



April 27, 2017

Dear Chaverim,

The Blessing of the Yellow Candle We light this yellow candle to rekindle God's flame, to shine His light upon the world once again, to sanctify the memories of the millions of souls, to honor their prayers and all their lost goals. We bless their existence by being alive to light this yellow candle.

Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) was commemorated this past Monday. Remembering this dark and horrific period in our history is our responsibility and we all have the responsibility to honor the memories of those who were persecuted and who perished because of their religion. We have the responsibility to fight against ideologies that exclude, marginalize and create "others" that are persecuted.

HMO's world famous trauma surgeon, Dr. Avi Rivkind reminds us of the need to remember, and the value of each life. He recently spoke at a ceremony honoring Righteous Gentiles in Warsaw, Poland. Professor Rivkind's life is a restatement to the goodness of people even in the darkest times. May we honor those who enabled us and our relatives to live and perform acts of Tzedakah and Tikkun Olam. As he recounts in this moving speech, "whenever I am privileged to save a life".

April 20, 2017, Israeli Embassy, Warsaw Poland

I have come to Poland from Jerusalem, the capital of the State of Israel.

Thank you for inviting me.

This is an emotional journey for me.

I am 67 years old, born in Israel, the only child of two survivors, Polish Jews who emerged from the Holocaust with the help of righteous gentiles, while most of their families perished.

I want to tell you about my mother Lucia Epstein.

She and her sister grew up in the city of Grodno. The two girls went to public school, and acquired fluency in Polish, even though they spoke Yiddish at home. There were prayers in school, so the girls had a familiarity with Catholic liturgy and practice, although they remained faithful Jews. In November 1941, Jews were forced into a ghetto.

Their father was a linen merchant, and a leader in the community. He was offered a chance to leave the ghetto but refused unless everyone was let go. In response, he was captured, made to walk through town with a pot of excrement on his head and then slaughtered.

My mother was a brilliant student. She was close to one of her teachers, Zofia Modzelewska, who offered to save her and her family.

The plan was set. My mother left the ghetto first, making her way to the teacher's house.

On the following night, her sister and mother were supposed to leave. It was exactly the middle of the month and the full moon illuminated the streets.

Dogs attacked them and tore them to pieces.

The teacher comforted my mother. She washed her and killed the lice that covered her head and body, lice carrying typhus. Zofia saved my mother's life.

My mother, pretty with dark hair and light eyes pretended to be a Christian for the rest of the war. She wore a cross and went to Church.

Her school experience was important. After the war she went to Vilna and then Lodz, where she met my father.

Not long ago, the Israel Holocaust Memorial Yad Vashem held an exhibit about teachers in the Holocaust.

Said the curator, "During the Holocaust most people abandoned their Jewish neighbors, turned a blind eye or even participated in the persecution of the Jews. Among them were teachers, who watched as their students were marked, harassed, discriminated against and finally murdered. Only some felt that it was their duty not only to educate and instill values in the classroom, but to live by those ideals, even at the risk of their lives."

Yad Vashem has recognized those teachers as Righteous Among the Nations.

Today we are adding the name of Zofia Modzelewska

After marrying, my parents moved to Israel so that we would be part of the Jewish people. My father's uncle was already living there, farming the land. He had moved there against the family wishes, but by the time my father and mother came all had understood what a wise move it was. My parents were proud when I went into the Israel Defense Forces. As part of my duties, I had to conduct investigations, which led me to consult with doctors. I realized I wanted to be a doctor too.

I succeeded in becoming a trauma surgeon. In that capacity, I have saved thousands of lives together with my team at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. Among those I've saved are Jews, Christians and Moslems-and yes-both terror survivors and terrorists.

Every decision I make is informed by my core belief that every patient wants to live. That is what I learned from my family.

Sometimes this credo forces me to try so-called heroic surgery when everything seems lost.

For example, in October 2000, Shimon Ohana, an 18-year-old border police officer, was declared dead in the field. But I asked the ambulance driver to bring him to the hospital. Some decisions are hard to make in the field. I uncovered him, we opened his chest cavity and began to work. He came back to life but remained in a coma for 17 days

At last, he woke up.

Today, he is a fully functioning young man, a father of two. When I see him, I can't resist hugging him: He's my continued reminder that we can't give up hope.

The lines of ambulances, inevitably, bring a fair percentage of Arab patients to Hadassah Hospital.

We can't tell whether they are perpetrators or victims. Even if we could, it wouldn't matter:

Everyone who enters the Hadassah Hospital courtyard is treated equally.

And yes, I have operated on terrorists.

Once, I was awakened at 2 a.m. on the Sabbath to do emergency surgery on a terrorist who had been injured while he was being apprehended. I had seen the grisly results of his bus bombings.

More than any other question, friends and visitors and even patients want to know how I feel using my medical training to save the lives of these mass murderers.

Because I'm a doctor, a believing Jew, a human being, I would never allow a patient to die whom I could save. But this saving of life is more than my medical requirements: It's a mission.

By fixing the holes in their chests and bellies, I'm making a statement that I'm not like those forces of darkness that want to engulf us in blood.

Do they understand? I haven't the slightest doubt that they do. They thank me. They look at me differently. I and my people are no longer the demons of their ugly propaganda. The Hadassah motto is taken from the prophet Jeremiah who cried for the "healing of my people."

The healing of all peoples is the only way to rescue the future of this region.

When I began the search for my mother's rescuer, it was hard to communicate by phone. One of the surgeons I've mentored helped me. He was born in Grodno and speaks Russian.

I got to Zofia's grandson.

Little did I know that he had already told his grandmother's story to an Israeli businessman who had brought it to Yad Vashem.

I wish I could take credit for being the one who first asked to give credit to Sofia as a Righteous Among the Nations.

We live at a time when life is often considered cheap. We witness horrible events: beheadings, and gassing of civilians and murders for no reason at all. For those of us who have devoted our lives to saving others, who value the sanctity of life this is very disturbing.

We must fight for our values. I am never afraid to take up that fight.

My great - great grandfather, the Rabbi from Kotsk was known for his wise sayings. Perhaps the most famous is:

Where is God to be found? In the place where He is given entry.

Let Him enter our hearts and inspire our deeds. He was certainly in the heart of Zofia Modzelewska

I thank her in heaven, and I thank her descendants on earth.

I thank her in the name of my mother, in my own name and those of my children.

Whenever I am privileged to save a life, I know she is watching from above with pleasure.

Prof. Avi Rivkind



Tampa Ameet Chapter

Wednesday, May 17th, 7:00 PM

Bryan Glazer Family JCC

522 S. Howard, Tampa - Free to the Public



An interfaith event, featuring author Morris Wolff, will honor the memory of Raoul Wallenberg, a righteous Gentile, who saved more than 100,000 Jews during World War II.

The program will include a presentation, book sale and signing by Wolff, and a commemoration honoring the work and memory of Wallenberg provided by area clergy. A dessert buffet will follow the program.

Patrons who donate \$100 will receive VIP reserved seating for two (2) at the presentation, an autographed copy of Wolff's book, *Whatever Happened to Raoul Wallenberg?* A private meet-and-greet session with Mr. Wolff at 6:00 pm, and recognition in the event program.

Deadline for Patrons is May 1, 2017.

For Patron information or to RSVP, please contact Brandy Gold at 813-769-4725 or brandy.gold@jewishtampa.com

This evening is proudly sponsored by the Tampa Jewish Book Festival, the Tampa Federation, and Tampa Ameet Chapter of Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America.



Maggie and Stewart Greenberg at HMO

“Doctors in Florida who pronounced me ‘soon-dead’ can’t believe that I’m healthy today,” said Hadassah melanoma patient Stewart Greenberg. Standing with his wife, Maggie, in front of the famous statue of Hadassah’s founder, Henrietta Szold, who asked that her eyes “look to the future,” Mr. Greenberg is enjoying his future thanks to [treatment at the Hadassah Medical Center](#) in 2012 when he was diagnosed with stage four melanoma. Although medical centers in the United States could offer him no hope, Hadassah’s Dr. Michal Lotem, head of the Center for Melanoma and Cancer Immunotherapy, successfully treated him with her individually tailored melanoma vaccine.

“It was *bashert* (fated) that I should meet Dr. Michal Lotem,” he said. Thank you, Hadassah.”



Day in the District: The Tampa Ameet and Collier/Lee Chapters have visited their Congressmen. **NOW ITS YOUR TURN!!** Call Luise Burman for help planning your visit.

Suggested Giving Opportunities

- Lighting the Way in Tower - \$5000
- Patient Bed in Tower - \$5000
- Additional variety of equipment in Tower - \$1000 +
- Furnish a one bed patient room in Tower - \$18,000
- Furnish a 2-bed patient room in Tower - \$36,000
- Seat in Synagogue in the Tower - \$36,000



Yahrzeit - \$5000 Yahrzeit - \$1000, Enhanced



Keeper of the Gate-\$1000-\$5000 annual commitment
Chai Society-\$180-360 annual commitment



Road Tile - \$1500

**HADASSAH
FLORIDA MISSION:
ISRAEL - SEEING IS BELIEVING**
October 18 - 31, 2017
Led by Marion Aronheim, Linda Goldstein, Dorrie Kahn & Susan Lafer

This amazing tour includes...

- Meeting with Israel's communal leaders & speakers throughout
- Visiting the Yad Vashem complex & the newly found materials relating to the people & events connected to the Holocaust
- In-depth visit to Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital
- Uncovering the glorious past of the Temple Mount on a "hands on" archeological dig at Ein Tzurim
- Exploring the mystical city of Safed & participate in a calligraphy workshop
- Interacting with the kids & staff at Hadassah's Meir Shifeya youth village
- Taking an amazing tour of the Eshkol region - visit the Regional Center & Sinef Netzarim.
- 5 nights at the Dan Fanozma, Jerusalem
- 2 nights at kibbutz Kfar Blum, Galilee
- 4 night plus LCD at the Gowine Plaza, Tel Aviv
- Meals per itinerary
- Arrival/departure transfers with main group
- Entrance fees & portage per itinerary

Eilat/Petra Extension: October 30 - November 2, 2016

- 2 nights at the Queen of Sheeba, Eilat
- Day tour to Petra
- Meals per itinerary
- Transfer in Eilat

Full itinerary & online registration:
secure.ayelet.com/HDFlorida2017.aspx

PRICING CHART	COST (PER PERSON)
LAND TOUR <i>(Includes 10 nights)</i>	\$5,375
Adventure Center Single Occupancy	\$1,250
Eilat/Petra EXTENSION <i>(Includes 3 nights)</i>	\$880
Adventure Center Single Occupancy	\$385
AIRFARE*	\$1,480

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Shabbat Shalom,

Susan

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