



Newsletter

Issue 7, Spring 2020

Sustainable Israeli-Palestinian Projects

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Join Us!

Wednesday, April 22, 10am MDT

Community Update Via Zoom

Board Members Bernard Amadei, Beth Ornstein, and Peter Ornstein will talk about their visit to Israel and the West Bank this past January. Several of SIPP's Palestinian, Israeli, and American partners will also participate.

[Please RSVP Here](#)

You need to RSVP in order to receive the Zoom link.

Message from the Board

COVID-19 is creating challenges for all of us as we try to foster community while preserving separation. Our efforts may be delayed, but they have not stopped. With much of normal life here in the US and in Israel and Palestine disrupted, SIPP is in regular communication with many of our partners. We are looking ahead to the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, and are currently discussing impactful future projects. Your ongoing support is vital to our ongoing work and is deeply appreciated.

January 2020 SIPP Trip

SIPP Board members Peter Ornstein, Bernard Amadei, and Beth Ornstein traveled to Israel in early January, 2020 as part of a US Embassy Grant awarded to Arab-Jewish Center for Empowerment, Equality, and Cooperation Negev Institute for Strategies of Peace and Economic Development (AJEEC-NISPED), Green Land Society for Health Development (GLSHD), and SIPP. They also met with a number of existing and potential partners in Israel and in the West Bank. Read on for some of the highlights:



US Embassy Grant Workshop. Bernard and Beth led interactive presentations as part of a one-and-a-half day workshop relating to sustainability, systems, and facilitation and communication skills for a diverse group of eleven participants (3 Israeli Jewish, 4 West Bank Palestinian, and 4 Israeli Bedouin) at the AJEEC-

NISPED office in Be'er Sheva. The participants learned about the common, cross – border environmental challenges that their communities face. This was the second of three workshops being provided as part of the US Embassy grant. Participants had been asked to read an EcoPeace study of the Hebron Basin in advance of the program, and the workshop culminated with a role play based on that study to explore the varied perspectives and concerns of the region's diverse stakeholders. As we completed the workshop, it struck us that participants learned a lot from just working through a fact-based role play with people they would never interact with and who espoused perspectives they do not necessarily share. Between the discussions about the interconnectedness of environmental systems, the presentations on different communication styles, and culminating with the role play, the participants came away with a new way to look at the needs and challenges of cross-border issues.

We were pleased that the Cultural Attache from the US Embassy attended the role play portion of the workshop.



Science Training Encouraging Peace (STEP) Fellows. Beth, Peter and Bernard visited with STEP Fellows Nibal, Reut, and their advisor Dr. Amit Gross at Ben Gurion University's campus adjacent to S'de Boker. They were impressed with all three individuals and the lab where the

students are conducting graduate-level research associated with environmental aspects of human waste. Nibal had just arrived on campus the previous day with her two young children. She is hoping that her husband will soon obtain a permit so that she will be able to continue with her studies.



GLSHD Environmental Education Center (EEC)

Grant. Beth, Peter, and Merrill Glustrom (Boulder Rotary Club) visited the EEC in Idhna. GLSHD's

Director reported that the EEC is working on developing educational displays to explore different environmental and educational topics. They also discussed obtaining a

HomeBioGas composter/biodigester for the EEC (see below). Rotary Club (Boulder and Jerusalem) is planning support for the EEC's educational work designed to stop the pollution-causing burning of electronic devices in the area and encourage responsible recycling/refurbishing of old computers.



Compost Digesters



SIPP is starting two projects to develop community projects and education around composting. We are supporting the purchase of two inexpensive compost-to-methane digester units, manufactured by Israeli company HomeBioGas, to convert their food and animal waste to heating/cooking gas and fertilizer. One project is located at the GLSHD Environmental Education Center in Idhna. The other, a joint Jewish-Bedouin project will be in Ramat

HaNegev. Our purpose is to foster inter-community interaction through environmental education.

Alliance for Middle East Peace (ALLMEP) - Lobbying Day

SIPP Board Member Roberta Spivak, along with representatives from other ALLMEP member organizations, attended an all-day ALLMEP Advocacy Day in Washington DC on February 11th. Learning the basics of lobbying in the morning, in the afternoon they lobbied congressional representatives and staff for aid and economic development to further Middle East peace. In particular, Roberta and others asked for support for the Partnership Fund for Peace Act (PFPA), a proposed law modeled on a successful program that brought warring sides together in Ireland. There is very broad, bipartisan support in Congress for the PFPA. The Act was in committee and in the process of being redlined. Roberta introduced SIPP's work to each of the five different congressional offices she visited.



Meet our Board Member: Sandy Friedman



SIPP is excited to introduce our board member, Sandy Friedman. She has been a supporter of SIPP since its founding. Sandy joined the board after previously being involved in a joint Israeli-Palestinian project importing olive oil to Boulder, Colorado. She is very committed to SIPP's mission and believes that peace in the Middle East will ultimately come through economics.

Sandy's background is in the medical field. She worked as a registered nurse and has a particular interest in public health. Involved in a number of organizations around the Boulder community, Sandy serves as the president of the local Hadassah chapter, the Chair of Social Action Committee her local synagogue, and she serves on the Hillel advisory board at the University of Colorado Boulder. In her free time, she enjoys traveling with her husband, reading, hiking, and visiting her 5 children and 10 grandchildren across the country.

Sandy wanted to join SIPP because she loves Israel and is hopeful for Israeli-Palestinian peace with SIPP's approach through environmental community engagement. She is ultimately committed to the best sustainable environmental practices which will bring the highest level of health and well-being to both Israelis and Palestinians.

Meet SIPP Liaison: Lisa Talesnick



SIPP's activity on the ground in both Israel and Palestine has developed so much in our action-packed four years of existence, that we have found we can benefit from an on-the-ground presence. Over the past several years, we have been fortunate to work with Lisa Talesnick on a number of our projects. She accompanied/drove us to the Mar Saba Monastery in 2018, and has introduced us to several potential partners. Lisa

is a former Boston Globe Correspondent in Jerusalem, publisher and founder of Israel News Today, director of the Peace Academy at the Jerusalem School in Beit Hanina, co-founder of the All Nations Cafe -- a peace initiative gathering Israelis and Palestinians, and an educator of mindfulness and non-violent communication in elementary and high schools. Lisa is well connected to the peace activist community in Jerusalem and shares SIPP's values in promoting community-to-community connections.

Lisa has agreed to expand her relationship with us and act as our representative when we need a physical presence in Israel or Palestine.

Meet our Intern: Tzigane Martin



SIPP is excited to introduce our new intern, Tzigane Martin. Tzigane began work for SIPP in February of this year. She became interested in SIPP after learning about its mission to facilitate peace efforts through environmental engagement. As a senior at the University of Colorado Boulder studying International Affairs and Environmental Studies, she has always been curious about the way the environment can play a role in both

starting and easing conflicts.

Tzigane has previously interned for The Nature Conservancy, where she

conducted fieldwork for the conservation of Colorado lands. She has a particular interest in environmental policy and hopes to one day work on global environmental policy efforts. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, photography, videography, and cooking.

Through this internship experience, Tzigane hopes to learn more about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and how to navigate challenging conflicts through community engagement, both locally and abroad.

Donations

Peace is a verb. SIPP accomplishes our work through the volunteer efforts of our board members and others, and also by raising funds for the projects of our regional partners. We work hard to minimize our expenses and ensure accountability of grantees and donees. But, we need more funds to be more effective. Help us by making a donation today. If you are unable to make a monetary donation, please consider donating airline miles as we can use them to bring some of our partners to the United States or send American experts to the region.

Donate to SIPP!

To learn about donating miles, contact us at info@sippprojects.org
