

Editorial

If you didn't get to hear The Yuval Ron Ensemble when they played in Indy on Sept. 20 at the JCC and Sept. 21 at the Central Library downtown, you missed a good concert of Middle Eastern music. I didn't make the first concert but I attended the second evening's "Sacred Music of the Middle East" that was held on World Peace Day.

The evening started with a few brief speeches from representatives of the three Abrahamic religions, one from Mayor Ballard's office and one from a library worker. The Jewish speaker was Gadi Boukai who spoke on behalf of the Jewish Community Relations Council.

Afterward, a short film on the origin of World Peace Day was shown. In 1981, the United Nations agreed to make Sept 21 an annual 24-hour call for ceasefires and non-violence, and a day for UN agencies and aid organizations to safely carry out life-saving work.

After the film and before the concert a local band, City Squirrels played the song "Imagine" by John Lennon. Lead singer Ernest Lewis was joined by Tim Nation and Charlie Wiles. Wiles is co-founder of the Peace Learning Center and director of the International Interfaith Peace Initiative. Also from Indianapolis, Jamilla Ali, a multi-talented belly dancer, performed during the concert.

Independently and through his work in music, Yuval Ron actively promotes peace and goodwill. Yuval is the musical director and oud player for The Yuval Ron Ensemble, which includes Arabic, Jewish and Christian artists who unite the sacred music traditions of Judaism, Sufism and the Armenian Church into an unusual mystical, spiritual and inspiring musical celebration.

The Ensemble got the audience singing, dancing, and hand-clapping, but in between the songs, the room was quiet while Ron shared little bits of wisdom. He said that Jewish music and that of other religions takes on the style of the location where the musicians live. Therefore, even though the group played Jewish, Christian and Muslim music, it all sounded Middle Eastern. If it weren't for recognizing a few Hebrew words and also hearing in advance what the songs were going to be, I wouldn't have been able to tell which songs came from which religion.

Later in the concert, Ron spoke about all the wonderful achievements happening in the Middle East in different areas such as education, medicine, technology and so forth. On a basic level there is tasty cuisine, diverse clothing, competitive sports and such. At the same time, there is a lot of darkness in the area. Continuing in his

Tour de Shuls – Indy kickoff is a blast

With a mighty blast of multiple shofars, the cyclists of Tour de Shuls, the first annual ride of greater Indianapolis, was off. Under gray, rainy skies, but with colors bright and spirits high, young riders as well as those with many miles under their treads, casual cyclists, and hard core enthusiasts alike, gathered in support of Hillels across the state at Congregation Shaarey Tefilla in Carmel (this year's host synagogue) on Sunday morning, Sept. 25.

The Tour attracted 130 registered participants for 5-, 20-, and 40-mile rides through Carmel, Westfield, and Sheridan. The riders and volunteers from across the Jewish community came out in full force representing all Indianapolis area synagogues to raise money for and awareness of Hillels on college campuses throughout the state of Indiana. "Hillel provides a center of Jewish life on college campuses for our children away from home. We wanted to support their activities and show them that the Indianapolis community is appreciative and supportive of their efforts," said Jay Perler, one of the Tours' brainchildren and organizers. Hillels at eight campuses will benefit from this event – Ball State University, Butler University, DePauw University, Earlham College, Indiana University, IUPUI-Indianapolis, Purdue University, and University of Indianapolis.

"One of the most exciting things about Tour de Shuls is that virtually the entire organized Jewish community came together to raise money for a common cause – the Hillel chapters on Indiana college campuses," said Rabbi Benjamin Sendrow of Congregation Shaarey Tefilla. "At Shaarey Tefilla, we are proud to be the first host congregation for what I hope will become an annual Indianapolis tradition. This is Jewish community at its best." Along with Rabbi Sendrow, Rabbis Dennis and Sandy Sasso of Congregation Beth El-Zedeck, and Rabbi Brett Krichiver of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation were tremendous forces in arousing their

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calm, soft spoken voice, he commented that some people think that the way to diminish that darkness is with more darkness, but he doesn't agree.

Yuval Ron believes the way to diminish the darkness is with light and that is what his group does with their music. They travel around infusing light by highlighting the commonalities of the different religions and bringing them together for a joyful

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and uplifting experience. May the group continue to do so for many years. Check out the website of Ron and The Ensemble at www.yuvalronmusic.com. See photos from the concert on page 16.

Mazel Tov to: Leslie Abrams and Matthew Tobe on their marriage Sept. 4, 2011. Leslie is the daughter of Dr. John and Diane Abrams, and Matthew is the son of Stephen Tobe and Judy Tobe.

Condolences to: Tom Steiman-Cameron and family on the death of his beloved mother Lucille Cameron; Steve Steinkeler and family on the death of his beloved mother Ruth Steinkeler; and to the family of Jack Alboher.

In the last issue I wrote about the perseverance and dedication of Jewish residents who lived their entire lives in Indianapolis and who turned 90 in the past year. One of those mentioned was Jack Alboher who died on Sept. 20. Another one who turned 90 in February that I forgot to mention was Ruth Steinkeler who died on Sept. 9.

The two came from very different Jewish traditions, Jack was Sephardic and belonged to Etz Chaim and Ruth was Ashkenazic, a member of Beth-El Zedeck. They were similar in that they both gave life their all until they breathed their last breath. Both set examples by improving the quality of life in this city with their family businesses, ongoing hard work, Jewish observances and raising Jewish children. They will be sorely missed.

Jennie Cohen, September 28, 2011 ☆