SPECIAL SECTION

2018 Summer Arts Guide

Pages 13-17

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SPECIAL TO THE JEWISH LIGHT

BY SUSAN FADEM

‘Scared every day’: WWII bombardier shares his story

Don’t call him a hero. It’s OK to believe we’re hearing this from someone who lived it.

"I’ve never being believing I’m a hero," Ralph Goldsticker Jr. said.

"I didn’t know it," Goldsticker responded.

"I wasn’t the pilot. But we had six planes in a squadron, 18 in a group."

Could you hear the bombs drop? ("There was too much other noise.")

With "pinch me, we can’t believe we’re hearing this from someone who lived it," the audience at Shaare Emeth sat enraptured.

"Are you crazy enough to imagine what that is?" he said. "What’s the last time you stood opposite 47,000 people?"

See VETERAN on page 6.

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2018 UNSUNG HEROES

Maxine Mirowitz gets a kiss from her husband, Steven, after the 2018 Unsung Hero awards, held May 17 at the Jewish Community Center. Maxine Mirowitz was one of 10 people to be honored as an Unsung Hero. Find more photos from the event on page 4, and see an extensive gallery online at stljewishlight.com/multimedia. PHOTO: PHILIP DEITCH

Could Israel’s army have acted differently on Gaza border? Experts disagree.

What should an army do when tens of thousands of protesters mass on its border? When that happened on Gaza’s border with Israel May 14, Israeli soldiers opened fire on protesters who were storming the border fence, killing 60 and wounding more than a thousand. In the days since, debates have raged over larger ideas and issues like terrorism, occupation, withdrawal, blockade, civilians and militants.

But in real time last week, did the Israeli Defense Forces conduct itself appropriately? Could it have defended its border with less bloodshed? Here are the cases for and against the IDF’s conduct — and an example of a similar situation where things ended a little differently.

See ISRAEL on page 9.


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Schmooze: Scouts’ honors; building the Arch Café

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Zack Wild, Avery Fredman and Ben Fister and Max Hampton. Temple Israel is the only Jewish institution in St. Louis that represents; building the Arch Café

Talk about coming full circle

Joe Spiegelglass started his business in downtown St. Louis in 1904, from a pushcart. He’d walk the streets, knocking on door to door, looking to do carpentry repair work.

As retail grew in St. Louis during the 1920s, and department stores got larger, Joe found he needed additional help. He hired a few carpenters to work with him, and then little by little began bringing on sub-contractors to assist in their individual areas of expertise.

Over the next eight decades, Spiegelglass Construction, a Jewish-owned family business, continued to grow both locally and nationally, as more generations joined the company. Today, Barry and Tim Spiegelglass, Joe’s grandson and great-grandson, respectively, are co-owners, and working on a signature project: the Arch Café, a new restaurant that is, of course, located downtown, at the base of the Gateway Arch.

The 1,600 square foot café, which is scheduled to open July 4, will offer farm-to-table food that includes everything from ribs, hamburgers, paninis and toasted raviolis to vegetarian and gluten-free options. Visitors can also enjoy locally sourced foods, as well as organic produce. “Spiegelglass Construction has strong roots in St. Louis — our business began here in 1904, the year of World’s Fair,” said Barry Spiegelglass. “It’s an incredible honor to now be constructing the Arch Café more than 110 years after my grandfather opened Spiegelglass Construction.”

Like I said, full circle.

Continued from Page 1

Ever since making headlines in 2015 as one of the American recipients of the French Legion of Honor medal, for helping liberate France from Nazi control, Goldsticker has been in demand as a speaker.

He earlier received the Distinguished Flying Cross and five other air medals from the Army Air Corps. Another medal, from the Russian government, recognized that after a mission, his plane landed in the Soviet Union, where it was destroyed on the ground by German bombers.

Augmented by his own research and air-combat footage from the documentary “Memphis Belle: A Story of a Flying Fortress,” Goldsticker tells his story: a savourer of history, he counts among personal souvenirs his wartime paychecks (the Army’s F73 a month dwarfed his previous St. Louis wages as a 50-cent-an-hour clerk), his train tickets and flying records.

Goldsticker tailors his sharing to particular audiences, whether schoolchildren, pilots or senior citizens, and talks about:

• Friday nights at Royal Air Force’s Deopham Green airfield in England, the 15 or 20 Jews on base, without benefit of a rabbi, conducted religious services. A twice-a-year-to-temple Jew at home, serviceman Goldsticker discovered that “a little praying never hurt.” Raised at Shaare Emeth, he’s a longtime member of Shaare Emeth; and other visuals that his son Bob has shared.

Continued from Page 1

Veteran: WWII bombardier shares his story

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Zack Wild, Avery Fredman and Ben Fister and Max Hampton. Temple Israel is the only Jewish institution in St. Louis that sponsors a Boy Scout troop. The TI troop is 98 years old and currently has 23 scouts ranging in age from 12 to 17 years old.

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