Welcome to ic-news – written by, for, and about Cleveland Jews.

In the section titled “Ic-News,” read cleve- landers’ stories about their travels to Israel. Every 10 days to Israel in 2016, inspired by knowledge gained from their travel, they will talk about Jewish identity changing political, social, and cultural perspectives of Israelis, the realities of the Israeli conflict, and what it means to be Jewish. In this news story, it relat- es Cleveland’s Jewish high school students from all destinations in scenes of Israel society and the geopolitical situation in Israeli society today in a piece of the Jewish feder- ation community, administered through ic-news. For information about or to supply ic-news, contact Tira Keller at tkeller@ic-lev.org.

In “more.teen.news,” ic-teen presents events in the community. From presenting stud- ents for the challenges on their future college campuses to helping them to be advocates for Israel, from theater (Testimony Theater) to music (HaZamir Cleveland), there are many opportunities to grow into the community. Below are reflections from members of the youth. There is no fee for students to participate in Testimony Theater and to see the play. For more information contact tkeller@ic-lev.org.

Testimony theater has had a big impact on the way I live, and thinking about how I can give back. I survived the Holocaust. They experienced things that they replayed be- cause they were in the middle of it too. For me, this community was full of Holocaust survivors and sadly, their numbers are declining steadily; that is why we have to keep the stories alive. -Noa Roblin

Testimony theater gives me a voice to those who I don’t know. We have no idea what the effects of the Holocaust are today. If we don’t create some sort of point of view is lost the Holocaust happened, even some people who are part of the Holocaust themselves don’t know what really happened. This program has me see the Holocaust story my way, indeed I am able to be ashamed of the program.

—Rachel Blumenfeld

visiting Ultra-Orthodox Community By Kayla Soloff

After a full day touring the Old City and visiting students, our group ended with an inter- esting Q&A session with Rabbi Yehuda Weinstein. Rabbi Weinstein grew up in Brooklyn, New York in an Ultra-Orthodox Jewish community and attended Yeshiva Veis in Ohio before moving to Kiev, Ukraine. He and his wife help locals in the Jewish commu- nity in Kiev by establishing Jewish camps and schools.

On our way to meet Rabbi Weinstein, we walked through the name streets of a small and beautiful Orthodox neighborhood. It felt very warm and comforting when I first saw it. There were families all over and kids run- ning around on every street. It looked a lot like University Heights on a sunny afternoon. During the tour we got to talk about life as an Ultra-Orthodox Jew in a small neighborhood like this one. In that area, I wanted to talk about the Ultra-Orthodox community’s influence on the government; however, what we heard was very different. The group talked about how Jews are unique and that we are part of an exclusive group of people who are barely around so much longer than anyone else would have ever expected. He then talked about the “stereos” of their community and how they wear long coats and mostly black or darker clothes out of respect for the underside. Of the questions asked was about the differences between Ultra-Ortho- dox and other denominations (specifically, the differences between the Modern Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox). He went on to explain that we all believe in the Torah, but the Ultra-Orthodox are much stricter. While Modern Orthodox Jews “compromise” on Halakha and integrate modernism more with the modern world, Ultra-Orthodox Jews pay more attention to detail with stricter views on Jewish law.

When this rabbi was asked about why he was proud to be a Jew, he started off by saying that he was proud of his culture. He shared his family, what he learned, and his shadim. Brainwashed! Yeah, but his par- ent’s were very proud. He grew up in a very strict Orthodox community and attended Talmud Torah and traveled, and through his experiences develop a genuine love for the region.

If the very speaks about the government and the influence of Judaism on the government. He explained that because Israel is a Jewish democratic state, we need it to mean a survival as well as democracy. He explained that this is his son is learning "a huge difference in the area" and he also explained to me that he is planning to be a spiritual leader of his community while he said that while Israel obviously needs people to fight for the flag and to be politically involved, in order to Israel to incorporate the “self- guard” part of the Jewish democracy, it needs to have people who are willing to be spiritual leaders of our state.

The Teapack Concert by Eliahu Stein

Today in Gush Etzion we met with an Australian immigrant named Ari. We sat in the backyard of his home in the evenings, being in Beit She’an and from these stories directly from survivors while they are still with us. My feeling is for the community will be Monday, April 15, 6:30pm, at Cleveand Heights High School. This performance is free and open to the community.

The Teapack Concert by Eliahu Stein

Ari firmly believed it was the Jewish people’s right to live freely in their country, and that fighting came as a consequence, so be it. Central to Ari’s focus is the belief that Palestinian community in Israeli society.

This is also crucial to protect Israel from tension in society.

From Israel advocacy, leadership training and college prep for Jewish students to HaZamir Cleveland and original theater, @akiva offers Hebrew and so much more!

Testimony theater has been proven to be an impactful program for Cleveland Jewish teens. The program’s 7th-12th grade students with Holocaust survivors. The students document the survivors’ courageous stories and develop these stories into a theatrical production. This year’s performance for the community will be Monday, April 15, 6:30pm, at Cleveland Heights High School. This performance is free and open to the community.

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Hearing what people have been through has really changed the way I see life and the way I see the world. It showed me how much Holocaust survivors as well as people of and how some people of others’ has changed. It’s important to listen to these stories as the world will rather than never. -Noa Roblin