El Pasoans meet Israeli Consul General and learn about FIDF

At a special luncheon in honor of Gilad Katz, the new head of Israel’s Consulate General for a six-state region, El Pasoans learned about the important work of the Friends of the Israel Defense Forces organization (FIDF) and got to know more about the Jewish military forces. The gathering, coordinated by Jerry Schwartz and Jerry Rubin, was the first-ever FIDF event in El Paso and for some attendees, their first exposure to the program.

Consul General Katz, who was appointed to lead the Houston-based office in August 2017, spoke eloquently of the time he was called up to fight in the Gaza Strip as a member of the military reserve. A husband and father of three, his experience in 2009 was very different from the typical 18-year-old soldier serving three or four years before college or starting a family. He saw his fellow soldiers from a different perspective. “Jews are responsible for each other,” he said, “and at the end of the day as a soldier, you know you are one piece in a very large puzzle.”

“Our army is a symbol of our sovereign country,” he added. “It stands for justice and loyalty to tradition for Jewish people everywhere. Without the IDF, the Jewish community worldwide would not be standing where we are today.”

Danny Gutman, the director of the Houston chapter of FIDF, shared with us the variety of support programs for members of the military and their families, including financial assistance, construction of gyms and other amenities at military bases, support for wounded soldiers and the families of fallen soldiers, and caring for “lone” soldiers who are not from Israel but volunteer to serve. The FIDF plays a unique supporting role for soldiers: “Their job is to look after Israel; our job is to look after them.”

Eyal Shavitzky also flew in from Houston for the luncheon; he grew up in both Israel and the United States and served in the Israel Defense Forces before moving back to the States. He described his experiences and said that weekends could be lonely because his family was not in Israel during his service. However the FIDF sent him a weekly Shabbat care package and provided other morale-maintaining support.

“FIDF is a true home for so many soldiers,” said Consul Katz. Consul Katz encouraged the forty-plus attendees at the El Paso Club event to get involved with FIDF, an organization that he says closes the distance between people here and people in Israel. “When you get involved, you can feel a part of the magnificent story that is called Israel.” To learn more and support programs for Israel’s army, visit FIDF.org.

Cindy Graff Cohen
Editor, The Jewish Voice

Please Join Us
Tuesday, February 20
6:30 PM - Home of Lory and Jonny Rogers
1600 Dede Lane • El Paso, Texas
79902
Pacesetter’s Co-Chairs: Robin & Tony Furman Wendy & Steve Lanski

Kindly reply by February 13th by calling 915-342-9654 or emailing csandalm@jfedelpaso.org

Campaign Co-Chairs
Leslie Beckett and Janet Wechter

Minimum donation to the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso Annual 2018 Campaign $1,800 per person

Bernard Felsen and Jerry Schwartz, event organizer

Danny Gutman, Director of FIDF Texas Region; Joyce Davidoff, Danny’s first cousin; and Eyal Shavitzky, former Israeli soldier
Hearing the Scroll of Esther read from a proper “Megillah” (twice) is the core of Purim observance and an entire tractate of the Talmud is dedicated to the laws of this important Mitzvah. The Mishna declares that one who reads the Megillah “backwards” has not fulfilled the Mitzvah. Practically speaking, if one hears the story from Chapter Three until the end and afterwards hears the first two chapters – it doesn’t count. You need to hear the story from the beginning to end - in order.

The Baal Shem Tov taught a profound lesson from this rule. Using story from the beginning to end - in – it doesn’t count. You need to hear the story from the beginning to end - in order.

The Megillah describes in intricate detail the setting of this lavish feast. “In the courtyard of the king’s palace garden, with white, green and blue hangings, embroidered with cords of linen and purple wool, on silver rods and marble columns; on a floor of alabaster and marble in rows and circles.”

If the setting impresses you, check out the service protocol. “Drinks were served on golden vessels, each of the vessels differing from all other vessels.” No two vessels were the same. Imagine the opulence! This vivid description gives us an inkling of Achashverosh’s stratospheric wealth, but is it necessary to understand the Purim story? Must we religiously read in the synagouge so many lines describing how ancient heathens partied and wasted 187 days on frivolous drinking?

Achashverosh chose to celebrate his reign with such extravagance because he had the resources to do so. Every detail of the party needed to exhibit his vast wealth, down to the rods holding up the courtyard curtains. Had the rods been wood instead of silver, had two of the same wine vessels been used or had the party lasted 186 days instead of 187 days - it would not have met Achashverosh’s true potential.

Clearly, this is not the Jewish ethic of celebration. Rather, the Megillah is teaching us the Jewish ethic of achievement. Aim to realize your fullest potential because “Better than nothing” is not an option. Whether it is about our own Torah study, religious observance, Tzedakah donations or inspiring others to follow suit – we must expect of ourselves the very best.

Examine your schedule and find more time for Torah study. Make the effort to observe more mitzvot regularly and take a hard look at your income to be sure your charity is up to par. Ultimately, you are the only one capable of achieving what only you can.

Purim this year begins on the Wednesday evening, February 28 and continues through Thursday, March 1.

Please be sure to observe the four Purim mitzvot:

1. Listen to the Purim story read from a proper Megillah on Wednesday evening and Thursday during the day.
2. Give charity to at least two poor people or worthy organizations.
4. Eat a festive meal.

Best wishes for a festive and joyous Purim!
FEDERATION NEWS

Enhancing Jewish Life

Last December, the Board of the Jewish Federation approved $188,000 in funding to promote programs and Jewish education in the El Paso and Las Cruces areas for 2018. Thirty-two programs totaling $164,000 dollars were part of the yearly granting process. All local Jewish organizations were invited to submit grant requests in which interested agencies filled out application forms that the granting committee reviewed. In addition to the written applications, each agency provided in-person presentations and answered questions.

The Granting Committee scored each application base on predetermined four criteria. The four criteria were: (a) delivering programs in line with the Federation’s mission, (b) value, (c) community reach, and (d) management. The granting committee delivered the scores to the Finance Committee which in turn recommended the dollar amounts to the Board.

On top of the $164,000 in grants, the Board of the Federation approved $29,000 to assist the newly created J Center for Early Learning (JCEL) with its startup costs. The Federation Board is pleased with the progress demonstrated by the JCEL; the Federation Board also acknowledges the significant role the JCEL plays in the future of our community and expects the school to succeed.

Through this process, and the many other programs run by the Federation, we are enhancing the quality of Jewish life and education in our midst. We are currently in the midpoint of delivering the highly popular 2018 Jewish Film Series. Hopefully, you can participate in the upcoming Community Relations Council (CRC) sponsored program “Good Deeds Day” on April 15th.

In May, we will host a community celebration honoring Israel’s 70 years of independence. Thanks to the great generosity of the Jewish Community Foundation, we continue to operate the highly successful services of “Shalom Shuttle,” “Cafe Europa,” the bi-weekly senior gathering, and our “Camp Shamayin” youth summer day camp. Your continued support makes these and other programs possible, and we are highly appreciative of your generosity.

In December, Daniel Chejfec, the Federation’s executive director resigned. We wish Daniel every success in his future endeavors. We have a search committee in place working to locate the most qualified individual for the job.

Thanks to the great work of volunteers and the staff, all operations of the Federation continue uninterrupted. If you wish to volunteer for various Federation activities, please call the office at 842-9554.

Toda Raba!
Eitan Lavi, President
Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

A reason to show up!

It’s hard to believe another year has passed and our campaign plans for 2018 are on the calendar! We are thrilled to celebrate our successes and reasons for campaign. With the allocations complete and budgets approved, inspiring programs -- both educational and musical -- will delight all who show up!

Our central theme for campaign is “A thriving Jewish community. Why it’s important, why it matters.” Why show up, why volunteer, why donate? We hope to answer those questions throughout the year. We begin Campaign 2018 with a Pacesetters event, where we will enjoy friends, food and a great guest speaker. We will hear from a dedicated and exceptional volunteer, Danny Prescott, past board chair of the Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas, about how he and his board transformed their organization and campaign.

Caring for those in need, nurturing Jewish identity, and improving life for Jews here in El Paso and all over the world is what we do best! So, we look forward to seeing you at one of the many programs and campaign events JFED El Paso sponsors. We want to know what your passion is, so we can work with you to make it happen.

Spring Campaign Events

Leslie Beckoff, campaign co-chair; Sue Bendalim, campaign director; and I are thrilled and proud to have leaders in our community step up and co-chair our 2018 campaign events.

Pacesetters: Pacesetters co-chairs Robin and Tony Furman and Wendy and Steve Lanski, along with hosts Lory and Jonny Rogers, have planned an enchanting evening at Lory and Jonny’s beautiful home on Tuesday, February 20, so you won’t want to miss it.

Cardozo Society: Co-chairs Becky and Keith Myers and Amy and Allan Goldfarb are working on a topic that will be both provocative and engaging. On Thursday, March 8, event for attorneys and other members of our Jewish community working in the legal profession.

Women’s Campaign: Ellyce Kimmelman and Maria Klein, women’s event co-chairs, are scheduling an adventurous road trip which will make you laugh and cry.

Maimonides Society: Co-chairs Adam and Lauren Eisenberg Rosenfield and Dede and Jeff Spier are planning an event for members of the medical community that will be a rewarding educational and social experience.

It’s up to all of us to “Show Up,” to inspire or be inspired! Will you show up? We hope so!

Janet Wechter, Campaign co-chair
President Elect, Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

This page is sponsored by: Robert Wiener
The staff at the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso extends a big “thank you” to three dedicated volunteers who were not afraid to tackle a tough task in January. Scott “Papa” Stevens and grandsons Jonathan, age 11, and Matthew, age 8, came ready to work on organizing the Federation’s spacious offices at 7170 North Mesa Street. The staff members reported that they all appreciated these volunteers’ time and hard work to get the Federation’s space in tip-top shape and that they also loved having them around.

Aaron Wechter Memorial Scholarship Fund
Accepting applications for Fall 2018 semester

Aaron Wechter was a long-time philanthropist and leader in the Jewish and business community in El Paso, Texas. The UTEP Memorial Scholarship was established in his name by his widow, Sylvia Wechter, and her family in 2014 to financially assist a worthy UTEP student interested in bettering the Jewish community of El Paso. Building upon Aaron Wechter’s legacy of communal involvement and dedication, Sylvia and her family continue to be major supporters of the El Paso community. Anyone interested in applying can contact the UTEP Office of Scholarships (call 747-5748 or email scholar@utep.edu). Completed application forms, with personal statements attached, must be received or postmarked no later than Wednesday, April 18, 2018.

Bea Weisz Memorial Scholarship Fund
Accepting applications for Fall 2018 semester

The Beatrice L. Weisz Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in July of 2001. It was the wish of Ms. Weisz that proceeds from the fund would be given to one or more needy and worthy Jewish college students to enable them to pursue their studies. The amount available for distribution is $6,584 for the upcoming school year. Applications are available online at www.jewishelpaso.org and must be received on or before Tuesday, May 15th, 2018, for distribution by August 1, 2018.

As a special highlight at the spring Pacesetters event on Tuesday, February 20, the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso will host Daniel J. Prescott, a long-time leader in the Dallas Jewish community. Dan served as board chair of the Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas from 2015 to 2017 and helped set a campaign record in 2017. Previously, he served as Federation Campaign chair and Federation Pacesetters chair and president of the Aaron Family Jewish Community Center. He has also been a board member of the Dallas Community Foundation and is a past I. Zesmer Young Leadership award winner and JCC Leader of the Year award winner. A founding partner of Prescott Pailet Benefits, Dan is one of the industry’s foremost consultants on employee benefits programs, with expertise in estate planning protection, key executive insurance programs, and other areas.

At the Purim Pacesetters’ event, Dan Prescott is sure to inspire our area’s leading Federation supporters with his experience and ideas.

FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED

FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED

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FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED
“Clothes come from the store, or your mommy, or your sisters.” So said the three- and four-year-old students of the Cottontails class at the J Center for Early Learning. They were embarking on a study of clothing, and their teachers came to the realization that the students had never even considered where their clothing comes from! The teachers knew that to engage their students, they would have to make this unit hands-on and allow the children to explore. They began by learning how fabric and clothing are made. Students practiced weaving yarn on cardboard looms and decorated paper cutout sweaters and vests. They learned words for different textures, and the children were able to incorporate them into their own clothing designs. The students especially loved reading the book “A Pocket for Corduroy” by Don Freeman. To follow up, their teacher, Ms. Iveth, brought in a real-life sewing machine, and each child got his or her own pocket on a large piece of fabric. The children use their pockets to sign in and out of the classroom for the day.

Once they understood how clothing is made, the children created a pretend store in which they could buy clothing. They used cash registers and practiced their math skills as they “shopped” for clothing. The children also were curious about how clothes get cleaned. The teachers constructed a realistic washer and dryer out of cardboard, and encouraged students to incorporate them into dramatic play. They also read a book about how clothing was washed before electricity, and they used an old-fashioned washing board in their water table. Then they used clothespins to hang the clothes on a clothesline.

By the end of this unit, students had a much deeper understanding of where their clothing comes from and how to take care of it. They enjoy dressing themselves and talking about what patterns or designs they are wearing. Who knows if we’ll see these designers at New York Fashion Week in 2035!

Caren Szanton
Director
J Center for Early Learning
On January 21, more than 130 people of all ages met at El Paso Country Club to celebrate the lives of many of our longest-lived members of our Jewish community: men and women over 90, or chai times five. As Rabbi Stephen Leon said in his remarks to the crowd, these people represent those who set the foundation for today’s Jewish community. As Rabbi Ben Zeidman put 90-plus years in historical context before giving the blessing and leading the motzi, the people born in 1928 and before witnessed incredible changes and events, both bad and good.

Debra Pazos, executive director of Congregation B’Nai Zion and chair of this event, said that the seeds for this first-ever celebration of our eldest members of our Jewish community were sown at a synagogue meeting in August. Jerry Rubin mentioned that the synagogue should do something to honor our older people and Debra Pazos came up with the event’s name. “I can see an event like this every few years,” Debra added. “The concept will always be for the whole Jewish community to get together.”

Many thanks to the Chai Five Committee who worked with Debra: Sylvia Cohen, Ruth Erlich, Barbara Ertinger, Irene Castillo, Rabbi Stephen Leon, Sandy Nadler, Sally Parker, Voli Radcliff, Denise Tolentino, and Rabbi Ben Zeidman. Thanks also to Susie Goldman and Amy Goldfarb for the elegant Chai Five centerpieces and table decorations; Edward Dubowitz, the event photographer who took portraits of attendees; and the celebration’s financial supporters. Not able to attend, but on our minds and mentioned in many conversations was our Jewish community’s oldest member, Lola May, an avid reader with an excellent memory and quick sense of humor, who turned 105 on January 28.

Cindy Graff Cohen
Editor, The Jewish Voice

Jack and Harold Peitzer
Debbie and Alan Cohen
Ben Taber, Rita Davis and Ruth Taber

Patty and Mark Hutman, Mendle Goldberg, and Ray Mesta
Felicia Rubin, Debbie Pazos and Denise Tolentino

Allan and Amy Goldfarb with Jay Heins
Photos by Leslie Beckoff and Cindy Graff Cohen

Rabbi Stephen Leon at the podium sang the song he wrote for the occasion to a packed El Paso Country Club ballroom

IT’S ALWAYS SOMETHING…THAT’S WHY THERE’S FEDERATION
HONORING THOSE OVER 90

The Chai Five Song

Written by Rabbi Stephen Leon
January 20, 2018
Melody: “Sunrise, Sunset”

We have all come together, to celebrate with happiness and cheers,
A group of 28 special people, celebrating 90-plus years.
Beradine Belkin, Tibor Schaechner, Warren Pulner and Irene Batt,
Barbara Ettinger and Norma Levenson – what do you think of that?
Chai Five equals 90, the letters chet and yud,
Thank you for celebrating with us –
We wish you everything that’s good!

Ruth and Ben Taber, Ruthie Erlich, Rita Davis and Jeane Moye,
Harold Peitzer and Mendle Goldberg, all of you bring us so much joy.
Evelyn Goodman and Sylvia Cohen, Jack Eisenberg and Bernie Lauterbach,
Stanley Marcus and Estelle Goldman – our celebration is on the right track.
Chai Five equals 90, the letters chet and yud,
Thank you for celebrating with us –
We wish you everything that’s good!

Jay Heins, Sam and Lea Kessel, Sam Kelen and
Ruth Kerner are among our stars
Charles Ramenofsky, Louis Rosenbaum, David Kaplan and Bobby Goldfarb.
Ninety years is quite an achievement, you have blessed us, that is clear
But in our Jewish tradition, we wish you all 120 years!
Chai Five equals 90, the letters chet and yud,
Thank you for celebrating with us –
We wish you everything that’s good!

Judy and Gary Weiser with Leslie Beckoff
Bud Ramenofsky and Marcia Dahlberg
Debby Robalin and Bernie Lauterbach
Janis Goodman Weiss and Evelyn Goodman
Jeane Moye and Norma Levenson
Dina and Stanley Marcus
Ira and Irene Batt
Jack Eisenberg and Valerie Barnett
Delivering toys to Anapra, Ciudad Juarez

In December, Temple Mount Sinai held a successful toy collection project to provide gifts for children in Mexico. Temple members Marvin Rubin, Bob Novick, Iran Brown (my wife), Lety Vazquez (my mother-in-law), and I signed up for an incredible yet short journey across the US/Mexico border. Our destination was Escuela Primaria Federal Ricardo Flores Magon, a school located in the Anapra neighborhood of Juarez. Amazingly, the neighborhood of Anapra is so close to us, yet Anapra is one of Ciudad Juarez’s and Mexico’s poorest areas.

Upon arrival, it was easy to see just how poor the area was, with impoverished homes, potholes in the streets, hungry stray dogs, and litter everywhere. The school was located across from the local grocery store (S-mart) and had a gate patrolled by a student. Once making our way through to the school’s parking lot, it was like traveling through a gateway into another world. We met the principal, a young woman named Daisy Valdez. She was graceful, calm and yet as confident as one would picture an administrator to be. We could easily tell how thankful she was for our visit.

Daisy explained the school served over 600 students in the morning with 600 more students in the afternoon with a new set of teachers and principal. We went right to work and together we pumped up soccer balls, organized the toys, and prepared to hand them out to the large group.

As the students lined up by class in the courtyard, we started giving out the gifts. We all soon witnessed the smiling faces. I could hear some of the students’ excitement, while others were silent but with positive vibes. I will never forget these moments of seeing this joy. I was also though taken aback by how well Daisy and her staff of teachers had their kids behave. Out of 610 students, not one student misbehaved. Each one said, “gracias” or “Felic Navidad.”

After we gave the first set of gifts, we gave the students spinners. As we entered each classroom, we noticed how densely populated they were with students. Seeing the students line up inside each classroom was wonderful too. I can’t believe to think that we saw 600 sunny faces.

I want you all to know that you were also part of this experience through your generous donations. I only wished more of us could have been there at the school as it was a sight to see. Let’s face it, 2017 was not an easy one for the world or our country. However, for one sunny day, the power of giving helped bridge the gap between two countries, two communities. The power of giving helped knocked down those border walls. I only hope we can continue to help out this school and do it again. As we left the school to return home, I looked west and could see a scenic view into El Paso and the West Side. Fittingly, I could see what only could be that unique facade of our building, Temple Mt. Sinai. You were all indeed there with us, too.

Darren Brown
The day comes when we send our Jewish children to college. We made sure they learned about Jewish history, education, and love for Israel, Judaism’s adherence to tikkun olam and social justice was of high importance.

Our millennial kids, who are highly ideological morally and ethically, want to fight for the underdog. The campus they arrive at is full of pro-palestinian groups like Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP). These groups tell the new arrivals that all Palestinians are victims and Israel is an apartheid state. In order to do the right thing, they need to fight for the Palestinians. They are told that this will help bring peace to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Many of them fall prey to this indoctrination. The pro-palestinian vision which fits in with social justice is tempting for some millennials.

In 2005, over 170 Palestinian non-governmental organizations began an international call for the BDS (Boycott, Divest, and Sanction) movement against Israel. It has been a voice on every campus in the United States and Europe. Since 2010 SJP and JVP have formed more than 100 chapters at American universities. Both back the BDS movement. The BDS message is: To impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era. The BDS movement calls for three demands: 1) Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the wall 2) Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and 3) Respecting, protecting, and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194. The BDS demands calls for the dismantling of Israel through right of return. The end of Israel is the core BDS goal. This call has had success in global academia. Many have found that singling out Israel as the only nation worthy of boycott, divestment, and sanction is anti-Semitic. Under the guise of non-violent political protest, the BDS movement has brought hate and aggressive behavior to our campuses. Many Jewish students feel threatened if they defend or speak in favor of Israel fearing verbal attacks. It is acceptable to demonize, criminalize and delegitimize Israel. This is not representative of America’s long achievement in academic freedom, which depends on free speech and free expression.

At San Diego State University, graffiti stating “SDSU Divest” so we can get rid of the Jews” was found. At UC Berkeley, “Zionists should be sent to gas chambers” was written. Jewish students have been called “racist” and “Zionist pigs.” Invited Israeli scholars and Jewish American professors have been shouted down at colleges across the country, ending in cancelled programs. These are not non-violent protests, but aggressive attacks that are disruptive.

The American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) published a report in March 2017 titled “Campus Free Speech, Academic Freedom, and the Problem of the BDS Movement.” The report found several higher education professional organizations that back the BDS movement. There have been overt academic programs supporting an anti-Israel agenda. They also reported BDS activists engaging in anti-Semitic behaviors on campus.

We want to keep our kids safe when we send them off to college. We mainly worry about their physical safety. We also may want to prepare them for the religious and political conflicts they may face. That now includes preparing them for how they can push back against the platform that advocates ending Israel’s existence as the nation-state of the Jews. People are being encouraged to understand how Israel has the right to its sovereignty.

Nancy Elliott
Temple Mount Sinai holds Cantor-in-Residence Weekend

Temple Mount Sinai will welcome Cantor Rosalie Boxt to El Paso, February 2-4, for a special Cantor-in-Residence weekend. Cantor Boxt has an extensive resume in Jewish music and education. She currently serves as the Worship Director of the Union of Reform Judaism. Cantor Boxt was invested Cantor at the School of Sacred Music of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York in 2001. From 2001 until her retirement in 2017, she was Cantor of Temple Emanuel in Kensington, Maryland.

Cantor Boxt is a Synagogue 3000 Fellow and is a Partner in the Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health. Through PressEnTenre, an incubator for young Jewish social entrepreneurs and ConnectGens of the DC-JCC, she has launched a non-profit business called Kesher Shir: a venture which brings together Jewish musicians from diverse backgrounds to study, collaborate, and create meaningful music which will enrich and enliven worship and strengthen communities. She currently mentors cantors in the field and consults with congregations on issues of worship and music.

Weekend Activities

Shabbat Services, February 2-3:
Renowned for her engaging style of prayer leadership, Cantor Rosalie Boxt will participate in leading the music for Shabbat services on both Friday evening and Saturday morning.

Havdalah & Social Event, February 3:
Saturday evening, Cantor Boxt will help us bring Shabbat to an end with a special Havdalah and dessert reception sponsored by the Temple Gift Shop.

Song Leading for Children and their Families, February 4:
On Sunday, Cantor Boxt will bring her love of music and work with families to El Paso by conducting a song leading session for children and their families during religious school activities on Sunday morning.

This program is made possible, in part, by a generous grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso. With special thanks to Temple's Sid & Rena Dicker Music Endowment and the Temple Gift Shop. For more information, visit www.templemountsinai.com or contact Carlos Gamez at 915-332-5959.

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Phone: (915) 544-6400

New Holocaust film for kids

Premiering on HBO on National Holocaust Memorial Day, January 27, “The Number on Great-Grandpa’s Arm” captures the conversation between a ten-year-old boy and his great-grandfather, a survivor of Auschwitz. Historical film footage and animation add to the story, which becomes a rare lesson about the Holocaust that will be suitable for older children. The 19-minute film is available on HBO On Demand in February.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Concert brings together Jewish and Arab music

Two internationally known musicians – one Jewish, one Muslim – will together visit the UTEP campus and the El Paso Holocaust Museum in early February for workshops, master classes, a community talk/performance, and a concert with UTEP’s Middle Eastern music ensemble, Layali Al-Sham. Violinist Layale Chaker and violist Hannah Nicholas are world-class performers whose collaboration is remarkable considering their diverse backgrounds: Chaker identifies as Palestinian-Lebanese and Nicholas as Jewish American.

Coming from nations and communities that normally thwart any such exchange, Chaker and Nicholas have overcome the obstacles that would typically result from their cultural and religious differences through the understanding that has developed from what was, initially, an organic, musical relationship. In addition to performing at UTEP, Layale and Hannah will also speak about their journey in overcoming both figurative and literal borders to perform together around the globe. Both artists have had distinguished international careers.

This program includes Layali Al-Sham’s premiere of the peace-seeking, boundary-crossing song, “Break” by award-winning Jewish American songwriter and UTEP professor Larry Lesser, inspired by his conversations with a former UTEP colleague raised in Ramallah.

Events open to the public:
- **2/1/2018** Hannah Nicholas, “Music As Resistance” at The El Paso Holocaust Museum
- **2/3/2018** “Perspectives in Counterpoint: Layale Chaker and Hannah Nicholas Perform Arab and Jewish Music with UTEP’s Layali Al-Sham” at UTEP Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall

U.S. Holocaust historian and Emory University professor Dr. Deborah Lipstadt will be the special guest at an exclusive event hosted by The University of Texas at El Paso’s Inter-American Jewish Studies Program (IAJSP) and The El Paso Holocaust Museum and Study Center on the UT-El Paso campus, on Thursday, February 15, in the Undergraduate Learning Center, Room 106, at 5 PM.

The event, “Holocaust Denial: The Rise of Anti-Semitism and Intolerance in America and Europe,” will feature an exclusive showing of the 2017 motion picture “Denial,” which stars Rachel Weisz and chronicles Dr. Lipstadt’s successful legal battle against Holocaust denier David Irving, followed by Dr. Lipstadt’s lecture.

The discussion will touch on subjects such as the current rise of anti-Semitism and intolerance in America, Europe, and around the world, as well as on her battle against Holocaust denial and intolerance.

Admission to the event is free and open to the public. For further information, contact Dr. Ezra Cappell, Director of the UTEP Inter-American Jewish Studies Program, at (915) 747-5739.
Judaism has a vibrant and colorful history in El Paso. Today, we can say the same about its future.

$600,000 Distributed by The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso in 2017 as recommended by our donors and their endowments. To ensure that an organization you support receives funds in the future, please consider starting a fund today.

The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso continues to grow in the number of funds and value of dollars entrusted to its management. Current funds include:

- Rick and Judy Anzterfer Fund
- Shleee Z. Anzterfer Fund
- Irving Farbman Memorial Scholarship Fund at Temple Beth-El
- Louis Baumwoll Fund
- Robert and Leslie Beckoff Fund
- Max and Besie Bellman Fund
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- Judith H. Leonard Fund
- Meyer and Mindy Marcus Fund
- Marilyn and Justin Jay Mendeloff Fund
- Cindy and David Merrick Fund
- National Council of Jewish Women Fund
- Robert D. Nevick and Frieda Lee Schwartz Fund
- Popular Dry Goods Fund
- Charles and Charlotte Ramenofsky & Marcia R. Dahlberg Designated Fund
- Charles and Charlotte Ramenofsky Fund
- Bob and Jean Rosen Designated Fund
- Jerry and Stanlee Rubin Fund
- Jane Elber Ryan Fund
- Bernard and Florence Schochet Leadership Fund
- Bernard and Florence Schochet Fund
- Ann S. Schaeffer Fund
- Rose and David Schofer Fund
- Albert and Adele Schwartz Fund
- Sivert and Stuart R. Schwartz Fund
- Jeffrey Schweitzer Memorial Fund
- Robert and Sara Shiffler Fund
- Stuart and Nancy Shiffler Designated Fund
- Jean and Arlene Sonnen Fund
- William and Arnie Spier Fund
- David Stolaroff Fund
- Aaron Wechter Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Aaron and Sylvia Wechter Fund
- Janet and Randy Wechter Designated Fund
- Bea Weiss Fund
- Bea Weiss Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Congregation B’nai Zion Fund