

Upcoming and Past Activities of the **Iranian American Jewish Federation**

Upcoming Events:

Is Your Child on Track?

Join us for a seminar and panel discussion for parents and grandparents of children ages 2-12 years in English and Farsi on April 5th at the Federation.

Presented by IAJF Committee for Young Families together with IAJF Health and Wellness Committee. For more Information please click the following:

http://www.iajf.org/cms/calendar/home.viewdetails.php?event_id=28&clickdate=2011-04-05

Second Group Adult Bat-Mitzvah (by Women Committee)

On May 21st 2011 at Temple Beth El (IAJF)

Interested ladies (best opportunity for two or three generations to celebrate together) will attend 15 hours of Hebrew reading by Ms. Neli Mizrahi and Jewish History by Dr. Isaac Norman.

For information please contact the office 323 654 4700

The spring issue of **Shofar Magazine** will be distributed soon.

For your tax deductible support of SHOFAR please contact the office at 323 654 4700

You always can study all SHOFAR issues online:

http://www.iajf.org/shofar/shofar_mag.php

Past Activities:

David Levinson's "Everyone Helps, Everyone Wins"

Book Review 12/7/2010 By Mona Javdan

On Tuesday, December 7, Hollywood Temple Beth El and The Iranian American Jewish Federation's Women's Division sponsored an event where David Levinson, Director of the largest regional Volunteer Network, "Big Sunday", spoke about his book, "Everyone Helps, Everyone Wins". David started off by reading the first chapter of his book, which humorously details the experiences that helped motivate him to use his time and energy – at first reluctantly - as a volunteer. He then described how he created “Big Sunday”, where people from different socioeconomic and religious backgrounds volunteer at various Community Service Organizations. This ongoing project creates an opportunity for volunteers to help others and to feel better about themselves by bonding with each other. David stated that volunteer projects can vary in size, but it doesn't matter whether a project has five or a hundred volunteers; every volunteer's contribution makes a difference.

The Iranian American Jewish Federation initiates a project funded by the Neman Brothers in support of the Birthright Foundation

12/9/2010 By Gentile Barkhordar

On December 9th, 2010, a meeting was held at the home of Elaine and David Maltzman of Beverly Hills in honor of Project Birthright, and in recognition of the Iranian American Jewish Federation's latest project in support of Birthright Foundation. The intent of IAJF's project is to send 40 young Jewish students on a free trip to Israel every year, and Mrs. Shahla Javdan, President of IAJF, is initially funding the project with a generous contribution of \$25,000 made by three brothers, Yoel, John and Leon Neman of Beverly Hills. Birthright was founded in 1999 with the purpose of offering young, Jewish adults between the ages of 18 and 26 a free, ten-day trip to Israel so they could discover their heritage, build new friendships and develop their sense of identity as Jews. To date, 260,000 young adults have attended Birthright, and 40,000 more are on the waiting list. In the past, the program was solely funded by a small group of philanthropists, the Jewish Federation, the Jewish Agency for Israel, and the Government of Israel. However since 2008, several thousand more Americans like the Neman brothers have realized the importance of the program and begun supporting it. When asked what prompted them to contribute, the Nemans described the passion they saw in their children as they returned from a Birthright trip to Israel: “Ten days spent in Israel were far more effective than several years of Jewish education in awakening a sense of passion for the land and people of Israel, and for the Jewish culture”, said Yoel. The meeting on December 9th began with opening remarks by Doris and Jacob Melamed, Regional Chairs, and Jamie Bakhrad, Director of Birthright, Southern California. Next, Jay Sanderson, President of the Jewish Federation of Greater Los

Angeles, introduced screenwriter and film director David Mamet, who in 1984 was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his play Glengarry Glen Ross. Mamet, who has authored books like “The Old Religion” and “The Wicked Son” described the growing anti-Semitism and Jewish Self-hatred around the globe, and emphasized the importance of getting to know our history, and of embracing our religion and our “connection to the Divine” as our “Birthright”. What came last was a moving, firsthand account of the life-changing experience of a young, married couple who had met on a Birthright trip to Israel several years back: The story told by Joel and Auna Simon of Ventura County was unique in the way it painted the way their lives had intertwined almost magically overnight as they each found a sense of identity and came into their own when they reached the “promised land” - In Auna’s own words, Israel had awakened in them a sense of “Hatikvah” or “hope”. Joel and Auna’s story is reminiscent of many other people’s accounts of an acute sense of belonging and a stronger passion for their Jewish heritage after a trip to Israel.

Young Professionals’ Group Meeting

1/19/2011 By Gentile Barkhordar

Following is a recap of the Young Professional Group's third meeting, which took place at the IAJF on Wednesday, January 19th, 2011. The purpose of the meeting was to define a mission statement and a primary focus for the Group, and various members made suggestions based on their interests, strengths and past experiences with volunteering. One of the attendees proposed the creation of a service committee which would participate in various non-profit activities such as food, clothes and blood drives, volunteer at women's shelters, and provide help at assisted living homes. Others suggested a project consisting of cleaning parks or cleaning the beach, with a bonfire celebration to follow. Besides social services, another area of interest among several of the attendees was psychology. Events such as an Autism Awareness Day or a Seminar for Building Self-esteem, as well as one-on-one counseling were discussed. Based on the foregoing discussions, following is a draft of the Young Professional Group’s Mission Statement:

“An Iranian American Jewish Young Professionals Organization dedicated to giving back to the community via services dedicated to the betterment of society.” The Group’s next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 2nd, at 6:30 PM at the Coffee Bean on Robertson and Beverly Blvd. This meeting’s agenda includes further discussion of goals and processes, as well as the selection of a name for the Group – “Iranian American Jewish Corp” or “The Volunteer Network” were prior suggestions. Upcoming meetings may consist of a speaker series on the topic of social services.

Camera Event on “The Legitimacy of Competing Claims to Jerusalem and its Old City under International Law” 1/27/2011 By

Gentile Barkhordar

On Thursday, January 27, 2011, the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA) and the IAJF Women’s Division hosted a lecture on the topic of sovereignty over Jerusalem and its Old City. Dr. Jacques Gauthier, a renowned non-Jewish Canadian attorney, who has spent 20 years researching the legal status of Jerusalem and has written a 1,300 doctoral dissertation on this topic, explained that the Jewish people have been given legal rights to the city of Jerusalem through a series of treaties and resolutions made by the Supreme Council of Nations – made of the United States, Britain, France, Italy and Japan - beginning with the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and followed by the San Remo Resolution of 1920, where the Jews were given title to Palestine, and the Arab people were given claim over Mesopotamia (or Iraq). Dr. Gauthier went on to describe how in 1921, in order to appease the Arabs, the land that had been granted to the Jews previously was divided once again, and its western portion (or Trans-Jordan) was given to the Arab People. Later, as the United Nations replaced the failed League of Nations in 1945, they created a new Partition Plan, passed in 1947 as Resolution 181, which gave the Arabs political rights over western Palestine, thus violating the Supreme Council of Nations’ post-World War I resolutions. Further, after the Six Day War of 1967, as Israel regained Jerusalem and the land west of Jordan, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 242, which emphasized the “necessity for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem”, and did not establish ownership over Jerusalem. Drawing from his experience as an attorney, Dr. Gauthier concluded that the treaties passed by the Supreme Council of Nations had already given Israel legal rights over Jerusalem, and that in its failure to recognize those rights, the UN Security Council would be acting in contradiction with the principles of International Law.

Young Professionals’ (IServe) Group Meeting

2/2/2011 By Gentile Barkhordar

On February 2nd, 2011, members of the IAJF Young Professionals Group held their fourth meeting to establish a focus and a mission statement for the Group. Various members made suggestions based on their interests, strengths and past experiences with volunteering, and drafted out their mission as one of “An Iranian American Jewish Young Professionals Organization dedicated to giving back to the community via services dedicated to the betterment of society.” In addition, they chose the name “IServe” with a Magen David above the letter “I”.

One of the attendees proposed the creation of a service committee which would participate in various non-profit activities such as food, clothes and blood drives, volunteer at women's shelters, and provide help at assisted living homes. Others suggested a project consisting of cleaning parks or cleaning the beach, with a bonfire celebration to follow. Besides social services, another area of interest among several of the attendees was psychology. Events such as an Autism Awareness Day or a Seminar for Building Self-esteem, as well as one-on-one counseling sessions were discussed. The Group plans to volunteer at the Centennial "Super" Sunday on February 13th, and bi-weekly meetings are to follow.
