



Jewish Community Federation
OF RICHMOND

Happy Hanukkah

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'We are one family'

*Joyce Feinberg, Richard Gottfried, Rose Mallinger,
Jerry Rabinowitz, Cecil Rosenthal, David Rosenthal, Bernice
Simon, Sylvan Simon, Daniel Stein, Melvin Wax, Irving Younger*
"Kol yisrael arevein zeh lazeh"

All Jews are responsible one for another.

More than 2,000 people of all ages and faiths including Virginia First Lady Pamela Northam and Commonwealth Attorney General Mark Herring attended the Night of Unity Community Vigil on Oct. 30 to join in memory of the 11 Jews who were killed at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh three days earlier.

The gathering outside the Weinstein JCC featured remarks and readings from Jewish agency community leaders, Rabbis, Christian clergy and Muslim leaders, as well as Northam and Herring.

"The defining characteristic of Jews has always been our sense of people-hood," said Ellen Renee Adams, president of Jewish Community Federation of Richmond. "The idea that connects us all together is no matter where we live, or how we practice, we are one people. We are one family. We care for and support one another. When one of us hurts, we all hurt."

Adams began and concluded her remarks by reciting the

Night of Unity *More on page 16*



Waving their glow sticks and singing "Oh Seh Shalom," people of all ages and faiths attended the Night of Unity Vigil on Oct. 30 at the Weinstein JCC. Photo by Adrienne Winkelmann

Love not hate

By Nina Dater

VCU Class of 2019

My name is Nina Ma'ayan Skirboll Dater and I am a proud member of Tree of Life Congregation.

My parents were married at the Synagogue, I had my Bat Mitzvah there, and I attended high holiday and Shabbat services when I was home.

I grew up in the Squirrel Hill neighborhood of Pittsburgh, a Jewish haven for all. There was a Kosher store a few blocks away from my house, multiple Synagogues, and I even attended a Jewish Day School for nine years.

None of this matters though because on Saturday, Oct. 27, 11 people from my home were murdered. Regardless of how Jewish and safe my hometown felt, it was still not safe enough. These 11 people were just praying and worshipping in their Synagogue, not doing anything hateful, but hate was used to kill them.

Cecil Rosenthal (OBM) greeted everyone at my Bat Mitzvah and told me a joke so I would laugh when he saw I was nervous to recite my

Haftarah. Now that he is unfortunately gone, this memory will have to last forever. I had seen and spoken the other ten martyrs from my Synagogue throughout my whole life at Tree of Life and in Squirrel Hill.

My past connections with them is all I have and this too will have to last.

With all of the pain and sadness I was feeling, my VCU community came together for me and everyone else hurting. On the Monday after, Rabbi Friedman and Jewish Life at VCU organized a vigil for the eleven lives lost and all that were injured. Together with 120 students and staff, we all stood in a circle in the middle of campus and lit candles and listened to the Rabbi speak words of love.

Because we need more love in this world and a lot less hate. Then people said the names of the 11, and we all shed a tear because regardless of your connection to Tree of Life, we all were feeling sadness and pain. This attack was not just on the Tree of Life – or L'Simcha Synagogue, but on the Jews of the world.

This is what we need more in this world, love. We all have different hometowns, backgrounds, cultures, but that does not mean we



Nina Ma'ayan Skirboll Dater Contributed Photo

should be mean to someone who is different. The more light and love we spread, the less hate there is. I will always remember these eleven beautiful souls who were all taken too soon by hate.

Now we must shine brighter for them.



The photos of the people on these two pages do not require words to express the sorrow on their faces as they gathered during the Night of Unity. People of all ages and faiths heard and reacted to the remarks and readings by the speakers who called for unity and decried hate and violence. They came together to mourn with their friends, families and others and send comfort to all affected by acts of terror and hate. They found comfort in prayer and song and the bonds of community. For more photos, visit the Federation's Facebook page www.facebook.com/JCFRRichmond.
Photos by Adrienne Winkelmann

Night of Unity

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names of the 11 victims murdered at the Pittsburgh Synagogue.

"Tonight, we come together to support each other and mourn the unbearable loss of 11 members of our Family, targeted while celebrating Shabbat, a time of peace and reflection ... targeted simply because they are Jews. We join together with our Jewish family and gain strength from our broader family, joined by—our Christian, Muslim, and friends of all faiths. Tonight we are Not Jews, Not Muslims, Not Catholic or Baptist. Tonight we are all one family, leaning on and supporting each other."

Weinstein JCC CEO Rick Nelson welcomed the attendees. "It is so heartwarming to see so many of you gathered here tonight. In the face of such an unspeakable tragedy, I welcome you. Our global Jewish community again has been challenged. Through events like these we become stronger. Thank you for your community support tonight."

He spoke of the efforts by the professional staff and volunteers at the JCC in Pittsburgh who provided crucial assistance to the Jewish community.

"The JCC there became a base for com-



munication and haven for involved community members. The center served as a staging and crisis center; staying open well into the night for law enforcement, human services and families and friends waiting to hear about word from their loved ones."

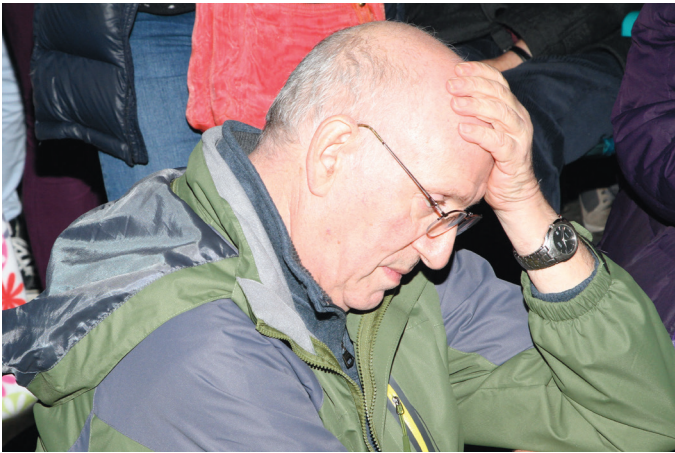
Nelson continued, "It is in this spirit of neighborliness we gather here tonight to be allies to our Jewish neighbors who have been victimized and traumatized by this tragedy and to each other.

Other speakers included Rabbi Ahuva Zaches, Congregation Or Ami and leader of the Richmond Rabbinic Council; the Rev. Mary Anne Glover, interim general minister of the Virginia Council of Churches; Rev. Dr. Corey D.B. Walker (vice president, dean and professor of Religion and Society at the Samuel Dewitt

Night of Unity *More on next page*

Night of Unity Hosts

The Night of Unity hosts were: Jewish Community Federation of Richmond, Jewish Community Relations Committee, Congregation Beth Ahabah, Weinstein JCC, Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, Temple Beth-El, Congregation Or Atid, Congregation Or Ami, Keneseth Beth Israel, Jewish Life at VCU, Chabad of Virginia, Virginia Holocaust Museum, Rudlin Torah Academy, Islamic Center of Virginia, JFS Richmond, Beth Sholom Lifecare Community, Richmond Jewish Foundation, Kehillah, BBYO, Congregation Brith Achim, Emek Shalom Holocaust Memorial Cemetery, Randolph Macon Hillel, University of Richmond Hillel, Diversity Richmond and Hadassah Richmond.



Night of Unity

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Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University; Rabbi Hal Schevitz, Congregation Or Atid; Rabbi Dovid Asher, Congregation Keneseth Beth Israel; Rabbi Scott Nagel, Congregation Beth Ahabah; Rabbi Yossel Kranz, Chabad of Virginia; Dr. Jim Somerville, Richmond's First Baptist Church; Immam Ammar Amonette; Rabbi Patrick Beaulier, Kehillah; Rabbi Michael Knopf, Temple Beth-El; Rabbi Dennis Beck-Berman, Congregation Brith Achim.

Cantors Sarah Beck-Berman, Beth Ahabah, Dara Rosenblatt of Beth-El and Hazzan Marian Turk sang "Eli Eli" and "Oh Seh Shalom."

