Hatikvah Kallah
Show Time
January 24-26, 2014

Hosted by
BITTY
Location
Congregation Beth Am,
Tampa

NFTY-STR
Life is a Circus
And with Avodah, G’Milut Chasadim, and
Torah you can do anything

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NFTY-STR Acronyms and Definitions

URJ: Union for Reform Judaism, the parent body of NFTY. The URJ encompasses all of NFTY plus many college students, adults, rabbis, cantors, temple board members, and basically every reform Jew in America. They also manage summer camps like Kutz and Camp Coleman.

NFTY: NFTY is the North American Federation of Temple Youth. Any member of a TYG (Temple Youth Group) is a part of NFTY. It ranges from Canada, to Texas.

STR: Southern Tropical Region (our NFTY region).

Regional Board: The Regional Board consists of 6 members, President Brandon Marks, Programming Vice President Matt Kessler, Social Action Vice President Adam Shapiro, Torop Religious and Cultural Vice President Aaron, Communications Vice President Cindy Groszman, and Membership Vice President Avi Matarasso.

STRrites: The lovely members of NFTY-STR

STRsky: NFTY-STR’s beautiful, white tiger mascot!

Kallah: A regional convention where all TYG’s within that region gather for a fun weekend! NFTY-STR has 5: Fall, Winter, Hatikvah, Spring, and LLTI.

LLTI: Our regional Liz Leadership Training Institute, which is a NFTY-STR event that focuses on leadership within TYG board members.

B’rit Kehilah: NFTY’s Code of Conduct. You sign this before coming to an event; it details the rules and regulations for a NFTY event.

Shirah: Where we show our ruach! We sing, stomp, clap, dance, and make lots of noise! Shirah is led by our wonderful songleaders: Leo Henkin, Morgan Routman, Emily Groff, and Carly Mackler.

Tikkun Olam: This means repairing the world. It is a Jewish value that tells us to do social action. NFTYites do this by participating in mitzvah projects, social action programs, and doing mitzvot in general!
The prayer of Elohai N’shama is for the purity of the soul. This is one of, if not my favorite prayer. I remember my first Hatikvah Kallah in seventh grade—precisely where you are (only four years ago) The song leaders at the time led us in Saturday morning services, and when we got to the Elohai, I was utterly moved. I heard for the first time Casey Prusher’s version of the prayer (you created me, you shaped me, you breathed me into liiiiiife)

The whole room was ringing with the sound of the participants voices. My soul was pure, my heart was lifted, and my mind was at peace. I had never been to a Jewish camp before, or anything like NFTY. In my mind, Elohai n’shama was the spark to my NFTY experience and now every time I hear it, I flash back to my 7th grade Hatikvah Kallah, and feel serenity.

This prayer helped me dive into NFTY with all of my soul. At my 7th grade Hatikvah Kallah in 2010, I met one of my best NFTY friends there (shout out to Emily Groff—she’s a songleader) and we are still great friends today. I encourage you to find your prayer, your friend, your place, because I have found a place where my soul is purest—NFTY.
Finding value in Circus Chaos by Briana Bursten, BITTY

I remember my first NFTY experience like it was yesterday. It was Fall Kallah and I was a small, slight, insecure freshman. I distinctly recall walking into this large synagogue without a single person by my side—both physically and symbolically. The weekend that followed was not as eye-opening or as life-changing as was promised. Sure, the programs were engaging and interesting, but NFTY seemed to be a socially exclusive place for teens that had gone to Jewish camp or for those who had incredibly outgoing personalities. I did not fit into either of those categories, and failed to make meaningful connections and friendships throughout the course of the weekend.

Down on my luck, my youth advisor encouraged me to attend Spring Kallah of the same year. This event was far different in structure and in style. I met so many others and thoroughly enjoyed myself. While I came to acknowledge NFTY as a fun environment with the occasional emotional program, I did not really see it as anything more.

My turning point arrived exactly two years ago, when BITTY hosted Hatikvah Kallah 2012. It was not until I was given planning responsibility and group leading opportunities that I realized the true value of NFTY and the wonderful community NFTY-STR facilitates. I was able to grow as a leader, a mentor, and a friend. Simultaneously, I was able to look up to numerous other individuals as leaders, mentors, and eventually as friends. For this experience, I am eternally grateful.

Throughout the months that preceded this year’s Hatikvah Kallah, I had the wonderful opportunity to work closely with various regional board members and with members of the BITTY board. I became aware of each individual’s unique talents and strengths, and feel confident about the future of leadership. In addition, this weekend allowed me to meet numerous participants. With these seventh and eighth graders paving the way, the future of NFTY looks incredibly bright.

I encourage all of you to find your niche and to continue to come back to NFTY events even if you think it is not for you. The individuals you will meet and the opportunities you will engage in will undoubtedly contribute to your teenage development and enable you to realize your potential as leaders, mentors, and as friends.
Lisa Cohen: Shalom NFTY-STR!!!
My name is Lisa Cohen the Youth Director at Congregation Beth Am!!
My favorite color is....Purple! I’ve been a Youth Director for 7 years thanks to my son and NFTY-STR!! My favorite part of Kallah is Siyyum! I love hearing what our participants have to say! If you are an 8th grader hope to see you at LiTI and if you are a 7th grader see you next year at Hatikvah Kallah!

Briana Bursten: Hi everyone! I am the President of BITTY. Leading up to Hatikvah Kallah, I was responsible for attending temple board meetings in an effort to secure host families, monitoring the BITTY board, and adapting and creating numerous programs. Although it has been hard work, it has also been very exciting and rewarding. When not spending time at NFTY or BITTY events, I enjoy listening to music and attending any concert I can go to. I also love Saturday Night Live and watch it religiously! Thank you again for coming to this event. I hope that you all enjoy this weekend and that you successfully find order in the chaotic circus of NFTY-STR’s Hatikvah Kallah!

Hanna Rinner: Hi! I’m Hanna and I’m the interim PVP (Programing Vice President) of BITTY. I am 15, a sophomore in high school, and have been involved in NFTY for 2 years. My role in this event included helping in the planning, execution, and preparation for the weekend. I group lead many of the programs and mixers that you participated in, as well as prepared some of the materials, such as the posters for the “Jewish Heroes” program. Some fun facts about me include that I love musical theatre, attended Hatikvah Kallah hosted by BITTY 2 years ago, and I have a small obsession with Gossip Girl.

Michelle Tomlinson: Hey everybody! I’m BITTY’s Religious and Cultural Vice President. As RCVP, I handle the whole “Jewish” aspect of the event. My main job was to plan Friday night and Saturday morning services and make them as fun and interesting as they could possibly be! I am a sophomore at Gaither high school, I am a proud member of the marching band, and I love to read and write my own books.

Ryan Cornig: Hey NFTY-STR! I’m Ryan and I’m your SAVP. A few things about me… my first NFTY event was Hatikvah Kallah 2010, which was my 8th grade year. My favorite TV show is Breaking Bad. I am athletic and I love all sports. I have been a counselor at Camp Coleman and Camp Jenny. This year I’m a senior and this is my second to last event! Hope you had an amazing time this weekend, come back soon! (:

Kelsey Oberbroeckling: Hello There! I’m the Communications Vice President of BITTY. I designed the spiffy red event T-shirt, wrote the Just Us program, and helped with the opening skit. When I’m not at Shul, you can find me at the theater or in the chorus room. I love performing, Buddy Baseball, Camp Jenny, and Relay for Life. I’m so passionate about Relay, I’m my schools event chair, where over 600 students raise money to fight against cancer.

Hannah Tomlinson: Hello Everyone!! My name is Hannah Tomlinson. I am BITTY's Membership Vice President. As MVP, I got the chance to write all of the mixers so I hoped you enjoyed them! I am a senior at Gaither High School and love being in my high school's band program. I love that all of you are here this weekend and hope you had a blast!!

Lexy Frenchko: Hi NFTY-STR! I’m Lexy, the member at large. Through the process of planning this event, I got to help Hannah Tomlinson brainstorm and create the mixers. I am a horseback rider and it is my passion. I love to read. I have many books that I like but I would have to say that The Hunger Games in my favorite! Also, I adore dogs!

Andrew Jasper: I am Andrew Jasper and I am the Member At Large on BITTY’s board. My job in planning this event was to do any tasks that needed to be done but did not have someone to do them. One main thing I did was I helped with a lot of Membership VP tasks including mixers and some programs. I am a freshman in high school and I like to play my PS3.

Hannah Oberbroeckling: Hello There! I’m Hannah, the BITTY Songleader. In my free time you will most likely see me on stage performing with my Thespian Theater Troupe or singing with my Show Choir. Also, I’m very active with Relay For Life, Buddy Baseball and the Student Government Association at my school.