



THE JEWISH VETERAN

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Lack of Accountability at the Department of Veterans Affairs Leaves Veterans Flabbergasted

By Lance Wang, Editor

I had the opportunity to interact with the Veterans' Administration while in uniform, much more so since retiring from the Army. As with any large organization I've encountered good and bad. Certainly the good is the dedicated functionaries who I encounter, many of whom are themselves veterans. I also have been particularly pleased with the service of a nearby VA Community-Based Outreach Clinic which provides responsiveness that I've never encountered from a big city VA facility. They have provided more continuity of care than I encountered in the military or the civilian world. However the "bad" side has certainly made itself known. I live in a border region of New York, and the ability of Veterans Administration facilities to talk across state lines is still bureaucratically challenged to a very frustrating degree. For instance, rather than referring 50 miles to the nearest VA Hospital in New York, they have to refer me to three times that distance to a facility in Vermont. The employees of the VA who I encounter know this

limitation of their system, and share my frustration. I don't blame them.

Why is it so difficult to bring the problems in the VA to solution stages? For years the VA has been neither fish nor fowl – it did not have the accountability nor true profit motive that civilian medical agencies have, nor did it have the discipline to which a military agency was subjected. It was designed to replace a 19th century system which largely put the onus on charitable organizations and local communities to care for veterans. It was never fully resourced to perform its mission, resulting in fraud and scandals like we saw in Arizona's VA system several years ago. Or it resulted in terribly substandard care like revealed in a 1970 *Life* magazine exposé called "Our Forgotten Wounded" regarding what Vietnam Veterans were encountering in VA hospitals, what *Life* called a "medical slum." The complaint of the VA hospital administration in the article – "We're just not being funded so as to give our services."



The workload for the VA has only increased since the editorial was written. Battlefield mortality has again decreased – some wounds that would have been certain to kill someone during the Vietnam War are now survivable. However, they are survivable in some cases with considerable follow-up care required, often for life. In addition, as our Vietnam veterans require geriatric medicine, demands will again rise. So, as in 1970, are we prepared to pay the

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The Legacy of the American-Israeli Partnership

By Adam Lammon

In the late spring, the United States and Israel signed an agreement to exchange cadets between the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis and the University of Haifa, broadening a military relationship which has endured for more than

six decades. The American cadets will spend several months in 2018 training alongside Israeli students in Israel's demanding Naval Officers Course. This cadet exchange program follows a long history of joint exercises such as the "Blue Flag" exercise between the air forces of the United States, Poland, Italy, Greece, India, France, Germany, and Israel that occurred in November - the largest international aviation exercise that the Israeli Air Force ever hosted.

Although these programs bolster the American-Israeli relationship, the alliance was not always as robust as it is today. As Israeli

professor Dr. Ephraim Kahana has detailed, the Cold War aligned American and Israeli interests and caused their cooperation to blossom from its tepid beginnings. In the early-50's, the Israeli Mossad tried to entice greater cooperation from the American CIA by offering intelligence on the USSR that it received from Soviet Jews. Despite the fact that this information was invaluable for Americans operating in Eastern Europe, it was insufficient to overcome the CIA's instinctive unease towards establishing ties to a foreign intelligence agency. However, this changed in 1956 after Mossad gave an exceedingly furtive document to the

Continued on page 7



Israeli jet conducting joint exercise.
Photo Credit: IDF Blog

D'verei HaShomrim

The parsha for this Veterans Day is Chayei Sarah – the life of Sarah. It is named that because it begins, “Sarah’s lifetime was one hundred years, and twenty years, and seven years.” It talks about Abraham’s search for a burial site for Sarah as well as Eliezer’s (Abraham’s servant) search for the perfect wife for Abraham’s son, Isaac.

When I first look at the parsha for this Veterans Day, I first thought, “How in the world can I possibly relate Abraham’s sending his servant to pick out a wife for his son Isaac to veterans?”

Abraham wanted a wife for his son Isaac - not just any woman, but a good woman who would stand with her husband through all the ups and downs that come with marriage. So, he sends his servant (you might call him a recruiter) to find a wife for Isaac. Eliezer finds the characteristics he is looking for in Rebecca.

So what does any of this have to do with veterans and Veterans Day?

Most of us have heard over the years that Uncle Sam “wants a few good men (and women).” So, our recruiters for the armed services look in nearly every town for those special men and women to serve in today’s Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard with the qualities that we expect in our soldiers, sailors, airmen, coast guardsmen and marines.

It is important that our recruiters find service members with a good moral compass. They will literally have decisions of life or death in their hands, and it is important that we have people who are compassionate and patient when making decisions. We need people who know wrong from right and will uphold the Constitution. Making sure we have the right people in the military is of the utmost importance, and our recruiters do a great job at finding just the right candidates.

Isaac and Rebecca became a strong team, raising a family, moving often to assure pastures for their cattle and food for the family. They worked together; not against each other.

It is the same with our soldiers. They work together to accomplish what, at times, seems impossible. We serve side by side, men and women. We both bear arms; we both go through extensive combat training. Having the right people to work together makes a



JWV National Chaplain Jerry Farris

world of difference when you need to get the plan done.

But what happens after their service is over?

Besides the search for Rebecca, the parsha talks a lot about Abraham’s search for Sarah’s burial place. He finds the most befitting place to bury her, but in the process, he pays an exorbitant price. However, Abraham does not mind paying such an expensive price because the selfless service that Sarah has given him and their family warrants such a price.

When I returned home from service (I served during the Vietnam War) all I heard was “You’re a baby killer,” and “Too bad you weren’t killed.” We were spat upon; people would come up and slap you in the face and call you even worse names. It was the first ever war played out in the news every night, and it was not pretty.

For those of us who experienced battle, who were shot at or who found themselves in a position of killing that enemy soldier, the transition from military to civilian life is often not that easy. We made decisions that we will think about for the rest of our lives. We have really seen the worst humanity has to offer, and we do it in service of all Americans.

Soldiers of today, our veterans of both yesterday and tomorrow, regardless of gender or rank, need to hear you say, “Thank you for your service”. They need a firm handshake, a pat on the back.

However, they need more than a pat on the back; they need your support. Long gone are the days of the House and Senate being packed with veterans like Rep. Montgomery. When Congress comes looking for cuts on Veterans benefits, we need everyone to realize that there is no price too large to pay when it comes to our veterans. They more than earned it.

I hope you all had a very meaningful Veterans Day!



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Song of Service Contest



Attention cantors, musicians, and others! JWV is partnering with the Jewish Welfare Board (JWB) and the American Conference of Cantors to sponsor a new cantorial work for the U.S. Armed Forces. Dubbed the “Song of Service,” submissions must put the Prayer for the United States Armed Forces from the new edition of the JWB Jewish Chaplains Council Siddur to original music.

“Regardless of denomination or affiliation within the American Jewish community, this prayer will remind us that our American freedoms don’t come without risk and cost,” said JWB Director Rabbi Irving Elson. “And that those who defend them should never be far from our prayers and our hearts.”

All submissions are due by March 1, 2018 and must include the English/Hebrew version of the prayer, a recording, and the musical score. The winner will receive a \$1,250 cash prize. Contact Anna Selman at aselman@jwv.org or 202-448-5409 for more information.



Jewish Summer Camp Discounts for Military Families

Ramah is a Jewish Summer Camp group with a network of 10 overnight camps and 4 day camps in North America. In appreciation of their service to the United States, Jewish families with at least one parent in active American military service are eligible for a 40% tuition discount at Ramah overnight camps.

Families are welcome to apply for additional scholarship assistance from individual Ramah camps.

For additional information, please contact the National Ramah office at (212) 678-8881 or email info@campraham.org.

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER

National Commander Paul D. Warner, Ph.D.

Dear Chaveyrim and comrades,

The theme for this issue of *The Jewish Veteran* is the Veterans' Administration (VA). As always, we have a variety of interesting articles and perspectives to share, however with implementing a "theme" approach to each issue, it gives us an opportunity to align some of our feature articles around a common focus. We hope you enjoy the new format!

Continuing Problems

For our transitioning service members, there is a continuing problem for them to transition into the civilian workplace. In fact, according to a survey by Prudential and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, 60 percent of respondents said they struggled translating their military skills into a civilian job experience. This creates a significant barrier to employment. Many high-demand, good-paying jobs such as paramedic, truck driver, nurse, and welder require either a national certification or state occupational license. Currently our national and state systems make it very difficult for service members and veterans to obtain these civilian certifications and licenses that directly translate to their military training. Service members and veterans are often required to repeat education or training in order to receive these occupational credentials, even though much—and in some cases, all—of their military training and experience overlaps with credential training requirements. Employers, many with significant needs for skilled workers, are left waiting for these military members to complete these often lengthy programs—programs many veterans could have taught themselves.

Recommendations:

1. Congress, VA, DOD, and the Department of Education must work together to ensure college-bound veterans have access to quality pre-enrollment consumer information and post-enrollment consumer protections when utilizing their earned education benefits at the college or university of their choice.
2. VA must develop quality metrics with which to evaluate student veteran success in higher education, identify potential problems, and develop quantifiable solutions.
3. Congress needs to continue investing in campus-based support resources for student veterans, such as the VA's VetSuccess on Campus program (which should be expanded), and additional programs that support peer-to-peer support or offer resources to veterans.
4. Congress must also work with the Department of Education and VA to ensure veterans attending schools that are at risk of closing are given ample notice beforehand, as well as make sure veterans enrolled in schools that do close are not immediately cut off from their living stipend and do not lose their educational benefits. It should also provide for the forgiveness of all student loans if the school should close.

The Continuing Saga of the Blue Water Navy

During the Vietnam War, approximately twenty million gallons of Agent Orange were sprayed over the Republic of Vietnam, contaminating the lands, rivers, harbors, and territorial seas. Under the Agent

Orange Act of 1991, Blue Water Navy Veterans were initially entitled to presumptive service-connected disability status, relieving them of the burdensome process of producing evidence that directly established service connection for a specific health condition. However, in 2002, the VA reinterpreted the language of the Agent Orange Act of 1991 to apply only to veterans who served in the inland waterways or set foot in the Republic of Vietnam.

A study conducted by the Institute of Medicine shows a plausible pathway for Agent Orange to have entered the South China Sea via dirt and debris from rivers and streams. Additionally, a study conducted by the University of Queensland found that Australian ships' distillation systems, which were identical to the systems used on U.S. Navy ships during the Vietnam War era, in fact, enriched the toxic dioxin in Agent Orange. This contaminated water was used for cooking, cleaning, showering, laundry, and drinking, exposing U.S. Navy personnel to high levels of the toxic chemical.

We are joining other veterans organizations which are requesting the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to have the VA provide services to all veterans with Agent Orange-related diseases who served in the territorial seas of the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975.



Capitol Hill Action Days & National Executive Committee Meeting February 6 - 11, 2018

Capitol Hill Action Days - February 7+8

National Executive Committee Meeting - February 9

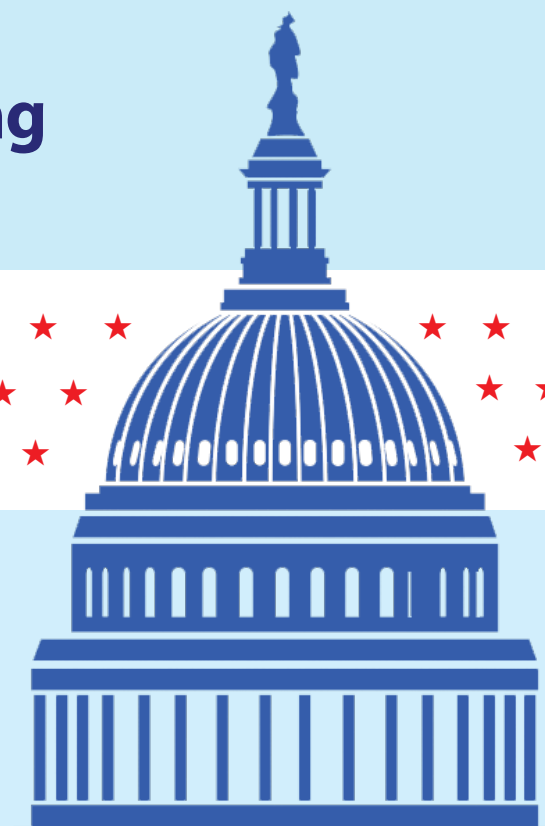
NMAJMH Board of Directors Meeting - February 10

Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport

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\$155/night • To book over the phone call 703-413-5500, say you're with the Jewish War Veterans or go to the reservation link at jwv.org.

Book by January 5, 2018 to reserve your space!





NAZIS ARE NOT WELCOME IN AMERICA!

Commentary By PNC Dr. Robert Pickard

Just before Rosh Hashanah this 5778 (2017) I was asked to represent the Jewish War Veterans USA (JWV) on a teleconference call from the White House. I accepted the honor.

Participants on the call were rabbis and leaders of American Jewish organizations.

First, Jared Kushner got on the line to introduce the President and to tell us how happy the President is to have a Jewish daughter. President Trump then spoke and declared what a great asset the Jewish Community of America is and wished us a "sweet year" (the traditional blessings said to one's family and friends at Jewish New Year).

Prior to the call, the White House asked us to list concerns of the Jews of America. I did my homework. I thought I was going to be able to voice certain concerns, nay fears, I have as a Jew in America today. That was not possible. I was disappointed, as this call was only a few weeks after the Nazi torch-lit march, à la 1930s Germany, on the university campus in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Here is what I wanted to convey to the President; positive comments about his support for veterans, and comments in response to the question of what are the over-riding concerns of the American Jewish Community today.

POSITIVES

JWV applauds President Trump's stance in support of all veterans.

JWV applauds President Trump for honoring all Medal of Honor recipients including Tibor Rubin, a Jew and a survivor of the Holocaust and later a Korean POW camp where he was instrumental in saving the lives of many fellow US soldiers. Because of anti-Semitism, Tibor Rubin was initially passed over for the Medal of Honor.

JWV applauds President Trump's appointment of Dr. Donald J. Shulkin, M.D., a practicing physician, to head and fix the broken VA Health system.

JWV applauds President Trump's signing of the GI bill in support of lifetime benefits to veterans and their dependents.

JEWISH CONCERNS & FEARS IN AMERICA

Jews in America are concerned about the President's response to the torch-lit march on the campus of a noted university in Charlottesville, Virginia. FEAR is what we feel after the President stated that the violence in Charlottesville was "many sided" and that there were "good people on both sides" of that Nazi-induced riot. Jews and all Americans should be concerned and fear the threat of the rise of Neo-Nazism, White Power, KKK, and other hate groups in America. There are no "good" fascists or Nazis in America. Racial, ethnic, religious bias is an anathema here.

Mr. President, my father was a soldier during WWII. He was part of the GREATEST GENERATION which fought and died to free the world from Nazi tyranny. Jews lost 6 million innocents at the hands of the Nazis. "Never again" is not just a slogan.

President Trump, you are said to be a master of perception. The perception of the American Jewish community today is that the Government has taken

a step back from religious protections in America. Many of us believe that the White House is not doing enough, nor saying enough, to combat Nazism in any form or name in America.

No group which espouses racial or ethnic superiority has a place in America. The First Amendment does not condone rioting and the cause of the Charlottesville riot was the Nazis. These are they who are shouting "fire!" in a crowded theater.

We Jews are willing to fight against Nazis. I was one of those who went to Chicago in 1978 and took part in the counter march against the Nazis when they threatened to march in predominantly Jewish Skokie, Illinois. We would prefer that the legitimate government and police organizations keep the peace. Our government needs to stop these Nazis in their tracks, not offer aid, comfort, and accommodation.

President Trump, with all due respect Sir, we Jews of America need you to reassure us that Jews are safe here. You might quote from George Washington's "letter to the Jews of Rhode Island". He said that the US "gives to bigotry no sanction, and to persecution no assistance". He went on to reassure those Jews of their safety in America (Micah 4:4): "Each (Jew) man will sit under his vine and his fig tree, with no one to make him afraid". Micah/Washington's words led to the ratification of what is now our First Amendment to our Constitution. Jews need your voice now and always.

President Trump, we need you to quote Washington "may the children of the stock of Abraham who dwell in this land continue to enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants."

NAZIS ARE NOT WELCOME IN AMERICA!

Controversial Statements by Air Force Chaplain Sparks Review by Air Force Inspector General

By Falk Kantor, Post 100

Capt. Sonny Hernandez, an Air Force Reserve chaplain for the 445th Airlift Wing at Wright-Patterson AFB in Ohio, posted an article in BarbWire.com on September 12, 2017 that contained several controversial remarks concerning service members and their obligations regarding their religion and the Constitution. In it he stated that "Counterfeit Christians in the armed forces will appeal to the Constitution, and not Christ, and they have no local church home – which means they have no accountability for their souls." Further Chaplain Hernandez asserted that "Christian service members who openly profess and support the rights of Muslims, Buddhists, and all other anti-Christian world views to practice their religions – because the language in the Constitution permits – are grossly in error, and deceived."

Further, Hernandez noted that "Christian service members must share the Gospel with unbelievers so they can be saved, and not support unbelievers to worship their false gods that will lead them to hell." He further alleged that "It is impossible to submit to both the Bible and the Constitution as an ultimate au-

thority..." because logic would prohibit this. Hernandez indicated that Christians in the military "serve Satan" if they support other service members rights to practice their own faiths.

On September 15, 2017, the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, an organization dedicated to ensuring that all members of the US armed forces fully receive the Constitutional guarantees of religious freedom, filed a complaint against Capt. Hernandez with the Department of Defense Deputy Inspector General for Administrative Investigations and recommended referral of this matter to the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI). The MRRF, whose founder and president is Michael L.



Chaplain Hernandez. Photo Credit: US Air Force.

"Mikey" Weinstein, stated on October 16, 2017, that Chaplain Hernandez has accrued a significant history of publicly subverting military regulations, his oath as a commissioned officer, and the Constitution. MRRF stated that in spite of numerous official complaints lodged against him over the course of nearly two and a half years by MRRF, the Air Force has yet to discipline him in any way.

On September 22, *Stars & Stripes* reported that after initially denying an investigation, the Air Force said that its IG's office is reviewing complaints against Reserve chaplain Sonny Hernandez. An Air Force spokesman (Col Patrick Ryder) said that he could confirm that the AF is reviewing IG complaints made against Chaplain Hernandez that were referred to the Air Force IG's office.

The *Stars & Stripes* had earlier reported (September 20, 2017) that an Air Force Reserve spokesman (Lt Col Chad Gibson) said Hernandez is expressing his own views, not those of the Air Force, and his freedom to express his own faith is an essential protection of the military, and that the Air Force is not conducting an investigation.

Remembering the Beirut Barracks Bombing By Rabbi Arnold Resnicoff, Post 212

From 1982-84, I was part of a three-man rabbi-priest-minister chaplain team assigned to Commander 6th Fleet on the USS Puget Sound. I visited all US ships in the Mediterranean in addition to frequent visits to the Marines in Beirut. On October 21, 1983, I was sent to Beirut in order to lead a memorial service for Allen Soifert, a Jewish Marine killed by sniper fire. I was offered a flight back to Italy the next day, but after explaining that I would not travel on Shabbat, I stayed until Sunday October 23, when the Iranian-sponsored Hezbollah terrorist attack took the lives of 241 men - 220 Marines, 18 Sailors, and 3 Soldiers. It was one of the largest non-nuclear explosions ever recorded, and for the Marines, it was the deadliest attack since the WWII Battle of Iwo Jima. Four days after the attack, Vice President George H. W. Bush led a White House team to visit the survivors, asking me to write a report of the bombing and its aftermath for President Ronald Reagan. The president read that report in full to the 20,000 attendees of the Rev. Jerry Falwell's "Baptist Fundamentalism '84" convention in Washington, DC. As I look back at the terrorist attack 34 years later, these excerpts from the final entry of my article provides background for the 1983 attack and some of my reflections of its aftermath:

It was that morning, October 23, when the truck crashed through the gate, and two hundred and forty-one Americans were killed. For the first time, those of us in Beirut understood the "terror" in the word "terrorism." There was an immediate reaction, a feeling that we should expand our perimeters, to ensure that the next attack would be more distant from our center.

If you can't stop a terrorist who is willing to die, then you must make him die farther away. In the future, I think all of us would think differently about Israel's need for "buffer zones."

The Marines were heroic that day, risking life and limb to save their comrades. Amidst the rubble, we found the plywood board which we had made for our "Peace-keeping Chapel." The Chaplain Corps seal had been hand-painted, with the words "Peace-keeping" above it, and "Chapel" below it. Now, "Peace-keeping" was legible, but the bottom of the plaque was destroyed. The idea of peace above, and the reality of war below.

Our final decision to pull back and to redeploy to the ships was inevitable given the deteriorating situation within Lebanon. There was some hesitation because no one wanted to send out a message that terrorism works, but the response to the changing situation had to take one of two forms: withdrawal from our positions on land or a massive build-up.

As we pulled back, there was some talk of failure, but these Marines did not fail. They served with strength and with courage, never succumbing to the hatred around them, never giving in to the urge to avenge their fallen comrades. It was the international effort to negotiate peace which failed, despite the time the peace-keepers had "bought" for the diplomats.

Mark Twain once wrote that a cat which sits on a hot stove will never do so again, but it will most likely never sit on a cold stove either. I hope we will not overreact to our experience in Lebanon, and losing courage to try again to help when the cause seems just

– even if helping means taking risks.

The Jewish teaching is "Where there is no man, strive to be a man." Or, as William Cohen, a Jewish poet, has translated it: "Where there is no humanity, you be humanity." In Beirut, we Americans strove to be human, despite the inhumanity which sometimes seemed to surround us. For a time, our presence seemed to make a difference – seemed to give breathing space for hatreds to cool, and working space for diplomats and politicians to confer.

It is inspiring how many of our men who have suffered here still speak in terms of an effort which was worthwhile, and a goal which was – and I hesitate to use the word when it is chic to be cynical – noble.

During Purim, as I sat with the Marines on the ships so close to Lebanon, we read the Book of Esther, the story of personal vendetta, religious hatred, and political intrigue. Somehow Jews kept faith. Perhaps this was the real miracle of the Purim story.



Chaplain Arnold Resnicoff, at the Benediction of Beirut Bombing.

Do We Need To Return Stolen Jewish Iraqi Artifacts? By Anna Selman, JWV Programs and Public Relations Coordinator

Just as U.S. Military Forces were storming Saddam Hussein's Intelligence Building in 2003, our soldiers stumbled upon a treasure trove of Jewish Iraqi artifacts that belonged to a 2,000 year old community. The sacred writings and belongings of the Iraqi Jewish Community were badly damaged through years of neglect and the intense fighting of the Iraq War. U.S. Forces quickly developed a plan to save the thousands of relics, and in 2003, our government and the Iraqi provisional government came to an agreement that after the documents were restored in the United States, they would be returned to the Iraqi government. To date, the U.S. government has spent over 3 million dollars and 10 years to restore and digitalize the archive, which included thousands of manuscripts from the Jewish community of Iraq.

This summer, in yet another blow to the memory of Jewish Middle Eastern History, the Trump Administration announced that they would not ask for an extension regarding the Iraqi Jewish Artifacts and would return the artifacts to the Iraqi government in early 2018. In fact, these items were meant to be returned to the Iraqi government in 2014. However due to the war with ISIS within Iraq at that time, the U.S. decided that the Iraqi government was not a suitable guardian of the documents because they were unable to provide the proper upkeep.

In almost unanimity, the Jewish communities of the United States and Israel have demanded that the

archives either stay in the United States or be given to the government of Israel for safekeeping, and it is understandable why.

These artifacts belonged to the Jewish Iraqi People, whose community can be dated back to the destruction of the First Temple. After almost 2,000 years living in Iraq, the Iraqi Jewish community was subjected to horrific violence during World War II by the Iraqi government – families were murdered and the community was brutalized. After the establishment of the State of Israel, around 130,000 Iraqi Jews left for Israel in what could be describe as "Eichmann-style" conditions during Operation Ezra and Nehemiah. The Jews of Iraq had their citizenships revoked and all of their belongings were made property of the Iraqi government. Many were left penniless refugees in the State of Israel and in the United States.

Now, what is left of the Iraqi Jewish community is demanding that the artifacts stay somewhere that is accessible to their community, and there is a precedent for our legal system to demand the artifacts stay with the descendants of the original owners. The Republic of Austria vs Altmann was a case where Holocaust Survivor Maria Altmann sued the government of Austria for the portrait of her aunt. The Austrian government stated that their former government, not them, played the part in confiscating the painting and that the painting was part of their "cultural heritage". Whereas Altmann stated that the paintings were the

property of her family that were illegally obtained after the Nazi government confiscated her family's belongings and revoked their citizenship. Ultimately, it was decided that the Austrian government and the museum were in violation of international law, and the paintings were given back to Mrs. Altmann.

Mrs. Altmann's case helped spur hundreds of other cases of Nazi looted artifacts from the Jewish community, where the belongings were returned to their rightful owners. It is befuddling to me that there is a clear national and legal consensus about returning looted Jewish artifacts during WWII in Europe, but when it comes to Jews from the Middle East, we still question whether they have the same rights as their European brothers and sisters.

As some of the last memories of the community, it is imperative that these artifacts be preserved for future generations. The Iraqi government has proven that it is unfit to be a preserver of history and should not have control of these relics. When anti-Semites start shouting that Jews are not indigenous to the Middle East, these artifacts are crucial historical reminders that Jews have lived alongside their Muslim and Christian neighbors for millennia. The artifacts in question should be returned to Iraq's Jewish community, now located in the United States and Israel. It is their history, and the best way to preserve it is to return it to them.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Let's Go Back To The Basics!

By Barry Lischinsky, Membership Committee Chairman
As many recall, this past Veterans Day fell on our Sabbath. It gave our Jewish War Veterans a chance to celebrate the Veterans Day Service at our traditional place of worship. Whether it was a Shul/Temple/Congregation/Chabad, many of our JWV Members were asked to speak to their Congregation about their experience and life in the military. At some point of the Service the attending Rabbi/Lay Leader/President asked all the Jewish Veterans to please stand and be recognized by the Congregation for their dedication and military service. As I looked around the sanctuary, I could not help but to notice that there were Jewish Veterans that were not JWV Members. I asked myself "How did I miss an opportunity to recruit a potential member from within my own place of worship?" The answer came to me as a blind flash of the obvious, "Maybe I/we need to refresh myself/our-

selves with some basic principles of Recruiting and Retention."

During our 122nd Annual National Convention at San Antonio, Texas, Membership Committee Break-Out Session I opened the session with this question. Many people respond that they just do not know what to do, so here are a few ideas to get you started:

Have your meeting at a neutral location. Young members do not want to come to a retirement home or a funeral home to meet other veterans. They would rather go to their local restaurant, synagogue or JCC. Many of our posts already host their meetings at a local JCC that excitedly host our members.

Find a dynamic speaker. Having non-members come speak to your group can be very exciting. Local politicians, decorated veterans and non-profit leaders are interesting speakers to young veterans. Also, do not forget to publicize your event. Make fliers and post

them around your synagogue and JCC.

Do not have a meeting every time. This may seem counter intuitive, but young members are just not that interested in going to a business meeting. They want something fun and engaging. Having a quarterly outing to a barbeque, a brunch at a local restaurant or a holiday party can be a fun exciting way to get young members.

We have to go back to the basics and put ourselves in these young veterans' shoes. Think about when you were a young veteran, and what you wanted out of JWV. Now, go do that!



7 Questions with a JWV Member

Member: Sherwin Freeman

Post: Lt. Harold Greenberg - Albert I. Lerner
Post 692

Current Residence: Kensington, MD

Military Service: Vietnam War, Marine
Corps 1968-1970

Member Since Year: 2012



1) What was a special moment for you, as a Jew, serving in the military?

In Nam, I was medevac'd to a hospital ship in Danang, with a high fever. I awoke two days later to find Chaplain Krause sitting at the edge of my bed. He was the first, and only Jew, I met overseas. Nothing could have raised my spirits more than my visit with this wonderful man.

2) For what one thing is JWV Post 692 best known?

Our Post initiated and completed our legacy, due to the giving of its members. Over a three-year period we constructed and dedicated a project meant for Jews and all others to recognize the value and contributions made by us to our military. Located on a prime location at the Blacksburg Jewish Community Center (BJCC), the Memorial site has at its center an informational statue dedicated to Jewish Military service. A Wall of Honor and benches surround that circular patio. It is a place for contemplation, ceremonies, education presentations, and BJCC activities. Now all those visiting the site will know that we Jews do serve in the US military.

3) What is one of your fondest JWV memories?

As a member of Post 692 I knew Bernie Resnick for a little

over six years. For my first two years as Post Commander Bernie and I had many long telephone chats. We discussed worldly matters, yet he always seemed to end up with some instruction on my commander's responsibilities. I appreciated those calls probably because of the depth of his knowledge that he so freely passed on to me. When Bernie courageously made his final exit, I had the honor of speaking at his funeral, representing our Post. It was there that I discovered just what an incredible man he was. Amongst his many life experiences, he was a right-hand man to the father of our nuclear navy, Hyman G. Rickover. I had absolutely no indication of Bernie's accomplishments until that day.

4) If you could improve, or completely invent, a JWV program to improve our service to veterans, what would you do and why?

Most Post membership rolls are declining as members pass on and fewer younger veterans join. All of us are attempting to capture those younger vets, yet I don't feel that we are utilizing our creativity enough. In our ranks we have incredible gold that should be mined and exported to help younger vets in their endeavors, whether it be for their business, family matters, or any conversation that interests them. That's what Post member Bernie Resnick did for me. However, to accomplish that, I feel that we also must stop thinking like old men, because then we act like old men, and speak like old men. Bernie never acted like an old man, because he was only ninety-five.

5) What display of patriotism in your community makes you the proudest?

The Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C.! Foolishly, I was for some reason initially opposed to the building of it. I even waited ten years before visiting. It was really tough that first time. But go I did and it now refreshes me every time that I visit it.

6) What is your favorite Hanukkah tradition or memory?

The presents!

7) Favorite Mel Brooks film?

Blazing Saddles. The beans scene makes me laugh whenever I recall it.

Want to know what your everyday JWV member is like?
Then let's play 7 questions! Contact the Membership
Department (membership@jwv.org)
if you wish to be featured.

JWV National Responds to Tzipi Hotovely's Comments

By Anna Selman, Programs and Public Relations Coordinator

Coming back to work after the Thanksgiving holiday, JWV National was surprised to learn that Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister, Tzipi Hotovely, had gone on Israeli television and made the claim that American Jews are a "people that never send their kids to fight for their country. Most of the Jews don't have children serving as soldiers, going to the Marines, going to Afghanistan, going to Iraq."

National was dismayed when we heard that statement. We like to think the best of people. However, when Neo-Nazi groups started using Ms. Hotovely's comments to perpetuate the anti-Semitic trope "Jews don't serve," we could not let it go.

We took this situation as an opportunity to teach Ms. Hotovely and Israeli Jewry more about American Jewish military service. JWV reached out to the Israeli Embassy, and on December 1st, National Executive Director Herb Rosenbleeth and myself held a call with Yaron Gamburg, the Minister for Public Diplomacy and Molly Tobin, the National Director of Outreach. Both Mr. Gamburg and Ms. Tobin expressed their deepest regret over the comments and also viewed this situation as an opportunity to help bridge the growing Israeli-American Jewry divide.

During our discussion, we told them about upcoming projects for JWV, the Museum and the Foundation. Both Mr. Gamburg and Ms. Tobin were very interested to learn about the work JWV does on behalf of veterans and the Jewish community. Both expressed a desire to become involved. They are coming to the museum on December 13th, and we will be discussing with them ideas for joint programming that we feel would be beneficial for Israeli - American Jewry.

JWV National will continue to update our membership about this issue.

If you haven't already, please visit and like us on Facebook and Twitter. Content is updated regularly, and you'll find interesting stories and valuable information. Also, keep an eye out for the biweekly emails in your inbox.

Lack of Accountability at the Department of Veterans Affairs

Continued from page 1

costs for the VA to do its job? Or are we to treat our veterans as out of sight and out of mind, with the VA only commanding attention when its problems come to a head as in Arizona?

Recently, the lack of accountability and discipline was highlighted in a *USA Today* report. The report indicated that “In 2014 and 2015, the VA spent nearly \$6.7M to secretly settle cases with hundreds of employees who were either fired or forced into retirement due to inadequate performance.” This included doctors who made mistakes that caused harm to patients. One VA podiatrist was allowed to resign after harming 88 patients at a hospital in Maine. Another VA radiologist in Washington was allowed to resign after finding that he misread “dozens of CT scans.” Because of the nature of their departures from the VA, these individuals’ poor performance does not make it into national registries and databases.

Until the VA is treated as a civilian entity, with the same accountability (and liability) as a civilian hospital, this will continue to happen. I understand the challenges of hiring medical pro-

fessionals for government employment – the military branches often face the same challenges. However, compensating for lower wages with lower accountability is not the answer – it will not provide the health care that our veterans need, nor of the caliber that they deserve. Further, I’m also well aware of how challenging and cumbersome the civilian personnel system is for the Federal Government. Supervisors need to be trained to document and evaluate poor performance. It has been my experience that the reason that the government (and other large organizations) often need to “settle with” as opposed to “firing” an employee is that supervisors often do not do their job when it comes to documenting employee performance.

It seems amazing that we can create a world class military, unmatched in technological advantage, yet still are having a hard time creating a system of medical care that is equally unmatched for our veterans. Our veterans, and the thousands of outstanding employees of the VA who do go over and above to take care of them, deserve nothing less.

The Legacy of the American-Israeli Partnership

Continued from page 1

CIA (Soviet General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev’s speech to the 20th Soviet Communist Party Congress) which revealed the horrors of Stalinist rule and gave the CIA a huge propaganda victory. This overture laid the foundation for today’s intelligence relationship, which capitalizes on each partner’s comparative advantages.

The rise of American-Israeli intelligence cooperation then supported a concurrent growth in bilateral military ties. In 2014, retired BG Blain D. Holt observed in *American Foreign Policy Interests* that U.S. military support for Jerusalem ballooned in the 60’s following President John F. Kennedy’s belief that a well-resourced Israel would support Middle Eastern stability. Kennedy’s policy set the stage for Lyndon B. Johnson’s subsequent decision to develop an Israeli “Qualitative Military Edge” (QME) over its Soviet-backed Arab neighbors through the provision of offensive arms.

Continually endorsed with bipartisan support, this QME strategy has been frequently strengthened by American-Israeli commitments. For instance, after the Camp David Accords were endorsed in 1978, Washington and Jerusalem signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 1981 which launched joint military exercises

and collaborative defense research projects. That MOU was succeeded by two more - institutionalizing routine intelligence sharing, establishing two joint political-military working groups, and permitting Israel to purchase advanced weapons from the U.S. by codifying it as a non-North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally.

In addition to creating political ties, these MOUs are most renowned for the financial investment that they represent in Israeli security. U.S. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to Israel, which now exceeds a total subsidy of \$70 billion since 1949, is the most salient measure of American support and directly advances bilateral programs such as chemical and biological weapon defense, missile defense, and tunnel detecting and mapping technologies. In 2016, President Barack Obama signed a MOU with Israel, allocating \$3.8 billion in annual FMF to Jerusalem for the next decade. The biggest change in this MOU is how it affects Israel’s ability to spend American FMF on indigenous Israeli products—a program known as Off-Shore Procurement. Previously, Israel could spend up to 26.3% of American FMF on products made in Israel, but since the Israeli defense industry has become self-sufficient and is now a competitor to U.S. companies,

NEW MEMBERS

DEPARTMENT AT LARGE

Abes, Jared - Post 100
Angel, Edward - Post 100
Bartley, Jana - Post 100
Fusco, Joseph - Post 100
Lubkin, Alexander - Post 100
Rogers, Neil - Post 100

DEPARTMENT OF ARIZONA

Martin, Keith - Post 619

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA

Foss, Pamela - Post 385
Hochman, David - Post 605
Maiten, Sidney - Post 118
Ross, Leonard - Post 603
Sakulsky, Hershel - Post 385

DEPARTMENT OF CONNECTICUT

Balsam, Mervyn - Post 142
Meyer, Harold - Post 45

DEPARTMENT OF DC

Buring, Benjamin - Post 410

DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

Deutsch, Howard - Post 172
Dorf, Julian - Post 172
Isenstein, Robert - Post 321
Koren, Jamie - Post 409
Rapoport, Philip - Post 819
Schwartz, Harry - Post 172
Sussman, Oscar - Post 400
Trevens, Bruce - Post 172
Waxman, Irwin - Post 172

DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS

Baich, Jordan - Post 89
Conway, Oren - Post 800
Friedman, Edward - Post 153
Shapiro, David - Post 89

DEPARTMENT OF MARYLAND

Cohen, Jerome - Post 567
Harris, William - Post 692
Secunda, Ronald - Post 410

Weinburke, Matthew - Post 692

DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS

Rosenberg, Joseph - Post 220

DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

Kantor, Sandy - Post 474

DEPARTMENT OF MIDWEST

Adelman, William - Post 605
Greitens, Eric - Post 644
Hammer, Hanan - Post 605
Himmelstein, Harry - Post 605
Rosel, Walter - Post 605
Shapiro, Ronald - Post 605

DEPARTMENT OF NEVADA

Adler, Sol - Post 65
Stein, Franklin - Post 64

DEPARTMENT OF NEW JERSEY

Alstein, Jack - Post 98
Cohen, Robert - Post 133
Derringer, Marvin - Post 609
Platt, Gerald - Post 651
Rivkin, Israel - Post 33
Sklar, Samuel - Post 609
Weisfelner, David - Post 972

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK

Levitz, Stanley - Post 717
Mayo, Edward - Post 717
Weiss, Arnold - Post 717

DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Atterman, Aaron - Post 215
Machles, Martin - Post 706
Schulman, Stanley - Post 305

DEPARTMENT OF SOUTHEAST

Gordon, Robert - Post 112
Hasenbein, Bernie - Post 121
Fenster, Herbert - Post 112
Gordon, Robert - Post 112
Meyer, Barry - Post 111
Sinason, Gideon - Post 112

Looking for recruitment materials for your Post's next membership drive?

We're here to help with brochures, membership applications, and more! Contact the JWV Membership Department at membership@jwv.org or by phone at 202-448-5402.

Jewish War Veterans of the USA • Veterans Helping Veterans since 1896.

this policy will start being phased out in 2024.

However, there are Americans that probably wonder why the U.S. should continue to support Israel. This last year, Yair Lapid appropriately argued that Israel delivers priceless services for the U.S. by acting as a forward operating base, intelligence partner, research hub, and technological testing ground. Without Israel, the U.S. would lose its radar facility in Dimona and the ability to store military materiel throughout the country. Without Israel, the U.S. would also need to station more troops in the region for missions in places like Syria. Likewise, Israel supports American jobs by spending much of its awarded FMF on American defense contractors, and then later tests their products in op-

erations against groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. For example, Vice Admiral James Syring, Director of the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, previously testified that the American military has benefited from Israel’s deployment of the “David’s Sling” interceptor, a joint American-Israeli project.

The modern American-Israeli partnership is the result of decades of joint operations, collaboration, and conviction. Since the U.S. became the first country to offer recognition to Israel on May 14, 1948, the two countries have built upon a common commitment to democracy, rule of law, religious freedom, and pluralism. Their bond has constructed a strategic relationship which not only serves both nations’ interests, but is coveted by nations around the world.

JWV IN THE COMMUNITY

Help Me Get The Recognition My Son Deserves

By Beth Agami, JWV Gold Star Mother
Social media is a wonderful thing. It has helped me to connect or reconnect with so many people over the years – including my son's, SPC Daniel Agami, brothers in arms, the military community, the Gold Star community and so many more.

However, when I recently opened my Facebook, I came across a post from JWV member Dr. Robert Pickard about the new permanent U.S. base being built in Israel. I had not heard anything about this new base, and when I mentioned it to family and friends, they too were surprised to hear about it.

I then thought about it – there are a number of military bases and Navy ships around the world being renamed after fallen soldiers and sailors. Just this year, the Coast Guard announced that they would build a new ship after fallen Jewish coast guardsman, Nathan Bruckenthal. I thought how awesome it would be to have the honor in having this new U.S. base in Israel so deservingly named after my son, Army SPC Daniel Agami aka the "Hebrew Hammer".

In fact, Daniel proudly wore his rifle with the Hebrew Hammer written across it. He was sometimes the only Jew that people would meet, and he would not shy away from telling people about his Jewish and Israeli heritage. Moreover, everyone knew where Daniel slept too because he would go to sleep with an Israeli flag and American flag over his cot.

Daniel had very strong ties to Israel, where his father and my husband, Itzhak, was born and raised. Itzhak proudly served in the IDF, and Daniel would say that he was his inspiration for joining the U.S. Army. Daniel entered the Army, and he served in the 1/26 Infantry C-Company in Iraq during 2005. He was killed in action on June 21, 2007 by an IED explosion on his convoy in Adhamiyah, Iraq.

Prior to just leaving for the Army, our family took a trip to Israel where Daniel enjoyed himself immensely, and he always took the time to befriend everyone he met. I remember distinctly there was



Daniel Agami in Iraq.

an afternoon stroll that we were taking as a family down Allenby Street in Tel Aviv, and Daniel stopped to take a moment to sit on a street bench next to an aged homeless man. He made him laugh while his arm was wrapped around him, and then, he gave him some Tzedakah.

This was the kind of man my son was, and these common acts of kindness were also exhibited by Daniel on the battlefield. His unit was in charge of rebuilding schools, and the guys in his unit would tell me how he would be mentoring the young Iraqi children. They would often describe how they knew the children looked up to him.

Daniel fought bravely and died for our country, and I thought how wonderful would it be if his legacy could be continued and recognized in Israel with the renaming of the new U.S. Military base in Israel. You never had to question whether or not Daniel had your back, and I think that he represents an analogy of the U.S. and Israel relationship. In my mind, there is no one more befitting to name the first U.S. base in Israel after.

I contacted Dr. Pickard and asked what I needed to do to make this happen, and his response was that he would begin working on it immediately (which he did). With the help of Dr. Pickard and JWV, I pray and look forward to this becoming a reality.

Department of MA Initiates "Wills for Veterans Day" Program

By Harvey Weiner, National Judge Advocate

On November 9, 2017, the Massachusetts Department of the JWV inaugurated its first "Wills for Veterans Day", in collaboration with the Massachusetts Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.



NJA Harvey Weiner and Major James Downey, from the Federal Bar Association.

Seven local attorneys who concentrate their practices in estate planning volunteered their services. NJA Harvey Weiner initiated the program and acted as on-site greeter, witness, and gofer. The event took place in the JFK Federal Building in Boston. The event was advertised state-wide through the VA, the JWV, and certain other veterans groups and organizations.

Twenty-three veterans and nine spouses had their wills, durable powers of attorneys, and health care proxies drafted and executed on site. Two veterans required complex estate plans, which two of the volunteer attorneys agreed to draft at a later date. Two house-bound disabled veterans telephoned and one of the volunteer attorneys agreed to go out to their respective houses to draft their estate plans. The veterans came from nineteen different cities and towns throughout Massachusetts. All seven attorneys volunteered to do it again next year.

If any Department is interested in implementing such a program, I would be glad to speak with its Judge Advocate.

Sukkot with Rochel

By Steven Troy, Adjutant of Post 210

JWV Scottsdale Post 210 celebrated their 2nd annual Sukkah party on Sunday, October 8th, hosted by Commander Rochel Hayman and her family. This year the invitation was extended to the members of the Department of the Southwest. The Department of Southwest is composed of 5 Posts covering Arizona and New Mexico. The three Phoenix Posts were represented; they are Scottsdale Post 210, Valley of the Sun Post 194 and Copper State Post 201. Upon arrival, guests were given a tour and explanation of the Sukkot holiday, also known as the Feast of the Tabernacles, and of the spacious Sukkah itself by Rabbi Dan Hayman. Almost everyone took the opportunity to shake the lulav and etrog; a few members very excitedly mentioned it was the first time in their life to have ever done so. A little history lesson, Sukkot celebrates the gathering of the harvest and commemorates the miraculous protection G-d provided for the children of Israel when they left Egypt. On this holiday, Jews are commanded to bind together a palm frond, or "lulav" with two other branches called "haddasim" and "arovot", and holding them together with an "etrog" these "four species" are used in the holiday rituals. (An etrog is a yellow citron, according to the Torah it is a beautiful fruit).

Members, family members and guests enjoyed a beautiful buffet complete with eggplant parmesan, baked ziti, garlic bread, pumpkin cranberry muffins, a refreshing fruit relish and apple-cranberry-plum cake. While Commander Hayman and Rabbi Hayman both gave Dvar Torah on Sukkot and especially it's holistic inclusiveness, Department JVC Lenore "Lee" Katz, guest and new member active duty LTC Moshe Bennett, and other JWV members spoke and shared interesting anecdotes of their holiday experiences on active duty and beyond. Frequent L'Chaims were shared as well.

Attending from Post 619 were the Commander Mort Huskey and his family, Evan, Steven, Brigid, Sophie and Lenore. From Post 194, Lou & Ruth Kelter and Lenore (Lee) Katz. From Post 210 Commander Rochel Hayman & Rabbi Dan Hayman, Jonathan Sorrell, Rhonna Bolton, Moshe Bennett, Susan Conwisar & Mel Brody, Steven Troy, Michael & Ahuva Chambers and guest Nathan Brownstein. The weather and temperature were perfect for enjoying the Sukkah.



Enjoying the 2nd annual Sukkah party are, from left: Mel Brody, Susan Conwisar, Steven Troy, Michael Chambers and Ahuva Chambers.

JWV IN THE COMMUNITY

Honoring Veterans 2017 Temple El Emeth, Youngstown, OH

By Rabbi Joseph P. Schonberger

Temple El Emeth members and friends were very pleased to honor 11 veterans at a brunch November 12. We were privileged to recognize veterans in attendance who served in WWII, Vietnam, Korea, Desert Storm, in other wars and conflicts in numerous roles.

All attending were moved by the documentary "True Honor" which presents the stories of ten Jewish Medal of Honor recipients. We thank the National Museum of American Jewish Military History (NMAJMH) for allowing us to view the movie. The stories told were truly heart wrenching and pride evoking. Then we were privileged to hear from our own Veterans.

Dr. Larry Glass responding to the movie told us that he never experienced anti-Semitism in the military. Rather, he has fond memories of the support he received. Dr. Bill Gordon spoke about being called up to active duty twice: before he attended dental school and after dental school graduation. Apparently, his commanding officer at Camp Lejeune found his dental services constituted immeasurable, much needed service. For many, he was their first dentist. Dr. Gordon reflected that the worst mouths he had ever seen were there. This is a reminder that medical and support personnel are essential yet often unheralded.

Alan Sharapan, expressed gratitude for serving as a guardian for an "Honor Flight" as a gift from his children. Those who were unfamiliar with the program were pleased and surprised to learn about this very special program. He offered to pay it forward by being a guardian to one of our member vets who would like to travel to Washington on an Honor Flight.

Lieutenant Colonel Donald N. Persky, USMC (Ret.) was honored to be invited to the White House on October 23rd. where retired Army Captain Gary M. Rose was awarded the Medal of Honor for gallantry during an operation over 47 years ago during the Vietnam War. Rose, an Army medic, repeatedly risked his own life while treating dozens of fellow soldiers over a four day period of intense fighting against a numerically superior hostile force deep in enemy-controlled territory. Persky, then a lieutenant, was the command helicopter pilot that rescued Rose along with 39 other soldiers before being shot down. Persky has been credited with saving the lives of forty soldiers and his crew of five, and was previously awarded the Silver Star and Purple Heart for gallantry and superb airmanship during that operation.

It was heart wrenching to hear Sam Fine recall his D Day experiences. Looking at him today, those of us who didn't know him as a young man were extremely impressed that he was one of the brave 82nd Airborne. He talked about flying into enemy lines in a glider with no protection on D Day. It is amazing thinking about what he did and survived. His humble account of what he experienced truly elevated his stature to everyone present. As an aside, we learned that the parachute he landed in was taken by the townspeople



Temple El-Emeth members held a luncheon to honor veterans of WWII, the Korean war, the Vietnam war, and Desert Storm. Afterwards, *True Honor*, a documentary which presents the stories of ten Jewish Medal of Honor recipients was screened for those in attendance.

and transformed into a wedding gown. When he visited the village at a later date he attended the wedding and was gifted a special scarf that was fashioned from his parachute. He still has that scarf.

All in attendance appreciated being able to hear friends' stories. We cherish these opportunities when we can share and hear from one another about the encounters that changed and shaped many lives.

Friends, relatives and community members in attendance voiced profound appreciation and respect for our veterans and their service. They underscored that while we give the greatest accolades to those who made the greatest sacrifice we owe a huge debt of gratitude to all who served in any capacity. We definitely need to have more time together. It uplifts us all.

Post 385 in California Donates To Thousands of Sailors and Their Families

By PNC Maxwell Colon

This Veterans Day, North County Post 385 members, friends and the Camp Pendleton Naval Hospital Commanding Officer assembled at the Chapel of Camp Pendleton's Naval Hospital in San Diego, California. Veteran's Day is unique because we honor past, current and future Veterans, and we truly appreciate the men & women serving in harm's way.

Post 385 donated the following items to the



PNC Maxwell Colón presented a framed Life Membership certificate to the Command Chaplain, who joined Post 385.

Naval Hospital - hundreds of DVDs, newborn baby knitted hats, booties, crib blankets, socks, onesies, baby outfits and knitted crutch pads for our wounded warriors. Many thousands of dollars in supplies were brought to the Camp Pendleton Naval Hospital for distribution to the 55,000 plus Marines and Sailors stationed at this base.

During this presentation PNC Maxwell Colón presented a framed Life Membership certificate to the Command Chaplain, who joined Post 385. The Hospital Commanding Officer and his staff were present for the donations and the presentation of the Life Membership certificate ceremony to the Command Chaplain. The Naval Hospital Commander asked that all present gather for a formal picture. People from all over the State of California attended this presentation. Post 385 and JWV makes 2 to 3 presentations each year at this hospital.

On the recommendation of PNP Linda & PNC Maxwell Colón, Post 385 adopted this hospital in the year 2000-2001 and to date have raised and contributed in supplies, food gift cards/certificates over \$900,000.00.

This year we have added another facility known as Naval Medical Center San Diego where we will be making a similar presentation on November 20, 2017 at 11:00 A.M. The Commanding Officer of this Naval Hospital has also become a NEW member of Post 385.

Veterans Day 2017



National Commander Paul D. Warner, and PNC Michael Berman, represented JWV and presented a wreath at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall on Veterans Day.

JWV IN THE COMMUNITY

Jewish War Veterans: A New Beginning –JWV Post 4

By Colonel Nelson L Mellitz, USAF, Ret.

The Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America started a new beginning with the signing of a new Post charter on November 1, 2017 in New York City. The new Post, JWV Post 4, has been organized primarily by Afghanistan and Iraq veterans and will be run by these veterans in support primarily of Afghanistan and Iraq veterans and their families. Post 4 memberships are concentrated in the Northeast United States but as the group increases in numbers it will expand to other parts of the United States.

The Post leadership and membership plan includes development of alliances with Jewish organizations and non-Jewish veterans support groups to accomplish a mission of support to all military members, veterans, and their families. The Post will hold meetings both in-person and online. The group will do fund raising for programs that benefit younger veterans and their families.

Why is JWV starting a Post with primarily under 50 years olds?

- Remember back when you first walked into a JWV Post and the leadership and members were “old”.

We are the old ones and not transitioning to younger members fast enough. “Don’t trust anyone over 30”: Jack Weinberg, October 1964.

- We have tried for over ten years to incorporate the younger members within our organization with little success. We need new ideas and follow-through implementation from the younger veterans without the limitations and personal interest of more senior JWV members.

- The current JWV policies and procedures are viewed as a turnoff to the younger veteran. The creation of Post 4 will permit their leaders and members to implement younger ideas without “some” of the burden self-imposed by our larger organization.

- Individual Post social activities are the glue that keeps the members working together. Under 50 year olds do not have the same family social needs as more senior veterans and their families.

We are not doing away with the traditional Post. Members of Post 4 are en-

couraged to retain dual membership in the traditional geographic Post.

The JWV categories of membership still apply to this new Post.

In closing: In the past we have discussed changing our approach to recruitment and getting younger members involved within JWV. Post 4 is a new approach that has positive potential for JWV and we are implementing it now!



New Post 4 members. Seated: Elana Duffy and Marc Wolf; standing, from left: Larry Rosenthal, David Everett, Ilya Bratman, Peter Kashin, Craig Wertheim, Jonathan Yellen, Jordan Lender.

National Leadership Celebrates Veterans Day

By PNC Edwin Goldwasser

This year, Veterans Day had special meaning for me inasmuch as my wife, Iris, is the President of our Jewish War Veterans National Ladies Auxiliary, and it brought back memories of my days as National Commander – where I attended official functions on behalf of JWV. One problem we faced this year was that Veterans Day occurred on our Sabbath, and therefore we could not attend the official events at Arlington National Cemetery. The question then came about as to what we could do to make the day more meaningful?

It was decided to have Shabbat services in our chapel Saturday morning along with other events planned in our building, the Museum of American Jewish Military History, throughout the day for the local Jewish Community’s participation. Rabbi Bruce Kahn, a retired Navy Chaplain, officiated one of the most meaningful services for JWV that I can say I have ever attended. We had just about 22 people who participated



JWVA National President Iris Goldwasser and JWV National Commander Paul Warner presented a wreath at the Korean War Memorial in Washington, DC.

some of our members and Auxiliary members. The service concluded with a lively discussion on that day’s Torah portion, “What price are we willing to pay for our land?” As veterans on this Veterans Day,

this subject was extremely meaningful and provoked much thought.

Our JWV/JWVA members then proceeded to the Vietnam Memorial Wall to attend the ceremonies and presentation of wreaths. Our group consisted of our National Commander Paul Warner and his wife, Norma; National President of our Ladies Auxiliary Iris Goldwasser and myself, PNC Edwin Goldwasser; PNC Michael Berman; PNP Rita Panitz; PNP Elaine Bernstein; NED Herbert Rosenbleeth and his wife, Francie; and our in-house staff photographer, Christy Turner. The program ended with all the organizations placing wreaths - ours by National Commander Warner and PNC Berman, a Vietnam veteran. Some other organizations in attendance were the American Legion, DAV, AmVets, VFW and Military Order of the Purple Heart to name a few.

After that ceremony, we all proceeded to the Korean War Memorial to pay homage to the veterans of the Forgotten War. A service was conducted at this Memorial, which is just across the reflecting pond from the Vietnam Wall. Prior to the placing of wreaths, young Korean ladies in traditional dress each placed a white rose on the names of the many countries that participated in the Korean War, which as a Korean Veteran myself, I found very moving. At this memorial, the National Commander and the National Auxiliary President together placed our wreath in front of the wall.

Although the temperatures were extremely cold and it was difficult to be outside for long periods of time, Veterans Day was truly a very heart warming experience. We were there to pay tribute to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice, and the ceremonies were very moving. We were grateful to be included in the proceedings and proud of our Commander, JWVA President and all who participated and represented JWV/JWVA.



Looking for a New Career?

CASY & MSCCN are here to help.

Corporate America Supports You (CASY) & Military Spouse Corporate Career Network (MSCCN) are sister nonprofits that combat under-employment and unemployment in the military and Veteran community. CASY supports military members and Veterans of all eras, and MSCCN assists military spouses, caregivers, and dependents. Each organization provides one-on-one career coaching, job search support, resume and LinkedIn® assessment and development, interview preparation, industry training, and much more.

CASY & MSCCN work directly with employers who want to hire Veterans and military dependents in order to place our job seekers into the right career opportunity.

Veterans can register for CASY services at <https://casy.us/jobs-for-veterans>, and spouses and dependents can register for MSCCN services at <https://www.msccn.org/job-seekers.html>. Once registered, job seekers are contacted by an Employment Specialist who will work with them to identify their goals, find job opportunities, and get them career ready.

JWV IN THE COMMUNITY

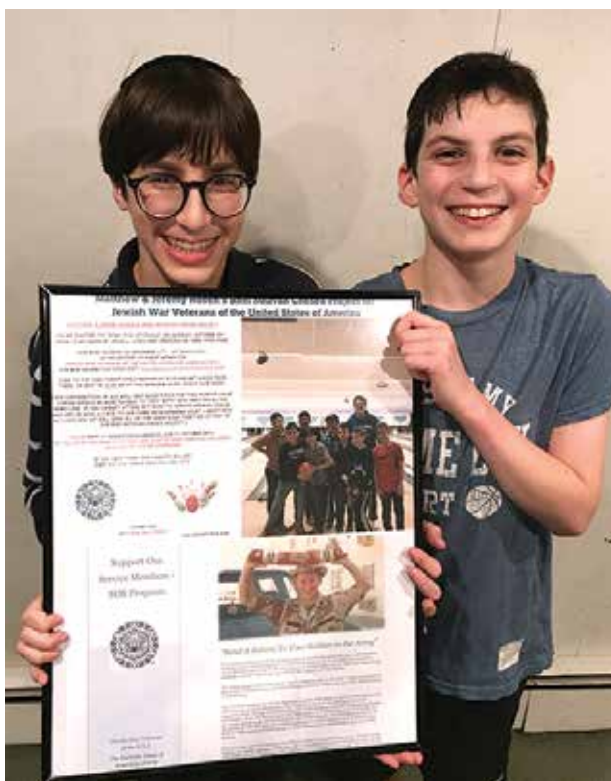
Bar Mitzvah Project with JWV

By Eric Rosen

Matthew and Jeremy Rosen of Great Neck, New York celebrated their B'nei Mitzvah on November 11, 2017, at their synagogue, the Young Israel of Great Neck. When they discovered during the summer that this was the date on which Veterans Day falls out, it was a simple decision to direct their Bar Mitzvah Chesed Project effort towards benefitting the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America. This was especially true considering that both of their grandfathers served in the military, and their first cousin Sam is currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.

As part of this project, Matthew and Jeremy opted to raise funds specifically for the JWV's S.O.S. - "Support Our Soldiers" - program. Through this program, JWV sends packages, generally of toiletries and kosher food items, to those who are serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other places of conflict throughout the globe. Their famous phrase, "Send a salami to a boy in the army," is one example of how a taste of home has been important throughout history to those who leave their homes in order to defend them. The S.O.S program lets those who are currently serving know that we on the home front are thinking of them.

Two weeks before their B'nei Mitzvah, Matthew and Jeremy and a group of their friends went 'Bowling for Veterans', and they also ran a Facebook campaign, and they're proud to have raised over \$730 for Jewish War Veterans. As part of their bar mitzvah speech, they announced this accomplishment to their entire congregation, and they also left JWV brochures and membership forms for those who were interested to take with them. Many congregants, especially those who had family members who served in the military, took the forms and mentioned what a wonderful chesed project this was.



Matthew and Jeremy Rosen raised funds for the Jewish War Veteran's SOS program.

It was indeed a really meaningful project for them, as they got to do a very special mitzvah, and they had fun doing it! And the timing couldn't have been better, because special Chanukah care packages will soon be delivered in their names to many Jewish soldiers in a variety of locations, which will surely put a smile on their faces during the holiday season.

Thank you, Matthew and Jeremy!

If you would like to find out more information about the S.O.S. program, please go to: http://www.jwv.org/programs/service/sos_program/overview.

Maryland Commander honored by Veterans organization

By Anna Selman, JWV Programs & Public Relations Coor.

Colonel Erwin A. Burtneck, USA (Ret), Commander of the JWV Department of Maryland, was the recipient of the Military Community Service Award presented by the Jewish Uniformed Service Association of Maryland at Baltimore's historic Fifth Regiment Armory on October 15, 2017. He was recognized for his extraordinary work within the military and veter-



Colonel Erwin Burtneck is congratulated by Richard Sher.

an communities including the Jewish War Veterans, the Military Order of the World Wars, the Maryland Veterans Commission, the Maryland Committee for Employer of the Guard and Reserve, and the Fort Meade Retiree Council.

Commencing with a speech by Maryland's Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford, the awards dinner showcased the work of the Association and its director, Rabbi Chesky Tenenbaum. The organization provides educational, social, and religious support for military, police, fire, and public safety. The numerous activities sponsored include Shabbat and High Holiday programs, cultural training workshops, one-on-one counseling, provision of Mezuzahs, and a lounge in the Baltimore area.

Rabbi Tenenbaum is the Jewish chaplain of the Maryland Defense Force with the rank of major. Since there is no Jewish chaplain in either the Maryland Army or Air National Guard, he provides them with Jewish religious support. He also serves as the Jewish chaplain of the Baltimore City Police Department and the United States Park Police.

Along with numerous high level elected, police, and fire officials including Maryland State Police Superintendent Col. William Paliozzi and Chaplain

Doing a Mitzvah

By Bam Rubinstein, Post 757

On Sunday, 24 September, 2017, I had the opportunity to do a mitzvah, in the place of a different mitzvah. I joined a group of friends, and we went to an area that was devastated by Hurricane Harvey, to do "Tzedakah." Allen has a huge smoke pit on a trailer. David also knows his way around a grill. Thom, Jeffrey, Holly and I were more like window dressing, but we did get the chance to do our part.

We started with about 250 or so pounds of meat. We also had enough buns for all the meat. We had at least 5 or 6 cans of beans, which I saw. And we had enough bags of cabbage, and carrots, and bins full of dressing, to make enough slaw to go around. We also had cases and cases of water, which we continuously added to an iced cooler.

People came up and asked, "How much?" and we got to tell them, "It's free. How many would you like?"

One lady offered me a monetary donation. I got to tell her that her money was no good; but if she felt that she needed to donate, she should try a charity that her church likes.

However, the thing that made me stop in my tracks, have to turn away from the crowd and catch my breath, was when a woman came over and asked how much the water was. When she was told that it was free, you could feel the weight in her words, with what she said next. She looked at one of the guys helping her to her car and said, "The water is free? You're giving it away? We haven't had water for days."

I'm pretty sure that the days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are meant for doing things like this, and it felt good.



Bam Rubinstein and friends in Houston.

(COL) Jacob Goldstein, USA (Ret), former Jewish chaplain of the New York Army National Guard was in attendance. The uncle of Rabbi Tenenbaum, Chaplain Goldstein presented the award to COL Burtneck.

The evening's events, with long-term Baltimore television personality Richard Sher as master of ceremonies, included the presentation of colors by the Maryland State Police Honor Guard and a video presentation of the work of the Jewish Uniformed Service Association of Maryland.

In addition to the honor bestowed upon COL Burtneck, the evening included the memorialization of Ira Neil Weiner, a Jewish police officer, and Gene Meir Kirchner, a Jewish firefighter, both of whom died in the line of duty.

JWV IN THE COMMUNITY

Shacharit and Schmear at Fort Benning

By Dave Schetcher

Shacharit, the morning Jewish prayer service, is scheduled at Fort Benning on Sundays at “oh-800.” That’s 8 a.m. civilian time. A congregation of more than 500 assembled Sunday morning, Dec. 3, in the Regimental Chapel of the Infantry at the U.S. Army base next to Columbus. Most were new soldiers undergoing weeks of basic training, also known as boot camp.

Their ranks — the largest number of recruits to attend a Jewish service at Fort Benning — included a small number of women after the Army infantry became gender-integrated this year. Some worshippers wore tallit, and some wrapped tefillin. Not all were Jewish, but all were welcome. The Sunday service is the big one on base each week because that’s when the soldiers have a break from training.

The service was led by retired Navy Capt. Neil Block, who is a Jewish lay leader at Fort Benning and a member of Temple Israel, a Reform congregation in Columbus. Also participating were retired Army Signal Corps Maj. Robert Max, the commander of Atlanta-based Jewish War Veterans Post 112, and retired Washington State Guard Lt. Col. George Heart, the Post 112 public affairs officer.

At least a couple of Sundays a year since 2014, members of Post 112 have left Atlanta at “zero-dark-thirty” to drive to Fort Benning to assist with the service and host a post-service oneg of bagels, cream cheese, peanut butter, candy and lemonade for more than 500.

Block has been known to warn that the failure to schmear a bagel with cream cheese is an automatic Article 15 (a crime against the Uniform Code of Military Justice). In addition to donations by kosher bakeries, the Epstein School provided a basket of candy for the latest oneg. Other supplies and volunteers for the oneg came from the Jewish Federation of Columbus and the local Jewish community.

About 30 of the military personnel signed up as new members of Post 112, which has about 300 names on its mailing list.

The military-issue prayer book used for the service was a siddur published in the 1960s, the product of a combined effort by Orthodox, Conservative and Reform rabbis and the first such volume published since World War II.

Heart, a member of Congregation Ariel, an Orthodox synagogue in Dunwoody, recited a prayer using his late father’s siddur from World War II and read from a prayer book for Jewish troops issued by the War Department (as it was then called) in World War I.

The Post 112 delegation was small — “quality vs. quantity,” Heart joked. His children — 15-year-old daughter Ahava, a student at Dunwoody High School, and 11-year-old Avi, who attends Peachtree Middle School in Dunwoody — also did readings.

“Avi always says ... ‘I have stage fright, and I don’t like doing it,’ and after he’s done with that and interacting with the soldiers, he tells me, ‘I want to go to West Point,’” Heart said. “We go down there to host the oneg, to talk to the troops about our services, to say thank you. From them, we get more naches (pride) out of being there, being re-energized by those 500 troops.”

The service at Fort Benning provided a counterpoint to recent comments by Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely, who referred to American Jews as “people that never send their children to fight for their country. Most of the Jews don’t have children serving as soldiers, going to the Marines, going to Afghanistan or to Iraq.”

Several dozen Jewish troops have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, more than a dozen of them Marines. Heart was offended by Hotovely’s comments. “Typically Israeli uppity nose over American Jews. I’ve seen it quite often, unfortunately,” Heart said. “They have no idea that the oldest active veterans organization in the U.S. is the Jewish War Veterans.”



George Heart, Post 112-SE, with basic trainees during Sunday morning prayer service at Ft. Benning.

Meet JWV’s Newest Member: Missouri Governor Eric Greitens

By Dennis Cohen, Post 644

On Thursday Nov 30, 2017, seven members (Dennis Cohen, Monroe Ginsburg, Wayne Kaufman, Carl Sherman, Larry Chervitz, Howard Holtzman and David Schneider) of JWV Post 644 met traveled up Jefferson City, MO in order to induct Post 644’s newest member to JWV – Governor Eric Greitens. Greitens is a Jewish former Navy Seal with an impressive military record.

After attending Duke University and the University of Oxford as a Rhodes scholar, he became a U.S. Navy SEAL officer, where he served four tours of duty around the world, rose to the rank of lieutenant commander, commanded an Al-Qaeda targeting cell and was awarded a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart, among other decorations. Following his military service, Greitens founded The Mission Continues, a non-profit organization serving veterans which he led until 2014.

After months of planning, our meeting was arranged by our state representative, Hon. Jill Schupp. We were so excited to meet Governor

Greitens, and we presented him with a certificate of appreciation, a membership in JWV, a letter from National Commander, a cap and a purple heart pin. He was very appreciative for the gesture, and he was very excited to get involved with JWV. Afterwards him and Schupp treated us to a guided tour of the capital, where we were able to sit on the Senate floor. Overall, the trip was a great success and we look forward to seeing Governor Greitens at our upcoming meetings.



From left; Post Commander Dennis Cohen, Larry Chervitz, Monroe Ginsburg, Senator Jill Schupp, and new JWV member, Missouri Governor Eric Greitens.

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JWV IN THE COMMUNITY

JWV gives a New York Welcome to Jewish Warrior Weekend

By Richard Goldenberg, Capital District Council

Just a few blocks over from the annual Veterans Day parade up New York's Fifth Avenue, a separate sort of commemoration was held to mark Veterans Day in 2017: the gathering of the Jewish Warriors Weekend. Jewish War Veterans partnered their support for this year's event in New York City with the American Sephardi Federation at the Center for Jewish History to bring more than 30 cadets into New York City from November 10-12.

Past year gatherings, going back to 2000, were held at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. The goal, noted cadet organizer and West Point cadet Gabriel Glazer, was to offer educational programs that foster Jewish military identities and opportunities to enjoy the social gatherings and friendship of the Big Apple. The cadets from West Point, the Air Force Academy, Naval Academy and Texas A&M University ROTC held Shabbat services on Friday, November 10 and spent their Veterans Day at the center.

At the center, the group met with retired Army Lt. Gen. Howard Bromberg, the Army's 46th Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel and retired Marine Corps Col. Jonathan de Sola Mendes, a combat pilot who served in both WWII and Korea, flying first prop and then jet fighters.

"Actions speak louder than words, and those actions will define you as a leader," said Bromberg to the group. Discussing his leadership positions at company, battalion and then brigade level units, he stressed that Soldiers won't define their leader by their faith, but by their actions.

If there was one take away, it would be that leaders should do their job to the best of their ability and live the values of their service. They should make a difference in their organization and make a difference for their Soldiers, he extolled. And those values, Bromberg said, are entirely in line with the Jewish notion of Tikkun Olam, of repairing the world.

Marine Colonel de Sola Mendes echoed the idea. Jews have always served, he noted, and in his experience, your faith is simply part of who you are. "In all my years of service, I never once had an anti-Semitic incident," noted de Sola Mendes, as he discussed his wartime service in both the Pacific and in Korea as



A special gathering of the cadets who participated in the 2017 Fall Jewish Warrior Weekend.

a Marine pilot.

American Sephardi Federation Executive Director Jason Guberman thanked the cadets for their service and highlighted the key role of Jews in American military history, especially the earliest Jewish immigrants. "Sephardim have served and sacrificed in every generation on behalf of American liberty since the first stirrings of the War of Independence," Guberman said. "From Major Benjamin Nones and Commodore Uriah P. Levy to Col. Jonathan de Sola Mendes and Pfc. Daniel J. Agami, the ingenuity, erudition, fortitude, and virtue under fire demonstrated by Sephardi patriots are essential examples for emulation by cadets and, indeed, Americans of all backgrounds."

The group also learned about the important changes in American Jewish military history from 100 years ago as JWV Capital District Council Commander Richard Goldenberg, a serving colonel in the New York Army National Guard reviewed the American Jewish History Center's exhibit "1917: How One Year Changed the World." World War One matters, Goldenberg told the cadets, both as military history and as Jewish history. The Great War ushered in the modern era of warfare, and its impact on the American Jewish community was just as monumental.

"From the creation of the first organized Palestinian Jewish military force by the British to the deployment of rabbis as Army chaplains to front line units to the Balfour Declaration of 1917, the Great War gave opportunities for Jewish Americans to prove

their loyalty."

Interestingly enough, Goldenberg told the cadets, is that in the Central Powers, in Germany, Austria and Hungary, Jews also served proudly for their homeland. Sadly, less than a generation later, the rise of the Nazi party and the blame for the failure of World War I would lead directly to the Holocaust.

The cadets finished up their day with a Havdalah service at the center and dinner sponsored by JWV member David Everett, a Westchester County Court Judge and former Army Reserve JAG with 30 years' service that included three wartime deployments – in the Persian Gulf in 1991, Iraq in 2005-2006, and Afghanistan in 2009.

"JWV plays an important role in supporting and partnering with events that strengthen Jewish identities in our armed forces," said Anna Selman, Programs and Public Relations Coordinator for JWV, who helped coordinate the programs, speakers and support to the Jewish Warrior Weekend.

"These cadets are the future leaders in the military and Jewish community," Selman said. "They have a natural sense of responsibility and duty, understand the importance of continuing the proud tradition of Jews in the U.S. armed forces, and exemplify their connection to Judaism and the Jewish way of life through their service."

The JWV visits the new V.A. Hospital in New Orleans

By Judge Sol Gothard, Post 580

Veteran and patron members of Ben Katz JWV Post 580, New Orleans, visited the recently opened Veterans Administration hospital in New Orleans, serving southeast Louisiana.

Mr. Fernando Rivera, CEO/Director of the Hospital, graciously met with our group, which was followed by a tour of the facility. An eighteen-page informational handout, was also provided. We learned that the top three focus areas for 2017 were:

- 1) Activation, to create a new VA medical center in New Orleans that will be among the highest performing VA medical centers in the country
- 2) Access by veterans to the facility and response

thereto in a timely manner

- 3) A workforce to deliver outstanding health care to veterans. This includes recruiting and retaining the physicians, nurses, other clinical staff as well as staff for non-direct care.

The hospital is particularly proud of the same day service available for mental health and primary care during business hours.

There was much more information given in the talk and in the handout, but I was particularly interested to learn that "women are the fastest growing group in the veteran population, and that a Women Veterans Program has been established to meet their needs."

Calling Jewish cadets and midshipmen nationwide...

Jewish Warrior Weekend

2-4 February 2018

Texas A&M University

- Learn about life as a Jew in the military from Jewish Senior Military Officers.
- Attend Jewish Leadership Training.
- Participate in Shabbat services.
- Develop relationships with other future Jewish officers.

Housing, Food, and Travel provided.

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Blue Water Navy Veterans

By Herb Rosenbleeth, National Executive Director

One of JWV's highest legislative priorities is justice for the Blue Water Navy Veterans. That means providing the same presumptive VA benefits to those personnel who served off the coast of Vietnam as are provided to those who had "boots on the ground" in Vietnam.

Throughout the Vietnam War, the United States sprayed millions of gallons of a chemical called Agent Orange. This program, called Operation Ranch Hand, was intended to defoliate areas providing concealment to the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops. Agent Orange was sprayed over jungle areas and along the coast and around rivers and streams that emptied into the South China Sea.

The United States Navy provided support throughout the war, including air strikes and close air support, naval gunfire support, electronic intelligence, interdiction of enemy vessels and the insertion of supplies and troops ashore.

It was common practice for our Navy ships to anchor in the South China Sea while providing gunfire support. By doing so, the Navy was able to achieve more stable fire control because it was not necessary to factor in their own course and speed. While anchored, these ships could easily pick up Agent Orange.



By U.S. Navy (U.S. Navy) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

Aircraft carriers, especially in the waters off the southern part of Vietnam, picked up Agent Orange while launching or recovering aircraft, conducting search and rescue operations, and when racing to meet disabled planes returning from combat. Often returning aircraft had flown through clouds of Agent Orange while conducting close air support missions. These planes were then washed down on the flight deck, exposing Navy personnel to the chemical.

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has stated that "it is generally acknowledged the estuarine waters became contaminated with herbicides and dioxin as

a result of shoreline spraying and runoff from spraying on land, particularly in heavily sprayed areas that experienced frequent flooding."

It seems quite clear that those who served in the waters off Vietnam are deserving of VA benefits. Thousands of veterans who served in the territorial waters of Vietnam are now suffering from higher rates of disease, and other chronic health conditions, which can be attributed to exposure to Agent Orange.

On April 5th of this year, the House Committee on Veterans Affairs held a hearing on HR 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017. JWV strongly supports HR 299 and other proposals which provide benefits to our Blue Water Navy personnel.

Congressional support appears to be lacking due to the cost of providing these benefits. However, it is a cost of war. Our country sent these Navy personnel to the seas off the coast of Vietnam. As a result of their combat service, a number of them have become sick. Therefore, the country must take care of them. It's that simple.

JWV will continue to keep benefits for Blue Water Navy Veterans as one of our top legislative priorities! They will not be forgotten.

Reefer Sadness: Cannabis Use to Treat PTSD in Veterans

By Lauren Hellendall, JWV Membership Assistant

The grim opening crawl of the 1936 film *Reefer Madness* warned audiences of a "new drug menace" that was "destroying the youth of America". The substance in question was "Marijuana", which was associated with the influx of Mexican immigrants who entered the US in the early 20th century and presented a competing labor force to American workers. As a result, the political tide turned against these immigrants and the new drug they brought with them. In 1937, Congress pushed through the reactionary Marijuana Tax Act following a propaganda campaign demonizing immigration and marijuana.

In the 80 odd years since *Reefer Madness* premiered, there has been a shift in the social attitude toward Marijuana use. Sparked by increased acceptance amongst affluent whites in the 60's, the national stance against marijuana pivoted toward leniency and efforts began to investigate the true effects of the drug. Although the national conversation began to open up, the next 30 years marked a contentious national debate over the medical effects and legal repercussions of using marijuana.

It is difficult to pin down exactly when marijuana use entered the discussion in the veteran community. The idea of using Marijuana to treat PTSD gained momentum on the national stage after the first wave of state-level legalization of medical marijuana in the mid-1990's. In the years following, the national conversation shifted. According to a CBS News Poll, between 1979 and 2017, Americans' affirmative answer to the question "Should Marijuana use be legal?" increased over 30 percent, with a 20 percent increase occurring between 2011 and 2017 alone. As Americans

became more interested in medical and recreational marijuana use, veterans and veterans' advocacy groups started to explore marijuana as a serious treatment option for veterans suffering from PTSD.

Vietnam veteran Danny Belcher felt strongly enough about his own experience that he spoke to the Kentucky legislature. Describing how marijuana helps his PTSD he testified "if [a] nightmare gets so bad I can't wake up and realize it's just a nightmare I will light that pipe up, I'll be a criminal, I'll go back to sleep. Next morning I'll get up at 6'clock like I always do". Belcher, like many other veterans struggling with the symptoms of PTSD, has turned to advocacy to voice his opinion. Belcher's words, and the words of veterans like him, rang true throughout veterans' community.

Capitalizing on increased support the Scottsdale Research Institute announced an FDA-Approved Marijuana/PTSD research study in 2016. In an open letter published in September of this year, American Legion National Commander Denise Rohan asked VA Secretary David Shulkin to "support ... [the] study taking place at the Scottsdale Research Institute in Arizona." The letter spoke of the organization's efforts to "support and enable scientific research to clinically confirm the medicinal value of cannabis."

Secretary Shulkin has not responded to Commander Rohan's plea and the Trump Administration continues to publicly condemn all marijuana use. This view is readily noted when reading the National Center for PTSD website. According to the Center, "The belief that marijuana can be used to treat PTSD is limited to anecdotal reports" and "There have been no randomized controlled trials, a necessary 'gold standard' for determining efficacy", completely



eschewing mention of a promising preliminary study which found medical marijuana can decrease PTSD symptoms up to 75 percent. The center's website is indicative of where the current national discussion tends to stall – we do not currently have a vetted trial studying the effectiveness of marijuana to treat PTSD and the current administration is not willing or able to do anything about it.

As it stands now, we are at a crossroads. Marijuana use has gained social acceptance. It is no longer seen as the evil it was deemed to be when *Reefer Madness* sought to inspire terror in 1930's America. Our cultural attitudes have changed drastically, but there still a very palpable controversy surrounding it's use. One of the most prominent veterans' organizations and the Trump Administration have locked horns about what is best for veterans. Taboo as it once was, today the American Legion wants its members to be able to use marijuana as a treatment for PTSD and other uses, such as non-opioid pain relief. If the tenacity of veterans is any indication, they may just get their way.

JWV AND THE VA

Veterans ID Cards

By Michael Corbett, Post 440

There's a great deal of confusion over the "Veteran ID" cards soon to be issued by the Department of Veterans Affairs. For those who have been rated by the VA Health Care system, issuance of the "Veterans' Health ID card" permits qualified veterans to enter VA clinics and hospitals for the express purpose of obtaining health care.

In 2015 the President signed the "Veterans' Identification Card Act," to provide a form of identification as a veteran to anyone. Simply put, this identification card acts much as a driver's license without the privilege of operating a motor vehicle. The "Veterans' ID Card" provides documented evidence the holder is a bona fide veteran who has faithfully and honorably served her or his country. For the veteran, it will be an easy to carry form of identification in order to obtain offered discounts at retail outlets – businesses, restaurants, amusements, etc.

While the Veterans' ID card will be an officially sanctioned form of identification, it is up to a business to decide on offering a discount in the first place; and the level discount to provide. There will not be a Government standard discount! Businesses that choose to offer a discount may or may not require appropriate identification – the "Veterans ID card" is appropriate for such transactions.

The "Veterans' ID card" is neither intended to nor shall it be used in place of a DoD Uniform Services or Retiree ID card. There is no relation among the cards. However either of the three may be used as identification, provided the business establishment accepts it as such in order to provide the discount.

The VA website reports that the "Veterans' ID card," which originally was to be available in 2016, should now be ready for issue in 2017 – as of this report in October 2017, VA sources tell us they do not know when the card will be nationally available.



However, we were referred by the VA at their "800" number to go to the website: <https://www.vets.gov> after 1 November to complete the application for the card. A visit to the site on 19 October revealed no reference to the "Veterans' ID card."

As planned, the "Veterans' ID card" will display the veteran's branch of military service. 49 states currently provide veteran status on their driver's license plus, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, by displaying the insignia of the branch of service of the veteran. The 50th state, Washington is scheduled to roll-out their version by the end of 2017. Veterans interested in this form of ID should contact their state's Motor Vehicle department. Veterans may possess both a valid state driver's license with the "veterans" designation and the new VA issued "Veterans' ID card."

Today, veterans may access a free identification – proof of honorable service – via the joint VA/DoD site, "<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage>" However, when available, the new "Veterans' ID card" will not be free. Veterans will apply for the card, as VA provides, for a fee that will be established "in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible while protecting Veterans' personal information." Considering the millions of people whose information has been hacked in very recent memory, veterans are

warned to take this message with a grain of salt. At the time of this article, the fee for the "Veterans' ID card" has not been determined.

For years we have been admonished not to use our Veterans Health Care ID card for purposes outside the VA. Now however, the VA website offers that, when veterans want an ID for purposes of obtaining discounts at civilian establishments, they may obtain the 'Veterans Health Care ID card' from the VA (see: <http://www.va.gov/HEALTHBENEFITS/vhic/index.asp>). Meanwhile, military retirees have the option of obtaining an ID card from the Department of Defense (see: <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/appj/site>).

Veterans are reminded that non-official websites on the internet are purposely made to look like the real VA website – proceed carefully when seeking VA information on-line. And know too, VA programs such as the "Choice" program permitting qualified veterans to visit civilian medical facilities are rife with problems. Veterans should insist on written permission to visit civilian medical facilities only after being absolutely certain of their qualification for VA health care.



The Eugene Moore National Stamp Program

By Mel Gervis, Post 440

The Eugene Moore National Stamp Program was started in 1991, and is designed to uplift the spirits of hospitalized veterans and shut-ins. JWV members and good citizens collect stamps from local businesses and house of worship, which are then sent onto the National Stamp Program Distribution Chairman, Mel Gervis. He in turn distributes these stamps to over 40 Veteran Affairs Centers and residences of veterans, who otherwise would not get out.

The stamps are sent out each month to our hospitalized brothers and sisters across the US. They receive a wonderful assortment of stamps that are used in the occupational and physical therapy. Through your many hours of postage stamps collecting and cutting, we help our disabled veterans increase their dexterity and using their prosthetic limbs. Veterans can make beautiful vases, collages, sculptures and so much more with the stamps that you collect. The real reward is the appreciativeness on our veterans faces – that you took the time to think about them and the amount of effort it takes to organize such an endeavor. Thank you for giving back for those who have served our country and showing our troops, soldiers and veterans we care and they will not be forgotten.

VAVS: A Family Tradition

By Garland Scott, Post 753

Leo & Faye were involved in JWV activity since the mid 1980s, for over 40 years.

Leo was a Post Commander for 2 years (19xx-19xx) and the designated Rep for VAVS between May 2005 & May 2007. He continued to actively participate in JWV activities until his passing in May 2015.

Faye was a key developer and Past President of the JWVA Post 753. Its Charter was issued Sep 1986 with installation of officers in 30 May 1987. A City Of San Antonio Proclamation, issued by Mayor Cisneros, asserted 21 May 1987 as "Jewish War Veterans Ladies Auxiliary Day". Both Faye and daughter, Bonnie Scott, each served 2 years as JWVA President. JWVA ceased to be active around 1992 as demographics changed.

The Post and Auxiliary did most of the Post activities jointly. Leo & Faye participated in various VA Hospital activities such as:

Quarterly Bingo- calling numbers and helping patients with cards, Semi Annually baking of cookies, then distributing them and ice cream to patients and

staff in the wards for 4th of July and Christmas time.

They had Chanukah parties at Hospital. JWVA donated a flag pole at a newly commissioned elementary school honoring one of the Post 753 founders - Zavell Smith. They were also active in fund raising, canning, and acquiring donations from various merchants. They held social activities at different locations to maintain and increase membership.



Faye and Leo during the Chanukah Party at the Audie Murphy VA Hospital

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget Committee

By Alan Paley, Budget Committee Chairman

Since this is my second year serving as Chairman, my goal is to involve the rest of the committee in all preparation and review of the numbers, prior to finalizing the budget for presentation to the NEC in February. During the month of December, National sends me the unaudited numbers for the year ending the prior June. These are the numbers that are used to determine what amounts will be budgeted for the coming year.

Each line item is looked at and questioned. The national office provides feedback on what the revenue or expense item relates to and why it was a particular amount of money. Together, we then determine if that amount will occur in the coming year, or if we need to either reduce or increase the amount.

Special events or circumstances are also figured into our determination of what amount will be presented to the NEC.

When we are all done, all revenue and expense lines have been reviewed and the budgeted amount for the coming year is determined.

Once the budget for JWV is completed, we then move onto the museum. The same process is followed, and when completed, we have what we as the committee feel is the best revenue and expense budget that can be presented. As we have done in the past, the budget is presented at the February NEC meeting, and is then opened for questions and suggested revisions. Once the members in attendance approve of the numbers, the budget process is complete.

During the national convention, a budget report is presented to the body. The report will recap the actual results as compared to the budget for the nearest month that the national office has closed. We will try this coming year, to have numbers through at least May, if not preliminary numbers thru June. This was not done last year, and several members in attendance questioned why actual numbers were not presented. Our goal as budget committee members is to provide the membership with as up to date information as possible, each time we meet.

As with any committee, we are open to suggestions and recommendations from any member, if they feel we need to change the process in any way.

Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS)

By Ken Ashworth, VAWS Chairman

October 1, 2017 starts a new fiscal year of JWV Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAWS) activities. These are JWV members and family volunteers who assist Veterans while at Government VA facilities, Veterans Homes, performing Shabbat and Holiday services, helping with Social Services, fund raising, preparing and serving food to veterans and families, performing Military Honors for deceased Veterans and numerous other activities. All this is appreciated by the Veterans, family and friends and I suspect makes us more humble for all that we have.

At our 122nd National Convention in San Antonio, we had a VAWS Workshop with 30 or more members representing 15 or more Posts - learning

about some of the things other posts do to support our local VA facilities, other organizations that support Veterans and the Veteran's family's needs.

What we hope to do this year is to continue with what we are doing and share our experiences with one another. We need to take pictures when appropriate and share them in The Jewish Veteran so others might get some ideas for their volunteer programs.

If you have any suggestions for projects please let me know and I'll pass them on.

Veteran Service Officer Committee

By Michael Winnick, VSO Chairman

Most often Veterans are frustrated by their own failure to be prepared. Here are a few simple yet important clues on being ready deal with the system.

IF YOU ARE LEAVING MILITARY SERVICE or if you are planning to file a claim for service connected or the spouse of a Veteran who has passed on, there is a simple requirement - find your separation papers (DD214). Don't panic if you can't find it. You can request a copy from the National Archives. The VA does not have your DD214, go to your computer (or your grandchild's), and go to this website:

<https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html>

This site does NOT give an instant response but you will receive a faster response.

Even if you are not filing at this time, get a copy of this form and make a copy to be held by a responsible adult.

POWER OF ATTORNEY (VA form 21-22)

You can appoint any approved Service Organization to represent you with the VA. Jewish War Veterans is an approved representative. As far as I know, none of the Service organizations charge for this service. There are companies that do charge I would advise you to avoid them.

If you wish to be represented by JWV you can e-mail me at Mwinnick@jwv.org and I will e-mail the form back to you

If you are leaving service be sure to have a copy of all relevant medical information.

If you are retiring from the military examine all options you are offered, consult with an advisor to determine what is best for you - a Military disability or VA disability.

If your parents need aid and attendance or an income based pension. You should go online for VA Form 21-526. Read the directions carefully; they will tell you what is considered income for VA purposes and what expenses are deductible. Gather all your information together. DO NOT try to wing it, the numbers have to make sense.

If you are applying for a "Service connected disability" list your ailments and how you connect them to your time in service. As an example, if you are claiming PTSD you must show where and when the trauma occurred.

If at this time you are uncertain as to whether or not you are going to file, you can submit an "intention to file" and have a year to decide with up to a year retroactive.

If I have managed to confuse you, you can e-mail me at Mwinnick@jwv.org Include your full name, your preferred E-mail address, a phone number where you can be reached and a brief explanation of your situation.

Women in the Military Committee

By Sheila Berg, Post 239

Edith Freyer, Post 795, and I were able to attend the Department of Veterans Affairs Center for Women Veterans' Womens Summit in Houston, TX scheduled for August 25-26, 2017 as representatives of the JWV Women in the Military Committee. Unfortunately, the summit was shortened to one day due to Hurricane Harvey.

However, there was a lot of wonderful content during the 1 day conference. A video message from the Honorable Daniel J. Shulkin, Secretary of the Veterans Affairs was prepared for the participants - where he expressed the importance of recognizing and supporting programs for Women Veterans. The main speaker was Vivieca Wright-Simpson Chief of Staff for Veterans Affairs.

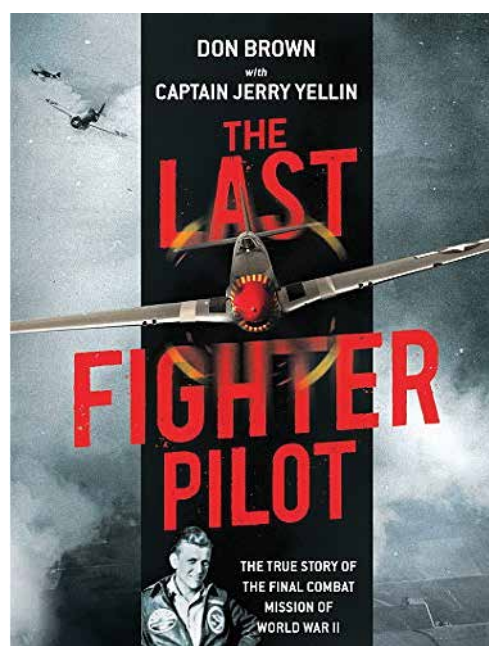
The Summit presented information on Services available for Women Veterans at the VVA. Services continue to evolve to address issues on the life continuum for Women. The VA provides services for Pre-Natal, Maternity, Reproduction, Military Sexual Trauma, Pulmonary/lung, Asthma, Movement, Weight Management, Menopause/Cervical, Aging and Mental Health. In addition, they are working on mental health services by treating Adjustment/Coping Disorders, PTSD, Depression, Anxiety, Eating Disorders, Opioid dependence and Tobacco use.

The VA is trying to expand it's services by providing (1) Re-integration-Adjustment into Civilian Lifestyle, (2) Returning to family roles and responsibilities, (3) Nurturing Issues- reluctance to communicate with children during deployment, (4) Provide Child Therapy for children of deployed and (5) Provide Breast Pumps, nursing bras, Post Mastectomy items and wigs related to Alopecia.

The Veterans Affairs Department is working on a Cultural Change. Their goals are (1) to develop measurable medical evidence for service expansion, (2) to improve coordination of referral service, (3) to decrease the suicide rate, (4) to increase Tele-health services, (5) to decrease waiting times for VA appointments, (5) to increase HUB Services for rural/remote areas and (6) to reduce of VA site harassment.

The Department of Veteran Affairs Center for Women Veterans also came out with some interesting statistics - (1) 63% Women Veterans have Service Connected injuries, (2) 500 Thousand Women receive VA Services, (3) the female suicide rate is 6 times rate for female Civilians, (4) 2,000 female veterans receive GI Loans, (5) 16,000 female veterans receive VA Loans, (6) there are 2 million female veterans in the U.S., (7) 57% of injured women more likely to return to duty and (8) the largest numbers of female veterans using VA services are age 45-65 years.

The Final Video Message from Lt. General Patty Horoho, US Army (Retired), CEO Optima Military. She encouraged Women Veterans to enroll in Million Veterans Program (MVP).



By Dr. Sheldon Goldberg, Docent for NMAJMH

The Last Fighter Pilot is more than the story of Captain Jerry Yellin, the USAAF fighter pilot who flew his P-51D on the last combat mission in World War II. It is also the story of the war in the Pacific and the background of the strategy that brought Jerry Yellin to Iwo Jima and that led to the final victory over Japan. Lastly, it is the story of dedication, friendship and death in the skies over the Pacific as told by one who experienced these emotions and that have remained with him throughout his life.

Born to a non-practicing Jewish family in New Jersey in 1924, Jerry was a typical kid, playing sandlot baseball and football with his friends until one day in 1936 he experienced anti-Semitism first hand from those very same friends. Jerry never understood why but he realized that he needed to be stronger, better, and smarter than anyone else, and by becoming a fighter pilot, he had.

The Last Fighter Pilot: The True Story of the Final Combat Mission of World War II

By Don Brown

Jerry was barely twenty-one when he and the other pilots of the 78th fighter Squadron landed on Iwo Jima on 7 March 1945. The Pork chop shaped island had been invaded on 19 February 1945 by 70,000 Marines who, due to stiff resistance by the Japanese, were only in control of a fraction of the island when the 78th arrived. For then Lieutenant Yellin and many of the 78th, flying missions from this eight square mile island would be their first taste of combat.

Their mission was to fly close air support for the Marines until the Japanese defenders were defeated but their aircraft was not fitted out for that mission. The P-51's of the 78th were fitted out with six, fifty caliber machine guns and not equipped to drop napalm, a more effective weapon against dug-in Japanese soldiers. The problem was soon fixed and in less than three weeks there was little close air support to be flown.

Perhaps more significant than the description of the various missions flown by Yellin are, particularly for the historian or those simply interested in the history of the Pacific war, the side stories, i.e., the background to the events that took place in that theater of war. There is, for example, an excellent, albeit brief, history of China and Japan in the early 20th Century that underscores the Japanese rationale for its aggression against Manchuria, China, and the whole of Southeast Asia, as well as the U.S. response following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

We also learn why Iwo Jima was important enough to the war effort to cost the lives of 7,000 Marines; that the need for staging bases for both fighters and bombers required taking back from the Japanese the Marianas, Guam, Saipan, Tinian, and

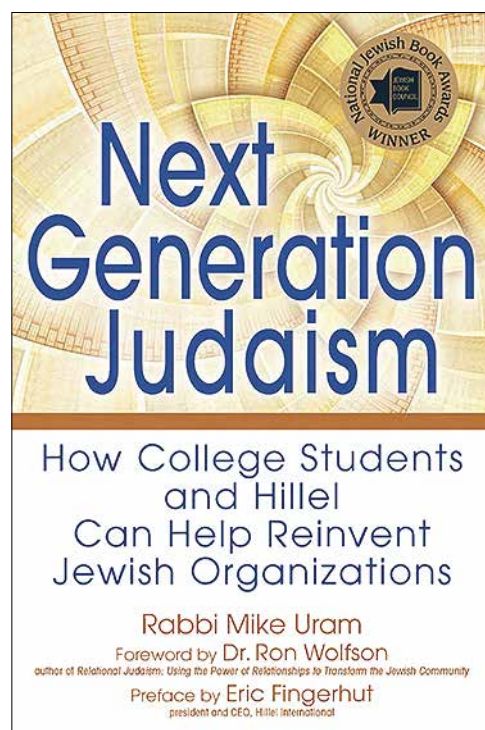
Rota. From there, Iwo Jima – just 759 miles south of Tokyo – was needed to allow the P-51's, the aircraft that Yellin flew, to escort the B-29 bombers when the final push against Japan would begin. Iwo Jima was the key to that effort.

Throughout the book the authors do an excellent job of introducing various personalities, such as Major James Tapp, Commander of the 78th Fighter Squadron and an air ace by war's end and Lieutenant Phillip Schlamborg, another Jewish pilot in the 78th, Yellin's friend and wingman on that last mission. Schlamborg was also the great-uncle of the movie star, Scarlett Johansson. There are diagrams and explanations of fighter formations and tactics as well as overview of the tactics developed by General Curtis LeMay in Europe against Germany that he would later bring to the Pacific.

Similarly, the book is replete with the deeply felt feelings of Jerry Yellin as he talks about his squadron mates and those that were lost, whether in training or later in combat. In particular, the loss of his friend and wingman, Lt. Schlamborg – the last combat loss of the war – on that last, fateful mission of World War II that took place on 15 August 1945, and unbeknownst to either of them, three hours after the Japanese surrendered, is still keenly felt.

Thanks to the efforts of best-selling author Don Brown, the Last fighter Pilot is an engaging and enjoyable read.

This book is available for purchase at our museum bookshop. Contact Mike Rugel at mrugel@nmajmh.org to order a copy and to learn about other great books we carry.
Your support is appreciated!



By Anna Selman

This book is a must read for those who want to understand millennial Jews. As has been noted, millennial Jews are less likely to join synagogues, JCCs, and

Next Generation Judaism: How College Students and Hillel Can Help Reinvent Jewish Organizations

By Rabbi Mike Uram

other Jewish organizations – like JWV. What is the cause of this behavior and how can we entice them to become involved in Jewish society? In the book, *Next Generation Judaism*, Rabbi Mike Uram addresses this important question and provides some answers.

This book is mainly focused on Hillel's (a Jewish student college organization) attempts to reach out to Jewish college students. It provides a look at the types of outreach which have been successful and types which have not. Unfortunately, the book deals solely with Hillel's struggle to reach millennial Jews and does not include information on a wider range of institutions. However, the book was written and published by Hillel – so, it is expected.

Nevertheless, one comes away with information from Hillel's "lessons learned" which can be applied to our own organization. The best "lesson learned" for me is that millennials are highly individualistic. The "one size fits all" model will not work with them. They want to be invested in – take them out for coffee, em-

power them with leadership roles and take time to talk to them. This requires members to be highly active in engaging with millennials and not just throwing money at the problem, hoping someone else will fix it.

From my own experience, I remember being stationed at Fort Hood and being introduced to members of JWV. Eddy Freyer is quintessentially everyone's Jewish geographical mother when you come to shul. At services, I would talk to her about my day, and she was the only person who came to my promotion ceremony since my parents could not fly out from California. She even kept in touch with me via email after I moved.

This is what millennials want. They want Jewish organizations and their members to invest in them. I highly recommend that anyone who wants to learn more about how to engage millennials to read this book. I think that everyone can learn a lot from what the writer has to say about the way baby boomers and gen x can reach out and make connections with millennials.

NATIONAL LADIES AUXILIARY JEWISH WAR VETERANS OF THE U.S.A.

National President Iris Goldwasser

Dear Sisters,

The concept of Thanksgiving is universal, as old as civilization and actually originated in the Old Testament, where it tells us that Jews decorated their homes and temples in gratitude for their daily food and thanked G-D for their bounty.

The influence of the Jewish Bible on the Pilgrims was evident as they celebrated their fall harvests with piety, reverence and devotion to G-D. They paralleled their experiences with those of the Israelites. Many of their customs and laws could be traced to the Holy Scriptures. The Pilgrim Fathers tried to imbue the spirit of understanding between men and broke bread with the Indians signifying that they were all children of G-D.

Although the holiday of Thanksgiving itself may have passed, the spirit and message should always remain with us. As the Channukah season approaches we should continue to give Thanks – for the little cruse of oil that burned for eight days instead of the expected one and for the good fortune that enables us

to celebrate this joyous holiday and others with our families.

Our religion teaches us that we should love our neighbors as ourselves, practice charity and aid those less fortunate. Let us keep faith with our humanitarian and biblical beliefs – bring smiles into the lives of sick children and veterans confined to hospitals, aid the needy in our local communities and support our fellow Jews in Israel.

The various programs of JWVA lead the way – participation leads the way. Remember **HELPING HANDS BRING SMILES!** Join us – get on the bandwagon and make someone smile!



Jewish Sacred Aging®: Join the Conversation

By Carole Goldberg, AP, Senior Citizen Chairman

As we reflect on our stage in life many thoughts flow through our mind – health issues, end of life issues, legal issues, caregiving/receiving – to name just a few. It may have never crossed our mind to think about these issues in the context of our Jewish teachings and theology. What guidance might we find if we delve into the meaning of our lives through Jewish texts, theology, rituals? Might we think about what resources are already available to us as we deal with the health issues of our parents, our children, ourselves?

When Rabbi Richard Address founded the Department of Jewish Family Concerns in 1997 at the Union for Reform Judaism, he thought deeply about the changing demographics. One of his solutions was creating and developing the Jewish Sacred Aging® program.

According to the website, “Jewish Sacred Aging® is a forum for the Jewish Community with resources and texts that feature discussions on the implications of the revolution in longevity for Baby Boomers and their families. We encourage you to participate in the conversation!”

You will find resources, guides, and podcasts with discussions on so many pertinent and thought provoking issues when you visit the Jewish Sacred Aging® website at: <http://jewishsacredaging.com/>.

You can also listen to podcasts live on Tuesdays at 11:00 am by visiting: <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/jewishsacredaging>

I highly recommend that you take advantage of the Jewish Sacred Aging® resources, including workshops and speaking engagements around the country.

VETERAN'S DAY



Photo Credit: Sgt. Ken Scar

“Our Flag does not fly because the wind moves it. It flies with the last breath of each soldier who died protecting it.

“Let us respect their service and continue our support!”

THANK YOU!

As a non-profit organization, JWVA depends to a large extent on your generosity. We appreciate ALL donations, large or small, and wish to thank our supporters and contributors.

We want to acknowledge any CHAI (or more) donations to its General Fund or its Programs. This column is our way to show our gratitude.

Thanks to:

PFC. Fred Hecht Post and Auxiliary #425
Rodger C. Snyder Memorial Auxiliary #117

NEC Meeting February 6-11, 2018

Make your reservation for our NEC Meeting in February 2018. Register at the Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport by visiting the www.jwv.org/events/nec_capitol_hill_action_day. To make a reservation by phone, please call 703-413-5500 and tell them the group code is JWVS.



JWVA National President Iris Goldwasser was joined by JWV National Commander Paul D. Warner at the Korean War Memorial in Washington, DC, for the 2017 Veterans Day Memorial ceremony. JWVA partnered with JWV to present a wreath in honor of all of the casualties and veterans of this war.



JWVA WORLD SERIES BASEBALL POOL 2017

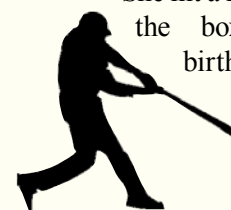


By Charlene Ehrlich, PNP, Chairman

Three strikes and you're out!

But not for Helene Van Clief, a veteran and member of JWV Post 3 in New York.

She hit a home run when she selected the box that represented her birthday! Helene won \$250.00.



Thank you to all who supported our JWVA Baseball Pool.

HELPING HANDS BRING SMILES

Hanukkah

By Natalie Blank, National Chaplain

Hanukkah is the yearly "Festival of Lights" holiday that falls on the 25th day of Kislev in the Jewish calendar. Jews worldwide celebrate the victory of Jewish soldiers, their leader, Judah Maccabee and the purified oil which lit the menorah for eight days continuously, hence the eight night celebration.. During Chanukah we traditionally eat fried potato latkes and fried donuts to symbolize the oil commemorating this holiday.

The Chanukah menorah differs from other candelabra in that it holds nine candles, one standing taller than the others. We light one candle and the Shamus on the first night and add an additional candle each night thereafter plus the Shamus until the last night when all are lit. The Shamus, being the tallest candle means "servant or helper", is used to light the others (always right to left). The menorah represents the light and wisdom found in the divine inspiration that together with the candles are indicative of this "Festival of Lights."

The dreidel is a game of chance played by children and has become a symbol of Chanukah. It is a four sided top, each side having a Hebrew letter imprinted on it; nun, gimme, hay and shin, translating to "A great miracle happened here."



Action and Jewish Affairs

Gladys L. Simon, PNP, Chairman

The U.S. Conference of Mayors and the Anti-Defamation League recently announced a new 10-point Mayors' Compact on Combating Hate, Extremism and Bigotry in response to the hate and violence in Charlottesville, VA.

As of August 28th, at that time more than 300 mayors from across the country have so far pledged to implement the plan. Under this Compact, mayors commit to:

- Vigorously speak out against all acts of hate.
- Punish bias-motivated violence to the fullest extent of the law.
- Encourage more anti-bias and anti-hate education in schools and police forces, using Anti-Defamation League experts and resources for both
- Encourage community activities that celebrate their population's cultural and ethnic diversity; and
- Ensure civil rights laws are aggressively enforced and hate crimes laws are as strong as possible.

Has your Mayor pledged to implement this plan? To see the full wording of the Compact, visit www.mayorscompact.org/compact.

Jewish Schools and Antisemitism

Jewish schools in South Florida proudly appreciate Florida's Governor Rick Scott's recent proposal to push for \$1 million in the next budget to help cover the expense of security at the Jewish Day Schools throughout the state. This would cover bulletproof glass, fencing, video cameras and other measures for protection. This comes after a wave of anti-Semitic threats in the past year. Recent incidents have been bomb threats and swastikas in predominately Jewish neighborhoods.

Has your Governor or State Legislature increased its budget to support added security at these schools?



The Gift of Love



*The gratitude of the men of the VA Hospital in Wood, Wisconsin does not go unmentioned.
Morris Silber, a resident, wrote this "Ode to the JWVA Volunteers."*

Welcome, JWVA Ladies, we bid you enter
To visit us patients at our VA Center.
We, who once were young and robust and hale,
Now are getting old and pretty frail.

Each week you join us in an hour of prayer
In thanksgiving for God's help in our burdens to bear.
Together we glorify the Lord, our God's name,
From whom all the gifts that we enjoy, originally came.

The Rabbi leads us in praising the Lord above
And teaches us of God's compassion, mercy, care and love;
Of the wondrous miracles he continues to perform
To help us in difficulties, strife and storm.

When the services and amens are finally read
And all the Hallelujahs lovingly said,
You set a table before us, fit for a king
So laden with delicacies, it makes our hearts sing.

A table of choice food a veritable treasure,
Like showers of Manna, from heaven, all for our pleasure.
Welcomed by our shepherd, divine, we lie deep in clover,
And in the "Broche" for wine, our cup runneth over.

Week in and week out, all through the year
You bring us comfort and good cheer.
You plan, you buy, you cook and prepare
Delightful and pleasing kosher foods, for us to share.

You bring us food of a great variety of choice
Tasty and fresh, to make us rejoice;
Apples, oranges, plums and quinces,
And knedlach, kreplach and cheese blintzes.

A pleasant surprise, a dainty dish,
Is good old-fashioned gefilte fish,

With a relish of kosher pink-colored "chrane"
And soda water, cherry, orange or just plain.
Kosher salami and baloney you bid us try
On fresh-baked "challe" or Jewish rye.
And kosher dill pickles to go with the above,
All these dishes, the soul-food of your great love.

A treat for us, that's most delicious
Is bagels, lox, or tasty knishes;
A rich, luscious, "cheese lukshen" kugel,
And cherry or apple-filled fresh-baked strudel.

So, hail to you, our beloved sisters who show that you care;
Of us and our problems your hearts are aware.
Thank you, dear ladies, you delight us no end
We are happy to keep each one of you for a dear friend.

You come to us in the blazing heat, or biting cold,
Your commitments to us you continue to hold;
On bright, sunny days or in times of rain,
You comfort us who constantly live with pain.

Dear ladies, we thank you, we thank you
For the wonderful, and selfless work you do;
And for your kindness and graciousness and loving care
We lift up our voices and hearts in prayer.

By coming here our lives you bless;
Each visit by you is like a gentle caress,
Like the joy of being tenderly kissed
By a fragrantly perfumed wafting mist.

We hope to see you again and again
You make life worth living, it is not in vain.
And so for giving of your efforts without question or pause,
We give you our heartfelt APPLAUSE! APPLAUSE!



Helping Veterans in the Hospital



By Sandra Cantor, Hospital/Grant-a-Wish Chairman

Dear Sisters,
How can we help our Veterans in the Hospitals?
I have been racking my brain to come up with different ways our Auxiliaries can answer this question. Through my experience at my VA Hospital in Dallas, here are a few suggestions.

- If your VA hosts a carnival as ours has, ladies can volunteer to participate at the various booths.
- If your VA hosts a Homeless Stand Down, ladies can volunteer to hand out needed items.
- If your VA and/or Post hosts a summer BBQ, Thanksgiving or Christmas meal, we can help serve food, escort Veterans to tables and provide pleasant conversation.
- Participate in a Christmas Mitzvah by offering to do tasks such as receptionist, candy striper or generally helping where needed.

- Contribute new or gently used men's and women's clothing if the hospital has a clothes closet.

All these ideas are easily achieved by contacting Voluntary Services at any VA Hospital. If you have any other ideas please let me know so I can share them.

If your Auxiliary is not in close proximity to a VA Hospital, you can Adopt-A-Hospital. Please let me know if this is the case for your Auxiliary and I will try and match you with a hospital. The Voluntary Services Department will let you know what they need and hopefully your Auxiliary can help in that way.

In closing, let us all try to help our Veteran Heroes at the various VA Hospitals. I know it is appreciated and it is part of our mission as the National Ladies Auxiliary of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America.

Thank you for your support.

HELPING HANDS BRING SMILES

By Mike Rugel • Program and Content Coordinator

Captain Jerry Yellin spoke at the the National Museum of American Jewish Military History on October 25th. Though he has never been a religious man, Yellin made clear that from his Bar Mitzvah to the final mission of WWII, his Jewish identity played an important part of his life. Yellin become a frequent speaker at a variety of venues and his story is well told in several books and articles, including in these pages. But on his visit to our museum, he spoke more about being Jewish than he does in other settings. From his childhood to wartime when he was flying a P-51 named for Doris Rosen and lost his Jewish wingman on a mission after the war had already ended, to his experiences in Israel in the 1960s, being Jewish played an important part in much of Yellin's life.

A young Jerry Yellin didn't want a Bar Mitzvah, but his mother insisted. Following his becoming a Bar Mitzvah, swastikas appeared on his home. He became isolated from his non-Jewish friends. This would feed his motivation to become the best fighter pilot he could be.

When he was first assigned to train with the 78th Fighter Squadron, the room assignments told him he was different: "[There were] 28 guys. 27 of those guys roomed with other fighter pilots and I was a Jewish guy and they knew that and I roomed with Marvin Kern and Phil Janoski guys who were the Intelligence Division of the 78th Fighter Squadron. I was separated because of my religion. I was not accepted as a fighter pilot until I flew and like the Tuskegee Airmen, the black guys who had to be three times as good, just to be even, I had to be three times as good." Yellin felt he achieved this goal and proved himself as a pilot.

Yellin also had Jewish experiences when stationed in the Pacific. Though he never had much use for religion at home, he spoke of the boost to his morale that a Passover Seder provided in 1945. The matzah and wine on Iwo Jima provided a powerful experience by connecting his wartime life with his Jewish culture.

Yellin summed up the combination of Jewish identity and his individual war experience this way: "The war started in Europe with Hitler killing Jewish

people. It ended with two Jewish guys flying the last combat mission. One came home and one was killed." His relationship with Phillip Schlamborg, his fellow Jewish pilot who was killed, led to decades of struggling with PTSD following the war. Yellin described learning transcendental meditation many years later to help manage his PTSD.

After the war, Yellin stated he would have liked to continue with the Army Air Forces. But it was anti-Semitism that kept him from continuing with a career in the military. Yellin felt he wasn't fully accepted because he was Jewish, and he chose another career path. That postwar career included making a living playing golf. He gambled on the courses of New Jersey. He was good enough to compete in the Maccabiah games and decided to move to Israel in 1965.

Yellin's World War II experience is a stellar example of the kind of stories we want to tell at the museum. He distinguished himself as a fighter pilot. His final mission was significant, marking the end of the war. His Jewish identity infused all these experiences.

Captain Yellin's entire talk can be seen on our YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/YkIBI0c0Y-Y>.



Captain Jerry Yellin talked about his experience as a fighter pilot during WWII.

Celebrating Veterans Day 2017 at the Museum

Veterans Day fell on Shabbat this year, so we celebrated the days together at the museum. We began the day with a Shabbat service conducted by Rabbi Bruce Kahn, retired U.S. Navy chaplain. Rabbi Kahn began by discussing Admiral Hyman Rickover, Father of the Nuclear Navy. He recalled being with Admiral Rickover as he was dying at the request of his wife and participating in his memorial service at Washington National Cathedral and funeral at Arlington National Cemetery. Kahn conducted the service with repeated reference to the service of veterans. He had the veterans attending the service a chance to share their experiences and talk about the significance of veterans' issues. National Commander Paul Warner, PNC Ed Goldwasser, PNC Michael Berman, and National Executive Director Herb Rosenbleeth all attended. Younger veterans were there as well discussing their place in a younger generation of Jewish Americans.

We followed the service by putting together care packages for patients at the Washington DC VA Medical Center. We'd been collecting materials in the weeks leading up to Veterans Day and received donations from some local hotels. We also got some support from the students at Milton Gottesman Jewish Day School of the Nation's Capital, seniors at the Greenspring Retirement Community and local Jewish organization Sephardic Heritage in D.C. The packages included toiletries, books, games and puzzles. They were delivered to DC VAMC the week after Veterans Day.

The day ended with a visit from PJ library, the organization that sends Jewish books for free to families with young children across the country. Along with the cards we included in the care packages for the VA, the children made paper "salami" cards for active

Continued on next page



Spread the Word!

By Larry Schulman

Spread the word! We need you to help publicize the museum. Word of mouth is the most valuable tool we have to let the world know about the National Museum of American Jewish Military History. Tell your friends, tell your family, tell anyone you know who is interested in American Jewish history. Tell people to visit our website – nmajmh.org. Tell them to watch the videos on our YouTube page, see our posts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. In today's world, word of mouth means not only telling people, but sharing on social media.

One important way you can spread the word: Tell your local schools about the museum! We'd love to have more school groups visit the museum. If you have a connection with a local school that makes a trip to Washington, make sure they know about the museum. These types of trips are common on middle school curriculums. It's easy for the smaller destinations in Washington like ours to get lost amongst the Smithsonian and Federal government destinations. That's why we need to make sure more people know about the museum. We can provide a valuable educational experience, but we need help getting the word out. Please inform or remind any local teachers and administrators about NMAJMH.

This extends beyond just schools. For example, our local Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester has sent a group of teens on a trip to Washington to the museum several years. Their trip emphasized Holocaust education. We provided them special materials on American Jewish liberators and customize the tour to their needs. They've continued to reuse those materials to promote discussion about the Holocaust and the role of American Jewish soldiers as liberators of concentration camps. We can emphasize a period of history or a specific topic if it matches the school's curriculum.

Our museum is here to educate, inform and tell the stories of Jews who served in the American military. Spread the word!

Spread the Word

To learn more about Jewish American's contributions to the U.S. armed forces go to:

- facebook.com/nmajmh
- twitter.com/nmajmh
- instagram.com/nmajmh
- youtube.com/c/nmajmhorg
- plus.google.com/+NmajmhOrg

US Merchant Marines and the Fight for VA Recognition

During World War II, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt promised mariners of the US Merchant Marine that they would receive veteran status and a Seaman's Bill of Rights for "fighting side by side with our Army and Navy." Mariners suffered the highest casualty rate of any service during World War II, with 1 in 26 killed. Over 1,500 ships were sunk and over 9,500 mariners died. Despite those numbers and President Roosevelt's promise, mariners did not obtain veteran status until 1988.

The Merchant Marine bore the first US casualties of World War II. The first American victim to Axis aggression was the SS City of Flint, captured by a Nazi battleship in October 1939. The first US ship sunk was the MS City of Rayville, which hit a German mine in November of 1940, killing one mariner. The death toll grew to 243 before Pearl Harbor. Mariners were among the first US prisoners of war and many were held by both the Germans and Japanese.

Once the US joined the war, it was the Merchant Marine's job to help supply our troops. To support one soldier for a year at the front, it took 15 tons of supplies. Mariners delivered tanks, jeeps, trucks, airplanes, ammunition, gasoline, aviation fuel, medicines, food rations, and more while taking part in every invasion from Normandy to Okinawa. Mariners were at the front the moment they left port, subject to attack by submarine, surface ships, mines, bombers, and land-based artillery.

Mariners remained in war zones long after the fighting troops came home. The danger did not end with the cessation of hostilities, as mines remained. Over 50 ships struck mines after V-E or V-J Day. When the mariners finally did come home, it was to face several misconceptions about their service—that they received high pay, were draft dodgers, and that they refused to unload ships. As he signed the GI Bill in June 1944, President Roosevelt said, "I trust Congress will soon provide similar opportunities to

members of the Merchant Marine who have risked their lives time and time again during war for the welfare of their country." Unfortunately, the promise of benefits died with Roosevelt. Mariners were denied benefits such as unemployment, education, home or small business loans, priority for postwar jobs, and medical care for disabilities.

Mariners struggled for more than forty years to obtain veteran status. Veteran status for the Merchant Marine came about because of Senator Barry Goldwater, an Air Force Reserve officer. Sen. Goldwater wanted veteran status for the Women Air Service Pilots (WASPs) who transported military aircraft in the United States and Canada. Public Law 95-202, approved November 23, 1977, granted veteran status to WASPs and "any person in any other similarly situated group" with jurisdiction for determination given to the Secretary of Defense. It took another decade and a court order for mariners to be extended veterans' status. The designation entitled mariners to obtain military service discharge certificates, which in turn made them eligible for such veterans' benefits as the use of VA hospitals and burial in a national cemetery.

Max Berman was one of the mariners to receive this long-awaited status. He joined the Merchant Marine in 1937, when he was 22 years old. When the US joined WW2, he was drafted but rejected for military service after a physical exam because of his poor vision. He continued his service in the Merchant Marine, receiving a letter of commendation from the War Shipping Administrator in 1944. The letter states:

The various reports clearly show that all hands [on the SS President Fillmore] promptly and efficiently manned their battle stations at every alert; and that, for ten days under imminent attack, the crew willingly turned to and rapidly discharged the war material which was so urgently needed ashore. It was also

noted that the fire of your guns was so accurate and determined that your ship and its vital cargo came through the attacks undamaged, and the entire crew was commended by the Commanding Officers of the Army and Navy personnel on board for its discipline and conduct under fire.

He also received the Merchant Marine Combat Bar for his service during the war.

Max Berman died in 2003, but not before belatedly receiving veteran status. He was just one of the thousands of often overlooked WW2 veterans.



Correction to Max Berman's DD-214, establishing active duty for purposes of VA benefits.



Max Berman's VA benefits card, noting that he served in the Merchant Marine (MM).

Celebrating Veterans Day 2017

Continued from previous page



duty Jewish soldiers continuing the tradition of "Send A Salami To Your Boy In The Army."

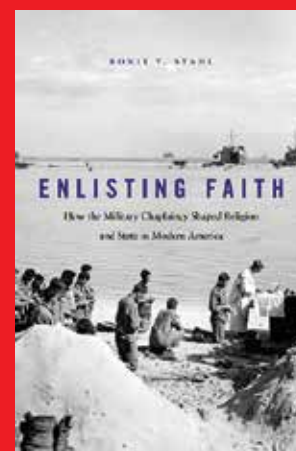
We read Hanukkah at Valley Forge by Stephen Krensky. The book tells the story of General George Washington learning the story of Hanukkah from a Polish immigrant Jewish soldier on the fields of Valley Forge. Washington is inspired by the story of the Maccabees to continue his uphill fight against the British. It was a great read for Veterans Day and provides a nice bridge to our next celebration at the museum for Hanukkah.

Museum Docent Sheldon Goldberg shows visitor Hadley Rugel museum exhibits.

Have a contact at a local school?

Recommend a tour of the museum on trips to Washington, DC. Contact Mike Rugel at mrugel@nmajmh.org for more information.

Coming Up February 7, 2018



Ronit Stahl, will be at the museum to talk about his book, **Enlisting Faith: How the Military Chaplaincy Shaped Religion and State in Modern America.**

Books will be available for purchase.

For more information about other upcoming events at the museum, go to: <https://nmajmh.org/my-calendar/>

Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A.

31st Annual Mission to Israel • April 30-May 9, 2018

Join us on JWV's 31st Mission to beautiful and historic Israel! Witness the wonderful achievements of this small Jewish country, celebrating its 70th Independence year. We visit places other groups do not visit. Get updated briefings. Meet Israelis and their leaders. Enjoy fun and comradeship with fellow veterans. You do not have to be Jewish or a veteran to travel with us, so bring your family and friends!

It's more than a tour, it's a meaningful experience!

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Package includes:

- Round trip coach class tickets from JFK (New York) with EL AL Israel Airlines. Call aviatours for other cities.
- Transfers to/from airport and hotels (if you fly with the group).
- Superior First Class hotel accommodations (similar to Sheraton or Crowne Plaza in the US).
- Full Israeli buffet breakfast and dinner daily.
- Daily sightseeing tours in an air-conditioned deluxe bus with the services of a licensed English speaking guide (the wonderful Ronit!).

- All entrance fees to sites as per program.
- All taxes and service fees as imposed by hotels.
- Earphones so you can easily hear the guide.
- Tips per day, per person, for guide, driver, hostess, and hotel restaurant staff.

For more information about this trip, please visit the JWV website or contact Christy Turner at JWV Headquarters: 202-265-6280 x417 or email at: cturner@jwv.org.



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Happy Tu BiShvat

Allan & Sheila Abramson
Good Health & Happiness to All

PNC Lou & PDP Gloria Abramson
Good Health & Happiness to All

SFC Lillian Aronson, USA (Ret)
In honor of my 100th Birthday

**Any Jewish WWII person captured and sent
to Aushchwitz, etc., and survived**

PDC Ed & PDP Louise Baraw
Eugene Baraw • Post 336

In Memory of Bert Stoler
Allan & Nikki Berger

Howard A. & Dorothy G. Berger
Naples/Denver • USFA/USASETAF

In memory of PDP Adele Bilker

PNC Jerry & PNP Joanne Blum
Good Health & Happiness to All

PDC Elliott Donn & PAP Elissa Donn • CT
Best Wishes & Good Health to All

Greetings! Jerry Farris, PDC-PA

In Memory of Carol C. Frank
In Memory of Fred Hiendrick

David Goldberg, K.C.C.
In memory of Sam Goldberg

Sidney B. Goldberg, PDC • Post 510
Abe Cohen - Leaman Post 50

In Honor of PNC Nate & Selma Goldberg
In Memory of Leo & Anita Gilbert

Alan J. Gould Post 105
In Memory of Sam Gould, Post Cmdr.

PNC Sam & PNP Barbara Greenberg
Happy Holidays to All

Arthur H. Greenwald • Post 321/69
National Adjutant • 2017-2018

In Honor of all who have served!

PNP Petra C. & Jason A. Kaatz
Beth Kane Wishes You Good Health
Happy Holiday!

CMDR Laurence & Marilyn Kaufman
Saluting the Men & Women of Post 46

In Memory of Marty Kessler
Bell-Oak Post 648, Queens-NY

Dr. Arlene Mars Kushner
In Memory of Herb O. Zemble • Post 176

In Honor of Dr. George Mangeim • WWI
Artillery Officer Russian Front

PNC Sheldon & Judith Ohren
L'Chaim - To Life

PNC Ira & Shelley Novoselsky
Happy Holidays

Dr. Jack N. Porter • Post 211-MI
In memory of my dad, Irving Porter

In Memory of PNC Ed & Helene Robins

Herb & Francie Rosenbleeth
Happy Holiday to You and Yours!

To All Our Troops • Be Safe, Be Well!

PNP Freda & PNC Norman Rosenshein
Good Health & Happy Holidays

Stephen & Helen Sax

To the 2%

Irv Schildkraut • JWV Post 440
Proud Vet of USMC, USN, USA

PNC Lawrence & Judith Schulman
Our Very Best Wishes to All

PDP Linda & Stuart Singer
In memory of PDC Bill Singer

PPC Norman & Toby Smith • Post 129 NY

CH Murray Stadtmauer • Post 648
In loving memory of Clare Stadtmauer

Shalom & Mazel Tov to all Veterans
Greta & Jerry Stolar • Post 346

To All Surviving Jewish WWII prisoners
L'Chaim!

NC Paul and Norma Warner
NJA Harvey & Linda Weiner
Be Well!

In Memory of Joan S. Weinstein

Major Stuart Adam Wolfer Institute
www.msawi.org

Jeri Zweiman
In loving memory of PNC Robert Zweiman

David S. Zwerin, PDC
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