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ARIZONA JEWISH POST

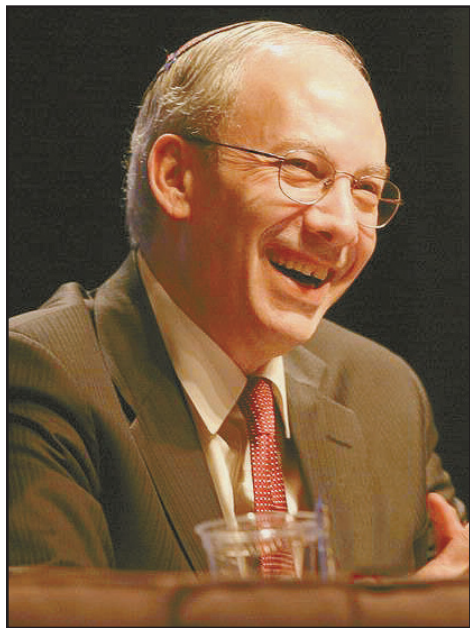
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URJ leader Rabbi Eric Yoffie to celebrate Temple Emanu-El's 100th year



Rabbi Eric Yoffie

PHYLIS BRAUN
AJP Executive Editor

In our troubled economy, religious congregations of all stripes are struggling. Yet it is precisely these economic challenges that make congregations even more important now, says Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism. "What we offer is support and community and refuge in difficult times, and those are especially essential at a point where people are feeling vulnerable and kind of battered by what's happening in the world around us," he says.

Tucsonans will have an opportunity to share that sense of community with Yoffie when he joins Temple Emanu-El for its Centennial Shabbat service on Friday, March 26 at 7:30 p.m. to celebrate the congregations'

100th anniversary and its vitality under the leadership of Rabbi Samuel M. Cohon, who has been senior rabbi for more than 10 years.

"I'll be focusing on the wonderful strengths of this congregation and how much it brings to the community. It's a cause for celebration, not simply because it's 100 years old ... but more because it's just a wonderful example of a vibrant dynamic Reform community," says Yoffie, president of the URJ since 1996. Temple Emanu-El is the oldest synagogue in the state, with adult education and outreach programs that are among the largest in the Southwest.

The URJ, which is the congregational arm of the Reform Jewish movement in North America, represents 1.5 million Jews in more than 900 synagogues across the United States and Canada.

It is North America and Israel that hold

the key to the future of the Reform movement, says Yoffie, although the movement is also working hard to build its presence in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Israel has or will soon have the largest Jewish population in the world, surpassing the United States, says Yoffie.

"We think Israel will benefit from a strong Reform presence, progressive religious values in the Jewish state," he says. "We are a small movement now [in Israel], but that movement is growing and we've made some exciting progress. We're also working for religious freedom in the Jewish state in a variety of forms."

Israel, says Yoffie, "belongs to Jews everywhere and therefore has to be welcoming to Jews everywhere."

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Wildcat strays from objective reporting, say some community members

SHEILA WILENSKY
AJP Assistant Editor

Enough is enough, say some members of the Tucson Jewish community. The Arizona Daily Wildcat, the University of Arizona's student newspaper, has been presenting only one side of the story when it comes to Israel, they contend. The latest objection was prompted by a Feb. 15 front-page "opinion piece masquerading as news," says Ken Miller, 61, UA Hillel Foundation board member specializing in Israel issues, Jewish Community Relations Council executive chair for Israel affairs, and a UA graduate student.

The story in question, "Human rights violations: UA group calls for President Shelton to sever UAPD-Motorola contract," was written by Jennifer Koehmstedt. The article

states that in 1999, the UA Police Department entered into a \$203,000 contract with Motorola Corporation that still exists today. The article quotes Hali Nurnberg, a UA senior majoring in sociology and a member of the Community for Human Rights, the group calling for divestment, as saying, "Motorola is very heavily invested in the Israeli occupation of Palestine. They have all sorts of technologies being used with large civilian deaths." Koehmstedt's story cites an article published in 2009 by Human Rights Watch, an independent human rights monitoring group, that ties Motorola to Israel's production of drone aircraft.

A letter accusing the Wildcat of "biased and unethical practices," written by Hillel's Israel Team of students and Lily Winchester, a member of the UA CUFI (Christians United for Israel on Campus) club and a

senior majoring in journalism, was delivered to Wildcat Editor in Chief Lance Madden, a senior majoring in journalism, on Friday, March 5, by a group of Hillel students, along with Winchester and Hillel Executive Director Michelle Blumenberg and Director of Engagement Laura Wilson Etter. The letter was signed by more than 570 UA students, parents, faculty, staff and community members.

One serious concern with the Feb. 15 "Human Rights Violations" article, which the students' letter addressed, was that UA President Robert Shelton was misquoted, says Blumenberg. Shelton was quoted in the Wildcat as saying, "I certainly haven't made up my mind. I'm gathering information ... In terms of divesting, I also need to get some advice from council [sic], and that's always

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University of Arizona students Aaron Jacobs, left, and Joel Kanter look at the Feb. 15 edition of the Arizona Daily Wildcat, which featured controversial stories on Israel.

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