

publisher's notebook

Jewish News: New Format, Ongoing Commitment In Midst of Dramatic Industry Changes

To our readers, advertisers and community:

The media industry stands in the midst of dramatic change. Established business models are being tested as companies, including the *Jewish News*, balance your preference — to hold a publication in your hands — with those who only want to receive information on their electronic devices.



Arthur Horwitz

For you, the *Jewish News* is now a full-fledged magazine with no ink rub-off on your hands or clothing. It is in a convenient size with a longer shelf life and easier-to-read typefaces.

A new format represents our ongoing commitment to provide you with a publication of quality — visually and substantively. We may be the only weekly publication in Michigan — perhaps the country — that is battling the headwinds of industry-wide contraction with an upgraded printed product.

Today, content from the *Jewish News* is viewed by more people than at any time since its founding in 1942. In addition to print readers, our website thejewishnews.com is approaching 100,000 unique visitors per

month. And our social media platforms, particularly Facebook and Instagram, bring additional visitors who often engage intensively with each other on the hot issues of the day.

Our industry's vexing challenge remains providing valuable content to our community in the ways they want to receive it — print and digital — when the bulk of revenue to pay for it all is generated by a declining and difficult-to-replace part of our industry's business model.

In the coming weeks and months, I'll be sharing additional media industry insights with you, how they impact the *Jewish News* and our likely path forward to a sustainable future.

For now, here are some of the realities driving change:

Advertising — think of ads you see from auto dealers, financial institutions, Jewish communal organizations, health care systems, assisted living facilities, Realtors, etc. That accounts for 80 percent to 85 percent of *Jewish News* revenue.

The amount of space for news and information in our publication is determined by the volume of advertising sold. As advertising volume declines, so does the amount of space for content.


There is more news than ever to cover in our community. There

is just less room and less economic capability to do so.

Google and Facebook capture 87 percent of all global digital advertising revenue. Every news outlet competes for the remaining 13 percent. Virtually none of it goes to us to counterbalance losses we experience in print advertising.

Several American media companies are transitioning to non-profit organizations, enabling the communities they serve to help support their work via contributions and grants.

In this hyper-partisan era of “fake news” and “alternative facts,” we strive to continue to be your trusted, credible information source — one that connects Jewish Detroiters to each other and the world around us. Today's *Jewish News* represents the latest chapter in our evolution. It will not be the last. Future chapters will likely include you as our partners in community building. Please stay tuned.

We value your readership, business, comments and the opportunity to serve you. 

Arthur Horwitz
Publisher & Executive Editor

from letters

Disappointed in HMC

What a disappointment the Holocaust Memorial Center has become (“Unexpected Visitors,” Aug. 29, page 16). I was led to believe that the

purpose of the HMC was to preserve and protect the memory of the more than 6 million Jews murdered in the Holocaust by the National Socialist German Workers

Party (Nazis). Yet, the HMC did not condemn the use of its building as a backdrop for a protest by the Close the Camps group, comparing detention camps for illegal

continued on page 8

**ANGRY?
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guest column

When Do We Partner? When Do We Not?

A week ago, I led a prayer at a rally against hate organized by Rep. Debbie Dingell and co-sponsored by many anti-hate, civil rights organizations, including the ADL, ACLU and ACCESS.



Rabbi Asher Lopatin

That evening, my remarks were made as a board member of JCRC/AJC, whose mission is to represent the voice of the Jewish community to the broader Detroit community.

As we were determining our participation in the event, we learned that Rep. Rashida Tlaib would be speaking, which raised the question of how Jewish organizations should decide whether to take part and co-sponsor events that involve individuals whose views on Israel and other critical Jewish causes go against the Jewish community's consensus.

Judaism has a long tradition of aligning with people with whom we disagree to further important causes. The Torah tells us that we got out of Egypt "on the wings of eagles," and many rabbis have pointed out that eagles are the most unkosher bird you can get!

Moreover, Rav Soloveitchik, who forbade any theological or philosophical work with the Christian community because of his strong rejection of Christian theology, was a strong advocate of working with anyone, of any religion, to help further important, real-world issues that Jews could not advance on their own. Now, that applies not only to topics affecting the

Jewish community, but also to broader societal issues — such as hatred, intolerance and xenophobia, the ills that this rally was designed to oppose. Joining forces to fight wars or enemies, as America and England had to do in WWII and as Israel has to do constantly, does not automatically legitimize or support the actions or ideas of those with whom we disagree, but have to unite with.



Judaism has a long tradition of aligning with people with whom we disagree.

— RABBI ASHER LOPATIN

Having said this, it is vital to keep in mind that when we partner on events with a broad group of people who may strongly disagree with us on certain issues, that those programs stick to their rightful goals and not mix in or promote partners' causes with which we disagree.

At the Take on Hate rally, no speaker brought up extraneous and problematic issues such as Palestine or BDS. The event was more partisan than I would have liked, but Tlaib, in particular, was careful to focus her remarks on fighting hate against anyone and sensitivity to those who are targets

of such hate.

In addition, I find when we focus on a shared goal with a diverse group of people, we must ensure we are not participating with groups that are so problematic that merely partnering with them will poison the cause. Sometimes this dynamic needs to be examined based on who the main organizer of the event is and how many other co-sponsors there are, as well as who those co-sponsors are. In the case of the Take on Hate rally, the main organizer was Dingell, who was joined by other members of Congress, including Rep. Andy Levin and members of the Michigan State Legislature.

While, as I mentioned, the rally was certainly not as nonpartisan as the planners intended, the main message rang true: Everyone was there to call out hatred and advocate for tolerance and respect.

Partnering and speaking at these events is risky as one never knows how the program will turn out. Each decision needs to be made on a case-by-case basis, yet the risks of not partnering against anti-Semitism, hatred or any other cause so central to the Jewish community is far greater. We cannot do it alone; we need partners, as difficult and as scary as that might be.

As a community, let us work together to find the partnerships that best advance our causes and help us be a light unto the nations and leaders against hatred and intolerance. [In](#)

Rabbi Asher Lopatin is a board member of the JCRC/AJC and founder of the Detroit Center for Civil Discourse.

most read on the web

Each month, the *JN* will let you know the stories that were read most often online. If you missed any, you can go to thejewishnews.com and search for them by title. These stories were most popular in August.

TOP 10 ON THE WEB

- Southfield Teen Helps Save Life
- New Hope for Neurological Disorders Through Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy
- *Schitt's Creek* Live Comes to Detroit
- Mumford Grads Find Love at Last
- Kaufman to Step Down as Detroit Federation CEO
- Anti-Israel Resolution Rejected in Ann Arbor
- Proud Boys Join Jewish Counter-Protesters
- Woodstock 50th Anniversary
- Belen Brings The Morrie to Birmingham
- Charlevoix the Beautiful

TOPS ON FACEBOOK

- Oxford Recovery Center in Brighton and Troy
- At 70, Mumford High School Friends Tie the Knot
- Deep Political Divide Ignores Nuances of Holocaust Center
- West Bloomfield Resident Helping the Homeless
- *Schitt's Creek* Live

TOP INSTAGRAM POSTS

- *Schitt's Creek* Live
- High School Student Starts Bubble Waffle Company
- 91-year-old Holocaust Survivor Celebrates Bar Mitzvah
- Hazon Detroit Annual Food Festival
- Maccabi Detroit Girls Soccer Team video

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immigrants to Nazi concentration and death camps.

The protest group Close the Camps is associated with the left-wing, George Soros-funded Moveon.org. By making that comparison, Close the Camps trivialized the suffering and death of the Jews of the Holocaust. Why didn't the HMC speak out against that disgusting comparison? Why did the HMC allow the comparison to go unchallenged?

— **Sylvia Fleshman**
Farmington Hill

Example of Jewish Continuity

Thank you for publishing "At Long Last" by Judy Greenfield in the Aug. 29 issue of the *JN* about Holocaust survivor Bill Kaye sharing his bar mitzvah with his grandson Elijah. This is an outstanding example of Jewish continuity. It's so inspiring.

— **Harvey Bronstein**
Southfield

Israel-Bashers at Take on Hate Event

In the *DJN* coverage of the

"Take on Hate" event of Aug. 29 (online), you did not mention the history of Jew-hatred and the bashing of Israel by many of the sponsors and speakers, which (I believe) is a disservice to your readers.

The event featured a cadre of notorious anti-Semites and Israel-bashers:

- Ali Elahi, leader of the Islamic House of Wisdom. He is a vocal supporter of Hezbollah and called the terrorist group Hamas "freedom fighters."

- Congresswoman Rashida Talib, whose anti-Semitic and anti-Israel comments are a matter of public record.

- Sayed Hassan Al-Qazwini, imam of the Islamic Center of America in Dearborn. Al-Qazwini held a memorial service honoring the spiritual leader of Hezbollah and claimed Israel created ISIS.

Also represented was the Islamic Center of Detroit, an organization that has co-hosted events with groups associated with the Muslim Brotherhood and CAIR (an unindicted co-conspirator in a terrorist-funding trial) and American Muslims for Palestine.

And let's not forget the hon-

ored guest, Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist. He called Hamas a "legitimately elected party" and asked the U.S. to support it.

What is most disgusting to me was the endorsement by ADL Michigan, whose director, Carolyn Normandin, was one of the speakers. The original priority of ADL was to fight for the safety and security of Jews. Obviously, ADL no longer sees that condemning Jew haters is a priority because, in Normandin's own words, "We put our differences on certain topics aside and raise our voice with community partners who want to 'Take on Hate.'" In other words, standing with anti-Semites and Israel-haters is the most important mission for ADL. (*Editor's Note: Read related op-ed on page 6.*)

— **Irving Ginsberg**
Farmington Hills

Don't Degrade the Holocaust

The Publisher's Notebook ("Deep Political Divide Ignores Nuances of Holocaust Center") in the Aug. 27 edition of the *JN* was so conciliatory, cogent and well written, it deserves to be reprinted.

While I strongly believe in the separation of church and state, I wish every rabbi would take advantage of the High Holidays to ask their congregants to take a deep breath, dial down on the emotional harangues and never, ever degrade the Holocaust by calling people with different points of view fascists or describing any facility anywhere a concentration camp. There is no comparison. Tossing around these terms so carelessly is an insult to the 6 million. Let's remember to never forget.

— **Dorie Shwedel**
Franklin

Corrections:

- The address for JARC in the Community Directory (Aug. 29, page 56) should have been for its office in the Max M. Fisher Federation Building, 6735 Telegraph Road, Suite 100, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48301; (248) 940-2617, jarc.org.
- Eileen and Richard Polk are the grandparents of Josie, Jack, Evie, Hannah and Sophia ("Time to Kvell," Sept. 5, page 12).

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essay

A Soviet Jew Reflects on Immigration Deportations

As an immigrant to the U.S. myself, the recent rise in deportation of immigrants, whatever their legal status, is personal for me. My family came here in



Rabbi Moshe Givental

1990, when I was only 9 years old. However, the U.S. did not welcome us in easily, naturally, just out of the goodness of its heart, no matter what is written on the Statue of Liberty.

The immigration doors opened because of decades of political struggle by Refuseniks in the Soviet Union and the hard work of organizing here in the U.S., first by college students and eventually by the full Jewish community. Thousands of people called their representatives, and 250,000 took to the streets in 1987 in Washington, to make my family's move here possible.

Surely, many of you reading the *Jewish News* contributed to that decades-long effort in one way or another. You made it legal. Thank you for that. You created incredible infrastructure in the U.S. to support us once we arrived. I can't thank you enough for that!

But sadly, the legality, or lack thereof, does not change the desperate circumstances that often lead people to immigrate or seek asylum.

I'm not a politician, so I will not pretend to have an answer for how we integrate the needs of security and

budget on one hand, and the ethical and international imperative to help the needy and treat every person once they've entered our country with basic dignity on the other.

However, as a rabbi, I know something about difficult decisions, constructive conflict or lack thereof. I know something about the dehumanizing way in which we talk to each other and about each other in the U.S. right now. I also know that some choices are clear-cut wrongs.

The deportation of Jimmy Aldaoud, a 41-year old Chaldean man born in a refugee camp in Athens on the way from Iraq to the U.S., was a clear wrong. While the rest of his family became U.S. citizens, Jimmy's schizophrenia made it too difficult for him to take the test. So, we deported him, a man who had never actually stepped foot in Iraq, didn't speak the language, struggling with schizophrenia and diabetes.

He died on Aug. 6. This story, in all its insanity, also hits close to home because my sister-in-law is Chaldean, so while I don't know Jimmy's family, I grieve with them as if they're part of my own.

The ridiculousness of our immigration system, which doesn't provide sufficient exceptions for people with mental health challenges, is also beyond words. I had an aunt with Down's syndrome who, at her citizenship interview, was asked, "Would

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OUR JN MISSION: We aspire to communicate news and opinion that's trusted, valued, engaging and distinctive. We strive to reflect diverse community viewpoints while also advocating positions that strengthen Jewish unity and continuity. As an independent, responsible, responsive community member, we actively engage with individuals and organizations dedicated to enhancing the quality of life, and Jewish life, in Southeast Michigan.

you be willing to pick up a weapon and defend your country?" My Aunt Sveta, who had the most acute sense of humor in the family, laughed in response. She was lucky, however, and was granted citizenship after all. Jimmy was not so lucky; our system of immigration killed him.

Jimmy's story is just one, from our decades-long dysfunctional and increasingly inhumane immigration system. However, his life's worth cannot be measured.

Moreover, immigration status does not affect the reality that each life is created "b'rzelem Elohim," in God's image, and, therefore, demands treatment of respect and dignity. So, last month, Jews gathered all over the

country in commemoration of Tisha b'Av and a call for action from T'ruah: A Rabbinic Call for Human Rights, to protest the many inhumane dysfunctions of our immigration system. A week later we gathered at the Holocaust Memorial Center to mourn and call for humanity.

I pray that we keep this up and wonder what it will take for us to continue to gather with people of conscience from every political party, religion and ethnicity to create humane immigration reform. **IN**

Rabbi Moshe Givental is a local climate activist and works alongside clergy of all faiths and other community leaders on behalf on social justice.

online comments

Readers reacted to the story "Anti-Israel Resolution Rejected in Ann Arbor," published online at thejewishnews.com.

Marvin Sonne: Well, common sense prevails. *AM ISRAEL CHAI: LONG LIVE ISRAEL*

Daniel Kerin: WAKE UP, AMERICAN JEWRY! #walkaway #neveragain

Alex Bensky: And why should a city council be spending its time on this?

Irwin William Davis: It should never have been brought up.

Frances Swoish: Disgusting to think that there was an anti-Israel resolution in the first place.

Ellen VanSlyke: Thank God. These are bullies trying to force their world view. They have no experience and no real knowledge base.

Readers also had thoughts on "Take on Hate Rally Supports End of Hateful Rhetoric," published on thejewishnews.com.

Jonathan Schwartz: Unfortunately, Congresswoman Dingell doesn't have a problem with the racist BDS movement.

Eric Weiss: Tlaib is a rabid anti-Semite who supports BDS, which would render Israel unable to defend itself against its genocidal neighbors. Inviting her to speak is no different from inviting David Duke.

The JN welcomes comments online at thejewishnews.com. Letters can be sent to letters@renmedia.us.

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