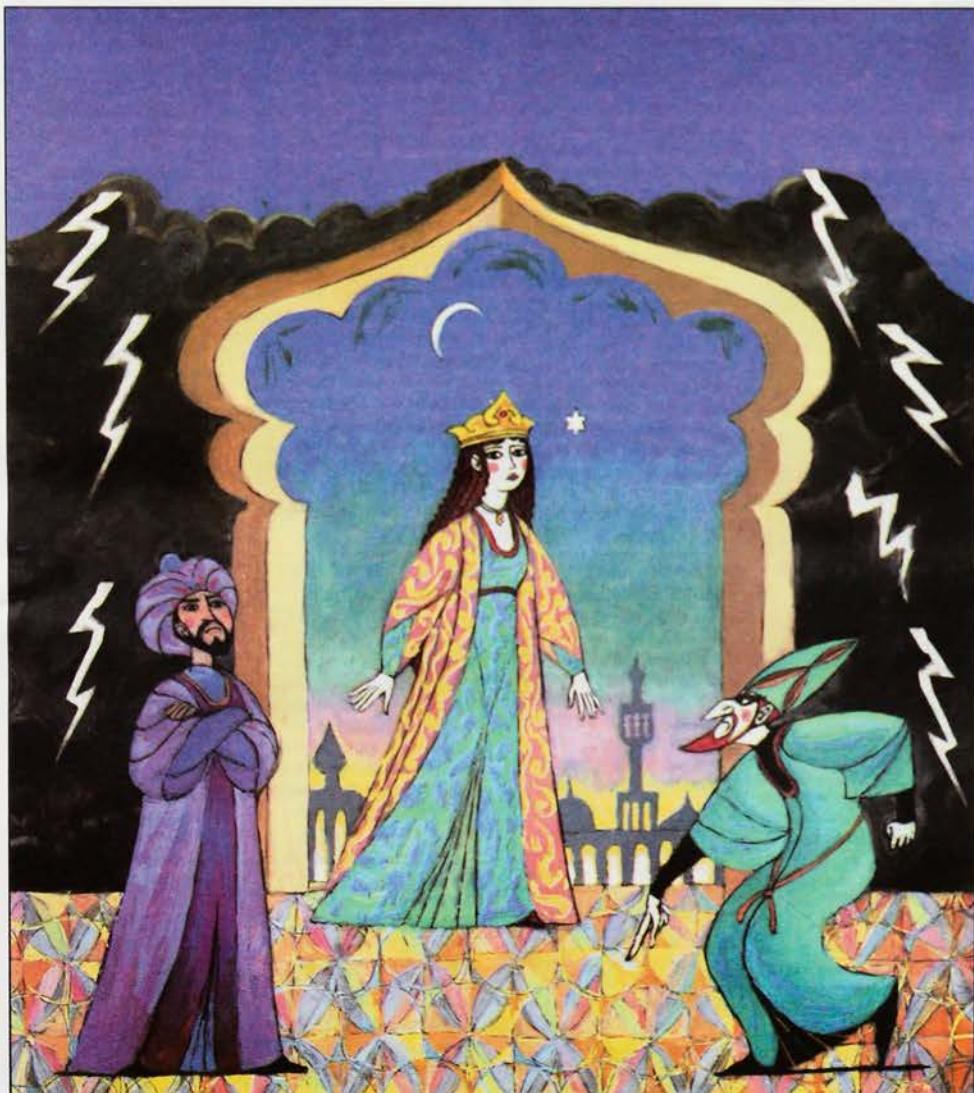


Jewish Federation of Rhode Island

Adar II 5760

March 2000



From the cover of "Queen Esther the Morning Star," a new midrash on the Purim tale written and illustrated by Mordicai Gerstein. Reviewed on page 11.

Postmaster: Dated Material.  
Please Expedite!

In his **Letter from Rome**, Joshua Stein is all agape at how the Italian Jewish community runs its affairs. No separation of church and state there.

[See page 10](#)

Queen Esther evokes pride among Jews of all ages every Purim as we celebrate her rescue of her fellow Jews. She is, indeed, one of our Women of Valor, as are 3 modern women chosen by the Jewish Women's Archive.

[See page 13](#)

Is it only coincidental that we parade in costumes near Mardi Gras?

[See page 10](#)

In **Business** this issue, we celebrate Women's History Month by featuring 3 women who now run their family businesses.

[See page 3](#)

And pay close attention to 3 outstanding members of the younger generation.

[See page 17](#)

Two Barrington teens skate their way to top spots nationally.

[See page 21](#)

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## The Jewish Voice of RI

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**Editor-in-chief:** Jane Sprague

**Production Assistant:** Leah Camara

**Editorial Board:**

Joshua Stein, PhD, chair Eleanor Lewis, vice chair Members: Stanley Aronson, MD, Alan Axelrod, Patricia Cohen, Mark Feinstein, Linn Freedman, Rabbi Alvan Kauffman, Toby London, Doris McGarry, Robert Riesman, Richard Schein, Gladys Sollosy, Norman Tilles, Judith Romney Wegner, Alan Zuckerman.

**Advertising Representative:** Seena Taylor

**Correspondents:** Betty Aronson, Stanley Aronson, Joshua Edelglass, JJ Goldberg, Tema Gouse, Yehuda Lev

**Photographers:**

Seymour Glantz, Bill Sprague

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# Briefly . . .

Compiled by Yehuda Lev primarily from Jewish Telegraphic Agency dispatches.



### Is this man a spy?

A former CIA employee, who claims he was fired from the agency because he is an observant Jew, was featured on a segment of CBS' "60 Minutes" last month. Adam Ciralsky charged that the agency's counterintelligence investigators ignored all secular information about him while focusing on his religion. He said they focused on his travels to Israel rather than a trip he made to China. "I lived in China for a summer," he said. "They could not have cared less whether I was associating with known Communists, but they were incredibly concerned about who sold me a falafel sandwich."

Meanwhile, a CIA memo charged that Ciralsky failed two lie-detector tests about whether he gave or sold US secrets to Israel.

### These rabbis very "sharing"

WASHINGTON: Six weeks ago, 314 American rabbis signed a statement calling for Jerusalem to be shared by Israel and the Palestinians. The explosion set off by that move still reverberates throughout the American Jewish community.

Jerome Segal, president of the Jewish Peace Lobby, who wrote the statement, titled "A Rabbinic Call for Shared Jerusalem," refused to make public the names of its signers because, he

Adam Ciralsky, a former CIA employee who claims he was fired from the agency because he is an observant Jew appearing on a segment of CBS' "60 Minutes." JTA photo courtesy 60 Minutes

said, it might lead to their harassment.

The Rabbinical Assembly, representing more than 1,500 Conservative rabbis, and the Rabbinical Council of America, representing more than 1,100 Orthodox rabbis, have issued a joint statement which said, in part, that they view "with great dismay the statement released by 300 unnamed rabbis, which wishes to promote a 'shared Jerusalem,'" adding that "only Israel and her neighbors should determine conditions for peace."

Segal, a research scholar at the University of Maryland's Center of International and Security Studies, did not request signatures from Orthodox rabbis and is believed to have received most of his support from Reform rabbis. His statement said that given the more than 180,000 Palestinians living in eastern Jerusalem, the question is "whether the pursuit of both justice and lasting peace requires that, in some form, Jerusalem be shared with the Palestinian people. We believe that it does."

The joint statement by the Conservative and Orthodox rabbinical associations responded by reiterating their "previously declared organizational policies that Jerusalem is the united and indivisible capital solely of the State of Israel."

### US seeks death for LA gunman

LOS ANGELES: Jewish leaders disagree on the unusual decision by Federal prosecutors to seek the death penalty for Buford Furrow Jr., the white supremacist who is accused of killing a Filipino-American postman shortly after wounding five people in a Los Angeles Jewish Community Center last August. No one has been executed by the federal government since 1963.

"This man killed an innocent individual who was a public servant," said Jeff Rouss, executive director of the Jewish Community Centers of Los Angeles. "He terrorized children and hurt them in day care. His was an act of terrorism and it was an act of murder."

Rouss thinks the death penalty appropriate.

Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, agrees. "For people who commit acts of terrorism... the greatest deterrent is knowing that they face the possibility of a death sentence."

But Rabbi David Saperstein, head of the Reform movement's Religious Action Center, disagrees. He told the Los Angeles Times that the government move would deflect attention from hate crimes and toward the controversy over capital punishment.

According to the Times, some of Furrow's defense lawyers have approached Jewish attorneys to enlist their help to settle for a lesser sentence, life without possibility of parole.

## International

### Vatican, PLO, sign pact on Jerusalem

ROME: In Rome, too, the future of Jerusalem has been under discussion. The Vatican and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed an agreement that any unilateral decisions on Jerusalem would be "morally and legally unacceptable."

The Vatican has maintained since 1947, when the UN partitioned Palestine into Jewish and Arab states but proposed Jerusalem and Bethlehem be under UN control, that that agreement still stands.

While Israeli officials accused the Vatican of interfering in the peace talks, a Vatican spokesman said that "There is no reference to the political situation of Jerusalem" in the agreement. Most of the agreement touches on day-to-day bilateral issues.

Its preamble, however, says that "an equitable solution for the issue of Jerusalem, based on international resolutions, is fundamental for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East."

### Putin a no-show in Moscow

MOSCOW: The delegation from the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations visited Russia, expecting to meet with Vladimir Putin, the acting president and odds-on favorite to win the Russian presidential election. But Putin sent his regrets, saying he wasn't receiving foreign visitors because he was too busy with domestic issues.

Observers suggested a different reason. The visit was hosted by the Russian Jewish Congress headed by Jewish media tycoon Vladimir Goussinsky.

Putin is an ally of Boris Berezovsky, a rival mogul.

## National Notes

### US seeks death for LA gunman

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## Israeli Items

### Ezer no, Bibi yes

JERUSALEM: A relieved Israeli president Ezer Weizman has returned to his duties in Jerusalem after State Attorney Edna Arbel announced that he would not be indicted on charges of accepting large sums of money from a friend while a member of the government. An opinion still is expected from Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein, who will be critical of Weizman's judgment, expects the president to apologize.

Not so relieved are former prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu and his wife, Sara, who are expected to be indicted on grounds of theft and corruption. As the Voice went to press, Israeli newspapers reported that the police are preparing charges against them and that the case will go to trial.

### Barak has plan to break deadlock

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak told American Jewish leaders that he has a plan to break the negotiating deadlock in the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. He offered no details to members of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations on their annual mission to Israel.

Barak downplayed the importance of the recent stalemates in talks with Syria and the PLO. He repeated his pledge to withdraw Israeli troops from southern Lebanon by July and defended Israeli attacks on Lebanon in response to Hezbollah violations of a 1996 cease-fire agreement. He said the Palestinians "Somehow felt the time is not right for them to expose their flexibilities."

## Special Features

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3 Women run family

businesses

Women of Valor

Some NEAT women

Synagogue Spotlight

A majority of children

God's choices: Listening to Yitz Greenberg

Iced medals

As we grow older

Out of it!

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# Sharp, smart, stylish — their images reflected in their businesses — these women hold the reins

by Jane S. Sprague

*To celebrate March as Women's History Month, this issue of The Voice presents a triad of trios. We begin on this page with our In Business feature, by presenting two in our trio of businesswomen now at the helm of their family-owned establishments, the sixth article in our year-long series. (Our third story is on page 14.) We also bring you the three Women of Valor honored this year by the*

*Jewish Women's Archive and Ma'ayan. Their stories begin on page 13. The third trio, featured on page 17, represents the coming generation, and they have done something really NEAT! On pages 15-16 you will find other columns and articles including: Drs. Betty and Stanley Aronson's commentary inspired by Leah and Rachel, and the changes afoot for women in philanthropy by Ilisa Hurowitz.*

## From cottages to castles

Melanie Delman leans back in an ornately carved black chair at her overflowing desk. It fits snugly in the southeast nook of the enclosed porch of a large Victorian house which sits across the street from the Coast Guard House on Ocean Road in Narragansett.

"Had my mother been born a man, who knows what she would have accomplished," Melanie Delman says of the late Lila, who founded Lila Delman Real Estate. "She was extremely independent and she built a business here in Narragansett in the days when there weren't very many women in real estate, and certainly not Jews in real estate down here."

Melanie's view of sparkling blue water stretches past Beavertail Point on Conanicut Island clear to the crop of rocks known as The Breakers just outside the entrance to the East Passage of Narragansett Bay.

This wrap-around porch is crowded with a mishmash of large old desks and ornate chairs, with fancy pedestals holding gorgeous planters overflowing with ferns. (Some of the plants in the windows aren't doing as well.) A Chinese cupboard is decorated with figures and trellises carved from ivory and wood. These furnishings came from estate sales that Lila loved to haunt, acquiring bargains that seemed to reflect her flamboyant personality.

In the middle of the porch, facing the entrance, is a wall-mounted display of glossy promotion pieces for properties listed with Christie's. Four of them are handled by Lila Delman Real Estate.

"We will list any interesting property in a good location, especially waterfront," Melanie says. Currently, their listings fall in the \$500,000 to \$6.5 million range, "but I'll take a cottage if the location is right," she insists.

Tall and slim, dressed in a black pinstripe business pantsuit, wearing her thick black hair loose, Melanie is a stark physical contrast to her mother, but seems just as savvy in running a business. Please turn to page 15



Melanie Delman straightens the Christie's display at the family real estate company in Narragansett. Christie's lists several properties under the Lila Delman Real Estate brokerage.



Rena Rotenberg Abeles stands amidst the eclectic mix of old and new jewels and accessories in the Reliable Gold showroom in Wayland Square, Providence.

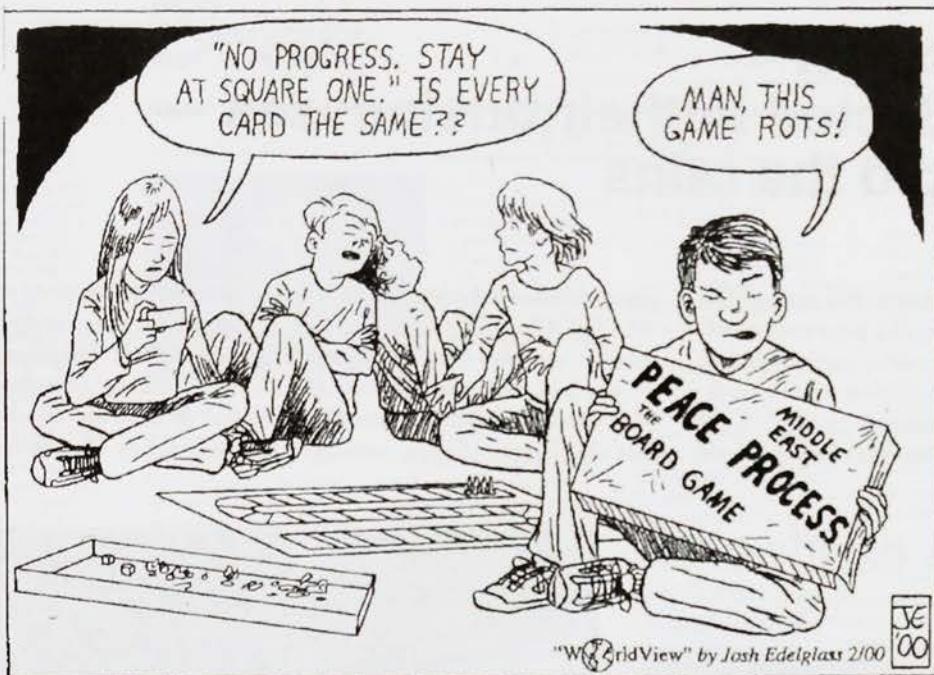
## From behind the scenes to center stage again

Rena Rotenberg Abeles sits on a straight-backed chair in the showroom at Reliable Gold on Providence's Wayland Avenue. She is dressed, appropriately, in a golden-brown tweed suit that seems to pick up the golden highlights in her hair. Her style reflects her store: uncluttered, simple elegance — the real thing.

For 12 years now she has been working in the family business, the third generation in the Limer/Rotenberg line. She has taken center stage there in the last two years. The management responsibility has become hers; as her father, Leonard, has directed her toward more and more of the buying, advertising, appraising and other day-to-day operations. Her mother, Ruth, is busy waiting on customers while we talk.

This may seem a far cry from the boards of Broadway where the petite Rena played Patty in the original cast production and the first touring company of "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown." And although she retired after that from the New York theater scene to raise two children, she kept her hand in theater by working with a repertory company behind the scenes, handling such tasks as marketing, public relations, development and casting. When divorce changed her circumstances, Rena and her children came home to Providence and the family business.

Reliable Gold was started in 1934 by Rena's grand-uncle, Henry Limer, in a storefront on Washington Street. Rena's father, married to Limer's niece, Ruth, joined the business right after WW II, and Ruth's brother, Harry, came in shortly thereafter. Please turn to page 15



A majority of one

## Musings on one's epitaph

by Yehuda Lev

Of late I have been thinking of death.

Not of death, the dark destroyer of nations, nor death, the merciful end of pain for the afflicted, but death as the closing of a personal history, the end of the string of days that comprise a lifetime. Yesterday I was, today I am no longer.

This is surely a normal activity for people nearing the midpoint of their eighth decade, so I do not find these thoughts disturbing and they do not deprive me of sleep. On the contrary, I think it interesting to wonder about the implications of meeting up with the last great mystery of life, that for which all of our science, technology, experience and just plain common sense have failed to provide an answer.

I cannot agree with those who believe that we have souls which survive our physical demise, or that there is a hereafter. If even one person should return and describe what he or she experienced after death I might find these explanations more plausible, but without a more reliable source than the human imagination, I leave to others the solace to be found in such beliefs.

That death should involve specific rituals intended to ease the survivors' sense of loss, makes more sense to me, whether it is the Irish wake or the Jewish shiva. (I pass on the Hindu custom of *suttee*; the idea of widows throwing themselves upon their husbands' funeral pyres is beyond reason.)

As for funerals, the traditional Jewish custom of clothing the body in a shroud and placing it in the grave without a casket, seems to me far more sensible than the elaborate and expensive procedures foisted upon us by the

funeral industry. I would personally prefer cremation, but my wife and daughter oppose that on religious grounds, and since the dear departed will not be in a position to dictate funeral plans, a gravesite there shall probably be. (If you want to lead a really interesting life next time around, return as a secular Jew married to an Orthodox convert.)

All of which begs the question that one should try to answer as the final curtain slowly drifts downward: What have we left behind that made a life memorable, that will affect, for longer than the funeral rites, that tiny segment of the world in which we lived? The quick answer, for most of us, is our children and the example we set for them.

I have four children, three of whom are successful in their different fields (the fourth is still in school) and two of whom are parents. How they will recall their father in years to come I do not know; in many ways I scarcely remember my own father, dead these 41 years. But I inherited from him my own humanistic Jewish beliefs and my firm attachment to the Jewish community and to Israel, however much I might disagree with individual actions or policies they pursue.

From my mother I received, among other gifts, a strong commitment to the importance of government in leveling the economic and social playing fields.

If this sounds too Pollyannish, I confess that there were numerous times over the years when these teachings were ignored and the memory of my parents violated. But they remain personal guideposts which I and their mothers have transmitted to our children.

Does the anticipation of death cast a pall upon the rest of life? So far it has not, despite

the recent loss of a close family friend and the imminent death of a close family member. Nor has it created a sense of fear, although it may be too early to speak on that since the circumstances in which my own death will occur are as yet unknown. How anyone will meet such an occasion is impossible to predict. If there is one terrifying thought about death it is that, despite the presence of others, we meet it alone. The best death is a painless one; I do not believe there can be such a thing as a "good" death.

It is when thoughts like these arise that I envy those who believe in an afterlife and the accompanying religiosity. To view life as but an interlude in a larger pattern of existence imbues it with far more meaning than I can give it and removes much of the sense of the finality of death. Yet both my education and my experience deny me this option.

In the course of 73 years I have buried far too many people. Most of them were strangers. Some of them died horribly, in flames or in pieces. Others died of exhaustion or of neglect. These died needlessly. They included, in Europe, survivors of the Holocaust whose journey to Palestine we were abetting. Later, in Israel, they were soldiers, ours and the enemy's, whose deaths are beyond my powers to describe.

From these experiences I learned two things. First, if there is a God to whom we are responsible for our actions (and I don't know that there is not), God has much to answer for. And second, when death comes and we evaluate our lives, we must answer first to those whose lives we influenced and for whose wellbeing we were responsible.

Once, in a rare moment of introspection, I told my wife that I would like my epitaph to read "When he was needed, he was there."

Well, mostly.

## Letters

### Minyanim at home in South County

The article in The Jewish Voice, February 2000, gave some of the history of the Beth David Shul in Narragansett. Reference was made, "Although not chartered as a congregation until 1961, Jews who summered in the Narragansett area had been gathering a Minyan on Friday evenings in someone's summer home since at least 1946."

From the summer of 1949 until the death of my mother in 1960, that "someone's summer home" was the home of my parents, Charles and Sarah Koffler, at 37 Central Avenue, Narragansett. And scores of Jews, adults and children, gathered not only on Friday evenings, but also Saturday mornings, Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings.

My parents purchased the home in the spring of 1949 and we spent delightful summer years in Narragansett until 1960 when my father, my two sisters and our families did not have the heart to continue vacationing in the house without my mother.

So the fact that there was no longer a gathering place sparked the beginning of discussion and subsequent erection of the small shul in 1961.

Esther K. Kaplan

PS: The name of the President of the Congregation in the photo, I believe was Shlomo Kofman not Kofler (sic).

### Taking a chance on Purim party

A few years ago, I saw an advertisement for a Purim Party sponsored by Chabad of West Bay. Since I thought that I would be the only male without a black coat and beard, I decided not to go.

The next year when I saw the ad again, I decided to take a chance and to attend. When I got to the Roger Williams Park Casino, the crowd was not what I had expected.

The only person with a black coat and beard was the rabbi, and the rest of the guests were dressed in costume or in street clothes. Some people were affiliated with synagogues and others were not. After the Megillah was read downstairs (in about 15 minutes), the rabbi welcomed us to go upstairs to the ballroom and sit wherever we'd like. There were delicious hors d'oeuvres. The full course meal was delicious, the entertainment funny, and the music exciting—a great celebration.

I hope you will attend the Chai Center Purim Party at the Roger Williams Park Casino on Tuesday, March 21 at 5:45 pm in costume (or not), with Rabbi Yossi and Shoshanah Laufer, me and my friends. The Megillah will be read at 5:15 pm. The suggested donation is only \$18 for an adult and \$9 for children ages 3 to 12 (maximum \$50 per family). For reservations call the Chai Center at 401-732-6559.

Stanley L. Freedman  
Warwick, RI

# Austria set to talk restitution, but some Jews balk at the idea

by Michael Shapiro

WASHINGTON (JTA) — After years of failing to address the issue of Holocaust restitution, Austria's new government says it wants to enter negotiations quickly with survivors and Jewish groups to settle outstanding claims.

However, some in the Jewish world see this sudden change of heart as an attempt to dampen the criticism of the governing coalition. The government is being criticized for including the far-right Freedom Party of Jorg Haider, who has made sympathetic comments regarding the Nazis.

The Austrian offer is forcing those who have worked on securing restitution for elderly survivors into a dilemma: Do they negotiate with Austria despite Haider's presence in the government or do they boycott talks to show their opposition to Haider, thus forcing survivors to wait even longer for a measure of justice.

While acknowledging the "unquestioned rights" of Holocaust victims, the World Zionist Organization on February 15 called on Jews not to deal with the current Austrian government on restitution issues. "Haider's real nature is evident in his latest offer to buy us out with offers of money," said Sallai Meridor, chairman of the WZO and Jewish Agency Executive.

"It must be made clear that we will not

negotiate with this government while at the same [time] we encourage every other country to disengage from it," Meridor said in announcing a new campaign to isolate Austria. "Only standing together, working with the rest of the free world, we will stand a chance to succeed in this mission."

Until now restitution discussions with Austria have focused mainly on Austrian banks, with Jewish groups seeking reparations for bank accounts and other assets seized from Austrian Jews during the Holocaust. Other Israeli and Jewish officials also have expressed skepticism about Austria's desire to deal with such outstanding issues as compensating slave laborers and settling unpaid insurance claims.

Avraham Hirschson, a survivor who heads the Knesset committee that deals with Holocaust-era restitution, told a congressional committee here last week that "we will not cut any short deal with any country. The blood of my brother and my sister, that were in the chambers, are shouting at me and saying 'Don't go into any agreement with this government when Haider is in power,'" he added in his testimony to the House Banking Committee.

Israel Singer, secretary-general of the World Jewish Congress, told the House committee that Jews are concerned that the new Austrian government is acting out of "em-

## How to seek insurance restitution

WASHINGTON (JTA) — After nearly two years of work, the international commission seeking to settle unpaid Holocaust-era insurance claims launched a global effort February 15 to reach out to Jews who may have claims against European insurance companies.

Lawrence Eagleburger, the former US secretary of state who chairs the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims, said people who believe their relatives bought life, education or dowry insurance policies with any company between 1920 and 1945 but never received the proceeds are eligible to file a claim with the commission.

The cooperating insurance companies are: Allianz of Germany; Assicurazioni Generali of Italy; Axa of France; and Zurich Financial Services and Winterthur Insurance, both of Switzerland.

Claimants can file an application even if they do not know the name of the company under which the policy was held.

Individuals can obtain a claims packet by: writing to the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims at P.O. Box 1163, Wall Street Station, N.Y., NY 10268 USA; visiting the Web site at [www.icheic.org](http://www.icheic.org); or calling 1-800-957-3203. All claims must be filed by Feb. 1, 2002, and are promised to be resolved within two years of filing.

barrassment" rather than in good faith. "We should not have to crawl to those whom we do not choose to sit with," he said.

Despite their concerns, organizations that deal with reparations issues have not yet decided how to respond to the Austrian offer to negotiate quickly, an offer that was made by Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel.

Elan Steinberg, executive director of the WJC, said that his group, the Conference on

Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, and the Austrian Jewish community and survivors living outside of Austria are currently discussing how to respond to Austria's offer. He said, however, that "reparations are an obligation of Austria," no matter which government is in power.

Last year, Bank Austria, the nation's largest bank, reached a \$40 million settlement under which it agreed to make restitution for profiting from seizures of bank accounts. Under the settlement's terms, the bank also agreed to issue an apology for its wartime actions. This was especially important to some Jewish leaders, who wanted the restitution efforts to have a moral as well as financial dimension.

The Bank Austria settlement did not extend to other Austrian firms, including companies that profited from the use of Holocaust-era slave laborers or insurance companies.

Lawrence Eagleburger, chairman of the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims, said that he has written to three Austrian insurance companies urging them to join the commission, which is seeking to settle outstanding insurance claims against European insurers.

Eagleburger, who outlined the process by which survivors and their heirs can file claims for unpaid insurance policies between 1920 and 1945, said he will continue to urge the companies to join the claims process, as the new Austrian government has urged them, despite possible concerns from Jewish groups.

"Jewish organizations may not want to deal with them but I intend to get them into the commission and I don't see anything wrong with it," he said.

their influence more effectively, spokesman James Rubin said.

US officials convened a five-nation monitoring committee in an attempt to stem the growing violence in southern Lebanon. But Israel walked out of the meeting on Barak's orders after Hezbollah killed another Israeli soldier hours earlier.

The next day, Hezbollah mounted a fresh attack against Israeli troops, and a Hezbollah official vowed more "humiliating" assaults.

In early February, in the worst escalation of the fighting in Lebanon in months, Israeli jets launched airstrikes on Hezbollah targets and on three power stations in Lebanon, one of them near Beirut.

Israeli officials also declared a two-day state of emergency, during which citizens in northern Israel remained in bomb shelters on the chance Hezbollah would launch cross-border Katyusha rocket attacks.

Foreign Minister David Levy vowed a scorched earth policy in Lebanon if Hezbollah decided to retaliate with Katyushas, but those attacks did not materialize.

Meanwhile, the question does not appear whether Israel will withdraw its troops, but when. Danny Yatom, a top Barak aide, made this clear during a television interview. "We are leaving. We will go out of Lebanon not later than July 2000 — period."

## Barak's dilemma: stay or pull out?

by Mitchell Danow

NEW YORK (JTA) — Prime Minister Ehud Barak has to make a difficult calculation.

Months ago, he vowed to withdraw Israeli troops from southern Lebanon by July — with or without an accompanying peace deal with Syria. That vow was widely credited with bringing Damascus back to the negotiating table in December.

But now the Israeli-Syrian talks have been suspended, and Barak has to weigh whether he should wait longer and see if the negotiations will be revived — or pull the troops out even earlier than July.

From the Israeli standpoint, a withdrawal from Lebanon after reaching an agreement with Syria — one that would be accompanied by guarantees of security along Israel's northern border — would be preferable to a unilateral withdrawal. But waiting can prove costly, especially now that Hezbollah has become emboldened by Barak's pledge and wants to inflict heavy damages on Israeli troops. The more losses it inflicts, the more it will appear that the unilateral withdrawal is a unilateral Israeli defeat.

During one recent three-week period, seven Israeli soldiers have died in Hezbollah attacks, prompting growing calls from the Israeli public to pull the troops out before July. At least half of Barak's Cabinet favors an early withdrawal, according to the Israeli

daily Ma'ariv.

Joining the calls is none other than opposition leader Ariel Sharon, the architect of Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon. "The posts in Lebanon today have become anachronistic, and we must get out," he said. "Situations change."

The same day, the father of the latest Israeli casualty sounded a heartfelt call for early withdrawal. Arye Itach, a reserve colonel who founded the infantry unit in which his son Tzachi was killed February 11 in a Hezbollah rocket attack, said Israeli soldiers in Lebanon are "cannon fodder" because the government does not allow them to operate freely.

"We must move up the timetable," Itach told Israel Radio hours before his son's funeral Sunday. "This killing is terrible."

Meanwhile, Israeli soldiers stationed in the southern Lebanon security zone have been publicly questioning the wisdom of remaining there. Last week, Israel Radio aired remarks by troops reflecting their low morale and desire to pull out of southern Lebanon as soon as possible.

"We have no business here," said one. Another added: "If we're going to leave anyway, why stay and give them a few more dead?"

Meanwhile, the US State Department criticized Syria for not influencing Hezbollah to stop its attacks on Israeli troops. The "evidence is clear" that they need to exercise

By-lined articles and cartoons in The Jewish Voice of Rhode Island reflect only the personal opinions of the authors or the organizations the authors may represent.

# US businessman launches Israeli mutual fund

by Brianne Korn

JERUSALEM (JTA) — "The land of the prophets is becoming the land of profits," says an American businessman who has turned his passion for the State of Israel into a successful business venture.

Cliff Goldstein, 42, launched AMIDEX35 last year, a mutual fund index that tracks and invests solely in 35 of Israel's largest companies. The mutual fund's exclusive interest in Israel is a first for any American fund.

While his project continues to prosper, its success has a more personal meaning for its founder.

Goldstein's interest in Israel began at the age of 7, when his father brought him to a shareholders' meeting of Ampal, an Israeli holding company. "He bought me five shares," Goldstein, who lives in Pennsylvania, recalls, "which totaled about \$1.50 back then, but it made me a shareholder."

He remembers those who participated in that meeting at the Waldorf Astoria as a group of people who were not only interested in making money. "These people were there for a purpose: to invest and support Israel," Goldstein says.

When his father died three years ago, Goldstein began to learn more about his father's connections with Israel and its future. Goldstein felt the proper thing to do with his inheritance would be to invest in his father's dream. Investing in a single Israeli company, however, was not the answer for Goldstein, who says he was watching the growth of Israeli companies

with excitement.

"I wasn't happy with personal results, though," Goldstein says. "So I looked for mutual funds to diversify my Israeli investments."

So the index of AMIDEX35 was born on Jan. 1, 1999, with Goldstein's hopes of honoring his father's legacy and "finding a path to assist others to invest in Israel."

The mutual fund was introduced by Goldstein's company, TransNations Investments of New York, later on in June. The fund represents a diverse spectrum of Israeli businesses. Since its launch date, AMIDEX35 has gone up 42%, and the fund's assets approach \$10 million, according to Goldstein.

With more than 700 Israeli companies trading on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange and 120 on the New York markets, Israel has developed many technology industries alongside traditional banks, insurance and retail. Many, however, are business-to-business industries, making the actual product or service practically unknown to the average consumer.

"Most Israeli technology companies are not household names to us," Goldstein says. "But the chip and the billing software your company uses may be Israeli, even though you may not see an Israeli name."

Businesses opt to trade on the New York markets, however, "because that's where the money is," Goldstein says. "More than half of Israel's stocks are traded outside of Israel," he says. Israel is third, behind



Cliff Goldstein creator of AMIDEX35

the United States and Canada, in the number of companies represented on US exchanges. AMIDEX35 incorporates companies traded on the Israeli and New York markets.

Companies tracked by the index include Check Point Software Technologies, TEVA Pharmaceuticals and Gilat Satellite Networks.

"It often shocks people," Goldstein says of the image people hold of Israeli businesses. "They imagine some guy in shorts and a funny hat selling oranges, and the image is changing."

According to Goldstein, Israel is second behind the United States in the number of new high-technology start-up companies. "Israel has become a second Silicon Valley in every shape and form," according to Abba Horovitz of Yeoman Capital, an investment firm in Israel. "Wall Street has started to acknowledge that." Horovitz says there is an increased interest in

Israeli investment.

According to Horovitz, examples of new technologies developed by Israeli industries include a computer screen one millimeter thick that can be folded to fit in a pocket. The Israeli company Comverse has become the leader in virtual private networks, while Check Point Software has become the leader in the development of firewalls, security measures to protect Web transactions.

"There's a boom going on here and I don't think it will finish," says Horovitz.

"Buying Israel Bonds has always been popular," Goldstein says. "But that is a debt — you're lending money to the government. This is different. You're investing, lending, and becoming a part of the private sector. It's a momentum for every American Jew."

While the fund currently attracts mostly individual investors, Goldstein expects future investors to include pension funds, foundations and other types of institutions.

The fund's site can be accessed at <http://www.amidex.com>.

## Stymying enmity

# No love lost between Assad and Arafat

by Douglas Davis

LONDON (JTA) — Egypt is believed anxious to convene an emergency Arab summit to discuss the faltering peace process. But a senior Egyptian analyst believes such a meeting is impossible because of the antagonism between Syrian President Hafez Assad and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

Ibrahim Nafei, editor of the semiofficial Egyptian daily Al-Ahram, made the call for an emergency summit in mid-February. Despite all the high hopes that were vested in the government of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, wrote Nafei, it has come perilously close to torpedoing the peace process.

Apparently reflecting the Egyptian government's line, Nafei accused Barak of causing a deadlock in the recent negotiations with Syria by refusing to commit to an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights. He also said Barak had maneuvered the Palestinians into a negotiating impasse.

Barak's behavior, Nafei wrote,

"is almost tailor-made to anger Arab public opinion and convince it that coexistence with Israel is impossible."

The Arab world has a duty to rid Barak of the delusion that he can impose his terms with brute force, he wrote, adding, "The first step in doing this is to call for an Arab summit conference."

But Egyptian analyst Wahid Abdelmeguid believes there is virtually no chance for convening such a summit. Writing in the London-based Arabic daily Al-Hayat, he said inter-Arab differences over how to deal with the peace process are now the primary obstacle.

"The Syrian leadership views the Palestinian leadership as though it has become a tool in the hands of Israel and America, while the Palestinian leadership believes that if Syria had found a way of doing a deal with Israel on its own, it would not have waited for anybody."

"Add to this the Iraqi problem," wrote Abdelmeguid, "and one can say that the convening of an Arab summit is not in the cards for the foreseeable future."

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**Who counts?**

# Jewish population study delayed by controversy

by Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — William Cohen's father was Jewish, but his mother was not. The young Cohen attended Hebrew school for years, but shortly before his Bar Mitzvah, the rabbi informed him he would have to undergo a conversion since he was not Jewish according to halacha, or Jewish law.

Offended, Cohen walked out of the synagogue, never to return. Now an adult — and the US secretary of defense — Cohen is married to a Christian woman.

Should William Cohen be counted as a Jew? Should he be counted among the intermarried?

Identity questions raised by people far less prominent than Cohen are challenging the planners of National Jewish Population Study 2000, which was scheduled to get under way last month but has been postponed until May.

In an effort to address these challenges, those involved with the study made one major decision: to take into account the nuances of Jewish identity, so that in analyzing things like intermarriage statistics, the William Cohens can be separated from Jews whose Jewishness cannot be questioned.

The approximately \$5 million study, the first national census to be taken of American Jews in 10 years, is charged with providing data on everything from intermarriage rates to the level of Jewish identity to philanthropic habits to assessing whether the decade's proliferation of continuity initiatives have had any impact.

It is expected to shape the priorities of Jewish organizations and scholars for the coming decade.

**Outreach or Inreach?**

At its core, the debate over NJPS 2000 parallels the ongoing outreach vs. inreach debate in the Jewish community: To what extent should scarce resources be invested in reaching, or at least studying, those who have only tenuous connections to the Jewish community as opposed to focusing on more committed Jews? In gathering this data, the study's planners have the sticky task of determining who to count — and what to ask.

NJPS 2000 has been postponed ostensibly so that leaders of its sponsoring organization — the newly formed United Jewish Communities — have time to review the process and add input. But the survey has snagged its share of controversy, mostly stemming from dissatisfaction with what happened in 1990.

Several demographers — some of whom were involved in the 1990

study — have questioned the finding that 52% of Jews who married between 1985 and 1990 had married a non-Jew, suggesting that a more accurate count is 10 to 20 percentage points lower.

A number of Orthodox leaders claim their community was undercounted due to methodology that disproportionately emphasized Jews living in areas where Orthodox are less likely to cluster.

Community studies, generally commissioned by federations in order to gauge what programs are needed and which fund-raising strategies are effective, tend not to interview those on the margins of the community, says University of Miami demographer Ita Sheskin.

Sheskin, who serves on the NJPS technical advisory committee, has conducted 20 community studies and has authored a forthcoming book comparing the findings. Hebrew University sociologist Steven Cohen and syndicated columnist J.J. Goldberg have used Sheskin's community studies — which find much lower intermarriage rates and higher rates of Jewish ritual activity than the national study — as reason to question the validity of NJPS' 1990 findings.

But Sheskin says the differences can be attributed less to inaccuracy in the national study and more to the fact that it casts a wide net. Also, says Sheskin, Jews living outside the large communities that commission the studies are more likely to intermarry.

However, a number of changes are being made in this year's national study — which will be surveyed by phone 5,000 people, more than double the sample of 1990 — that seem, at least in part, to respond to the criticisms.

In deciding to address the nuances of Jewish identity, Sheskin said, a change has been made from 1990. In 1990, only "yes" or "no" answers were recorded when asking whether the subject had Jewish parents and was raised Jewish.

**Who's half 'n half?**

But this time, "in addition to yes or no we are going to let people say 'maybe.' I suppose, half and half' and record those answers, so when we go back and do analysis, we know who said what and can compare those different people," explained Sheskin.

In addition, this year's study will limit the number of interviews with marginal Jews to approximately 500 people, said Sheskin. "There are certain questions that aren't relevant to those people, and this will save resources, so we can do a better job in other places. The

whole thing is a series of tradeoffs."

Responding to concerns that changing the study will make it difficult to compare the findings from 1990, the final study may list several sets of statistics — one set that can be compared to the 1990 rate by casting as wide a net and another that uses a stricter definition of Jews and intermarriage.

After the data is collected, researchers may use a variety of weighting techniques, a statistical way of compensating for segments of the population that are least likely to respond to surveys and thus might not be represented accurately.

In 1990, researchers used US census weights, but a number of demographers — both those on the advisory board and those critical of it — have questioned the validity of those weights, which assume, for example that people in the South and rural areas respond less. But some of the demographers involved said no better weighting system existed.

It is not yet clear to what extent Orthodox critiques will be addressed. Rabbi David Eliezer, a Chabad leader from suburban Los Angeles, said the study's researchers have been cordial but not responsive to the specific concerns he outlined last spring in a memo.

UJC is optimistic it will get an accurate portrait of American Jewry. "We think that from a tech-

nical point of view, we really have the details down well," said Jim Schwartz, research director of UJC.

"Our mandate is to produce the most accurate sample of American Jewry possible."

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## Wide range of historians discredit Irving

by Douglas Davis

LONDON (JTA) — Holocaust revisionist David Irving has no right to call himself a historian, according to a leading scholar of Nazi Germany.

Richard Evans, a professor of modern history at Britain's prestigious Cambridge University, made the remark in early February while testifying in the trial here where Irving is suing American historian

Professor Deborah Lipstadt and her British publisher, Penguin Books, for libel on the basis of Lipstadt's 1994 book "Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory."

Irving, who denies that Jews were systematically exterminated in the gas chambers at Auschwitz, is claiming that Lipstadt ruined his reputation and career by labeling him a Holocaust denier — and

asserting that he twisted historical data to suit his own bias.

Irving's confrontation with Evans was just one that he had with other scholars last month who are testifying in the trial.

After producing a 740-page critique of Irving's historical method, Evans said he had been unprepared for the "sheer depth of duplicity" he had found in Irving's treatment of Holocaust-related his-

torical sources. Evans asserted that Irving had relied on his audience lacking time or expertise to study his sources in order to discover the "distortions and manipulations."

Irving, who is representing himself, charged that Evans's "sweeping and rather brutal" attack on his career was based on personal animosity: "I think you dislike what I write and stand for and what you perceive my views to

be," he said.

But Evans denied this was true and said he had sought to be objective as possible when examining Irving's work. Evans said he had little prior knowledge of it, although he had thought Irving as a sound historian. But I said he was "shocked" at what I found when he closely examined Irving's writings and speeches.

The court proceedings reinforced the view he had expressed in his report that Irving had fallen far short of accepted standards of scholarship that "he doesn't deserve to be called a historian at all."

Evans agreed that Irving had wide knowledge of source materials for the Third Reich and that he had discovered many new documents. "The problem for me," he said, "is what you do with them when you interpret them and write them up."

Irving's writings and speeches, said Evans, contained statements that he regarded as anti-Semitic — to the extent that he blamed the Jews for the Holocaust. Irving's belief that he was the target of "a worldwide Jewish conspiracy," Evans continued, was "a fantastic belief which has no grounds in fact."

Irving also had a bruising encounter, also in early February, with Professor Christopher Browning, of Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Wash., who also appeared as a witness for Lipstadt. Asked by Irving to comment on a Nazi plan to settle Jews on the Indian Ocean island of Madagascar, Browning, author of four books and more than 35 academic papers on Nazi Germany and the Holocaust, said it was a "bizarre fantasy."

Browning added that the result of such a population transfer would have been disastrous as "a large percentage of the people would have perished."

"I think," countered Irving, "that the Jews are a very sturdy people."

Earlier, military historian Sir John Keegan, compelled by subpoena to testify for Irving, said he found Irving's ideas to be "perverse," while his claim that Hitler did not know about the fate of the Jews until late 1943 "was so extraordinary it would defy reason."

Sir John, who was knighted for his contribution to military history, agreed that he had in the past recommended students of World War II to read Irving's book, "Hitler's War," but he told the court he had also advised them to read Chester Wilmot's "Struggle for Europe."

"Together," he said, "they gave Hitler's side and the Allies' side." His recommendation to students did not mean he endorsed Irving's opinions, he said.

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When in Rome...

# What wouldn't fly here, boon to Jewish life in Italy

by Joshua Stein

Special Voice correspondent

Franco Pavoncello is no Giovanni-come-lately to the Roman Jewish community.

When I asked him over lunch how long his family has been living here he replied off-handedly, "Oh, about 2000 years." My jaw fell. It would not be the last time my mouth would be agape.

"How do you know?" I was astonished. Did he really know his father's father's father back 100 generations?

"It's my name," he explained. "It's the name of a town in the area. Only Jews who were here before the Spanish expulsion of the 15th century carry such names." "Oh."

Pavoncello is the Dean of Academic Affairs at John Cabot University in Trastevere, an ancient, cobblestoned, narrow-streeted maze of a section of Rome, which is where, coincidentally, Jews first lived 2000 years ago, and where I am spending the semester. He is also a member of the Jewish Council of Rome, has been since 1993. He was vice president until 1997. When he speaks of the community it is with a twinkle in his eye.

Until 1984 it was mandatory for Jews to belong to a community. The community pays for essential Jewish services and charitable institutions. But in 1984 a Libyan Jew living in Rome challenged the law and won. Now membership is voluntary. Nevertheless, because of the benefits and centuries of tradition, the majority belong, despite the taxes imposed.

In Rhode Island, membership in the Federation and other Jewish organizations is voluntary. When American Jews make a commitment to an organization they pay membership dues or make a pledge. Not so in Italy. Here, the Commissioner of Taxation of the Jewish Community (Franco speaks with authority here because he is the incumbent) assesses individuals what he thinks they can pay. All members of the family are required to pay a tax.

"How do you know how much to assess?" I ask.

"It's inductive," he says with a smile.

"But how do you know what each family can afford?"

"Other people tell us. We send a bill, they complain. We reassess."

"But how do you collect? How do you force people to pay?"

"Oh, the municipal tax collector gives the community its money in advance and then collects the assessment. If people don't pay,

their furniture is seized." My jaw dropped again.

There are about 18,000 Jews in Rome. Half pay anywhere from no tax up to about \$50. A few pay about 15 million lira (about \$7,000). "Roman Jews break out when assessed," Franco reports. "The most proud thing for them is not to pay their community taxes. Billionaires (in lira, of course) pull their hair out of their head over a million lira (\$500) assessment."

There is another source of income for the community — national taxes. It wouldn't fly in America. In Italy there is no separation of church and state. The Catholic Church is the official religion of Italy, but others are recognized. By a concordat with the church, the government agrees to return to the various religious organizations 8 lira for every 1000 collected if the money is earmarked for charitable purposes. When citizens pay their taxes they may designate which religion should get their 8 lira per 1000. Most people don't bother and so their 8 out of 1000 lira get parceled out on the basis of those who did make a preference.

This tax return to the Jewish community of Italy should amount to 6 billion lira (about \$3,000,000) in addition to the 4.8 billion lira (\$2.4 million) the community generates from its own taxes. Franco expects a great deal of politicking when it comes to deciding how to distribute the largesse. He is, however, not planning to give back the money merely to avoid a feud.

The organized Jewish community of Rome (and other Italian cities) is like the pre-World War I Kahal of Jews in Eastern Europe, except that its members are democratically elected. It maintains the Jewish day schools (there are three), cemeteries, synagogues (about 8, the main synagogue a magnificent Babylonian style building), and the administration of buildings (collecting rent, maintenance). The community oversees the Jewish

hospital, a retirement home, a community center, various charities and the *hevra v'emet*, or burial society.

It costs about \$2.5 million to run the elementary, junior high and high schools. Half of this comes from the community, the other half from tuition (about \$2800 per year). There are about 800 pupils, which Franco estimates makes the Roman Jewish school population the largest per capita outside of Israel. He says this with justifiable pride.

Other money goes to pay the salaries of the seven or eight rabbis (about 1.2 billion lira, equivalent to about \$600,000) in town, including the chief rabbi who is chosen by the Council.

The Council of 28 people is elected every four years, and there is a national federation of 15 representing local organizations. On March 12, voters will select from six lists of candidates. Campaigning is a panoply of events, yet only about 13% of eligible voters cast ballots. This means that about 280 votes will result in victory.

They are a tough group, these Jews of Rome. They had to be to survive 2000 years of frequently hostile environment. They are Orthodox by law, but are committed more by a strong folk attachment than knowledge and study. As in Israel, it is only the Orthodox synagogue from which Jews can (and generally do) absent themselves.

When challenged by outsiders, they fight back. In 1982 the main synagogue was attacked by Arab terrorists. Since then, policemen armed with submachine guns patrol in front of the building. But sometimes the Jews take matters into their own hands.

In the late '80s, a group of neo-Nazis painted swastikas on shop windows and Jewish homes and were verbally abusive. One night, 300 people, in a military style operation, attacked the Nazi headquarters, destroyed it and disappeared into the night. The police



The synagogue Lungotevere de' Cenci

arrived late. The looters departed with a huge Nazi flag, which, legend says, ended up in the office of the Chief Rabbi, who said he knew nothing of how it got there.

In 1997 a Nazi war criminal was discovered in Argentina. He was arrested, returned to Italy and tried for his part in a massacre of Jews in Rome. A military court acquitted him. In response, Jews of Rome attacked and occupied the tribunal. The Minister of Justice

held the man in custody. Although he was awaiting extradition to Germany, he instead was retried in Rome, found guilty and received a life sentence.

Franco Pavoncello relates these stories with relish.

**Joshua Stein, PhD, professor of history at Roger Williams University and chairman of The Voice editorial board, is teaching in Rome this semester.**

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## Purim — the Jewish "Mardi Gras"

by Judith Romney Wegner

Probably no biblical book is more familiar to Jews than the Book of Esther. We first learn the Purim story in Hebrew school; and many of us attend Megillah services every year and know the story in even greater detail than the biblical story of the Exodus.

Our very familiarity with Jewish festivals leads us to assume that our rituals are uniquely Jewish phenomena. Yet the history of religions reveals, time and again, that the customary practices of any religion almost always have close parallels elsewhere. This is demonstrably true of Purim, which, from an anthropological viewpoint, falls into the genre known as "carnival" — the best known example being

the Mardi Gras celebration that inaugurates the solemn period of Lent terminating in Easter.

It is of course no accident that Purim comes at the same time of year as Mardi Gras; scholars think both are adaptations of ancient pagan spring rites — just as the dates assigned by Jewish sages to Hanukkah and Church fathers to Christmas were no doubt influenced by winter solstice rituals in surrounding pagan cultures.

One common denominator of carnivals is indulgence in food and wine — even to the point of excess. On Purim it is a mitzvah to eat a festive meal, the Se'udat Purim — or in Yiddish, "Purim-se'udah."

As for Mardi Gras, the word "carnival" itself relates specifically

to food, being an abbreviation of either *carne vale!* ("Meat, farewell!") or *carnem levare* ("to remove the meat") — reflecting the fact that Mardi Gras represents a last chance to "binge" before those weeks of dietary austerity begin. (The name Mardi Gras, "Fat Tuesday," reflects the custom of leading a fat ox — blissfully unaware of its impending fate — through the streets of Paris on that day.)

The degree of levity associated with Purim is certainly comparable to that of a carnival — for instance, the Babylonian teacher Rava declares in the Talmud (b.Meg.7b) that one should drink wine to the point where one cannot distinguish between the phrases *arur Haman!* "Cursed be Haman!" and *barukh Mordekhai!* "Blessed be Mordekhai!"

Later rabbis of a more puritanical bent apologetically explained this away, saying that one can actually reach this point at the outset by noting that the sum of the numerical value of the letters in those two Hebrew phrases is identical (it's actually 502 — could this be an allusion to the number of glasses one should drink?).

Besides indulgence in food and drink, another feature of carnivals worldwide is the donning of fancy costume — often specifically cross-dressing in terms of gender and/or class. Purim is in fact the only day on which the rabbis suspended the biblical prohibition against wearing clothing that pertains to the opposite sex (Deut.22:5).

As for dressing across class lines, on Purim every child, no matter how lowly, can be king or queen for a day, just as on Mardi Gras two commoners are chosen to play those roles. This reminds us of the late medieval French carnival of the "Lords of Misrule," when the lowest-ranking boy and girl in the village were selected as King and Queen for a day, decked out in royal costumes and paraded through the village, much as Haman leads Mordechai through the streets of Shushan garbed in the King's robe and seated on the king's horse (Esther 6:7-11). In other words, a mini-carnival parade is built right into the Purim story, in which the lowly are elevated and the haughty are brought low.

The practice of such rituals is not pure happenstance. Psychologists and anthropologists tell us that such carnival antics as cross-dressing, excessive drinking or symbolically elevating the lowest members of society to the highest positions — in other words, turning the rules of society upside down for a single day — paradoxically reaffirm the social order.

## Esther and company under Gerstein's brush and quill

*Queen Esther the Morning Star*

by Mordicai Gerstein

Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2000.

Reviewed by Toby Rossner, BJE Director of Media Services

Well known author/illustrator Mordicai Gerstein has truly outdone himself with the publication of *Queen Esther the Morning Star*, a picture book so creative and clever that it will enthrall adults as much as the target audience of 5- to 10-year-olds.

Gerstein has embellished the traditional drama of Queen Esther's bravery and faith with midrashim (additions to the text which enhance its message). The story is told as much by the expressions on the characters' faces and their "body language" as by the text. Every setting, every costume, every pose is perfect! (See cover art.)

Each page is colored and bordered to remind the reader that this is Ancient Persia, a different time and place from today, where the authority of the king and his prime minister were absolute and a woman's independent spirit was not permitted. Haman's demise on the gallows is drawn with such wit and humor that you'll smile despite the grim subject.

Gerstein has only recently become interested in Jewish folklore as a subject of his children's books. When he visited Rhode Island last year as a guest of the Judaica librarians he told us that he discovered Ginzberg's Book of Legends when he was looking around for something to read at his father's house in California during his father's illness. He was fascinated by these legends and read them aloud to his father. Adapting and combining the legends he discovered, he wrote and illustrated "The Shadow of a Flying Bird," "Jonah and the Two Great Fish," and "Noah and the Great Flood."

Gerstein's books can be borrowed in the Bureau of Jewish Education Library, 130 Sessions Street, Providence and in other synagogue libraries in the area.

### Memories

## Iraqi Purim, subdued yet children's paradise

by Linda Morel

NEW YORK (JTA) — Like visions of date palms laden with fruit, Purim in Iraq was paradise for children.

"We were excused from school and over the two-day holiday, we'd attend six parties," says Nora Iny, who grew up in Baghdad during the 1960s. She is now a trustee of Congregation Bene Naharayim, an Iraqi synagogue in Jamaica Estates, NY. Looking back, she recalls the spectacular dinners and lunches people threw for their families and friends.

"We had guests in the house all the time," says Jamila Shoeker, a Manhattan resident who left her homeland with bittersweet feelings in 1946 after witnessing attacks on Jews. Yet she has vivid memories of aunts and uncles lavishing children with gifts.

More so than during Hanukkah, which in Iraq never hit the commercial heights it's reached here, at Purim children received gifts, such as pieces of silver jewelry or coins.

To escape Saddam Hussein's tyranny, in 1974 she and her family were in the last wave of Jews to flee the country. Although a Jewish culture once flourished there, today approximately 100 Jews live in Iraq.

From the heartland of the Sephardi world, for centuries Iraqis repeated the story of Queen Esther, the brave young beauty who saved her people from annihilation at the hands of wicked Haman.

Although Purim was spirited, people didn't use noisemakers or stamp their feet at the mention of Haman's name. "Even in good times, we didn't dress in costumes as children do here," says Iny. "We wouldn't parade or call attention to ourselves. We were afraid to show we were Jews."

Playing cards was the major entertainment at parties, and people often gambled for small change. "I hated cards and would quit after 15 minutes, claiming I was tired," laughs Iny, whose fondest memories of Purim revolve around food.

While Ashkenazi Jews adore hamantashen, the Iraqi signature dish is Sambus El Tawa, explains Carole Basri, an attorney of Iraqi descent who teaches cooking classes through Sephardic House in Manhattan. "Sambus are small pastry crescents filled with chicken and vegetables." Fabulous as appetizers, they can also be served as the main course. The pastry is el tawa, meaning fried.

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**Iraqi Purim...** from pg. 11

Today vegetarians skip the chicken, substituting chickpeas and cumin instead. This heartens back to Queen Esther, who some scholars believe became a vegetarian after marrying the King of Persia. Fearful of revealing her religion at the palace, but determined to remain kosher, Esther was wary of the ingredients in the food she ate. Because pareve foods were her safest alternatives, there is evidence that she delighted in chickpeas.

Like Jews the world over, Iraqi also visited friends at Purim, bringing sweets to their hosts.

The amount of desserts was incredible, claims Iny. His favorite is zangula, donuts prepared by frying dough into hot oil. After frying, Zangula, Basit teaches students to dip them in a syrup of sugar, lemon and rosewater, a distillation of rose petals with an intensely perfumed flavor that's been popular for centuries in the Middle East.

No Purim celebration in Iraq was complete without plenty of extra food for all the friends expected to stop by.

"The warmth in the Jewish community was incredible," says Shooker who, in exile for five decades, still misses the sweetest part of life in Baghdad — Purim parties, family and friends.

**Recipes by Carole Basri:**

*Sambuk El Tawar*

(Yield: 30 crescents)

Dough

4 cups flour

3/4 tsp. salt

2 pkg. dry yeast

1 1/2 cups warm water (98.6-105 degrees)

1 Tbsp. olive oil

1. Combine flour and salt.

2. In another bowl, dissolve yeast in water for about five minutes, until proofed (foamy). Add to flour. Slowly add additional warm water to form a sticky dough.

3. Remove dough to a floured counter and knead until smooth.

Coat a large bowl with oil and place dough inside. Cover with plastic wrap until dough doubles in size, about 45-60 minutes. Prepare chicken filling.

Chicken Filling  
1 large onion, diced  
1 Tbsp. olive oil  
4 pounds cooked, diced chicken  
1/2 cup frozen peas  
Salt & pepper to taste  
2 cups corn oil  
1. Sauté onion in olive oil until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add other ingredients. Cool.  
2. Place dough on floured counter. Roll dough 1/8 inch thick. With a 3-inch round cookie cutter, cut circles of dough and place on an oiled cookie sheet.

3. Place 1 Tbsp. of filling on each circle. Fold in half and seal tightly by pressing edges together.  
4. Heat corn oil in a deep skillet to 375 degrees. Fry a few pieces at a time until golden brown. Draw on paper towels.

*Zangula*

(yield: 14-16)

Dough

1 1/2 cups flour

1 1/2 tsp. salt

2 pkg. dry yeast

1 1/4 cups warm water (98.6-105 degrees)

2 cups corn oil

Plastic squirt bottle

1. Combine flour and salt.

2. In another bowl, dissolve yeast in 1 1/2 cup warm water for about five minutes, until proofed (foamy). Add to flour. Slowly add remaining water to form a creamy, sticky dough.

3. Coat a bowl large enough to hold the dough with 1 Tbsp. Oil. Cover with plastic wrap for 30 minutes. Prepare syrup.

Syrup

1 cup sugar

3/4 cup water

Juice of 1/2 lemon

1 Tbsp. rosewater (sold at Indian and Middle Eastern stores)

1. Combine sugar and water in a saucepan. At medium heat, stir sugar dissolves and mixture thickens. Add lemon juice and rosewater, cooking one minute. Cool.

2. Place dough into squirt bottle. In a large frying pan, heat remaining oil to 400 degrees. Squeeze dough into oil in circles and swirls. Turning once, fry until both sides are golden brown.

3. Remove to paper towels. When cool enough to handle, dip into syrup and serve.

**Chai Center****An ABSOLUT celebration with Bobarino**

Get out your costumes, your greggers and your dancin' shoes and get ready for "an ABSOLUT celebration," the annual Family Purim Feast at Roger Williams Park Casino on Tuesday, March 21.

The licky-pint Megillah reading will begin at 5:15 pm followed by dinner, music, dancing, masquerade and entertainment by Bobarino Grevitinis.

Promotional materials claim that "This man deserves a big audience. With his India rubber legs and Marceau-like face, he clownes, juggles, jokes, dances

and balances his way into hearts for 40 minutes."

A receiver reports that Bobarino offers a "finale that has to be seen to be believed. He also toses off some pretty cool lasso spinning and gives mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to an alligator."

This evening of Purim antics is sponsored by the Chai Center of West Bay and is open to the community. The fee is \$18 for adults, \$9 for children ages 3 to 12 with a maximum charge of \$50 per family. RSVP by calling the Chai Center at 401-732-6559.

**www.Purim...****Could Mordechai have survived the internet?**

by Mark Mierkiewicz

In the story of Esther, King Achashverosh ruled over an immense empire "from India even unto Ethiopia." In order to defuse his royal decree, messengers needed to travel for days to reach all of the King's 127 provinces.

Thanks to modern technology, news now travels a bit quicker.

The Internet has a surprising number of Purim sites for you to visit. By the time Purim starts on the evening of March 20, you'll be able to travel the world for a wealth of information about the holiday that occurred in Persia over two millennia ago.

Start your tour at Virtual Jerusalem: ([www.vjholiday.com/purim/index.htm](http://www.vjholiday.com/purim/index.htm)). This large site has everything for children, from a history of the holiday and its traditions, to several quizzes and games. My favorite page also has a great title: The Abbridged Annotated Scratch & Sniff Megillah. A Cuckoo Condensation ([www.vjholiday.com/purim/cuckoo.htm](http://www.vjholiday.com/purim/cuckoo.htm)). This is a wonderful holiday story book complete with hilarious sound effects.

Just follow the story and every time you pass your computer's cursor over a picture of a gregger, it will make the appropriate sound effect. Hear the boing when Haman is promoted to the King's second in command; listen as the gallows are built to hang Mordechai; and cheer along when the Jews are saved.

If you want to brush up on the story of Esther, listen to "Cantor Rabbinowitz" conduct a Virtual Megillah Reading at 613.org ([www.613.org/purim.html](http://www.613.org/purim.html)). A traditional English translation of Megillah Esther can be found at Purim Play Today ([www.us-israel.org/jsource/bible/Ester.html](http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/bible/Ester.html)).

I also recommend taking a look at Seven Silly and Serious Suggestions for a Wild and Meaningful Purim ([www.jewishfamily.com/holidays/dayan.htm](http://www.jewishfamily.com/holidays/dayan.htm)). On the same page, you'll find a couple of links to some Purim-related discussion areas. The first asks for your special Purim traditions. The other asks for your special Purim answers. The author who asks, "Will someone like Haman try to hurt me and other Jews?" would you respond?

One of the central traditions and joys of Purim is to send mishloach manot, a minimum of two items of food to one person (Esther 9:22). Rabbi Yehudah Prero suggests that mishloach manot represents something much more than sending goodies but is actually

a Gift of Unity ([www.torah.org/learning/yomtos/purim/5757/od20029.html](http://www.torah.org/learning/yomtos/purim/5757/od20029.html)).

Our happiness on Purim is to be expressed through festive feasts — which not everyone can afford. But because we do not want "to embarrass the poor, the rich give poor gifts, and the poor give gifts to the rich. All the members of the nation of Israel give indiscriminately to their brothers and sisters so all can celebrate Purim properly, without any shame."

Tired of the same old prime and poppy seed hamantaschen? ([www.eskimono.com/~jefftree/recipes/purindex.htm](http://www.eskimono.com/~jefftree/recipes/purindex.htm)) Create cheesecake hamantaschen sound interesting ([www.eskimono.com/~jefftree/recipes/hamachrc.htm](http://www.eskimono.com/~jefftree/recipes/hamachrc.htm)). But I'm still not ready for a mishloach manot basket full of, oy, beef-beef hamantaschen sitting on my doorstep! ([dinnercoop.cs.cmu.edu/dinnercoop/opf/Recipes/jodiy/FlayshigHamantaschen.html](http://dinnercoop.cs.cmu.edu/dinnercoop/opf/Recipes/jodiy/FlayshigHamantaschen.html))

Finally, I nearly choked on my hamantaschen when I came across "Latke vs. Hamantasch: A Materialist Feminist Analysis," ([users.uniserve.com/~hostov/latkes.html](http://users.uniserve.com/~hostov/latkes.html)) penned by the erudite Robin Leiderd of University of Pennsylvania's Department of Sociology, she examines which food is more liberating for women, latkes or hamantaschen.

Leiderd rejects any suggestion that hamantaschen have "been part of the oppressive apparatus upholding the most retrograde patriarchal elements of Judaism" when she concludes that "for women, it is clear that hamantaschen offer far more scope for self-realization, egalitarian relations, and social progress than do latkes."

I'm glad Professor Leiderd removed the hamantaschen from her cheek long enough to firmly plant her tongue there.

Happy Purim and bon appetit!  
*Mark Mierkiewicz is a Toronto-based television producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be contacted at [highway@home.com](mailto:highway@home.com).*

**Jewish mardi gras...**

firms the cultural norms to which we revert when the carnival is over. Such periodic opportunities to let off steam are a catharsis for our social tensions and resentments and ultimately make for social harmony by releasing people to the notion that the way things are in the way they should be.

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## Bella Abzug, born yelling



Bella Abzug was "born yelling" in 1920, the year women won the right to vote. She was the second daughter of poor Russian immigrants. At age 12, Bella gave impassioned speeches on the New York City subways for Hashomer Hatzair, a Zionist youth organization. When she was 12, she defied convention at her family's Orthodox synagogue by saying Kaddish for her father.

Bella Abzug graduated from Hunter College, where she served as student body president. She took night courses at the Jewish Theological Seminary. She then enrolled in Columbia Law School, one of a minuscule number of women law students across the nation.

Abzug practiced law for 25 years, specializing in labor law, civil rights and liberties cases, while raising two daughters with her husband Martin. In 1949, she unsuccessfully appealed the conviction of Willie McGee, an African-American man sentenced to death in Mississippi on specious charges of raping a white woman. Jackson hotels refused Abzug a room and local newspaper called for lynching the "Jewish woman lawyer."

Perpetually speaking out against injustices of the day, Abzug, at age 50 in 1970, ran for Congress in Manhattan and

*Every year, in conjunction with Women's History Month, the Jewish Women's Archive and Ma'ayan: The Jewish Women's Project designate three "Women of Valor" in recognition of their contributions to their people and to North America.*

*Posters depicting each woman's achievements, a study guide for schools and synagogues, and a web site — [www.jwa.org](http://www.jwa.org) — all are available to expand one's knowledge of these women.*

*We present here brief biographical sketches and photographs of each Woman of Valor.*

won. One of only 12 women in the House of Representatives, she continually demonstrated her unshakable conviction as an anti-war activist, as a fighter for social and economic justice, and as a vocal supporter of Israel and Soviet Jewry.

In 1976, she lost the New York democrat primary for US Senate by less than 1% and, subsequently, lost bids for mayor of New York City and for Congress.

In 1977, Abzug presided over the historic first National Women's Conference in Houston. She headed President Carter's National Advisory Committee on Women until she was fired for criticizing the Administration's economic policies. In response, Abzug founded Women USA, a grassroots political action organization.

On the international scene, she advised the US delegations to four of the United Nations' International Women's conferences, and in 1990, she co-founded the Women's Environment and Development Organization. The UN honored Abzug in 1996 for her work with grassroots organizations on peace and the environment, and Bella began speaking about the links between environmental hazards and breast cancer just months before she was diagnosed with the disease.

Bella Abzug gave her final public speech before the UN Commission on the Status of Women in March of 1998. She died soon after, of complications following heart surgery, at the age of 77.

## Bobbie Rosenfeld, star athlete



Fanny "Bobbie" Rosenfeld came to Ontario, Canada from Dnepropetrovsk, Russia in 1904 as an infant. From a young age, Bobbie loved and excelled at sports, though she never had a coach or any formal training. She played lacrosse, golf, tennis, ice hockey, basketball and softball, and speed skated. In 1922, at a track meet, Rosenfeld challenged any girl in her county to a race. When none accepted, she challenged the boys, who did accept, giving her a three-yard handicap. Rosenfeld won easily, launching her running career.

When she was 18, her family moved to Toronto where Bobbie worked as a stenographer at the Patterson Chocolate factory and joined the company-sponsored Pats Athletic Club team and the ice hockey and basketball teams of the Young Women's Hebrew Association.

Rosenfeld first received international attention at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1923 when she ran the 100-meter dash, beating both the American and world-record-holder Helen Filkey and the Canadian record-holder Rosa Grossie. She won wearing her father's socks, her brother's swimming trunks and a gym jersey because no stores in Toronto sold women's sports clothing.

The 1928 Olympics were the first to include women in track and field and Rosenfeld was there as part of the Canadian women's team, nicknamed "The Matchless Six." She led the 400-meter relay team to a gold medal and won a silver in the 100 meter in a photo finish. She then entered the 800-meter race, for which she had not trained, to support an injured teammate. She coached her teammate through the race, holding herself back, so her teammate could place 4th while she took 5th.

## Barbara Myerhoff, trialblazer

Anthropologist Barbara Myerhoff was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1935 and was raised by her mother, stepfather and grandmother. When she was a teenager, the family moved to Los Angeles where she attended college at UCLA, from which she also earned her doctorate in anthropology. At age 19, she married Lee Myerhoff, and together

they had two sons. Their marriage ended in divorce after 28 years in 1982.

Her doctoral dissertation became her first book: *Peyote Hunt: The Sacred Journey of the Huichol Indians*. It was written after field work with the Huichol Indians of Northern Mexico in the late sixties.

Myerhoff began teaching at the University of Southern California in 1968. A creative and extremely popular professor, she urged her students to use the tools of anthropology to question and examine their own lives and to better understand the live of others. Myerhoff was also a renowned academic, publishing frequently in scholarly journals, editing collections, speaking at conferences, developing a unique program in visual anthropology and eventually chairing the USC anthropology department.

In 1972, Myerhoff embarked on her pioneering research with the elderly Jews of the Israel Levin Senior Center in Venice, California. Declaring that the study of one's own culture was just as important as traditional anthropological research on the distant and "exotic," she explained, "Some day I'll be a little old Jewish lady myself. And I'm finding out now how it's done, how it feels, what the possibilities are." Her influential 1979 book, *Number Our Days*, as well as her Oscar-winning documentary film by the same name, showed how the Venice elders made everyday life meaningful amidst hardship, invisibility and poverty.

Myerhoff's contributions to the study of the elderly, ritual, women and religion, and personal narrative throughout the 1970s and early 80s significantly impacted the general public as well as scholars. She helped a broad audience of men and women understand the importance of storytelling to their own lives and initiated a shift in focus within the field of anthropology from studying exotic communities in remote places to studying communities in one's "own backyard."

Myerhoff's study of Jews in Fairfax district of Los Angeles led to her final documentary, "In Her Own Time." The film focused on the Hasidic community and their response to Myerhoff's battle against cancer. Her last on-screen interview for the film was two weeks before she entered the hospital for the final time. She died on January 7, 1985, at age 49, long before she had a chance to "be a little old Jewish lady."

The next year, at age 25, she was struck by severe arthritis. Rejecting amputation, she was bedridden for eight months and used crutches for another year. One day, Rosenfeld, against strict doctor's orders, attended a game of her ice hockey team. Unable to watch them lose, Rosenfeld set down her crutches, put on her skates and scored the winning goal.

By 1931, she had recovered sufficiently to lead her softball league in home runs and be voted the year's outstanding woman hockey player in Ontario. But a second attack of arthritis in 1933 forced her to retire from competition for good.

She began coaching track and softball, and in 1937 became a sports writer for the Toronto Globe and Mail. For 20 years, in her column, Sports Reel, she covered women's sports, defended women's athletics, and encouraged sports education for girls. Rosenfeld stopped the column in 1957 to become the paper's Public Relations Manager. She retired in 1966 due to illness, and died on November 14, 1969 at age 65.



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## From hardware to floorware



Linda Fain is surrounded by the elegance of Oriental rugs, which evoke memories of her favorite places to visit.

Linda Fain perches on a two-foot high stack of oriental rugs at Fain Carpeting. In her black pants and jersey, accented by a gauzy, patterned caftan, she reflects the sophistication and uniqueness of the high quality goods on her floors.

She now is the controlling owner of Fain's Fine Carpets and Rugs, a fixture on North Main Street in Providence since the late 1920s.

This is a business that evolved from a hardware store that her grandparents founded in the Silver Lake section of Providence in 1884. At 116 years old, Fain's is the oldest of the family-owned Jewish businesses we have featured in this series. Although her grandfather, a tinsmith, started the business, it was her grandmother, Ida, Linda says, who really ran it and their large household, all in a three-story building.

As a young teen, Ida had immigrated to Providence to help her cousin care for her brood of four children. When the cousin died, Ida, at age 16, married the widower and bore six children herself, including Irving and Archie, the youngest and Linda's father. It was these two sons who took over the business, opening The New Idea Store in Olneyville before moving to North Main Street.

In the early years, the company sold a variety of goods, including linoleum rugs. That line expanded to broadloom floor coverings and, finally, they settled exclusively on rugs and carpet. The Oriental line was added in the late 70s or early 80s, Linda says. When she assumed control of the business in 1994, she decided to manage just one location — North Main Street.

"This always had been our signature store," she says, "and I love this location. It symbolizes the beginning of Fain Carpeting and most of our customers preferred to come here, looking for a better line of goods."



Ida Fain, the early force behind the business, with son Irving, who with brother, Archie, transformed a hardware store into Fain's Carpets.

Managing a carpet store was not exactly what Linda Fain had in mind growing up. She earned a degree in sociology from the University of Michigan and a master's in family relations at the University of Rhode Island. She taught, did private counseling and consulting, and was involved in prison reform. Divorce changed her needs and she asked to join the business in 1979. In those years it was run by her brother, Barry Fain (now publisher of East Side Monthly and Providence Monthly), and a cousin, Barnett.

She quickly found herself employing all her relationship skills as she worked with vendors, employees and customers, and when she bought the controlling interest in the business, Barry gave her "a quick course in Business 101."

"I use a lot of my own theories, too," she said. "I never knew there was a phrase for it, but I've been told that I run on an 'open book policy.' That means that my employees (there are 9 or 10) know everything about the business; I hide nothing from them and they share in the profits."

One of her great joys has been the travel associated with the their Oriental lines. "I love third-world countries," she says. "I went to Tibet, India, Pakistan to learn how oriental rugs are made. It was wonderful."

Linda points out that although Fain's sells luxuriously thick Orientals and lush carpets, the store offers a broad price range. "We have some hand-knotted room-sized Orientals starting at \$1,200 and going up to \$8,000, but most are in the \$2,000-\$3,000 range. We have non-Orientals, but still beautiful rugs, for less, and we carry very reasonably priced broadloom that look good."

"When people come here," Linda explains, "they demand more from us. They have bigger expectations. They expect more, we offer more."

She says she finds great joy in seeing a new generation in a family come in and begin to accessorize their homes. "I love the progression, to see the kids grow."

She also gets considerable joy from her older customers. "A woman who hadn't recarpeted in 40 years came in recently to order new wool carpets. She also wanted custom Oriental runners for her stairs. As she was leaving, she said 'You better hurry up with this. I'm 86 you know!'"

Who will carry on Fain Carpeting?

"We need to grow," Linda says. "I'm basically waiting for one of my daughters to come into the business."

## Women In Business

### **Reliable Gold... from pg. 3**

Henry Limer sold the business to the two young men in about 1948, according to Ruth, and in 1958 they moved the store to Wayland Avenue, nearer to where the "carriage trade" lived.

"From the beginning, we've always had a mix of antiques and estate pieces with new jewelry and accessories," Rena said. "In many cases, the mix of new and old complement each other."

Showcases of silver hollowware and sterling silver flatware face shelves displaying contemporary glass and ceramic accessories on the opposite side of the room. Delicate cameras are displayed near antique pocket watches, encased in intricately designed cases. Old rings and brooches, their brilliant and colorful stones shimmering from elaborate settings, are beside starkly modern rings and earrings.

Reliable Gold deals only in "real gems, real gold, silver and platinum — all fine jewelry," Rosenberg explains. "We are a unique store, and one of the largest antique dealers in New England. We are constantly acquiring."

To prepare to manage the business, Abeles earned her appraisal certification from the Gemological Institute of America in New York City. She uses the large microscope atop a show case to examine the intricacies of a stone and its setting.

In another day and time, Reliable Gold was on the move, opening stores each winter at the Hollywood



Ruth Rosenberg, niece of one of the founding partners, has helped her husband run Reliable Gold since the late 1940s. She still waits on customers regularly.

Beach Hotel in Florida and the Mayflower in Plympton, Mass., each summer. Ruth remembers those as glamorous times, when lots of celebrities came to the store," singer Jan Pearce and novelist Taylor Caldwell among them, she tells us.

But today, the store on Wayland Avenue is enough.

"The nice part about this particular kind of business," Rena says, "is that in an age of malls, chain stores and huge buying conglomerates, we're able to offer personal service in an intimate environment. We have multi-generations of families as our customers

Melanie's father, Clement, lives upstairs above the business. His last name was not always Delman. When Clement DeLucia and Lila Pearlman decided to get married, Lila required two things — that Clement convert to Judaism, which he did, and that they create a new last name, which they did. So, they kept the "Del" (Yes, as in Del's Econozone, a business owned by uncles of Clement) and the "man" from Pearlman.

This business is just as demanding as was its founder. One must be available whenever the prospective buyer or seller wants to see the agent. That means that Melanie and her 16 sales people, split evenly between Narragansett and Newport, may work every day. The evening of the interview, she is to meet with a couple in Middletown who are ready to list a choice piece of property.

She plans to spend most of the next day in Newport with a client from England who will be closing on a deal for the third piece of property she has sold (and resold) to or for him — Vernon Court, Wildacre, Sea Fair. He found her through Christie's.

Other properties with familiar names that the company has handled include Bellevue House, the former home of Jane Pickens, and Sandcastle in Narragansett. Many other significant estates, though nameless, have been or are in the Delman stable.

"We have had dramatic sales increases in the last three years," says Melanie, who has been running the company since Lila retired in 1988. "The number of properties we handle has grown and the price has climbed dramatically. Demand," she adds, "is way up."

To manage all this, the company has modernized, although you might not think it by looking around the jam-packed porch. Still, there are computers everywhere and the company has its own website. Potential buyers can take "virtual" tours on the computer and if they are flying in to look at a property, they'll see a Delman kiosk at Greene Airport. This aspect of the business is managed by Melanie's brother-in-law, John Hoddnett.

Is there likely to be a third generation to carry on this business? "I certainly hope so," Melanie says. "I think my oldest niece, Pamela and John's daughter, although only 12, will be interested one day."

base," she adds.

"It is a great pleasure to go in to work in the morning and feel like our circle of customers and friends widens daily. It is a particular pleasure to find just the right thing for someone and know they'll enjoy it. We try to zero in on each customer's likes and needs."

And those customers come from all over the country, even a few, especially dealers, from out of the country.

Is there likely to be a fourth generation in the business? "My daughter, Sarah Abeles, is an attorney in New York City," Rena says, "but my son, Jordan, is working in computer graphics in California, and I think he may be interested some day. I suggested he widen his horizons first," the actress, turned gracious sales woman and adroit store manager, smiles.

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### **The Delmans... from pg. 3**

When Gerry Goldstein, editor of the Providence Journal's South County section, wrote Lila Delman's obituary last April, he quoted a story that once de-



The flamboyant Lila Delman, pictured here on the enclosed veranda of her Victorian home turned real estate office. She is surrounded by some of the treasures she acquired from estate sales and auctions.

*Photo courtesy of The Providence Journal.*

scribed her as "a magnificently big woman." Delman, Goldstein continued, "accented her presence with trademark, flowing dresses in floral patterns and bright colors; chartreuse and coral were favorites."

Having moved to Narragansett in the late 40s, Lila got lots of calls from friends in Providence looking for a place to rent during the summer. After helping them out for years, she decided she might as well make money at it, and so in 1965 founded the real estate company in the back room of her home, next door to the current Victorian that doubles as office and residence. (Daughter Pamela is raising her five children in the first house.)

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## Women & Medicine

### Medical Commentaries

## Laban's daughters and the essence of mandrake

by Stanley M. Aronson, MD and Betty E. Aronson, MD

In terse terms, Genesis tells of the complex relationships between Jacob and Laban's two daughters, Leah and Rachel, particularly in their intense desire to bear Jacob's children. At one critical point, Rachel declares, "Give me children, or I shall die." And later, at the time of the wheat harvest, Leah's son, Reuben, comes upon some mandrakes in the field which he gives to his mother. Rachel then implores Leah: "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." [Genesis 30:14.]

Why, in what seems to be an irrational demand, did Rachel beseech her sister to yield the mandrake herbs harvested by Reuben? Why, in a Scriptural book densely packed with critical historic recountings, is there even inclusion of a dialog over an obscure herb?

Rachel, in her consuming need to overcome her barrenness, may have reflected upon a folk belief that small doses of mandrake had both a sedative and fertility-enhancing action. One doesn't study the Torah to learn pharmacology, but even in ancient Scriptural texts one encounters enigmatic hints explainable only by assuming that the pastoral Hebrews had some minimal acquaintance with herbal therapeutics.

Mandrake was certainly known to the Greeks. They called it mandragora, a name which over the centuries was corrupted to its current form, mandrake. It was a name historically associated with magical events; and, even in the 20th Century, when a comic book magician needed an historically sanctioned name, Mandrake was an obvious choice.

The plant itself, a biennial native to the Mediterranean basin, is a rather ugly thing with fetid, fleshy leaves and clusters of berries. The roots (where the pharmacologically active substances are concentrated) have a characteristic fork-shape which, with some vivid imagination, may be said to resemble the human form. The legend arose, then, that each mandrake plant imprisoned a small demon. Certainly when someone imprudently chewed the mandrake roots, he quickly became wildly demented, paralyzed and often died.

Mandrake became an herb crucial to many tribal initiations and fertility ceremonies. In small doses it served as a calming sedative and was frequently given to those awaiting crucifixion.

By the Elizabethan era, mandrake was well-known for its effects as a tranquilizing agent. Shakespeare has Cleopatra say, "Give me to drink mandragora, that I might sleep out this great gap of time. My Anthony is away." And Othello declares that poppy and mandrake are amongst the "drowsie syrups of the world."

It didn't take long for many to appreciate that dosage was critical: a little resulted in pleasant sedation, somewhat more to hallucinatory madness, and still more led to death. John Donne appreciated the perilously narrow range between therapeutic and lethal concentrations of mandrake when he wrote, "... mingled wine with mandrake, whose operation is betwixt sleep and poison."

Linnaeus, the great classifier of plants, called it *Mandragora officinarum* (the mandrake of the apothecaries.) He placed it in a large botanical family called the Solanaceae, a division which includes such diverse plants as the potato, the common tomato, pimento, tobacco, pepper, eggplant and even the petunia.

A 17th Century contingent of British soldiers, stationed in Virginia, once harvested a local plant called the Jamestown weed. They added it to their salad and within hours became wildly manic and disruptive. When they finally recovered they recalled little of what happened. The weed, now called Jimson Weed, is distributed widely throughout the United States and

had been used extensively by the Aztecs as part of the sacrificial temple rites. Many Native American tribes of the Southwest continue to cultivate the weed (technically called *Datura stramonium*) for religious ceremonies. Datura intoxication causes headache, nausea and vomiting, intense thirst, dizziness and hallucinations; and if the dose is greater, is then followed by convulsions, blindness and death. Jimson Weed and mandrake contain similar psychoactive agents.

The most pharmacologically active of the solanaceous plants is commonly called deadly nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*). This plant yields atropine, a critically important drug in medicine and surgery. Related to atropine are the drugs hyoscine and scopolamine sometimes called truth serum. (Atropos was the third of the three Grecian Fates held responsible, in legend, for determining the length and destiny of each person's life.) Historians say that the frenzied behavior characteristic of the ancient Bacchanalian rites of Greece was brought about by adding belladonna to the wine.

The older Greek legends, as embodied in Homer's Odyssey, tell the story of the mythic enchantress Circe, who effectively used a decoction of mandragora to beguile and disarm the sailors of Ulysses. There is Homeric magic to this legend; and to say that the sailors were made compliant merely by a weak solution of scopolamine is to diminish the poetic power credited to the song of Circe.

The pharmacologically active plants of this botanical family (mandrake, datura and atropa), are globally distributed and share similar intoxicating and sedating alkaloids. No culture was ignorant of their neurophysiological properties. (There is, however, no currently credible evidence that mandrake root enhances fertility.) Certainly these botanical agents have been regarded with awe and respect by native groups on every continent. It is naïve, then, to assume that the ancient Hebrews, and in particular, Rachel, would have been totally ignorant of the powerful pharmacological effects attributed to mandrake root.

The Solanaceae provide humanity with an astonishing variety of products for food (potatoes, tomatoes, eggplant), for culinary enlivenment (peppers), for morbid diversion (tobacco), for beauty in the garden (petunias) and for medication (atropine, scopolamine). The effects of the medicinal herbs of this group upon humans were universally known, and, inevitably, some were mentioned in the Bible. But only when their pharmacological properties are appreciated could Rachel's compulsive demand for mandrake be understood. The authors of Genesis must have assumed that the effects of mandrake consumption were common knowledge; they therefore provided no further explanation for Rachel's urgent request.

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The Jewish Voice of RI • March 2000

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# Young women prevail as defense, prosecution in mock trials

by Jane S. Sprague

The team of young women from the New England Academy of Torah truly lived up to all the meanings that can be associated with their school's acronym — NEAT.

First of all, they were doing a really neat thing — competing with other high schools in mock trials under the sponsorship of the Rhode Island Legal Education Partnership. The team of six — three prosecutors and three witnesses — representing one-third of the high school's enrollment, were arguing the case. This time, February 11, they were the prosecution (they had already defended and won) in a real courtroom in the Garrish judicial center in Providence, before a real judge, Janette Bertram of the Workers' Compensation Court, and in front of real attorneys who would act as the jury, Amy Coleman and Joe Marrian III.

In their business suits, the team appeared *orderly and precise*, as were their procedures; *nothing careless or messy here*.

The issue, however, was very messy. The prosecution was asking for a Waiver of Jurisdiction that, if

granted, would allow them to try a 14-year-old as an adult on a charge of reckless homicide.

Bashi Lipson skillfully opened the prosecution's case, standing erect and poised behind the lectern, making solid eye contact with judge and jury, and never faltering as she hammered home the contention that the boy could not be rehabilitated as a juvenile.

Adina Shafner was the first to call and examine a witness. Immediately the defense objected to the credentials of the investigating officer, but Shafner was ready for them, deftly defending her witness's expertise and winning the point. In fact, she prevailed over each objection.

Tamara Shore then rose to question the boy's teacher. Although she lost on part of the defense's objection to the expertise qualification of the witness, she *adroitly argued against each subsequent challenge, prevailing three times out of five*.

As the prosecution rested and the defense team from Lincoln High School began to call their witnesses, nearly every objection raised by the women from NEAT times out of five.

was sustained. They made their case so precisely, in fact, that their opponents often were left speechless.

In the end, when Shafner rose to close, after a strong statement from the opposition's star defender, she made a simple and smoothly consistent summary of the case, not diluting or miring the thrust of argument with other issues that would confuse the jurors.

While the jurors scored the teams on their efforts, Judge Bertram took time to coach the teens on their skills, complimenting both sides, giving suggestions for mastering court room procedures and reminding them to be appropriately aggressive, saying, "Lawyers need to know that their judgment affects another person's life dramatically."

Attorney Coleman suggested they be persistent with their objections, and Lawyer Marrian said not to "confuse respect for the court with being zealous for their client, even if the judge gets aggravated."

And then the decision was rendered. For the prosecution.

Now, the *tzavot* ("prosecutors,"



The women of NEAT's mock trial team pose with Judge Jarette Bertram. Standing in center are Adina Shafner and Tamara Shore, arguing both sides of the case successfully. Standing (l to r) are witness Yael Silberberg and prosecutors Adina Shafner and Tamara Shore. Kneeling (l to r) are witness Nechama Gerber, prosecutor Bashi Lipson and witness Elishava Diamond.

their "witnesses" and their coaches — Aviva Jakubowicz and Attorney Jim Lee, Chief of Civil Division in the Attorney General's office — whooped and clapped.

The young women have one more hurdle to clear. If they win a third time, they will go to the state finals, the furthest the team has advanced in the three years that NEAT has been participating. As of this writing, they did not know which side they would be assigned to argue in their third presentation at Day 6 or which school they would face across the court room. But as one coach said, "We've

won both sides, so we know it's not the case. It's us!"

How neat!

*Bashi Lipson is the daughter of Miriam and Rabbi Yosef Lipson. She will study at Bais Yaakov Seminary in New York City next year.*

*Adina Shafner is the daughter of Rivlyn and Samuel Shafner. She will study in Jerusalem next year. (She may become the lawyer among the team.)*

*Tamara Shore, daughter of Valerie and Scott Shore, will enroll in general studies at Bar Ilan University next year.*

## German teenagers choose Nazi-fighter as top woman

by Tobi Axelrod

BERLIN (ITA) — Readers of a German magazine for teen-age girls chose a young woman who was excused for criticizing the Nazi regime as the most important woman of the 20th century.

Sophie Scholl — a member of the White Rose student resistance movement — was overwhelmingly chosen for the honor, according to the results of a questionnaire announced in the Jan. 12 issue of "Brigitte" magazine, which comes out twice monthly and has about 1 million subscribers.

The White Rose was a small group of Munich university students who, from the summer of 1942 until they were caught by the Gestapo in January 1943, disseminated anti-Nazi leaflets urging Germans to oppose the war. It may be

the only German resistance group that mentioned the mass murder of European Jews.

Seven members of the group, including Sophie, who was not yet 22, and her brother, Hans, 24, were guillotined after their clandestine activities were uncovered.

The fact that Sophie Scholl was honored by so many readers shows that they "find it good when women are courageous and politically active," said magazine staff member Marina Meyer-Bungert, who answers readers' questions. "It shows that young women who read our magazine want a bit more than just to be good-looking."

During her trial on Feb. 22,

1943, Sophie told the famous "hanging" Judge Roland Freisler, "Somebody had to make a start. What we said and wrote are what many people are thinking. They just don't dare say it out loud. We have lost the war," she added. "Everyone knows it. Why are you so cowardly as to not recognize that?"

Readers did not pick Sophie Scholl out of the blue. They were given a choice of 10 women, said editor Angela Wittmann. "We wanted a mix, including politics, fashion, theater and so on — our classic themes." About 10,000 readers responded, with more than a quarter choosing Scholl.

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## Storyteller Harkin leads weekend programs for Women's History month

In celebration of Jewish Women's History Month, the Association of Jewish Libraries, Rhode Island Chapter, will sponsor a visit by renowned storyteller Vered Hankin on Thursday, March 30. Hankin's visit is funded by a grant from the DeRabban Fund of the Rhode Island Foundation. All events are free and open to the public. The schedule for Hankin's visit is as follows:



9:00-10:45 am Workshop on Storytelling Techniques open to all librarians and teachers in the community, at Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Avenue. RSVP to Temple Emanu-El Librarian Mara Sokolsky.

11:00 am-noon Storytelling performance for adults highlighting this year's Jewish Women's Archives

Women of Valor. Performance at Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Avenue, Providence.

3:30-5:00 pm Open House Storytelling for children in grades 4-6 highlighting Jewish Women's History Month and midrash, at the Jewish Community Center, 401 Elmwood Avenue, Providence.

Israeli born, Vered Hankin draws from her experience in education and theater to give storytelling a unique and dramatic flavor. She makes history come alive in her narrations on famous historical figures. She integrates the telling with audience interaction. At age 25, Hankin has been called "the leading Jewish storyteller of her generation."

Her notable credits include the 92nd Street Y, Performance Space 122, The Jewish Museum, Columbia University, University of Washington (Seattle), Connecticut Diversity Festival, and many television and radio features. Her stories and essays are in two forthcoming books.

Author and storyteller Cherie Karo Schwartz says of her, "Vered uses movement, voice, and spirit to draw her audience beautifully into the moment of storytelling. Her whole being shines with the magic of sharing stories."

## UN group blocks Hadassah as "racist" organization

by Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — Although the United Nations repealed its "Zionism Is Racism" resolution several years ago, Jewish nationalism apparently still sparks debate in the international body.

Citing concerns about its Zionist ties, representatives of Lebanon and other Arab countries put up roadblocks against the largest Jewish women's organization in the United States in its efforts to achieve greater involvement in the UN's humanitarian work.

At a January 26 hearing before the UN Economic and Social Council, Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America requested consultative status, which would enable it to participate in the Commission on the Status of Women and work with nongovernmental organizations around the world on humanitarian issues.

Seven other Jewish groups, including B'nai B'rith and the American Jewish Committee, have consultative status on the committee, along with more than 1,000 other organizations.

Hassan Najem, Lebanon's representative to the 19-member committee — which is chaired by Tunisia and includes several countries that are hostile to Israel — moved to reject Hadassah's application. In the hearing, Najem and representatives of other Arab countries, including Syria and the Palestinian Authority, which are observers on the committee, described Zionism

as racism and repeatedly questioned Hadassah about its Zionist ties.

A decision on whether to accept Hadassah was deferred until the committee's next meeting, scheduled for May.

According to Amy Goldstein, the director of Israeli, Zionist and international affairs for Hadassah, an organization best known for its hospitals in Jerusalem that serve Jews and Palestinians, representatives on the UN committee "saluted our work," but repeatedly asked Hadassah officials to clarify their definition of Zionism.

"They stated that our definition of Zionism is not Zionism and insisted that Zionism is not just a political movement but inherently racist," said Goldstein, explaining that Hadassah describes its philosophy as "practical Zionism." This philosophy includes establishing projects that address Israel's social, educational and health needs.

At the more than hourlong hearing, Hadassah was questioned about the nature of its efforts in Palestine at the time of the group's founding 88 years ago and why the founders chose to work in Palestine rather than "other places in the world that had the same problems," Goldstein said.

Following the meeting, Hadassah President Bonnie Lipton said, "While Syria and Lebanon speak the language of peace in negotiations with Israel, their behavior in the United Nations was most objectionable.

"By raising the rescinded and repudiated 'Zionism Is Racism' resolution, they once again identify themselves with the rejectionist camp rather than with those seeking peace in the Middle East."

## Woman heads tech college

(Jerusalem) — Nava Ben-Zvi, PhD, appointed President of the Hadassah College of Technology in Jerusalem in December, is the first woman to head the institution in its 30-year history, and the first head to hold the title of president.

A long-time faculty member at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Ben-Zvi comes to Hadassah with more than 25 years' experience in science, technology and education.

Ben-Zvi's vision for the college includes: increasing the number of academic degrees; revising curriculum to respond to the changing needs of the consumer market; working with students to create programs that will offer them diverse career and growth opportunities, and creating new programs that contribute to life in Jerusalem and Israeli society.

"Clearly, academic excellence is paramount, and that will be maintained and upgraded," said Ben-Zvi. "We're also bringing a number of study tracks under the umbrella of digital/visual arts, such as industrial design, video and television, photography and printing."

A native of Jerusalem, Ben-Zvi holds a Ph.D. in chemistry from Hebrew University, and is chair of Jerusalem's Bloomfield Science Museum and a founder of Israel's Open University. Previous to her appointment, she was codirector and a founder of Snunit, Israel's first, largest and most successful Internet learning site, affiliated with Hebrew University. She was also Chair of Hebrew University's Science Teaching Center, and has worked extensively advising and developing education projects in Israel and around the world.



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## Women see new opportunities

By Ilisa Hurowitz

These are the best of times. The economy is strong. Inherited and new wealth abounds. Non-profit organizations are able to proliferate, innovate and grow to meet endless need, thanks to the generosity of experienced and new philanthropists.

As competition for the philanthropic dollar increases, charities necessarily consider and approach their constituencies in new and varied ways. Among all of the talk about how to engage the 20 and 30-something dot.com millionaires in charitable giving; how to educate the "next generation" to support the non-profit sector; how, at the same time, to maintain and retain the interest and leadership of existing and "traditional" donors; at last, most of us are also thinking about women with new and creative energy.

What are the assumptions? What are the issues? What are the pitfalls? And what should or can donors, volunteers, charities and the professionals who represent them do about all of this?

Hardly new to philanthropy, either as donors or volunteer leaders, women are the subject of new study and attention, as charities—that historically and understandably built fundraising models with, for and about men—look to maximize support from all sources.

Always donors and always, though often invisibly, the philanthropic decision-makers, women tend to behave differently from men when it comes to charitable giving. Different circumstances inspire their philanthropy; different expectations may guide the use of their gifts; different objectives capture their passion, time and leadership.

The new wisdom that nonprofits are accumulating about women in philanthropy confirms the following generalized assumptions: 1) that women are particularly attracted to grass roots non-profit causes, to places where they feel that they can make a real difference; 2) that women, perhaps more frequently than men, seek direct, tangible results of their philanthropic support; 3) that women, more often than men, embrace a "democratic" view of fundraising, founded less upon hierarchy that separates major donors from all donors; 4) that gift planning, including life income gifts, deferred gifts and bequests, with its emphasis on the mutuality of giving (i.e., the charity benefits; the donor benefits), can be especially attractive to women; 5) that women are likely to make gifts to underwrite change, rather than to maintain status quo.

There are also a number of

external forces at work. The tone, leadership structure and organizational culture of a non-profit will impact the extent to which women will be inspired to be involved. Gender balance on the board of directors, gender representation at senior staff levels will be implicit, if not explicit factors, sending messages to all of an organization's constituents about mission and commitment to diversity. Women's colleges and non-profit causes that specifically support women and women's issues presumably have an easier time in this regard. Studies confirm, for example, that alumnae of women's colleges give more to their alma maters than do women alumnae of co-educational institutions.

At the same time, women have traditionally given less to their favorite causes and respective colleges (whether single sex or co-educational) than do their spouses or male counterparts. In response, numbers of women leaders and organizations have made it a priority to educate women—and men—among their supporters as to this disparity and to stress the value of greater parity in giving.

The implications of these assumptions and realities raise important questions for women who are philanthropically involved or inclined to be—and for charities that will benefit from women's financial and intellectual participation in their enterprises. As the role of women in corporate America continues to change, women's relationship to wealth and philanthropy is changing. A behavioral distinction that appears to be gender-based may prove to be professional or generation-based instead.

Do young, or less young, successful women entrepreneurs behave more like their male colleagues or more like their grandmothers in the philanthropic context? How do these women respond to "friendly competition" in fundraising? Are they be inspired to give more in order to "win" or "beat" the giving levels of their friends or classmates (a form of leverage that historically and typically has worked well among men)? Or, is their giving more personally and privately motivated?

Without a doubt, charities that want to attract and develop the support of women will need to appreciate and articulate the core value of their "case" or compelling program need. Organizations must be ever more creative and vigilant to develop new ways to involve and engage women—and men—through new and diverse volunteer opportunities. Time is short; people are busy. Traditional com-

mittee and board assignments, with multi-year terms and formal and frequent meeting schedules do not work for everyone who has leadership potential. A broadened, customized menu of possibility, on the other hand, will attract greater diversity, interest and support.

These are the best of times for women in philanthropy. Volunteer leaders and charities together have an opportunity to collaborate to create additional and new means for involvement. Many organizations have had success bringing women together in focus groups, in order to test and challenge these assumptions. Follow-up can identify and prioritize action plans that accommodate general trends and knowledge; but that also recognize that women—like men—are not a monolithic group. A combination of broad-based and one-woman-at-one-time relationship building will provide the strongest foundation—boosted by continuing dialogue between and among women in philanthropy, working together to make a difference.

*Ilisa Hurowitz is a Senior Consultant with Marty & Lundy, Inc. She is the former Vice President for Endowment and Development at CJP in Boston and is an acknowledged expert on Women's Philanthropy. She will be the featured guest at the first meeting, on April 11, of the President's Council, a group of women who preside over Jewish organizations in Rhode Island.*

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## How can judges help children caught in violence?

What can a judge do to help children who are caught in the tragedy of domestic violence?

Judge Howard Lipsey, of the Rhode Island Family Court, will answer that question on Wednesday, March 15 when he speaks to the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) in the social hall at Temple Beth-El.

The Rhode Island section of NCJW has been examining the issues surrounding domestic violence for the last three years. Members have heard Peg Langhammer of the Rape Crisis Center speak on the pain and trauma women victims feel and how devastating it is when children are involved. Deb DeBare, executive director of the RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence, described life in women's shelters, how demeaning it is and how insufficient the programs are for children. Kathy Jellison, executive director of the Women's Cen-

ter of RI, discussed minimal programs that are not very productive.

Now, a judge will discuss options available to the bench.

In addition, NCJW will honor and salute those members who help others through volunteer service on a day-to-day basis.

Coffee and dessert will be served at the program which begins at 7:00 pm. Temple Beth-El is at 70 Orchard Ave., Providence.

## MARCH COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### March 6

Temple Sinai Talmud Study  
Leisure Club  
JFRI Maimonides Society Steering Committee  
CRC Israel/Turkish Task Force  
Miriam Hospital Women's Hospital Assn. Board Mtg.  
BJE Judaica Course  
BJE HEM Committee  
BJE Leadership Development Committee

### March 7

Temple Sinai Talmud Study  
Temple Beth-El Sisterhood Board & Luncheon  
CRC Executive Committee Meeting  
BJE March of the Living Orientation  
Temple Emanu-El Adult Institute

### March 8

BJE Principal's Council  
Temple Sinai Talmud Study  
NCJW Kick-off Community Service Luncheon  
Leisure Club Board  
BJE 50th Anniversary Committee  
JFRI Leadership Development Awards Com.  
Touro Fraternal Assn. Board Meeting  
ASDS Executive Board Meeting  
JFRI P&A Committee  
Temple Beth-El's Adult Enrichment Class

### March 9

Temple Sinai Talmud Study  
Leisure Club  
BJE Melton Class

### March 10

Temple Sinai Talmud Study  
Temple Beth-El Children's Shabbat

### March 11

Temple Sinai Torah Study  
BJE Midrasha Fundraiser

### March 12

Temple Emanu-El's Hamantaschen Baking and distribution

### March 13

Temple Sinai Talmud Study  
Leisure Club

### March 14

JFRI Executive Committee Meeting  
JFRI Women's Alliance Hamantaschen Baking  
BJE Passover Workshop  
Temple Beth-El Board of Trustees

### March 15

Temple Sinai Talmud Study  
JFRI Endowment Committee  
RI Hadassah Executive Board Meeting  
ASDS Board Meeting  
Temple Beth-El's Adult Enrichment Class  
JFRI CRC Arab/Jewish Dance  
NCJW Volunteer Recognition Meeting  
PHDS Board Meeting

### March 16

Temple Sinai Talmud Study  
Leisure Club  
Eden Garden Club

### March 17

Temple Sinai Talmud Study  
Temple Beth-El Social Action Shabbat

### March 18

Temple Sinai Torah Study  
RI Hadassah Israeli Wine Tasting & Passover Wine Sale

### March 19

Temple Beth-El's Passover Wine Sale  
Temple Emanu-El's Purim Carnival

Temple Beth-El's Purim Carnival  
Temple Beth-El Service of Comfort

### March 20

Temple Sinai Talmud Study  
Leisure Club  
JFRI Audi Committee  
JCC Purim Dinner  
NA AMAT Davorah Dayan

### March 21

Voice Copy Review  
Temple Sinai Talmud Study  
Noon  
Temple Beth-El's preschool story & craft hour

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## Community

# Barrington teens skate their way national to recognition

by Yehuda lev

There doesn't seem to be any logical reason why Warwick, RI should be an American center for developing young figure-skating talent. Even Providence, with its sparkling new outdoor ice-skating rink, doesn't boast a figure-skating team such as Warwick has.

And it seems even less logical for two of Warwick's finest skaters to live within a couple of miles of each other in Barrington. But such is the case and so The Voice recently dispatched a non-skating reporter to talk with each of the 16-



Rachel Segal in costume

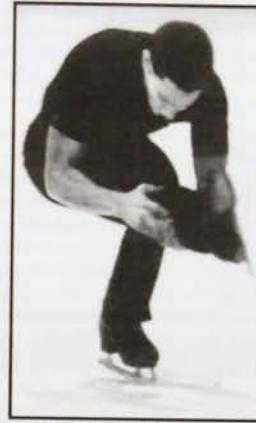
year-old potential national champions in their Barrington living rooms.

Rachel Segal returned home recently from Helsinki, Finland, where she and 22 other young women, the Superettes Junior team of Warwick Figure Skating, came in 3rd in synchronized skating competition with 13 other top teams world wide. The Superettes Jr. went to Helsinki on the strength of the United States championship they had won earlier.

Rachel Segal began skating at the age of 10 and spends two hours every weekday and eight hours every weekend on her skates. She says she does this because skating is lots of fun, because she gets to travel and because it gives her a chance to meet new people.

Skating also has its downside: she has already broken a leg and has a collection of scars on her fingers from being overrun on the ice by sharp skates. But Rachel, who is in her third year at the Wheeler School and who hopes to become a physical therapist, wants to attend Providence College so that she can continue to skate for Warwick.

Watching a film of her team skating in competition makes clear why she is enthralled by the sport. The 20 young women skate in unison and harmony, weave patterns among each other with a seeming nonchalance born of years of practice, and endlessly form and reform their lines and circles, demonstrating in their precision of movement the kind of loyalty to the collective



Adam Kaplan in action

team that men often claim to find so satisfying in football.

But football is the last thing on the mind of Adam Kaplan who, at the age of five began to play ice hockey and soon discovered that what he liked least about his new sport was the game itself. He enjoyed the skating much more. Adam's sister, eight years his senior, also skated but has since traded the rink for law school. (Another sister, eight years his junior, recently began lacing up her skates.)

Adam is not attracted to synchronized skating which, in the US is almost entirely a woman's sport, but skates freestyle, as a single and, until recently, as one of a mixed pair. He demonstrated a talent for exhibition skating early in his post-hockey career and was accepted into Warwick Figure Skating

where, for the past three years, he has been a national competitor. For the past two years he has finished 4th in the North American Challenge, representing the United States and skating against teams from Canada and Mexico.

Adam will not be competing this year because a knee injury (skating, not skating) caused him to miss the US finals at which the team was selected. He expects to compete again in 2001. Are the Winter Olympics too much to hope for? Yes, says Adam, in 2002 because he is still in the Junior class and not ready to take on the top rung of skaters. But in 2006 he would like to represent the United States on the Olympic ice.

Adam is a student at Bar-

rington High School and is a graduate of the Alpern Schechter Day School where his mother, Cynthia, teaches math and history to the upper grades. He has no particular college in mind but wants to attend one in the Boston area where there are good rinks and plenty of opportunity to practice. There is also a possible new partner for pair-skating who lives near Boston.

And post-skating? There may not be any. Adam's plans call for a career as a professional skater and, later, a coach. For the moment, like Rachel, he spends hours every week on the rink. You can watch them now in Warwick and, coming soon, on your TV screen. You know, the programs with grace, beauty, skill and no laugh tracks.

## Touro gives more defibrillators

Just three months after donating three Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) to the fire departments in Cranston, Providence and Warwick, Touro Fraternal Association delivered two more of the life-saving devices to each of the three cities.

Touro originally underwrote the costs of the AED units as a gift to The Lifespan Cardiac Initiative program and had planned to pay out the pledge over three years. "After we saw the enthusiasm of the rescue squad personnel when we presented the first units, we decided to accelerate the completion of our pledge," explained Arthur Poulten, chairman of Touro's board of directors.

In addition, Touro expanded its commitment from eight to a total of nine units.

"We selected Cranston, Providence and Warwick as recipients because a majority of our more than 600 members live in those communities, so we may very well be serving our members directly," Poulten said.

Touro Fraternal Association is the largest independent Jewish fraternal order in the Northeast.

## An Interfaith Passover Gathering for people Touched by AIDS 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Seder of Hope



Synagogue Youth, today serving as the congregation's liaison to the organization. She is a past president of the synagogue's Sisterhood, helping to organize children's programs and fundraising events.

The Mintzes are parents of (l to r above) Abigail, age 16, who attends the Maimonides School in Boston; Orli, age 13, in junior high at PHDS, and Michael, age 10, a 4th grader at PHDS.

The cocktail hour will begin at 5:00 pm with dinner at 6 o'clock. For information and to purchase tickets, call the synagogue office at 401-621-9393. Congregation Beth Shalom is at the corner of Rochambeau Avenue and Camp Street in Providence.

**Sunday, April 9th - 5:00 PM**

Jewish Community Center of RI  
401 Elmwood Avenue - Providence

\$10 per person includes complete dinner  
Space is limited. Reservation deadline is March 24.

For reservations or more information call  
JFRI-421-4111, ext. 161

Sponsored by the AIDS Task Force  
of the Community Relations Council • Jewish Federation of RI

Panels from AIDS Memorial Quilt will be on display courtesy  
of "Names Project Rhode Island"



Congregation Beth Sholom

# Heads up! Kids may well outnumber adults in this shul

by Jane S. Sprague

Rabbi Mitchel Levine taps his foot on the new tile floor in the social hall at Congregation Beth Sholom. "This used to be carpeted," he said. "But we now are a very kid-friendly synagogue, so when the carpet had to be replaced, we decided to create an environment where parents can be comfortable bringing their kids."

We have just come from the wing that houses offices and a few classrooms. "This once was a Conservative congregation," Rabbi Levine says as he opens a door to a room filled with colorful toys, "so there were classrooms. This is where the toddlers hang out. We have a big ratio of little ones to adults. In fact, we adults can easily be outnumbered."

This congregation is an amalgamation of several others, giving it the long name of Congregation Ahavath Sholom - Sons of Zion, Beth Sholom. Ahavath Sholom was formed in the summer of 1905 when the Providence Jewish population numbered about 2,000. For 44 years, its home was at Howell and Scott Streets.

The history printed on the Beth Sholom calendar says, "On April 10, 1949, farewell services were held at the old Synagogue, and in a traditional solemn procession, the four sacred Torah scrolls were carried fourteen blocks to the Congregation's new House of Worship at Rochambeau Avenue and Camp Street, its present location."

At some point, perhaps in the 60s and in conjunction with a classroom addition, the congregation became Conservative. In 1978, it merged with the Sons of Zion, and in the 80s, Rabbi Levine says, they resumed the Orthodox affiliation.

Rabbi Levine describes the 100 families which comprise the Modern Orthodox congregation at Camp and Rochambeau, just about half a mile west of Hope Street in Providence, as mostly young working couples, whose school-age children all are enrolled in one of the two local Jewish day schools, either Alperin Schechter (ASDS) or Providence Hebrew (PHDS). His own son, Elan, age 6, attends the PHDS, while his toddler, Keshet, is in the Jewish Community Center's program.

Despite the pressures on their lives, his congregants make minyanim in the chapel (call for schedule), and he estimates that Saturday morning services average about 75 daveners, more for special occasions and bar/bat mitzvahs.

As we walk into the sanctuary, Rabbi Levine says, "We believe in the need to make sense of Jewish tradition in the modern world, and we are committed to maintaining ritual practices while still being open to modernity."

He gestures to a low wall of lattice that runs the length of

the center aisle and is affixed to rows of pews. "We give a very clear message to women that their presence is valued here. We have the mehitzah in the center so women and men daven side-by-side. Women here chant and sing out loud, and girls who become bat mitzvah study with the rabbi and deliver a d'var torah from the bimah on Saturday mornings." In keeping with Orthodox tradition, what women do not do is read from the Torah during mixed services.

The davening here, Rabbi Levine tells us, is lay directed. "Here at Beth Sholom, we believe our congregants should be ritually literate, able to lead davening and know their place in the siddur. They should know what the prayers mean. We are devoted to the idea of being able to do for oneself Jewishly rather than have a professional Jew be Jewish for us." His role during Shabbat services is to deliver a d'var torah, and even that is sometimes abbreviated if there is a special guest speaker or a bat/bat mitzvah youth on the bimah.

In fact, Rabbi Levine sees being an "open-door place" as the congregation's biggest challenge, a place that can introduce Jewish tradition to "Jews who may not have felt invited" into a congregation before. He also sees Beth Sholom as a bridge between the Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jewish communities.

The passionate and articulate young rabbi sees "the most important division in Jewish life as that between the various Orthodox schools of thought and the non-Orthodox Jews. Beth Sholom is especially valuable because it straddles that line and tries to remain a bridge between one world and the other. The mission of this synagogue is to keep both sides of the mehitzah in the same room," he says.

To that end, the congregation offers several programs that are open to the Jewish community at large. They are just beginning a program for parents and daughters to learn together, modeled after the popular father-son program that has been underway for several years and initiated by the New England Rabbinical College.

This article is the sixth in a series The Voice is writing that profiles all Jewish congregations in our area.



Beth Sholom's young and passionate rabbi, Mitchell Levine.

In addition, a Shomer Shabbat Cub Scout pack meets at Beth Sholom and is open to all eligible boys in the community.

On Thursday nights, there is Israeli dancing for women, most of whom are not members of Beth Sholom and who, the Rabbi says, "seem to have a good time."

The congregation also hosts programs and courses that are open to the community.

One of those is a Lunch and Learn that has been meeting on Thursdays for several years in the accounting offices of Jay Rosenstein. Rabbi Levine says the 15 to 20 men and women in the class delve into classical Jewish texts and try to adapt the ancient concepts to modern issues. He considers the bi-weekly sessions "a wonderful opportunity for me to teach and to learn from those I'm teaching. It's an exchange of ideas on timely Jewish topics."

Teaching and learning obviously is the rabbi's passion, not the business side of synagogue life. The congregation's board and its officers handle the financial side of things. "Ours is not a wealthy congregation," Rabbi Levine says, "but ours is a very enthusiastic and energetic group."

Dues, as in most synagogues, are flexible when necessary. A family can expect to pay \$725 a year, and a single person \$450. There are rate variations for seniors and for students.

Because most Orthodox congregations do not have Hebrew schools, members with children will also face tuition costs at one of the two day schools. Some will send their daughters to high school at the New England Academy of Torah, affiliated with the Providence Hebrew Day School. The boys' division of NEAT closed several years ago, forcing local Orthodox families to send their sons, and in some cases their daughters, either to public high school, boarding schools or the Maimonides School (coed) in Boston.

"The Maimonides option has worked admirably well," Rabbi Levine says. "But I still feel that for the Providence Jewish community to grow and become stronger, a good next step would be a Jewish high school. As a community, we should be interested in competing for Jewish families who are moving to Southern New England. Providence as a city can compete, but the area would be more attractive to Jews if we offered a Jewish high school."

For more information about Congregation Beth Sholom, contact the synagogue at 401-621-9393.



Congregation Beth Sholom at Camp and Rochambeau Streets in Providence serves the Modern Orthodox community.

# God's choices may be many and varied



Rabbi Yitz Greenberg, the "retired" founder of CLAL, says his own evolution as a Jew in the United States parallels that of the community at large.

by Jane S. Sprague

Yitz Greenberg is a Modern Orthodox rabbi. He is sitting in a circle of about 30 other rabbis, young to middle age, most are men, a few women, with a spouse or two also in the circle. It is a cold but bright morning in Newport. First Beach is just across the street, in view of the meeting room's windows.

"I have come to know the limitations of my own absolute," Rabbi Greenberg tells the group of Reform, Conservative, Orthodox,

Reconstructionist and Humanistic clergy. Rabbi Greenberg is the founder of CLAL, the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, whose purpose is to foster a pluralistic atmosphere among Jews. He serves ex-officio with CLAL now and expects to be formally nominated soon by President Bill Clinton to chair the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

In answer to a question, Rabbi Greenberg says, "Others are not

wrong on all issues. I have to recognize when they are right. Pluralism recognizes multiple truths. Am I the only chosen one? Can't God make many choices?" he asks.

For about an hour, he casually discusses his own evolution as a Jew, which he characterizes as passing through three phases, somewhat akin to the progression of the American Jewish community in the 20th century.

The son of immigrant parents, Irving Yitzchak Greenberg was born in Borough Park, NYC, in 1933, the year Roosevelt was first elected President. The goal Jewish parents set then for their children, Rabbi Greenberg says, was thorough Americanization. "We were to go to Harvard because it was the acme of American universities."

What did Irving (not yet "Yitz") do? While on a tour of Yeshiva University as a teen, he met a group of survivors, half from the Holocaust, the others from Siberia, who decided to open up to a group of American boys. "The room explodes into a cacophony of singing, crying, shouting. I stayed at Yeshiva and got a dose of Judaism uncensored."

He also took classes at Brooklyn University. "Every day was a crisis," he remembers. "Morning classes knocked out religion; afternoon classes knocked out secular studies. It was the beginning of my pluralism."

He did make it to Harvard, at the graduate level, where, still Irvin-

ing, he focused on American history, but where he did not wear a kippah. "Finally," he says, "a two and a half years, I decided to wear my kippah. I felt like I was coming out of the closet."

## Becoming Yitz

By now married to Blu, he was recruited by the new dean of Yeshiva University who sought Modern Orthodox scholars with American degrees as faculty. A few years later, a Fulbright Scholarship took the Greenbergs, now parents of baby boy, to Israel. Their sojourn coincided with the Eichmann trial. "I spent 10 months reading about the Shoah," he says. "I went to Yeshiva, then a very run-down place. All day long I read about the killing of babies and then at night I would come home to this pulsating life. I was filled with rage, shame, humiliation. It was devastating. But I decided I wanted to be Jewish not American."

He also decided he wanted to teach Jewish studies, particularly the Shoah. Once back at Yeshiva University, the dean blocked his proposal for a "fluff" course on the Holocaust until he recast it as "Totalitarianism and Identity in the 20th Century." The course carried that title for four years.

## Embrace what shames you

Rabbi Greenberg says that "the Shoah came to dominate the middle phase of my life." During these 13 years, he says, he came to know

Please go to next page.

## So, you want to be a Maven?

### Shabbat

- Light Shabbat candles, saying or chanting the blessing
- Conduct Shabbat table service:

  - Sing *Shalom Aleichem*
  - Chant the Friday evening Kiddush
  - Bless my child/ren
  - Recite *ha-motza*
  - Sing Shabbat songs (*zemirot*)
  - Chant short version of grace after meals (*birkat hamazon*)
  - Chant the long version of *birkat hamazon*
  - Enjoy a Friday Shabbat dinner with a host family
  - Chant the Kiddush for Shabbat lunch
  - Chant the Havdallah service marking the end of Shabbat

### Home Rituals

- Affix a mezuza to a doorpost with the blessing
- Make my home kosher
- Holiday (Yom Tov) Rituals**

  - Chant the Kiddush for Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot, Passover and Shavuot
  - Blow the shofar
  - Build a sukkah
  - Shake the lulav and etrog
  - Light Hanukkah candles and chant the blessings
  - Prepare my home for Passover
  - Conduct a Passover seder

### Jewish Learning

- Read Hebrew
- How to start a personal Jewish library
- Prayer (history, development, concepts and themes)
- Study a section of Torah
- Make my own tallit
- Surf the Jewish internet
- Study Jewish concepts

### Synagogue Skills

- Take an aliyah (blessing of being called to the Torah)
- Put on tallit and tefillin, with appropriate blessings
- Recite mourner's Kaddish
- Participate in Shabbat morning service
- Participate in Shabbat evening service
- Participate in daily service (morning, afternoon/evening)
- Chant from the Torah
- Chant a haftarah (portion from The Prophets)

### Life Cycle

- Planning, learning about, observing:

  - Baby naming
  - Brit Milah (circumcision)
  - Bar/Bat Mitzvah
  - Wedding
  - Mikvah
  - Mourning rituals – funeral, shiva, unveiling
  - Yahrtzeit, Yizkor

### Creating a Holiday Environment (in your home)

- Rosh Hashanah
- Yom Kippur
- Sukkot/Simchat Torah
- Hanukkah
- Purim
- Passover
- Shavuot
- Recipes – making Jewish holiday treats

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## DELIBERATE SCHISM

After lunch, the entourage of the 33 retreat participants headed to Touro Synagogue to learn about this National Historic Landmark. When they returned to the Inn at Newport Beach, there was clear tension among them as they settled in for the scheduled discussion on implementing pluralism. There would be no such discussion.

At America's oldest synagogue, which is Orthodox, the group had splintered. Some had wanted to daven Mincha, but doing so would have required the women present either to leave or go to the balcony. They all were shaken by this rift among what had seemed an easily accommodating group. But were they?

Why had some members of the group stayed at Touro to daven when others, clearly offended, had left? Shouldn't they have stuck together?

CLAL had provided only one Sefer Torah. Which group would be privileged to use it for daily minyan?

Would anyone join the Orthodox, very much fewer than 10, for morning or evening davening?

The discussion, always respectful, ever calm, diplomatic but frank, often sounding wounded, ensued for several hours.

As we gathered our belongings to tip toe out of the room, Donna M. Rosenthal, CLCL's executive director, left the room, too.

"I'm so glad you were here for this," she said, almost conspiratorially. "This is the heart of the retreat. This discussion always happens (it's the 7th year for these retreats), and always on the second day.

"We very deliberately bring only one Sefer Torah. We want them to work it out," she smiled.

I wonder how they resolved it.



Five Rhode Island rabbis, who are planning a series of interdenominational programs later this year, joined the CLAL retreat on Tuesday, February 7. While the others went off to tour Touro Synagogue, these five stayed to study with Rabbi Tsvi Blanchard, CLAL's director of Organizational Development, whose back was to the camera. CLAL is consulting with the rabbis on the local program. They are, (l to r) Rabbis Michael Cahana, Wayne Franklin, Mitchell Levine, Alvan Kaunfer and Les Guttermann, representing Conservative, Orthodox and Reform congregations.

## Pluralism must come to this holy place

by Jessica Steinberg

JERUSALEM (JTA) — It's been 12 years since Women of the Wall began meeting to pray at the Western Wall, but a recent prayer session was particularly poignant for several US Jewish feminist leaders reciting the morning blessings.

"Listening to these women sing together, it absolutely ran through me," said former New York judge Karen Burstein. "Prayer was a very distant concept for me; this has been an opening experience."

About 100 women attended the America-Israel Dialogue in Jerusalem in late January. Co-sponsored by the American Jewish Congress Commission for Women's Equality and the Israel Women's Network, the weeklong dialogue took stock of the status of Jewish women, plotted a course of action for the future and honored Israeli and American feminists including author Betty Friedan, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, former congresswoman Elizabeth Holtzman and author Letty Cottin Pogrebin. An award was also slated to be given in memory to former congresswoman Bella Abzug (see page 13).

While the conference discussions on Israeli feminism, women's health and domestic violence were spirited and meaningful, participants agreed that this grouping of women of all ages and backgrounds praying together on a wintry January morning was one of the week's highlights.

"Religious pluralism has to become an elevated value in Israel," Burstein said. "I want to bring

equality here. I want to support women because this is a holy place."

In the past few decades, awareness of the challenges facing women has increased among Israelis, said Holtzman, but, she added, women still don't have full equality — as evidenced by the dilemma facing Women of the Wall.

There is a court decision pending in Israel's Supreme Court regarding the group's right to pray at the wall. The women meet at least once a month on Rosh Chodesh, the first day of the Hebrew month, as well as during holidays and for their daughters' Bat Mitzvahs.

They chant the morning Shacharit service together, clustered in a tight group at the back of the women's section. When it's time to read the Torah, they adjourn to a courtyard behind the Western Wall plaza, near Yeshivat HaKotel, some taking the opportunity to lay tefillin and take out their tallitot from

under their coats. Yet even this arrangement is currently being re-examined by the Supreme Court.

According to Jerusalem City Council member Anat Hoffman, the court is concerned about protecting the women from the other religious factions that aren't pleased with the group's efforts.

One compromise suggested by the court is letting the women go to the wall with their Torah for one hour each month on Rosh Chodesh. The judges are also exploring the general wall area, looking for an alternative prayer space for the women.

Neither option is acceptable, said Hoffman. "We're modern Marranos," she said, referring to Jews forced to hide their Jewishness during the Spanish Inquisition. "We're hiding here in this courtyard and we want to wear our tallitot and tefillin out in the open."

At the conference's final ses-

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### God's choices... from pg. 24

*Epiphany: Others can learn*

Rabbi Greenberg characterizes that episode as "a liberating experience." He even had an epiphany: Conservative and Reform rabbis, he discovered, "can learn, and are just as passionate about Judaism as I am. I even discovered that they are right in some aspects. This was a life-transforming encounter." And out of it was born CLAL.

The next phase of his maturation seems to have been initiated in 1965 by his friend, the then Canadian rabbi, David Hartman, founder of the Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. Rabbi Hartman received a \$10,000 grant from Charles and Andrea Bronfman "to do anything with he wanted to."

He decided to gather a group of Orthodox rabbis, his friend Yitz Greenberg among them, to study together. Since that used up only half the grant, the two friends took the next step and gathered an inter-denominational group.

#### Compassion for God

Ten years later, while studying in Israel again, going again to Yad Vashem, and this time coping with the death of his father, he entered a long depression. "There were mornings when I couldn't daven," he said. "I would choke on the words. The turning point was a moment of compassion for God. If I am suffering, how much more God must be suffering."

In his calm and familiar voice, Yitz Greenberg looks around the room and tells his younger colleagues, on this second day of their week-long CLAL retreat, to celebrate the triumph of life. "To create life is the classic example of a people who believe in life and who make the choice to become a partner of God."

"Pluralism is the only answer," he says. "Freedom and human dignity is the only way to be a Jew. Orthodox Judaism needs the liberal experience and liberal streams need orthodoxy."

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## Cantor leads women in study of Sarah, the first matriarch

by Eleanor Lewis

Cantor Ida Rae Cahana led over 110 women in Torah study on February 8 as part of the JFRI Women's Alliance "Rosh Chodesh" series on biblical women. After a welcome from Barbara Lavine, a campaign report by Susan Froehlich, and an introduction by Sharon Yarlas, the Cantor began.

Her subject was Sarah, the first matriarch. Using a line by line reading of the Fox translation of the Bible and numerous midrashic commentaries, Cantor Cahana brought Sarah across the centuries, not only as our spiritual progenitor but as every woman.

Sarah, she said, had to deal with continuous changes in her life, including moving to a new country at an advanced age and becoming a mother at an even more advanced age. Even in her good marriage, she had to deal with anger and lack of communication. The Cantor pointed out that the emotional issues surrounding infertility and surrogacy are important parts of the Sarah story that still speak to her and to us today. Cantor Cahana opened and closed the session singing beautiful music.

Note: The next, and last, session in the "Rosh Chodesh" program will be led by Carol Ingall, professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary, on Miriam. That program will be in JCC Social Hall at 7:00 pm April 4.

Eleanor Lewis is acting chair of The Voice Editorial Board.



Sharon Yarlas introduced Cantor Cahana to the crowd. The final program in the series will feature Carol Ingall, PhD, presenting Miriam, at 7:00 pm on April 4 in the JCC Social Hall.



Cantor Ida Rae Cahana (left), now the mother of four, including triplet girls, could identify with the struggle over infertility as she lead the women in the study of Sarah. Above, Barbara Lavine, who welcomed the women to the 3rd in the Rosh Chodesh Series, talks with Leah Daniels.

## What is a "Woman of Valor"?

On Friday nights many Jewish families sing *Eibet Hayil*, Woman of Valor, to their wives and mothers. This blessing was the basis of a program led by Rabbi Gail Diamond of Congregation Agudas Achim on January 24 for more than 30 women. Gathered at the home of Bonnie Reibman, they studied this blessing and through the course of the evening realized that they accomplish many of the things it mentions.

This program was sponsored by the Professional Women's Programming Committee of the Jewish Federation's Women's Alliance, which is chaired by Brenda Gaynor, with associate chair Dianne Isenberg (standing in photo).

The next program is scheduled for April 12 at 7:00 pm in the JFRI Board Room, 130 Sessions St., Providence. The women will discuss "The Juggling Act."



how to balance career, children, parents and spiritual needs. This program will feature Erin Minior from Jewish Family Service and Chiropractor Amy Westrick. They will speak about mental and physical wellbeing, respectively.

For more information about the program or the Professional Women's Programming Committee, call Elissa Mirkin at 401-421-4111, ext. 172.

## Women in their professions

Barbara Fields Karlin has been appointed by FleetBoston Financial to its 20-member oversight board that will monitor and advise the bank on its efforts in New England to meet its goal of investing \$14.6 billion in five years in the various communities it serves. Karlin is senior program director of the Local Initiative Support Collaborative of Providence. She is an active member of the Jewish Federation's Women's Alliance and of Temple Emanu-El.



Judge Majorie J. Yashar '58 with its Distinguished Alumna Award. Judge Yashar has balanced a career in law with raising her family and volunteering in the community. The award noted that "She has also distinguished herself with an uncompromising commitment to public duty and conscience."

A graduate of Wellesley College, Judge Yashar earned her law degree from Boston University. She has served on the RI Administrative Adjudication Court (now the Traffic Tribunal) since 1985 and was instrumental in bringing the faults of the system to public attention two years ago.

## The Arab-Jewish Women's Dance Group



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# Top educator heads CJF pillar on renaissance and renewal

by Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — In a sign that the new Jewish buzzwords of "renaissance and renewal" are intrinsically linked to education, a top Jewish education professional has been tapped to oversee a national push to infuse Jewish life with more meaning.

One of four pillars that will set the agenda for the newly formed United Jewish Communities, the national fund-raising and social service organization of the North American federations, Renaissance and Renewal was formed to promote increased collaboration among federations, religious movements, Jewish educators and other organizations in strengthening Jewish identity and community.

The other pillars address fund-raising, Israel and overseas needs and human services/social policy.

Although the Renaissance and Renewal pillar's exact focus is still unclear, the selection of Jonathan Woocher — who will also continue in his role at the Jewish Education Service of North America, a coordinating body for formal and informal Jewish education providers around North America — indicates that advocates for education will have a strong voice within it.

Woocher, who has worked

closely with the federation world, was instrumental in creating the Renaissance and Renewal pillar. He drafted the platform on the topic last year that described Renaissance as efforts to create "a far more vibrant, engaging, content-full Jewish life for large numbers of Jews here and around the globe than we ever could have imagined just a few decades ago."

In his statement, Woocher suggested that the UJC work with other organizations to launch bold initiatives to expand and redesign Jewish programming for teens, develop a national infrastructure for teacher training through technology and create a "multifaceted support system to assist day schools striving for excellence."

UJC officials said they selected Woocher, who was a professor of Jewish communal studies at Brandeis University before coming to JESNA in 1986, for his combination of experience, connections with various players in Jewish life, expertise and familiarity with the federation world. It is unclear how long Woocher will hold the two large jobs. Also unclear, is how the new pillar will work with JESNA and to what extent their efforts will overlap. With both housed in UJC's Manhattan headquarters and shar-



Jonathan Woocher  
ing an executive, the relationship undoubtedly will be close.

In what may be an early demonstration of that relationship, discussion about implementing recommendations of a recently released JESNA task force report urging greater communal funding for Jewish day schools is expected to be the first item on the Renaissance and Renewal pillar's agenda.

However, UJC officials, Woocher and JESNA board members maintain that JESNA will remain an independent entity. Beyond that, Woocher said it is too soon for him to comment further on the relationship.

## CRC initiates forum on contract with elderly

What is most on the minds of Jewish elderly in Rhode Island? How do public officials respond to those concerns? What information can officials offer senior citizens?

Those questions, and a conversation that may provide answers, will create a forum for seniors, their relatives and interested members of the community on Monday, April 3 at 7:00 pm in the Jewish Federation's (JFRI) Board Room.

Sponsored by the JFRI Community Relations Council (CRC), "RI's Vision for Health Care: Policies Affecting the Aging" will include panelists Lt. Governor

Charles Fogarty; Director of the Department of Elderly Affairs Barbara Rayner, and President of the RI Forum on Aging Rick Ryan.

Sam Zurier, whose CRC committee on government affairs has organized the forum in cooperation with Jewish Seniors Agency, Jewish Family Service and the Jewish Community Center, says it should appeal to those in the "sandwich" generation — people caring for children and their parents — as well as seniors themselves.

"Rhode Island has a significant elderly population and the Jewish community even more so,"

Zurier said. "These issues effect our community to a great degree so they are of special interest to us and to the work of our committee."

Being informed about services for and needs of seniors, Zurier noted, is important to all citizens as the programs form a major part of government budgets at all levels and are part of the focus of the campaigns of those seeking the presidential nomination in the November, 2000 election.

The Jewish Federation is at 130 Sessions St., Providence. For more information call CRC director Amy Gross at 401-421-4111.

## COMMUNITY

### Chased Schel Amess installs officers

Steve Sholes, Warwick, was installed for his second term as president of the Chased Schel Amess Association in January. The Association is responsible for the operation and care of Lincoln Park Cemetery.

Other officers installed with him by past president Murray Gereboff are Sidney Goldman, Cranston, 1st vice president; Michael Glucksman, Warwick, 2nd vice president; Susan Vederman, West Warwick, financial secretary, and Irving Zaidman, Warwick, treasurer.

At large board members installed were Norman

Elman, Joel Gerstenblatt, Barry Glucksman, Stephen Goldman, Sidney Goldstein, Harry Katzman, Stephen Kosofsky, Howard Kosofsky and Nat Wolicki, all of Warwick; Ross Feinberg, Phillip Geller, Leon Goldstein, Sam Mendelowitz, Arthur Poulen, Ken Resnick, Phillip Rosenfield, Ernest Schleifer and Gerald Sherman, Cranston, and Herb Wagner, Providence.

Past presidents and representative of organizations which own land at the cemetery also serve on the board.

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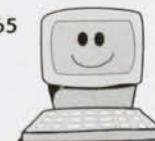
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Barbara Rayner, Director of Department of Elderly Affairs

Rick Ryan, President, RI Forum on Aging

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## Scholarships for Israel exploration

Registration is now open for Livnot U'Lehibano's Spring and Summer sessions. This multi-faceted Jewish awareness program of Jerusalem and Tzfat incorporates hiking, study and community service for young Jewish adults aged 21-30 who have little previous knowledge of Judaism but are interested in exploring their Jewish roots.

Informal classes are presented on topics such as Jewish ethics and philosophy, Zionism, mysticism, relationships and Jewish identity. Students experience a traditional Shabbat and learn about the implementation of Jewish values. Livnot also undertakes community service projects such as the repairing of immigrant apartments, the restoration of buildings in the ancient city of Tzfat and excavations of the tunnels under the Western Wall. Scenic and challenging hikes in the footsteps of the Jewish forefathers and mothers are an integral part of the program.

Two, three and six week programs are scheduled throughout 2000. Special scholarships are available to qualified applicants from Rhode Island.

For further information call 1-888-Livnot-0 or 212-131413 or email to [livnot@livnot.org.il](mailto:livnot@livnot.org.il). The Livnot website is [www.livnot.org.il](http://www.livnot.org.il).

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## Young Adults

The Jewish Voice of RI • March

Breakfast Club, arts & crafts  
keep young adults involved

by Lisa Davis

"Why choose Rhode Island?" With this query, Mark Patinkin, author and columnist for the Providence Journal, began his talk to young Jewish adults at January's Breakfast Club event. In reviewing the reasons why he chose to make his life and build his career in Rhode Island, Patinkin touched on the elements that matter most to all of us: good quality of life, a job that affords a sense of control, a wonderful community.

Rhode Island offers all of these,

he said, in a setting that perhaps is slighted more often than we would like to acknowledge. He drew parallels between the choices he has made in his career and those made by others in the same field who have achieved great success. Mark's love for Rhode Island and his witty observations about his family spoke to many in the audience, who seemed to agree with his reasons for choosing the blue-bug, three-left-turns-after-red, coffee-milk state.



Providence Journal columnist  
Mark Patinkin

## Family Arts and Crafts

What do you get when you mix together one fabulous art teacher, 52 excited parents and kids, and a fun project? A wonderful afternoon of arts and crafts for families, that's what! On a recent Sun-



The Reiser boys show off their art work.

them came out very different, the children expressed their individual styles. With an expert laminator on hand, the placemats we soon preserved for years of use. This project was a big hit, and left many wondering when and what the ne-



Attendees at JFRI's Breakfast Club After Hours meet and socialize at the Providence Marriott.

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day afternoon at the Jewish Federation, art teacher Charlie Lurie taught a gathering of children (and their parents) how to make shabbat placemats for candles.

Using materials like tissue paper, craft paper, Israeli flags and stickers, kids ages 3 and up busily decorated their placemats. All of

family activity will be.

More Young Leadership events are planned for Spring, so be sure to watch your mail and The Voice for more information. If you have any questions or would like to be on the mailing list, contact Elissa Mirkin at 401-421-4111 ext. 172, or me at [ldavis@umassd.edu](mailto:ldavis@umassd.edu).

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## Rhode Islanders Meet in Florida

On January 24, over 100 Rhode Island snowbirds gathered together in Lake Worth, FL to socialize with their hosts, Stanley and Hazel Grossman.



Hostess, Hazel Grossman (left) enjoys wine and conversation with Elaine Odessa. In addition to hosting the event, the Grossmans were honored for recently establishing a Charitable Remainder Trust with the Federation.

Special guest, Shoshana S. Cardin (right) whom Mel Alperin introduced as the Jewish community's "foremost woman leader", thanked the crowd for making the commitment to build Jewish community for their children and their children's children. While she highlighted many challenges to the American Jewish community, she was optimistic that people like Rhode Islanders will ensure the continued vibrancy of the community by making provisions in their estate plans.



Gussie Baxt and Ellie Frank enjoy each other's company, especially at Federation events.



Harry and Bea Shore were able to see long-time friends while wintering in Florida.



Endowment Chair, Ed Feldstein with wife Barbara and Nancy, daughter of Stanley and Hazel Grossman.



Eugene and Polly Wachtenheim in the relaxed Florida atmosphere.



Stanley Grossman shares a moment with Bob and Marcia Riesman.



Bernie Goldberg, Herb and Trudy Galkin, and Karen and Irwin Galkin are all smiles. Karen and Irwin were honored for their gifts of four annuities to the Federation. In addition, the Goldberg family recently moved their foundation to JFRI.

## ALIYAH HAPPENING ON SUNDAY, MARCH 5...

at the JCC of Brookline, Mass., will feature two Israeli consultants who will discuss business development, taxation and employment in Israel.

Israeli music and children's activities will be the entertainment at this "Coming Home Fair" from noon to 3:00 pm. Fair offers information on electrical appliances, shipping and insurance, customs' regulations and procedures.

The JCC of Brookline is at 50 Sutherland Road, one block from Cleveland Circle. RSVP to the Israel Aliyah Center, 617-457-8750.

*The Feinstein Chronicles*

February 2000 - No. 26

**6.6 Million – Thank You Rhode Islanders!**

That's the total raised in response to my \$100,000 challenge to help the needy over the 1999 Holiday Season. Yes, \$6.6 million... A wonderful response.

Our \$100,000 was divided proportionately among the 267 responding local agencies.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to help make it happen. That money brightened so many lives.

I would especially like to thank the Rhode Island Foundation which gave \$25,000 toward our challenge, plus the following people who each contributed \$1,000:

Christine Anatone	Varum Genjendran	Alexander Ovalies
Adam Andolfo	Jacob Gamerman	Kathleen Quirk
Ashley Baizer	Annie Gulse	Kate Rafile
Melanie Barsamian	Benjamin Handel	Lindsay Redfern
Kelly Cabral	Matthew Knapp	Kelly Rondeau
Constantine Christy	Manuel Lam	Daniel P. Rowe
Gabriel Cote	Beth David Lee	Jaclyn Smyth
Rebecca Calmesia	Anne Marek	Meghan Sullivan
Mark Ferreira	Robert Markelewich, Jr.	Jessica B. Weaver
Melissa Ferrel	Cara McKenna	Stephanie Wilkes
Kelly L. Fitzpatrick	Lindsay McNally	Adam Woods
		Lauren Wier

To everyone who has ever reached out to help someone in need, the world is a better place because of you.

*Alan Shawn Feinstein*

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**Education****Creativity awards deadline nears**

Teachers in local Jewish schools may submit projects to be considered for the Teacher Creativity Awards program of the Bureau of Jewish Education of Rhode Island. These awards recognize outstanding teachers in Bureau-affiliated schools for creative and innovative teaching projects.

The Edward and Florence Goldberg Memorial Endowment Fund of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island provides stipends of \$100 annually for projects that were initiated during the course of the academic year.

The annual \$300 Perelman Family Award is for creation of curricular teaching units and materials during the course of the academic year. To be considered for this category, the entry must be a curricular unit that takes place over a period of time.

All entries must have clear goals and objectives and must demonstrate pedagogic value. Projects will be judged on their creativity, innovation, presentation and potential for being reproduced.

Awards are intended to be given only to teachers. Projects should be submitted as such. Awards will be presented at the BJE's Annual Meeting.

For application, contact the BJE or the school immediately. Deadline, including endorsement by the school's principal, is March 15. Sue Suls chairs the committee. Winners will be notified by May 1.

For more information, contact Lawrence Katz, at 331-0956.

**Future Faces shine forth**

These five young women were selected for the Future Faces award, the annual program of the Bureau of Jewish Education's Jewish Outreach and Leadership Training that recognizes outstanding teenagers for their academic and community service achievements. From left to right, they are Rachel Suls, Sarah Gross, Natanya Raskin, Rochel Jakubowicz and Lauren Weir.

**Stipends available for summer in Israel**

It's time to think about summer, and plan a study/travel program in Israel. Programs for educators and for high school and college students abound. University, ulpan, kibbutz, teen travel from two weeks to two months, from one semester to one year, offer options to fit all time frames, intellectual needs and spiritual inclinations.

Stipends for teachers and grants and scholarships for students may be available from one of the many Jewish Federation of Rhode Island and Bureau of Jewish Education/RJ endowment funds. Those interested should call by March 23rd. For information, contact Ruth Page, Director of Israel Programs at the Bureau of Jewish Education/RJ at 401-331-0956.

**Alperin scholarships for first generation post-secondary students**

High school seniors whose parents did not attend college, may be eligible for a scholarship from a fund established last year at the Rhode Island Foundation by its then out-going chairman, Melvin G. Alperin, and his wife, Patty.

Eligible candidates must dem-

onstrate academic excellence, good character, financial need and be Rhode Island residents planning to attend an accredited nonprofit two or four-year college.

Alperin is a past president of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island and a past chairman of the JFRI Endowment Fund. He also has chaired the United Way Campaign.

The application deadline for the Patty & Melvin Alperin First Generation Scholarship is May 22. For details and forms contact the RI Foundation at One Union Station, Providence, RI 02903 or call 401-274-4564.

**ISRAEL TEST MARCH 6**

The Bureau of Jewish Education has scheduled the Israel Test for Monday, March 6th at 7:00 pm, at the Jewish Community Center, 401 Elmwood Avenue, Providence. This test is required of all high school students who plan to participate in Israel travel/study programs and to avail themselves of grants from the endowments of either Jewish Federation of Rhode Island or Bureau of Jewish Education. This is a general Jewish information quiz, and students need not study for it.

Application forms for grants and financial aid, and information on myriad Israel programs — both summer and academic year — are available from Ruth Page, Israel Desk Director, 401-331-0956.



**Bureau of Jewish Education of Rhode Island offers**

**Tools To Tote**

**Tools To Tote** provides an opportunity for families to participate in Passover preparations together and its celebration of the Passover Seder.

- Perfect for your own family
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Utilizing a Carpenter's **Toolbelt** "armed" with utensils to remember and reenact the Passover story, children and adults complete 10 activities together.

To order your Toolbelt, call Sharyn Yanku Wilk at the BJE/RJ, 401-331-0956. Toolbelts are \$12.00, with a \$3.00 charge per kit for shipping and handling. Credit cards accepted.

## Birthright traveler

# The energy from all other pairs of hands caressed hers

by Julie Brener

Brown University Sophomore

I wound my way through the narrow, twisting pathways of the Old City. The Jerusalem stone stretched on endlessly, glistening under the light bulbs that illuminated the dark pathways. As I turned a corner, the unmistakable gold exterior of the Dome of the Rock appeared from behind a wall as if it were the sun peeking out from behind the clouds. It was one of the most beautiful sights I have ever seen.

I pulled my eyes away and let my gaze wander to the magnificent sight just below the Western Wall. I felt my breath catch in my throat as I realized where I was.

"Next year in Jerusalem," the Haggadah reads.

Now I was here. I couldn't believe it. I was one of the lucky recipients of a free trip from Birthright Israel, an organization created with the belief that visiting Israel is the birthright of every Jew.

Despite the late hour, the plaza in front of the Wall was alive with activity, but I felt as if the world had come to a standstill. Tears rolled gently down my cheeks as I made my way to the Wall. My steps became slower and more deliberate. I wanted to savor every moment of the experience.

I began to caress the stones, running my fingers along the rocks and between the crevices. Thousands of hands had run their fingers along those stones, making the rough edges of the rock shiny and smooth. As I touched the wall, I felt the energy from every pair of hands that had lovingly caressed those rocks. Despite the chill that was in the air, the stones felt warm to my touch.

I suddenly felt as if I were part of a worldwide community of Jews. As I looked at the scraps of paper stuck between the crevices of the Wall, I noticed that prayers had been written in every language imaginable. Israel is truly a place for Jews from around the world to find their common roots and to bond as one people.

I leaned my forehead against the Wall, trying to soak in the intensity of the moment. I recited my own personal prayer before heading back to join my group.

As I walked towards the exit of the Old City, I lifted my eyes skyward and found Orion amidst the stars—the same constellation that I had viewed from my own backyard a hundred times. I was miles away from everything I knew and loved, and yet I felt at home.

Now I know why Israel is known as the Jewish homeland,

and I understand Michael Steinhardt and Charles Bronfman's vision for the future of the Jewish people. They recognize the threat of assimilation, and they do not want the Jewish religion and traditions die with their generation.

During an event for all the participants on the Birthright trip, Bronfman made us scream, "I'm Jewish, and I love it!" He and Steinhardt hope we will walk away from our trip to Israel with a renewed sense of pride and dedication to our people. I know that many people, both in Israel and around the world, have questioned whether the money was well-spent. I had the same concerns before going on the trip.

But now, after my visit to Israel, I feel that the project was worthwhile. Many young Jews left Israel shouting, "I'm Jewish, and I love it!"

Peace?

The trip was not only a religious and spiritual experience—it was also an educational experience. I learned a great deal about the political situation in Israel, not only about relations between Jews and Arabs, but between Jews and Jews.

One afternoon in Jerusalem I took a walking tour of Mea Shearim, an ultra-Orthodox neighborhood just on the other side of our hotel. It was as if their entire way of life stopped in time about 150 years ago. They still have arranged marriages, and they still dress in full religious regalia.

"This is not Fifth Avenue in Manhattan," read a sign on the wall of the neighborhood. Hundreds of other signs requested that visitors dress "modestly" and refrain from taking pictures on the Sabbath. Our tour-guide had instructed the women to wear long sleeves and long skirts. He also split the men and women into two groups. He was afraid of the consequences if we were seen together.

As I walked through the neighborhood that afternoon, I felt a strong sense of hatred among people of my own faith. One young boy actually hurled a handful of small pebbles at my group. With all the anti-semitism in the world, I can't understand why Jews insist on dividing themselves into separate denominations. Perhaps if we presented ourselves as one, united front, the future of the Jewish people would be far more assured.

My tour group was also lucky enough to visit Barta'a, an Arab village on the border of the West Bank and Israel. This visit helped me personalize the political situation I had read so much about in the newspapers.

Now when I read about Israeli Arabs, I see the faces of old women chatting on their front porch. I see the innocent faces of little children running barefoot in the schoolyard and giggling at their American visitors. I see the tanned face of the young man who invited all 40 of us to his house for coffee.

These are people whose daily lives are affected by political strife. They are not the enemy. They want peace just as much we do.

A Hamas slogan, a permanent remnant of the violence and hatred that once plagued the peaceful village, is spray-painted on a building near the elementary school. "All the way to Jerusalem in blood," it reads.

Across the street, outside the kindergarten, a Palestinian flag flies proudly. Shivers ran up and down my spine when I saw this, but my tour-guide explained that the flag no longer symbolizes hatred, but peace. I looked behind me and saw the old ladies on their porch and the giggling children in the schoolyard, and I understood what she meant.

As I boarded the bus that afternoon, I was filled with hope for the future.

Hatikvah

I have never felt compelled to kiss mezuzzot when walking through doorways, yet I decided to kiss the mezuzah on the door of the children's memorial at Yad Vashem. Perhaps I needed to reaffirm the existence of God while remembering the deaths of 1.5 million children in the Holocaust.

I took a deep breath and delved into the darkness of the main room. I found myself in a swirling abyss of blackness and flickering lights. I

could not see the floor below me or the ceiling above me. Perhaps the room was supposed to make me feel like a lost child in the darkness—like one of the poor young souls who perished in the Holocaust.

I looked to the center of the room and saw two drippy candles. "They are the parent candles," my tour-guide had explained. A complicated series of mirrors around the room reflect the flames from these two candles, creating millions of twinkling lights.

I twirled around slowly, taking in the effect of the flickering flames. I began to cry. Each light represented one lost life—one unfulfilled destiny. I cried for the children and I cried for their families. The tears filled my eyes and the millions of lights became a messy blur.

As I made my way outside to

join the rest of my group, I pulled myself together and wiped my moist cheeks. I looked upward to the cloudy sky and felt the tiny splashes of raindrops on my face. The rest of the world was crying with me.

I always knew that the United Nations had created the State of Israel after the Holocaust as a homeland for the Jewish people. But, I did not thoroughly understand the magnitude of this historic event until my visit to Israel.

On our last day in Tel Aviv we visited Independence Hall, the site where David Ben Gurion declared the independence of the Jewish state over 50 years ago. As I stood in that room listening to "Hatikvah," the Israeli national anthem, I felt a sense of pride that I have never felt before. I felt a part of the land of Israel.

## BJE, synagogues co-sponsor "I'm Special, You're Special"

Three suburban synagogues and the Bureau of Jewish Education are joining together to sponsor a production by Kaleidoscope Theatre, "I'm Special, You're Special," on Sunday, March 5 from 9:30 am to noon, at Temple Sinai in Cranston.

Temples Sinai, Torah Yisrael and Am David are bringing in the program as part of their family education series.

The Kaleidoscope Theatre production includes workshops and a theater-in-the-round performance about a family of five which includes a developmentally delayed son. The play addresses the impact of teasing, exclusion, lack of acceptance and social stigma.

The theme speaks to the mitzvah of "do not put a stumbling block in the path of a blind man."

Temple Sinai is at 30 Hagen Avenue, Cranston.

This performance is open to the community. For more information call the Temple Sinai school office at 401-942-3466.

Join us in a joyous evening

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## 2nd graders just love their new, red sit ups

The Providence Hebrew Day School received a grant from the Endowment Fund of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island to buy new furnishings for the school, including chairs for the second grade. Here's what the children thought of them.



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like the color that they are. They are  
comfortable. We really like them! Thank you  
very much.



DEP Grade  
January 2000

Grade 2  
PHDS

Jan. 26, 2000  
Dear Jewish Federation of RI,

Thank you for our new chairs. They are very comfortable. They are a beautiful color. They are really nice. They're very very pretty. They are very sturdy. I was very cheerful when I saw them. They are shiny and feel good. They're just the right size. We are so glad to have new chairs. They are attractive and also very useful. I bet they were very expensive. They are much better than our old ones. We're very happy with them. We were glad to hear we were getting new chairs. Our principal came in to tell us about the new chairs we were getting. It took a pretty long time to take them out of the box. It was very very exciting.

### Ethics always prominent in Day Schools

by Rabbi Yaakov Becker  
PHDS Judaic Studies Teacher

Say little and do much, receive everyone with a cheerful face, do not judge your fellow man until you have walked in his shoes, let your fellow's honor be as dear to you as your own — these are familiar examples of the many ethical exhortations offered by the Talmudic sages in Pirkei Avot, or "Ethics of the Fathers." This is the tractate of the Talmud which primarily deals with ethical and respectful behavior.

Quite surprisingly, this is also the tractate in which we are informed as to which sages were responsible for the transmission of our tradition from generation to generation, starting from Moses himself and continuing through the Mishnaic period. Would not the very beginning of the Talmud, the voluminous body of Jewish tradition, have been a more appropriate place for the delineation of the masters of that tradition?

The commentaries explain that this is meant to teach us that these ethical exhortations are not

merely products of the keen insight and understanding of the sages, but rather are rooted in the Sinaitic tradition. In other words, respectful behavior, as expressed in the "Ethics of the Fathers," is an integral part of our heritage, and as such is a religious imperative no less than the Ten Commandments.

It is precisely this notion that we seek to transmit to our students as part of the day school experience. These lessons are conveyed formally, as part of the curriculum and informally whenever the opportunity presents itself.

We recently completed a two-year program entitled "Project Derech" ("derekh" being short for "derekh eretz" or respectful behavior). The students learned more than 50 concepts relating to such behavior. Each concept was developed in the classroom, age-appropriate to the students, and presented with visuals, explanations, hypothetical situations, creative writing and/or drawing and classroom discussion.

In addition, at the end of each week, the students brought home a review sheet for parents to discuss with them. Among the topics: offering a seat, greeting people, table manners, not interrupting, not littering.

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Learning to count is always a challenge, but children at PHDS have found a way to make a tedious task fun. Will this preparation help them "count the omer" after Passover?

## Schechter hoopsters rack up wins

The winning season continues for the Boys' Basketball Team at the Alperin Schechter Day School. The team has played two home games against San Miguel School of Providence and an away game at Community Preparatory School of Providence. Each matchup affirmed the abilities of individual players and the team. Consistently in the top scorers, Richard Maidman and Michael Wolpert, are clear team leaders.

In the first competition with San Miguel, Maidman led the way with 16 points, closely followed by Wolpert's 12. These athletes demonstrated their court-sense, ball handling, and teamwork when every point was important. The outstanding efforts of both Maidman and Ben Savitzky with rebounds made the difference when San Miguel continued to press. The final score of 47-35 reflects the ability of the team to get the job done and play the game as it should be played, by teamwork.

Two weeks later, ASDS again hosting San Miguel, took an early lead and maintained it throughout the game. Again Michael Wolpert dropped in a total of 12 points as lead scorer for ASDS. Ben Odessa contributed 10 points in the overall 48-35 win. San Miguel gets a third and final game later this season.

Community Preparatory School welcomed ASDS to its court in recent play. The action with this highly competitive and accomplished team was fast-paced and packed with excitement. The final 37-34 score barely reflects the efforts put forth by both teams. Maidman and Wolpert were counted on to contribute their usual point totals, but the story of the game is summarized in the last seconds of regulation time. Wolpert drops three three-pointers during the course of the game but the last three-pointer came with 3 seconds left to tie the game. In the overtime, Wolpert drove to the basket drawing a foul, which allowed him free throws. Hitting 3 out of 4 possible points brought the victory home for ASDS. "Wolpert definitely earned MVP of this game for his performance," Coach Michael Blais said.

Blais went on to praise several of his players for the variety of skills they contribute and their dedication to the team. For his ball handling ability, David Levinson has been an important player in feeding the offensive abilities of Wolpert and Maidman. Maidman and Ben Savitzky are counted on for putting up the defensive efforts. With this trio in action, the Boys' Team offers a formidable opponent for

any basketball team.

The ASDS Girls' Basketball Team represents a ready, willing and able group of athletes. Coached by Brenda Redding for the away games, the Girls' Team played the Lincoln School to a win in their first meeting. Led by Leah Weissburg with 5 points, Rebecca Chaika, Lisa Pelcovits and Alina Neganova each contributed 2 points to the 12-9 victory. In their second meeting with Lincoln, ASDS lost a close match 17-20 on their home court, despite Weissburg's 7 points, and Hope Shole's 4.

Shayna Hersh led her teammates with 4 points against Moses Brown on their court. Coach Blais also commended Hersh for her consistent offensive abilities. Weissburg held the opposing team

to 18 points with some of the best defensive work of the season. Despite the 18-12 loss, the team coalesced in some dynamic play action and ball handling.

Early February games saw Community Prep come to ASDS with every intention of taking the victory, and did. Despite the best efforts of lead scorer Jill Teverow (4), and Sholes and Hersh (2 each), the final score was 8-46. Following this loss, ASDS recovered against the Pine Point School (Connecticut) on home court. Playing a very controlled game, Weissburg knocked down 10 points and Sholes found the hoop for 8 clinching the 26-21 win. Although the Win/Lose column does not run in the ASDS Girls' Basketball Team's favor at this time, there are a few more games in the season to improve their record.

### Kindergartners discover sweet Havdalah

Making the separation from Shabbat was a little sweeter one Saturday in February when Kindergarten families gathered at the Alperin Schechter Day School for Havdalah services. The children, after weeks of preparation, were ready to take on a leadership role. Under the guidance of Rivka Eskovitz, Judaic Studies teacher, each child had created a spice box, wine cup and havdalah candle to be used on this special night. As families gathered around tables decorated with the Havdalah sets and special snacks, it was clear everyone was ready for the close of Shabbat.

The students began the services, reading from booklets prepared especially for this evening, with blessings over the wine, spices and flames of the candle. Parents and siblings joined in with concluding songs and wishes for a "good week" for everyone.



These happy kindergartners seem proud of their spice boxes and candle holders. Beaming are Max Bromberg-Kraus, Zeb Stern and Noah Jennis.

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## Lake property allows boating to expand; kids will try catching those whoppers

This summer, children at Camp JORI will be able to take advantage of the camp's new property on Worden Lake. The waterfront will make possible the expansion of the small craft boating program, with canoes, kayaks and, eventually, sailboats. Campers who like to fish, or those who want to try it will find that option among the many camp activities.

"Our environmental programming will be greatly enhanced," says Camp Director Ronni Gutin. Campers will be able to spend time hiking and exploring the newly manicured nature trails. Hands-on learning about the forest and waterfront habitats will be a significant addition to the camp's offerings.

Another highlight of this year at Camp JORI will be the always-popular archery program, which now features a certified archery instructor.

This year, campers are being given the opportunity to specialize in two areas of interest in addition to the regular camp activities. Choices include stained glass making, jewelry making, archery, additional time with the tennis pro, aquatics, environmental studies and the performing arts. The specialization activities replace the former "interest periods" and provide more

time for in-depth exploration of campers' interests. For example, the performing arts group might stage a performance for the rest of the camp.

The camp offers a full sports program, including tennis, boating, water polo, swimming, softball, karate, soccer, miniature golf, basketball and sports workshops. The Narragansett-based camp also offers arts and crafts including ceramics, instrumental music and theater, nature programs, aerobics, special events and field trips.

For ages 7-13, there is an overnight camp with two four-week sessions. First-time campers only may enroll for one of four two-week sessions. JORI also offers a day camp with two-week sessions for children 6-9 years of age. Camp JORI observes the dietary laws of kashrut. The only Jewish overnight camp in Rhode Island, Camp JORI is accredited by the American Camping Association, the largest, most prestigious organization of its kind.

Would-be campers are advised to register as soon as possible, as only limited openings are still available. For registration packets and information, please call Camp JORI at 401-521-2655.

## Camp Ramah defines "Jewish" as enrollment qualification

by Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK (JTA)—When applications to Ramah summer camps were mailed out this year, they contained something new along with the enrollment forms and fee schedules: a statement of religious qualification.

The statement says that any child who wants to attend one of the Conservative movement-owned Ramah camps must be Jewish according to Jewish law, or halakhah, and it spells out precisely what that means.

Prompted by an influx of campers who are Jewish by the patrilineal descent standard of the Reform movement, the new statement—a directive of Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, the chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary—puts in writing what has always been policy, according to camp officials.

Nonetheless, it has sparked surprise among some parents and points to the increasing complexities of intradenominational co-existence. While the camps are officially Conservative and its participants are overwhelmingly affiliated with the movement, it does attract a small, but growing, percentage of other Jews.

There are seven overnight and four day camps in the Ramah system, which together enroll about 5,500 campers a year.

The Statement on Religious Qualifications says that all camp applicants must be "born to a Jewish woman who is herself natively Jewish or was halakhically con-

verted to Judaism prior to the birth of the applicant," and all male campers "are expected to have undergone brit milah."

Any campers born to a non-Jewish, unconverted woman—including children who were adopted—have to have been halakhically converted, in a mikveh, or ritual immersion. Boys of non-Jewish mothers must also have had a brit milah or hataf dam, the ritual drawing of a drop of blood from the penis, if there was a medical circumcision.

These rules have always been part of Camp Ramah policy for both campers and staff because it is a Conservative institution under the religious and educational supervision of the JTS, said Rabbi Sheldon Dorph, national director of the Camp Ramah movement. They were distributed now in written form because "we started to get feedback that some parents calling weren't sure" what the policy has been, Dorph said.

"I guess we had assumed that people knew to go to Ramah you had to be halakhically Jewish, but as the community changed we realized that we owed it to people to be clear," Dorph said.

Another requirement long included on Ramah applications says that every applicant between 3rd grade and Bar or Bat Mitzvah must be enrolled in a program of religious instruction.

Schorsch, the JTS chancellor, who required that the statement go out to camp applicants, said in an

interview, "With the number of patrilineal Jews growing there are cases of ambiguity, and all we have done is to enunciate our long-standing policy more clearly."

"I can't deny that it's a standard that includes many and excludes some," Schorsch said, adding that he hopes that "the few impacted negatively would be stimulated to take the final step and make sure that their children are full-fledged members of the entire Jewish community, and not just members of a sector of it."

## Family Camp at Ramah in May

Camp Ramah's 9th Annual Family Camp will be Memorial Day Weekend, Friday, May 26 through Monday, May 29, at the facilities in Palmer, Mass.

Families will be able to study with Scholar-in-Residence Saul P. Wachs, PhD, who is the Rosalie B. Feinstein Professor of Education and Liturgy, and chair of the education faculty at Gratz College.

In addition, there will be a full arts program for all ages; daily and Shabbat services; waterfront and sports activities; day camp for older children and babysitting/childcare for the youngest; adult Jewish study groups, discussions and workshops, all in a kosher setting.

For details, contact the camp co-directors, Rena Gray Fein and Naomi Katz Mintz at 781-449-7090, ext. 231 or e-mail to RamahFamilyCamp@yahoo.com.

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This camp must comply with regulations of the Mass. Department of Public Health (105CMR 430.000), and be licensed by the Middleboro Board of Health. Information on 105CMR 430.000 can be obtained at (617) 983-6761.

## Klein's prints on exhibit in Center's Gallery 401

An exhibition of the work of Judith Klein, artist and printmaker, is featured throughout March in Gallery 401 of the Jewish Community Center, 401 Elmwood Ave., Providence.

Born in Oradea, Romania, Klein pursued formal art studies in Tel Aviv, Israel, and Milan, Italy. She lives now in North Dartmouth, Mass. Her works have been exhibited in several local galleries, including AS220 in Providence, and the Federal Reserve Bank in Boston.

The opening reception will be Thursday, March 9 from 5:00 to 8:00 pm. Regular gallery hours are Sunday 7:00 am-7:00 pm, Monday-Thursdays, 9:00 am-5:00 pm; Friday, 9:00 am-4:00 pm. Admission is free.

### COMING IN APRIL:

"The Image Making Process" by Nicholas Palermo, insights into traditional processes using drawing and oil sketching.

## Singer's Meshugah at Trinity to April 9

"Meshugah," Emily Mann's stage adaptation of Isaac Bashevis Singer's novel, opened at Trinity Repertory Theater in late February and will run to April 9.

"Meshugah," meaning crazy in Yiddish, presents a love triangle between a young woman and a middle-aged and an older man. It draws the viewer into the world of Jewish émigrés living on the Upper West Side of New York City after World War II.

Aaron Greidinger (whose life parallels Singer's) is a 47-year-old Yiddish writer tortured by guilt at having escaped from Poland just before the Holocaust when his family and friends perished. He finds love unexpectedly when he meets Miriam, who harbors a secret which is slowly revealed to him. She has survived the Holocaust — but at what cost? They meet through Aaron's old friend Max, who is himself in love with Miriam. And there begins a powerful tale of what it means to love, to forgive and to move on.

Playwright Mann did the adaptation of "Having Our Say," the story of Sadie and Bessie Delany, the centenarian sisters, which ran weeks over its original billing dates on the Trinity stage two years ago.

Trinity artistic director Oskar Eustis has directed "Meshugah," and says that Mann "has an astonishing ability to take the domestic situations we all live through and make them reveal their deeper historical resonance."

"Meshugah" will run through April 3. Tickets range from \$26 to \$38. For show times and reservations call the box office at 401-351-4242. The theater is at 201 Washington St., Providence.

## Cultural Arts



One of Judith Klein's prints.

## Celluloid incidentals Munich Olympics, Jewish Romeo & Juliet subjects of notable films

Two recent film releases will be of special interest to Jewish audiences.

After years of consideration, Switzerland's five-time Oscar winner Arthur Cohn has produced "One Day in September," a docudrama, narrated by Michael Douglas, about the day and night in 1972 when eight



**"An act of love"**  
—NEW YORK TIMES

# Meshugah

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## New hours for kids at Books on Square

Books on the Square in Wayland Square, Providence, has announced new story hours for children.

All Kids 10:30-11:00 am Mondays with Lisa

Pre-schoolers 10:30-11:00 am Tuesdays with Lisa

Toddlers 10:30-11:00 am Wednesdays with Sara Z.

In March, the Lazy Sunday Story Hour at 2:00 pm will feature artists and storytellers presenting original programs:

March 5 Callicle Clarke reads some favorite tales.

March 12 Tony Jaccaci tells all about the Chinese New Year with good fortunes, gongs, dancing, flowers and firecrackers.

March 19 Herman Brewster gives a bird's eye view of the worlds, full of fancy, feathers and imagination.

March 26 Annie Geissinger and kids will make all the noise they want as they learn to drum, dance and make music in imaginative ways.

For more information, call Lisa Batt Parente at 401-331-9097.

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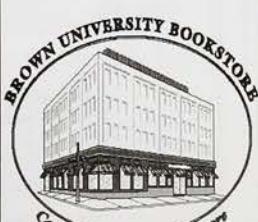
## About Town: The New Yorker and the World It Made by Ben Yagoda

The New Yorker is arguably America's most revered cultural institution, and with *About Town*, it has a biography worthy of its stature in American letters. The critic John Leonard once wrote, "Every American interested in literature at some point has to come to terms with *The New Yorker*".

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## Summer Day Camp adds "arts" track

In response to community requests, the Jewish Community Center of RI's summer day camp will feature an "arts track". This new program — Cultural and Creative Arts Camp — will give children in grades 2 - 6, an opportunity to choose elective courses in the creative arts.

Although the children will be offered variety of means of expressing themselves through the arts, the hallmark of the camp will be staff who are outstanding in their fields. Arts specialists, teachers, working artisans and craftspeople, each with unique talents and experiences, will lead this new effort.

The program will be offered during the June, July and August camps in three 2-week sessions. An early drop-off and extended day option will also be available.

In the JCC tradition, we will continue to offer the customary and expected camp activities, including an exciting and innovative sports program, daily swimming and outdoor activities.

JCC executive director Vivian Wiseman says that in the day camp program, "We hope to create an environment that promotes the values of learning, respect, self-expression and health. All this within an experience rich in Jewish culture."

Other day camp programs at the JCC are available for toddlers through children in grade four, including Camp Yeladim and Camp Haverm.

For a brochure or further information about the new arts camp or any of the other day camp programs for children starting at 18 months, contact Linda Singer-Berk, assistant executive director, at 401-861-8800 ext. 110.

## Israel trip allows for bar/bat mitzvahs plus wide-ranging travel, activities

The Jewish Community Center of Rhode Island will participate in the 4th Annual JCC Family Tour to Israel. Organized by the Springfield JCC together with the JCC Association Israel Office, Melitz Center for Jewish-Zionist Education and Da'at Travel Services, this tour is ideal for both first trips to Israel and repeat visitors, and provides an optional opportunity for a child's bar/bat mitzvah.

The June 25-July 6 trip includes two nights at the Dan Panorama in Tel Aviv, two nights at the Hagoshim Kibbutz Guesthouse in Galilee and six nights at the Dom Panorama in Jerusalem.

For Jews throughout the world a trip to Israel rekindles Jewish spirituality and enhances Jewish identity. This family tour offers special highlights including a family roots seminar at Beit Hatfusot, the Museum of the Diaspora, with separate tracks for adults and children, family hospitality to discuss changing realities of Kibbutz life, and a family Shabbat in Jerusalem.

Visits to Ein Gedi on Dead Sea, Masada and Yad Vashem are also included, and one day in Jerusalem has a separate track with a "camp counselor" for an experimental scavenger hunt tour-game, while parents visit the Knesset, Israel's Parliament, and meet with an MK.

For a complete itinerary and further information, contact Vivian Weisman at 401-861-8800.

## At last, something really constructive to do with that mountain of pennies

"Every ONE Counts: 600,000 Pennies" is a project of rare opportunity that combines tzedakah, social action, family education and Jewish teaching in an elegantly simple and meaningful way.

Through Shavuot (June 9 and 10), Jewish Community Center of RI (JCC) will join JCCs across the country in the goal of each Center collecting 600,000 pennies. Locally, "Every ONE Counts" is part of the Traditions on Wheels program.

This broad-based tzedakah campaign captures the imagination and participation of children, teens, adults, seniors and families.

Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin, Director of Jewish Life at the JCC of Greater Baltimore, created the concept, and the JCC Association has modified it to be a movement-wide program.

Participants will learn about the power of one; that is, the significance of each Jew. In addition, they can also learn about the significance of each penny — every one counts.

Why Pennies? Believe it or not, the United States has a penny shortage. The US Treasury estimates that there are \$7.7 billion worth of pennies lying about in peoples' coin cups" and dresser drawers — and maybe in between the cushions of their sofas. This is disruptive to American commerce. Incentives are being considered by businesses and individuals throughout the US to return these pennies to circulation.

As Jews of North America, we seek to fulfill our civic responsibility and help return much needed pennies to the US and Canadian economies. The project sends out a symbolic message that exemplifies what it means to be both American and Jewish.

Why was the number 600,000 Chosen? The Torah states that there were 600,000 people — 603,550 to

JCCs of North America

**EVERY ONE COUNTS:**



**600,000 PENNIES**

"Give graciously, cheerfully, and sympathetically." — Maimonides

be exact — gathered at the foot of Mount Sinai to receive the Torah — each and every one essential to the wholeness of the Jewish people. Rabbinic tradition tells us there are 600,000 letters in the Torah — each and every one essential to the fullness and sacredness of the Torah.

Striving to collect 600,000 pennies at every JCC throughout North America, from all segments of our richly diverse membership, reminds us how precious and connected we are to each other — and to each and every Jew.

Once the pennies are redeemed, the Rhode Island JCC's goals for the Every ONE Counts: 600,000 Pennies revenue are:

- tuition to send one child to the JCC Summer Camp who would not otherwise be able to attend
- a "thank You Celebration" for JCC volunteers
- purchasing one Polaroid camera for each JCC Preschool classroom
- planting 100 trees in Israel

So find those pennies and drop them into a conveniently located "Every ONE Counts: 600,000 Pennies canister." Further information about the program is available at the Traditions on Wheels cart in the JCC lobby.

For more information about the pennies' program or Traditions on Wheels, contact Kathy Novick 401-861-8800, extension 131.

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## Random acts of kindness bring satisfaction to anonymous donor

A 12-15 pound turkey, Cranberry sauce, potatoes, onions, Wine. All the trimmings. All kosher. These are the ingredients for six complete dinners Mr. Q. delivers to Jewish Family Service (JFS) for dispersal to needy families every Passover, Rosh Hashanah and Thanksgiving. "It makes me happy if it can make them have a more joyous holiday," he says.

Mr. Q. remains anonymous. He and his wife specialize in performing "random acts of kindness." They also give meals to a local Temple for someone in need.

It all started when he was in his early 20s and a college student. One Sunday night he stopped at a local restaurant for a meal after studying. When he went to pay, the cashier told him someone had already paid for him. It was an inspiration. Over the years, he and his wife have passed along the good

deed, paying for someone's dinner or giving \$20 to a newly married couple they encountered in their travels. They might help pay for someone's groceries at the market. "It is the opportunity to get a smile on someone's face," says Mr. Q., adding, "I just hope next time each of them will help someone else."

When a close relative was in a nursing home with a terminal illness, he began reading *Chicken Soup for the Soul* and *Random Acts of Kindness*. He says, "I learned a lot about myself that year. More people should do more kindnesses. The world would be a better place."

Mr. Q. wants no recognition. He says, "I do it for me, it makes me feel good."

For information on donating items or contributions through JFS, or to request emergency assistance, call 401-331-1244.

## Conference buoys Adoption staff

Members of the Adoption Options staff of Jewish Family Service (JFS) recently attended a national conference emphasizing ethics in the growing and changing field of adoption. The conference was sponsored by the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute.

In addition to general sessions with experts in their fields, a panel discussed the key ethical issues relating to infant adoption, international adoption and issues in foster care and adoption. Clinical social workers from Adoption Options also attended seminars on specific topics such as developing home studies, cultural issues in international adoption, and the role of kin in adoption.

Adoption Options Social Worker Peg Boyle reported that the conference placed great emphasis on meeting children's needs and on finding homes for them. The vulnerability of adoptive parents, who have gone through many losses was discussed, as was treating birth parents with dignity and not pressuring them as they make decisions.

Contact Adoption Options at 401-331-5437 or toll-free at 1-800-337-6513 for information or to arrange a confidential consultation, or call JFS at 401-331-1244.

### AO MEETING

Anyone interested in exploring the possibilities of adoption may attend informational meetings offered by JFS Adoption Options on the first Wednesday of every month, 6:00 to 7:30 pm at the JFS offices. The next meetings will be March 6 and April 5.

JFS is on the second floor, of 229 Waterman Street in Providence. The meetings are free and open. Call Adoption Options at 401-331-5437 or toll-free at 1-800-337-6513 for information or to arrange a confidential consultation. Or visit the web site at [www.adoptionoptions.org](http://www.adoptionoptions.org).

## Family Service

### How strong is your family life?

How strong is your family life? Does your family function well in today's fast-paced world? Do your family members work together to solve problems? Jewish Family Service (JFS), whose mission focuses on strengthening families, suggests that families consider these questions in an effort to identify areas that could be improved and to celebrate the positives.

Key areas to evaluate are communication, encouragement, commitment to family, spiritual orientation, social connectedness, adaptability, expressing appreciation, clearly defined roles and time together.

Communication in strong families has been characterized by researchers as clear, open and frequent. Everyone knows where he or she stands and is comfortable sharing opinions.

Encouragement of individuals within a family means that each member's uniqueness is appreciated and supported within the family. Respect is cultivated and differences are considered acceptable.

Commitment to family is important, with each member of the family working together with others as a team. Positive reinforcement is provided. For example, family dinners might be considered inviolable.

Spiritual orientation in strong families provides an underlying value system shared by all members. The family worships together and shares religious beliefs and activities, such as celebrating Passover.

Social connectedness reflects an involvement in the community and can turn to friends, family, neighbors and community resources when crises occur. Family members may serve as volunteers or be involved in community organizations like theater or school activities.

Adaptability is a skill that allows successful families to cope with stressful and potentially damaging events and life cycle changes. Both structure and flexibility can be beneficial to the family's response to stress. Rather than "falling apart" the family finds both ways to support each other and new ways to solve problems. For example, when a parent loses a job, all members of the family suggest ways they can economize while encouraging the parent in the search for a new job. "Maybe you got laid off but you will always be my best Mom," a child might say.

Clear roles are played by all members. Children recognize that their parents are in charge, and parents listen to children's ideas. Everyone understands what is expected of him/her.

Time together is valued in healthy families. They like each other and want to be together, not just when they must. There might be a family game night when everyone sits down to play board games, or perhaps the family goes hiking together on the weekends.

If your family is doing well in these areas, celebrate. If your family is weak in some areas, it may be appropriate to seek professional help before problems develop. The clinical social workers at JFS are well-versed in family therapy and can help each family build on its strengths.

For more information, call JFS at (401) 331-1244.

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### Adoption Options

Comprehensive, non-sectarian adoption program provides services to biological parents, children and adoptive families. Free informational meetings are held for prospective adoptive parents. 401-331-5437 or toll free at 1-800-337-6513 [www.adoptionoptions.org](http://www.adoptionoptions.org)

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### JFS Outreach for the Elderly

JFS assesses needs, provides supportive counseling, crisis intervention and, when necessary, acts as a surrogate family for the elderly.

### JFS Home Care Service

Registered Nurses assess needs and monitor health. Certified Nursing Assistants provide personal care, meal preparation and essential errands.

### JFS Lifeline RI

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### JFS Kosher Meals in Cranston

Hot, kosher meal and educational or cultural program. Monday through Friday, serving Cranston/Warwick area at Temple Torah Yisrael. 401-761-1771

### JFS Kosher Meals on Wheels

Hot, kosher lunch for the homebound Monday through Friday in Cranston/Warwick area.

### Refugee Resettlement

JFS coordinates resettlement and acculturation activities and volunteers, provides naturalization assistance.

### Moses Chitlin

Provides community seders and helps those in need through an annual Passover appeal, administered by Jewish Family Service.

\*A beneficiary agency of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island Annual Campaign and Endowment Fund.

## Cranston mealsite has active March schedule

Tantalizing aromas and delicious samples will be part of a cooking class led by Mealsite Coordinator Ronda French on Thursday, March 23 at the JFS Kosher Mealsite in Cranston. The class is an addition to the Mealsite's extensive schedule of programs.

Those with March birthdays are invited to celebrate on March 16, at a party with musical entertainment by Fascinating Rhythm.

The activities and programs accompany a hot kosher meal every weekday throughout the month. The March schedule includes:

- Exercise Class: Wednesdays, March 8, 15 and 22

- Tai Chi*: Tuesdays, March 7 and 28
  - Bingo*: March 6 and 20
  - Visits from the Bureau of Jewish Education Bookmobile Wednesdays, March 8 and 22
  - Purim Program* with Ronni Guttin from JERI (Jewish Eldercare of Rhode Island): Thursday, March 9
  - Dance Therapy*: Mondays, March 13 and 27
  - Nutrition Menu Meeting*: Tuesday, March 14
  - Birthday party* with cake and entertainment by Fascinating Rhythm: Thursday, March 16
  - Mah Jong*: to be announced
  - Men's/Women's Discussion Groups: every Friday
  - Cooking with Ronda*: Thursday, March 23
  - Weekly Shabbat Meal*: Fridays
- Programs begin at 11:00 am unless otherwise stated and lunch is served at noon. Every Friday, there is a Shabbat meal, complete with candles, challah and kiddush.

The JFS Kosher Mealsite in Cranston is located at Temple Torah Yisrael, 330 Park Avenue. Transportation is available every day for residents of Cranston and some areas of Warwick. For reservations and information, call French at 401-781-1771.

## JSA, JCC collaboration enlists agencies to offer new programming for active seniors

Jewish Seniors Agency (JSA) and the Jewish Community Center (JCC) have collaborated with Jewish Family Service (JFS) and the Bureau of Jewish Education (BJE) on a series of Spring classes for Jewish seniors at the JCC, 401 Elmwood Ave., Providence:

*Poetry Reading with Herb Brown*. Free, Wednesdays March 22nd, April 12th and May 17th • 10:30 am

*Basic Drawing with Lorraine McCoughan*. Fee: JCC members \$5; non-members \$8. Wednesdays starting March 22nd, for 8 weeks • 1-2:00 pm

*Parkinson Exercise with Lorraine*

*Diaz*. Fee: JCC members \$5; non-members \$8. Fridays starting March 24th, for 8 weeks • 10:00 am

*Dance Therapy with Theresa Pierson*. Free. Meets twice monthly at the meal site. Details to follow.

*Pottery with Marguerite Delucia Hall*. Two, four-week sessions, starting Wednesday, March 29. Fee: JCC members \$44; non-members \$50 • 11:00 am - noon

*Strength Training with Lisa Cournoyer*. Class underway; has waiting list

*Tai Chi with Bob Mathieu*. Fee: JCC members \$5; non-members \$8

bers \$8. Wednesdays, starting March 24th 1-2:00 pm

*Support Group: Sponsored by JFS*. Starts Friday March 31. In April, "For Men Only". In May, "For Women Only" 11-11:45 am

*Blood Pressure Clinics: Sponsored by JFS*. First Friday of each month. Free 10:30-11:30 am

*Bookmobile: Sponsored by BJE*. 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. Free • 11:45 am-12:30 pm

For further information call Susan Adler, JSA, 401-351-4750 or Sue Robbie, JCC, 401-861-8800.

## That's Life!

# Services keep distant families linked through years and seasons

by Paul L. Segal, *JFS Executive Director*

"We're worried about Aunt Sarah. She sounds weak when we talk on the phone..."

"I'm moving to California but my mother wants to stay here where things are familiar. I need someone to help take care of her..."

We often receive calls from adult children living as far away as Seattle to ask us to help an elderly parent. Sometimes the need is short-term, as when family members plan winter vacations and need to arrange for someone to check in on Great-Uncle Irving. And sometimes, a Rhode Islander will ask us to recommend service providers for an elderly relative living in Florida or another state. Occasionally, a concerned individual will call us to help a person who has no family.

The JFS Clinical Social Workers and Elderly Services staff can work with the distant family member to insure that the elderly person's needs are met, serving as a liaison with doctors and other service providers and keeping the family updated on their loved one's situation. In cases where there is no family, JFS can act as surrogate family, providing advocacy and supportive care.

JFS offers a wide-range of services: an initial assessment/evaluation by JFS Registered Nurses, Home Care, Lifeline RI personal emergency response system, Kosher Mealsite in Cranston, Kosher Meals on Wheels, Counseling and Family Life Education workshops, all available, depending on the person's needs. Our staff will coordinate care and monitor the situation, and respond to changing conditions.

If JFS is unable to provide a needed service, our knowledgeable case managers will refer the person to the appropriate agency and can help facilitate arrangements. For the elderly person out-of-state, we are able to refer them to agencies that we know are reliable through our network of contacts.

Winter's cold, ice and snow often curtail the ability to go out and engage in one's usual activities, making elders feel especially lonely. Children and grandchildren may live too far away to visit. Our clinical social workers understand when people feel isolated or depressed and are prepared to address these issues with counseling and other services.

Elderly clients often express relief to know that the staff members who will be helping them are familiar with Jewish customs and traditions. For example, the JFS Home Care Service staff is thoroughly trained in Jewish traditions and dietary law, so when they shop and prepare meals for our clients, the food is both nutritious and kosher, if requested. Our Certified Nursing Assistants also assist with personal care, essential errands and make it possible for people to remain in their own homes as long as possible.

Peace of mind can be increased for both the elderly person and the family by installing a Lifeline RI personal emergency response system, which allows the user to summon appropriate help immediately at the touch of a button.

Because social contact is important, especially when family is distant, transportation is available to residents of Cranston and Warwick to the JFS Kosher Mealsite in Cranston, where seniors can enjoy a hot, kosher lunch and participate in a wide array of activities to stimulate mind and body. There is a Shabbat meal every Friday and there are celebrations in observance of Jewish holidays.

For those who are homebound, JFS offers Kosher Meals on Wheels, delivered by volunteers who check on the well-being of the recipients. During the winter months, the program provides a two- to three-day supply of non-perishable kosher meals, in case there is a storm.

An opportunity to understand the aging process, learn about additional resources, share feelings and coping strategies are offered in Family Life Education workshops, with some programs geared toward caregivers and some focusing on issues of interest to the elderly.

Elderly people in our community do not have to be alone, even when family cannot be near. Jewish Family Service is here to help.

For more information about our services that help the elderly maintain their quality of life, including Counseling, Family Life Education, the JFS Kosher Mealsite in Cranston, Kosher Meals on Wheels, Lifeline RI and Home Care Service, please call 401-331-1244.

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## As we grow older

**Life out of the mainstream**

by Tema Gouse

In case you are not aware that you are "over the hill," just take a 12-year-old granddaughter shopping. Admire a conventional black or brown skirt, and watch as, eyes rolling, she says, "Oh, Grandma!"

This is the equivalent of her feeling that I am hopelessly out of the mainstream. I cannot differentiate between Ally Sheedy and Winona Ryder. I always thought Ally McBeal was a real person. Now I learn she is a TV character. And, if that same grandchild will forgive me, I must admit that Leonardo di Caprio does not turn me on. A Cary Grant will never be.

But this being of the Dark Ages is not restricted to clothing and entertainment. It spills over into most institutions of today's living. Let's begin in the home. I still have the illusion that a 3-bedroom house with adequate bathrooms and garage is a nice place to raise a family.

Granddaughter's eyes are rolling again. The den is now called the family room, a grossly oversized chamber, preferably with cathedral ceilings. The kitchen must be huge, though more for beauty than utility. Eating in the kitchen is gauche. That is done in the family room. In fact, everything is done in the family room, the repository of the TV, CDs, PC, VCR and everything else that is electronic and is identified by capital letters.

The family room is an interesting place. Besides eating and doing things electronic there, it is where Dad works on his taxes, children do their homework, and anyone, not otherwise occupied, can watch TV — all at the same time. Clutter is rampant because no one stores anything in those costly cabinets that were built to avoid clutter. I personally am still somewhat ill at ease in family rooms. They are too big to be cozy. I have never mastered computers or VCRs and I have never seen a family room stocked with classical CDs.

I have always felt that children deserve the privacy of their own bedrooms so that they can do their homework without distraction. And Dad deserves a small hideaway (formerly called a den) so tax preparation can be accurate. He can swear freely there, away from children, forcing them to learn to swear from friends or movies.

That new kitchen is really a thing of beauty. It should be. It cost more than my house and our last three cars collectively. It has all the latest work-saving gadgets that were ever invented. They aren't used too much because Mom holds down a job and gets home late and

Dad is nice enough to suggest eating out more often in any week than his parents did in any month when he was growing up. Eating out and ordering in will assure long lives for those appliances.

One final gripe on the houses of our children: Who ever decreed that natural wood floors are superior to carpet? Obviously it was someone who never did any housework. Pretty wood floors are a maintenance nightmare.

In the 1930s (those glorious Depression years) schools were mandated to teach. Like a teacher was not required. Her tolerating you was necessary. Parents assumed the teacher was right and the kid was wrong in any disagreement. It wasn't so, but parents accepted the premise. Now, if God (and my children) will forgive my being so "out of step," I'd like to say that that wasn't such a bad idea.

Today, the animosity between parents and teachers in public schools borders on open warfare. What teachers formerly instructed in the classroom must now be learned during 3-4 hours of nightly homework (even in the 4th grade). Parents feel teachers are unfeeling because teachers will not tolerate impudent behavior that is accepted in the home. I learned enough to get me into college in a classroom with 48 students. Today's classes of 20 are full of learning failures. Why? Should a child really learn to use a calculator instead of adding and subtracting? I know, I have antiquated ideas.

The Arts have also left me behind the times. Paintings should not look like photographs — or like what they are supposed to depict. True-to-life images are not "creative." Blank white canvases with a single dab of paint are masterpieces. Or so I am told.

Cacophony is called music and lyrical melody is not "creative." Operatic arias are verbalized as often as sung in New Opera. It takes three tenors to sell out a concert. Encores are a thing of the past; only I still miss those lovely melodies.

Even the written word is leaving me behind. Newspapers no longer proofread and the quality of their text reflects it. Non-fiction has gotten lengthier and less interesting. Half of all fiction is of the mystery/detective genre and poorly written. Magazines are more advertisement than article.

I still believe you should stay married to the same person until one of you dies. I think that purchased products should last at least six months beyond the warranty expiration. I believe courtesy is always right and exploitation is al-

ways wrong. Vulgarity is offensive and principles should be defended. Rings piercing noses are repulsive and loud music should be restricted to cars with closed windows.

Without apologies I remain in yesterday's mainstream. And if my granddaughter raises her eyebrows at the conservative gown I wear to her wedding, she may not get a wedding present from me!

**JERI looks for Purim volunteers**

In the week leading up to Purim, March 13-20, the staff of Jewish Eldercare of Rhode Island will run parties in nursing homes and assisted living facilities where five or more Jews are in residence, and will deliver gifts to all other residents of such facilities. They can use some help.

Several organizations — Women's Association of the Jewish Seniors Agency, the JFRI Women's Alliance, Kulanu from Temple Emanu-El, the kindergarten class from Temple Sinai and the social action committee at Temple Am David — will bake hamantaschen and supply other "goodies" that comprise a *mishloah manot* gift for Purim.

Volunteers assemble the packages and help deliver them. Because the JERI program covers residences throughout the state, there is a lot of territory to cover in just a few days, according to volunteer coordinator Bonnie Ryvicker.

To help with this mitzvah call JERI at 401-621-5374.

**Agencies form Council of Jewish Senior Presidents**

The Jewish Community Center of Rhode Island (JCC) and Jewish Senior Agency (JSA) have formed a Council of Jewish Senior Presidents (CJP) to provide support and exchange ideas among groups and to advance topical programs for the active older adult.

At the first meeting on February 9 at the JCC, the presidents decided to meet monthly to keep the line of communications open. Members also discussed the potential for new or joint programs that could be offered statewide.

The next meeting of the CJP will be March 15 at 1:00 pm at the JCC, 401 Elmwood Ave., Providence. Anyone interested in joining the Council should contact either Susan Adler (JSA) at 401-351-4750 or Sue Robbio (JCC) at 401-861-8800.

**Leisure Club features dance, art, science and women in Spring series**

The Leisure Club, a twice-weekly gathering for seniors which meets at Temple Emanu-El in Providence, opened its Spring classes February 28.

Each Monday at 10:00 am, through April 3, seniors may choose from either Line Dancing or lectures on Chinese Art (March 6) or "Art in Ancient Synagogues." After a coffee break, Judith Romney Wegner, PhD, will present a series on "Women in the Bible" at 11:10 am.

On Thursdays at 10:00 am, Maurice Glicksman, PhD, will present "Great Scientists of the Millennium," and at 11:10 am Cantor Brian Mayer will offer "The American Century: Overview of Jewish American Musical Creativity."

As a special treat, on Thursday, March 30, the Rhode Island Chapter of the Association of Jewish Libraries will present a program on "Women in Jewish History." Storyteller Vered Hankin will illuminate the roles of Bella Abzug, Barbara Myerhoff and Bobbie Rosenfeld in Jewish history. The three are designated "Women of Valor" this year by the Jewish Women's Archives (see page 3). Hankin is an Israeli educator, actress and storyteller.

These programs are free and open to the community.



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