

Frequently Asked Questions
Israel @60: A Capital Celebration
June 1, 2008

Q: So, just what IS Israel @ 60?

A: This year is Israel's 60th anniversary, a significant milestone that deserves special recognition and provides a great opportunity to celebrate its achievements and history. **The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington has undertaken this wonderful event to celebrate the accomplishments of the modern state of Israel and the friendship between the United States and Israel on Sunday, June 1st from noon to 5 p.m. at a free, family festival on The National Mall!** This will be the largest celebration of Israel in Washington's history with activities, events and venues for all ages, and we want people from across the Greater Washington area to celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary together on the Mall.

Q: What can people expect at the "Capital Celebration" event June 1st?

A: The *Israel @ 60* festival on the National Mall will feature Israeli music, arts, culture, history, society, and food and there will be entertainment, venues, and activities for all ages. This truly is a community-wide celebration and we invite everyone to come to the National Mall on **Sunday, June 1** between **noon and 5pm** to celebrate together. We are thrilled to announce several performers for Israel @ 60: internationally acclaimed singer/songwriter **Regina Spektor**, a Jewish Russian émigré, whose music has been featured on *Grey's Anatomy* and *CS*; Tony and Emmy Award-Winning Actor **Mandy Patinkin**; Israeli rock band **Mashina**; and two beloved **Sesame Street Muppets, Oscar the Grouch**, and his Israeli cousin **Moishe Oofnik** (from Israel's "Rechov Sumsum," the Israeli version of "Sesame Street"). Wheelchair accessibility and sign language interpreting for the hearing impaired available.

Q: There seem to be quite a few Israel @ 60 events in Washington. How are they all different from each other?

A: Israel @ 60: A Capital Celebration is hosted by The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. It will be the "capstone event" of hundreds of individual events over the past year – celebrated by dozens of synagogues, Jewish Community Centers and Jewish membership organizations – and promises to be the largest celebration of Israel's independence in Washington's history. The festival will feature activities, events and venues for all ages, and we want thousands from across the community to celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary together on the Mall on Sunday, June 1, 2008, from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. This June 1st event will celebrate Israel's 60th birthday and its important and lasting

connection between America and the Jewish state. The Federation is proud to host this event to build community and connect people to Israel in a fun, positive way.

Q: What's the goal or purpose of the event on The Mall?

A: The festival will celebrate Israel's 60th birthday and its important and lasting connection between America and the Jewish state. The Jewish Federation and its community of partners will host an afternoon that will showcase the unique accomplishments of modern Israel, and the many similarities between the United States and Israel. The Federation seeks to inspire a sense of pride and peoplehood that will create a broader and deeper connection between the Washington community and the State and people of Israel. We also seek to build a stronger, even more inclusive sense of community within the Washington area.

Q: Who's invited? Is there an admission charge?

A: Admission is free and open to the public. Israel @ 60 will have something for everyone: from families with young children to college students, some of whom recently participated in their first trip to Israel, from young professionals to empty nesters, to the retired and seniors, from long-time supporters of the State of Israel, to the casual tourist on the Mall, every person will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the accomplishments of the modern state of Israel over the past 60 years and the friendship between the people of the United States and Israel.

Q: What should I bring to the event?

A: The Jewish Federation's *Israel @ 60: A Capital Celebration* event is for everyone, so bring your family, friends, and neighbors. As it is June 1st and the weather may be hot, we suggest sunscreen, a hat and lots of water. While there will be concessions with food for sale, attendees are encouraged to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy on The Mall.

Q: What exactly will happen at the event? Will there be performers?

A: We are thrilled to announce several top performers for Israel @ 60: internationally acclaimed singer/songwriter **Regina Spektor**, a Jewish Russian émigré, whose popular music has been featured on *Grey's Anatomy* and *CSI*; Tony and Emmy-Award-Winning Actor **Mandy Patinkin, who will serve as emcee**; Israeli rock band **Mashina**; and two beloved **Sesame Street Muppets, Oscar the Grouch**, and his Israeli cousin **Moishe Oofnik**, from Israel's "Rechov

Sumsum,” the Israeli version of “Sesame Street.” There will also be concerts from some of our local talent, such as Zemer Chai, Robyn Helzner Trio, and Lion’s Tale Puppets. We promise something for everyone!

Q: Will there be seats for the concerts OR How can I secure the best seats for the concerts?

A: There are no seats for the concerts. Event-goers might want to bring a blanket to sit on the grass. Space is on a first-come, first-served basis. While many activities are under sheltered pavilion tents, concert seating is not under cover, so please be prepared for any weather.

Q: How can I find out the full schedule of events?

A: You will be able to find a complete schedule of events at www.israel60dc.org closer to the event. Please check our website for updated security, concessions, and program information before heading to the event.

Q: What else will there be to see or do?

A: *Israel @ 60: A Capital Celebration* will offer exciting hands-on programming and entertainment for people of all ages that will celebrate the many facets of Israeli culture. There will be cultural presentations and entertainment, children’s workshops, and displays on Israel’s tremendous achievements over the past 60 years. This day of fun includes sing-alongs and folk dance workshops, crafts for children, briefings by Israeli Diplomats, opportunities to meet recent immigrants to Israel, cooking demonstrations, historic exhibitions, and much, much more.

Q: So, it really is appropriate for nearly any age?

A: *Israel @ 60: A Capital Celebration* promises to educate, entertain and inspire all those who join together at the National Mall on June 1st to celebrate Israel’s 60th anniversary. From families with young children to college students, many of whom recently participated in their first trip to Israel, from young professionals to empty nesters, to active retirees, from long-time supporters of the State of Israel, to the casual tourist on the Mall, every participant will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the accomplishments of the modern state of Israel over the past 60 years and the friendship between the people of the United States and Israel.

Q: Who and how many people are you expecting?

A: We hope that thousands of community members from across the greater Washington area will join together rain or shine, noon to 5 pm on Sunday, June 1 on the National Mall to help celebrate Israel's 60th birthday and the important and lasting connection between America and the state of Israel. We also welcome those with only even casual interest in learning more about Israel.

Q. What kinds of security precautions are being taken?

A: Security is a top priority for everyone. We are doing everything possible to ensure a safe and fun event.

Q: Will there be food or things to buy? And can you bring your own food?

A: There will be food for sale. All food will be kosher, including Israeli-style food. Other than food, everything at the festival is free!

Q: Where, exactly is it again?

A: *Israel @ 60: A Capital Celebration* will take place on the National Mall – one of DC's prime locations, with a view of the U.S. Capitol on one side and the Washington Monument on the other. In terms of specifics, it will span the National Mall from 4th to 7th Streets NW, between the National Air & Space Museum and the National Gallery of Art.

Q: How should people get there? How far is it from the metro?

A: As you know, parking near the Smithsonian Museums can be difficult, though limited parking can be found downtown. We strongly suggest that you gather your friends and family and take the Metro. There are several Metro stops that are a convenient walk to the Mall:

- Smithsonian station (Blue/Orange lines) .00 miles away
- L'Enfant Plaza (Blue/Orange, Yellow/Green lines) .1 miles away
- Federal Center station (Blue/Orange lines) .12 miles away
- Archives station (Yellow/Green line) .42 miles away

Q: My organization is hiring a bus. Where should it discharge the passengers and where can it park?

A: Most bus drivers in the D.C. area have a usual pick-up/drop-off spot and know where to park. Should your driver need assistance, Union Station is a good option for parking. There will be no bus parking available at the site. We

recommend dropping off passengers in front of the Air and Space Museum or the National Gallery of Art (mall side of the museums).

Q: What if it rains?

A: We will hold *Israel @ 60: A Capital Celebration*, come rain or shine, on Sunday, June 1 from noon to 5 p.m.

Q: Why The Mall?

A: What better place is there in our nation's capital than the National Mall for friends of Israel from across the Greater Washington area to showcase and celebrate the accomplishments of the State of Israel in arts & culture, science, technology, medicine, and business? What's more, we patterned *Israel @ 60: A Capital Celebration* on the Folklife Festival - as an exercise in cultural democracy which encourages visitors to actively participate in every facet of the festival. We hope Washingtonians will enjoy the various program pavilions in which we try to bring modern Israel's culture and history alive for Americans from all walks of life.

Q. Can I volunteer? How?

A: To sign up to volunteer, please go to www.shalomdc.org/jvc and click on the link.

Q: Is it a political event or more of a cultural event?

A: *Israel @ 60: A Capital Celebration*, is a cultural event, in the same spirit as the many festivals held on the National Mall grounds. We hope that Washingtonians who come together to celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary on the National Mall will learn, sing, dance, and converse with people presented in the Festival program.

Q: Who organized it?

A: Hosted by The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, *Israel @ 60: A Capital Celebration* promises to be the largest, most exciting festival ever honoring Israel's independence in our nation's capital. There are 270,000 people living in Jewish households in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. We are the 6th largest Jewish community in the country. Federation brings people together to celebrate our Jewish heritage and to help care for people who need us. Like any major undertaking of this kind, hundreds of congregations, organizations, sponsors and supporters are involved to ensure that this event celebrating Israel's 60th anniversary to make this celebration a success.

Q: What's The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington?

A: The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington is a community-building organization that helps people in need, strengthens Jewish identity and connects Jews to each other locally, in Israel, and around the world. Because of the caring and generosity of our donors, we are able to help Jews and non-Jews of all ages and walks of life, and support interests from education and the arts to social services and cultural programs. The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington cares for those in need, deepens engagement in Jewish life, and strengthens the bonds among Jews in the Washington area, in Israel, and around the world.

Q: Can you describe each of the program pavilions?

A: Program pavilions will have multi-media displays, hands-on activities and performers or experts, with a different theme or focus about modern Israel. Of course, I want to encourage everyone to come see the pavilions for themselves, but here's a short overview:

1. The **Family Pavilion** hosts special activities geared toward parents with young children (pre-readers and elementary school age) with their parents, including "Shalom Sesame," a visit to the Kotel (Western Wall), Israeli games, craft activities, etc.
2. The **Israeli Achievements Pavilion** will feature ways Israel makes everyone's lives better every day.
3. The **Israeli Culture Pavilion** will have sing-alongs and folk dance workshops.
4. The **Many Faces of Israel Pavilion** will showcase the many faces, religions and facets of Israel's diverse society, including Ethiopian crafts, Sephardic traditions, and Arabic dance.
5. The **Tour the Land of Israel** will provide the opportunity to explore Israel's geography through games, performance, and film. The beauty of the land of Israel comes to the National Mall through spectacular photo-murals.
6. The **Israeli Government and Democracy Pavilion** will outline the democratic and pluralistic structure of Israel's government. Participants can have their photos taken with some of Israel's most important historical figures.
7. The **Capital Connections: Birth of Israel Pavilion** will be featuring photos and a dramatic performance which will demonstrate the D.C. area's connection to the founding of the State of Israel.
8. The **Immigration: Israel's unique Story Pavilion** will show how Israel, a country of immigrants, has absorbed and benefited from the contributions of individuals and various cultures. Immigrants from Ethiopia, the Former Soviet Union and North America will tell their stories to our audiences.

There will be something for everyone. *Israel @ 60: A Capital Celebration* promises to educate, entertain and inspire all those who join together at the National Mall on June 1st to celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary.

Q: Last time - what, when and where is the event?

A: I'm so glad that you asked that question. *Israel@60: A Capital Celebration* will feature internationally acclaimed **singer-songwriter Regina Spektor** and other celebrity performers, including **Israeli rock band Mashina** and **Sesame Street Muppets – Oscar the Grouch and his Israeli cousin Moishe Oofnik**. And we're thrilled that **Mandy Patinkin, the Tony and Emmy award winning actor** will emcee the festival.

Sponsored by The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, the festival will celebrate Israel's 60th birthday and its important and lasting connection between America and the Jewish state. Admission is free and the event is open to the entire public. **We hope to see everyone from the Greater Washington, DC area - rain or shine - on Sunday, June 1, on the National Mall from noon to 5 p.m. for *Israel@60: A Capital Celebration!*** You know, in Hebrew, you use the same word for Hello, Goodbye and Peace – the word Shalom. For more information about *Israel @ 60: A Capital Celebration*, go to www.shalomdc.org.