The Great Divide

Love him or hate him, Trump has put his presidency on the firing line

Story begins on page 29
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Adam Gidwitz ’00 is the author of the bestselling children’s books A Tale Dark and Grimm (2010), In a Glass Grimmly (2012), and The Grimm Conclusion (2013). His fourth book, The Empire Strikes Back: So You Want to Be a Jedi?, is his retelling of the iconic Star Wars film.


After graduating from Columbia University with a degree in English literature, Adam taught second grade at Saint Ann’s School in Brooklyn, N.Y., while attending Bank Street College of Education in the evenings. He drew inspiration from students who were enthralled by his reading of the original Grimms’ fairy tale stories. Now a full-time writer, Adam also travels around the country visiting schools, sharing his love of great storytelling. The Park School looks forward to welcoming Adam back to campus in April as the Gordon Berman ’68 Memorial Lower School Resident Author.

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Edelman Makes Super Super Bowl Catch

“I don’t know how he caught it. I don’t think he does either.” That’s New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady on Jewish teammate Julian Edelman’s physics-defying catch during the fourth quarter of Super Bowl LI on Sunday night won by the Pats in overtime, 34-28.

The catch, which Edelman somehow secured between multiple defenders after the ball was tipped in the air, was a crucial part of a historic comeback. The Patriots trailed 28-3 in the third quarter before scoring 31 unanswered points on the way to its thrilling victory — the first overtime game in Super Bowl history.

In typical goofy form, Edelman said Brady exaggerated his praise for the catch because the two have a “bromance.”

Nordstrom, Neiman Marcus Drop Ivanka Trump Label

Nordstrom said it was dropping the Ivanka Trump label due to poor sales, and the label was pulled as well from the Neiman Marcus website.

Racked, the fashion news site, reported last week that a Nordstrom spokesperson insisted the decision by the chain of luxury department stores was unconnected to any political stance involving President Donald Trump’s eldest daughter. Her husband, Jared Kushner, is a senior White House adviser.

“Based on the brand’s performance, we’ve decided not to buy it for this season,” the spokesperson said.

Ivanka Trump converted to Judaism before marrying Kushner in 2010.

The moves by both companies come after months of campaigns on social media against Ivanka Trump, who has come under criticism for some remarks by her father deemed divisive or discriminatory and incompatible with Ivanka Trump’s stated commitment to women’s rights.

Anti-Trump activists Shannon Coulter and Sue Atencio started the campaign under the headline “Grab Your Wallet” in reference to a lewd remark made by Donald Trump 10 years ago that came to light in a recording during the campaign. They aimed to pressure businesses not to offer Ivanka Trump products.

Since the campaign started, thousands have taken to Twitter to voice their support of the boycott.

A Heavy Metal Rock Star Returns to His Jewish Roots

Before David Draiman became famous as the singer of the heavy metal band Disturbed, he trained to be a cantor. That didn’t go so well. Growing up in Chicago, he was expelled from three different yeshivas, and after a rowdy night of Purim drinking as a teenager, he blew up his high school rabbi’s van.

While that may have made him notorious among local kids back in the day, seven Disturbed albums and millions of record sales later, Draiman is now best known for his guttural vocal yells — not his Jewish school antics.

This year, Disturbed is nominated for a Grammy for a cover of Simon and Garfunkel’s song “The Sound of Silence” — something that brought Draiman, 43, back a bit closer to his cantor-in-training days.

Instead of churning out a loud, heavy-metal version of the song, the group decided to keep their recording soft and acoustic. Draiman got to showcase his smoother, classically trained voice — which reminded him of the days when he thought he might one day lead a Jewish congregation in song.

“I was so overwhelmed with emotion listening to the way my vocals sounded in that beautiful bed of music,” Draiman told NPR last month. “Not having heard my voice in that way for so long, it was really just very, very overwhelming.”
If you’ve ever been to Israel, you’ve probably noticed the propensity of Israelis to adorn their cars, their bus stops — even their street signs — with all manner of bumper stickers. Seen as a reflection of the diversity of those who call the Jewish state home, these political — and even apolitical — statements represent a multitude of views: The people are with Gaza, the people are for peace, the people believe in a strong secular judiciary, the people are pro-environment, etc.

This uniquely Israeli phenomenon was popularized in 2004 by Hadag Nachash, the Hebrew-speaking rap group whose “Shirat Hasticker” (“The Sticker Song”) evoked a society of disparate identities and beliefs that was either coming apart at the seams or held together inside a cauldron of boiling-over tensions. But the spoof didn’t make the situation any less real, which is why anyone who claims to speak for “the Israeli view” is fooling himself.

The same can be said for the American Jewish community. Although most of us back here in the United States do not exhibit the same fondness for bumper stickers as our Israeli cousins, the multitude of our identities, religious values and political beliefs means that anyone who claims to speak for “the Jewish view” is being foolish.

As you’ll read this week in the JT, Baltimore — home to a microcosm of the wider American Jewish community — is not of one mind when it comes to the refugee ban, the border wall, defense spending, the economy, education … the list is almost endless. We split along denominational lines, we split along political lines, we split along socioeconomic lines. Some of us support President Donald Trump’s Jan. 27 executive order on immigration; others, predictably, do not.

The debate pits concerns over religious-based discrimination against fears for public safety, the sovereign right of countries to protect their borders against an implied duty of all nations to protect those fleeing war zones and near-certain death.

In the background, of course, are the other immigration-related concerns of job growth, wage stagnation, economic productivity and national character. Especially since these and other issues will now be weighed by the judicial system — starting with the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals that on Tuesday heard oral arguments over a federal judge’s Feb. 3 temporary restraining order striking down Trump’s executive order — perhaps all of us should remember that no one among us speaks for the whole of us. At best, each of us only represents a part.

Like our loved ones across the Atlantic, we will only be able to enjoy the company of our neighbors and friends if we grant them the room to disagree.

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Speak for Yourself

jrunyan@midatlanticmedia.com
Editorials

Consider Gorsuch on His Merits

The Senate’s advice and consent on a proposed Supreme Court nominee is a fundamental constitutional exercise that is important, consequential and reflective of the checks and balances built into our system of government. Consideration of Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch should begin with that in mind.

Gorsuch 49, is a U.S. Court of Appeals judge in Denver with a conservative track record. If confirmed, he will fill the seat of the late Justice Antonin Scalia, and in more than just his physical presence. In fact, an academic study of President Donald Trump’s list of possible court nominees put Gorsuch second for his “Scalia-ness.”

Gorsuch was in the majority of the 2013 appellate decision in Burwell v. Hobby Lobby, which expanded the right of corporations to be treated like people in allowing them to reject on religious grounds the government mandate to provide contraceptives under company health plans. The ruling was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 2009, Gorsuch argued against a majority decision that ruled a county’s Ten Commandments display was unconstitutional. He has never written an opinion on abortion, but he has come out against euthanasia and assisted suicide, which some think may parallel his views on Roe v. Wade. In a 2005 essay, he criticized liberals for turning to the courts rather than the political process to further their agenda — omitting that conservatives do the same.

Whatever one may think of his record — and the Jewish community, it should be noted, is split on its embrace of the judge — Gorsuch deserves a fair hearing in the Senate. Some Democrats have argued that Gorsuch should receive the same treatment as Judge Merrick Garland, who was nominated to the Supreme Court by President Barack Obama last March. Senate Republicans denied Garland even a hearing in hopes that the election of a Republican president would kill the nomination.

With Trump’s election, the Republicans’ wish came to pass. But Gorsuch shouldn’t be Garland-ed. The stubborn refusal of the Senate’s Republican majority to give consideration to a highly respected and well-qualified candidate like Garland was wrong and shouldn’t be used as a reason by Democrats to interfere with consideration of another respected and highly qualified candidate. If anyone needs to be reminded: Two wrongs don’t make a right.

The Senate must consider Gorsuch on his merits and should take the time it needs to explore his record and judicial philosophy. Should he be confirmed — by a 60-vote supermajority would be best — Gorsuch will return the conservative-liberal balance of the Supreme Court to what it was before Scalia’s death last year — the result we will almost certainly see from anyone on Trump’s current list of nominees.

The Senate’s charge to advise and consent is a serious undertaking that deserves serious action by those charged with the constitutional responsibility to get it done. It shouldn’t again fall prey to petty political gamesmanship.

Time to Recognize the Reality of Relations with Israel

Shmuel Bar, a former Israeli intelligence officer and founder of a company that sifts social media messages for terrorist threats, was recently disinvited from speaking on a panel at a London think tank. He was told that since a Saudi official would be attending the session, the Israeli couldn’t be seen in attendance with him. As related last week in Bloomberg Businessweek, “Bar told the organizers that he and the Saudi gentleman had, in fact, been planning to have lunch together at a Moroccan restaurant nearby before walking over to the event together.”

Such is the reality for Israelis who do business with Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, which pay lip service to the Arab boycott of Israel. Business relationships and security cooperation are growing among these countries — all of which share concerns about Iran, the Islamic State and other destabilizing forces in the region.

According to most reports, it is the lack of a solution to the Palestinian issue that keeps Muslim countries from acknowledging the growing interactions with the Jewish state. But something will have to give sooner or later, with or without an Israeli-Palestinian agreement. Indeed, according to Businessweek: “The volume and range of Israeli activity in at least six Gulf countries is getting hard to hide. One Israeli entrepreneur set up companies in Europe and the U.S. that installed more than $6 billion in security infrastructure for the United Arab Emirates, using Israeli engineers.”

What is amazing is the alternate reality in which these relationships exist. Thus, in documenting the Businessweek story, for example, reporters received an email statement from a source in Riyadh, the Saudi capital, “denying any trade links between Israel and Saudi Arabia.” The statement then went on to add that only countries with a “friendly” trade agreement could do business with the kingdom — implying that since Israel does not have a friendly relationship with the kingdom, any such cooperation would be impossible. Given the overwhelming evidence of multiple economic and political interactions, who do these guys think they are fooling?

One way of looking at the current state of affairs is to marvel at just how ingrained Israeli companies and technologies are in their layered dealings in the wider Middle East — this in spite of a boycott stretching back decades. But before anyone puts themselves on the back, it is important to recognize that the fact that Arab states are continuing the charade of the boycott means that there is a way to go to bring relationships in the region into some semblance of normalcy. It is time to get that done. It is way beyond time for Israel’s neighbors to call a spade a spade, stop the hateful rhetoric of seeking to delegitimize Israel, and use the reality of increased commerce, cooperation and areas of mutual interest to bury the hatchet.
Yes, we certainly all do have opinions about nearly everything, don’t we? We may or may not express them, but the choices we make and our reactions to others are all expressions of “our opinion.” But what is an “opinion”? Miriam Webster says, “1. A view, judgement or appraisal formed in the mind about a particular matter, or 2. Belief stronger than impression and less strong than positive knowledge.” Of course, there are legal definitions about “expert opinions” typically offered by doctors or lawyers, but let’s focus on Miriam’s first two definitions.

In today’s times, we are bombarded with so many opinions about everything under the sun. Those opinions do not have to be based in fact, rather they are “formed in the mind.” So, it begs the questions: What good are they? Who's right? Who's wrong? Is there even a right and wrong?

It is too easy to get lost in opinions in these times of such polarization when we try to address monumental decisions that affect so many. We should be expecting our leaders (on both sides of the issues) to show us real alternatives, to discuss the merits of varying opinions so that “we, the people” can better understand and not get caught up in ideology or in the us-versus-them mentality. Societal problems will not get better because of this thinking and behavior.

I want my opinions to matter and to be respected, don’t you? I cannot expect that to happen without seeking out and respecting the opinions of others, without thinking and testing my ideas in discussion with others. It is a two-way street of ideas and attitudes.

Watching our elected leaders, appointed leaders and the media manipulate the opinions of others has been detrimental to getting things done. We should demand that our leaders on all sides of the issues show respect and careful thought about the many important issues of our day. They should consider the real opportunity we have, and that is the opportunity to bring people together, to bring prosperity to all who strive for a better life and to show the world what a magnificent thing it is to be an American.

My opinion is that America is one of the great successful cultural and societal experiments the world has ever seen. Let’s show some pride and respect in that and demand all our citizens and those who wish to be citizens to embrace that and participate in it, for our children’s sake. Being a zayde has made me look at the world through a different lens that I would encourage everyone to at least consider. After all, our future depends on it.

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Vito Simone is a Pikesville resident and member of Moses Montefiore Anshe Emunah.
Oy Vey, Donald!

Full disclosure requires that I admit to voting for Donald Trump and fully supporting him as president of the United States. Of course, my friends here in New York, especially the Jewish ones, thought I was absolutely meshugah for coming out of the conservative closet. However, I saw an extremely successful businessman who, I believed, could take a much-needed new approach to government.

A Jewish Holocaust survivor mother raised me to be an independent thinker, and not necessarily follow all of those Democrat Jewish sheep — which is why I will never be one of those leftist progressive zombies, for whom our previous president could do no wrong. When President Trump makes a serious error, he should be called out on it. Trump's first week in office was a positive reinvention of the presidency.

From pulling out of the Trans Pacific Partnership trade pact to penalizing companies for moving manufacturing out of the country, he is fulfilling his campaign promises to the millions of Americans who voted for him.

But it was International Holocaust Remembrance Day that brought Trump his first major mistake, and it was a serious one. The White House issued a 117-word statement that included, "It is with a heavy heart and somber mind that we remember and honor the victims, survivors, heroes of the Holocaust. It is impossible to fully fathom the depravity and horror inflicted on innocent people by Nazi terror. Together, we will make love and tolerance prevalent throughout the world."

There was no mention of Jews and no mention of anti-Semitism. Can you envision anyone on International Slavery Day at the United Nations not mentioning the pain and torture that blacks lived through in history? Imagine working on a news release in the Oval Office that contained an emphasis on concepts like “in the interest of inclusiveness, we would like to mention all of the various groups that were slaves throughout the centuries. No, blacks own the term ‘slavery,’ just like Jews own the term “Holocaust.” Remember, it is not called “a holocaust,” it is called “the Holocaust,” because it was the greatest evil done to one people in history.

Trump’s misrepresentation of the Holocaust as being a kumbaya moment for all sufferers of history is a moral error of grave proportions. He has paid too much attention to the American left, which has imbibed the Bernie Sanders approach of inclusiveness for all, thus rewriting history.

Amazing that the person who much of Middle America elected to stop this leftist virus has himself gotten infected. Jr

Irwin N. Graulich is a motivational speaker and columnist on ethics, morality, Judaism, religion and politics. He is president of Bloch Graulich Whelan Inc., a marketing, communications and branding company in New York City.
A Whale of a Tale
Thank you for “Hebrews on the High Seas,” Jan. 27. This fascinating article brought together many bits of information that I was aware of with some fascinating new facts. This is one of the best JT articles I’ve ever read. Kudos!

Barry Rubin
Clarksville, Md.

Dirty Business
Regarding “Seasons Next Season?” (Feb. 3), it should be noted that for close to three years, the store’s owners have poked the community in the eye by their inconsiderate allowance of the debris that continues to clutter their frontage. Given that everyone knows that it is, or will be, a kosher establishment, it is an example of chilul HaShem by reinforcing the age-old negative stereotype of “dirty Jews.” I had communicated with

POLL OF THE WEEK:
Are you less excited about Seasons kosher market because of the long delay in its opening?

To vote, visit jewishtimes.com/polls

LAST WEEK’S QUESTION: Do you think the controversy over the White House’s Holocaust Remembrance Day statement, which did not mention Jews, is warranted?

Yes - 69%

No - 31%
their corporate office requesting that they clean up their act to no avail, nor did they have the courtesy to respond. I understand that they have ignored numerous code violations as well.

While there is no question that another kosher food market would be a welcome addition to our area, being a good business neighbor is an essential prerequisite. One wonders that if a corporate entity has such disdain for the community by allowing such a prominent eyesore to exist, how much confidence can one have on their dedication to maintain a clean and healthy facility when it eventually opens.

Arnold Feiner
Pikesville

Fight the Threat
Regarding “Give Trump a Chance” (Jan. 27), I realize that Z. Lois Madow wrote the Your Say letter soon after the presidential inauguration. I hope by now that Madow has seen enough of what a Trump presidency is like and is truly horrified about what is happening in our country. We have many people (immigrants and Muslims, for example) who are now living in fear. Our freedoms are being severely threatened. I ask those who voted for Trump and those who did not vote for Trump — Democrats, Republicans and independents — to stand up to the impending threat to our way of life. We may disagree on policy, but I hope that most of us agree that we need to protect all that makes America the great country it has always been.

Ellen Levin
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Ellen Levin
Columbia
Jenny Katz

Jenny Katz, 29, is a Charm City transplant. She spent the first decade of her life in Gezer, a kibbutz in Israel, before her family moved just outside Princeton, N.J.

After a brief stint at Skidmore College and year off (including a semester at Hebrew University, where she interned with the giraffes at the Biblical Zoo in Jerusalem), Katz finished up at Rutgers University, majoring in animal science with a focus on dairy goats.

Her career as a dairy goat farmer in New Jersey was, however, short-lived. Deciding one night that the dairy goat life was no longer for her, Katz’s boss put all of her 40 pregnant goats up on Craigslist. A South Jersey farmer arrived with a trailer within the hour, and Katz was out of a job.

But all’s well that ends well. She moved to Baltimore at the urging of her then-boyfriend and now works as the head of the community lot team and volunteer coordinator at Baltimore nonprofit Civic Works.

Not many young people go into animal science. What about that interested you?

Why dairy goats?

I think at the time I kind of looked down on any office jobs and just thought working with my hands was the only way. The reason for dairy goats was because in school — Rutgers was a research school — we had this herd of 40 wethers. Do you know what that is?

No ... Wethers are castrated male goats. And, apparently, when you castrate a goat young, they get really sweet, very large and very soft. So you walk into this pen with 40 wethers and they just swarm you for cuddles.

And I just loved making cheese, and I loved farms and the community. I just felt like I was fulfilling something without realizing it. Life on the kibbutz, we had all these animals, and it was a very agrarian lifestyle. And I think I was missing that in New Jersey.

And so when this job [at Civic Works] came along, it just felt like when the world hands you something like, “Hey, you should do this.” And you’re like, “Oh, I don’t know,” but really you do know. It was like that. It just brings me a lot of joy.

You’ve also done fellowships with Jews United for Justice and the Institute for Islamic, Christian and Jewish Studies. It seems like there’s this through-line in your life of both the world as a whole, in justice-related goals, and world as literal earth, dirt.

Oh yeah, I didn’t think of that. There’s some saying of a tree, with the roots in the ground, the branches in the heavens and trunk in the here and now. Like, be in all three places at once, as much as you can. And that’s always resonated with me.

I think that the Jewish groups I have been involved with are not just Jewish. They have a Jewish lens, but their focus is to help others. A pivotal part of my Jewish identity is how can we be allies and supporters and collaborators to other groups that are suffering too.

How has growing up in Israel informed your life here?

Obviously it’s informed me in a literal way in wanting to connect to the land. I mean, I didn’t wear shoes for like the first 10 years of my life, and there’s always part of me that craves that connection and strong sense of community.

But also, I think, coming to the states as a little Israeli kid with a weak grasp of English and being thrust into Hebrew school — there’s a culture in American Jewry and I never quite felt like I belonged in it. And I think that helps me to find compassion for people who are not like-minded.

Do you have any big projects coming up at Civic Works?

We’re doing a big project at 21st 1/2 Street in Barclay. This site in particular is a pretty rough space. A few of the residents there adopted it with help from Civic Works and Strong City Baltimore and in partnership with The Park School.

It’s been just a great practice in collaboration and that’s like my favorite part of my job. So, on April 4, we’re having Park School out there, and we’re getting shovels in the ground.

What do you like to do when you’re not civic working?

I’m a member of two boards: Friends of Stony Run and the City Forestry Board. I live right on Stony Run. I bought a house in the spring, and it backs up to the stream, which, to me, is one of the city’s greatest assets. I’d say that’s one of my biggest hobbies. I like to make beautiful spaces. The city is just ripe for beautification and greening. And I love it.
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Gordon Center to Feature Dance in ‘Take a Leap’ Month

February is dance month at the Gordon Center for Performing Arts for the fourth year running, and first up is a performance by Ariel Rivka Dance on Feb. 12.

The Gordon Center is partnering with the Baltimore County Commission on Arts and Sciences for this year’s “Take a Leap Baltimore County Dance Celebration,” happening throughout this month (and a little into March).

That first performance will be followed by the Peking Acrobats on Feb. 19, the Philadelphia Dance Company on Feb. 25 and the Baltimore Dance Invitational on Feb. 26 and topped off with Steppin’ at the Junction March 18.

The series is becoming more and more popular each year, said Randi Benesch, managing director for arts and culture at the JCC. It also has an educational component. Dancers from the Philadelphia Dance Company conducted an intensive workshop with advanced dancers at Towson University who will be performing with the company in the first dance of its Baltimore performance. Additionally, the company will come to Baltimore a few days ahead of time and visit schools and give lectures and demonstrations in the county.

People can view dance as a more esoteric dance form, which can make it harder to market — people don’t want to feel like they won’t understand, Benesch said. That’s why she worked specifically to choose performances she felt would be accessible and lovely.

“We didn’t want it to be so cerebral,” she went on to say. “We want people to just be in the audience and see the beauty and movement of the bodies.”

Ariel Grossman, choreographer and artistic director for Ariel Rivka Dance agreed. She said they worked hard to make their performance for all ages and entertaining for everyone.

“[The dancers] are all really dynamic and beautiful to watch,” she said, “but [the show] is also beautiful to listen to. Even if people aren’t going to connect or understand what’s happening, they’re still going to see something they enjoy.”

— Hannah Monicken
C-Rye-Baby at the Senator

Union Craft Brewing, Clark Burger and the Senator Theatre are teaming up for a revival screening of John Waters' immortal modern classic "Cry-Baby" on Thursday, Feb. 16 at 8 p.m. The event is set as a kick-off celebration for the release of Union's winter seasonal Rye-Baby IPA that will be available in a can for the first time.

The beer will be for sale at the screening at which patrons can also buy food from Clark Burger that will likely have appropriately themed specials still being mulled over by co-owner James Clark.

To further cement the connection between Rye-Baby IPA and "Cry-Baby," Union chose label artwork that represents an homage to Waters' signature camp send-up of 1950s-era teen films.

"Each one of our beers typically instills some sort of emotion or concept about Baltimore and the Baltimore public," said Union co-owner Adam Benesch. "For [Rye-Baby IPA], we wanted to pay tribute to John Waters as a Baltimorean and, more specifically, Johnny Depp’s [eponymous] character."

As the popularity of the previously seasonal/draft-only Rye-Baby and its spicy, piney mix of malt rye and citrusy hops grew, Benesch decided to release the IPA in a larger batch and in cans around the end of 2016. The upcoming "Cry-Baby" screening at the Senator will be a kind of official party for this latest incarnation of the beer.

Clark is equally enthused with his restaurant's regularly partnering with Union at past events such as a recent spoken-word night at the Senator.

"We share a lot of their values," Clark said. "They’re definitely motivated, as we are, to do these community events. We really enjoy promoting a local operation like this."

Clark also looks forward to finally seeing "Cry-Baby" on the big screen.

"I’m definitely a fan," Benesch said of Waters' nostalgic 1990 musical comedy. "I remember when 'Cry-Baby' was being filmed at my school [Franklin Middle School], and we had to have our class schedule adjusted because of it.

"That’s a fun tie to it all!"

— Mathew Klickstein

Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month

February is Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month, and numerous area organizations are offering various ways to become engaged.

Local events over the course of the month include the CJF and JCC partnering for an inclusive, kid-friendly story time session at J’Town on Feb. 14 and a screening of "No Ordinary Hero: The SuperDeafy Movie" at the Weinberg Park Heights JCC on Tuesday, Feb. 28.

On Saturday, Feb. 11, Congregation Beth El of Montgomery County will host Justice Richard Bernstein, who will present the D'var Torah for the morning's Shabbat Service.

Voted to the Michigan Supreme Court in 2014, Bernstein is blind and travels around the country speaking at various venues about issues pertaining to inclusion such as the unfortunate dearth of employment access for those with special needs.

The inclusive Shabbat will be followed by a similarly themed Havdalah service and Tu B’Shvat celebration kicking off at 6:30 p.m.

"We’re really passionate that everyone who comes to the JCC, if they have a disability or not, is able to participate in everything we have to offer," said Sara Rubinstein, special needs program director at the JCC of Greater Baltimore. "If we’re not welcoming people with disabilities, we’re not being welcoming to the community as a whole."

— Mathew Klickstein
ADVOCACY DAY AMPLIFIES JEWISH VOICES IN ANNAPOLIS

By Justin Silberman | Photos by David Stuck

Jonathan Allen and Ari Schneider normally plan their own lobbying trips to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. But on Tuesday night, the pair of University of Maryland, College Park sophomores decided to shake things up and head to Annapolis.

Allen, 19, and Schneider, 20, the president of and vice president, respectively, of Terps for Israel, joined about 200 people from the Baltimore and Washington, D.C., Jewish communities for Advocacy Day, which was hosted by the Baltimore Jewish Council and Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC).

“While we have met with members of Congress before, I saw a lot more state delegates and senators walking around very casually,” said Allen, an American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) campus activist. “It was very easy to speak with them just about any issues or topics that are relevant in what’s going around the state.”

The group spent the evening meeting with leaders of the General Assembly from Baltimore City, Baltimore, Howard and Montgomery counties to discuss a host of subjects important to the Jewish communities of Baltimore and Washington.

These included the state’s efforts to divest itself from companies that support the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel, whether Maryland companies should offer earned sick and safe leave to their workers and budget items the community would like to see funded.

Del. Benjamin Kramer, a Democrat who represents District 19 in Montgomery County, said he was pleased to see so many active residents taking an interest in an anti-BDS bill he is the sponsoring.

The bill would prevent the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System from investing in any companies that participate in the BDS movement and also prohibits companies that support BDS from securing state procurement contracts.

“There is a lot of support in the community for this anti-BDS bill, but it is important for my colleagues to hear that. I think we saw that here tonight, so it is important that we have such a strong presence here,” said Kramer, who added he has attended every Advocacy Day since his first full year in the House of Delegates in 2007. I am hoping a lot of folks here leave energized to take up the initiative and get the message out there.”

In addition to pushing for an issue or project, many people used Advocacy Day as a chance to network and foster meaningful relationships with local leaders beyond just politics.

“Just being here, living in our Democratic system in ways that it should be experienced, is essential for America,” said Nina Beth Cardin, 63, a community rabbi and Baltimore native. “I’m afraid with all that is happening that we are losing the fundamental fabric of Democracy that keeps us strong. Democracy is not a spectator sport, but it’s a participant activity.”

Linda Hurwitz, 59, a Baltimore native and chairwoman of The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, said she feels confident Jewish legislators are committed to working on behalf of the community. She feels the face time cognizant residents such as herself and legislators get to have at Advocacy Day goes a long way toward accomplishing just that.
Among the issues Hurwitz hopes pan out are the BJC’s budget requests for $75,000 for its elder abuse program and for $350,000 in aging-in-place funding for Holocaust survivors.

“To put a face [to the name] and show a sense of passion with personal opinions means so much more than a one-dimensional piece of paper,” said Hurwitz, who has attended Advocacy Day three times. “I believe it is multifaceted when people come and share not only their passions, but their support of something that speaks to them.

“My concerns with everyone are from cradle to grave. We take care of every Jew.”

Sarah Mersky, director of government relations at the BJC, said this year’s Advocacy Day is one of the most noteworthy she has been involved with.

Those who attended Tuesday also had the chance to listen to remarks from Baltimore County Executive Kevin Kamenetz, Sen. Bobby Zirkin (D-District 11) and Kramer during a dinner reception in the Senate Office Building.

“It really is up to our community to make sure they are reaching out to their elected officials, which I think is one of the most important parts of this,” Mersky said.

Ron Halber, executive director of the JCRC, said he was also encouraged by the events of the evening.

“This was a very positive day,” Halber said. “There was strong support on almost wall-to-wall issues for all of our issues.”

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$15 Minimum Wage Bill Introduced in City Council

FOR THE SECOND straight year, Baltimore City Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke is making a concerted effort to incrementally raise the city’s minimum wage over the next few years.

Clarke, a Democrat who represents the 14th District, introduced a bill on Monday that would pave the way for low-wage employees 21 and older at businesses with more than 50 employees to earn $15 per hour by 2022. It would also call for businesses with fewer than 50 employees to do the same by 2026, increasing hourly wages for their lowest-paid workers by 60 cents annually to reach the $15 mark.

The increase would not apply to tipped workers, who earn $3.63 per hour.

Clarke, the bill’s lead sponsor, said the legislation has 10 co-sponsors and is fully backed by City Council President Bernard C. “Jack” Young.

“Baltimore cannot rest until the majority population who works, lives and has endured here is empowered to share fairly in the progress their work has been essential in helping the city achieve,” Clarke said.

The city will follow the state’s minimum wage schedule until 2018, affording all employers a year-and-a-half to prepare for the wage increases. Current minimum wage in Maryland is $8.75 and is set to rise to $10.10 by July 2018.

Last year, a similar piece of legislation sponsored by Clarke fell short after meticulous rounds of revisions and debate.

Young, who was one of the most outspoken critics of last year’s bill, said this year’s version is a “compromise” to Clarke’s previous efforts.

“This is a compromise I feel comfortable with. I wish we could have gotten this done the last go-around,” Young said. “I really do. A lot of people thought I was against $15. I’ve never been against it, but I felt Baltimore shouldn’t be the hole in the doughnut. I was willing to say, ‘Hey, if [the state] wants us to be leading the state, then we will lead them.’”

Like the previous bill, the current bill has created contentious debate in the working community.

Donald C. Fry, president and CEO of the Greater Baltimore Committee, said in a prepared statement that the legislation would make Baltimore an “island” city surrounded by other jurisdictions that have no plans to raise the minimum wage.

“If passed, this bill would place Baltimore City at a serious competitive disadvantage,” Fry said. “It has the potential to result in job losses and businesses leaving the city.”

He noted testimony presented to the council last year from more than 30 business owners, employees, disability service providers and others who argued a $15 minimum wage would hurt their businesses and limit job creation.

But low-wage workers and advocate groups — such as 32BJ Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the largest property services union in the country — argue that people living and working in the city can’t survive on the current minimum wage.

Frances Smith, 61, who lives in West Baltimore and is a member of the Baltimore 32BJ SEIU chapter, works as a housekeeper at 100 E. Pratt St. and earns $13.20 per hour.

Smith said an additional $1.80 per hour “would go a long way” toward helping her current living situation.

“My in an abandoned neighborhood, taking care of my grandson, and I want to be able to move,” Smith said. “I can’t afford to move out right now, but if I got the $15 minimum wage, then maybe I could afford to get out. It’s tough to make it and pay my bills on what I’m bringing in now.”

Cohen, a Democrat who represents the 1st District, said he will continue to listen to the opinions of his constituents as the bill moves forward.

“This is a challenging vote for me in my district,” Cohen said. “We do not take this lightly. This is a serious responsibility, and we fully understand that.”

Despite strong support for the bill, there are some councilmembers who have yet to say if they back it.

Councilman Isaac “Yitzy” Schleifer, a Democrat who represents the 5th District, through a text message declined to comment, saying, “I’m sure there will be many opportunities to discuss this in the coming months.”

A council committee is scheduled to hold a public hearing for the legislation on March 1.

The bill needs a simple majority of eight votes to pass in the council, but it would need 12 to override a mayoral veto.

Mayor Catherine Pugh has yet to say whether she would sign the bill into law if it passes a council vote. She told the JT last week she prefers to see minimum wage regulations discussed at the state or regional level.

Clarke said her legislation would affect roughly 98,000 workers, or about 27 percent of Baltimore’s workforce.

She joined supporters in Annapolis on Tuesday to urge General Assembly legislators to defeat a bill that would prevent the city and other jurisdictions from setting their own minimum wage laws.

A hearing for that bill, sponsored by chairman of the Economic Matters Committee Del. Derrick Leon Davis (D-District 25), is scheduled for Tuesday.

“Cities are leading all over the nation … in terms of taking action and coming together to take care of one another,” Clarke said. “That’s what people say we need to do in this environment, and that’s what we plan to do with in this Baltimore City Council.”
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Film Screening at the Jewish Museum of Maryland
Sunday, February 12 at 1:00 p.m.
Included with Museum Admission

Film director Irene Orleansky joins us virtually for a Q&A after the screening.
For more info head to our website jewishmuseummd.org

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Concerned parents, students and Baltimore City Council members gathered at Frederick Douglass High School on Feb. 2 for a bake sale to raise funds for students affected by changes the Maryland Transit Administration and Baltimore City Public Schools made to the bus schedule that cut the evening hours students can ride for free by two hours.

The problematic decision has caused numerous issues for students and parents alike across the city. Many students are now being force to choose between their after-school programs and a safe trip home on the bus. Meanwhile, parents are put in the compromising predicament of finding a way to get their children home when buses are inaccessible to students or hindering their child’s academic and extracurricular activities.

City officials are looking for the MTA to pay back the $200,000 the school system paid to cover the rides.

“Years ago, we negotiated with the MTA and the school system to extend the [student pass] hours to 8 p.m. — we won that battle. We have built programs around the fact that our kids have extended bus passes during the week… Now all of a sudden, it got taken away.”

— Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke (D-District 14)
stay. Now all of a sudden, it got taken away,” said Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke (D-District 14). “We just want what we already won for our children. The whole issue of public transportation is tied right into opportunity, whether it is for jobs or your choice of education. If you’re for education, you must be for accessible transportation.”

The bake sale took about three months of planning. According to Councilman Zeke Cohen’s office, 38 bakers from across the city volunteered their services to raise money and awareness for the issue. The current goal is to raise $97,200 by the end of February, and the bake sale, which was broadcast live via Facebook, served to direct people to the GoFundMe page for the campaign, which can be visited at bit.ly/2lfQc3X.

City residents are also upset after a recent article in the Baltimore Sun reported that Baltimore Ravens quarterback Joe Flacco was paid $45,000 to pose for a promotional picture to be displayed on the sides of five MTA buses.

“This is almost half of what we need now to get our kids on the bus,” said Shantay Guy, a parent from the 8th District who spoke at the event. “Why is it OK to drop that money to pay a millionaire, or anyone for that matter, $45,000 to pose on MTA buses that won’t let our kids stay on until 8?”

“Even before we took away the 6 to 8 p.m. ridership, school transportation was encumbering,” said Councilman Ryan Dorsey (D-District 3). “Students were already having a hard time. Based on school choice, students have to travel far distances just to get to a decent school. We have been divesting from community schools and the whole model of schools as the center of community for decades in Baltimore city, contributing to the hyper-segregation of our schools. An opportunity only exists if you can get to it. We can’t talk about providing opportunities to better pathways to the future if we are standing in the way of students being able to get to those opportunities.”

Councilman Leon Pinkett (D-District 7) addresses those concerned with the city’s bus changes.

February is Chocolate Tasting Month

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National News »

Top Chabad Court: D.C. is Shemtov’s Exclusive Domain

By George Altshuler

The Central Committee of Chabad-Lubavitch Rabbis has declared that the movement's activities in Washington fall entirely under the authority of Rabbi Levi Shemtov, settling a longstanding feud between the District of Columbia rabbi and Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan, who oversees Chabad programs in Maryland.

In its decision, the three-person beit din, or rabbinical court, ruled completely against the Baltimore-based Kaplan, who initiated the suit to seek authority for himself or his subordinates to operate on Washington's college campuses, with Jewish young professionals and in downtown Washington.

Shemtov "is considered the regional director of the city, and every activity that is done in Washington must be with his agreement and confirmed consent," the ruling said in Hebrew. Both Shemtov and Kaplan signed the ruling, which was issued by Rabbis Gedalia Oberlander, Chaim Yehuda Rabinovitch and Binyamin Kuperman.

Shemtov has operated in Washington for close to 25 years and runs the Washington office of the American Friends of Lubavitch (Chabad). Both Shemtov and Kaplan did not respond to requests for comment.

While Shemtov has long been regarded as the movement’s liaison to the U.S. government and Jewish officials in the District — among other things, Shemtov has regularly koshered the kitchen of the White House for the president’s annual
Chanukah party — Shemtov and Kaplan have repeatedly butted heads over who has the authority to operate in Washington in the area of community concerns. Most recently, their dispute came to a head in July over a controversy about whether Rabbi Yudi Steiner, who was terminated by Shemtov but then began working under Kaplan’s authority, could operate a kosher food truck in Washington.

“Rabbi Kaplan has not had, does not have and will never have the authority he is apparently claiming over Washington, D.C.,” Shemtov told Washington Jewish Week in July. “For Rabbi Kaplan to insinuate that anything has changed in Washington, absent any din Torah and halachic ruling to the contrary, is reprehensible.”

In 2014, Shemtov took Steiner to District of Columbia Superior Court to implement a previous rabbinic ruling that Steiner could no longer operate Chabad activities on the George Washington University campus. The civil court ruled in favor of Shemtov.

The latest rabbinical court ruling, issued on Jan. 17, was based on the decision of the late Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, to give Philadelphia-based Rabbi Abraham Shemtov, Levi Shemtov’s father, responsibility for representing Chabad in the White House and on Capitol Hill. Today, the elder Shemtov is chairman of Agudas Chasidei Chabad, the movement’s umbrella organization.

In the formal complaint Kaplan submitted to the beit din, he argued that the Shemtovs should represent Chabad on all political matters in Washington but that he should be responsible for programming relating to the Jewish community in the city. However, the beit din rejected Kaplan’s claim, saying that the Shemtovs’ mandate applied to both political representation and local programming. The ruling also states that Kaplan maintains authority over Chabad activities in Maryland, a point that had not been disputed by Shemtov.

In the last month, the website of Jewish Colonials Chabad, the George Washington University group that Steiner has been operating in contravention of Shemtov’s wishes and in apparent violation of the Superior Court order, removed language indicating that it was under the supervision of Chabad of Maryland.

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— Rabbi Levi Shemtov
Laws from Morhaim Take New Approach on Drug Addiction

By Hannah Monicken

DEL. DAN MORHAIM (D-District 11), along with numerous co-sponsors, introduced three bills Jan. 27 that take a radical approach in addressing drug addiction in the state.

One bill seeks to decriminalize small amounts of controlled substances, as the state already has done for marijuana, and takes a three-strikes approach. Those stopped for first and second possession offenses will instead be fined and, where applicable, be referred to a treatment facility. The third offense will put the offender in the criminal justice system.

The second bill requires hospital emergency departments to have an addiction counselor available for those coming in with drug-related injuries. Patients in need of treatment would be evaluated and then admitted or referred to an outpatient setting.

"If you come to the ED with appendicitis, I would set up surgery and admit you," Morhaim, a longtime emergency medicine physician, said. "If you came in with a cardiac issue, I would find a cardiologist and admit you. If you come in with addiction, you sign a sheet and we let you go."

The third, and probably most controversial, bill would set up safe drug consumption facilities in the state. These facilities would help addicts shoot up safely and develop relationships within the community, with the hope that a large portion of them eventually seek treatment.

"They really target the most marginalized groups of people," said Lindsay LaSalle, the senior staff attorney at Drug Policy Alliance, a California-based group with which Morhaim consulted on the legislation, along with other local experts. "Safe consumption allows you to meet them where they are."

The sites would be staffed by health professionals and offer a clean, safe environment for those addicted to get their fix without resorting to crime or trying to use back alleys or bathrooms of local businesses, Morhaim said.

The sites have not been implemented anywhere in the
U.S. yet, although Seattle has recently voted to go ahead with the program as part of its opioid epidemic task force recommendations. A handful of other states, such as New York, Massachusetts, Vermont and California, have seen similar bills introduced, or bills are about to be introduced, LaSalle said. A number of countries — Canada, Australia, Spain and Germany, among others — have facilities like these.

The war on drugs isn’t working, Morhaim said. It’s time for a different approach, or at least several approaches.

“The public likes to have silver bullets, one size fits all,” he said. “Well, it’s more nuanced that that.”

Morhaim actually introduced these bills last session with just one other co-sponsor. Though LaSalle said advocates are buckled in for a multiyear fight, they’re heartened by the exponential uptick in interest and support.

And yet both Morhaim and LaSalle know already what some of the arguments against will be: that the sites would be encouraging drug use and bring crime to the neighborhoods that house them.

“They get people into an area where they have a chance for therapeutic connection, and that’s the advantage,” Morhaim said. “What it’s recognizing is reality.”

Research seems to be on his side. Studies of the first North American site in Vancouver, Canada, for instance, found no increase in crime, a decrease in public injecting and loose syringes and increase in the use of detox or addiction treatment among patients.

Baltimore City Police spokesman T.J. Smith said the department hasn’t taken a stance on these bills at this time, but this week the department took its own steps in addressing addiction that indicate a shift in approach similar to Morhaim’s. The three-year pilot Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program, or LEAD, will take some of those stopped for low-level drug and prostitution offenses and divert them into social services or treatment programs. It is the same program Seattle had implemented prior to the city’s recent move to set up safe drug consumption sites.

Morhaim emphasized that of course he’s against drug use, but the old ways of combating drug addiction aren’t working. It’s time for new thinking, he said.

“The numbers speak for themselves, and I think that’s what’s important,” he added. “I’ve been in office long enough that things that seem radical at the time become accepted.”

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Hopkins President Shares Family Refugee Story in Letter Opposing Immigration Ban

By Hannah Monicken

The executive order signed by President Donald Trump on Jan. 27, which implemented a 120-day travel ban from seven majority Muslim countries, sparked numerous protests (including at Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport) and legal challenges.

One such challenge resulted in a nationwide hold on the ban by a federal judge last week. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals heard the Trump administration’s appeal this week, and it seems likely that the case could end up at the Supreme Court.

Local colleges and universities, like their counterparts across the country, are also making their displeasure known and, in the case of Johns Hopkins University, doing so through one personal refugee story.

Hopkins president Ronald Daniels wrote a long letter distributed across the university Feb. 1, detailing not only the university’s dedication to “openness, freedom of ideas, opportunity for the many, not the few,” but also the story of his father, a Polish immigrant to Canada in 1939.

“Though many years have passed since my father, his two siblings and his parents found safe harbor in Canada, the story of their odyssey is vivid and enduring for me,” Daniels wrote. "In March 1939, my father, then 7 years old, and his family came to Canada as Jewish refugees from Poland, only months before Hitler invaded the country and unleashed his Final Solution on six million European Jews.”

Daniels goes on to say that both the remaining of his father’s family in Europe and his wife’s family were “destroyed.” According to the letter, Daniels became a U.S. citizen about a year ago, proud “to associate myself with its historic standing as a place that has given succor and opportunity to the ‘huddled masses yearning to breathe free.’”

The letter ends with Daniels saying Hopkins “will strongly support the members of our community who need our direct assistance in the days and months ahead. …To do less is to sacrifice the futures not only of countless individuals, but of our nation and its great institutions.”

Hopkins also dissuades any faculty or students who could be affected from traveling, as does the University System of Maryland, which includes institutions such as the University of Maryland and Towson University.

“The University System of Maryland community reaffirms its deep commitment to diversity and inclusion,” USM chancellor Robert Caret wrote in a statement. “…We are steadfastly committed to assisting them, as we are committed to all those who are marginalized.

In this moment, I also encourage each of you to keep in mind how deeply we, as a university community, cherish the ideals of diversity, equity and inclusion.”

Hannah Monicken

Hannah Monicken @ midatlanticmedia.com
Love him or hate him, 
Trump has put his presidency 
on the firing line
By Justin Silberman

The Great
DIVIDE
Ben Silverberg, 32, an Owings Mills native who is Orthodox and grew up a staunch Democrat in Baltimore City. “I wouldn’t have called myself a Trump backer at first, but as he started to emerge, what he was saying really started to click.”

“It became easier to support Trump as I heard him talk and listened to his message of what he wanted for the people of America,” said Salganik a 76-year-old Edgemere resident who is Orthodox and grew up a registered Republican who refers to himself as an “independent,” said he was drawn to Trump because he is someone “with a strong work ethic who gets things done.”

“With a strong work ethic who gets things done,” said he was drawn to Trump because he is someone “with a strong work ethic who gets things done.”

“In his first three weeks as president, Trump, at 70, the oldest elected president, took steps to deliver on many of his signature campaign promises. He signed executive orders aimed at building a wall along the Mexico border, stopping the flow of Syrian refugees into the country and banning immigrants from seven Muslim countries, and he announced his selection of Judge Neil Gorsuch to fill the vacant seat on the U.S. Supreme Court.

As a result of these actions, the reality of Trump’s presidency has led to a great rift in the Jewish community across the denominational spectrum, provoking both fear and hope. There are a number of differences taking place along normal political lines, which have grown more noticeable as the country has become more partisan.

Ruth Goetz, an Orthodox Pikesville resident and registered Republican, believes Trump is carrying out precisely the plans he vowed he would to prioritize U.S. national interests over those of foreign countries. Only in politics, Goetz confidently pronounced, would a politician “keeping his promises be so shocking.”

“Our only obligation is to the American citizen,” said Goetz, a Trump supporter. “It’s what’s best for our country. I need to feel safe on my daily routine and for my family to feel safe. It doesn’t say in the constitution that we have to let everybody into our country who wants to come in. Those people can go to other places, because we don’t have any obligation to them.”

In many primarily Orthodox sections of Pikesville, excitement for Trump is robust. At Pikesville High School on Smith Avenue, a polling place with a large number of Orthodox Jews, voters went for Trump by a margin of 51 percent to 40 percent for Democrat Hillary Clinton.

However, as with some Trump rhetoric, the president’s staunch “America First” message, which he proudly delivered during his inauguration speech, has made others uncomfortable and rubbed them the wrong way.

Ruth Goldstein, 64, a registered Democrat from Pikesville who is Reform, is worried about how civil liberties for minorities around the country could be challenged under the Trump administration. Much of that fear stems from Trump’s elevation of chief strategist Stephen Bannon, former executive chairman of alt-right Breitbart News, to the National Security Council, describing Bannon as “racist, homophobic, xenophobic [and] misogynistic.”

“The fact that [Trump] has practically put Bannon in the Oval Office is terrifying to me,” Goldstein said. “Any pious Jew who purports to be observant is a hypocrite if they can support Trump, who has embraced this white supremacist.”

Calls from state Democratic leaders for Republican Gov. Larry Hogan to speak out against recent actions of the Trump Administration have gone widely unnoticed.

In response, General Assembly Democrats introduced legislation late last month that would protect Marylanders’ rights against potentially “negative actions” from Trump and...
the federal government.

One of the measures in the five-bill package, the Maryland Act of 2017, would grant Maryland Democratic Attorney General Brian E. Frosh the power to take legal action against the federal government without permission from Hogan or the General Assembly. Frosh and 15 other attorneys general filed an amicus brief on Monday in support of the federal lawsuit against Trump’s executive order on immigration.

Rayna Verstandig, 20, a registered Republican from Pikesville who is Conservative and a sophomore at Tulane University, said such a measure, if passed, would do more to add to the political discourse between Democrats and Republicans in Maryland.

“In my opinion, the Democratic opposition that has occurred just in the first weeks of this presidency is counterproductive to persuading the voters they lost in November,” said Verstandig, who added she voted for Trump.

Verstandig said she’s able to have civil political discourse with those whose views differ from hers and hopes others can do the same in the coming years. She also feels the nation is shifting toward “making political correctness a higher priority than national security,” a trend she said she finds particularly “troubling.”

“Everyone is entitled to their opinion, and I think that a vital component to a well-functioning society is the ability to have constructive conversations and respectful, open debate,” Verstandig said. “However, the political atmosphere has become so divided that many individuals are not capable or willing to engage in a dialogue that would justify an opposing view. The Republicans and the Trump administration are not innocent in creating controversy.”

**IMMIGRANTS AND THE ECONOMY**

On International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Jan. 27, Trump made headlines when he issued a statement in which he called to “make love and tolerance prevalent throughout the world” but failed to mention Jews or anti-Semitism.

It also marked the same day he followed through with an executive order banning all people from seven countries — Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Yemen and Somalia — from entering the U.S. for 90 days.

“If a sizable fraction of the Jewish population and community in the country begin to oppose Trump, then he will do toward them what he’s done toward everyone else who has opposed him,” said Donald Norris, director of University of Maryland, Baltimore County’s School of Public Policy. “He will belittle, bully, berate and, ultimately, take action to shut them down.”

Mandee Heinl, 26, a registered Democrat from Pikesville who is Reform, said she’s concerned Trump could follow through with his plans to deport illegal immigrants. She also fears he will set back women’s rights.

“I think we have an administration that has an idea of what America and Americans should look like and what they should believe,” said Heinl, who added her ancestors had to change their last name from Silberberg to Simmons after World War II to escape
anti-Semitism. “I think they will target anyone who doesn’t fit that mold, and that is a very scary thought. When you have an administration that you feel isn’t capable of making fair and just decisions, it’s terrifying to think about.”

Garrett Sawyer, 26, a Reisterstown native now living in Greenville, S.C., who is Reform, believes illegal immigration at the southern border is a problem. But one of means by which Trump plans to go about funding the project — enforcing a 20 percent tariff on goods imported to the U.S. from Mexico — is not an ideal to proceed with the project, he said. “Personally, I think there are more financially feasible ways to protect our southern border, stiffening penalties for undocumented workers and providing jobs for Americans are inseparably linked. “Trump is doing the things that are going to try and help the American people,” Kaplan said. “He’s doing it without regard to what big corporations may want. The corporations still have an interest in shipping jobs overseas and doing things to benefit themselves while continuing to financially hurt 99 percent of the country.”

Salganik’s wife, Linda, 69, who is from Baltimore and Orthodox, voted for Trump, who she views will end bad economic deals and remove government restrictions.

She said Trump’s business acumen will play a critical role in helping reduce the national deficit of nearly $20 trillion, which she feels reflect years of stagnant economic growth, failed trade agreements and reckless spending. “Our country is in serious, serious trouble financially,” Linda Salganik said. “These politicians just print money, print money and print money. Sooner or later, we’re going to be even more trouble. I don’t think a lot of these young kids who follow what the movie stars or celebrities or rock ’n’ rollers say negatively about Trump really understand this country could go down the tubes real fast.”

RESPECT FOR GORSUCH
One thing some Trump supporters and detractors appear to have in common is a respect for the credentials his Supreme Court nominee, Gorsuch, would bring to the vacancy on the bench left by Antonin Scalia’s death. By most accounts, Gorsuch is a widely acclaimed jurist, held in high esteem by both conservatives and libertarians but also respected by liberals. Gorsuch boasts an Ivy League pedigree — he earned degrees from Columbia University and Harvard Law School, as well as Oxford University — and has served as a justice on the Denver-based 10th Circuit
Court of Appeals since 2006. While Heinl does not agree with how Gorsuch has ruled in the past in cases involving women’s and workers’ rights, she said Democrats should look at his qualifications rather than his political ties.

“I respect his background, his education and his professional history, all of which qualifies him for the job,” Heinl said of Gorsuch. “I mean, I hate his stances and his rulings on certain things, but he’s qualified nonetheless. So, really, if the Democrats try and block this, then how is it any different than the Republicans blocking [former President Barack] Obama’s nomination of [Merrick Garland]?”

Gorsuch’s legal background, which consists of time in both the public and private law, “make him a valuable asset to the bench,” said Bernie Salganik, who holds a law degree from the University of Maryland School of Law. Salganik added: “You don’t go to Oxford if you’re the village idiot. The people on the other side of the aisle need to let him come in and do the job he was rightfully picked to do by President Trump.”

LOOKING AHEAD

While Trump won the presidency with an unorthodox approach, he faces a long road in mending the current political atmosphere, according to experts.

Mentioning the fallout from the contentious campaign season, Norris said it would take time to mend the divisions but wondered just how long it would take for things to get back to “business as usual.” Norris added the number of demonstrators who have taken to the streets to protest Trump in waves have not reached such levels since the Vietnam War.

“The difficultly with what’s going on is that can it be sustained over six months, one year or four years? There has to be a matter of constant organization,” Norris said. “One march [Women’s March on Washington] won’t do it. The folks who marched in Washington, men and women, and in other cities around the country are going to have to keep mobilizing.”

Heinl was among the estimated 500,000-plus people who took part in the Women’s March and is actively involved in promoting similar causes on social media. She plans to combat Trump’s divisiveness by supporting nonprofit organizations that might be threatened by the new administration.

“Each decision [Trump] is making is more concerning than the one before,” Heinl said. “We have to be on guard.”

Sawyer, meanwhile, said it is up to all to press Trump to follow through on changes that benefit everyone and that it is time to accept him as president.

“At the end of the day, there are lessons to be learned. We need to engage in political discussion, and we need to see and appreciate opposing viewpoints,” Sawyer said. “We need to be honest with our friends, families, business interests and ourselves. The best thing we can do is embrace the idea of balance and diversity.”

Salganik said, “like all presidents,” he expects Trump to have his missteps here and there but that “he will do the job the American people elected him to do.”

—jsilberman@midatlanticmedia.com

Art by Ebony Brown; Photos provided

Demonstrators pack the National Mall during the Women’s March on Washington last month.
Sunday 12
‘The Book of Esther’
Ariel Rivka Dance’s “The Book of Esther” investigates the biblical stories of Queen Vashti and Queen Esther, epitomizing the Jewish traditions of community, collaboration and support. 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Tickets range from $11 to $23. 3506 Gwynnbrook Ave., Owings Mills. Contact 410-356-7469.

Monday 13
ASL Meetup
American Sign Language (ASL) users schmooze with friends, practice sign language and play some fun Jewish learning games. 6 p.m. Free. 5700 Park Heights Ave., Baltimore. Contact Rachel Turniansky at rturniansky@cjebaltimore.org.

Tuesday 14
Storytime at J Town
J Town hosts story time and kid-friendly activities centered around PJ Library’s “Estie the Mensch,” a picture book that teaches young children to be kind to everyone. 10:30 a.m. Free. 5700 Park Heights Ave., Baltimore. Contact 410-500-5900.

Wednesday 15
Pikesville Friends Speaker Series

Thursday 16
Memory Café
The Atrium Village hosts Memory Café, a relaxed safe place where people with early-stage memory loss, their family and friends and health care professionals come together for education and social interaction. Free. RSVP required.

Friday 17
Shabbat with Shir Chadash
Bolton Street Synagogue hosts a Shabbat service with Shir Chadash. 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. 212 W. Cold Spring Lane, Baltimore. Contact 410-235-5354.

Saturday 18
BHC Pride Dinner
Join Baltimore Hebrew Congregation for dinner at Arlon’s Carry Out after its Shabbat service. 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. 706 Reisterstown Road, Pikesville. Contact 410-764-1587.

Sunday 19 >> The Peking Acrobatsthe Peking Acrobats, a troupe of Chinese tumblers, contortionists, jugglers, cyclists and gymnasts, perform daring acrobatic maneuvers with displays of contortion and flexibility. Gordon Center for Performing Arts. 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Tickets range from $16 to $30. 3506 Gwynnbrook Ave, Owings Mills. Contact 410-356-7469.
GO PALEO! or GO HOME

By Daniel Nozick

CARA ZALLER, a Howard County nutritionist, saw a five-year dream come to fruition with the final production of her board game, Go Paleo! The educational and active game, based on the Paleolithic diet, challenges players to differentiate between health foods and junk, encourages exercise and teaches about the benefits of living a Paleolithic lifestyle.

The diet is based on what those living in the Paleolithic period of the early Stone Age would have eaten. As it was a time before processed foods, the diet eliminates dairy, grains, legumes and most sugars opting for natural foods instead.

“It’s not even about what it eliminates, it’s more about what it does include,” said Zaller. “Paleo is more about getting back to nature — you have to have grown it or killed it. All sources of animal protein, fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds. It’s not just about a diet either, it’s a lifestyle.”

With an M.B.A. in finance and a bachelor’s in math from Emory University, Zaller did not originally aim to be in the field of nutrition. However, as a fitness instructor, many of her students would inquire about her diet, so she decided to get certified as a nutritionist. Even that was not enough — in the time since, Zaller has opened her own nutrition practice and is currently enrolled in the nutrition and integrative health master’s program at the Maryland University of Integrative Health.

Zaller first heard about the paleo diet from a chiropractor, with whom she was giving a joint lecture, who gave her a book about the paleo diet for athletes.

“I read it and was like, ‘Wow, this is totally different than what is taught in conventional nutrition,’ and from that point on, I decided to eat a paleo-style diet,” said Zaller.

Inspiration for the Go Paleo! board game came one night when she was cooking dinner for her children.

“My kids were running around and my older one was saying, ‘Let’s play a tag game, I’m going be vegetables because they will give you power. You guys will be junk food.’ Listening to him speak, I thought that it was an excellent idea for a board game. We could teach how fruits and vegetables and wholesome foods give the body energy and junk foods drain you of energy, so therefore the fruits and vegetables and natural foods will always win,” said Zaller.

The process of creating a board game from scratch was far more arduous than Zaller and her family anticipated. Their first step was to design the game on paper — her eldest son drew it out, and they used printed images they found online. From there, Zaller began to communicate with Parvez Mangalorewala, the co-owner of Wordsmith Enterprises, who agreed to work with Zaller to produce the game. She sent him their handmade copy, and from there, it was a matter of going back and forth to make sure everything was done correctly.

“The whole idea is like Chutes and Ladders with the slides,” explained Zach, Zaller’s oldest son. “Landing on something bad and making you go back and do an activity card, that was my idea. It’s pretty cool, the game is just as I imagined it to
be. I never thought we would make it this far.”

“When we started, it was May 2012,” said Zaller. “We thought that by the end of summer, we would have this game out, but it was just one thing after another.”

Go Paleo! was finally completed two months ago. They had to search databases to see if there was anything remotely like it, trademark the name — copyrights, trademarks and patents all required lawyers. Additionally, communicating overseas to approve every aspect of the game drew the process out.

“The whole journey entailed a lot in terms of layouts, imagery, content and fleshing out the whole game,” said Mangalorewala. “It took about three years to give shape to the final version. Although we did create two prototypes, small things like the wooden dice with food icons instead of dots happened spontaneously during the last stage. However, the entire gameplay and process was well thought out by Cara beforehand, so it was easier and more interesting to develop the board game into a fine piece.”

The back of the game provides a wealth of information regarding the paleo diet, while the instruction manual itself details the rules of the game, tells Zaller’s story and provides resources that go more in depth about the paleo lifestyle. The game board is also durable. Zaller wanted the board and pieces to be able to survive the active play style the game requires.

Initial interest for the board game came from Zaller’s neighbor, Sherry Chen, who is a member of a local board-game meeting group. According to Zaller, she first played the game and when she landed on pasta, she said, “I didn’t know pasta isn’t a health food!”

“Now when I go shopping, I think about Go Paleo! and choose my groceries based on the paleo diet,” said Chen. “I would strongly recommend the game to the community because it is very hard to find a game with the same educational and fitness value. Our modern diet, full of refined foods, trans fats and sugar, is at the root of degenerative diseases such as obesity, cancer, diabetes and heart disease.”

Now that Go Paleo! is finally ready for the public, Zaller’s immediate goal is distribution. David's Natural Market, which has stores in Columbia, Forest Hill and Gambrills, is carrying the game. Many of Zaller’s friends and students from fitness classes have picked up copies of the game as well. Zaller is also looking forward to the game being reviewed in a paleo magazine.

“My next steps are not just the paleo world,” she said. “I am interested in kids’ nutrition, so I have been contacting the different Howard County schools to see about getting one of these games in every elementary school for their health unit where they teach nutrition. What better way to teach than with fun?”
One of three recipients of this year’s Newbery Honor from the Association for Library Service to Children, widely considered to be the most distinguished award in children’s literature, is none other than Adam Gidwitz, a Baltimore native and alumnus of The Park School.

Gidwitz will be honored in a ceremony on June 25 in Chicago for his most recent novel, “The Inquisitor’s Tale: Or, The Three Magical Children and Their Holy Dog.”

Gidwitz, 34, describes the book as “a quest narrative about three kids, each with a miraculous ability. There is a peasant girl with visions of the future, a young monk-in-training with incredible strength and a boy with the power to heal people’s wounds.”

Fantastical elements aside, many of the ideas and events depicted in the novel are drawn from Gidwitz’s real-life experiences. His inspiration came while traveling Europe with his wife, Lauren Mancia, a professor in medieval history, for her research. He explains that coming across incredible stories and pieces of history that he would never have encountered otherwise prompted him to weave a tale based around these untold stories.

Beyond the basic plot, Gidwitz addresses a variety of contemporary issues and wrote the novel from a more analytical standpoint as “an interreligious narrative about a Christian monk, a peasant girl and a Jewish boy, all of whom have very different ideas about faith and ideology, and how they become friends despite their world views.”

The monk is also of African descent, and his mother is a Muslim woman from Spain, said Gidwitz. He wanted the novel to reflect “how we live in a religiously diverse world and deal with the crises that come out of the clash and interaction of these religions.”

This religious theme is apparent throughout the novel. “The first half of the book is about the three kids together being pursued by the church because it doesn’t believe in these miracles and wants to determine whether they are false saints,” said Gidwitz.

However, he did not have a climax for the book until he visited the Jewish Museum in Paris. He and his wife came across a small plaque that explained that the museum had no medieval Jewish manuscripts because in 1242, King Louis IX gathered every Talmud in France and burned them in the center of Paris.

“Reading that plaque felt like being kicked between the legs,” said Gidwitz. “I knew that I had the great problem for my new book.” The second half of the novel tells of how these three children meet and befriend King Louis IX, only to discover that he is planning on burning all of the Talmud, and they decide to stop him.

Dan Paradis, Park’s head of school, believes Gidwitz’s achievement really speaks to the kind of academic culture that the school tries to perpetuate, challenging kids to think in new and innovative ways.

“Coming across incredible stories and pieces of history that he would never have encountered otherwise prompted Gidwitz to weave a tale based around these untold stories.”

Gidwitz returns to the school on April 13 as the Gordon Berman ’68 Memorial Lower School Resident Author.

Part of Gidwitz’s passion for history and religion comes from his Jewish upbringing. He grew up as a member Har Sinai.
Congregation and vowed to continue his religious education after becoming a bar mitzvah. However, he did not want to continue attending Sunday school.

Instead, Gidwitz came to an agreement with his father that he did not have to attend Sunday school on the condition that he read the Bible every Sunday and they would discuss it together, fulfilling his obligation at home instead of in temple. “That became a really important touchstone for my religious education,” he said. “I was learning about this tradition and then turning around and discussing it. I learned to take the moral and religious lessons seriously.”

He also asserted that Park had an incredible influence on him, citing his librarian and fellow Newbery honoree Laura Amy Schlitz as an amazing storyteller and inspiration.

“I would love to believe I’ve been helpful to Adam,” she said. “We grumble together, as writers do — but the work, the ideas, the heart, is 100 percent his. His readers sense his deep respect for them, and that knowledge leads to a special intimacy.”

Schlitz believes that Gidwitz is such a successful author of children’s literature because he is a child at heart. He writes for his readers, rather than for himself.

“The Park School is a place where literature and creativity are highly valued,” said Gidwitz. “Our creations were always valued more highly than the grades we were getting. I was never a writer as a kid,” he continued. “An author came to Park and someone asked, ‘How do you know you’re a good writer?’ And she said, ‘Writers write.’ I remember clearly that day in seventh grade when I decided I wasn’t a writer. But I played a lot, imagined all the time and probably told more fibs than was good for me. Now, I embellish the truth until it seems like a good story.”

Facebook requesting all these interviews and articles. It’s too much for me to handle all at once, so I’m getting to some every day and am writing apologies about why it’s taking so long to respond — that it’s because I’m flooded and it’s nothing personal.”

Barsky was interested in learning to knit for a long time before finally taking it up. It appealed to him because he could make his own clothes with designs of his choosing. However, he encountered a lot of difficulty when he first attempted to learn while studying nursing at the Community College of Baltimore County.

“1999 proved to be a difficult year for Barsky. He started to develop mobility issues that forced him to drop out of his nursing program in the middle of the semester. He was left trying to figure out what to do next with his life. A post on the website Imgur, self-described as “the best place to share and enjoy the most awesome images on the internet,” went viral the first weekend January.

“I looked at my Facebook page and had over 100 friend requests all at once,” the Baltimore resident said. “Some mystery person found out about my sweaters and posted about them on a site that I had never heard of without talking to me, which is not the first time it has happened. It apparently become their most popular article of the day, made their front page and went viral.”

“Author’s note: How viral is viral? We scrolled through the comments section of the Imgur post and still couldn’t reach the bottom after five minutes.

Since then, the mass outlets around the world have published stories and are seeking out Barsky for interviews.

“It’s overwhelming,” he said. “I have a few thousand unread messages on email and on
At a flea market one Sunday morning, Barsky had a chance encounter with three women who were knitting that would be the catalyst for his learning to do so himself.

“I asked them, ‘How do I learn how to do that?’ They told me that they owned a yarn shop, and that if I would come in, they would teach me for free on the condition that I bought their yarn,” Barsky explained. “I made a point of wearing a commercial sweater with a multicolored paisley pattern the first time I went in, because I wanted to show them what my goals were.”

The yarn shop was Woolworks Inc. on Falls Road, which is now in a new location with new owners, according to Barsky. He was told in the beginning that making sweaters was for experienced knitters, so the women started him on a scarf instead, which he never finished. Several weeks later, a friend that he had met at the shop told him of another store called Woolstock Knit & Sew in Glyndon.

“The moment I walked in, the owner, Leslye Solomon, told me that I would walk out of the shop having started work on a sweater — I was very excited about it,” he said. “She started me on a solid color sweater. It took me about eight months to complete it, but I got it done just in the nick of time before the end of the millennium.”

After knitting two initial sweaters, each monochromatic, Barsky decided to challenge himself and create a sweater that depicted a map of the world in five months, followed by a sweater with a nature scene “that had a picture on the back of a tall waterfall and a cloudy sky and on the front depicted a raging river with a covered bridge and waterwheel.”

The latter took him just two months to finish and he declared it a success — “People didn’t mistake for something else!” Since that time, Barsky has amassed an enormous collection of sweaters, and now averages about a month to make each sweater.

“At that point I realized I could put anything on a sweater,” he said. “I realized I could do buildings and iconic landmarks, I did a castle. It’s really weird, but I did the Twin Towers before 9/11. I also did the Tower Bridge in London.

Fast forward several months, I decided it would be nice if I had some Jewish-themed sweaters, so I made a Sukkot sweater and shortly after that, a Chanukah sweater. Over the years that followed, I was making Sweaters of many different landmarks all over the world, nature scenes, at least one for every Jewish holiday. By 2016, I was a celebrity within the worldwide knitting community.”

At first, Barsky would just come up with the idea for his next sweater off the top of his head. However, if he was going to visit a location that he had depicted in a sweater, he figured that he might as well wear that particular sweater — what better place to wear it? “I wouldn’t think of going somewhere with the point being to get a picture,” Barsky said, however. “Whenever you’re at a tourist attraction, it’s normal to take pictures.” What stood out was his sweaters more than taking photos.

“Over time I realized I had a good collection of 10 to 15 pictures [wearing a sweater depicting my surroundings] — they weren’t the greatest, but at that point I realized I had to grow the collection and I would take pictures like that at every opportunity.”

Today, Barsky has a total of 104 sweaters, with matching pictures for 93 of them.

“For 105, I am doing a Groundhog Day sweater. I was planning to make an Martin Luther King Day sweater, it’s about halfway done, but because of this past week of publicity, I didn’t have the time to finish it,” said Barsky. “I’ll find out what to do next based on what place we plan to travel to or what event comes up.”
Parshat Beshalach

First Steps on Path to Promised Land

REDEMPTION! Parshat Beshalach is a Torah portion of glory — glory in the Song at the Sea, the poetic celebration of liberation from Egyptian bondage and glory in the details of the Israelites’ first steps out of Egypt.

The parshah begins with the verse that sets the scene for the entire next thematic section of the Book of Exodus, the Israelites’ early adventures wandering in the desert. Exodus 13:17 reads, “Now when Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although it was nearer; for God said, ‘The people may have a change of heart when they see war, and return to Egypt.’”

Although God orchestrates the route in the desert, it is clear that it is still the Israelites themselves who determine their own future. They have the power to return to servitude in Egypt. Additionally, it appears that God wants to avoid the war. The Israelites do indeed have free will, and God is working hard to set the scene for them to make the “right” choices, which is clearly far from predetermined.

Taken as a whole, Parshat Beshalach’s opening verse sets the stage for the Israelites’ complex experience of desert wandering and their first encounters with freedom. Even the opening verse of this ecstatic and climactic Torah portion reflects the Israelites’ anxiety about their new reality.

Michael Walzer, a Princeton University professor and author of the stunning book, “Exodus and Revolution,” emphasizes our tradition’s commitment to the Israelites’ agency. Regardless of God’s role, the Israelites chose freedom when they left Egypt, and even more powerfully, they kept choosing freedom even as the uncertainty of their journey grew, even through 40 years of wandering.

Maimonides realized just how inherently human this experience is. He wrote, “Had [the Israelites] immediately been confronted with the task of conquest, after their sudden redemption, they would not have been capable of undertaking it.” The experience of liberation itself, as joyful and powerful as it is, does not make a free people who are able to thrive in a new world order. But a moment of liberation coupled with a twisting, hard journey can lead to the Promised Land, something totally unfathomable to the Israelites in their first steps out of Egyptian bondage.

JT

Rabbi Ana Bonnheim recently moved to Charlotte, N.C., with her husband and two young children. She had served as associate director and director of year-round programs at URJ Greene Family Camp in Texas for the past eight years. A version of this article first appeared on reformjudaism.org.

Conratulate Your Grad!

Our 2017 GRADUATES section will appear in the June 9 issue of the JT. Every student can receive a FREE listing and photo.

1. Go to: www.jewishtimes.com/graduates
2. Click the ORDER FREE LISTING button
3. Submit the student’s info and photo

Visit jewishtimes.com/graduates to submit all listings and graduation ads!
The Community Page

Out & About

TOP NEWSWOMAN: Jayne Miller (fifth from left), lead investigative reporter at WBAL-TV, was featured at the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Brotherhood breakfast on Sunday, Feb. 5. From left: Lorna and Richard Kane, Brotherhood president Sidney Bravmann, Dr. Harriet Meier, Diane Bravmann, Miller, Brotherhood corresponding secretary Norman Goldschmitt, Linda Leffman, Brotherhood vice president Roger Wolff and Celia Wrisk.

ADVOCATING FOR A CAUSE: Representatives of the Baltimore Jewish community met with Congressman John Sarbanes (fifth from left) in Washington, D.C., at the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) Jewish Disability Advocacy Day on Feb. 2.

SCRAP FAMILIES REUNION: From left: Jewish Museum of Maryland executive director Marvin Pinkert, Sandy Shapiro, Ellen Kahan Zager and Jack Zager, whose families were in the scrap business, met with others at Tark’s Grill on Feb. 2 to talk about Baltimore’s old scrapyards.

Campers and counselors at Bais Yaakov Day Camp, 1958. Can you identify anyone in this photo? Contact Joanna Church, 443-873-5176 or jchurch@jewishmuseummd.org. To see more of the Jewish Museum’s extensive collection and find out who has been identified in past photos, visit jewishmuseummd.org/tag/once-upon-a-time-2/.
Society

Anniversary

Blank
Mike and Shelley Blank of Reisterstown celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on Feb. 10. They have two daughters, Karyn and Tamara, a son, Louis, and three granddaughters, Rachel, Stephanie and Rebecca.

Birth

Gassman
Vera Faye, daughter of Craig and Laine Gassman (nee Oppenheimer), was born on April 29, 2016.

Vera Faye’s maternal grandmother is the late Joanne Cohn Oppenheimer, and her maternal great-grandparents are Paula and the late Morton Oppenheimer, Naomi B. Cohen and the late Jerome B. Cohen and the late Barbara and Irving F. Cohn of Baltimore. Her paternal great-grandparents are Charlotte and Manuel Gassman of Swampscott, Mass., and Sonia and Edgar Lewis of Boynton Beach, Fla.

Engagement

Rankin — Dansicker
Stephen and Linda Rankin are excited to announce the engagement of their son, Aaron Rankin, to Alexandra Dansicker, daughter of Samuel and the late A. Danelle England-Dansicker.

Aaron is the grandson of Mary Ann and the late Lawrence V. Landolt and the late Howard and Diana Rankin. Alexandra is the granddaughter of Stanley and the late Shirley Danicker and Anida and the late William England.

An October 2017 wedding is planned.

Birth

Schleifer
Bobbi Bella, daughter of Councilman Isaac “Yitzy” and Lauren Schleifer of Baltimore, was born on Jan. 15, 2017 at Sinai Hospital and weighed 7 pounds, 9 ounces. She joins sister Maxi.

Send submissions of births, engagements, weddings and anniversaries via email to mklickstein@midatlanticmedia.com or mail to Mathew Klickstein, BJT, 11459 Cronhill Drive, Suite A, Owings Mills, MD 21117. Please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope for returning photos. Items will be selected and edited at the discretion of the editors.
BANKS — On January 19, 2017, Lester Harvey Banks; survived by his loving wife Cheryl Ann; his siblings, Norma (late Edward) Carl, Barry (late Bobbi) Banks, Diane Banks and Douglas (Gloria) Banks. Lester is also survived by many loving nieces and nephews. Interment at Baltimore Hebrew Cemetery, Bermans Lane. Please omit flowers. Contributions in his memory may be sent to Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, 100 Painters Mill Road, Suite 800, Owings Mills, MD 21117 or American Association for the Study of Liver Disease (aasld.org) or Humane Society of Carroll County (hsccarroll.org/donate/).

BENSKY — On January 17, 2017, Stanford “Sonny” Bensky; beloved husband of Lois “Cookie” Bensky (née Seligman); cherished father of Howard, David, Steven, Neil and Robert Bensky and the late Ronnie and Lawrence Bensky; devoted father-in-law of Faith Johnson, Sherry Bensky, Michele Bensky and Tamara Bensky; dear brother of Shirley Glaser and Harry Bensky; beloved brother of the late Sara and Louis Bensky; loving grandfather of Melissa Casalena (Luke Torretti), Stacy Bensky, Andrea (Dan) Hartman, Gail Collins, Kevin (Leah), Amber, Hunter, Marshall, Jasmine, Charley, Gabriella and Katelyn Bensky; adoring great-grandfather of Logan and Nora Collins, Mason and Tala Hartman and Harper Benfield. Interment at Oheb Shalom Memorial Park, Bermans Lane. Please omit flowers. Contributions in his memory may be sent to Beth El Congregation, 8101 Park Heights Ave., Baltimore, MD 21208.

BLUESTEIN — On January 21, 2017, Annette Bluestein (née Lavy); beloved wife of Sylvan Bluestein; loving mother of Michael Bluestein and Steven Bluestein; beloved mother-in-law of Gail Bluestein; devoted sister of the late Toby Fives; loving grandmother of Corey and Sydney Bluestein. Interment at Beth El Memorial Park, Randallstown. Please omit flowers. Contributions in her memory may be sent to Beth El Congregation, 8101 Park Heights Ave., Baltimore, MD 21208.

CHAITOVICEZ — On January 18, 2017, Marty Chaitovitz; beloved husband of Jody Chaitovitz (née Rosenzweig) and the late Harriet Chaitovitz (née Perlman); cherished father of Donna S. Chaitovitz and Gerson A. Chaitovitz (Monica Ellis); devoted brother of Sandy (late Lynn) Chaitovitz, Larry (Diana) Chaitovitz and the late Paul Chaitovitz and Sheila Herman; adoring grandfather of Michael, Samantha and Sophie Chaitovitz; loving son of the late Sophie and Harry Chaitovitz. Interment at Columbia Memorial Park, 11895 Clarksville Pike, Columbia, Md. Please omit flowers. Contributions in his memory may be sent to Beth Shalom Congregation, 8070 Harriet Tubman Lane, Columbia, MD 21044 or The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, 101 W. Mount Royal Ave., Baltimore, MD 21201.

HIMMELFARB — Sylvia Himmelfarb; survived by her sister Lily Polakoff, nieces Emily Turk, Ellen Mazoff and Marian Sherwood, nephew Bob Turk and great-nieces, great-nephews, great-great-nieces and a great-great-nephew. Donations may be made in her honor to Walters Art Museum and Johns Hopkins Medicine Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center.

KAUFMAN — On January 19, 2017, Clara S. Kaufman (née Simonyi); beloved wife of the late Frederick Kaufman; dear sister of the late Toby Kaufman and Michael Kaufman (Dr. Barbara Alpert); dear sister of the late Vera, Paul and Miklos Simonyi; loving grandmother of Adam (Laurie) Hartman, Daniel (Leslie) Hartman, Alexander Kaufman, Matthew Kaufman and Jennifer Pura; cherished great-grandmother of Samantha, Rebecca, Amy, Evan and Rachel Hartman. Interment at Arlington Cemetery, Chizuk Amuno Congregation, North Rogers Ave. Please omit flowers.

KEENEY — On January 11, 2017, Suzanne Keeney (née Shaivitz); cherished wife of William Keeney; loving mother of Scott (Michelle) Schwartz, Kenneth (Ilene) Schwartz and Bethann (Peter) Talbot; beloved sister of Jules (Selsa) Shaivitz; devoted mother of Linda Hollander, William Jungreis, Mitchell Jungreis and the late Rebecca Brager; dear mother-in-law of Lynn Jungreis and Alex Brager; loving daughter of the late Mary and Abraham Goodman; also survived by fourteen loving grandchildren and nine loving great-grandchildren. Interment at Lubawitz Nusach Ari (Ner Tamid) Cemetery, 6300 Hamilton Ave., Rosedale. Please omit flowers. Contributions in her memory may be sent to Beth Tfiloh Dahan Community School, 3300 Old Court Road, Baltimore, MD 21208 or Pikesville Jewish Congregation (PJ), 7644 Carla Road, Baltimore, MD 21208.
Colin Talbot and Kai and Joshua Schwartz; dear step-mother of Susan Keeney, Jeffrey Keeney and Jennifer Keeney; dear stepgrandmother of Ryan, Ian, Erin, Jacob and Justin; adored by many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. Interment at Har Sinai Cemetery, Garrison Forest Road. Please omit flowers. Contributions in her memory may be sent to Pearlstone Center, 5425 Mount Gilad Road, Reisterstown, MD 21136.

KLEIN — On January 19, 2017, Raymond N. Klein, beloved husband of the late Carolyn Klein (née Berkow); devoted father of I. Dennis (Janet) Klein and Susan (Robert) Fain; cherished brother of the late Beverly Senker; loving grandfather of Jarrett Klein, Melissa (Mark) Heinenon, Ashley Fain, Robin Rapsey and Jodi Cohen; adored great-grandfather of Jake, Riley and Justin; adored stepgrandmother of Ryan, Ian, Erin, Jacob and Justin; adored stepgreat-grandmother of Whitney and Kyle Alperstein, Spencer and Emma Miller and Willow Noonberg. Interment at Baltimore Hebrew Cemetery, Berrymans Lane. Please omit flowers. Contributions in her memory may be sent to Lymphoma Research Foundation, 115 Broadway, Suite 1301, New York, NY 10006.

MARGolis — On January 22, 2017, Bernard “Bernie” Margolis; beloved husband of Jami Margolis (née Schultz); devoted father of Avi Margolis and Emma Margolis; dear brother of Mark (Janine) Margolis; beloved brother-in-law of Tami (Steve) Adelman and Emma Margolis; dear uncle of Bianca (Dan) Travers, Candice (Dan) Jackson, Talia Adelman, Ryan Cohen and Tyler Cohen. Interment at Oheb Shalom Memorial Park, Berrymans Lane. Please omit flowers. Contributions in his memory may be sent to Krieger Amuno Congregation, North Rogers Avenue. Please omit flowers. Contributions in her memory may be sent to The Barb Purkey Financial Assistance Fund or the Lucky Mallonée ’62 Financial Assistance Fund at The Park School of Baltimore, Attention: Development Office, 2425 Old Court Road, Baltimore, MD 21208.

MILLER — On January 16, 2017, Marcelle E. Miller (née Honigsberg); beloved wife of the late Morris Miller; devoted mother of Diane (Donald) Miller and Barbara (Michael) Noonberg; dear sister of Evelyn (late Allan) Katz and Joan (Jerome) Scherr; adored daughter of the late Gertrude and Samuel Honigsberg; loving grandmother of Whitney (Jeffrey) Alperstein, Brett (Mandi) Miller, Amy Noonberg and Yascha (Alison) Noonberg; cherished great-grandmother of Jordan and Kyle Alperstein, Spencer and Emma Miller and Willow Noonberg. Interment at Baltimore Hebrew Cemetery, Berrymans Lane. Please omit flowers. Contributions in her memory may be sent to Jewish Children’s Services, 303 International Circle, Cockeysville, MD 21030.
Ruth; devoted mother of Ilysa (Glen) Peak, Renie Barnes and Derrick Ruth (Marsha Gibbs); dear sister of Janice Morome and Terry (Dave) Abrams; adoring grandmother of Michelle Fitzpatrick, Sonny Peak, Jordan Fiore, Trinity Ruth and Miles and Noah Gibbs; adoring great-grandmother of Mylie, Skylar, Malaya, Willow, Wyatt and Zoe; loving daughter of the late Irene and Harry Saffron; also survived by loving nieces, nephews and dear friends. Interment at Arlington Cemetery, Chizuk Amuno Congregation, North Rogers Avenue. Please omit flowers.

SANDLER — On January 12, 2017, Malcolm Sandler; beloved husband of the late Sylvia Renard Sandler; devoted father of Jeffery Mark (Debra) Sandler, Mitchell Scott (Maureen) Sandler, Cathy Sandler Fitzsimons (Robert P. Fitzsimons, Jr.); loving brother of Parke (late Rue) Sandler, Fulton “Rusty” (Judy) Sandler and the late Alva Sandler; cherished grandfather of Corey and Coral Jean Sandler; adored son of the late Hannah and Abraham Sandler. Interment private. Please omit flowers. Contributions in his memory may be sent to Disabled American Veterans, P.O. Box 14301, Cincinnati, OH 45250.

SHVARTSBERG — On January 12, 2017, Arkadiy Shvartsburg, beloved husband of Lyudmila Shvartsberg; devoted father of Leon (Helen) Shvartsburg; dear brother of Flora Kamenker; dear grandfather of Khana (Michael) Nizovskiy and Jason Chvartsburg; loving great-grandfather of Daniel and Aaron Nizovskiy. Interment at Chizuk Amuno Cemetery, North Rogers Avenue.

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SILVERMAN — On January 19, 2017, Judith S. Silverman (née Schuman); mother of Daniel (Judy) Silverman, Michael (Mackenzie) Silverman and Roseanne (Mitch) Witonsky; dear sister of the late Lewis Schuman; grandmother of Nathan and Rachael Silverman, Sara and Ian Witonsky; loving daughter of the late Rose and Sam Schuman; also survived by a large extended family and many dear friends. Judith was known by all as Tante Yehudis. Interment at Agudath Israel Cemetery, Rosedale. Please omit flowers. Contributions in her memory may be sent to Ahavas Yisrael Charity Fund, c/o Janine Chapman, 2723 Woodcourt Road, Baltimore, MD 21209.

SOLLINS — On January 20, 2017, Helen Sollins (née Burman); beloved wife of S. Leonard Sollins; devoted mother of Amy Sollins and Howard (Barbara Resnick) Sollins; dear sister of the late Pearl Seligman and Borah Burman; adored daughter of the late Rena and Howard Burman; loving grandmother of Elie (Paige) Sollins, Yael (Elliot) Zweig, Aliza Sollins and Jake Sollins; cherished great-grandmother of Naomi and Rafael Sollins, Caleb and Leon Zweig. Interment at Beth Tfiloh Cemetery, 5800 Windsor Mill Road. Please omit flowers. Contributions in her memory may be sent to B’nai Israel Congregation, 27 Lloyd St., Baltimore, MD 21202.

SOKAL — On January 11, 2017, Ernest Sokal, beloved husband of Beverly Sokal; devoted father of Yoni (Lisa)
SUSSMAN — On January 15, 2017, Shirley Sussman (née Adleman); beloved wife of Donald Sussman; devoted mother of Yeheskiel (Hadas-Shamosh) Sussman and Richard (Pola) Sussman; dear sister of Marvin (Susan) Adleman and Mildred (Late Edward) Herscher; adored son of Mildred (Late Edward) Herscher; loving grandson of Rose and Herman Adleman; loving daughter of the late Dr. Ernestine and Saul Sokal; beloved husband of Dr. Sally Winston (née Margolick); cherished father of Dr. Carla Winston, Maggie Winston and Molly Winston (Cantor Michael Zoosman); devoted brother of Lucy Jablon and Steven (Elena) Winston; loving son of the late Ida and Carl Winston. Interment private. Please omit flowers. Contributions in his memory may be sent to Amnesty International USA, 5 Penn Plaza, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10001 or Social Accountability International, 15 West 44th St., New York, NY 10036 or the Alan Dawley Center for the Study of Social Justice at the College of New Jersey, P.O. Box 7718, Ewing, NJ 08628 or Medecins Sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders, 333 7th Ave., New York, NY 10001 or Partners in Health, P.O. Box 996, Frederick, MD 21705

WINSTON — On January 13, 2017, Dr. Morton Winston; beloved husband of Dr. Sally Winston (née Margolick); cherished father of Dr. Carla Winston, Maggie Winston and Molly Winston (Cantor Michael Zoosman); devoted brother of Lucy Jablon and Steven (Elena) Winston; loving son of the late Ida and Carl Winston. Interment private. Please omit flowers. Contributions in his memory may be sent to Amnesty International USA, 5 Penn Plaza, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10001 or Social Accountability International, 15 West 44th St., New York, NY 10036 or the Alan Dawley Center for the Study of Social Justice at the College of New Jersey, P.O. Box 7718, Ewing, NJ 08628 or Medecins Sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders, 333 7th Ave., New York, NY 10001 or Partners in Health, P.O. Box 996, Frederick, MD 21705

Sokal, Dina (Alan Hirsch) Sokal, David (Janet Woodward) Sokal, Eli (Kelly) Sokal and Joe Sokal; dear brother of the late Chana Shamosh; dear brother-in-law of Amnon Shamosh; adored son of the late Dr. Ernestine and Saul Sokal; loving grandfather of Amy Sokal, Danny (Erica) Sokal, Evan Sokal, Lucy Hirsch, Ann Hirsch (Gene McHugh), Sam Hirsch, Jacob (Nora) Woodsey, Ira Woodward, Rebecca Elizabeth Sokal and Andy Benjamin Sokal; cherished great-grandfather of Yona, Bowen and Tevel Sokal and Riley and Tobin Ernon Woodsey. Interment at Baltimore Hebrew Cemetery, Berrymans Lane. Please omit flowers. Contributions in his memory may be sent to Habonim Dror Camp Moshava, 6101 Executive Blvd., Suite 319, Bethesda, MD 20852.
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