Israelis also provided medical training to Ayder staff. The medical device company Medtronic donated the equipment necessary for the surgeries.

Schroeder said he was happy to have coordinated and participated in the mission.

“We’re working in a really privileged society, both in Israel and the United States, and things that we have at our fingertips don’t exist over there,” he said. “These people, you can really change their lives with a reasonably short intervention.”

The Hadassah and Ayder hospitals have a partnership dating back five years, with Israeli medical students doing rotations in Mekelle, and Ayder physicians receiving training and supplies from Hadassah.
Carole Safier Weimer to be Honored as the Guardian of the Menorah at June 3rd Event

Carole Safier Weimer will be honored by B’nai B’rith as the 2018 “Guardian of the Menorah” at a Tribute Banquet at 6:30 pm on Sunday, June 3, 2018 at Vernon’s Café, 720 Youngstown Warren Rd, Niles, Ohio 44446. The Guardian of the Menorah Tribute is presented to outstanding members of our community who have demonstrated, through service and commitment, their devotion to the causes of youth and the Jewish and general community.

Carole Safier Weimer of Youngstown is a retired special education teacher having spent most of her career at Liberty Local Schools. She previously taught in the Detroit area, at Youngstown Easter Seals, as an intervention specialist with special needs preschoolers, and at Akiva Academy for the first three years of its operation, and then she returned to her passion of teaching children with special needs at Liberty Schools. Mrs. Weimer earned a bachelor’s degree in education from the Ohio State University and a master’s degree in education from Youngstown State University, both with a major in education of students with special needs.

She currently serves as a Trustee and vice-President of the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County, and she is a member of the board of the Mahoning Valley Historical Society.

She is a member of the Greater Youngstown Area Board of the American Cancer Society and also serves on the American Cancer Society Board of Directors for the Ohio Northern Area. She is the volunteer co-lead for a seven state Relay for Life region.

In 2002, after her own battle with breast cancer, she was one of the two volunteers who brought a Relay for Life event to the Liberty Township area, and chaired it for many years. Mrs. Weimer was honored as the cancer survivor at the 2006 Cattle Baron’s Ball of the American Cancer Society. She has served as Co-Chair of the American Cancer Society’s Cattle Baron’s Ball from 2008 through this past year, and she will serve as its co-chair again next year.

Mrs. Weimer served on the Youngstown State University Board of Trustees from 2008-2017, having been appointed by Gov. Ted Strickland in 2008 and reappointed by Gov. John Kasich in 2012. She served as Chairperson of the Board from June 2014-June 2017. During her tenure, she served with four different Presidents of the University and had been a part of three Presidential Search Committees.

Mrs. Weimer was a member of the Mahoning County Board of Developmental Disabilities for more than 25 years, many of those years as Board Chair. Mrs. Weimer also has served as an American Cancer Society Ambassador for the Celebration on the Hill (Ohio 17th Congressional District) in 2002 and 2006. She previously served on the boards of Ballet Western Reserve (Board Chair), the Jewish Community Center, Jewish Family and Children’s Services, Leadership Mahoning Valley, Mahoning County Children’s Trust Fund, Mahoning Valley Camp Fire Council, Northeast Ohio Adoption Services, The Paula and Anthony Rich Center for Autism, and Yellow Brick Place Cancer Wellness center.

Carole has been married for 42 years to William Weimer, long time legal counsel for Phantom Fireworks. They raised two daughters in Youngstown and now have four grandchildren in Washington, DC and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Past recipients of the Guardian of the Menorah are Philip A. Levy, Sidney Moyer, Doris Burdman, Abe Harshman, Marvin Itts, Samuel D. Goldberg, MD, Aaron Grossman, Stanley Engel, Esther Marks, Dr. Sidney M. Berkowitz, Frank Kline, Murray Fibus, Sen. Harry Meshel, Atty. James L. Pazol, Bishop James W. Malone, Samuel A. Roth, Marvin Peskin, Bert Tamarkin, Lawrence J. Heselow, Florence Harshman, Dr. William Lippy, Terry Roth, Sam D. Roth, Paul Schwebel, Dr. Milton Greenberg, Bruce Sherman, Gerald Peskin, Louis R. Epstein, William Vegh, Irving Lev, Dr. Saul Friedman, Morris Simon, Sam Kooperman, Myra Benedikt, Susan Sokolov, Bruce Lev, Anita Shapiro, Dr. Richard Shapiro, Suzyn Schwebel Epstein, Marlene Holland, Mervyn Hollander, Jesse V. McClain, Michael Froomkin, Father George Balasko, Alan Mirkin, Howard Sniderman, Linda Sniderman, Carol Sherman, Richard Marlin and Bonnie Deutsch Burdman.

For further information or to make reservations please contact B’nai B’rith at (330) 783-1442.

Save time and money with our Gourmet-To-Go
Anytime, any occasion...always good!

View our menu at www.theupstairsrestaurant.com

The Small Toiletry Project has been very successful thanks to all of the donors and their generous responses in bringing home unused hotel toiletries from their travels.

Every month every family at the food pantry has received a bag containing the necessities for everyday living — shampoos, conditioners, lotions, razors, soaps, cleansing gels, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and more.

The items can be dropped off at any area synagogue or the JCC. Linda Palumbo, who started the project, will periodically pick them up and arrange for their distribution.
David & Avshalom • Life and Death in the Forest of Angels

By Bernard Mann

Time melts in the heat of history as Bernard Mann’s David bursts out of statuary and the dust of old scripts into our palpable moment. Young and vibrant, surviving a near-death experience with the spear of Saul, David escapes the court, fleeing into his destiny. On his journey with trusted companions, we re-learn sacred geography: how and why places were named as we know them, the land alive, newly enriched for us as men knew it then, with the close natural world, migrations and wildlife, inspiring David’s songs. Mann understands this complex warrior-poet, revealing why David’s imprint on the world of his day still resonates dramatically for us.

Inevitable battles reek their rancour, resounding a personal courage we still wonder at. Mann has a gift for drawing us into that time in a reality of goose-flesh experience.

Saul’s cruelty becomes clear as families of anyone against him perish. The Edomite betrayal, how Evyatar became David’s priest, that past now part of our psyche.

Omens of David’s destiny, the part played by the sword of Goliath, will fascinate the reader.

David’s intelligence in planning and kingship are another proof of the leader in him, his power to attract fealty and devotion obvious, no wonder he glows through the centuries in spite of his human foibles. His times were the most impactful on all peoples in the emergence from iron to bronze age, the riddle of the forging of new swords so absorbing to read here. The bread we take for granted becomes the miracle it was as we understand the intensity of its life-sustaining creation. Simple everyday acts are sanctified in this impact of developing... Bernard Mann restores the wonder and leaves us much to revalue as a legacy of this perceptive book. David’s self-governing refuge of Ziklag thrives for us here.

Avshalom’s horrific end beckons as a Nemesis in so much of David’s haunted story.

Moments of tension are cleverly broken, with an inspired literary device of letters, many of them from the remarkable women of David’s time, expanding the perspectives of the story. The 23rd psalm, beloved through centuries, evolves in these pages.

How shall we remember David? He will certainly captivate you as his vulnerable humanity and fierce power grip you, remain with you, after this literary adventure.

The arrival of Solomon, with his huge dominance of landscape and legacy, is a fitting finality to David’s world contribution, though the young David will remain so powerfully within our memory, as a gift of Mann’s writing, to our consciousness.

Israeli Pastry Chef at Akiva

By Nancy Burnett

Partnership2Gether sponsored the recent visit of Natali Marciano, a renowned pastry chef from Akko, Israel. She spent the morning decorating cupcakes with Akiva students.

Chef Natali helped the Youngstown area Jewish community celebrate Israel at 70 with her unique desserts. She showcased her talents, presented demonstrations, and shared recipes with all guests.

Pictured here are children from the Akiva Academy preparing and icing their cupcakes.

Natali is traveling the country as a part of Partnership2GETHER.
Marc Rubin to Receive Abe Harshman Leadership Award

Marc Rubin, this year’s recipient of the Abe Harshman Leadership award, describes himself as an average guy. “If someone asks you to do something and you believe in it, then you just keep going on and on,” he says. “Once you get started it just falls in place, really.”

The Harshman award is given annually at the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation annual meeting to an individual who has shown leadership and service to the Federation and/or its affiliated agencies.

Originally from Boston, Mass., Rubin came to Youngstown in 1962 to study at Youngstown State University. He stayed after earning a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering.

He and his wife Karen are the parents of four children - Brigitt Burk and Jason, Judd and Brady Rubin—and the grandparents of 13.

Rubin began volunteering with the Federation and with Congregation Rodef Sholom about 20 years ago. At the time, his children were old enough to not need constant care, and he felt it was time to “get back to the Jewish community.”

He has volunteered on the Human Services Board and Congregation Rodef Sholom building committees.

“I’ve been in construction all my life so it was the perfect spot to help out with my knowledge,” he said.

His mother was a resident of Heritage Manor for about seven years.

“So I knew the facility,” he said. “I grew to love it and to respect what they did there.” He has devoted a significant amount of volunteer time to it. He continues to volunteer because he enjoys it, and it’s an outlet from his job as an electrical engineer. Among other projects, Rubin has been involved with the social room expansion at Levy Gardens and the remodeling of Heritage Manor about 10 years ago. He’s a past president of the board of Congregation Rodef Sholom and current president of Heritage Manor’s human service board. Rubin has also volunteered for the Liberty Relay for Life. He’s a past president of the Mahoning Valley Society of Professional Engineers and served on multiple committees for that organization. He’s also a past president of Mahoning Valley Technical Society.

Rubin will receive a Judaic memento and up to $1,000 to be used for a subsidy for a federation-related conference up to the end of the following year. If not used in this manner, the balance of the annual income of the Abe Harshman Leadership Endowment fund (5% of the principal balance as of January 1 annually) will be distributed to the annual campaign in memory of Abe Harshman.

Samie Winick Receives the Marks Award

The Marks Award is given in honor of Esther Marks, who lived her life with a Jewish heart and with passion. She understood Tzedakah, justice and righteousness. Her family created this award to encourage others to follow in her footsteps, and to honor those who have done so.

Samie Winick fits the bill. She says volunteering is a part of who she is.

She grew up in a family that gave freely of their time to help others. She helped out when her mother, Elaine Winick, volunteered. And she saw the legacy of philanthropy left by her grandmother, Dora Schwobel. “It’s just something that was instilled in me from the beginning,” she said.

Winick earned a degree in education from Kent State University, and was a special education teacher in the Youngstown City School District for 30 years.

She often volunteers on projects centered on children, education and the environment. “I like to get my hands dirty,” she said. “I like things that are active.”

Winick was instrumental in the Peace Chair Project and Healing Hearts note cards to benefit Sojourner House. For the past 12 years, she has volunteered with the Youngstown Area Children’s Book Festival. Currently, she is president of the Garden Club of Youngstown and volunteers at Fellows Riverside Gardens where she has been involved for 25 years in their youth gardening and education initiatives such as the Children’s Vegetable Gardening Program and the Family Garden. Winick also volunteers with the Family Garden Program at Akron Children’s Hospital and with Making Kids Count in Boardman.

Her involvement with the Youngstown City School students didn’t end with her retirement. She participates in the Adopt-A-School Program, has raised funds and coordinated volunteers for the Paul C. Bunn school garden, and raised funds and sponsored creative arts and academic enrichment programs that benefit students, including a trip to the African-American History Museum in Washington, D.C.

Winick also volunteers with 100 Women Who Care Mahoning Valley and the Guiding Circle of the Fund for Women and Girls, housed at The Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley.

In recent years, Winick has sought to more fully live the tenets of her faith, and strengthen her bond to the Jewish Community. “For many years, I was very involved in volunteering out in the community and not quite as much with the Jewish organizations,” she said. “And then in recent years I really felt a strong call and need to do more for the Jewish community.”

This commitment has included accepting board positions with Hillel at Kent State University, and the JCRC of The Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, as well as volunteering with Congregation Rodef Sholom Sisterhood, and sponsoring enrichment programs for the students at Akiva Academy.

Winick recently accepted nomination to the board of trustees for Congregation Rodef Sholom and the Chairmanship of Compass’ PR and Fundraising Committee.

2018 ANNUAL MEETING
May 17, 2018 | 6:00 p.m.
Jewish Community Center
505 Gypsy Lane Youngstown, Ohio 44504
www.jewishyoungstown.org
Author Renate Frydman to Visit Poland Public Library

A special author event featuring Renate Frydman will be at noon Wednesday, May 23, at the Poland branch of the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County.

Frydman is the author of "Anschel's Story: Determined to Survive," which tells the story of her late husband's survival in Nazi-occupied Poland. The author will sign and sell books.

The event, which is sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation and the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County Literary Society, is free but reservations are required. Call 330-740-6086 to reserve a spot.

"Anschel's Story: Determined to Survive" is a heart-stopping journey told in first person, which describes unusual courage and uncanny luck. It is the true story of a young teenager who lost everyone and everything during the Holocaust. He fought to live on in spite of ghettos, fatal line-ups, enslavement in work camps and years of survival as a partisan in Polish forests.

Renate Frydman, Ph.D., has been writing since the age of eight, and worked as a contributing writer for the Dayton Daily News, a Cox newspaper, for thirty years. She has been involved with Holocaust education and remembrance since the 1960s. Renate is curator of and docent for the Holocaust Exhibit, Prejudice & Memory at the Museum of the U.S. Air Force in Dayton which has over a million visitors a year. Renate is producer and interviewer for the video series "Faces of the Holocaust," which was produced at Wright State University in 1985 and 1995. The series is used at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and throughout the world. She has been a member of the Ohio Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education since its inception in 1986. Renate founded the Holocaust Education Committee and Dayton Holocaust Resource Center and remains active with both. She emphasizes the harm that comes with racism and bullying in all her speeches to students. "Anschel's Story: Determined to Live" is her tribute to the man she was married to for fifty-one years.
CAMP JCC 2018

For more information contact Emily Blau, Program Manager at 330.746.3250 or eblau@jewishyoungstown.org

BBYO Open Recruitment

Attention all 8th graders! Now is your time to get active in Youngstown’s AZA and BBG chapters.

To find out more, contact any member you know or City Director: Emily Blau at 330.746.3250 ext. 152 or eblau@jewishyoungstown.org.

Local Chapters:
- Dodi Li BBG #69 Girls, grades 8-12
- Sigmund Nisenson AZA (Siggy) #169 Boys, grades 8-12

Afterschool Art: Blossoming Artists

Flowers are in bloom and inspirations for art-making are all around us! Join the curator of the Thomases Art Gallery of the JCC, Katelynd Gibbons, for an afterschool program exploring the art of still life painting and the joys of working in bright spring and summer hues.

Dates: May 8, 9 & 10
Time: 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.
Location: Adult Lounge
Cost: $15/Member | $20/Non Member

Register at jccyoungstown.org or contact the Bursar’s Office at 330.746.3250 ext. 195

Liz Rubino Studios

For more information on the studio offerings, contact Liz Rubino at 330.509.0891 or coaching@lizrubino.com.

Liz Rubino offers private sessions in voice, acting, drama therapy, junior voice, and junior acting. Voice lessons are conducted primarily online.

Voice Lessons:
- Regular Lessons | 55 mins
- Cost: $49/Member | $65/Non Member
- Junior Lessons | 30 mins
- Cost: $30/Member | $45/Non Member

To register, contact the Bursar’s Office at 330.746.3250 ext. 195

JCC School of Dance

For more information on the studio offerings, contact Eri Raib-Ptichkin at 330.333.2219 or jccschoolofdance@jewishyoungstown.org

Specialty Camps Campers entering grades 1-8

These camps are either one or two weeks, and provide campers with experiences focused on specific areas of interest. We are offering several amazing specialty camps this summer including Martial Arts, 3D Printing, YSU Playmakers Theatre, Lego Camp, Mad Science, and Horseback Riding.

Advanced Specialty Camps - Campers entering grades 5-8

These camps are also either one or two weeks, and are specifically designed to inspire our middle school age campers with more diverse and challenging experiences. These camps include Broadway 360 with Liz Rubino and Backpacking Wilderness Camp.

To register for camp visit jccyoungstown.org/camp

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!

Summer Session I:
- Wednesday, May 9 - Friday, June 1

Summer Session II:
- Monday, July 30 - Wednesday, August 22

Parent & Me Program

Music & Movement (18-36 months)

A 30-minute class that focuses on parent led activities that build coordination, listening skills and social awareness. Learning based play with a variety of props and musical styles keep the tots active.

Summer Session I: Wednesdays 5:30 - 6:15 p.m.
Summer Session II: Mondays 5:30 - 6:15 p.m.

Creative Movement Program

Creative Movement Tumbling Fun (Ages 4-6)

A 45-minute combined level Creative Movement class that teaches the beginning principles of jazz dance and tumbling in a safe and controlled environment. The fun includes somersault and backbend variations and stretching.

Summer Session I & II: Wednesdays 4:45 - 5:30 p.m.

Dance Curriculum Program

Ballet I & II (Ages 7-12)

A 45-minute class that emphasizes the basic principles of ballet like body positions and movements. This class introduces balance skills and challenges students to remember patterns and choreography.

Summer Session I: Fridays 5:30 - 6:15 p.m.
Summer Session II: Tuesdays 5:30 - 6:15 p.m.

Jazz I & Jazz II (Ages 7-12)

A 45-minute class that teaches the art of classic jazz dancing focusing on body lines, coordination, proper technique, and flexibility. This class aids in the development of spatial and kinesthetic awareness.

Summer Session I: Fridays 4:45 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Summer Session II: Tuesdays 4:45 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Tap I (Ages 7-10)

A 45-minute class that introduces students to the percussive dance style known as tap. Dancers gain listening skills and develop rhythm while moving to the beat and creating music with their feet. Summer Session I: Fridays 4:00 - 4:45 p.m. Summer Session II: Tuesdays 4:00 - 4:45 p.m.

Tap II (Ages 11-12)

A 45-minute advanced tap class that focuses on the technique of tap dance to improve sound quality and speed. In this class, variations of basic tap steps are learned and practiced. Summer Session I & II: Wednesdays 4:00 - 4:45 p.m.

Adult Dance Program (Ages 16+)

Ballet

A 45-minute class that introduces adults to the basic principles of ballet, including body positions and movements. This class improves posture and balance, and challenges students to remember patterns. Class is taught at Advanced Beginner to Intermediate level. Summer Session I: Wednesdays 7:00 - 7:45 p.m. Summer Session II: Mondays 7:00 - 7:45 p.m.

Tap

A 45-minute class for adults to explore the percussive dance style known as tap. Dancers gain listening skills and develop rhythm while moving to the beat and creating music with their feet. Class is taught at an Intermediate level. Summer Session I: Wednesdays 6:15 - 7:00 p.m. Summer Session II: Mondays 6:15 - 7:00 p.m.

To register for JCC School of Dance contact the Bursar’s Office 330.746.3250 ext. 195

JCC School of Music

This exciting program features piano, violin, guitar, percussion, and voice lessons housed at the JCC!

To register for JCC School of Music lessons, contact the JCC Bursar’s Office: 330.746.3250 ext. 195

EARLY LEARNING CENTER

For more information on the Early Learning Center, contact Jennifer Bracken, Coordinator of Early Learning, at 330.746.3250 ext. 125 or jbracken@jewishyoungstown.org.

Ages: 6 weeks - Prekindergarten

Hours:
Monday - Friday
Half day: 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Extended day options:
6:45 a.m.- 6:00 p.m.

Infant

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

Toddler

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

Preschool

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

School Age Care

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

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

*Coming Soon: NEW Infant and Toddler Playground

FITNESS

For more information on fitness programs, contact Sheila Cornell at 330.746.3250 ext. 182 or scornell@jewishyoungstown.org.

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

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To register for personal training, contact the Bursar’s Office: 330.746.3250 ext. 195

Pickleball Play Schedule

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

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

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

Date: Fridays
Time: 4:00–5:30 p.m.

Wallyball

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

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

Racquetball

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

Ping-Pong

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

Wellness Program: Area on Aging Agency

Wellness Specialist and Certified Dementia Practitioner and Gerontologist, Amy Plant, will join us for a free adult vision screening provided by the Area Agency on Aging.

Date: Friday, May 18
Location: Multi-Purpose Room
Time: 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
Free Event

Register at jccyoungstown.org or with the Bursar’s Office at 330.746.3250 ext. 195 by Wednesday, May 16

New Class- Taekwondo (Ages 8+)

Master Tom Ritchie is a Kukkiwon Certified 4th Degree Black Belt. He has been teaching Olympic Style Taekwondo to children and adults for over a decade. In addition to being a great workout, Taekwondo helps to sharpen reflexes, improve coordination, stamina and balance, and increase strength and flexibility.

Date: Mondays and Thursdays beginning June 4
Time: 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Location: JCC Dance Studio
Cost: $74/Member per month
$99/Non Member per month
$45 uniform cost
Sign up for 6 months and receive a free uniform!

Register online at jccyoungstown.org or contact the Bursar’s Office at 330.746.3250 ext. 195

New Class- SilverSneakers® Boom

Challenge yourself with a blended fusion of cardio, athletic exercises, yoga and Pilates all in one class! This total body workout will improve strength, flexibility, endurance and balance.

Date: Fridays
Time: 10:00-10:55 a.m.

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

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

To enroll in any of our group or private swim lessons contact the JCC Bursar at 330.746.3250 ext. 195.

P.A.L.S.+ Private Swimming Lessons

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

SwimSafe 500

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

Group Lessons

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

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

Learn-To- Swim: Ages 3+

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

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

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

Level 3: Children will focus on breaststroke, butterfly, and diving while refining freestyle and backstroke techniques.

Level 4: Children will continue to refine the four swim strokes and diving.

Date: Wednesdays
Time: 4:30-5:00 p.m.
Date: Saturdays
Time: 8:55-9:25 a.m., 10:05-10:35 a.m. or 10:40-11:10 a.m.

Private Swim Lessons

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

1:1 student/teacher ratio
Four 30-minute lessons
Cost: $82/Member | $110/Non Member

Afterschool Family Fun in the Pool

Dive-In Movie: Ferdinand

Relax in our indoor pool while watching the movie Ferdinand. Pizza and refreshments will be served.

Date: Sunday, May 20
Time 3:00-5:00 p.m.
Cost: Free/Member | $5/Non Member
Register online at jccyoungstown.org or contact the Bursar’s Office at 330.746.3250 ext. 195
Step It Up Flow
You will be walking the length of the pool while incorporating exercises to build muscle, improve balance and enhance flexibility. The last 15 minutes of class will focus on improving strength, range of motion, balance and endurance. No swimming ability required.

Date: Monday & Friday  
Time: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Date: Tuesday  
Time: 1:15.- 2:15 p.m.

Youth Tennis Team Beginner Clinic
Beginning June 4  
Date: Mondays (Ages 8-10)  
Date: Wednesdays (Ages 11-18)  
Time: 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
Free/Member

Adult Beginner Clinics
Beginning June 8  
Date: Fridays  
Time: 6:00-7:00 p.m.  
$100/Member | $133/Non Member

Men’s Open Play Tennis
Beginning June 4  
Date: Mondays  
Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.  
Free/Member | $10/Non Member

Women’s Open Play Tennis
Beginning June 7  
Date: Thursdays  
Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.  
Free/Member | $10/Non Member

Footwork Clinic
Beginning July 9  
Date: Mondays & Wednesdays  
Time: 1:00-2:00 p.m.  
$50/Member | $67/Non Member

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

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

Swim Team Tutors
1:1 student/coach ratio  
Four 30-Minute Lessons  
$82/Member | $110/Non Member

To enroll in private swim team tutoring or beginner group lessons, contact the Bursar’s Office at 330.746.3250 ext. 195

Summer Swim Team
An informational open house will be held Monday, May 7 in the Multi-Purpose Room of our Main Campus from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The Swim Team is part of the Youngstown Swim League. Practices will be held at our Logan Campus starting Monday, June 4. Participants must be between the ages of 4-18, and able to swim one length of the pool independently.

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. - Advanced swimmers  
10:30 - 11:30 a.m. - Swimmers under 10 and new swimmers  
4:30 p.m. - Swim meets every Wednesday in June & July  
$100/Member for one child  
$150/Member with multiple children  
$150/Non Member

Register at jccyoungstown.org or contact the Bursar’s Office at 330.746.3250 ext. 195

Family Late Night Movie & Swim
Emoji Movie  
Date: Saturday, June 23  
Time: 7:30-10:00 p.m.  
Cost: Free/Member | $5/Non Member

Register online at jccyoungstown.org or contact the Bursar’s Office at 330.746.3250 ext. 195

2018 JCC Dash and Splash 5k and Family Fun Walk/Run
We’ll DASH from the JCC Main Campus on Gypsy Lane in Youngstown and end at the JCC Logan Campus on Logan Way where we’ll SPLASH into our outdoor pool, and enjoy a BASH with food and entertainment for the entire family.

Prizes awarded for top 3 overall finishers and top 3 in each age category.

*Day of race registration and packet pick-up begins at 7:00 a.m. at the JCC Logan Campus (3245 Logan Way, Youngstown, OH 44505)

Runners will be bussed from the Logan Campus to the Main Campus for the start of the race.

Date: Sunday, June 24  
Start time: 9:00 a.m. for all runners & walkers  
Cost: $25 pre-registration | $30 race day registration | $10 children 10 and under

Register online at jccyoungstown.org/dash or contact the Bursar’s Office at 330.746.3250 ext. 195

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

Join us on a fun-filled bus trip to Cleveland or Pittsburgh to see a show and have dinner. It’s a wonderful way to meet new friends. Members and Non Members are welcome! Register online at jccyoungstown.org or with the Bursar’s Office at 330.746.3250 ext. 195.

Beautiful – The Carole King Musical

This musical tells the inspiring true story of King’s remarkable rise to stardom, from being part of a hit songwriting team with her husband Gerry Goffin, to her relationship with fellow writers and best friends Cynthia Weil and Barry Mann, to becoming one of the most successful solo acts in popular music history. Price includes orchestra seat, transportation and tip for the bus driver. Dinner will be on your own. Space is limited and seating location is on a first come, first serve basis.

**Aladdin**

Based on the 1992 animated film, Disney’s Aladdin tells the story of a street-smart commoner whose whole life changes when he meets a magical genie who can grant him three wishes. Aladdin wants the hand of Princess Jasmine, but that means becoming something he’s not and going toe to toe with Jafar who wants the genie for his own evil plans. Price includes orchestra seat, transportation and tip for the bus driver. Dinner will be on your own. Space is limited and seating location is on a first come, first serve basis.

**Movie and Lunch Bunch: Sully**

On January 15, 2009, Capt. Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger (Tom Hanks) tries to make an emergency landing in New York’s Hudson River after US Airways Flight 1549 strikes a flock of geese. Miraculously, all of the 155 passengers and crew survive the harrowing ordeal, and Sullenberger becomes a national hero in the eyes of the public and the media. Despite the accolades, the famed pilot now faces an investigation that threatens to destroy his career and reputation. A light lunch will be served. This film is rated PG-13.

**My Big Fat Reform Wedding… in Israel**

Gili and Uri Hershkovitz are Israeli Shlichim in Akron and Canton Ohio. After a year of research, they recently got married in a Reform Jewish wedding ceremony, which actually isn't officially recognized by the state of Israel. In this lecture they will be discussing the reasons they chose this path, the difference between recognized and unrecognized marriage also known as “civil marriage” and the process that Israel is going through in this field. A light dinner will be served.

**Diaper Packing with Making Kids Count**

The Making Kids Count Diaper Bank Volunteers repackage diapers in quantities of 25 diapers per size with saran wrap and labels. This ensures that more people are able to receive a pack of diapers and that the diapers are being distributed as more of an “emergency” supply. Volunteers wrap 10,000 diapers into 400 packs a month!

**Churchill United Methodist Food Pantry**

The CHUM Food Pantry aims to feed families in Liberty Township that are in need of extra assistance. Since first starting in 2016, the pantry now feeds over 70+ families. Volunteers will help distribute food and make guests feel welcome during their visit.

**Israel’s 70th Anniversary Gala Dinner and Theatrical Presentation**

This gala event, the conclusion of a year-long celebration of Israel, will feature the traveling show, “The Wandering Israeli.” Based on a true story, “The Wandering Israeli,” with its special mix of theater, storytelling, live music and a refreshing dose of humor, brings to stage an unforgettable Israeli adventure. The café on Rothschild Blvd., a lone soldier on the Kibbutz, winding trails atop the Andes Mountains, drifting canoes down the Congo River, a friendly Jordanian backpackers hostel… Join actor/storyteller Elad Shippony and musicians Sagi Eiland and Eran Edri as they journey down the lesser-known pathways of modern-day Israeli culture.

**Volunteer Opportunities**

Social Action Committee of the Jewish Community Relations Council
330.746.3250 ext. 123
Swilscheck@jewishyoungstown.org

Register online at jccyoungstown.org or contact the Bursar’s Office at 330.746.3250 ext. 195
**SENIOR OUTREACH**

If you or someone you know is over 67 years old and could use a friendly visit, a helping hand, or just information about our Jewish community, please contact Senior Outreach Coordinator Darlene Muller at 330.942.6270 or dmuller@jewishyoungstown.org.

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**RENTALS**

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

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

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

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

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

**Pool Party**
Swim in our full-size heated pool and enjoy time at our onsite pavilion. Maximum party size is 50. Lifeguards will staff the pool at all times.

**Game Time-Birthday Bash**
Play basketball, volleyball, kickball, soccer, or wiffleball in our gymnasium then enjoy time in our party room.

**Pavilion at Logan Campus**
A large, covered, outdoor pavilion with round tables you can decorate to suit your theme. Invited guests who are non members must pay price of admission. Maximum capacity is 50. Lifeguards will staff the pool at all times.

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**LOGAN CAMPUS RENTALS**

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

**Pool Party**
Swim in our full-size heated pool and enjoy time at our onsite pavilion. Maximum party size is 50. Lifeguards will staff the pool at all times.

**Under the Sea Splish Splash Mermaid Bash**
Experience swimming and storytelling with the JCC Mermaid in our pool and enjoy time in our party room.

**Pool Bash**
Swim in our full-size heated pool and enjoy our onsite pavilion. We will provide pizza, chips and drinks. Maximum party size is 50. Lifeguards will staff the pool at all times.

**Pavilion Time: 12:00-3:00 p.m. or 4:00-7:00 p.m.**
Cost: $75/Member | $100/Non Member
$150/Member | $200/Non Member - all day rental

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**Upcoming Exhibit: Images from Domestic Bliss and Other Selected Works by Susan Copich**

**Exhibit Dates: May 14 – July 12**
The exhibition of photographs from the acclaimed series, Domestic Bliss, explores domesticity, marriage, and motherhood through a uniquely dark and witty lens featuring the artist herself and her family members as subjects. Copich is a Youngstown native and will be speaking at the exhibit opening reception on May 22. This event is free and open to everyone. Light refreshments will be served.

**Opening Reception**
**Date: Tuesday, May 22**
**Time: 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.**

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**The Thomases Family Endowment of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation Art Gallery**
Israel’s First 70 Years Have Surprised the World

By Daniel Gordis

In November 1947, one day prior to the expected United Nations vote on partitioning Palestine into Jewish and Arab states, the CIA urged President Harry Truman not to throw his weight behind the idea. America would have to defend the new Jewish state when it faltered, the CIA’s secret memorandum warned, adding that “the Jews will be able to hold out no longer than two years.”

Several months later, David Ben-Gurion was about to declare the establishment of the State of Israel. Seated among the dozen or so men who would determine the fate of the state-to-be, he famously turned to one of his top military commanders, Yigael Yadin, and asked him if he thought a new Jewish state would survive the military onslaught that the Arabs would inevitably launch. Yadin, who would later serve as chief of staff of the Israeli Defense Forces, replied that he thought the Jewish state would have a 50-50 chance.

Today, those bleak assessments feel like ancient history. As the modern Israeli state celebrates 70 years, the prevailing sentiment is one of extraordinary accomplishment. American Jewish leaders were incensed in 1948 when Ben-Gurion came to the U.S. and spoke about the fledgling state as the new center of the Jewish world; today, that status is nowhere in doubt.

In 1948, there were some 650,000 Jews in Israel, who represented about 5 percent of the world’s Jews. Today, Israel’s Jewish population has grown ten-fold and stands at about 6.8 million people. Some 43 percent of the world’s Jews live in Israel; this population overtook American Jews several years ago and is now the world’s largest Jewish community. Israel’s birthrate, even among secular Jews, is higher than that of any other OECD country, and significantly higher than that of American Jews (who now account for some 34 percent of Jews worldwide).

Beyond mere survival, the other challenge that the young Jewish state faced was feeding and housing the hundreds of thousands of Jews who were flocking to its borders. At times, financial collapse seemed imminent. Food was rationed and black markets developed. Israel had virtually no heavy machinery for building the infrastructure that it desperately needed. Until Germany paid Holocaust reparations, the young state’s financial condition was perilous.

Today, that worry also feels like a relic from another time. Israel is not only a significant military power (and in the region, a superpower) but also a formidable economic machine. A worldwide center for technology that has more companies listed on the Nasdaq than any country other than the U.S., Israel’s economy barely hiccupped in 2008. The shekel, its currency, is strong. Like other countries, Israel has a worrisome income gap between rich and poor; but fears of an economic collapse have vanished.

Israel has become an important cultural center, vastly disproportionately for a country whose population approximates that of New York City. When the five finalists for the Man Booker literary prize were announced last year, two were Israelis who write in Hebrew: David Grossman and Amos Oz. Grossman won. Ever since S.Y. Agnon received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1966, the Israeli literary scene has been punching far above its weight.

When the state was founded, Ben-Gurion sought to block television altogether; he thought it would have a deleterious impact on Israeli education and culture. He failed in that attempt, but for decades, Israel had but one television channel. Today, Americans and Europeans alike wait hungrily for new episodes of Israeli shows like “Fauda,” while others (like “Homeland” and “The A Word”) have been remade into American and British series.

On the occasion of Independence Day, Israelis are fully conscious—and deeply proud — of the fact that their country has exceeded the ambitions of the men and women who founded it seven decades ago.

Yet some of the initial worries and troubles of those early years persist. Militarily, the looming enemy is not the Palestinians (with whom peace remains utterly elusive), but Iran. The Israeli military is bracing for a possible Iranian missile or drone attack. International support for Israel remains a concern: In 1948, many American Jews were deeply conflicted about the creation of a Jewish state. Solidarity eventually grew — but today the relationship has become increasingly fraught.

And Israelis get a stark reminder this week that some of the social ills that have long plagued the country persist. Several days ago, Haaretz, Israel’s “paper of record,” asked its writers which Israeli song they most despise. When one replied that he hates the national anthem, a furious Twitter discussion ensued. At one point, a woman annoyed at having her focus on security dismissed by the Haaretz editors, tweeted, “It’s thanks to my ideology that you live like a king in this country and can write and distribute your absurd newspaper with no impediments.” Amos Schocken, Haaretz’s editor and the son of its previous editor, retorted (in a tweet he subsequently deleted): “You insolent woman. My family was leading Zionism when you were still climbing on trees. Haaretz has been in the Schocken family for 83 years; we did fine without your ideology and will continue to.”

Seventy years after its founding, Israel’s once-ruling Labor party has virtually no political influence and what seems almost certain is that it will be not Ben-Gurion’s founding Labor party but the once marginal and now powerful political right that will rule this still young and fascinating nation for the foreseeable future.
J.K. Rowling Explains Anti-Semitism and It’s Magical

By Ron Kampeas

There’s an unsettling debate underway in Britain about whether the right or the left is more anti-Semitic, and videos of Jewish members of Parliament reading out some of the anti-Semitic invective they’ve suffered have gone viral.

J.K. Rowling, the non-Jewish author of the Harry Potter series, decided to weigh in on Wednesday, defining anti-Semitism for her 14.4 million Twitter followers.

She posted a screen grab of a non-Jew gentile-splaining what Judaism is — “Judaism is a religion not a race” — and gently explained why this is hardly relevant to defining anti-Jewish bias.

“Most UK Jews in my timeline are currently having to field this kind of crap, so perhaps some of us non-Jews should start shouldering the burden,” she said.

“Antisemites think this is a clever argument, so tell us, do: were atheist Jews exempted from wearing the yellow star? #antisemitism.”

Rowling's head-smacking was almost audible as she sorted through responses to that tweet, including one that said arguing against anti-Semitism was “culturally insensitive” to Muslims.

“When you only understand bigotry in terms of ‘pick a team’ and get a mind-boggling response,” she said.

She also reacted with impatience — attaching a GIF of an exasperated Hugh Laurie — when someone argued that Arabs can’t be anti-Semitic because they are Semites.

“The ‘Arabs are semitic too’ hot takes have arrived,” she said.

“Split hairs. Debate etymology,” she said in a tweet attached to a definition of anti-Semitism as “hostility to or prejudice against Jews.” “Gloss over the abuse of your fellow citizens by attacking the actions of another country’s government. Would your response to any other form of racism or bigotry be to squirm, deflect or justify?”

Rowling got in so deep, she forgot for a moment that her followers mainly want to chat about, well, Harry Potter. “How wonderful that you’re experiencing it for the first time!” one said to another who posted that he had just started reading the series. “Enjoy!!”

Rowling quoted the reply, and said: “For a second there I thought @jessiebaacho was telling me it was wonderful that I was experiencing antisemitism for the first time... then I realised she was responding to somebody who just finished reading Harry Potter for the first time #ReadCarefullyBeforeCursing.”

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**Share the Joy!**

New baby? Engagement? Wedding? Graduation (from high school, college or grad school)?

**Jewish Journal** readers want to read about your simchas. Families are invited to submit information and photographs to The Jewish Journal. Please be sure to include parents and grandparents names (if appropriate); names of schools/colleges and majors or degrees, any honors awarded, and future plans; positions held by brides- and grooms- to be. Please send your news to journal@jewishyoungstown.org. High resolution photos provided digitally offer the best reproduction.
YAJF Celebrates Israel at 70 with Gala Event

By Elise Skolnick

The Youngstown Area Jewish Federation will present an Israel at 70 Gala Event at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 10 at Temple El Emeth. This event, the conclusion of a year-long celebration of Israel, will feature the traveling show, “The Wandering Israeli.”

Based on a true story, “The Wandering Israeli,” with its special mix of theater, storytelling, live music and a refreshing dose of humor brings to stage an unforgettable Israeli adventure. This Israeli theatrical-musical production brings to stage the unseen sides of modern-day Israeli culture.

The cafés on Rothschild Blvd., a lone soldier on the Kibbutz, winding trails atop the Andes Mountains, drifting canoes down the Congo River, a friendly Jordanian backpackers hostel... Join actor/storyteller Elad Shippony and musicians Sagi Eiland and Eran Edri as they journey down the lesser-known pathways of modern-day Israeli culture.

This highly-acclaimed show has been performed over 600 times across the country and regularly tours Jewish and Israeli communities around the world with its Hebrew, English and Spanish versions.

The cost is $48 per person, which includes a full Israeli dinner. Reservations are due by May 3 to Nancy Senteilik at nsentelik@jewishyoungstown.org

Israel at 70 Gala Event

Thursday, May 10, 2018

Temple El Emeth
3970 Logan Way, Youngstown, OH

$48 PER PERSON FOR FULL ISRAELI DINNER AND A SHOW COCKTAILS & DINNER 6:30 PM.
One-Fifth of U.S. Millennials are Unaware of the Holocaust

By Josefin Dolsten

Over a fifth of millennials in the United States have not heard of or are unsure if they have heard of the Holocaust, a study found.

The survey, which was commissioned by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (also known as the Claims Conference), found that many Americans were unaware of basic facts about the Holocaust.

The results were released on Yom Hashoah, or Holocaust Remembrance Day. The study included 1,350 interviews with Americans aged 18 and over.

While 6 million Jews are estimated killed in the Holocaust, 31 percent of all respondents and 41 percent of millennials, aged 18 to 34, believe that number is 2 million or less, according to the survey.

Forty-five percent of all respondents could not name a concentration camp or ghetto from World War II, and 41 percent could not identify Auschwitz, a network of Nazi concentration and extermination camps.

The study found that the vast majority of respondents support Holocaust education. Ninety-three percent of the respondents said that all students should learn about the Holocaust in school and 80 percent said it was important to educate about the Holocaust to prevent it from happening again.

Still, 58 percent of respondents believe that “something like the Holocaust could happen again.”

Claims Conference President Julius Berman expressed concern about the lack of knowledge about the Holocaust among millennials.

“We are alarmed that today’s generation lacks some of the basic knowledge about these atrocities,” he said in a statement.

The group’s executive vice president, Greg Schneider, said the study’s findings highlighted the importance of Holocaust education.

“There remain troubling gaps in Holocaust awareness while survivors are still with us; imagine when there are no longer survivors here to tell their stories,” Schneider said. “We must be committed to ensuring the horrors of the Holocaust and the memory of those who suffered so greatly are remembered, told and taught by future generations.”
The Kennedy Center Wants to Revive the Israel Room You Didn’t Know About

By Ron Kampeas

(JTA) -- It’s like finding out that the White House has a mikvah in its basement and no one knows about it.

Up an elegant stairway next to the concert hall at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is the “Concert Lounge dedicated by the State of Israel.” It’s a delicate, quiet refuge from Washington that bursts with, well, Israeliness: Paintings and wooden reliefs feature biblical scenes by Israeli artists who were well known in their time.

Forty-seven years after it was inaugurated by Yitzhak Rabin in 1971, the lounge is about to get a makeover.

Mikhail Fridman, a Russian-Israeli philanthropist -- the kind that art magazines like to call “oligarch” -- is offering $1.25 million through his investment shop, LetterOne, to renovate the lounge. The Kennedy Center opened up the redesign to a competition. Submissions were closed in January, and the center is now making a decision.

Not that anyone in the Israeli or pro-Israel community here was even aware that one of the most prestigious spaces -- the lounge is used for receptions for donors to the National Symphony Orchestra -- in one of the capital’s most prestigious landmarks is named for the country they love.

“I had forgotten about it,” said one leader of an organization known to plan major events in the capital.

“Never heard of it,” said another. And so it went across the pro-Israel spectrum, with a dozen officials saying that maybe they had seen the lounge once, and others saying they weren’t even aware of it. (Remarks were mostly not for attribution, even for a topic as unpolitical as an Israeli lounge.)

Israeli Embassy spokespeople did not return a request for comment, but a former staffer recalled that the embassy was surprised by the lounge’s existence nine years ago when the Kennedy Center’s curators sought information about its artwork.

Step inside the huge double doors and you enter a tiny version -- 60 by 20 feet -- of the lively, elegant and perhaps dated spaces found in Israeli museums, event halls, government offices and the Knesset.

That’s not surprising, considering the architect of the lounge, Raphael Blumenfeld, designed the interior of the Knesset. Shraga Weil, whose painting of biblical scenes spans the lounge’s ceiling, sculpted the three main doorways to the Knesset. Nehemiah Azaz’s wooden sculpture depicting biblical musical instruments reserved for children with special needs

takes up a wall.

Rabin, the future prime minister who was Israel’s ambassador at the time, had an acute understanding of American sensibilities. He perceived the importance to Americans of the Kennedy Center, a modernist, layered white structure that would arise from the Potomac and still beloved among Washingtonians as the capital’s wedding cake.

Sarit Arbell was the cultural attache at the Israeli Embassy nine years ago when the center called seeking information about one of the artists.

“I did a little research,” she said in an interview. “Rabin arranged it. He was so smart.”

The Kennedy Center opened just just eight years after President Kennedy’s assassination, recalling the idealism of the postwar period during an era riven by the Vietnam War and the Nixon presidency. Plenty of countries donated artwork to the Kennedy Center, but only three built lounges: the Soviet Union, next to the Opera House; China, next to the Eisenhower Theater; and Israel, next to the concert hall.

Its execution was a project not just of the Israeli government but of the Jewish community.

“The cost of the project is being borne in part by ‘Friends of the State of Israel’ in the Washington area,” JTA reported at the time. Blumenfeld said then it was “the first permanent exhibit of Israeli art outside of a museum.”

How did the lounge disappear out of the local Jewish consciousness?

It’s not clear, but the officials at pro-Israel groups who knew about the room’s existence said it was too small for receptions. It’s now used once a month for dinners for donors to the National Symphony Orchestra. On the day a reporter visited, schoolchildren were attending a concert in the hall, and the lounge was reserved for children with special needs who might need a break.

An actual Russian oligarch, Vladimir Potanin, paid to renovate the Russian lounge a few years ago, and now it appears light and airy: Plush white furniture is set against a massive abstract painting suffused with spring colors, green and blue.

A Kennedy Center spokeswoman told JTA that the Russian lounge previously resembled the Israeli lounge: darker and more solid, the prevailing interior art and architecture of the 1970s. The center would preserve the existing artworks, but Fridman said in a statement that he was looking for something more "dynamic." The existing artwork would be preserved elsewhere in the Kennedy Center, the spokeswoman said. (Silk panels by Ezekiel Kimche were water damaged nine years ago and returned to his family.)

“When I first visited the Kennedy Center last spring, it was full of dynamic, creative energy,” Fridman said. “As an Israeli citizen, I thought it was important for the Israeli lounge to project that same dynamism, so that it can reflect modern-day Israeli culture as well as the incredible diversity of the Jewish heritage. We hope this competition can inspire a modern interpretation of the Israeli lounge.”

For some, though, it’s a stunning discovery, a sudden glimpse into a beloved far-off land.

Jeff Bernstein, a political science professor at Eastern Michigan University touring Washington, made a special trip to the Kennedy Center to get a glimpse and was disappointed to learn the lounge was closed for the duration of the concert for schoolchildren.

“My son saw it and loved it,” he said. “I’ve heard it’s fantastic.”