

PEOPLE

Newton men organize program focusing on Roots in Israel

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Temple Emanuel Brotherhood members distribute customized Jewish National Fund collection boxes to children at the temple's annual Kickoff Barbecue in September 2012. Pictured, from left to right, are Roots in Israel Committee members **Danny Mandeau**, **David Beckman** (the current Brotherhood president), **Bruce A. Gold**, **Dennis Buchenholz**, **Rob Finkel**, **Peter Matusow**, and **David Greenfield**.

DEEPENING ROOTS: **David Greenfield** said he and fellow Temple Emanuel Brotherhood members **Dennis Buchenholz** and **Danny Mandeau** have sensed a growing loss of appreciation for what life was like for Jews before the United Nations recognized Israel in 1948.

Adding to the Newton residents' dismay, according to Greenfield, is the news media's focus on Israel "through a lens of conflict" with its Middle East neighbors, while overlooking its contributions in humanitarian aid and innovative technology.

Last fall, the men's group launched Roots in Israel, an initiative designed to strengthen the congregation's connection with Israel. According to Greenfield, this objective is being addressed by sharing stories of Israel's accomplishments in the temple's weekly newsletter and monthly bulletin, and in photo essays documenting Roots in Israel events.

Through a grant from the New England chapter of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, customized Jewish National Fund collection boxes were distributed to all 1,100 families in Temple Emanuel's congregation. The contents are collected on holidays for donation to the Jewish National Fund, as a lesson for children on the value of supporting their historic homeland.

Ultimately, Greenfield hopes other Jewish men's clubs will implement similar programs nationally and internationally.

"Israel's reestablishment after 2,000 years is miraculous, and it continues to be a beacon to the world in so many ways," said Greenfield, whose parents were both Holocaust survivors. "We want the pendulum to swing back to a time of celebrating, supporting, and standing with Israel while countering misrepresentations against it."



Temple Emanuel Brotherhood members Dennis Buchenholz (right) and David Greenfield of Newton load bulk mailing bags containing 1,100 Jewish National Fund collection boxes onto a mail truck for delivery to congregation families at the West Newton Post Office in October 2012. The project is part of the brotherhood's Roots in Israel initiative.