Pittsburgh Tree of Life synagogue tragedy remembered

BY MARK SILVERBERG

October 27, 1993

Governor Tom Wolf signed a proclamation declaring Sunday, October 27, a day of remembrance in Pennsylvania and ordered all state flags at all Commonwealth facilities, public buildings and grounds to be flown at half-staff from sunrise until sunset in recognition of the one-year mark of the antisemitic attack on the Dor Hadash, New Light and Tree of Life*Or L'Simcha congregations in their synagogue in Pittsburgh (October 27, 2018).

“Year has passed, but I continue to carry sorrow for the victims and their families of this heinous attack,” said Wolf. “We must honor them by remembering, and through our thoughts, prayers and actions, to redouble our efforts to combat anti-Semitism and the actions of hate.”

WHEREAS, all of Pennsylvania stands in solidarity with the Tree of Life community, their families, the Jewish community, and all those who continue to mourn in Pittsburgh and across the Commonwealth. Horrific acts of violence like this remind us of the fragile nature of human life, and of just how much we depend upon one another; and

WHEREAS, though events such as these leave sorrow, heartache, and fear in their wake, we can also find hope in the outpouring of love and compassion evident in the Pittsburgh community and across the Commonwealth. In the aftermath of this act of violent extremism, Pennsylvanians reached out to comfort and support one another, to reject bigotry and anti-Semitism, and to affirm the bonds of kindness, acceptance, and love that define our Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, William Penn founded our Commonwealth on the principles of inclusion and freedom, and today Pennsylvanians continue to demonstrate that true strength comes not from uniformity, but from diversity. The bonds we build between individuals and communities strengthen our Commonwealth and our world; and

WHEREAS, as we commemorate the events of October 27, 2018, we remember those killed and honor the wounded by building bridges of understanding and tolerance across the Commonwealth. In the aftermath of this act of violent extremism, Pennsylvanians reached out to comfort and support one another, to reject bigotry and anti-Semitism, and to affirm the bonds of kindness, acceptance, and love that define our Commonwealth; and

According to Yad Vashem, Giaonpoulou's connection to the Mordechai family was through Melpomeni's sister, Efthimia (married name Xanthopoulou), who before the invasion of Greece had lived in her home in Bithleem (later Sumbasi) and 14-year-old Melpomeni cultivated a piece of land they acquitted seven members of the Mordechai family. “They loved my mother very much because of her good heart,” recalled Mor, “so they took upon themselves the dangerous mission to hide her and five other members of her family during the Holocaust. “The feeling is very emotional and very exciting. I carry sorrow for the victims and their families of this heinous attack,” said Wolf. “We must honor them by remembering, and through our thoughts, prayers and actions, to redouble our efforts to combat anti-Semitism and the acts of hate.”

ZAKA expanding
ZAKA, an Israeli mass-disaster response agency, plans to expand its operations worldwide.
Canada is home to approximately 392,000 Jews, comprising 1 percent of its population. The community is highly urbanized, with 87 percent living in just six metropolitan areas: Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Ottawa and Calgary. Like their counterparts in the United States, Canadian Jews are supportive of Israel, though opinions are divided on the level of support for Canada’s relations with Israel.

Some 59 percent of Canadian Jews who support the Liberals think Canada should negotiate a peace plan in the Middle East. In contrast, 60 percent of Canadian Jews who identify with the Conservatives believe Canada is insufficiently supportive of Israel, according to a study by the Environics Institute.

Even if the issue of Israel comes up in the next election, said Fogel, “we do not anticipate any shift in formal government policy or the positions that have been staked out by the federal government over the last four years. We expect the same voting pattern at the [United Nations] and its agencies and a cautious approach to UNRWA [given the recent scandals and formal investigations of the agency] and an expansion of the bilateral relationship on matters of mutual interest, including cyber security and intelligence.”

By Jonathan S. Tobin

The Jerusalem Post

The report of Trump’s new government expected to maintain steady support for Israel

Trump relocated the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in May 2018. According to the most recent annual report of the Trump administration, the U.S. government awarded $212 million to Jordan, a significant increase from the $121 million awarded in the previous year.

In fact, the report states that the Trump administration has been working closely with the Jordanian government to support its efforts in areas such as counterterrorism, economic development, and political stability.

The report also highlights the Trump administration’s commitment to supporting the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli government, and the importance of maintaining a peaceful and stable environment in the region.

The report further notes that the Trump administration has been working with partners in the region to promote regional stability and security, and to advance a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Trump’s new government expected to maintain steady support for Israel

This is why those who echo Cohen’s arguments also want Facebook to reject political ads from people they oppose, as they think their arguments are false. But that’s why, in the end, the judgments in these cases are never entirely objective.

Already there have been instances when conservatives feel Internet giants will not allow ads that are clearly political in nature. Some of these judgments are being made by Facebook employees, which means their work is being conducted in a double standard.

However, the Trump administration has not only avoided the topic, it actually won’t even discuss it publicly. The president’s response to the scandal was simply to say, “There’s no such plan and never has.”

The cost of censorship on Facebook

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The cost of censorship on Facebook
Bureau of Sages makes progress with research at Jewish Home

Jewish Home of Eastern Pennsylvania established the Bureau of Sages under the leadership and direction of volunteer Patty Weiner, M.A. in psychology, and M.P.H. The Bureau of Sages has been called an innovative model that incorporates the voices of older adults residing in skilled nursing facilities into research. Based upon Weiner’s work on the design of the original model at CJE Senior Life in Chicago and the Home’s role as the lead resident coach for two years, six JHEP residents, who have turned 55, have been participating in bi-monthly meetings, “sharing experiences, building knowledge, and developing skills for working together to provide voice to the direction, design, and implementation of research on aging.” The group was formed to “improve lives of older adults as the result of patient-centered research.”

The group recently worked with Dr. Jerry Jacobs, professor of sociology at the University of Pennsylvania. Jacobs earned his Ph.D. in sociology at Harvard in 1983. He has received numerous academic awards and research grants. He was selected as a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University during 2018-2019 academic years. Jacobs discussed with the sages the possibility of adding technology to their daily lives to see if they felt it could be valuable. Items discussed included smart phones and voice control assistive devices, smart homes, monitors and sensors, and telehealth communications.

The sages had several examples of how monitors helped them in the past and said they did not feel this would be intrusive. They also said they felt some of these devices could expedite response time in a nursing home and assist the nursing staff. Jacobs discussed the possibility of robotic assistance in the home. The sages said they felt human interaction was best.

The sages engaged in a conversation about cost and intrusive devices. However, they did not feel that these devices were intrusive. They did feel they would be overall helpful. The group closed the discussion with a conversation about telehealth. The Jewish Home sages shared with Jacobs that telehealth would allow a person to skip the long waiting times experienced at the doctors. They also felt comfortable getting access to their doctor without risking falls and transportation issues that might not be necessary. Jacobs said he was most appreciative of the feedback from the sages. He stated that his research efforts will be more productive and successful.

Since July, the sages have consulted with three additional groups of researchers. Most recently, the sages had a virtual meeting with Drs. Ann Kolanowski, Marie Boltz and Kimberly Van Haisma from Penn State University’s School of Nursing. The researchers sought the sages’ input regarding the best manner to provide an annual scholarship to a graduating senior to benefit that student in furthering their education. The Scranton Central High School Class of 1964 recently celebrated their 50th class reunion and raised additional funds to support the fund which promotes a legacy to support education within their community. The Scranton Area Community Foundation honored and celebrated the generosity of the Scranton Central High School Class of 1964 by awarding a 65th anniversary mini-grant to an organization of their choice. The Scranton Central High School Class of 1964 chose to support Jewish Family Service of Northeastern Pennsylvania through this $650 mini-grant.

Man charged in attempt to bomb CO shul

BY JNS STAFF

(JNS) – An alleged white supremacist has been charged in attempt to blow up a Colorado synagogue. Richard Holzer, 27, was arrested on November 1 after federal authorities gave him two pipe bombs and 14 sticks of dynamite to detonate at Temple Emanuel, Colorado’s second-oldest synagogue, in Pueblo, about two hours from Denver.

He was charged with intentionally attempting to obstruct persons in the enjoyment of their free exercise of religious beliefs, through force and the attempted use of explosives.

Holzer allegedly met with undercover agents posing as fellow white supremacists to discuss a plan to attack Temple Emanuel, they then visited the synagogue together. An affidavit states, “As they then made additional trips on his own to inspect the synagogue and coordinated with undercover agents to obtain explosives to “get that place until the shul that it be quiet and it be empty.”

On the evening of November 1, Holzer allegedly met with undercover agents, who provided him with inert explosive devices that had been fabricated by the FBI, including two pipe bombs and 14 sticks of dynamite. Holzer planned to detonate the explosives several hours later, in the early hours of November 2, according to the affidavit. See “Shul” on page

Check out the Federation’s new, updated website at www.jewishnepa.org or find it on Facebook

JFS receives mini grant

Jewish Family Service was recently awarded a $650 mini grant from the Scranton Central High School Class of 1964 Memorial Scholarship Fund at the Scranton Area Community Foundation.

Created in 2014 by the 1964 graduating class of Scranton Central High School, the Scranton Central High School Class of 1964 Memorial Scholarship Fund provides an annual scholarship to a graduating senior to benefit that student in furthering their education.

The Scranton Central High School Class of 1964 recently celebrated their 55th class reunion and raised additional funds to support the fund which promotes a legacy to support education within their community.

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Man charged in attempt to bomb CO shul
BY JNS STAFF

(JNS) – ZAKA Search and Rescue Inc., one of the world’s premiere international mass-disaster response agencies, has announced plans to expand operations in strategic cities in North and South America, as well as in the Caribbean.

“ZAKA’s primary mission is to save lives. Its effectiveness can be enhanced only through establishing autonomous ‘operations hubs’ in strategic locations in the United States, Brazil, Mexico, Canada, the Caribbean and elsewhere,” says Edward Mermelstein, president of ZAKA in the United States. “Upgrading in this way will vastly improve its ability to respond as fast as possible when tragedy strikes.”

The faster it deploys its highly trained volunteer specialists – outfitted with state-of-the-art equipment and other mission-critical resources – “the more lives can be saved,” he adds. “We see ZAKA as a long overdue, but now proven, solution to a substantive public-health problem, especially for developing nations in the throes of a natural or human-made disaster.”

Only recently, the agency was recognized with the Ambassador of Peace Award by the government of Guatemala for its humanitarian service to that country in a time of dire need, proving its utility in rapid-deployment disaster response.

Achieving its goals will require raising sufficient funds through private and institutional donations, building a logistical network for rapid deployment of personnel and equipment, and recruiting a corps of volunteers willing to undergo “rigorous training” and to put themselves in harm’s way at a moment’s notice. Volunteers are emergency medical technicians (or EMTs); first responders, such as police and firefighters; ex-military; and individuals with specialized skills, like doctors and nurses. “Excellent physical fitness” is essential for all candidates.

ZAKA trains and coordinates, with the U.S. National Guard, FEMA and oft-times deploys with the Israeli Defense Forces on humanitarian missions in response to disasters across the globe.

Bagels TV

Bagels TV, www.bagels.tv, seeks to present viewers with the best in kosher-style videos for the entire family that the company believes entertain, inspire and present thought-provoking ideas. The website notes that the video selections “are ‘kosher-style,’” meaning that not all of them are directly Jewish related, but ones it believes Jews should watch. The videos presented are considered family friendly; there is also a “frum” option with videos appropriate for haredim. In addition to music and videos about Israel, there is a study option labeled “Torah,” which offers material from the parasha of the week to Daf Yomi (Talmud) study.

-Pledge or Donate-
www.jewishnepa.org/donate
To get Federation updates via email, register on our website www.jewishnepa.org
Pledge or Donate online at
www.jewishnepa.org/donate

Chanukah Gifts

Issue Date: November 28
Ad deadline: November 20

Chanukah

Issue Date: December 12
Ad deadline: December 4

For Information on advertising, contact Bonnie Rozen at 1-800-779-7896, ext. 244 or bonnie@thereportergroup.org

Are you on the Jewish Federation’s email list?
We send updated announcements and special event details weekly to those who wish to receive them.

Send Dassy Ganz an email if you would like to join the list.
Dassy.ganz@jewishnepa.org

Home delivered meals when you need them the most!

Learn more by calling (570) 344-1186
Meals prepared at the Jewish Home of Eastern Pennsylvania under Kosher dietary guidelines.

Mailbox Shorts

At right: ZAKA emergency-rescue team and medical personnel at work at a disaster site. (Courtesy photo)

Pittsburgh

Continued from page 1
The program included:
• Welcome – Rabbi Daniel Swartz, Temple Hesed
• Prayer/Reflection – Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, bishop of Scranton
• Reflection – David Falk, chair, Community Relations Committee, Jewish Federation of Northeastern Pennsylvania
• Prayer/Reflection – Rabbi Caleb L. Benamid, rabbi, Temple Emanuel, Scranton
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The bill includes language for non-profit entities (including synagogues, mosques, churches, YMCAs, JCCs, JFS, senior centers, etc.) to receive funding assistance for their security.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:
• $5 million for this fiscal year, which ends June 2020,
• Future funding will be part of the budget process,
• The program will sunset after five years, but is subject to renewal, and
• Grants will be allocated based on a formula developed by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Criminal De- incentivizing (or PCCD) with the assistance of the Pennsylvania State Police, Homeland Security, etc.

Each individual non-profit community or communal facility can apply for the grant in the following manner:
• Grants up to $25,000 (with a minimum of $5,000) will be made outright, without matching funds.
• Grants above that threshold, up to $75,000, will require a 33 percent match (for example, with $25,000 in fund-raising, you can get $75,000 from the state for a total of $100,000).
• Grants above the $75,000 threshold, up to $150,000, will require a 50 percent match. For example, with $150,000 in fund-raising, you can get $150,000 from the state, for a total of $300,000.
• Money will be granted based on vulnerability to hate crimes as determined by the PCCD and assisted organizations.

Mark Silverberg is the executive director of the Jewish Federation of Northeastern Pennsylvania.
Maccabee Task Force to boost campus presence, funding, trips to Israel and fact-finding in Europe

BY SEAN SAVAGE
(JNS) — In the past two decades, one of the most critical frontlines of pro-Israel advocacy has been the college campus. Today, a number of organizations work in this space to counter the anti-Israel movement found at many universities in North America. With this presence, some U.S.-based pro-Israel organizations are now turning their sights on Europe in an attempt to tackle what many feel is a significantly more difficult environment for supporters of Israel.

The Maccabee Task Force has recently announced that it will expand into 11 universities in Europe in six countries. “This year, we will be on over 100 North American campuses; we are almost on all the campuses that meet of criteria of support. What we saw abroad was a significant need,” said CEO David Brog, noting that MTF focuses on campuses with a “seriously” BDS threat and one that will produce “tomorrow’s leaders and influencers.”

Launched in 2015, the Maccabee Task Force goal is focused on combating the BDS movement by investing directly in Jewish and pro-Israel organizations, while building a broader consensus supporting Israel on campus. After its initial foray into six campuses in 2016, the Maccabee Task Force has expanded each school year, with a current presence on 80 campuses across North America.

“We had another very good year last year. We were able to support more than 1,200 pro-Israel events on our 80 campuses,” said Brog. “We were able to bring 1,500 campus leaders and influencers to Israel. That, to us, is a significant investment. Nobody else is bringing that number of campus leaders to Israel, and these are primarily non-Jews as well.” Brog said of the 80 campuses they operated on last year, just seven schools held BDS votes, with only one passing a BDS resolution.

The success comes as Israel-related antisemitism is becoming more prevalent on North American college campuses. In September, the AMCHA Initiative found that the number of Israel-related antisemitic incidents against Jewish students on campuses increased 70 percent from 2017 to 2018.

MTF’s expansion into Europe likely comes with challenges not seen in North America. For starters, the Jewish population in Europe is much smaller than it is in the United States, with much larger Muslim communities in some Western European countries that are typically less sympathetic to Israel. While antisemitism is on the rise in North America, many Western European countries have been dealing with record numbers of anti-Jewish threats and ones that will produce “tomorrow’s leaders and influencers.”

See "Campus" on page 8

Project Joy 2019
Dear Friend:

PROJECT JOY, through the Scranton Jewish Community Center, was the "brainchild" of a very special woman, Rosebud Leventhal. Although Rosebud has passed on, the project continues in her memory. The monies come solely from private donations. The goal is a simple one. We want every child to experience a special holiday season. Through your generosity, we can do this.

This year in our area the economic situation has worsened. Our gift might be the only one a child receives.

Last year, over 125 children benefited with wonderful gifts we purchased from wish lists that we received from Jewish Family Services, the Catherine McAuley Center, Saint Joseph’s Center, Lackawanna Children’s Home, and children advocacy center.

In this northeast Pennsylvania region, one out of every three children lives at or below the poverty level.

And, as always, we still visited the pediatric departments of our two local Scranton hospitals to give their patients gifts of cheer over the holidays. Once we were made aware of specific needy families in the area, we were fortunate to have the funds to assist them too. In 2013, due to your generous giving, we were able to add United Neighborhood to our list.

We hope this year to give even more gifts with your help. Each year we receive so many “thank you letters and notes,” which just confirms how extremely vital and special this project has become.

This all depends on you!

Please send a donation to "PROJECT JOY" in care of the Scranton JCC, 601 Jefferson Avenue, Scranton, PA 18510. Or you can just drop off a new unwrapped toy at the JCC’s office.

We will be wrapping the gifts on Thursday, December 12th at the JCC starting at 9:00 am.

All volunteers are welcome! Please call Carol Leventhal at 570-587-2931 or 570-586-0241 or email jelf@graphicsart.net if you will be able to help us wrap gifts this year.

Thank You!

Carol Leventhal, Chairperson Project Joy

An aerial view of Cornell University. (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

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655 Jefferson Ave Suite 204, Scranton, PA (570) 544-1186 www.jfsnepa.org

Check out the Federation's new, updated website at www.jewishnepa.org or find it on Facebook

Report: uptick in anti-Israel activity on American college campuses

BY JNS STAFF
(JNS) – Anti-Israel activity on college campuses in the United States increased during the 2018-19 academic year, according to an Israel on Campus Cooperation report that shows there was a record number of anti-Israel disruptions at pro-Israel campus events (the report can be found at https://israelexc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/ICC-2019-Campus-Trends-Report.pdf).

During the academic year, campuses on the East Coast experienced more anti-Israel events than any other region, including an increase in anti-Israel activity at Ivy League schools such as Columbia University, Brown University and Cornell University. Harvard University also experienced a rise in anti-Israel events over the past two academic years.

Overall, 28 BDS and other anti-Israel campaigns were run on college campuses – an increase of a few more over the 2017-18 academic year and a decrease of 16 over the 2014-15 academic year.

“As the BDS movement has become more established over time, anti-Israel tactics have become increasingly hostile as Israel’s detractors double down on efforts to make campuses inhospitable to Jews and Zionists,” according to the report.

The 2018-19 academic year consisted of the highest recorded number of anti-Israel interruptions at pro-Israel events at 23, an increase of five from the previous academic year.

“While the prior academic year saw a surge in pro-Israel cooperation and coordination, professional collaboration among anti-Israel activists also reflected an increase in shared challenges across campus and community spaces,” stated the report. “As Israel-related antisemitism intensifies, Israel-related antisemitism, pro-Israel students and community members faced common threats of discrimination and delegitimization.”

ICC Executive Director Jacob Baime said in the report that despite the rise in antisemitic and anti-Israel sentiment in higher education, “demonstrating the impact of pro-Israel outreach, student governments and campus administrators are rejecting divisive BDS initiatives and expressing public support for Israel and pro-Israel students. On dozens of campuses, American and Israeli academic institutions are increasing cooperation, forging new partnerships while deepening existing ties.”

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Jewish Federation NEPA UJA Campaign 2020 Kick-Off – a Huge Success!
targeted by anti-Semitism, white supremacy, and hate.


"We commend law enforcement for arresting a man not anywhere," tweeted Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO) on November 4.

He told undercover FBI agents that he wanted to do something to tell Jewish people in the community that they are not welcome in Pueblo, and they should leave or they will die. The affidavit states that during a meeting with the undercover agents, Holzer repeatedly expressed his hatred of Jewish people and his support for a racial holy war.

Fellowing his arrest, Holzer confessed to the plot, but said that he wasn’t trying to hurt anyone, even though he would’ve blown up the house of worship if someone had been inside. If convicted, Holzer could face up to 20 years in prison.

Colorado’s leading politicians applauded the FBI for thwarting Holzer’s plot.

"I’m thankful for the law enforcement personnel who stopped this reprehensible act of domestic terrorism from taking place, and I’ve been in contact with the @FBI. White supremacists should be condemned each and every time they raise their heads and their ugliness," tweeted Sen. Cory Gardner (R-CO) on November 4.

Colorado’s leading politicians applauded the FBI for thwarting Holzer’s plot.

"Grateful to law enforcement for their actions in stopping this domestic terrorist. Time and again, places of faith and worship around the country have been targeted by anti-Semitism, white supremacy, and hate. No one should live or worship in fear – not in Pueblo, not anywhere," tweeted Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO) on November 4.

Jewish organizations echoed the senators’ appreciation to federal authorities.

"We commend law enforcement for arresting a man who allegedly plotted to bomb a Colorado synagogue, and who posted violent threats against Jewish & Latinx people. Our Center on Extremism has been tracking this white supremacist since 2016," the Anti-Defamation League tweeted on November 4.

"We are extremely grateful to law enforcement for stopping what could have been yet another horrific and deadly antisemitic attack on a synagogue," said Orthodox Union President Moishe Bane.

"This latest plot reminds us all that we must be vigilant in safeguarding our synagogues," added Orthodox Union Executive Vice President Allen Fagin. "The Orthodox Union has been working for 15 years to strengthen security at U.S. synagogues, Jewish day schools as well as other houses of worship and nonprofits at risk of terrorist attacks through the federal Nonprofit Security Grant Program we helped create in 2005. We will continue to advocate for the safety and security of all citizens at risk."

**Shul**

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**Federation on Facebook**

The Jewish Federation of Northeastern Pennsylvania has a page on Facebook, www.facebook.com/JewishNEPA/, to let community members know about upcoming events and keep connected.

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**Friends of The Reporter make big news!**

The Federation is asking members of its communities to support its “Friends of The Reporter” Campaign which seeks to raise $5,000 to assist in funding the newspaper.

The newspaper is delivered twice of month (except for December and July which are single issue months) to each and every identifiable Jewish home in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

The Reporter is the primary intercommunal newspaper of the Jewish communities of Lackawanna, Monroe, Pike and Wayne counties. Supplementing synagogue newsletters, bulletins and e-mails, The Reporter is issued to hundreds of Jewish households throughout our region. Over the past several years, the publishing cost of the newspaper has increased dramatically although the newspaper continues to be provided at no charge to members of our Jewish communities in northeastern Pennsylvania. The Federation has assumed the financial responsibility of funding the newspaper at a cost of $23,990 per year and asks only that its readers assist it in raising $5,000 as part of its “Friends of The Reporter” Campaign to offset a small share of these expenses.

Your gift to fund our regional Jewish newspaper matters a great deal to our readers and we would be very grateful for your financial support.

As always, your comments, opinions & suggestions are always welcome.

With best wishes,

Mark Silverberg, Executive Director
Jewish Federation of NE Pennsylvania
601 Jefferson Avenue
Scranton, PA 18510
D’VAR TORAH

Self-sacrifice, or sacrifice of oneself?

BY RABBI LEVI Y. SLOMIN, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND CHAJAH DOWNTOWN, ROHR CHAJAH CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDENT LIFE AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

Vayera, Genesis 18:1-22:24

In this week’s parshah we read about the binding of Isaac. This event is widely considered the most important, the crescendo of the 10 events with which God tested Abraham’s faith. The Talmud asks: “Why did God, in commanding Abraham regarding the Akedah, say, ‘Please, take your son’?” Answers the Talmud: “God said to Abraham: ‘I have tried you with many tests, and you have withstood this test for Me, lest they say that the earlier ones were of no substance.’” (Talmud, Sanhedrin 89b)

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At the same time, overall pro-Israel public sentiment in the United States is much higher than it is in Europe. It’s not just a numbers game; it’s also the fact that the BDS movement and an antisemitism scandal within with Labour Party. This is part of an effort to establish a broad-based coalition of support for Israel on campus beyond just Jewish or pro-Israel organizations.

Toward a deeper look at the BDS movement in Europe, we can answer that question for ourselves.

sentiments and attacks for a long time now.

The task force is funded by Sheldon and Dr. Miriam Adelson, mega-philanthropists who have given millions in six foreign countries. And if these investments bear fruit and are productive, I can see us expanding abroad.”

Brod declined to name the six countries and campuses ahead of time, citing the desire to avoid “inadvertently making life more difficult for our partners abroad.”

In North America, the MTF also establishes a fact-finding mission that the task force has been its sponsored trips to Israel. Unlike Birthright, which is exclusively for people with Jewish heritage, the MTF trips include recruiting emerging non-Jewish campus leaders to see Israel and Palestinian heritage, the MTF trips include recruiting emerging non-Jewish campus leaders to see Israel and Palestinian.

And yet, this was not just the ultimate test, but the test that validated the “whimsical yet powerful” world of Notorious RBG memes, fan art and parody – from a cartoon action figure named Wrath Hover Ginsbot to renderings of the justice’s likeness on t-shirts, nail decals and tattoos.

For more information, visit https://www.mnajh.org/exhibitions/rbg/ or contact the museum at 215-923-3811.

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Carlebach moshav rises from the ashes

BY DEBORAH FINEBLUM

(JNS) – The first thing you notice when you pass through the gate and into the moshav is the smell. Like a campfire that was doused with water and left to sputter. The second thing: just how many of the trees look like they’ve survived an inferno. Because they have. Back in May, Moshav Mevo Modi'im (aka Me'or Modi'im) or just “the moshav” lost nearly all of its 60 homes to a fire so intense that it fried the electrical and plumbing systems. And though the investigation was inconclusive, many insiders still suspect arson.

But against the odds, surrounded by a landscape of burnt-out homes and the scorched skeletons of trees, it was business as usual for the Moshav Mevo Modi'im Community Fair on October 16, just like it has been every Sukkot since 2006.

Founded in 1975 by “singing rabbi” Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach and friends, the moshav has long been home to the “Chevra,” a clan of counterculture artists, musicians, aromatherapists, rabbis, yoga teachers and poets practicing an amalgam of Chasidic Judaism in the spirit of the rabbi’s House of Love and Prayer in San Francisco. The rabbi, who split his time between Israel and New York, died a quarter-century ago, on October 21, 1994.

The intermediate days of Sukkot is a time when Israelis – both the native-born and the newest arrivals – are reborn as tourists, crisiscrossing their own country as if seeing its sights for the first time. And for many, the Moshav Fair is a unique way to take in the likeness of Shlomo Katz, Nuriel and the Solomon Brothers, and assorted other musical favorites while munching organic kosher foods? Not exactly your average country fair. But the strange thing was in the center of the moshav, of gutted homes cordoned off with plastic sheeting stand a few green shoots making their way through patches of charred earth. “It won’t be easy, but I believe they’ll make a comeback here,” says Shapiro.

And, speaking of strength, if you look very carefully, you could see a few green shoots making their way up and dance and sing, and learn from them to strengthen our own lives, too.”

For those who have called this place home, the trauma remains fresh. “It still seems surreal to me that my mom’s home is gone, reminding me that you can’t ever go home again,” says Miriam Leibowitz of Jerusalem, on hand to sell her watercolors. “With so many people here today, it’s a lot of beauty and a lot of pain all mixed together.” One surprise: In sifting through the ruins of her mother’s home, she found a few special pieces of her grandmother’s jewelry. “With that extreme heat,” she adds, “it’s a miracle it didn’t melt.”

Another insider put it this way: “Only four months after the devastating fire, this day was not only a huge success, but an important marker on the way to rebuilding the moshav,” said Rabbi Avraham Arie Trugman, who with his wife, Rachel, were moshav founders back in 1976. “Further, it is a testament to the members’ determination to not only carry on, but to forge ahead despite the loss of a large part of the work that lies ahead… and just how important the moshav is for Klal Yisrael.”

“It cheered us up to have all these people here,” says Shira Shapiro, whose home was completely consumed, and who now lives in temporary housing with her two children and mother in nearby Modi’im. “All you have to do is look around you at the devastation; until today, the place has been a ghost town.” One thing that kept her spirits, she notes, is the “absolutely phenomenal” moral and financial support that’s poured in.

“The day was an amazing opportunity for everyone associated with the moshav and everyone who cares about it to come together, reconnect and inspire each other,” says Shira Shapiro, whose home was completely consumed, and who now lives in temporary housing with her two children and mother in nearby Modi’im. “All you have to do is look around you at the devastation; until today, the place has been a ghost town.” One thing that kept her spirits, she notes, is the “absolutely phenomenal” moral and financial support that’s poured in.

“Irving Moshe of Pardes Hanna, who’s helped Sand with various aspects of the fair over the years. “The backdrop of the burnt-out homes, the smell of the fire, they’re unavoidable reminders, but I felt so much love for the moshav here today.”

As singer Shlomo Katz said from the stage: “If these people are able to pull off this festival and live with such determination, then the least we can do is pull ourselves up and dance and sing, and learn from them to strengthen our own lives, too.”

“Don’t give up on us. We’re going to be back,” adds Shapiro. “We’re going to come home, we’re going to rebuild this place; there’s no question about it.”

A view of burnt homes after a forest fire wiped out most of the houses in Moshav Modi'im, near Ben Shemen Forest, on May 26. (Photo by Hadas Parush/Flash90)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Nefesh B’Nefesh to host aliya events in U.S., Canada

Nefesh B’Nefesh, an organization dedicated to reviving, or “revi’ah” aliya by minimizing the financial, professional, logistical and social obstacles associated with the process, will be providing prospective new olim (immigrants to Israel) with the opportunity to have all their practical questions answered at events throughout North America. These will be held in cooperation with Kerem Kayemeth LeIsrael, Israel’s Ministry of Aliyah and Integration, the Jewish Agency for Israel and Jewish National Fund-USA.

Informational events will be held in Montreal; Toronto; Great Neck, NY; and Cleveland. The organization will also host a workshop for retirees and empty-nesters in Queens, NY, on Nov. 17, as well as expanded “Aliyah Dollars and Sense” financial workshops in Boston, Atlanta, Chicago, Florida and Teaneck, NJ. Additional events to be offered are “Buying and Renting a Home in Israel” in Los Angeles, San Diego, Queens and Teaneck; an Israel Networking Event for Young Professionals in New York City on Nov. 21; and a Nefesh B’Nefesh Pavilion at the Orthodox Union Jewish Community Fair on Nov. 24 in New York City, where there will representatives from six of the communities new immigrants head to once in Israel. A full list of events and meetings can be found at https://events.nbn.org.il/.

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- outright contribution of cash, appreciated securities or other long-term capital gain property such as real estate to your IRA or pension plan assets
- grant from your foundation
- reserved life estate in your residence
- bequest

Using appreciated property, such as securities or real estate, affords you the opportunity to eliminate the income tax on the long-term capital gain, will in some instances generate a full income tax charitable deduction and will remove those assets from your estate for tax purposes.

For more information contact Mark Silverberg at Mark.Silverberg@jewishnepa.org or call 570-961-2300, ext. 1.

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People took part in the Moshav Fair during Sukkot in Moshav Mevo Modi'im, which was devastated by a wildfire in May. (Photo by Deborah Fineblum)

Orah Moshe of Pandes Hanna, who’s helped Sand with various aspects of the fair over the years. “The backdrop of the burnt-out homes, the smell of the fire, they’re unavoidable reminders, but I felt so much love for the moshav here today.”

As singer Shlomo Katz said from the stage: “If these people are able to pull off this festival and live with such determination, then the least we can do is pull ourselves up and dance and sing, and learn from them to strengthen our own lives, too.”

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Yad Vashem, Dina was introduced to nearly 40 descendants of Yanai and Mor. After meeting all these relatives, Dina declared that she sees every member of their families as her own. “I am very happy to be here and to see you,” she told Yanai and Mor with tears in her eyes, again inviting them and their family to live with her in her home in Greece.

“We will stay together day and night for two days,” Yanai told Dina. “We have a lot to talk about.”

Yanai continued, saying, “It’s very hard to describe my feelings in words; it’s something deep in my heart. It brings me back many years, [thinking] how they kept us and how they worried about us. We hid in her house; she saved all my family. Now she can see our large family – all this thanks to her because she saved us. She did such a great thing! You cannot imagine how dangerous it was for her and for her whole family to keep our whole family.”

This was the first time that the JFR, which provides monthly financial assistance to more than 265 aged and needy Righteous Among the Nations living in 18 countries, has reunited Holocaust survivors and their rescuers in Israel. “The beauty of [making this reunion] in Israel is we got to have the whole family, I’ Dor v’ Dor,” Stanlee Stahl, executive vice president of JFR, told JNS. “You get to see the generations, including two grandchildren in uniform.”

Mor’s grandson – Imri Dor, 22, currently serving in the paratrooper’s unit in the Israeli Defense Forces – arrived in uniform to meet his grandfather’s rescuer. “It’s a huge event,” he told JNS. “We heard a lot about [Dina] and everything she did for our family; she has inspired me as a person and it means so much [to meet her]. It fulfills you and gives you perception.”

Dor noted that his army service, in the context of the story of his grandfather, is “always on my mind; it’s why I’m doing what I’m doing.

“We don’t have another place to be other than Israel,” he said. This is our only country, and we must be strong because [the Holocaust] could happen again if we are not.”

According to Stahl, this is likely JFR’s last reunion “because of age and frailty” of the survivors, and even more of those who helped save them, like Dina.

Joel Zisenwine, director of Yad Vashem’s Righteous Among the Nations Department, spoke of the rareness of such a meeting. “As time passes, we have fewer survivors and even fewer rescuers,” he told JNS. “This coming together of the offspring and descendants in Yad Vashem, which is authorized to commemorate the Holocaust in the presence of monuments” like the Hall of Names, which commemorates the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust who did not survive, “makes it even more meaningful.”

As the work of Zisenwine’s department often occurs past the death of the Righteous Among the Nations, he said, “To see a living testimony of someone who took part in a rescue mission is even more moving.”

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For further information on gifting stocks in payment of your pledge to our Annual UJA Campaign, please contact the Federation at 570-961-2300 (ext. 3) for details.
Demolition finds items in buried time capsule linked to Pittsburgh Jewish history

A time capsule buried in 1906 was uncovered on Nov. 4 during the demolition of the Pittsburgh Playhouse, which once housed the Tree of Life synagogue, CBS Pittsburgh reported. Past and present members of Tree of Life, and the congregation’s Rabbi Jeffrey Myers, gathered for the opening of the time capsule that was encased in the cornerstone of the building, originally constructed as the second synagogue for Tree of Life. Because of slight water damage to some of the items in the metal box, it will be a while before some of its contents — including some handwritten notes by Rabbi Elie Lapid — are revealed. One of several dozen Jewish archives at the Heinz History Center who is responsible for sorting out the contents of the box. So far, it is known that the box contains old Pittsburgh newspapers, bank deposit books, some letters and envelopes, a green Heinz pickle pin and what Lapid believes may be a “unique poster” that helps you understand what the different prayers are as you are moving through the Jewish year.” The items are a reminder of the role the synagogue has played in the history of the Pittsburgh Jewish community. “They had this long history before, and it sort of suggests that they will have this long history after,” said Lapid. “It’s just wonderful to be able to help them have that moment of being able to connect to a piece of their past at this particular moment in their present.”

Fatah official says P.A. chief Abbas won’t run for re-election

Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas, soon to turn 85, will not run for re-election, senior Fatah official Jibril Rajoub told Palestine TV on Nov. 4. Rajoub’s announcement contradicts the Arab League’s endorsement of Abbas for president by 29-year-old artist Ariel Mintzer. “I have learned about Marshall Meyer came to me from my dad, who was a student of mine,” Mintzer told JTA. “Talking with him, I realized that this motto is a good synthesis of his life.”

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Hamas leader threatens to rain rockets on Tel Aviv

Leader of Hamas in the Gaza Strip Yahya Sinwar warned on Nov. 4 that the terrorist organization could turn its cities into “ghost towns” and has enough rockets to bomb Tel Aviv “for six months in a row.” Yet reported. “We have heard the threats Israeli leaders made toward us, but we will still make them curse the day they were born,” said Sinwar. “Various intelligence agencies are trying to undermine the stability in the Gaza Strip,” he said, adding that Hamas has “many secret tools to counter the attempts made by Israeli intelligence to infiltrate Gaza.” Sinwar also said, according to the report, that if Israel launches a ground operation in Gaza it faces “hundreds of thousands of father of the al-Muhandis family. The US Air Force said it has “no evidence” that the Israeli official attends Mahar conference of Balkan Jewish communities for first time

For the first time, an Israeli minister attended the annual Mahar conference, which is a central meeting point for Jewish communities of Albania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Kosovo. President of Montenegro Milo Djukanovic addressed the hundreds of participants at the Nov. 4 opening ceremony of the seventh Mahar conference in Budva. The conference was being held in the Balkan nation due to the efforts of the Montenegro Jewish community under the patronage of the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress, an umbrella organization that links the diverse Jewish communities and organizations in the region. The meeting with Israel’s minister of religious services, Yitzhak Vaknin, was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Zoran Pazin; EAJC representative RATEX; Montenegro Zoran Raicevic; Chabad-Lubavitch Rabbi Ari Edelkopf, Montenegro’s first resident rabbi and now chief rabbi; and others. Vaknin expressed gratitude to the government and people of Montenegro for their friendship with the Jewish community, as well as for the work of the tribe and the spiritual father of the democratic process,” said Rajoub. “In two years only, Abbas has made a reality of the declaration of a Palestinian state, the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, the building of the state and the Palestinian government,” said Rajoub. 

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E-mail address: ____________________________________________________________________

_____ I’m enclosing a gift of $_____________     _____I’ll pledge $_____________ *

*___ One-time * _____ Quarterly installments (1/4 of total) * ____ Monthly installments (1/12 of total)

2020 UJA Campaign
Jewish Federation of Northeastern Pennsylvania
601 Jefferson Avenue, Scranton, PA 18510
Telephone: 570-961-2300 (ext. 3)

Payment options
_____ Please bill me at the above address.
_____ Enclosed is my check payable to “UJA/Jewish Federation of Northeastern Pennsylvania”.
_____ On-line banking (designate your payments through your bank auto-draft account to “UJA/Jewish Federation of Northeastern Pennsylvania”).
_____ My company ( _________________________ ) has a matching gift program.
   I’ll obtain the form and forward it.

_________________________________________________________  __________________________
Authorized signature                      Date

ERIC & ANGELA WEINBERG, CO-CHAIRS OF OUR 2020 UJA CAMPAIGN
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.