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COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

MARCH 2015
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EXCLUSIVE

**HOLOCAUST
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Has Never Lost Hope

**ACTIVE &
PASSIONATE**

Adam and Gila Milstein
Family Foundation

**ELECTION
DECISION '15**

Israeli Elections
In-Depth Analysis



Message From Kosher OC Magazine

Kosher OC is here to give the Orange County Jewish community news when it happens, here and around the world.

We combine the best of modern media and dedicated journalism to give you timely and interesting stories about the movers and shakers of the community and the great events they hold. We also talk about Jewish trends and trendmakers in Israel and throughout the globe with interesting ideas about celebrating holidays and celebrating each other.

Join us for a window into the world of Judaism, and let us have your insight and input.

It is our pleasure to serve this wonderful community.

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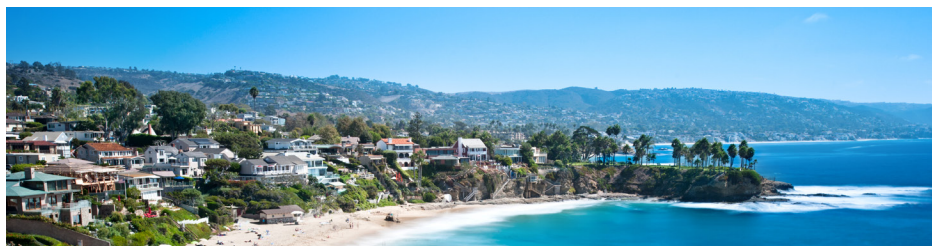
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FEATURED

Active, Connected and Passionate

Adam and Gila Milstein Family Foundation: Connecting and Getting Involved in the Cause

By Ilene Schneider



Philanthropist Adam Milstein thinks there is a problem with the culture of many Jewish and pro-Israel organizations. Because their priority is to raise funds, each one wants to stand out as the most important, effective organization. “Just give us the money, and we can take care of it, is the way they present themselves,” he said. If they work together, they can’t take all the credit, and then they can’t raise as much money.”

Milstein, 63, thinks he has a better solution. It started in Los Angeles, where Milstein and his wife live. He brought big donors together in the council of philanthropists, so that organizations could share ideas and resources. Functioning as a connector, the Adam and Gil Milstein Family Foundation supports a variety of organizations and ensures that programs funded share resources among multiple groups. Included are organizations working in the areas of media accuracy and non-governmental organization monitoring, Jewish and Israel education, youth and young professional engagement

and outreach, combating anti-Semitism and anti-Israel activity on college and university campuses, health and medical issues, Israeli-American and Jewish community services, connecting non-Israeli Americans with Israel, policy research and democracy think tanks and supporting Israel’s legitimacy.

Adam and Gila Milstein Family Foundation’s active philanthropy is about connecting organizations, giving financially and getting involved in the cause.

As Milstein told JNS.org, “Everything that I do, I put a few organizations together, I make them work together, make them empower each other and create a force multiplier.” Working with the American-Israel Educational Foundation (AIEF), the educational wing of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the Milsteins helped to create the Campus Allies Mission to Israel and the Campus Allies delegation to AIPAC’s annual Policy Conference. Both Campus Allies Missions engage African-American, Christian, and

Latino student leaders and educate them to become advocates for Israel.

Milstein’s passion is active philanthropy, which means giving money and getting involved in the cause. “The easiest thing is to write a check, and nobody knows where they money goes, Milstein explained. “I wanted to create impact, and I selected programs where I could put my own stamp and connect organizations.”



Adam Milstein with Birthright participants at Mega Birthright event.

The Milsteins serve on the board of several organizations; one of them being the board of the Israeli-American Leadership Council whose mission is to build an active and giving Israeli-American Community in order to strengthen the State of Israel and our next generation and to provide a bridge to the Jewish-American community. Through this organization they not only sponsor, but helped create several programs:

Sifriyat Pijama B’America: The Milsteins believe that by learning about Jewish values from a young age, Jewish children are likely to share a strong appreciation and affinity for their shared Jewish culture and retain a strong Jewish identity as they grow older. This is why they were inspired to help fund a program that provides free

Hebrew children's books to Jewish families across the United States in order to promote the use of Hebrew in the home and establishing Hebrew as the language of the Jewish people.

Shagririm (The Ambassadors) is a program that trains and educates current college students to help them build coalitions with primarily non-Jewish organizations in an effort to promote Israel Advocacy on campus.

The Israeli Fellows (Shlichim) are young people who have served in the Israeli Army, finished their university studies and have agreed to a 2 year mission to work on a U.S. campus as the voice and face of Israel. They coordinate all the pro-Israel activities on campus for the local Hillel house. The Milsteins help sponsor many of the Israeli Fellows for the Southern California area and have initiated positions for them at UC Irvine, CSUN, and San Diego State University (SDSU). Adam and Gila Milstein not only sponsor them but provide resources, connections and funding for many of their campus projects and activities. There are more than 50 Israeli Fellows nationwide, and the Milsteins stay in touch with all of them. By introducing them to many organizations, Adam and Gila are able to use them to represent all Jewish organizations on campus.

While Milstein is based in LA, his impact is felt all over California and beyond. Locally, he supports Shalom Family at Jewish Federation & Family Services, Tarbut V'Torah Community Day School and OC Israeli.

Milstein, who left Israel 35 years ago, explained that charity is very different there. It is not tax deductible, and religious and secular organizations

go their separate ways. While people volunteer their time and belongings, the culture of monetary philanthropy is lacking, Milstein said. After his modern Orthodox friend and business partner educated him about ma'aser (tithing), the Jewish tradition of giving 10 percent of one's income to charity, he created the Israeli-American Council to show by example that charitable giving could be a good thing.

"Israelis are always connected to Israel, but they are not always connected to Jewish life in America," he said. "In Israel they don't have to pay for schools, and they don't come from a culture where they pay for shuls and Federations. We give them some free services, hoping that we connect with them and get them involved. Now that the concept has caught on, a gala in March raised more than \$1 million."

Connection to Judaism and connection in Israel go hand in hand, according to Milstein. "We have religion, history, culture, values, homeland and language in common," he said. "We are part of one peoplehood." He is a "major player" in Birthright, as well as Taglit Shelanu, which sends people of Birthright age who have Israeli parents to Israel.

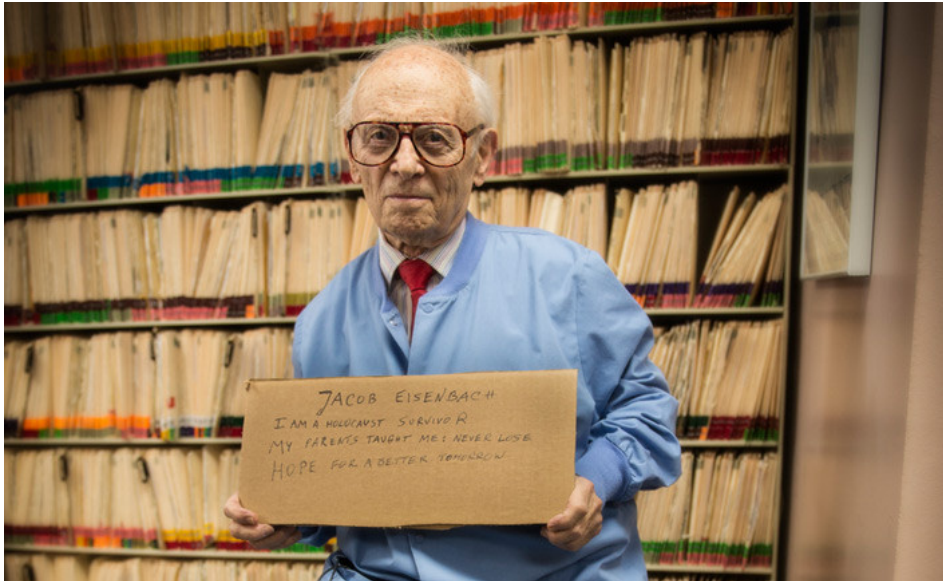
Milstein became more observant when his daughters started to date non-Jews. Motivating them by setting an example, he got involved with Aish HaTorah, which introduced him to advocacy organizations. Believing that the same people who are assimilated are the ones who are disconnected from Israel, he tries to bring people into Jewish life, educating them about philanthropy and connectedness at every stage. ■

FEATURED

A Large Dose of Optimism

Doctor Has Never Lost Hope for a Better Tomorrow, Even during the Holocaust

By Ilene Schneider



A contagious smile, an ebullient optimism and a belief that goodness will prevail keep him going. At 92 Dr. Jacob Eisenbach works every day, takes a daily walk of 45 minutes to an hour and keeps up with the latest developments in his field of dentistry and the world around him.

The first dentist in Anaheim Hills, Dr. Eisenbach has been in the same office for 41 years. He is so much more than a survivor; he is someone who can find sweetness in life and hope for tomorrow. With 8 million people on the planet, Dr. Eisenbach believes in the goodness of man. He derives joy in the fact that, in spite of tyrants coming to power and murdering innocent people, positive forces come out on top – and Israel is here to stay.

“When you’re at the bottom of a pit, the only place you can go is up,” he said. “No matter how dark the day is, the sun will always break through the clouds as long as you’re alive. For 5 years, I never knew if I would be alive tomorrow, but I never gave up hope.” What gave him strength through the Holocaust was the memory of

his mother, who died a year before World War II began, putting her arms around her four children and saying, “You are my greatest possession.” It gave Dr. Eisenbach a “tremendous amount of self-confidence.” His oppressors “could not destroy that spirit,” which gave him optimism and hope, “no matter what may happen.” His mother’s words “helped me to survive the Holocaust and contributed tremendously to my longevity, because I never lost hope for a better tomorrow.”

Dr. Eisenbach, who began attending cheder in Lodz, Poland, starting at the age of 4, was 16 when the war started. He liked to play his soccer with his brothers and enjoy the company of his large extended family. When the Nazis occupied his hometown, which had a thriving Jewish community, they built a ghetto with a barbed wire fence and watchtowers. Many of the Jews in the city, including his older sister, escaped to the Russian part of Poland. By May of 1940 every Jew had to be inside the ghetto.



After his father was deported to Auschwitz, Dr. Eisenbach and his younger brother went into hiding, sometimes in places with no heat. Finally, soldiers found them and took them to a camp where they worked in a munitions factory, inhaling toxic chemicals while grinding bullets. “I heard my mother saying ‘Never lose hope for a better tomorrow.’ These ideas have been transmitted from generation to generation. Bodies die, but spirits continue to live. My faith became stronger.”

As the Nazis were beginning to lose the war, the Nazis moved the factory. Dr. Eisenbach could hear artillery in the background. Finally, the Nazis in the watchtowers vanished, followed by the officers. The next morning the survivors were able to walk out of the camp.

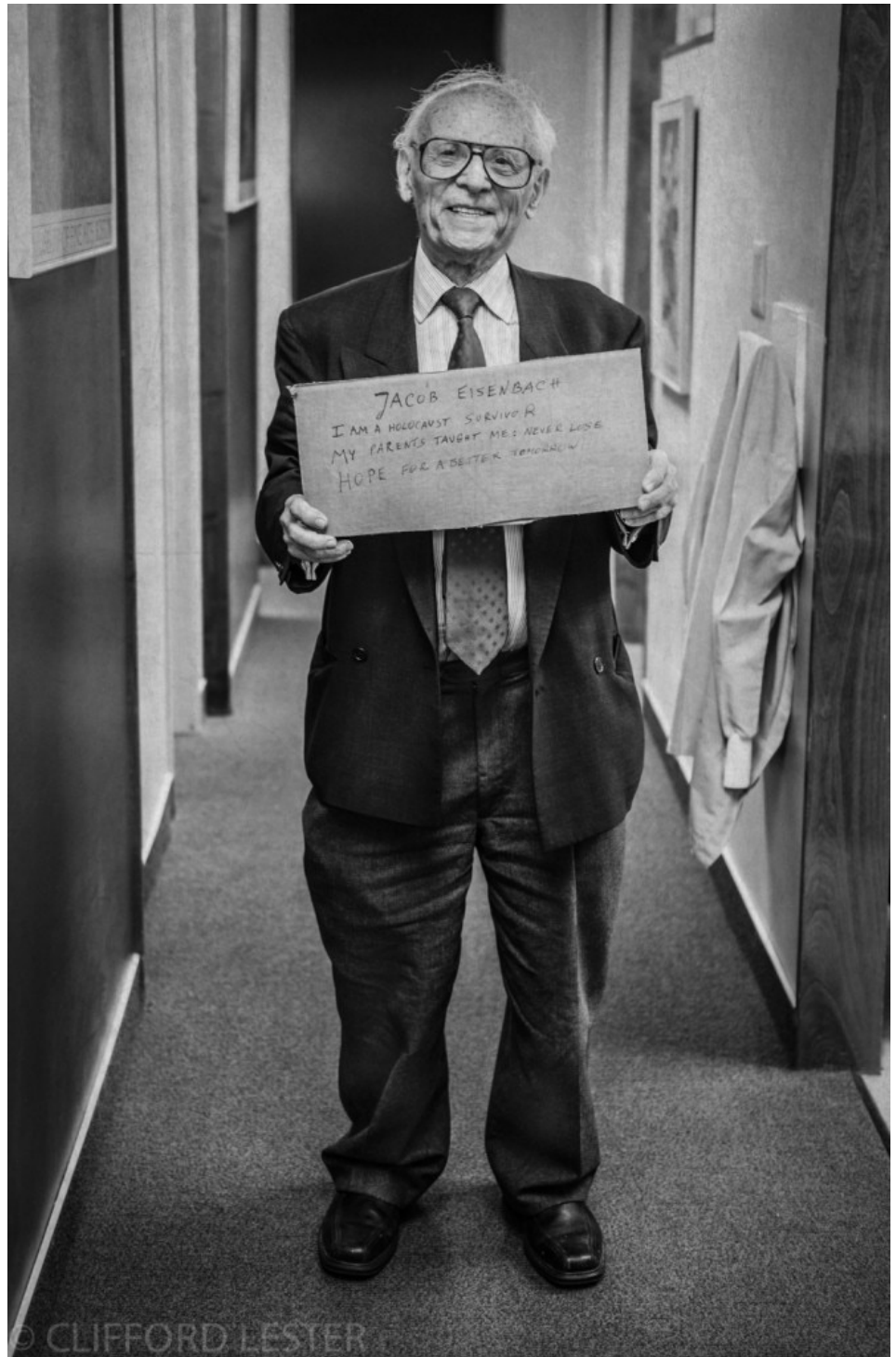
He rode on the roof of a train, tied with a belt, to his hometown and enrolled in the University of Lodz. After postwar anti-Semitic incidents, he left Poland for Frankfurt where he finished his studies.

Thanks to HIAS, Dr. Eisenbach was able to come to the US with his wife and son. Eventually, he went to dental school at the University of Iowa and practiced in Cedar Rapids for 18 years, moving to Orange County because of his wife’s arthritis. His wife died a few years ago at the age

of 90. The couple had three sons, one of whom is deceased. One son is a doctor in Malibu and the other a businessman in Costa Mesa. There are three grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Dr. Eisenbach is in touch with other members of his extended family, also survivors living a long and productive life, in Baltimore and Australia.

Dr. Eisenbach reflects on his experiences and longevity, as a book about him, *Where You Go, I Go*, is about to be published. He keeps busy, working full time. Although he needs 25 hours of continuing education credit per year, he takes 100 to keep up with new trends in surgical implants. He keeps his weight down and takes vitamins. Most importantly, he has a healthy attitude.

He concluded, "I'm an optimist. I have a positive attitude and hope for the future. I miss my family, but I'm happy in spite of my losses. The spirit of my ancestors lives in me." ■



FEATURED

Concerts of Peace

Support Performers Who Support Israel

By Robin Silver-Zwiren



Aerosmith continues to put on an amazing concert experience. Steven Tyler's voice may not have the range it had decades ago, but he is still a fantastic talent and showman. Drummer extraordinaire Joey Kramer may have had recent heart surgery, but he certainly made the crowds rock to the beat. The audience of business people ranged in ages in their 60's to their 20's, but everyone cheered, sang and danced along with the band. That Aerosmith has performed in Israel ensured that I lend my spirit and voice while at the group's recent concert.

The Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement believes that not only does it have the right to disrupt university speakers and ships from docking but also musicians from performing. Roger Waters, Carlos Santana, Annie Lennox and Brian Eno may support the BDS-Pro Palestinian fight, but it does not give the movement the right to stop others from performing in Israel. Kudos to Paul McCartney who performed in Israel in 2008 even though Islamic activists threatened him. Another musician, British John Lydon, said that until he sees a democratic Muslim country, he will continue to perform in Israel.

Gene Simmons of KISS agrees, stating that Israel is not the country we should boycott, but the ones with rebellious masses should be on a list.

Creative Community for Peace builds bridges through art and music. It began in 2011 when a group of music executives, talent agents, lawyers and artists themselves joined together to lend their voices to counter the BDS ones.

Share in the message:

"We represent a cross section of the creative world, those who create and help create music, films, and television programs-and their fans.

We may not all share the same politics or the same opinion on the best path to peace in the Middle East. But we do agree that singling out Israel, the only democracy in the region, as a target of cultural boycotts while ignoring the now-recognized human rights issues of her neighbors will not further peace.

We understand that the power of our music, our films, our television shows and all arts have. They have the

power to build bridges. Foster better understanding. And hopefully lead toward greater mutual acceptance.

The world may just be a better place for it."

Instead of listening to the BDS screams, we should listen to the sounds of those who believe in what we do. Those who believe Israel has a right to exist. That Jews, like Leonard Nimoy with his Kohen-Vulcan hand signal, have something to offer us all. Kat Graham, from the Vampire Diaries, has a Jewish mother who grew up on a Kibbutz. Kat speaks Hebrew and loves Israel.

Elton John, has performed in Israel more than once. I wonder how many of Israel's neighbors would welcome this flamboyant talent?

Madonna began her world tour in Israel, because she is well aware that conflicts have been going on for thousands of years and need to stop. She even stated that "you can't be a fan of mine and not want peace in the world." Who knew the wild girl of years ago would become so bright and centered!

Rihanna said that performing in Israel, being in Israel, was an amazing experience.

Alanis Morissette said that Israel was an "amazing, sacred place to end a tour."

For Natalie Portman, Israel is where she was born, a place where her insides refuse to abandon.

We should not abandon our Jewish home in Israel either. We should support the musicians and artists who believe in our ancestry. Guns and Roses, Metallica, Jethro Tull, Depeche Mode, Ziggy Marley, Justin Bieber, Rolling Stones, Linkin Park, Rod

Stewart, Black Eyed Peas, Air Supply, Antigone Rising and others. Skip paying the high cost of concert tickets to those who may in turn send funds to our enemies.

Check out www.creativecommunityforpeace.com for more updates.

Lady Gaga released a video a few months ago in which she greeted her Israeli fans by saying “Shalom Israel.” Arab fans were outraged long before the clip even went viral. They said that she was insensitive. Lady Gaga can certainly be a bit over the top in her mode of dress, but in Israel she was able to be her own provocative self. Israel is a democracy that welcomes all religions. Israel is a democracy that has a Gay Pride Parade every year. Israel is a democracy where you can voice your opinion about a leader without being stoned or beheaded.

In Israel Lady Gaga can say “Shalom” if she wants. However when she went to Dubai, her only concert in the Arab world, her voice and costumes were scrutinized and restricted by a group before allowing her onstage. She had to adhere to the group’s standards. So why did they let her have a show when even Indonesia did not? If people don’t like her style, just don’t go to the show.

Say “Shalom” and “May the force be with you.” ■



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Talking about Their Generation

JSwipe Founder Finds Judaism Compatible with Fast-Paced, Wired Lifestyle

By Ilene Schneider



The JSwipe team at work in their Williamsburg, Brooklyn headquarters.

What is it about millennials that makes everyone else sit up and take notice, maybe with a bit of trepidation? Aren't generation gaps normal? Didn't the baby boomers set themselves completely apart from the previous generation, rebelling against all kinds of conventional behavior and not trusting anyone over 30? What makes the generation that came of age in the early part of the new millennium so different and so intimidating? How do we reach millennials, and how do they connect with one another?

"Millennials are dramatically different in terms of influencing thought," said David Yarus, who runs a millennial marketing agency and JSwipe, a millennial Jewish dating site. Our characteristics and motives are influencing the rest of the world and inspiring a new way of thinking. We're into social media from the beginning to the end of the day, and we're about customization and individuality, best practices and disruption of the status quo."

According to Yarus, "Organizations not run by millennials don't understand them, because they think in terms of a traditional organization agenda. To connect the dots and reach millennials, organizations have to learn their motives, goals and strategies and reverse engineer their organizations through the eyes of millennials who do seven things at once."

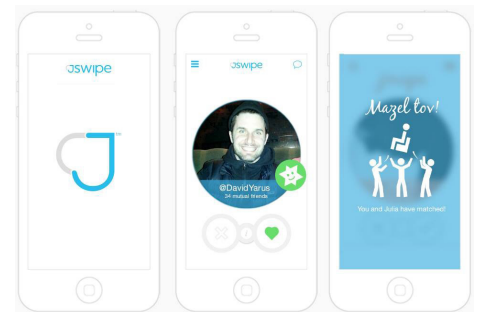
Yarus, 28, who grew up in Miami, said that millennials trust their friends and community more than they trust advertising. They believe that everything is possible using "hustle and smarts." They want to "break every single rule" and want everything "fast and on demand." He added that "people need to get smarter to make sure we see it and it gets our interest."

Yarus believes that millennials are different, because they are a product of their environment, locally and globally. "Technology changed the way our brains are wired," he said. "We grew up with the Internet, the idea of having all of the information in the world in our pocket and the ability to

get anywhere easily. The physical and intellectual world are so accessible that we believe we can do anything."

While Yarus acknowledged that he would like to have surgery done by a doctor who has been doing it for years, there is no such thing as lengthy experience for social media experts. "The creative industry flips the whole concept of experience on its head," he said. "We have to translate it for older people, and that gives us the competitive edge."

When it comes to dating, millennials have different needs than their predecessors as well, according to Yarus. For that reason he came up with a concept that gives Jewish millennials a way to place importance on finding "the one," while keeping up with modern times. "Judaism is something that I value very much, now and later, and this is a means to ensure that I can connect and find love with someone else who is Jewish," Yarus said.

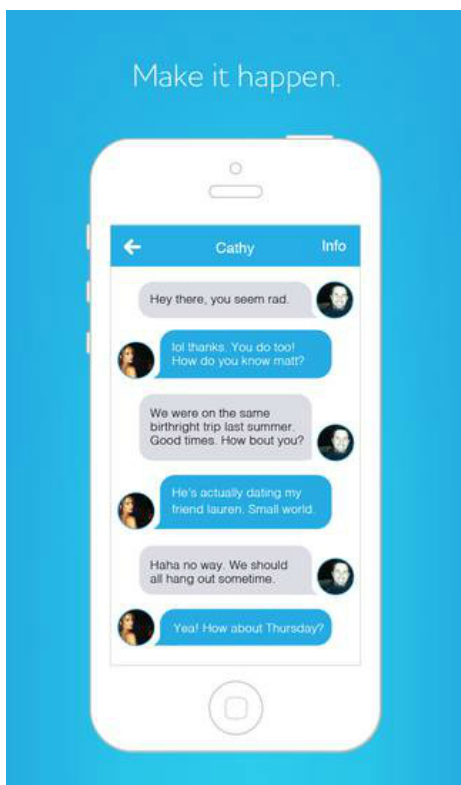


JSwipe founder David Yarus' JSwipe profile.

Unable to find success with existing dating services because of their archaic approach to young, Jewish singles, Yarus launched JSwipe last Passover. Since then the app, which some people refer to as the Jewish Tinder, has gotten more than 225,000 users in more than 70 countries and 315 million swipes, he

said. There has been a marriage, several engagements, all sorts of connections, 16 million messages and 4 million matches. When two people swipe on each other, they are mutually interested, he explained.

Awareness has spanned several generations. The fastest growing demographic profile on the app is the 35-plus crowd, Yarus said. JSwipe has gotten good media coverage, but Yarus believes there is more to the story.



A chat between two JSwipe users who swiped each other to the right.

According to the Pew Research Center study, nearly a third (32 percent) of Jews born after 1980 say that they have no religion, and 58 percent of Jews who got married after 2005 chose a spouse outside the faith. While these numbers would seem to indicate that “millennial Jews don’t

care,” the success of JSwipe “shows that new ways of connecting with one another are the key to what Jewish millennials need to get involved,” Yarus said.

He added, “Everybody’s bubbe wants us to find a Jewish person to marry. Now there’s a fun, easy way to do that, an engaging way for bridging the gap. The core to our success is our intention. The purpose of what we do is to improve love and connection within and across the Jewish community.”

Is tradition at odds with the lifestyle of the typical millennial? Yarus thinks that religion is in a “different part of the brain with a deeper level of identity.” “Religion can be compatible with his generation’s psyche as long as the messages and activities are compatible with the ways millennials look at life,” he explained.

“Shabbat is one of my favorite things in the universe,” Yarus concluded. “Usually I’m so hyperconnected. Shabbat is an opportunity to unplug while being present. I love it.” ■



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Mordechai: The Underrated Hero of the Book of Esther

By Sara Gold



Most people understand the Purim story as the tale of brave Queen Esther who risks her life in order to save the Jews of Persia. Mordechai is most known for being the reason why the evil Haman wants to destroy all the Jews, and it is primarily due to Esther's valiance that the Jews of Persia prevail. This is all true, but it is only one facet of the story. While Esther is unarguably an important and noble character, a closer reading will show that Mordechai is the best exemplar of a Jewish hero.

In the context of the Purim story, written during a time when Jews frequently suffered religious persecution, the hero must be a person who fearlessly represents the Jews and leads them to victory. Mordechai exemplifies these qualities, because, despite the Jews' vulnerable status as a minority in Persia, he is unafraid to express his loyalty to his faith and to his people. At the start of the story, Mordechai refuses to obey King Ahasuerus' law ordering all of his courtiers to bow down to Haman. He knowingly violates secular law and risks punishment in order to recognize only one God, as the Torah

commands.

Queen Esther, on the other hand, initially does not want to be associated with the Jews' plight. She is agitated by Mordechai's public protestation and even implores Mordechai to desist in his efforts, albeit unsuccessfully. She does not intend to act on behalf of the Jewish people until Mordechai chides her for her complacency:

Do not imagine that you, of all the Jews, will escape with your life by being in the king's palace. On the contrary, if you keep silent in this crisis, relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from another quarter, while you and your father's house will perish. (Esther 4:13-14)

When the welfare of the Jewish people is put at stake, Esther intends to keep her Jewish identity hidden in hopes of separating herself from the targeted group, which is anything but heroic.

Whereas Esther is reluctant to intervene until she realizes her personal investment in the situation, Mordechai is not deterred from publicly advocating for the Jews. Mordechai ultimately persuades Queen Esther to

approach the King, and while Esther's revelation is heroic in and of itself, it ultimately leads to Mordechai's rise to power. King Ahasuerus appoints Mordechai to Haman's prior position as second-in-command, marking the transfer of power from the oppressor to the oppressed. To counteract Haman's law against the Jews, Mordechai implements a new law allowing the Jews to defend themselves against their attackers. He then departs from the King's palace dressed in royal robes and the Jewish people rejoice, further establishing him as an archetypal hero:

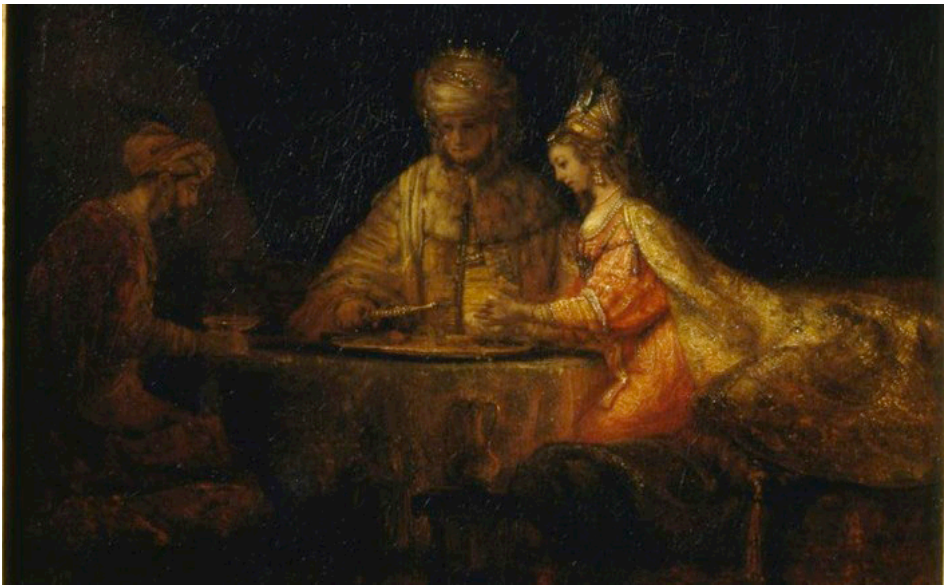
All of officials of the provinces... showed deference to the Jews, because the fear of Mordechai had fallen upon them. For Mordechai was now powerful in the royal palace, and his fame was spreading through all the provinces. (Esther 9: 3-4)

Due to Mordechai's rise to power, the Jews of Persia no longer live in fear – the ultimate triumph considering the Jews' historic struggle to secure safety and acceptance.

Although Esther's role in saving the Jews of Persia should not be discredited, Mordechai should be recognized as the hero of Megillat Esther. While Esther initially shows disinterest in the Jews' plight and even attempts to discourage Mordechai, Mordechai does not allow the threat of persecution to deter him from standing up for his beliefs or his people. Furthermore, the complete absence of Esther's name in the book's final chapter further implies that the queen may not be the ultimate hero of the story. Rather, the concluding chapter affirms that, ultimately, it is Mordechai who is revered and held in high esteem by the Jewish people. Indeed, "He sought the good of his people and interceded for the welfare of all his kindred" (Esther 10: 3) – the defining quality of any hero. ■

What Is the Name 'Purim' All About?

By Binyamin Kagedan, JNS



The names of religious holidays are usually fairly straightforward, pointing us to the central symbol or theme of the festival. Pesach refers to the ancient lamb offering, the *korban pesach*; Shavuot, meaning “weeks,” points to the careful counting of seven weeks that precede it; Sukkot are the booths that Jews inhabit during the celebration of that name. But just what is the name “Purim” all about?

Purim is a plural noun, but incidentally, not a Hebrew one. *Pur*, as I will explain in more detail below, is an Assyrian word meaning “lot,” some object involved in a game or ritual of chance. The Megillah (or “Scroll”) of Esther, whose reading is the highlight of the Purim liturgy, uses the word *pur* to describe the method employed by Haman to choose the day on which the Jews of Susa (or Shushan) were to be massacred. For the benefit of its Hebrew speaking audience, the megillah offers an on-the-spot translation: *hipil pur hu hagoral*, meaning “he cast *pur*, that is, lots,” *goral* being the common biblical term for a lottery. We can infer from this quick annotation that even ancient readers of the megillah would have been unfamiliar with the word *pur*.

That’s not to say that ancient Hebrews were strangers to methods of chance. The most famous use of *goral* in the Hebrew bible was the so-called scapegoat ritual of the Yom Kippur liturgy. Two goats were placed on either side of the high priest; one would be sacrificed upon the altar, the other would be pushed off a cliff on the edge of Jerusalem. The choice of which goat was to be used for which purpose was decided by lottery. The high priest would reach his hands into an urn containing two slips of paper, one reading “for the Lord” and the other reading “for Azazel” (the precise meaning of which is another biblical linguistic mystery). The slip that ended up in his right hand would designate the fate of the goat on his right, and the same for the left. The element of randomness in this practice put the outcome squarely into the hand of fate, or the will of heaven.

What then do we know about Haman’s *pur*? In a fascinating 1983 article for *The Biblical Archaeologist* titled “The First Purim,” William Hallo explains that the *pur* was nothing less than the oldest game in human history: dice. As the curator of the Yale Babylonian Collection, Hallo had under his care a clay cube dating

back to the 9th century BCE, which belonged to a minister of the Assyrian king Salmaneser III. A portion of the cuneiform text inscribed on the cube reads, “lahali the grand vizier... in his year assigned to him by lot (*pur*) may the harvest of the land of Assyria prosper and thrive, in front of the gods Assur and Adad may his lot (*pur*) fall.” Here we see two striking similarities to the megillah text. Firstly, in both places the *pur* is used to make a decision about calendar time; secondly, both sport the verb “fall,” as in “Haman caused the *pur* to fall (*hipil pur*).”

So how did it work? Hallo suggests that the ancient dice were dropped or thrown (that is, made to fall) from a specialized bowl toward statues of the gods, in this case Ashur and Adad. With each minister casting their own dice, the hope was that one’s own cube would end up in some desirable position, perhaps closest to the idol. The prize was extremely valuable—the winner of the game had an entire year of the king’s reign named after him (e.g. the “year of lahali”), resulting in wide scale publicity and immortalization in the official chronicles.

Exactly how similar Haman’s use of the *pur* would have been to lahali’s is still not clear. Scholars assume that the Scroll of Esther was written in the late Second Temple period, centuries later than Salmaneser III’s reign, and the practice of *pur* may have evolved and changed by over time. There is still much more for archaeologists and biblical historians to uncover. In the meantime, novel insights like this one continue to de-mystify and animate our ancient texts. The image of Haman rolling his dice enhances the color and drama of this most distinguished Jewish tale about the twists and turns of fate. ■

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Female Focus

Women's Voices 2015: Featuring Guest Speaker Delia Ephron and Women of the Year Debbie Margolis

By Ilene Schneider



It's the magical day Orange County Jewish women look forward to every year. Not only is it an opportunity to do the extraordinary for the community, but it's a feel-good event so well liked by participants that it was named the #1 Luncheon in Orange County for 2013 by the OC Business Journal Charity Event Guide in the Top 5 Luncheons category.

Slated for March 16 at 10 a.m. at the Hilton Orange County in Costa Mesa, Women's Voices, the largest annual gathering of Jewish women in Orange County, is the signature campaign event of Women's Philanthropy of Jewish Federation & Family Services (JFFS), supporting the Generations Fund of JFFS. Not only is it beautifully done down to the last detail, but organizers work hard to get top-notch speakers.

"It's a great way for women to get together with friends and meet new people while doing something great for the community," said Ann Miller, co-chair, along with Sherri Winkler.

"We're getting bigger and stronger, raising more money and seeing new faces every year."

This year's keynote speaker is Delia Ephron, a bestselling author, screenwriter, journalist and playwright. Her most recent book, *Sister Mother Husband Dog* (etc.), a memoir, was published last fall. The book is a series of autobiographical essays about life, love, writing, movies and family. One of the essays is about "the rivalry, mutual respect and intimacy that made up her relationship with her older sister and frequent writing companion, the late Nora Ephron," according to Amazon.com.

Ephron's career began with a bestselling book of humor called *How to Eat Like a Child* and other lessons in not being a grownup, which became a television special and theater piece performed all over the US and Canada. She became a contributor to *New York Magazine* while writing books of humor and essays about modern life.

As a screenwriter and producer, Ephron usually collaborated with sister, Nora Ephron, on many movies including *You've Got Mail*, *Michael* and *Hanging Up*. She also wrote *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*. Her original screenplay, *Sammy*, will begin production this spring. Based on her experience making movies, Ephron has written and spoken about the importance of collaboration in work and life. She is the daughter of screenwriters and one of four sisters, all of whom became writers.

Another highlight of the day is honoring the Woman of the Year. This year's recipient, Debbie Margolis, who Miller described as "a very philanthropic person who thinks outside of the box, fulfills her goals, chooses her teams well and gives a lot back to the community," is a former president of Women's Philanthropy who just finished a two-year term as president of Jewish Federation & Family Services.

According to Miller, "Debbie has done a lot for the community to make it grow and make it stronger. You can always call on her to come forward. She'll be there to give, help and build bridges."

Margolis is active in many charities, both locally and nationally. She received the Kipnis-Wilson/Friedland Award at the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) Lion of Judah Conference in New Orleans in 2010 and serves on the National Women's Philanthropy Board of JFNA, where she co-chairs the Best Practices portfolio. She is President of the Orange County Leadership Board of the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America. Members of Temple

Bat Yahm (TBY) in Newport Beach, Debbie and her husband, Jeff, are active in temple life. She has held several positions on the TBY and Women of Temple Bat Yahm boards and was TBY's Woman of the Year in 2004

As a former Girl Scout leader, Margolis supported girls in high school as a Gold Advisor for Senior Girl Scouts in Newport Beach. She grew up in Boulder, Colorado and lived in Denver before moving to Corona del Mar. She holds a master's degree in education and taught elementary school. She and Jeff have two adult daughters, 26 and 22.

"It's humbling to be part of the list of outstanding women who have given so much of themselves," Margolis said. She got involved in Women's Philanthropy to make a difference in an area that was not connected to her husband and children.

"It's just about great women, philanthropic women working together to make Orange County and Israel better places," she said. "Women's Philanthropy has magic to it. It's a diverse group of women who are like-minded in their philanthropy and love what they do. There's a place for every Jewish woman in Orange County. Everyone can find a connection."

Encouraged and energized by the diversity and the participation of women of all ages, Margolis wants to reach out to "people who are unaffiliated or on the periphery and help them to make connections." She said that it "takes a personal invitation to get people to events" and hopes to "expand and reach more Jews in

Orange County," as well as to "provide more services to more people more efficiently."



Voices Keynote Speaker: Delia Ephron



Woman of the Year: Debbie Margolis

Motivated by the fact that so many people need support for school, day school, camp and other services, Margolis wants to make sure there is enough to go around. She also wants to connect people in the community and thinks Voices is a great way to do that.

"I would love to have lunch with any of the 770 to 800 women who attend,"

she said. "They're motivating and inspiring. We grow the lunch every year and then walk out and can't wait for next year." ■

Women's Voices

Keynote Speaker, Delia Ephron
Woman of the Year, Debbie Margolis

Couvert: \$75

Date: Monday, March 16, 10 a.m.
Location: Hilton Orange County, Costa Mesa
Contact: Eileen at 949.435.3484 ext. 336 or email women@jffs.org

LOCAL

Olam Montessori Event Is out of This World

Purim Play, Bounce House, and Waffles Too

By Ilene Schneider



While Purim has a serious message, it is pure fun for the younger set. A few drops of rain failed to dampen the enthusiasm of the many children who turned out for a family Purim event at Olam Jewish Montessori of Beth Jacob on Sunday, March 1.

Along with parents and grandparents, the costumed children had a little of everything at "Breakfast with the Stars of Purim." They got to watch a Purim

play done by teens and preteens, top their own waffles, make mishloach manot, play games, jump in a bounce house and tour the preschool.

Olam Jewish Montessori, which is in its fourth year, uses the Montessori curriculum of hands-on learning and integrates Jewish values, customs, culture and Hebrew language throughout the program. Children learn by doing with the teacher as the

facilitator, and many learn to read by the time they finish the program. ■

For more information, call Olam Jewish Montessori at (949) 786-5230 and ask for a tour.



Gallery at [FB.com/KosherOC](https://www.facebook.com/KosherOC)

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Rep. Mimi Walters Presents Congressional Proclamation Honoring TVT

By Kosher OC Staff



The success of TVT students is demonstrated through their exceptional standardized test scores and high acceptance rates into our nation's top universities. For example, the acceptance rate of TVT students to Stanford University is 12.1 percent, in comparison with the 5.1 percent national average. The acceptance ratios for other top universities are as follows: UC Berkeley, 41.7 percent vs. 17 percent; USC, 53 vs. 17.8 percent, and UCLA, 31 vs. 18.2 percent. Furthermore, TVT SAT scores surpassed the national average by more than 400 points, and TVT ACT scores outranked the national average 29 to 21.

Friday afternoon representatives from Congresswoman Mimi Walters' office delivered a framed copy of the congressional proclamation honoring TVT for being the #1 ranked private school in Orange County for academics by niche.com.

for recently having been ranked the number one private school for academics in Orange County, California from niche.com. TVT was also recognized as being the number one Jewish school for academics in the nation by Niche. As a result of their outstanding accomplishments, TVT was recently presented with a certificate of recognition from the County of Orange for achieving these excellent honors. Today, I applaud TVT for their tremendous academic accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the students, faculty, and those who govern the school, for their accomplishments and academic success within the community. It is an honor to represent such an accomplished school in the United States Congress, and I wish them the best in their future endeavors. ■



Mrs. Walters. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to recognize Tarbut V'Torah Community Day School (TVT)

TVT, a Jewish day school with over 500 students, is a nurturing, caring community that embraces pluralism, cultivates Jewish identity and inspires students to lead meaningful Jewish lives. The school is known for its individualized college preparatory environment, which challenges students to think critically, work collaboratively, and explore creatively in order to realize their fullest potential. TVT also strives to encourage students to be inquisitive learners, compassionate citizens, and courageous leaders in their community and in the world.

TVT Teams Have Stellar Year

By Kosher OC Staff



Varsity Girls Soccer - 1 of only 8 teams advancing to next month's SoCal State Regionals. (Photo by Hirhurim)

Varsity athletic teams at Tarbut V'Torah (TVT) have much to be proud of this year as two made it to the second round of the local playoffs and another is going to the state regional championships.

For only the second time in school history, a TVT team is advancing to state regional championships. Despite losing to Garden Grove in the 2nd round of CIFSS playoffs, the TVT girls soccer team is one of eight teams selected to compete in Division V of the girls soccer state regional championships. In order to be eligible to compete in Division V in

state regionals, schools must have an enrollment between 0 and 430. The CIFSS receives four entries into the eight team bracket for each division. The TVT girls soccer team, coached by Walid Khoury, finished the season ranked in the top four of schools with 430 or less student enrollment. The first match of state regional championships will be March 10. The brackets and seeding will come out March 8. The only other team to compete in state regionals was the 2010 boys basketball team.

The boys basketball team lost in the second round of CIF playoffs to Capistrano Valley Christian. The team finished 2nd place in the Express Gold league. With an overall record of 15-9, the team finished the regular season

ranked #15 in CIF Division 5A. All-league teams will be announced after the boys basketball banquet.

The girls basketball team dropped in the second round of CIF playoffs to Woodcrest Christian. The team won its third league championship in a row! First year head coach Matt Tietz helped guide the lady lions to a 14-3 overall record. It is the second best record in girls basketball school history. The team finished the regular season ranked #6 in CIF Division 5A. All-league teams will be announced after the girls basketball banquet.

Since 2000, TVT Upper School varsity teams have advanced to CIF Southern Section playoffs 62 times. The TVT Lions have won 16 league championships including the boys basketball team being ranked #1 in the United States by Jewish Hoops of America in 2009-10. ■

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TVT Launches Transitional Kindergarten

By Kosher OC Staff



Tarbut V'Torah is hosting an Internet Safety Evening featuring expert Katie LeClerc Greer on March 17 at 6:30 PM in the Upper School Lecture Hall. The event, which will come on the heels of age-appropriate presentations to the students, is free and open to the public.

"We wanted to be proactive about Internet education," explained Sandra Cabouat, who works in administration for the dean of the lower school and is in charge of the program. "Amanda Marian, the lower school counselor, brought Katie Greer to our attention to provide some curriculum not written in the textbooks."

For more than 7 years, Greer — who has appeared on national television — has provided Internet/technology safety training to schools, law enforcement agencies, national conferences and community organizations throughout the country. Her educational and professional background has resulted in dynamic programs that appeal to all age groups.

In February of 2005, Greer began developing an Internet safety program

to deliver to Massachusetts students. The Corruption, Fraud and Computer Crime Division of the Attorney General's Office was inundated with requests for Internet safety presentations, and she rose to the challenge of expanding the existing program she created.

After leaving the Attorney General's Office, Greer worked full time as an Intelligence Analyst for the Massachusetts State Police, where she was assigned to the Missing Children Clearinghouse. With increasing demands for technology/Internet safety education, Greer built her programs into a private business with seven different age-appropriate presentations for students from kindergarten through college. She also instructs parents, teacher, administrators and law enforcement officials on digital safety/responsibility and issues pertaining to technology. ■

For more information, contact TVT at (949) 509-9500 or www.tarbut.com

Fabulous Factoids

JCC Hosts Jewish Trivia Specialist

By Ilene Schneider



Did you know that “Take Me Out to the Ball Game,” the unofficial anthem of U.S. baseball, was written by a Jew named Albert Von Tilzer? Did you know that he never attended a baseball game before he wrote it? Did you ever expect to get up and sing that song at your local JCC on a Sunday afternoon in February?

Thanks to Edmon J. Rodman and the Merage Jewish Community Center, my husband and I learned and did all of the above. Rodman, an award-winning journalist who writes for several publications and news services, including the Los Angeles Jewish Journal, Jerusalem Post, The Forward, Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA) and Jewish News Service (JNS), presented a delightful program called “Who Knew? The Remarkable Inventions and Innovations of Jewish Americans You Never Heard Of,” as part of the JCC’s Great Jewish Americans 101 “edutaining” series. Rodman regaled the audience with stories about Jews who have made a variety of contributions to our everyday lives, including the fact that Hedy Lamarr, silver screen actress and international beauty was a pioneer in wireless communication, as well as

being Jewish.

Howard Schulz, the founder and CEO of Starbucks and also Jewish wanted to tap into “the connection that people had to coffee — the place and one another,” that he witnessed at coffee bars when traveling to Italy. Oddly, while Starbucks now has 21,160 stores in 63 countries and territories, there are none in Israel – probably because of the success of Aroma and other Israeli coffee purveyors. Locally, the coffee at Starbucks is kosher, but the food is not. ■

March Community Events

Sunday, March 1

10:00 am
Breakfast with the Purim Stars
Olam Jewish Montessori
3900 Michelson Dr, Irvine

6:00 pm
Heritage Pointe Diamond Donor
Dinner
Newport Beach Marriott Resort & Spa
900 Newport Center Drive, Newport
Beach

Wednesday, March 4

4:00 pm
Purim Carnival, Service and Dinner
University Synagogue
3400 Michelson Dr, Irvine

5:30 pm
Young Family Purim Program and
Dinner
Congregation B'nai Israel
2111 Bryan Ave, Tustin

6:30 pm
Purim in the Wild West Adult Party
Chabad of Mission Viejo
24041 Marguerite Pkwy, Mission Viejo

6:30 pm
Dinner and Adult Purim Celebration:
Delilah's Call-In Karaoke Radio Show
Temple Beth Sholom
2625 N. Tustin Avenue, Santa Ana

7:00 pm
Maariv, Megillah Reading and Purim
Spiel: Shlock of Ages
Congregation B'nai Israel
2111 Bryan Ave, Tustin

7:00 pm
Purim Spiel: Shushanalot
Congregation B'nai Tzedek
9669 Talbert Avenue, Fountain Valley

7:30 pm
Havdalah, Megillah Reading, L'chaim
and Costume Contest
Temple Beth Emet
1770 W. Cerritos Ave, Anaheim

7:30 pm
Megillah Reading
Beth Jacob Congregation
3900 Michelson Dr, Irvine

Thursday, March 5

10:30 am
Purim Play and Lunch
Ezra Center
Temple Beth Emet
1770 W. Cerritos Ave, Anaheim

5:00 pm
Purim in the Wild West Family Party
Chabad of Mission Viejo
24041 Marguerite Pkwy, Mission Viejo

5:00 pm
Purim Seudah
Beth Jacob Congregation
3900 Michelson Dr, Irvine

6:00 pm
Purim in Persia
Chabad of Tustin
13112 Newport Blvd, Suite H, Tustin

Friday, March 6

6:00 pm
Synaplex Shabbat: Dinner, Service,
Lecture by UCLA archaeologist Dr.
Aaron Burke: "In Search of Jaffa's
Solomonic Harbor"

Saturday, March 7

6:00 pm
JFest
Merage Jewish Community Center
1 Federation Way, Suite 200, Irvine

Sunday, March 8

10:00 am
Grandparent & Me Purim Storytime
Merage Jewish Community Center
1 Federation Way, Irvine

11:15 am
Purim Carnival
Temple Beth Sholom
2625 N. Tustin Avenue, Santa Ana

Noon
Purim Carnival
Congregation B'nai Israel
2111 Bryan Ave, Tustin

2:00 pm
Purim Carnival
Temple Beth Tikvah
1600 N. Acacia Ave, Fullerton

5:00 pm
Hebrew Academy Visionary Dinner
Four Seasons Hotel
300 S. Doheny
Los Angeles

Friday, March 13 - 15

BJE Community Shabbaton
Camp Hess Kramer, Malibu

Sunday, March 15

2:30 pm
Showtime Cantors' Concert
Temple Beth Emet
1770 W. Cerritos Ave, Anaheim

Monday, March 16

10:00 am
Women's Voices Luncheon
Women's Philanthropy, JFFS
Hilton Orange County, Costa Mesa

Wednesday, March 17

6:30 pm
Katie Greer, Internet Safety Expert
Tarbut V'Torah
5 Federation Way, Irvine

Sunday, March 22

9:00 am
Mitzvah Morning
University Synagogue
3400 Michelson Dr, Irvine

1:00 pm
Biblical Trial: People vs. Mordechai
and Esther
University Synagogue
3400 Michelson Dr, Irvine

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Best of CES 2015

By Aaron Sigal



CES, the yearly electronics show in Las Vegas, allows electronics manufacturers to show off their latest and greatest gadgets and devices. CES always features cool products (often weird, but usually weird in a good way).

One of the more prominent devices on the floor this year was the Neil Young Hi-Fi Audio Player: The PonoPlayer. This triangular prism is designed for audiophiles and delivers a true high fidelity experience. Pono will be available some time this year.



Also featured at CES 2015 was a slew of smartwatches: Most notably, the Alcatel OneTouch and the Garmin Fenix 3 retailing for around \$150 and \$600 respectively. These watches bring to the table what most modern smartwatches do: improved battery-

life, smartphone connectivity, and Bluetooth integration.

Alcatel OneTouch

The OneTouch has all the features one would expect from a smartwatch including a pedometer and a calorie tracker. However, it also can also function as a sleep tracker, mp3 player, and camera shutter for your phone.

Garmin Fenix 3

The Fenix 3 is one of the more durable-looking smartwatches around. It has the usual specs but also includes a GLONASS Satellite Navigation system and a reinforced round display.

On the more technical side of CES, the USB Implementer's Forum demoed the next generation of USB connections: USB 3.1 type C. This new standard of USB ports brings unprecedented speed and transfers electricity at a rate no connector before it has brought. The 3.1 standard brings a max speed of 10GBPS (Gigabytes per second) to the table. That's twice the current speed of USB 3.0. It can carry so

much power than even laptops can be charged off of it. Additionally, USB 3.1 Type C is symmetrical allowing users to not have to find the "third side" of the usb port to plug into your device.



This was just a brief overview of CES. There are enormous amounts of devices and technology there. So much so that it would be difficult to fit it all in one article. However, this may have proven to be the most exciting CES so within recent memory. ■

Decision 2015: Israelis' Choices When They Head to the Polls

By Alina Sharon, JNS



The leaders of the eight political parties running in the March 17 Israeli Knesset election participated in their first televised debate on Feb. 26, moderated by anchor Yonit Levi of Israel's Channel 2 network. Absent from the discussion, however, were current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his most formidable challenger, Zionist Union alliance chairman Isaac Herzog.

If Zionist Union wins the most seats in the Knesset (Israel's legislature) and is able to form a governing coalition, Herzog—whose Labor party merged with Tzipi Livni's Hatnuah party for the election—would rotate the role of prime minister with Livni.

When Israelis enter the “kalfi” (Hebrew for ballot box) next month, they will cast votes for entire parties—not for specific candidates. Each party, which presents a list of candidates for membership in the Knesset, must win at least 3.25 percent of the total vote to get the minimum representation of about four seats. The new Israeli government will be established based on how many seats each party wins, and the president will appoint the

prime minister, who is usually the leader of the party that won the most Knesset seats. That party leader must then form a governing coalition with other parties, and the parties that are not included in the coalition become the “opposition.” As such, even after the votes are tallied on Israel's election day, it is never immediately clear which parties will form the governing coalition.

The following is a list of parties—some old, some new, and some that have merged—vying for seats in the 20th Knesset.

Likud (Hebrew for “Union”)

Israel's current ruling party, the right-leaning Likud seeks a free-market economy, supports some Israeli construction in Judea and Samaria, and affirms Jerusalem as Israel's undivided capital. Netanyahu and his party oppose total Israeli withdrawal from Judea and Samaria due to the security challenges that move would pose for the Jewish state.

Hamaḥane Hazoni (Zionist Union)

An alliance between left-leaning parties, the Herzog-led Avoda (Labor) and the Livni-led Hatnuah (The Movement), Zionist Union seeks a more proactive Israeli government effort to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians, but with some conditions. The party also promotes more government control of the economy.

Professor Yossi Yonah, a candidate on Zionist Union's Knesset list, recently said the party would be willing to discuss the division of Jerusalem.

“Jerusalem is in practice a divided city,” Yonah said. “We have to discuss the possibility of having the Arab neighborhoods be on the Palestinian side in a permanent arrangement.”

Habayit Hayehudi (The Jewish Home)

This religious-nationalist party led by Naftali Bennett, a 40-year-old software tycoon and veteran of an elite Israel Defense Forces unit, seeks to strengthen the identity of Israel as a Jewish state while upholding “the rights of Israel's minorities,” according to its official website.

Jewish Home staunchly opposes giving up any Israeli land to the Palestinians, instead calling for Israel's annexation of all of the disputed territories. The party also strives to improve Israeli education and economic competition and to reduce taxes for the middle class.

Yesh Atid (There is a Future)

Founded in 2012 by former journalist Yair Lapid, this party won a surprisingly high 19 Knesset seats in the 2013 Israeli election but is expected to see that number drop in 2015. Lapid served as Netanyahu's

finance minister before being ousted from the coalition in December 2014. Currently, Lapid's party is still championing a strategy to lower the cost of housing in Israel, as well as a controversial plan to eliminate Israel's value-added tax (VAT). Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Lapid said earlier this month that his party supports "a regional agreement that leads to a disengagement from the Palestinians—let them do as they please on their side," Yedioth Ahronoth reported.

Yisrael Beiteinu (Israel Our Home)

This nationalist party headed by current Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman was initially founded to represent Russian-Jewish immigrants but has expanded to other Israelis. The party is focused on security and asserts that the core goal of the Palestinians is not the achievement of peace through negotiations but the complete destruction of the Jewish state. Lieberman has criticized Jewish Home's annexation platform, saying that such an action would increase the Palestinian population in Israel and strip the country of its Jewish identity.

Shas

Shas (a Hebrew acronym that roughly translates to "Sephardic Torah Guardians Movement") is an Orthodox religious political party that caters primarily to Sephardic Jews.

In February, Shas leader Aryeh Deri, who has been battling corruption allegations, said he would support Netanyahu's re-election as prime minister if Netanyahu agreed to "a minimum wage of 30 shekels, lowering VAT on basic commodities, and taxing the rich."

United Torah Judaism

United Torah Judaism is a political alliance between two haredi parties, Degel HaTorah (The Flag of the Torah) and Agudat Israel (Israeli Union). The alliance is non-Zionist and accepts only deputy minister positions in the Israeli government. Its primary agenda is to promote the interests of the haredi community in Israel. The alliance is currently led by Yaakov Litzman, who recently said his party does not have a preference between a new government led by Netanyahu or Herzog. At the same time, Litzman said United Torah will specifically decline to join a government led by Yesh Atid due to Lapid's championing of mandatory haredi enlistment in the IDF.

Yachad – Ha'am Itanu (Together – The People Are With Us)

This new religious party, formed by former Shas chairman Eli Yishai, aims to honor the legacy of former Shas leader and Sephardic Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef. The party is running on a joint ticket with the far-right Otzma Yehudit party, led by Baruch Marzel, who was initially banned from the election by Israel's Central Elections Committee before the ban was overturned by Israel's Supreme Court. Yishai and Marzel have expressed their desire to protect the Jewish character of Israel and their opposition to a Palestinian state.

Kulanu (All of Us)

This new political party, led by former Israeli communications minister and Likud member Moshe Kahlon, is primarily focused on economic issues. The party wants to reduce economic class gaps and reduce the cost of living. Kulanu promotes entrepreneurship and economic freedom, but opposes monopolies and cartels that stifle competition—in line with Kahlon's own claim to fame of

breaking Israel's telecommunications monopoly, which dramatically lowered Israelis' cell-phone bills.

On the Israeli-Palestinian front, Kahlon said at the Feb. 26 debate that while he supports an agreement with the Palestinians, "there are lines I won't cross, like dividing Jerusalem or giving up the Jordan Valley."

Meretz (Hebrew for "Vigor")

This left-wing party, chaired by Zehava Gal-On, supports a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and focuses heavily on social justice. Gal-On castigated Jewish Home's Bennett during the Feb. 26 debate for his failure to champion the rights of gays and Arabs.

Hareshima Hameshufet (The Joint Arab List)

For the first time, the Knesset's Arab parties have joined forces, forming an alliance chaired by Ayman Odeh. A new law requiring an electoral threshold of 3.25 percent of total votes cast to qualify for Knesset representation drove the three Arab parties, which claim to represent 20 percent of the Israeli population, to unite in the name of "peace, equality, democracy."

The alliance's Arab parties have been criticized for opposing the Jewish character of Israel, allegedly supporting Palestinian terrorism, and sympathizing for Hamas. In particular, MK Hanin Zoabi of the Balad party has said the Hamas members who kidnapped and killed three Jewish teenagers in Gush Etzion last summer were "not terrorists." Like Marzel, Zoabi was initially banned from the Knesset election, but later got reinstated by the Supreme Court. ■

'A Bad Deal'

Netanyahu Addresses Congress

By Kosher OC Staff



Full text of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech to a joint session of Congress, March 3, 2015. As delivered:

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is addressing a joint meeting of Congress; here is a complete transcript of his remarks.

NETANYAHU: Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

Thank you...

(APPLAUSE)

... Speaker of the House John Boehner, President Pro Tem Senator Orrin Hatch, Senator Minority — Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, and House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy.

I also want to acknowledge Senator, Democratic Leader Harry Reid. Harry, it's good to see you back on your feet.

(APPLAUSE)

I guess it's true what they say, you

can't keep a good man down.

(LAUGHTER)

My friends, I'm deeply humbled by the opportunity to speak for a third time before the most important legislative body in the world, the U.S. Congress.

(APPLAUSE)

I want to thank you all for being here today. I know that my speech has been the subject of much controversy. I deeply regret that some perceive my being here as political. That was never my intention.

I want to thank you, Democrats and Republicans, for your common support for Israel, year after year, decade after decade.

(APPLAUSE)

I know that no matter on which side of the aisle you sit, you stand with Israel.

(APPLAUSE)

The remarkable alliance between Israel and the United States has always been above politics. It must

always remain above politics.

(APPLAUSE)

Because America and Israel, we share a common destiny, the destiny of promised lands that cherish freedom and offer hope. Israel is grateful for the support of American — of America's people and of America's presidents, from Harry Truman to Barack Obama.

(APPLAUSE)

We appreciate all that President Obama has done for Israel.

Now, some of that is widely known.

(APPLAUSE)

Some of that is widely known, like strengthening security cooperation and intelligence sharing, opposing anti-Israel resolutions at the U.N.

Some of what the president has done for Israel is less well- known.

I called him in 2010 when we had the Carmel forest fire, and he immediately agreed to respond to my request for urgent aid.

In 2011, we had our embassy in Cairo under siege, and again, he provided vital assistance at the crucial moment.

Or his support for more missile interceptors during our operation last summer when we took on Hamas terrorists.

(APPLAUSE)

In each of those moments, I called the president, and he was there.

And some of what the president has done for Israel might never be known, because it touches on some of the most sensitive and strategic issues

that arise between an American president and an Israeli prime minister.

But I know it, and I will always be grateful to President Obama for that support.

(APPLAUSE)

And Israel is grateful to you, the American Congress, for your support, for supporting us in so many ways, especially in generous military assistance and missile defense, including Iron Dome.

(APPLAUSE)

Last summer, millions of Israelis were protected from thousands of Hamas rockets because this capital dome helped build our Iron Dome.

(APPLAUSE)

Thank you, America. Thank you for everything you've done for Israel.

My friends, I've come here today because, as prime minister of Israel, I feel a profound obligation to speak to you about an issue that could well threaten the survival of my country and the future of my people: Iran's quest for nuclear weapons.

We're an ancient people. In our nearly 4,000 years of history, many have tried repeatedly to destroy the Jewish people. Tomorrow night, on the Jewish holiday of Purim, we'll read the Book of Esther. We'll read of a powerful Persian viceroy named Haman, who plotted to destroy the Jewish people some 2,500 years ago. But a courageous Jewish woman, Queen Esther, exposed the plot and gave for the Jewish people the right to defend themselves against their enemies.

The plot was foiled. Our people were saved.

(APPLAUSE)

Today the Jewish people face another attempt by yet another Persian potentate to destroy us. Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei spews the oldest hatred,

the oldest hatred of anti-Semitism with the newest technology. He tweets that Israel must be annihilated — he tweets. You know, in Iran, there isn't exactly free Internet. But he tweets in English that Israel must be destroyed.

For those who believe that Iran threatens the Jewish state, but not the Jewish people, listen to Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, Iran's chief terrorist proxy. He said: If all the Jews gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of chasing them down around the world.

But Iran's regime is not merely a Jewish problem, any more than the Nazi regime was merely a Jewish problem. The 6 million Jews murdered by the Nazis were but a fraction of the 60 million people killed in World War II. So, too, Iran's regime poses a grave threat, not only to Israel, but also the peace of the entire world. To understand just how dangerous Iran would be with nuclear weapons, we must fully understand the nature of the regime.

The people of Iran are very talented people. They're heirs to one of the world's great civilizations. But in 1979, they were hijacked by religious zealots — religious zealots who imposed on them immediately a dark and brutal dictatorship.

That year, the zealots drafted a constitution, a new one for Iran. It directed the revolutionary guards not only to protect Iran's borders, but also to fulfill the ideological mission of jihad. The regime's founder, Ayatollah Khomeini, exhorted his followers to "export the revolution throughout the world."

I'm standing here in Washington, D.C. and the difference is so stark. America's founding document promises life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Iran's founding document pledges death, tyranny, and the pursuit of jihad. And as states are collapsing across the Middle East, Iran is charging into the void to do just that.

Iran's goons in Gaza, its lackeys in Lebanon, its revolutionary guards on

the Golan Heights are clutching Israel with three tentacles of terror. Backed by Iran, Assad is slaughtering Syrians. Back by Iran, Shiite militias are rampaging through Iraq. Back by Iran, Houthis are seizing control of Yemen, threatening the strategic straits at the mouth of the Red Sea. Along with the Straits of Hormuz, that would give Iran a second choke-point on the world's oil supply.

Just last week, near Hormuz, Iran carried out a military exercise blowing up a mock U.S. aircraft carrier. That's just last week, while they're having nuclear talks with the United States. But unfortunately, for the last 36 years, Iran's attacks against the United States have been anything but mock. And the targets have been all too real.

Iran took dozens of Americans hostage in Tehran, murdered hundreds of American soldiers, Marines, in Beirut, and was responsible for killing and maiming thousands of American service men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Beyond the Middle East, Iran attacks America and its allies through its global terror network. It blew up the Jewish community center and the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires. It helped Al Qaida bomb U.S. embassies in Africa. It even attempted to assassinate the Saudi ambassador, right here in Washington, D.C.

In the Middle East, Iran now dominates four Arab capitals, Baghdad, Damascus, Beirut and Sanaa. And if Iran's aggression is left unchecked, more will surely follow.

So, at a time when many hope that Iran will join the community of nations, Iran is busy gobbling up the nations.

(APPLAUSE)

We must all stand together to stop Iran's march of conquest, subjugation and terror.

(APPLAUSE)

Now, two years ago, we were told to give President Rouhani and Foreign

Minister Zarif a chance to bring change and moderation to Iran. Some change! Some moderation!

Rouhani's government hangs gays, persecutes Christians, jails journalists and executes even more prisoners than before.

Last year, the same Zarif who charms Western diplomats laid a wreath at the grave of Imad Mughniyeh. Imad Mughniyeh is the terrorist mastermind who spilled more American blood than any other terrorist besides Osama bin Laden. I'd like to see someone ask him a question about that.

Iran's regime is as radical as ever, its cries of "Death to America," that same America that it calls the "Great Satan," as loud as ever.

Now, this shouldn't be surprising, because the ideology of Iran's revolutionary regime is deeply rooted in militant Islam, and that's why this regime will always be an enemy of America.

Don't be fooled. The battle between Iran and ISIS doesn't turn Iran into a friend of America.

Iran and ISIS are competing for the crown of militant Islam. One calls itself the Islamic Republic. The other calls itself the Islamic State. Both want to impose a militant Islamic empire first on the region and then on the entire world. They just disagree among themselves who will be the ruler of that empire.

In this deadly game of thrones, there's no place for America or for Israel, no peace for Christians, Jews or Muslims who don't share the Islamist medieval creed, no rights for women, no freedom for anyone.

So when it comes to Iran and ISIS, the enemy of your enemy is your enemy.

(APPLAUSE)

The difference is that ISIS is armed with butcher knives, captured weapons and YouTube, whereas Iran could soon be armed with intercontinental

ballistic missiles and nuclear bombs. We must always remember — I'll say it one more time — the greatest dangers facing our world is the marriage of militant Islam with nuclear weapons. To defeat ISIS and let Iran get nuclear weapons would be to win the battle, but lose the war. We can't let that happen.

(APPLAUSE)

But that, my friends, is exactly what could happen, if the deal now being negotiated is accepted by Iran. That deal will not prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. It would all but guarantee that Iran gets those weapons, lots of them.

Let me explain why. While the final deal has not yet been signed, certain elements of any potential deal are now a matter of public record. You don't need intelligence agencies and secret information to know this. You can Google it.

Absent a dramatic change, we know for sure that any deal with Iran will include two major concessions to Iran.

The first major concession would leave Iran with a vast nuclear infrastructure, providing it with a short break-out time to the bomb. Break-out time is the time it takes to amass enough weapons-grade uranium or plutonium for a nuclear bomb.

According to the deal, not a single nuclear facility would be demolished. Thousands of centrifuges used to enrich uranium would be left spinning. Thousands more would be temporarily disconnected, but not destroyed.

Because Iran's nuclear program would be left largely intact, Iran's break-out time would be very short — about a year by U.S. assessment, even shorter by Israel's.

And if — if Iran's work on advanced centrifuges, faster and faster centrifuges, is not stopped, that break-out time could still be shorter, a lot shorter.

True, certain restrictions would be

imposed on Iran's nuclear program and Iran's adherence to those restrictions would be supervised by international inspectors. But here's the problem. You see, inspectors document violations; they don't stop them.

Inspectors knew when North Korea broke to the bomb, but that didn't stop anything. North Korea turned off the cameras, kicked out the inspectors. Within a few years, it got the bomb.

Now, we're warned that within five years North Korea could have an arsenal of 100 nuclear bombs.

Like North Korea, Iran, too, has defied international inspectors. It's done that on at least three separate occasions — 2005, 2006, 2010. Like North Korea, Iran broke the locks, shut off the cameras.

Now, I know this is not gonna come a shock — as a shock to any of you, but Iran not only defies inspectors, it also plays a pretty good game of hide-and-cheat with them.

The U.N.'s nuclear watchdog agency, the IAEA, said again yesterday that Iran still refuses to come clean about its military nuclear program. Iran was also caught — caught twice, not once, twice — operating secret nuclear facilities in Natanz and Qom, facilities that inspectors didn't even know existed.

Right now, Iran could be hiding nuclear facilities that we don't know about, the U.S. and Israel. As the former head of inspections for the IAEA said in 2013, he said, "If there's no undeclared installation today in Iran, it will be the first time in 20 years that it doesn't have one." Iran has proven time and again that it cannot be trusted. And that's why the first major concession is a source of great concern. It leaves Iran with a vast nuclear infrastructure and relies on inspectors to prevent a breakout. That concession creates a real danger that Iran could get to the bomb by violating the deal.

But the second major concession creates an even greater danger that

Iran could get to the bomb by keeping the deal. Because virtually all the restrictions on Iran's nuclear program will automatically expire in about a decade.

Now, a decade may seem like a long time in political life, but it's the blink of an eye in the life of a nation. It's a blink of an eye in the life of our children. We all have a responsibility to consider what will happen when Iran's nuclear capabilities are virtually unrestricted and all the sanctions will have been lifted. Iran would then be free to build a huge nuclear capacity that could product many, many nuclear bombs.

Iran's Supreme Leader says that openly. He says, Iran plans to have 190,000 centrifuges, not 6,000 or even the 19,000 that Iran has today, but 10 times that amount — 190,000 centrifuges enriching uranium. With this massive capacity, Iran could make the fuel for an entire nuclear arsenal and this in a matter of weeks, once it makes that decision.

My long-time friend, John Kerry, Secretary of State, confirmed last week that Iran could legitimately possess that massive centrifuge capacity when the deal expires.

Now I want you to think about that. The foremost sponsor of global terrorism could be weeks away from having enough enriched uranium for an entire arsenal of nuclear weapons and this with full international legitimacy.

And by the way, if Iran's Intercontinental Ballistic Missile program is not part of the deal, and so far, Iran refuses to even put it on the negotiating table. Well, Iran could have the means to deliver that nuclear arsenal to the far-reach corners of the earth, including to every part of the United States.

So you see, my friends, this deal has two major concessions: one, leaving Iran with a vast nuclear program and two, lifting the restrictions on that program in about a decade. That's why this deal is so bad. It doesn't block Iran's path to the bomb; it paves

Iran's path to the bomb.

So why would anyone make this deal? Because they hope that Iran will change for the better in the coming years, or they believe that the alternative to this deal is worse?

Well, I disagree. I don't believe that Iran's radical regime will change for the better after this deal. This regime has been in power for 36 years, and its voracious appetite for aggression grows with each passing year. This deal would wet appetite — would only wet Iran's appetite for more.

Would Iran be less aggressive when sanctions are removed and its economy is stronger? If Iran is gobbling up four countries right now while it's under sanctions, how many more countries will Iran devour when sanctions are lifted? Would Iran fund less terrorism when it has mountains of cash with which to fund more terrorism?

Why should Iran's radical regime change for the better when it can enjoy the best of both world's: aggression abroad, prosperity at home?

This is a question that everyone asks in our region. Israel's neighbors — Iran's neighbors know that Iran will become even more aggressive and sponsor even more terrorism when its economy is unshackled and it's been given a clear path to the bomb.

And many of these neighbors say they'll respond by racing to get nuclear weapons of their own. So this deal won't change Iran for the better; it will only change the Middle East for the worse. A deal that's supposed to prevent nuclear proliferation would instead spark a nuclear arms race in the most dangerous part of the planet.

This deal won't be a farewell to arms. It would be a farewell to arms control. And the Middle East would soon be crisscrossed by nuclear tripwires. A region where small skirmishes can trigger big wars would turn into a nuclear tinderbox.

If anyone thinks — if anyone thinks

this deal kicks the can down the road, think again. When we get down that road, we'll face a much more dangerous Iran, a Middle East littered with nuclear bombs and a countdown to a potential nuclear nightmare.

Ladies and gentlemen, I've come here today to tell you we don't have to bet the security of the world on the hope that Iran will change for the better. We don't have to gamble with our future and with our children's future.

We can insist that restrictions on Iran's nuclear program not be lifted for as long as Iran continues its aggression in the region and in the world.

(APPLAUSE)

Before lifting those restrictions, the world should demand that Iran do three things. First, stop its aggression against its neighbors in the Middle East. Second...

(APPLAUSE)

Second, stop supporting terrorism around the world.

(APPLAUSE)

And third, stop threatening to annihilate my country, Israel, the one and only Jewish state.

(APPLAUSE)

Thank you.

If the world powers are not prepared to insist that Iran change its behavior before a deal is signed, at the very least they should insist that Iran change its behavior before a deal expires.

(APPLAUSE)

If Iran changes its behavior, the restrictions would be lifted. If Iran doesn't change its behavior, the restrictions should not be lifted.

(APPLAUSE)

If Iran wants to be treated like a normal country, let it act like a normal

country.

(APPLAUSE)

My friends, what about the argument that there's no alternative to this deal, that Iran's nuclear know-how cannot be erased, that its nuclear program is so advanced that the best we can do is delay the inevitable, which is essentially what the proposed deal seeks to do?

Well, nuclear know-how without nuclear infrastructure doesn't get you very much. A racecar driver without a car can't drive. A pilot without a plan can't fly. Without thousands of centrifuges, tons of enriched uranium or heavy water facilities, Iran can't make nuclear weapons.

(APPLAUSE)

Iran's nuclear program can be rolled back well-beyond the current proposal by insisting on a better deal and keeping up the pressure on a very vulnerable regime, especially given the recent collapse in the price of oil.

(APPLAUSE)

Now, if Iran threatens to walk away from the table — and this often happens in a Persian bazaar — call their bluff. They'll be back, because they need the deal a lot more than you do.

(APPLAUSE)

And by maintaining the pressure on Iran and on those who do business with Iran, you have the power to make them need it even more.

My friends, for over a year, we've been told that no deal is better than a bad deal. Well, this is a bad deal. It's a very bad deal. We're better off without it.

(APPLAUSE)

Now we're being told that the only alternative to this bad deal is war. That's just not true.

The alternative to this bad deal is a

much better deal.

(APPLAUSE)

A better deal that doesn't leave Iran with a vast nuclear infrastructure and such a short break-out time. A better deal that keeps the restrictions on Iran's nuclear program in place until Iran's aggression ends.

(APPLAUSE)

A better deal that won't give Iran an easy path to the bomb. A better deal that Israel and its neighbors may not like, but with which we could live, literally. And no country...

(APPLAUSE)

... no country has a greater stake — no country has a greater stake than Israel in a good deal that peacefully removes this threat.

Ladies and gentlemen, history has placed us at a fateful crossroads. We must now choose between two paths. One path leads to a bad deal that will at best curtail Iran's nuclear ambitions for a while, but it will inexorably lead to a nuclear-armed Iran whose unbridled aggression will inevitably lead to war.

The second path, however difficult, could lead to a much better deal, that would prevent a nuclear-armed Iran, a nuclearized Middle East and the horrific consequences of both to all of humanity.

You don't have to read Robert Frost to know. You have to live life to know that the difficult path is usually the one less traveled, but it will make all the difference for the future of my country, the security of the Middle East and the peace of the world, the peace, we all desire.

(APPLAUSE)

My friend, standing up to Iran is not easy. Standing up to dark and murderous regimes never is. With us today is Holocaust survivor and Nobel Prize winner Elie Wiesel.

(APPLAUSE)

Elie, your life and work inspires to give meaning to the words, "never again."

(APPLAUSE)

And I wish I could promise you, Elie, that the lessons of history have been learned. I can only urge the leaders of the world not to repeat the mistakes of the past.

(APPLAUSE)

Not to sacrifice the future for the present; not to ignore aggression in the hopes of gaining an illusory peace.

But I can guarantee you this, the days when the Jewish people remained passive in the face of genocidal enemies, those days are over.

(APPLAUSE)

We are no longer scattered among the nations, powerless to defend ourselves. We restored our sovereignty in our ancient home. And the soldiers who defend our home have boundless courage. For the first time in 100 generations, we, the Jewish people, can defend ourselves.

(APPLAUSE)

This is why — this is why, as a prime minister of Israel, I can promise you one more thing: Even if Israel has to stand alone, Israel will stand.

(APPLAUSE)

But I know that Israel does not stand alone. I know that America stands with Israel.

(APPLAUSE)

I know that you stand with Israel.

(APPLAUSE)

You stand with Israel, because you know that the story of Israel is not only the story of the Jewish people but of the human spirit that refuses again and again to succumb to history's horrors.

(APPLAUSE)

Facing me right up there in the gallery, overlooking all of us in this (inaudible) chamber is the image of Moses. Moses led our people from slavery to the gates of the Promised Land.

And before the people of Israel entered the land of Israel, Moses gave us a message that has steered our resolve for thousands of years. I leave you with his message today, (SPEAKING IN HEBREW), “Be strong and resolute, neither fear nor dread them.”

My friends, may Israel and America always stand together, strong and resolute. May we neither fear nor dread the challenges ahead. May we face the future with confidence, strength and hope.

May God bless the state of Israel and may God bless the United States of America.

(APPLAUSE)

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you all.

You're wonderful.

Thank you, America. Thank you.

Thank you. ■

ISRAEL

Court Orders Palestinian Authority to Pay \$218 Million to American Victims of Terror

By JNS



A New York City-based federal jury on Monday ordered the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Palestinian Authority (PA) to pay \$218.5 million in reparations to American citizens who were targeted by terror attacks in Jerusalem 10 years ago, and to the victims' families – a figure that will be tripled to \$655.5 million according to the anti-terrorism laws under which the case was brought, according to the New York Times.

The court ruled in favor of 10 American families who sued the PLO and PA for six different terrorist attacks that were linked to those groups during the second Palestinian intifada (uprising). Thirty-three people were killed in those six attacks between 2002 and 2004, and 450 were injured. Since the lawsuit was filed in a U.S. court under the Anti-Terrorism Act, the reparation amount is expected to triple to \$655.5 million.

“Now the PLO and the PA know there is a price for supporting terrorism,” said Nitsana Darshan-Leitner, a lawyer

for the plaintiffs and the head of Shurat HaDin, Israel Law Center.

The plaintiffs won the case after a 10-year legal battle in which the defense claimed that the PLO and the PA were not directly responsible for attacks, which were carried out by the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and Hamas. The verdict is likely to bolster Israel's longstanding claim that Palestinian factions such as Mahmoud Abbas's PA—which many in the West consider to be more moderate than Hamas—support terrorism. ■

Netanyahu at AIPAC

PM Benjamin Netanyahu's Speech at the AIPAC Policy Conference

By Kosher OC Staff



Thank you. Wow, 16,000 people. Anyone here from California? Florida? New York?

Well, these are the easy ones. How about Colorado? Indiana? I think I got it. Montana? Texas?

You're here in record numbers. You're here from coast to coast, from every part of this great land. And you're here at a critical time. You're here to tell the world that reports of the demise of the Israeli-U.S. relations are not only premature, they're just wrong.

You're here to tell the world that our alliance is stronger than ever.

And because of you, and millions like you, across this great country, it's going to get even stronger in the coming years.

Thank you Bob Cohen, Michael Kassen, Howard Kohr and all the leadership of AIPAC. Thank you for your tireless, dedicated work to strengthen the partnership between Israel and the United States.

I want to thank, most especially, Members of Congress, Democrats and Republicans. I deeply appreciate your steadfast support for Israel, year in, year out. You have our boundless gratitude.

I want to welcome President Zeman of the Czech Republic. Mr. President, Israel never forgets its friends. And the Czech people have always been steadfast friends of Israel, the Jewish people, from the days of Thomas Masaryk at the inception of Zionism.

You know, Mr. President, when I entered the Israeli army in 1967, I received a Czech rifle. That was one of the rifles that was given to us by your people in our time of need in 1948. So thank you for being here today.

Also here are two great friends of Israel, former Prime Minister of Spain Jose Maria Aznar and as of last month, former Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird. Thank you both for your unwavering support. You are true champions of Israel, and you are, too, champions of the truth.

I also want to recognize the U.S. Ambassador to Israel, Dan Shapiro, for your genuine friendship, Dan, and for the great job you're doing representing the United States and the State of Israel.

And I want to recognize the two Rons. I want to thank Ambassador Ron Prosor for the exemplary job he's doing at the U.N. in a very difficult forum.

And I want to recognize the other Ron, a man who knows how to take the heat, Israel's ambassador to the United States, Ron Dermer. Ron, I couldn't be prouder to have you representing Israel in Washington.

And finally, I want to recognize my wife, Sara, whose courage in the face of adversity is an inspiration to me. Sara divides her time as a child psychologist, as a loving mother, and her public duties as the wife of the prime minister. Sara, I'm so proud to have you here with me today, to have you with me at my side always.

My friends, I bring greetings to you from Jerusalem, our eternal undivided capital.

And I also bring to you news that you may not have heard. You see, I'll be speaking in Congress tomorrow.

You know, never has so much been written about a speech that hasn't been given. And I'm not going to speak today about the content of that speech, but I do want to say a few words about the purpose of that speech.

First, let me clarify what is not the purpose of that speech. My speech is not intended to show any disrespect

to President Obama or the esteemed office that he holds. I have great respect for both.

I deeply appreciate all that President Obama has done for Israel, security cooperation, intelligence sharing, support at the U.N., and much more, some things that I, as prime minister of Israel, cannot even divulge to you because it remains in the realm of the confidences that are kept between an American president and an Israeli prime minister. I am deeply grateful for this support, and so should you be.

My speech is also not intended to inject Israel into the American partisan debate. An important reason why our alliance has grown stronger decade after decade is that it has been championed by both parties and so it must remain.

Both Democratic and Republican presidents have worked together with friends from both sides of the aisle in Congress to strengthen Israel and our alliance between our two countries, and working together, they have provided Israel with generous military assistance and missile defense spending. We've seen how important that is just last summer.

Working together, they've made Israel the first free trade partner of America 30 years ago and its first official strategic partner last year.

They've backed Israel in defending itself at war and in our efforts to achieve a durable peace with our

neighbors. Working together has made Israel stronger; working together has made our alliance stronger. And that's why the last thing that anyone who cares about Israel, the last thing that I would want is for Israel to become a partisan issue. And I regret that some people have misperceived my visit here this week as doing that. Israel has always been a bipartisan issue. Israel should always remain a bipartisan issue.

Ladies and gentlemen, the purpose of my address to Congress tomorrow is to speak up about a potential deal with Iran that could threaten the survival of Israel. Iran is the foremost state sponsor of terrorism in the world. Look at that graph. Look at that map. And you see on the wall, it shows Iran training, arming, dispatching terrorists on five continents. Iran envelopes the entire world with its tentacles of terror. This is what Iran is doing now without nuclear weapons. Imagine what Iran would do with nuclear weapons.

And this same Iran vows to annihilate Israel. If it develops nuclear weapons, it would have the means to achieve that goal. We must not let that happen.

And as prime minister of Israel, I have a moral obligation to speak up in the face of these dangers while there's still time to avert them. For 2000 years, my people, the Jewish people, were stateless, defenseless, voiceless. We were utterly powerless against our enemies who swore to destroy us. We suffered relentless persecution and horrific attacks. We could never speak

on our own behalf, and we could not defend ourselves.

Well, no more, no more.

The days when the Jewish people are passive in the face of threats to annihilate us, those days are over. Today in our sovereign state of Israel, we defend ourselves. And being able to defend ourselves, we ally with others, most importantly, the United States of America, to defend our common civilization against common threats.

In our part of the world and increasingly, in every part of the world, no one makes alliances with the weak. You seek out those who have strength, those who have resolve, those who have the determination to fight for themselves. That's how alliances are formed.

So we defend ourselves and in so doing, create the basis of a broader alliance.

And today, we are no longer silent; today, we have a voice. And tomorrow, as prime minister of the one and only Jewish state, I plan to use that voice.

I plan to speak about an Iranian regime that is threatening to destroy Israel, that's devouring country after country in the Middle East, that's exporting terror throughout the world and that is developing, as we speak, the capacity to make nuclear weapons, lots of them.

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Ladies and gentlemen, Israel and the United States agree that Iran should not have nuclear weapons, but we disagree on the best way to prevent Iran from developing those weapons.

Now, disagreements among allies are only natural from time to time, even among the closest of allies. Because they're important differences between America and Israel.

The United States of America is a large country, one of the largest. Israel is a small country, one of the smallest.

America lives in one of the world's safest neighborhoods. Israel lives in the world's most dangerous neighborhood. America is the strongest power in the world. Israel is strong, but it's much more vulnerable. American leaders worry about the security of their country. Israeli leaders worry about the survival of their country.

You know, I think that encapsulates the difference. I've been prime minister of Israel for nine years. There's not a single day, not one day that I didn't think about the survival of my country and the actions that I take to ensure that survival, not one day.

And because of these differences, America and Israel have had some serious disagreements over the course of our nearly 70-year-old friendship.

Now, it started with the beginning. In 1948, Secretary of State Marshall opposed David Ben-Gurion's intention to declare statehood. That's an understatement. He vehemently opposed it. But Ben-Gurion, understanding what was at stake, went ahead and declared Israel's independence.

In 1967, as an Arab noose was tightening around Israel's neck, the United States warned Prime Minister Levi Eshkol that if Israel acted alone, it would be alone. But Israel did act — acted alone to defend itself.

In 1981, under the leadership of Prime Minister Menachem Begin, Israel destroyed the nuclear reactor

at Osirak. The United States criticized Israel and suspended arms transfers for three months. And in 2002, after the worst wave of Palestinian terror attacks in Israel's history, Prime Minister Sharon launched Operation Defensive Shield. The United States demanded that Israel withdraw its troops immediately, but Sharon continued until the operation was completed.

There's a reason I mention all these. I mention them to make a point. Despite occasional disagreements, the friendship between America and Israel grew stronger and stronger, decade after decade.

And our friendship will weather the current disagreement, as well, to grow even stronger in the future. And I'll tell you why; because we share the same dreams. Because we pray and hope and aspire for that same better world; because the values that unite us are much stronger than the differences that divide us values like liberty, equality, justice, tolerance, compassion.

As our region descends into medieval barbarism, Israel is the one that upholds these values common to us and to you.

As Assad drops bell bombs on his own people, Israeli doctors treat his victims in our hospitals right across the fence in the Golan Heights

As Christians in the Middle East are beheaded and their ancient communities are decimated, Israel's Christian community is growing and thriving, the only one such community in the Middle East.

As women in the region are repressed, enslaved, and raped, women in Israel serve as chief justices, CEOs, fighter pilots, two women chief justices in a row. Well, not in a row, but in succession. That's pretty good.

In a dark, and savage, and desperate Middle East, Israel is a beacon of humanity, of light, and of hope.

Ladies and gentlemen, Israel and the

United States will continue to stand together because America and Israel are more than friends. We're like a family. We're practically mishpocha.

Now, disagreements in the family are always uncomfortable, but we must always remember that we are family.

Rooted in a common heritage, upholding common values, sharing a common destiny. And that's the message I came to tell you today. Our alliance is sound. Our friendship is strong. And with your efforts it will get even stronger in the years to come.

Thank you, AIPAC. Thank you, America. G-d bless you all. ■

Why Obama Fears Netanyahu's Speech to Congress

By Ambassador John Bolton



The Obama administration fears the kind of plain speaking that Netanyahu will deliver to Congress.

When Speaker of the House John Boehner invited Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to address Congress on Iran's nuclear weapons program, one might have thought that America's politicians could benefit from participating in a serious discussion about a menacing global threat from the leader of a gravely endangered U.S. ally.

Instead, controversy erupted over the propriety of the speaker's invitation, the etiquette of when he or Israel's Washington embassy should have informed the State Department, whether President Obama would receive Netanyahu at the White House and, most frivolously of all, whether Boehner's invitation violated the Constitution. Rather than discussing potentially mortal risks for the United States, Israel, our Arab friends and, indeed, the whole world, we witnessed a cat fight, instigated embarrassingly by America's president, over whether everyone was using the right fork.

In short, this "debate" has been the very embodiment of placing process and style over substance in the making of foreign policy. And like all such distracting exercises, it is at best a waste of breath. Ask the ayatollahs in Tehran, who surely find this misallocation of American time, attention and resources to be totally amusing.

Unfortunately for the United States and all other countries concerned with the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the consequences of White House petulance are far more serious. The very pettiness of the dispute, moreover, actually underscores that Obama is unwilling to debate the underlying merits of his policies.

There was controversy in Israel, from a strictly domestic political perspective, whether Netanyahu should be speaking to Congress so close to the March 17 Knesset elections. Not surprisingly, Netanyahu asked that his address to Congress coincide with the annual Washington convention of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, an event every Israeli political leader wants to attend.

Whether Israelis criticizing Netanyahu were jealous of his scoring a "twofer" in America, whether he violated some unwritten protocol or whether his speech might actually backfire politically, Israeli voters will sort out on March 17.

Instead, I am concerned here with whether Boehner did anything improper or unwise from a U.S. perspective. And the answer clearly is "no."

For Americans, debating substance must replace critiquing style. America (together with the other four Security Council permanent members and Germany) is negotiating over Tehran's nuclear-weapons program in a fashion almost certain to produce a tragically flawed agreement that will leave Iran with the upper hand and the world in peril.

The stakes are as high as they come. But Obama cannot be candid about the terms of the ongoing discussions, especially now. The inevitable consequences of his dangerous position already are provoking widespread bipartisan disapproval in America.

The White House most fears the effect Netanyahu will have on congressional consideration of further Iran sanctions if no deal is reached. Obama is worried with good reason. Although Iran and the West have been negotiating since 2003, only Obama has made the massive concessions to Tehran that have brought a deal close at hand. And it is not just what Netanyahu will say in Washington but also his timing that set off Obama and his acolytes.

In fact, Netanyahu previously addressed a joint session of Congress

on May 24, 2011, demonstrating, among other things, his gaping differences with Obama regarding Israel's ultimate borders, under negotiation with the Palestinians. The New York Times reported that "Mr. Netanyahu received so many standing ovations that at times it appeared that the lawmakers were listening to his speech standing up." Even worse, from Obama's perspective, The Times said Netanyahu's "speech had many of the trappings of a presidential State of the Union address."

Ironically, Obama touched off the current controversy when he persuaded or allowed British Prime Minister David Cameron to lobby members of Congress against the pending Iran sanctions proposals. At a joint Obama-Cameron news conference in Washington, the British leader answered forthrightly that he had spoken with senators and would likely speak to more, to convey "the opinion of the United Kingdom" that sanctions legislation would impair the ongoing negotiations.

Although publicly admitting Cameron's lobbying efforts was highly unusual, they were hardly shocking in a day when foreign countries hire Washington lobbying firms to influence Congress, the executive branch and even U.S. public opinion. And even less shockingly, we do the same to foreign governments.

What likely irritated Obama more was that Netanyahu's star power will almost certainly eclipse Cameron's and that the arguments in favor of sanctions legislation are more persuasive than the Obama-Cameron view has been thus far. Moreover, British parliamentary elections are set for May 7, so Cameron's timing obviously does not differ in principle from Netanyahu's.

In short, Boehner outgunned and outmaneuvered Obama politically, a presumptuousness that could not go unchallenged from the heights of Mount Obama. In America, plain speaking remains a virtue. That's what Netanyahu will bring to Congress – and what Obama fears. ■

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Fifty Shades of Blue and White

ISR Elections Comes at Pivotal Moment for Israel

By Ilene Schneider



Two elections will be held on March 17. One is a special election to fill a vacancy in the 37th State Senate District of California. It will be very straightforward. If one candidate gets more than 50 percent of the votes, he will win. If not, there will be a runoff. The person will go to Sacramento and hold office. Period.

The other election on March 17 – in Israel, of course – is far more complicated. The 120 members of the Knesset (MKs) are directly elected to four-year terms, subject to calls for early elections. Knesset seats are allocated among the parties by means of proportional representation. A party or electoral alliance must pass the election threshold of 3.25 percent of the overall vote to be given a Knesset seat. Parties select their candidates using a closed list. Voters select the party of their choice, not a specific candidate.

A typical Knesset has 10 or more factions represented. With such a large number of parties, it is nearly impossible for one party or faction to govern alone, let alone win a majority. Thus, every Israeli government has been a coalition of two or more

parties. In other words, even the party with the most votes does not become victorious; there have to be charisma and coalition building steps.

After an election, the President meets with the leaders of every party that won Knesset seats and asks them to recommend which party leader should form the government. The President then nominates the party leader who is most likely to command the support of a majority in the Knesset, and the party leader has 42 days to put together a viable coalition. The Prime Minister-designate must then win a vote of confidence in the Knesset before taking office.

As a preview to the process, the top five political parties in Israel — Likud, Yesh Atid, Bayit Yehudi, Yisrael Beytenu and Labor-Tnua — held a debate on five key issues to woo the Anglo vote in Jerusalem last week. As JewishPress.com editor-in-chief Stephen Leavitt said, Israel is home to nearly half a million “native English speakers” who came from Australia, South Africa, the UK, Canada, the U.S. and other areas where the English language is spoken. Issues included the Iranian nuclear threat and Prime

Minister Binyamin Netanyahu’s trip to address a joint session of the U.S. Congress in Washington, D.C.

Netanyahu, who is speaking to the U.S. Congress in opposition to a nuclear agreement that the United States is currently negotiating with Iran, believes the deal puts Israel at risk and does not protect and ensure the security of Israel and other American allies in the region. The invitation came from House Speaker John Boehner and not from the White House, a source of irritation to President Barack Obama. Some Israelis see the speech as an attempt by Netanyahu to gain political advantage, while others agree with the Prime Minister’s argument that he needs to present his case on an existential threat to his nation. Still others are concerned that the strategy may cause further strains in the relationship between Obama and Netanyahu, with negative repercussions for Israel.

There is nothing black and white – or blue and white – or straightforward about the way Israeli elections are run. What is clear is that Israel needs a strong leader to back down what could be this year’s version of Haman or to form a coalition that can and will take the right steps to make that happen. ■

Understanding American Sniper and Other Missions

By Robin Silver-Zwiren



Thanks to autobiographies by Chris Kyle and Marcus Luttrell, many of us have a better understanding of the jobs US SEALs do. Many of their missions are just like IDF ones, although the latter are the ones most scrutinized worldwide. The truth is that every nation, plus the UN, has special forces units assigned worldwide. Chris Kyle worked with Polish GROM forces in Iraq. Maybe that is why US military forces hugely agree with IDF actions even if the US President, UN and Arab League do not.

After September 11, 2001 the US got a nasty taste of Middle-East fundamentalism and terror. Years have passed. Forces were sent into Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran, but matters have only gotten worse. Whether we agree with everything Benjamin Netanyahu does is not the issue. That Israel, more than any other nation, understands the threat of groups like Hamas, ISIS and others like them is a fact. For that reason alone, the US Congress, Senate and, yes, even the President, should be grateful that he is willing to come and speak. Bibi will be in DC because of the AIPAC

conference. It is time for Obama to grow up and realize he is not the expert here. If Chris Kyle were alive today, I am sure he would agree.

Navy SEALs are a unique group of soldiers. The acronym stands for Sea, Air, Land and that is what these elite units are trained for. The Army Special Forces and US Rangers are similar to IDF Paratroopers. Underwater Demolition Teams, UDT, were the initial team of frogmen that began during WWII. Basic Underwater Demolition/Scuba, BUD/S, trained persons often go on to become SEALs. It does take a lot more than that to become a SEAL, as Chris Kyle mentioned.

A member of our SoCal community was actually part of the original SEAL Team One. He told me how different the job is today from when he was in the service. Being an expert in underwater demolition, he was recruited. Underwater skills were the basic need. Now that has changed, and SEAL teams need to deal with desert heat and sand. The terrain is very different, and, obviously, the enemy is as well. That every SEAL,

whether in active duty or retired, take his job seriously is an understatement.

Like the IDF, no SEAL wants to murder innocents, but SEALs do want to fight against terror and discrimination. Kyle (p. 98) states how "the fanatics we fought valued nothing but their twisted interpretation of religion. And half the time they just claimed they valued their religion-most didn't even pray." Add that to their being drugged up and the enemies are careless fighters. Seems to be much like those fighting for Hamas in Gaza but who listens when Israelis say it? Kyle (p. 152) says that in Fallujah "they stockpiled ammo and weapons, prepared IEDs and fortified houses. Mines were planted and roads closed off so that they could be used for ambushes.....they moved from one house to another...mosques became fortified bunkers..." Yet when the Israelis say that mosques are used for stockpiling weapons UN sanctions are brought against them!

Kyle (p. 158) mentions that some innocents were found in the devastated villages that were overrun with insurgents. The Marines questioned them, gave the family \$300 and told them to leave. So why when the State of Israel was founded are "Palestinians" still able to claim themselves refugees? It was wealthy Arab landowners who sold off their acres to the Keren Kayemet/Jewish National Fund. Palestinian Arabs ran to Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt, believing that the new Nation of Israel would be crushed by Arab League forces. So why is Israel still paying decades later when all the US gives is \$300? Why is Israel always held to standards like no other?

Kyle (p. 266) says how Fallujah was taken in an all-out attack, how much damage was caused. He mentions how the insurgents hid in hospitals,

because they knew the soldiers were reluctant to hit such buildings, but they did. The IDF states that it found munitions in a UN hospital, and the world hollers. Tunnels are found under homes, and there are those saying that Israel had no right to blow them up. How can the US go into lands across a vast ocean, but Israel can't protect its own gardens?

Kyle (p.179), or rather his wife Tara, says how the terrorists don't care about the Geneva Convention. How US soldiers need to record every kill, because they can be tried, but the terrorists don't care who they kill. Terrorists put their wives and children in front of them when they see they are being attacked by others, yet when Israel makes these claims, the world revolts. When Israel news reports that children and women are not always innocents, the UN brings sanctions. When will the Geneva Convention side with Israel for a change?

All those US soldiers gave their lives fighting in the Middle East, and what has happened since then? Kyle (p. 221) says that even when the Iraqis had an election, he "never believed the Iraqis would turn into a truly functioning democracy...that it is a

pretty corrupt place."

That (p. 317) "tribal leaders were more vocal about wanting peace, and began working together as a unified council. The official government still wasn't functioning...and the Iraqi government and police were nowhere capable of keeping order.

Kyle (p. 362) says that they went in to kill all the bad people they could find. That the US military actions may not have pleased everyone, but it sure got the terrorists' attention. After Iraq the troops did not come home as promised. They went to Afghanistan and to Iran. Are things better now? Iran continues to produce nuclear arms, to train insurgents —although if you ask President Obama, he may well deny it along with some of his European cronies.

Israel continues to be the only democracy in the region. With how backwards the rest of the region is going, hopefully the rest of the world will understand what is happening.

We have a household rule that before we can see a movie, we must read the book. so American Sniper by Chris Kyle is at my side. It is enlightening.

Chris Kyle tells of his Texas upbringing and what made him want to join the military and ultimately become a SEAL. Add the part where he is a loving husband, devoted father, and I admit shedding a few tears. I look forward to seeing the movie, although I know it will require a towel, rather than a box of tissue, to catch all my tears. Hopefully others will read the book, and see the movie and realize that US military and the IDF are fighting for our survival too. ■

Happiness Insurance? Stress Kills, Vacation Heals!

By Kosher OC Staff



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Kosher in Vegas

By Robin Silver-Zwiren



Going to Las Vegas is lots of fun for even those of us who are not big gamblers. Alan may put \$1 in a slot machine at some point during each stay just to say he gambled. I prefer to spend \$\$\$ shopping and that is something abundant in Las Vegas. I have relatives in LV, and that is a big reason why I like to join my husband when he has a conference to attend. That the city also has several kosher restaurants makes our stay even more enjoyable.

We usually check out the kosher database on www.shamash.org; however, that site is not updated as regularly as we would hope. Restaurants, whether kosher or not, seem to close almost as often as they open, so always double check before showing up at their door. Examples of eateries Shamash lists that are now closed are: "Big Dragon," "Haifa," "Kosher on the Grill" and "Yafo."

With the amount of general food items now available in the US, all supermarkets carry basic needs. The Albertson's on Fort Apache, as well as one in Henderson, carry a decent amount of additional kosher food items. The Smith's on Rampart has a full, well stocked Kosher Experience.

Besides the usual stock of Sabra packaged salatim, Smith's market has freshly prepared salads and cooked foods. The thought of getting checked into the hotel and then leaving again seemed daunting so we picked up dinner at the supermarket. Fried chicken and several side salads certainly hit the spot. Grab some fresh baked muffins or rolls to keep in your room to go with your morning coffee from whatever coffee shop your hotel has.

Not having to wake up early to do carpool, or to attend to our household pets and chores, was a great way to start the day. Having an amazing suite at the Cosmopolitan Hotel surely made the hours even more comfortable and relaxing, but "the Strip" was calling. Miracle Mile was filled with tourists shopping (and taking a break from gambling). As luck has it, there is a Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf. I knew there was one at the Venetian Hotel but had no idea about this one. Too bad or I would have told the Israeli women I met in a store that CBTL is under Orthodox Supervision, so they too could enjoy it. I know that I certainly needed my jolt of coffee. It seems that CBTL is expanding in the area, because there are now quite

a few more locations including the McCarran Airport and UNLV. Check out the website so you can plan your day.

Jerusalem Grill is one spot we always enjoy. The staffers, mostly Israelis, are courteous and helpful, even though it was a busy night. We decided to order several appetizers between us and enjoyed every bite. Shawarma right off the spit, warm pitot, cigarim, falafel plus the fact that waiters and guests were speaking Hebrew made it seem a bit like Israel. Add the delectable sautéed mushrooms and onions, and we know they will see us again.

The expression "Six Degrees of Separation" always seems closer when you are Jewish. We talked for a bit with the US born Modiin residents at the next table. Suddenly I hear someone at the table behind us saying "Montreal" and my ears perk up. That begins another round of "Jewish geography." The Montrealer hails from Venezuela and was in the midst of a reunion with three other school chums. Now being that my own elementary school friends and I have been talking about having a reunion for over a decade, I must admit being envious that this group actually arranged it all. As it turns out, one of the ladies is married into a family I know from Montreal days. Then a gentleman at another table said he knew me from somewhere. Funny thing is kept looking at him and mentioned the same to Alan. Besides knowing several 5 Towns of Long Island people in common, we realized we probably had met at Grossinger's, or another Catskills singles event, in the 80's. Oh, being a part of the Jewish world is certainly grand!

Nina's Place is Jerusalem's dairy sister. If you go to either you can ask for the owner, Lior, and tell him I sent you. Nina's menu is filled with



delicious soup, salad, pasta and sushi options. The brick oven pizza is certainly my favorite choice. We often order a large Caesar or Greek salad and pizza to share and always leave the table satisfied and looking forward to our next visit.

There are two other dairy restaurants in the area: Huntridge and Panini. Huntridge Soda Fountain is a 50's throwback diner. With all the theme-filled establishments in the area, this one fits in well. Check out the posters and record albums. If you have your kids with you, you may have to explain what the strange looking vinyl disks are though!

Panini serves omelettes, sandwiches and wraps, as well as pasta and pizza. You may want to leave room for coffee and dessert. Its brother/sister spot a few doors away in the same strip mall serves Israeli fare. It is named "Shawarma Vegas" for a reason. Not every state permits the spit-like device

used for Shawarma to be out in the open, so getting the authentic stuff in LV is a real treat.

"Genesis" is the newest addition to the list of LV kosher establishments. In fact, it is only a month old and although there are some glitches, like an imperfect computer program, it has a promising future. Not only does it offer Mediterranean but Chinese fare. Don't be surprised when you see the sign that says "Bereshit/ תישארב" in front because remember that "Genesis" is the English translation. That took me a moment to figure out too.

"Sababa" is a Las Vegas legend. Rami recently sold to Effie, but the food is just as wonderful. In fact, the menu features many daily specials as well. Evan continues to cook and serve with his great ability and humor.

Vegas is not only the tour around the world of hotels and kosher

establishments; it also has sunshine. Living in SoCal we get plenty of that, but between carpools, housework and caring for our pets, I feel guilty lying out by our pool. I decided I needed a rest from walking so much yesterday, so am lying out on a very comfortable lounge chair on our personal balcony. The sunshine feels wonderful and is so bright, it is difficult to even text. Maybe a snooze is what my aging body really needs.

Remember not everything in Vegas needs to stay in Vegas. You can bring home some wonderful memories and a full Kosher stomach. ■

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