

The JEWISH VOICE & HERALD

SERVING RHODE ISLAND AND SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

29 Tevet 5767

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January 19, 2007

Inside... Bridal special



Israel, Syria held secret, unofficial peace talks

By: Yehuda Lev
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Three years ago, in January 2004, Syrian President Bashar Assad visited Turkey. By sheer coincidence, in the same hotel was Dr. Alon Liel, a former Foreign Ministry Director General and former Ambassador to Turkey. A few days after his return to Israel, friends in the Turkish Foreign Ministry told Liel that the subject of Syrian-Israeli relations had been raised in the talks between Assad and

See REPORT, page 7

Hebrew Day School hit hard

Federation, BJE try to help balance budget, boost enrollment

By Jonathan Rubin
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PROVIDENCE — The Providence Hebrew Day School, one of the Orthodox community's most prized assets, is also one of the most troubled. Enrollment is down, need-based scholarships are up and the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island (JFRI) has had to give several "emergency" grants for repairs or to reinstate programs. A JFRI task force is working with the school to create a realistic five-year business plan by next month.

The K-12 school is a fixture in the local Jewish community; it's a warm and cheery place tied into the daily lives of dozens of families, and has generated hundreds of alumni over the years. Half the curriculum includes standard subjects — math, geography, English — and the other half is focused on Judaic subjects, including Torah, Hebrew instruction and Jewish history.

However, besides a temporary spike in enrollment due to a surge of Russian Jews in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the enrollment at Providence Hebrew Day School (PHDS) had been

declining at about 4 percent for more than a decade from a peak of 195. A recent upswing in their high school brought it from 119 to 134 students.

The school suffered two "contractions" over the years, each of which resulted in significant enrollment declines.

The first occurred when the boys' high school closed in 1995 after nearly three decades. With a struggle it reopened in 2004, only to close the following year.

Secondly, the school has gradually shifted from a "community school" model with an Orthodox outlook into a much more observant "Yeshiva Orthodox" philosophy. This shift has upset some of the more liberal Modern Orthodox families, many of whom left. They now drive or bus their children to Jewish schools in Sharon or Brookline, or opted for the Jewish Community Day School of Rhode Island (JCDS). (PHDS was given the offer of merging with JCDS when it came into being in 2004, but declined).

See HEBREW DAY, page 13

Environmental group plans seder, fair

Family event will coincide with Tu Bi-Sh'vat holiday

By Mary Korr
mkorr@jfri.org

PROVIDENCE — A local environmental group hopes Jewish children will become little green boys and girls, and their parents as well.

The fledgling Rhode Island Jewish Environmental Alliance (RIJEA) has picked the holiday of Tu Bi-Sh'vat, the New Year for Trees, to begin the "greening" of Jewish Rhode Island with an environmental fair and seder for families. The event will be held on Sunday, Feb. 4, at the Jewish Community Center (JCC) from 1 to 4 p.m.

"Tu Bi-Sh'vat celebrates

the fruits of the earth and gives us the perfect context to do this," said Alicia Lehrer, who co-founded RIJEA with fellow environmental scientist Daniel Orenstein. He began the Alliance work on a small scale with a "light bulb" replacement program, using energy-saving CFL light bulbs, in area synagogues.

At the fair, local farmers, food cooperatives, kosher caterers/chefs and green businesses will set up display booths where guests can learn about their operations and sample locally grown foods. Consumers can find out how to sign up for "farm shares," which provides weekly crops at drop-off locales. Leading environmental groups will be present to enlighten guests on Rhode Island environmental issues and learn about the goals, actions and successes of these groups.

Zoomobile, film

Eco-minded crafts, games and face painting will be presented throughout the event, kicking off at 1 p.m. with a family oriented Zoomobile presentation by Roger Williams Zoo.

A film, "The Future of Food," will be shown at 1 p.m. with discussion to follow. The film is a documentary which investigates the "disturbing truth" behind the unlabeled, patented, genetically engineered foods. A discussion moderated by Noah Fulmer from Farm Fresh RI will follow the film.

Orenstein said celebrating the New Year of the Trees holiday with a seder is growing in popularity. It is based on the eating of fruits and grains and the drinking of wine or grape

See ENVIRONMENT, page 12

Appointment of Arab to Cabinet stirs controversy



Raleb Majadele, the first Israeli Arab to be named as a Cabinet minister.

By Dan Baron

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The naming of the first Arab minister to the Israeli Cabinet was billed as an event underscoring hope of securing racial harmony in the Jewish state, though it may long remain mired in regional conflict.

But the nomination of Raleb Majadele instead has merely served to uncover Israel's often messy personality politics and the latent racism of some of its citizens.

See APPOINTMENT, page 7

'I would like all families to come in out of the cold and celebrate Jewish commitment to planet Earth on Feb. 4.'

— Daniel Orenstein



Find out what's new for 2007: The flowers, the gowns, the cakes, the rings.

Index

Section	Page
Calendar	2, 10
Opinion	4-6
Food	14
Community	15-18
Obituaries	21
Simchas	23
My Voice	24

Community Calendar

SAT., JAN. 20

Agudas Achim to show film

7:30 p.m. "Keeping up with the Steins." At Agudas Achim, 901 No. Main St., Attleboro. See Community for more info.

Music at Temple Shalom

8 p.m. International music with singers, Fred Scheff and

Christina Crowder, and instrumentalists, Lila and Kevin Kane, Gabi and Ben Scheff, performing music from Yiddish theater to Paris cafes; at Temple Shalom, 223 Valley Rd., Middletown. For information and tickets call 885-6073 or 846-9002.

SUN., JAN. 21

Sisterhood book review

10 a.m. Temple Torat Yisrael, 330 Park Ave., Cranston. Reading and reviewing "The History of Love" by Nicole Krauss.

Combatants for Peace to speak

4 p.m. Jewish Community Center, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Israeli and Palestinian former fighters and activists will talk about their decision to renounce violence. Free; reception after the program. Call Judy at (401) 751-8665 or email rhodeisland@btvshalom.org.

MON., JAN. 22

Blood drive at Habonim

2 - 7 p.m. at the temple, 165 New Meadow Rd., Barrington. Co-sponsored by Temple Habonim and Hampden Meadows School. All donors will receive a free pound of Dunkin' Donuts coffee, courtesy of Dunkin' Donuts. For more information call 800-283-8385 or www.ribc.org

CLARIFICATION:

In our last issue, it was stated that "Federation has made an agreement with the JCC to assume responsibility for the center's financial / accounting needs." In clarification, the Federation and the JCC have been working on a plan, which has not been fully completed, that would involve Federation overseeing accounting functions for the JCC.



The Afro-Semitic Experience, a Jewish and African ensemble, will perform at Temple Beth-El on Fri., Feb. 2 at 7:45 p.m. See Feb. 2 calendar listing for details.

THURS., JAN. 25

Food Bank mitzvah visits

by Temple Sinai

The Temple Sinai Social Action Committee continues to visit the Rhode Island Food Bank on the fourth Thursday of the month from 6 to 8 p.m. Volunteers at the Food Bank must be at least 14 years old.

FRI., JAN. 26

Yiddish Shmooz

10 - 11:30 a.m. at the Jewish Community Center, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Yiddish and "Yiddishkeit is the focus, with member participation. All are welcome. Light refreshments. For more info call Elly at 861-8800, ext. 107.

Messenger to speak

at Brown Hillel on Darfur

4 to 5 p.m. Brown Hillel, 80 Brown St. Ruth Messinger, executive director of American Jewish World Services, will be speaking to students. She is on campus as part of the Brown University northeast regional STAND conference. The student coalition group advocates against the genocide in Darfur. Open to the public.

SAT., JAN. 27

Discussion group at

Agudas Achim

9 a.m. "Jewish Journeys" at Agudas Achim, 901 No. Main St., Attleboro. See Community.

See Calendar, page 10

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CANDLE LIGHTING
For greater Rhode Island

Jan. 19 4:26
Jan. 26 4:35
Feb. 2 4:43
Feb. 9 4:52



Kaplan speaks to Beth-El on dynamics of change

By Nancy Kirsch

PROVIDENCE —Each year, Rabbi Leslie Y. Gutterman invites a prominent member of the Temple Beth-El community to speak about his or her hopes and dreams for the future on the first Friday night of the calendar year.

Saul Kaplan, executive director of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, shared his aspirations at the temple's Shabbat service Jan. 5.

Before joining state government, Kaplan was a management consultant for Accenture, focusing on medical products, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, and a marketing manager for Eli Lilly and Company.

Kaplan takes an innovative and dynamic approach to business development; and so it was no surprise that his talk was entitled, "A Simply Better Way." Acknowledging that it is "both a blessing and a curse to always think there is a simply better way," Kaplan believes that Rhode Islanders can come

together, as a connected community, with a shared sense of purpose.

"We're always thinking of a better way," Kaplan told the 80 or so worshippers in the intimate Herman L. Bennett Chapel of the synagogue. It could be small, or it could be big, he said.

"Don't you wonder, as I do, that with so much new technology available to us why we haven't made more progress in the areas that matter the most? I can't help but wonder why our doctor isn't connected with the entire healthcare system and the best information available in the world to keep our children healthy. It is hard to believe that in a world where we can get a real time sports score, stock quote, or IM from our children, emergency responders are unable to communicate with each other during tragedies like 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the Station Night Club fire,"

Kaplan said.

"And the one that actually makes me cry is to see first hand what has happened to our urban public school systems. A simply better way is not a matter of better consumer convenience - our future depends on it."

He reminded congregants that "change is only possible when we are willing to collaborate across boundaries, disciplines and organizations. It is not someone else's fault that we don't have better healthcare, education and public safety systems. It is our fault."

"Rhode Island's small size makes it the perfect real-world test market," he said. "We have the advantages of an incredible place to live, a strategic location surrounded by many of the best universities in the world, and a unique opportunity to allow innovative thinkers to explore and test better ways to deliver value. We can be nationally and globally good. We can create a more prosperous place, higher

wage jobs at every wage level, and solutions that deliver better value to patients, students, citizens, and consumers."

And, last but not least, is the importance of stewardship —the idea that we leave an organization or community stronger than it was we first found it, he commented.

He is an active volunteer, serving as chairman of the board of directors for the Quonset Development Corporation and the Slater Technology Fund; he also is on the boards of Family Services of R.I. and The Big Picture Company.

A resident of Providence since 1998, Kaplan lives on the East Side with his wife, Susan. They are the parents of Rachel, age 23; Adam, age 20 and Alyssa, age 17. Except for Rachel - who attends law school out-of-town - the rest of the *mishpabab* attended.

Nancy Kirsch is a freelance writer in Providence. She can be reached at nkirsch@cox.net.



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JANET B. LEFKOWITZ, DO, OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY

Dr. Lefkowitz is a graduate of the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine. She completed her residency at St. Francis Hospital & Medical Center in Hartford, CT and is accepting new patients at the Caring for Women office in Coventry.



JASON B. BOUDJOUK, MD, INTERNAL MEDICINE

Dr. Boudjouk is a native Rhode Islander and graduate of the Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara in Mexico and the New York Medical College in Valhalla, NY. He is board certified in internal medicine and is welcoming new patients in his office with Dr. Kimberly J. Humlock in Warwick.



MARIA J. GUGLIELMO, MD, NEUROSURGERY

Dr. Guglielmo is a native Rhode Islander, a graduate of the Brown Medical School and board certified in neurological surgery. Experienced in a variety of spinal and cranial procedures, she is welcoming new patients in her Warwick office.

Opinion

A MAJORITY OF ONE
News flash: Some people hate Jews!

A friend of mine in the Old Country (Los Angeles), recently took a taxi to LAX from his home and engaged the driver in a conversation that shook him thoroughly. The driver, an immigrant from Jamaica, let loose with a diatribe against



Yehuda Lev

Jews that can best be described as Mel Gibson times ten. It ended with a personal threat against his passenger whose home address he knew and who described the incident in the *Los Angeles Jewish Journal*.

Everyone is familiar with the definition of a conservative as a liberal who was robbed the night before. While he would object to such a description of himself, my friend seems to have reconsidered seriously his previous belief that anti-Semi-

tism is something Jews elsewhere have to worry about; that in this country we are safe from such verbal and even physical abuse. He now worries about whether or not he should report the incident to the Anti-Defamation League for fear the cab driver will return to get revenge. If the cab driver from Jamaica doesn't read the *Jewish Journal*, the ADL certainly does so it remains to be seen what will happen as a result.

There is no question but that in the United States, feelings against Jews and Israel have become more open in the past few years. Mel Gibson's rant was the most visible example; there was also the attention paid to the shameful "Holocaust conference" in Tehran and Iran's commitment to destroy the Jewish State, the rise of opposition to Israel in the universities led by the paper published by professors at Harvard and the University of Chicago, which also echoed charges of strong Jewish influence, in particular AIPAC, the Jewish lobby for Israel, in

the determining of American foreign policy, and, springing up almost out of nowhere, the book by Jimmy Carter, *Palestine: Peace, Not Apartheid* which was No. 5 in last Sunday's *Times*' non-fiction best seller list. I have not read Carter's book so I cannot comment on its contents but the linking of Israel with South Africa's former racial policies in its title has brought a storm of justified criticism from Jewish leaders and organizations. Worse, people are reading it; you don't rise to near the top of the best seller list on the strength of sales to Jewish organizations.

From all this, our defense organizations are intended to protect us, chief among them the ADL. One can be critical of the ADL for finding anti-Semitism behind every criticism of Israel, and also in last Sunday's *Times* is a withering critique of Abraham Foxman, the driving force behind the organization, who is portrayed as almost monomaniacal in his pursuit of anti-Semites, real or

imagined. But the author never asks the important question: To whom else do I turn if I am a victim of anti-Semitism? Many Jewish organizations claim that they too fight anti-Semitism but none with the determination of Abe Foxman's group. Maybe it takes someone like Foxman to deal effectively with this sort of enemy.

The battleground has shifted recently. Critics of Israel, apart from mental cases such as David Duke of the Klan and the Holocaust deniers, always questioned Israel's policies toward the Arab states and the Palestinians, but rarely denied its legitimacy, its right to exist. Today that too is in play. On college campuses around the country professors and students, often inspired by Palestinian students, are calling for a single Palestinian state with a Jewish minority and the once-discredited slogan "Zionism is Racism" is again waved about on placards in anti-Israel demonstrations.

What can we do to counter this? First, make a clear

distinction between criticism of Israel and anti-Semitism. Vanessa Redgrave has always supported Palestinian nationalist movements and denies that she dislikes Jews. I don't doubt her for a minute; she is a member of the Socialist Workers Party that fights imperialism and sees Israel as a colonizing state. Mel Gibson, on the other hand, seems the genuine article; his diatribe was against Jews. Second, sever all ties with people like Gibson; don't excuse them because they make money for you. Show some self-respect. And last, admit it when you think that Israel seems out of line in its policies and do what you can to explain, not excuse, those policies to others.

When you have done all that, sit back and relax. You will finally have achieved world peace.

Yehuda Lev is a retired journalist who has worked in Israel, Europe and the United States. He can be reached at yebudal@cox.net.

Letters to the Editor

Give credit for good mitzvot

It was with a great deal of disbelief that members of Touro Fraternal Association read your editorial "Skip the spring roll - do a Christmas mitzvah."

No organization in this community is more interested in doing mitzvot than Touro Fraternal Association. Charitable deeds are the bedrock of our association 365 days a year, and especially during the holiday season. And the editorial staff of this publication knows that all too well. Yet you portrayed our Association in your unsigned editorial as a group seeking escape by seeing a movie and enjoying a Chinese buffet.

Touro Fraternal Association's Community Involvement and Welfare Committees have their own budgets. They are charged with seeking opportunities to perform *tzedakah* on a year round basis.

Every December Touro Fraternal helps feed the hungry by donating to the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. Our efforts are doubled by work-

ing with Alan Shawn Feinstein who generously matches these funds. And part of the price of admission to a Touro meeting is a non-perishable food product which is then donated to a local charity.

This year we donated to the Providence Journal's Hope for the Holidays campaign, in conjunction with Hasbro, to provide toys for needy children. In addition, we provided the seed money to the Jewish Seniors Agency for purchase of a brand new bus that the agency desperately needed.

Every year on December 25th we provide a place for Jewish families to get together with friends and family. Two hundred plus members of the Touro family get together and enjoy the kinship that might otherwise be missed. That's what Touro is all about: Giving and sharing!

By the way, our gathering begins at 4:30 p.m. That gives our members as much time as they like to volunteer their time and effort for whatever charities they choose, above

and beyond the ones Touro gives to annually.

Yes, for several years Touro Fraternal Association has invited its members to enjoy a Chinese buffet and a movie on December 25th. And for many more years Touro Fraternal Association has shown the community at large that it stands ready to help wherever and whenever it can. Touro will continue to honor its commitment to the community and to its members.

It's a shame the editorial staff at the *Voice & Herald* failed to give a complete and accurate picture.

**Members of The Board of Directors and Officers,
Touro Fraternal Association**

Carter's fanciful book

There has been considerable comment generated by the publication of former President Jimmy Carter's book *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*.

The general comments are that President Carter's comments are highly subjective and seem to be based on interpretations of the situation (historically and otherwise) which reflect a bias in favor of the Palestinian viewpoint (at one end of the spectrum of comments) all the way to the suggestion that his writing may be compared to the infamous anti-Semitic forgery, "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion".

A recent program presented on public television attempted to show why anti-Semitism is so pronounced, especially in the Muslim world. Stereotypical comments and editorial cartoons, as well as newspaper articles and television produc-

tions, continue to reflect the policies of Arab governments.

It is in the interest of Jews in particular, and Americans in general, that truthful depictions relating to the situation in the Middle East should be presented, rather than subjective commentaries, regardless of the fame and experience of the individual writing the commentary.

If you believe that the publisher of the book should re-evaluate its decision to publish this book, I hope you will write and express your opinion on the subject. The publisher's address is:

Simon and Schuster, Inc.,
Corporate Communication
Department, 1230 Avenue of
the Americas, New York, NY
10020.

Burton A. Zipser
Southfield, Mich.

Submission Guidelines

Submissions must be signed and include city of residence and telephone number. Letters should be limited to 250 words, and Viewpoint pieces to 700 words. Submissions may be edited for length. Send submissions to: Jewish Voice & Herald, 130 Sessions St., Providence, RI 02906, or E-mail to: voiceherald@jfri.org.

FROM THE OLD OLIVETTI A 'hands-on' Koran

By Joshua B. Stein

Back in the day (which is, I gather, *au courant* for "Once upon a time" or "A long time ago" or simply "Once") there was a kingdom that was the master of the world. Or so it seemed. Upon it the sun



Josh Stein

never set. Or so it seemed. Within this bastion of proper Victorian behavior there was harbored a small community of interlopers, people whose ilk had been expelled in 1290, returned in 1656 and a hundred years later were demanding equality.

In 1753, Parliament granted the small sect complete equality with Anglicans but popular opinion would not countenance such an action, and it was quickly revoked. In another hundred years, by 1858 to be exact, two prominent members of the sect, David Salomons and Lionel Rothschild, had each been often elected and as often denied permission to sit in the House of Commons. This because they could not take the required oath "on the true faith of a Christian." They were finally seated when Parliament voted to strike the clause when Jews were inducted.

Somehow the empire managed to survive this assault on its ancient traditions yet another hundred years. Remarkable.

We have a similar issue. The voters of Minnesota's 5th congressional district elected Keith Ellison to Congress. Let me check my constitution. Yes, that seems to be their prerogative. One Virgil Goode, the Republican representing the 5th Congressional district of Virginia (no relation) has a problem. Not only is Ellison a peacenik, calling for the withdrawal of American forces from Iraq, he's also (gasp) a Muslim. Gevalt.

Goode sent a letter to constituents which reads in part: "When I raise my hand to take the oath on Swearing In Day, I will have the Bible in my other hand. I do not subscribe to using the Koran in any way. The Muslim Representative from Minnesota was elected by the voters of that district and if American citizens don't wake up and adopt the Virgil Goode position on [severely limiting] immigration there will likely be many more Muslims elected to office and demanding the use of the Koran." Oh, right, I forgot to mention it. Ellison had

announced that when sworn in he'd have his hand on a copy of the Koran. Will troubles never cease?

OK, one thing at a time. The least important is that Emerson was born a Christian in Detroit and converted to Islam in college. (I've just checked the constitution again, and apparently this is legal.) Immigration is clearly not an issue here. It's beyond being a red herring. This particular fish is scarlet. More to the point, Goode either has not read, or he chooses to ignore, the words of the constitution to which he is swearing, hand on Bible. Unfortunately for Mr. Goode's position, it reads in part: "no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States." Damn!

What it does *not* say is that Members of Congress or any other federal official has to take an oath on the Bible. It also fails to make the Bible the one book upon which one may (or may not) rest one's left hand while raising his right. Double Damn!! Oh, those Deist founders! Curses be on them.

We are, I hasten to remind, Mr. Goode and others, *a secular republic* (As in, "What part of 'secular republic' don't you understand, Mr. Goode.") Here's a nasty little secret that I share with Mr. Goode and with my readers: Islam is no more absurd than any other so-called revealed religion. That, at any rate, is what we can draw from reading the constitution.

Cleverly, Ellison took his oath on an English language Koran that had belonged to Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson, of course, was an atheist who had such little respect for revealed religion that he truncated the New Testament by removing all references to the miraculous.

That sound you may just have heard was Mr. Jefferson rolling over in his grave. Not because Ellison borrowed his old Koran, but because Goode's district includes, of all places, the area in which Jefferson lived. Oh, the irony. And the swearing in on Bible or Koran? It's all for show, a photo-op. The real oath is with hands on the constitution.

The real danger to the republic is not Muslims pretending to swear on a Koran; it's fundamentalist bigots who have abandoned the principles for which the founders fought and later wrote the Constitution.

Josh Stein is a professor of history at Roger Williams University. He can be reached at jstein@rwu.edu.

Winter harvest

By Rabbi Avi Shafran

In a recent book, "Final Exam: A Surgeon's Reflections on Mortality," Dr. Pauline W. Chen writes about the many operations she performed on brain-dead patients for the purpose of procuring, or "harvesting," their organs for transplantation. "They all," she writes, "seemed remarkably alive."

This past fall, the prestigious journal *Science* published a report on a young woman who, after a devastating car accident, was declared vegetative. For five months, she showed no signs of awareness whatsoever. Scientists, though, decided to put her in a Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging scanner, a machine that tracks blood flow to different parts of the brain and that was only developed a few years ago. When they asked her to imagine things like playing tennis and walking through her home, the scan lit up with telltale patterns of language, movement and navigation indistinguishable from those produced by the brains of healthy, conscious people. The report's authors, while stressing that the patient may still be classified as "unconscious," conclude nonetheless that she has a "rich mental life."

Ten years earlier, a patient like the young woman would have been assumed, for all practical intents, to be – effectively, if perhaps not legally – lifeless. Only the development of a new diagnostic technology has now rendered her more obviously alive. It's hard not to wonder what technologies might one day yet be developed – or what aspects of consciousness might forever elude scientific instrumentation.

The acronym DCD might be mistaken for some new medium of music reproduction but in fact refers to "donation after cardiac death" – the procurement of organs from people whose hearts have stopped, even if their brains may still be functioning. Such procedures have taken place in many countries, despite the fact that the cessation of heartbeat is not necessarily irreversible. Even some patients, whose hearts did not respond to cardiac resuscitation, it is well documented, have "come back to life" – in one case after the lapse of a full seven minutes, certainly sufficient time to harvest a vital organ or two.

The driving force behind the scramble to define death "to the instant" is clearly the worldwide shortage of organs for transplant. This past summer, doctors at the World Transplant Congress in Boston were told how the pool of available organs in the United States could increase by up to 20 percent if DCD were adopted more widely.

What does Judaism have to say about all this? Saving a life is a most weighty imperative, to be sure, but Jewish religious law, or *halacha*, does not permit one life to be taken to save the life of another – no matter how diminished the "quality" of the life of the former, no matter how great the potential of the life of the latter.

Halacha requires that death be clearly established, and does not permit any action that might hasten the death of a person in extremis. Any harvesting of organs after cessation of heart function that might not be permanent would be forbidden.

Unrelated to DCD is "brain death" – a diagnosis of irreversible cessation of all brain function, which modern medicine and secular law consider sufficient to permit the "harvesting" of organs before removal of life-support. What does Jewish law have to say about "brain death"? Can a patient with no discernable brain activity but whose heart continues to beat be considered a corpse?

Some rabbis vote yea on that question. And a recent *New York Times* article about a conference organized by the "Halachic Organ Donor Society," an organization advocating increased organ donation from *halacha*-observant Jews, referred to "near unanimity among rabbis on the criteria for organ donation" – presumably referring to the next paragraph's citation of the chief Sephardic rabbi of the Israeli city of Tzfat, whose criterion is brain death.

But many, and considerably more prominent in the world of *halachic* discourse, are

the rabbinical authorities who do not agree. They include the late Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, who was renowned as one of our generation's most authoritative *halachic* decisors, as well as Rabbi Yosef Elyashiv, considered by many Jews to be the most authoritative authority of Jewish law today. Some leading scholars at Yeshiva University too, like Rabbi Herschel Schachter and Rabbi J. David Bleich, concur.

In her book, Dr. Chen writes about her "83rd procurement" when the brain-dead body she sliced open for its organs was that of a young Asian-American woman like herself, who reminded her vividly, so to speak, of herself. She found herself hesitating during the procedure, but managed to complete it, although as she cut the vena cava and watched the patient's blood drain into canisters, she felt "as if my own life force were draining away."

Dr. Chen may intend her account to be simply what the title of her book promises, a reflection on mortality. But perhaps another thought for consideration lay there on the operating table, the idea that despite the inevitability of its end, life is holy – and we do well to tread carefully and slowly before considering it gone.

That might explain the feeling she writes she had at the end of that 83rd procurement, an exhaustion born not only of "sleep deprivation [and] overwork" but of "an unbearable grief."

AMECHAD RESOURCES.
Rabbi Shafran is director of public affairs for Agudath Israel of America.

Dry Bones UH OH



ALISON ON ALIYAH: Haredim – 1; State of Israel – 0

One of the news stories that has gotten a fair amount of press in Israel over the past few weeks—but, I'm guessing, hasn't been one of the most prominent press-grabbers over in America—has been the recent battles between the Israeli airline, El-Al, and the Haredim in Israel. It's quite a story. About a month



Alison Golub

ago, Israel fell prey to a one-day nationwide workers' strike. This isn't really news, as strikes of all kinds of governmental and civil institutions happen here every few months, generally in protest of the fact that the workers have not received their wages for some ridiculous

period of time (anywhere from two weeks to a year). We, the Israeli public, never really know when or for how long these strikes are going to take place, nor which institutions are going to take part in them *this time*, so one can imagine how disruptive these protests can be to our daily lives.

This particular strike involved, among many other groups, the airport workers, which meant that for a full day no planes departed from or arrived in Israel. Even though the pilots were working as usual, there were no baggage handlers or maintenance people, and thus, no way for the airport to operate.

Now here's where the story gets interesting. The strike ended around midday on a Friday, as

Shabbat was rapidly coming in. Faced with crowds of irate and stranded would-be travelers (on both sides of the globe) and the huge mess that the strike had caused, El-Al made an executive decision to fly and land a number of planes after the sun went down on Friday. El-Al stated that their protocol is usually not to fly over Shabbat, but that this particular case constituted an emergency situation and was therefore justified.

Well, the ultra-Orthodox community in Israel disagreed, and instituted an unofficial boycott of El-Al Airlines for the past few weeks, reportedly causing an estimated loss of one million shekels per day (about \$236,000). The Haredim are outraged that El-Al, well-known (albeit mistakenly) as the "national airline" and very much in the public eye because of this, would do something that would so blatantly desecrate one of the holiest of the Jewish commandments. It is apparently irrelevant that El-Al is no longer government-owned and that when it privatized, it lost its status as the "national carrier," particularly so with the recent emergence of Israir, the "number two" of Israeli airlines.

Despite protestations to the contrary, El-Al has been reportedly "crippled" by this boycott and has made frantic attempts to negotiate a truce with the Haredim. The final agreement, reached only very recently, holds that El-Al will continue to adhere to its "general policy" of not flying on Shabbat, but will appoint a rabbi to act as adviser to rule on whether official emergency (i.e., life or death) conditions are in place, that would warrant operating a plane on the Sabbath. El-Al is, in return, expected to heed, to the letter, the rabbi's ruling.

This whole story simply amazes me, and what amazes me more is the lack of indignation and outrage by the state and by the level-minded faction of Israeli society (if there is still such a thing). The Haredim are simply holding the state hostage on so many levels, and the state is allowing the Haredim to run wild. The fact that the ultra-Orthodox rabbinate has total and complete control over the institutions of marriage, conversion, and divorce in this country is apparently not enough; rather, they are constantly making attempts to grab more power, create more restrictions, and tighten their choke-hold on Israeli society. The situation reminds me of the mafia in New York or Boston, ruling by intimidation and the invocation of fear.

An interesting side note regards the fact that Egged, the

only bus company in Jerusalem, violates the Sabbath on a weekly basis, and not a single Haredi voice has been raised against such religious abuses. And how could this be, you ask? It's quite simple, and it is capitalism at its finest; While Israir exists as an alternative to El-Al should the need arise for such an option, Egged has no competition. And because boycotting Egged would mean that a lot of Haredim would have to "hoof it" to their study sessions every day, all of a sudden desecrating the Sabbath isn't so bad after all. As Shahar Ilan of Haaretz has put it, "This is selective religious fanaticism on the basis of free-market principles."

The ultra-Orthodox community in Israel really isn't as interested in having their own religious rights respected, as they are desirous of seeing the rights of the secular community dropped to number two on the priority list, and therein tightening their grip ever-so-slightly on freedom and human rights in all sectors of Israeli society. And what is scariest is that the State of Israel is allowing this. I suppose I'm just a poor pawn in the game, but it certainly is a frightening game to watch.

Alison Stern Golub was born and grew up in Seattle, Washington and is a graduate of Brown University. You can email her at Alison_Golub@hotmail.com, and read more about her adventures on her website at www.alisonsterngolub.com.

Stephen F. Schiff, M.D., F.A.C.S.

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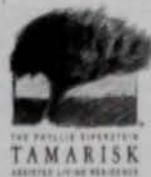
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Report

from page 1

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Would Liel see if the then Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was interested? Apparently the response was favorable so Liel brought in two additional people, Geoffrey Aronson from the Foundation for Middle East Peace and Ibrahim Sulaiman, a Syrian businessman living in Washington who the United States had often used as a back door contact with Syria.

The Syrians agreed to talks provided they were not "futile

academic talks" but could lead to serious solutions. Eight meetings took place in Europe and full reports were sent to Sharon and to American Vice-President Dick Cheney. In August 2005, an agreement was reached whereby Syria would regain the Golan Heights; demilitarized zones comprising about three fourths of the Golan would be established; Israel would control the use and disposition of water in the Upper Jordan River and Lake Tiberias, and Syrian territory east of the

border would become a park for the use of all peoples and under Syrian control.

This week someone leaked the story to the media, complete with the text of the agreement and favorable comment from those on the left who favor compromise agreements with Israel's Arab neighbors. But from elsewhere came denials of knowledge of the talks and outrage at their even having been held. It began to look like a repetition of an incident several years ago

when private Arab-Israeli talks in Switzerland produced the "Geneva Agreement", designed to end the Israel-Palestinian conflict and were immediately denounced by the governments of all parties concerned. Then, however, the political leaders had a point; they had neither been consulted nor informed. Now that excuse was lacking and their denials of knowledge sounded less like statesmanship and more like running for cover. Olmert announced that he had

known nothing about the talks and that they never happened. So did Assad's office in Damascus as did the American State Department.

As of Wednesday morning, the White House had not commented on the talks or the document. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, now visiting the Middle East, has not spoken publicly on the topic. The participants in the talks have also been silent. Somewhere behind this screen of silence there is a policy decision waiting to be made.

Appointment

from page 1

Majadele, a veteran Laborite, was chosen last week by the party's leader, Defense Minister Amir Peretz, for the science, culture and sport portfolio. He is to replace Ophir Pines-Paz, who bolted in November to protest Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's inclusion of the right-wing Yisrael Beiteinu party alongside Labor in the governing coalition.

Peretz was quoted as telling Majadele that in government, he would "help improve relations between the various sectors of Israeli society" — a reference to Jewish-Arab ties strained by the Palestinian intifada and allegations of institutional discrimination.

Asked how he would deal with sitting in government with Yisrael Beiteinu leader Avigdor Lieberman, who has proposed ceding Israeli Arab areas to a future Palestinian state and ousting Arab lawmakers from the Knesset, Majadele said, "It won't be simple."

But he added, "I think that my appointment strengthens the Israeli government and constitutes a step in the right direction toward the Arab public."

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert praised Majadele's nomination. But its ratification, which was expected to take place at Sunday's Cabinet meeting, was postponed for a week.

The prime minister told his Kadima faction that the appointment of an Arab minister "is a significant act whose time has come."

Condemnation of Majadele's appointment was quick to come from both Jews and Arabs.

Esterina Turtman, a senior Yisrael Beiteinu lawmaker, accused Peretz in a radio interview of threatening the Jewish character of Israel by encouraging "assimilation."

She was further quoted by Israeli media as calling Majadele's nomination a "blight" on Zionism — language that drew censure from across Israel's political spectrum.

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WORLD**For Olmert, visit to China is rich in meaning**

By Dan Baron

BEIJING (JTA) — For Ehud Olmert, it's a state visit rich in both diplomatic potential and personal significance.

The Israeli prime minister arrived in Beijing last week for a three-day trip aimed officially at bolstering already burgeoning 15-year-old ties and, more discreetly, at lobbying for a stronger Chinese stand against Iran's nuclear program.

Even though annual Israeli-Chinese trade has risen to \$3 billion, Olmert anticipated a tough time persuading President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao to abandon their circumspect tack vis-a-vis Tehran, given the Asian superpower's bottomless thirst for Iranian oil.

Nevertheless, Olmert said he and Wen had a "deep" discussion on Tehran during a meeting, in which Wen said "surprising things, things both positive and unexpected," Reuters reported.

The Chinese premier reiterated his country's support for U.N. sanctions on Tehran for its refusal to suspend uranium enrichment, saying they "showed the international concern over the Iran nuclear issue," Chinese state television reported. He added that "China will continue to play a constructive role in promoting the settlement of the

issue."

Like Russia, China has been a bit of a wild card at the U.N. Security Council, which has been debating sanctions designed to curb Iran's atomic ambitions.

The council unanimously passed a resolution last month limiting Iran's trade in sensitive nuclear materials that could be used for bomb making, but China appears more willing than Western powers to believe Tehran's claims that its plans are peaceful, and it's always ready to return to negotiations with the Islamic republic.

Israel sees Iran as an existential threat, given the country's presumed drive for nuclear weapons and its repeated calls for Israel's destruction.

Wen also raised the topic of Israeli-Palestinian peace prospects, advising mutual restraint.

"History and reality show that violence cannot solve the Middle East problem, but rather they only increase hatred and alienation," Wen said, according to Chinese media.

The Chinese leader offered to facilitate talks between the two sides.

Since they first hosted Jewish traders in the ninth century, the Chinese have displayed an intense interest, bordering on philo-Semitism, in a people they consider their "Western counterparts" in terms of enterprise and cultural depth.

The Israeli prime minister knows this firsthand: His parents, Mordechai and Bella, were among thousands of Jews who fled persecution in Russia in the early 20th century, settling in the northern Chinese city of Harbin before moving on to the nascent Zionist state.

The Harbin Jews, as well as coreligionists who fled Nazi Europe and settled in other Chinese areas such as Shanghai and Kaifeng, experienced almost unprecedented levels of prosperity and security. Olmert's parents received professional training in China, even speaking some Mandarin at home.

"Chinese culture became a part of our family's tradition. It is my first memory from my childhood in Israel," Olmert told China's Xinhua news agency. "We maintain a profound love for the Chinese people and are grateful for the warmth and friendship offered to the Jewish people in the early years of the 20th century and Second World War from the people of Shanghai and Harbin."

Despite its ties to the Jewish Diaspora, China was late in recognizing the State of Israel. It normalized relations only in 1992, after interim peace talks were well under way between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, which Beijing long had courted.

While it has consistently argued for peaceful conflict resolution in the Middle East, China has been out of step with the United States and European Union.

"Chinese people believe that peace, development and cooperation is the irreversible trend of our times," Chen Yonglong, China's ambassador to Israel, said last year, seemingly ignoring some of the more radical strains of Islamism.

Israel and China enjoy robust cooperation in commerce and scientific areas such as agriculture and high-tech.

Their relationship also had a major defense component until the United States, fearing for the safety of its ally, Taiwan, and for the survival of its arms firms in the face of stiff Israeli competition, stepped in.

Under U.S. pressure, Israel in 2000 canceled a \$1 billion sale of advanced radar systems to China. It has since faced further Pentagon ire after providing maintenance service for a fleet of Israeli-made drones that it sold to China in the 1990s.

According to Israeli defense sources, the scale of military-related trade with China since 2000 has been minimal — \$16 million in all.

Yet other trade is flourishing, and high-level Chinese delegations have visited Israel in the past 18 months, driven largely by interest in civilian technologies, Ha'aretz reported. Chinese officials say they want to double the quantity in coming years.

Wen and Olmert signed several documents for cooperation, including a cultural agreement, an export agreement allowing Israel to export citrus to China and a memorandum of understanding on water power between the city of Beijing and Israel's Industry, Trade and Labor Ministry.

Olmert paid a visit to a model farm set up by Israelis near Beijing, and visited the Great Wall and the Forbidden City in Beijing. He was expected to announce that Israel will open a consulate in the province of Guangzhou, which is home to high-tech parks, Ha'aretz reported.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Record no. of Jews in Congress

WASHINGTON: The 110th Congress, now in session, has more Jewish lawmakers than any congress in history. All but four are Democrats. The House admitted six new Jewish members, bringing its total to 30. The Senate has 13, an increase of two from the previous Senate. Some of the new House members come from states where Jewish voters are scarce, Tennessee, Kentucky, New Hampshire and Wisconsin. The Republican Party invested millions to woo Jewish voters away from their traditional Democratic voting habits but in the midterm elections nearly 90 percent of Jewish voters, one of the largest proportions in history, voted Democrat. (THE WASHINGTON POST)

Increased pop. Growth in settlements

JERUSALEM: Population growth in Jewish settlements in the West Bank has dramatically outpaced that within Israel, according to Israel's Interior Ministry. In fact it is almost three times the rate within the Green Line. In Israel proper, from 2005 to 2006 the rate of increase was 1.8 percent. The population of the settlements rose by 5.2 percent in the same period of time. Settler leaders said the numbers prove the popularity of their communities. Left-wing activists credit the rise mainly to the number of ultra-Orthodox Jews moving into settlements because of the cheap housing available there. (JTA)

Barak to run for Labor

JERUSALEM: Ehud Barak, former Israeli prime minister and army general, has announced his candidacy for leadership of the Labor Party and successor to Ehud Olmert, the present prime minister. Barak, who is the most decorated soldier in Israel's history, was originally elected to office with the expectation that he could negotiate a compromise peace with Palestinian leaders and carry a divided nation with him. But his personal style was so abrasive that Israelis replaced him with Ariel Sharon in 2000. (HAARETZ)

NY pols to pass on Israel trips?

NEW YORK: Newly elected New York Governor Eliot Spitzer's decision not to permit his executive branch officials to accept any gifts, including travel junkets sponsored by outside groups, has Jewish leaders scrambling to find out how this will affect plans to take New York political leaders on visits to Israel. Such visits have been helpful in the past to better acquaint officials with Israel's economic, political and security issues. Since 1982 the UJA-Federation

of New York has taken more than 500 community leaders, elected officials and/or their staff members to Israel on fact-finding missions. (THE JEWISH WEEK)

Torahs on flights

JERUSALEM: Israel's second airline, Isair, is making its own bid for Orthodox passengers. Beginning this month, selected flights will include in the cabin a Torah for those who need one for special occasions. One Israeli rabbi, on hearing the news, said it would provide an additional measure of safety for

passengers flying in its presence. (JTA)

Abbas calls for 'resistance'

JERUSALEM: Mahmoud Abbas praised Palestinians who fight Israeli "occupation." "We have raised our rifles against the occupation, and that is a legitimate right," the Palestinian Authority president said last week at a rally of his Fatah faction in the West Bank. "It is forbidden to raise rifles against one another. Our rifles, all our rifles, are aimed at the occupation." Abbas, generally portrayed as a moderate, has been scrambling

to head off civil war between the secular Fatah and the fundamentalist Hamas group, whose ascent to power drew a Western embargo on aid to the Palestinian Authority last year. Despite his apparent endorsement for Palestinian attacks on Israelis, Abbas also voiced hope for renewing peace talks with Jerusalem.

Olmert, Abbas, Rice to meet

JERUSALEM: The Israeli and Palestinian Authority leaders agreed to hold a U.S.-mediated summit. The decision was announced Monday after U.S. Secretary of State Condo-

lezza Rice met Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert in Jerusalem. An Olmert aide gave no immediate date for the meeting between Olmert and P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas, which Rice would mediate. Olmert and Abbas held their first summit last month, but hopes of a breakthrough in peace efforts have not yet been borne out. Rice, who visited Abbas in Ramallah on Sunday, pledged stepped-up U.S. support for establishing a peaceful Palestinian state alongside Israel.

Please join us for

Shabbat Shirah

Temple Beth-El 70 Orchard Avenue - Providence
Friday, February 2, 2007 at 7:45 p.m.

We are happy to welcome the *Afro-Semitic Experience*, a cross-cultural ensemble which combines African and Jewish traditional music. Their music brings people together and celebrates Jewish and African heritage through musical styles such as klezmer, jazz and spirituals.



Help us welcome new and prospective Temple Beth-El members at the "Sabbath of Song" with the *Afro-Semitic Experience*, and have an experience to remember!

Funding for Shabbat Shirah is provided by the Dorothy and Jay Isenberg Music Fund

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NEWSSTAND LOCATIONS

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Calendar

Continued from page 2

Games at Torat Yisrael
6:30 p.m. Torat Yisrael, 330

Park Ave., Cranston. Havdalah followed by games. Bring your own favorites. Free refreshments. RSVP: 785-1800 or Stephanie@toratyisrael.org. Jewish Collaborative

Funding Available: RFP Notice

The Women's Alliance Endowment Fund of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island is entertaining proposals for funding. Priority will be given to programs that impact women and children and funding is restricted to 501(c)(3) organizations only.

Proposals must follow published guidelines, available on the Women's Alliance page at www.jfri.org, and should be sent to: Jewish Federation - WAEF, 130 Sessions St, Providence, RI 02906. No proposals will be accepted after **Friday, March 9, 2007.**

Please contact Kerri Pariseault: kpariseault@jfri.org or 401-421-4111 ext 163, with any questions.

auction, dinner
7 p.m. The Center, 375 Kingstown Rd. at the Rotary, Narragansett. Silent auction and dinner; raffle with rare sports and pop culture memorabilia, vacations, much more. Benefit for the Jewish Collaborative and Hebrew School. Admission, with kosher dinner, \$25. For more information, visit www.jewishcollaborative.org.

Bresler's Klezmer Coffee House

8 to 10 p.m. Fishel Bresler & Shelley Katsh will perform as a duo at the Brooklyn Coffee & Tea House, 209 Douglas Ave, Providence. Admission is \$9. Also on Feb. 24 and Mar. 24. For more information, go to www.BrooklynCoffeeTeaHouse.com or call 575-2284 in the mornings or 273-9814.

MON., JAN. 29

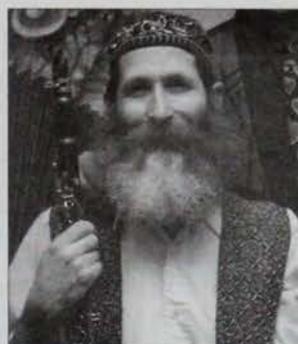
Self-defense class at Sinai for women

7:30 p.m. Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Social Hall, Temple Sinai's Sisterhood will present a women's self defense class. The class, taught by sensei Tim Cummings and sensei Alicia Lafrate of Chick Gavitt's Ichiban Karate Studio, is appropriate for women of all ages who want to be prepared to protect themselves. Cost is \$5 per person. For information or to RSVP, contact Amy Stein at 398-0567 or steins4@cox.net.

FRI., FEB. 2

Afro-Semitic Experience to perform at Beth-El

7:45 p.m. Temple Beth-El, 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Shabbat Shirah "Afro-Semitic Experience" will perform in celebration of Shabbat Shirah (Sabath in Song). Jewish and African



Klezmer musicians Fishel Bresler & Shelley Katsh will perform at Brooklyn Coffee & Tea House in Providence on Saturday, Jan. 27.



ensemble, performing Gospel, Klezmer, Nigunim, spirituals, and swing. Open to public. For more information, contact Susan Markoff at 808-6972 or Nan Levine at 351-8791.

SUN., FEB. 4

Blood drive at Torat Yisrael

8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Temple Torat Yisrael, 300 Park Ave., Cranston, will be hosting a blood drive.

Environmental fair, seder

1 to 4 p.m. Jewish Community Center (JCC), Elm Grove Ave., Providence. Family fair, fun, seder to celebrate New Year of the Trees. Sponsored by the R.I. Jewish Environmental Alliance. Free. For more information, visit www.rijea.org or call 272-0623 or email Daniel@coejl.org.

FRI., FEB. 9

Joyous Shabbat at Temple Emanu-El

6 p.m. Freylach Shabbat, Temple Emanu-El's joyous community welcome with a spirit-filled service, catered dinner and two programs for children (Beit Nechemiah for ages 7 and under, Beit Café for ages 8 and up). All

ages, for individuals and families, an opportunity to sing, to celebrate and to schmooze. Register with the Temple office by Jan. 26 (register children for Beit Nechemiah at the same time). For information, call the office at 331-1616.

SUN. FEB. 11

Jewish healing potluck and teaching

4 — 7 p.m. The R.I. Center for Jewish healing potluck and learning *Authentic Movement* and its connection to Jewish mysticism with Joan Webb. RSVP about food to bring. At 130 Jacob St., Seekonk. Contact jganek@cox.net or 401-658-1640.

N.E. Rabbinical College annual dinner

Event to honor Rabbi & Mrs. Avrohom Jacobowicz, Pillars of Torah; Rabbi and Mrs. Ari Neuwirth, Alumni Achievement awardees; and Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Weissmann, Parents of the Year. Call for time and place, (401)274-3298.

UPCOMING

WED., MARCH 7

Beth-El - Passover raffle

Call Rona at the Temple Beth-El Office (401-331-6070) to purchase raffle tickets for a gourmet kosher Passover dinner for 10-12 people. Catered by Accounting For Taste LLC, on the first night of Passover, Monday, April 2. All tickets must be purchased and ticket stub returned no later than March 2 to qualify for a drawing on March 7.

SEND US YOUR CALENDAR LISTINGS

Send us your calendar listings — include time, date, location and telephone number. Notices must be received 2 weeks prior to publication date.

E-mail to: voiceherald@jfri.org; Fax to: 401-331-7961; or mail to: Jewish Voice & Herald, 130 Sessions St., Providence, RI 02906 - Attn: Calendar

"Mitzvah of the Month"

Knitting



The Mitzvah of the Month for February is knitting!

Join us as we make scarves to send to children in Afula, Gilboa.

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- Needles and yarn will be available, but bring your own if possible. (needle sizes 7-10 worsted or bulky yarn.)

Knitting session

Tuesday February 22 10 a.m. - Noon
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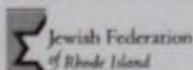
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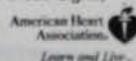


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Arts & Culture

“The most important female musician in Israel’s history”

Chava Alberstein will appear at the Zeiterion Theatre

NEWBEDFORD—Chava Alberstein is undoubtedly Israel’s most accomplished singer. She has released more than 40 albums in Hebrew, six of which have been awarded the Kinor David prize, Israel’s Grammy. She has also released six albums in Yiddish, and an English album of standards ranging from Gershwin to Lennon and McCartney. A dozen of the records have gone gold, six platinum, and one triple platinum. Often compared to Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell and Edith Piaf, she is considered a national treasure in her native Israel.



She makes a rare appearance at The Zeiterion Theatre, New Bedford on Sun., March 4th at 7 p.m.

She is Israel; her development as an artist mirrors Israel’s development as a country; her growing pains are Israel’s growing pains. Alberstein’s early Hebrew recordings, with names

like “Songs of My Beloved Country,” “Beaches,” and “Like a Wildflower,” speak to Israel as a fledgling country. They are external, almost frontier.

Alberstein has recently released “The Well”, an album of Yiddish poems she has transformed into folk songs, with the renowned klezmer group the Klezmatics.

She helped revive Yiddish music as part of Israeli and Jewish history, and was honored with an honorary doctorate from Tel Aviv University.

The Zeiterion Theatre is located at 684 Purchase Street, New Bedford, Mass. Tickets online: at www.zeiterion.org or call (508) 994-2900 and cost \$46, \$41 and \$37.

Israeli, Dutch films vie for Oscars

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, (JTA) — Israel’s “Sweet Mud,” a largely somber story of a youngster growing up on a kibbutz, and Holland’s “Black Book,” a thriller about a Jewish woman battling the Nazis as a resistance fighter, are among movies from 61 countries vying for best foreign-language film honors in this year’s Oscar race.

Director Dror Shaul based “Sweet Mud” on his own experiences as a young boy in the 1970s living on a kibbutz in the northern Negev.

Twelve-year-old Dvir, heart-wrenchingly portrayed by Tomer Steinhofis is left caring for his unstable mother, preparing for his bar mitzvah, and wrestling with adolescence.

There are some relieving flashes of humor but the underlying tragedy of Dvir’s young years is that for all of its professed idealism, the kibbutz displays insensitivity to his mother’s plight.

The film has considerable artistic merit, but continues the unfortunate tradition by the Israel Academy of Films of selecting

the most self-critical and down-beat portrayals of its society to compete in the Oscar races.

Black Book

“Black Book” marks the return of Dutch director Paul Verhoeven (“Total Recall,” “Basic Instinct”) to his native land, and he has chosen to depict his countrymen under Nazi occupation during the last year of World War II.

The central figure is a beautiful Dutch-Jewish cabaret singer, Rachel Stein (Carice van Houten), who, after seeing her parents gunned down by Wehrmacht soldiers, joins a resistance cell.

She is assigned the task of seducing the chief of SS intelligence in Amsterdam, but then falls under suspicion of betraying her resistance comrades.

It would be unfair to reveal more of the plot of this gripping, realistic thriller, but what makes “Black Book” truly notable is Verhoeven’s unblinkered view of his countrymen during the Nazi occupation.

Contrary to postwar legends, not all resistance fighters were unblemished heroes.

Even more surprising, the film pulls no punches in showing the widespread anti-Semitism in the land of Anne Frank, even among those who resisted the Germans.



A scene from the Israeli film ‘Sweet Mud.’

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Daniel Orenstein, at left, a co-founder of the Rhode Island Jewish Environmental Alliance (RIJEA); Noah Fulmer, of Farm Fresh RI; and Alicia Lehrer, co-founder of RIJEA, raise a glass to Tu Bi-Sh'vat, the celebration of the fruits of the earth, by drinking wine and enjoying fruits and grains featured in the traditional Tu Bi-Sh'vat seder.

Environment

juice to celebrate the transitions of the seasons — from winter to the blossoming of spring.

At 3 p.m. the seder (not a sit-down meal) will be led by local rabbis, who will say traditional blessings over three food types: those that are inedible on the outside but edible inside (such as pomegranate, banana) and the reverse — edible on the outside but inedible inside (such as pitted

fruits), and finally totally edible fruits (berries).

RIJEA has set several goals: to introduce Jewish environmentalism to day schools, synagogues and youth groups; to establish an environmental curriculum in grades K-8 and to continue with the greening of synagogues and Jewish buildings.

"We also want to provide a Jewish voice within the greater environmental community," Orenstein said.

Being environmental stew-

ards is a "rich tradition within Judaism," he added. "We have a moral and ethical basis to do this work. I would like all families to come in out of the cold and celebrate Jewish commitment to planet Earth on Feb. 4."

The event, which is free, is supported by a \$5,000 grant to the JCC from the Rhode Island Foundation.

For more information, visit www.rijea.org or Daniel@coejl.org or at (401) 272-0623.

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Hebrew Day

From page 1

The changes have been palpable; boys and girls are now separated as they reach middle school. Seeing the iconic black hats on students and teachers at PHDS, once a rarity, has become quite common.

Bare bones

The school has only two and a half full-time administrators governing the preschool, elementary and the New England Academy of Torah, its girls' high school. The dean, Rabbi Peretz Scheinerman, also serves as marketing director, admissions director, and fundraiser.

"We're really at bare bones right now," said Rabbi Scheinerman.

Another issue — the school gives an extremely high level of scholarships. At least 50 percent of students at the school, many of whose parents are faculty, do not pay full tuition; whereas an average private school has a more modest 20 to 30 percent.

Not allowing a child to receive a Jewish education due to an inability to pay is against the Jewish tradition and therefore not an option, school leaders say.

The school has taken out loans and borrowed from its endowment to make ends meet and pay salaries on a timely basis. Music had already been eliminated, and arts and computer classes were on the chopping block next for 2007, but lobbying from the Bureau of Jewish Education (BJE) and the school intervened and a \$43,900 grant from the Federation kept the programs afloat. It was the school's fourth emergency grant in as many years.

Task force assigned

The Federation had noticed with dismay regular deficits in the school's budget over the past dozen years, and had launched two task forces to look into the school's "systemic problems." The first, launched about a dozen years ago, examined the school's financial and governance system and warned that the school's business plan was not sustainable.

Providence Hebrew Day is one of the Federation's "core agencies," meaning that it receives an annual allocation of community funds. This came to about \$74,000 last year.

"This is going to require some very creative thinking, if it can be done at all," said Mathew Shuster, chair of the Federation task force examining the school.

Jewish schools are Shuster's forte; he was instrumental in creating and promoting the concept of a *trans-denominational* day school. His idea eventually became reality in the form of the Community School.

Shuster, who is also a member

of the Federation's finance committee, said at first many of his more serious ideas — including that the school move, downsize or cut back on scholarships — "were not taken seriously" by the school's representatives. Some members also had hopes that PHDS would receive a significant grant, similar to the \$1.2 million the JCDS received last June.

Frustrated and feeling that the group wasn't looking for real answers, Shuster reformed the committee, and charged Hebrew Day to produce, with his help, a solid business plan approved by the school's board by February.

"This committee has teeth," said Larry Katz, the committee's staffer and director of education services at the Bureau. "We're looking for definite benchmarks and measurable goals." (The JCDS is also in the process of being "benchmarked" against enrollment and fundraising goals. The results will be out in March.)

According to the 2007 Jewish Demographic Study, about 8.6 percent of Rhode Island's Jewish population is Orthodox — about 1,600 members. "If that school goes out of business, the majority of young Orthodox families will go out of state," said Shuster.

Some PHDS parents, who spoke to the *Voice & Herald* under the condition of anonymity, had concerns with the school's decreased focus on modern Hebrew language, with "gender issues," including prohibitions against teaching girls certain religious subjects, and a lack of general responsiveness to parental concerns.

Scheinerman said the school has been putting more focus on its language programs, modern Israeli history and now has a girl's Talmud class, among other changes.

Getting enrollment up

So far, the task force agreed with Scheinerman that the budget is about as lean and mean as it could get, so they looked at ways to increase income and draw more students.

The vast majority of the Orthodox children — Shuster says upwards of 90 percent — are already enrolled at PHDS, so there aren't many options locally. However, school officials have their eyes set on claiming new students from Sharon, which has a large Orthodox population and already sent 14 students their way.

"We believe the Sharon market will grow," Scheinerman said.

They also see room for growth at the preschool level, which they say at that age is "non-ideological." If they were able to

adopt a niche educational curriculum, such as Montessori or Reggio, and competitively price it, Scheinerman said it could become "a profit center."

Another option is to "grow" the Jewish community as a whole, with the hope of attracting more young families with children. Some options include having a position paid for by community dollars that would try to connect attractive employers — like the Miriam or Rhode Island Hospitals — with Orthodox workers. This would involve both shopping these positions to the right communities as well as creating positions that are compatible with observant Jewish lifestyle — i.e. working Sundays instead of Shabbat, etc.

Increasing income

This parent base, while generous when fundraisers come around (each family agrees to contribute at least \$1,500 toward annual fundraisers), is not as well-off as the school's coffers would like them to be; the median house-

hold income for an Orthodox family here was \$39,800 in 2002, a good deal less than \$60,400 for a Conservative family or \$77,300 for a Reform one, according to the Jewish Demographic Study. Orthodox families also must live within walking distance of a synagogue, most of which are on the East Side, famous for its sky-high real estate. This leaves most families with even less for tuition — which runs about \$10,000 a year for elementary or middle school.

"This parent body is not wealthy," Scheinerman said.

The school is beginning to shift some fundraising efforts from the already tapped-out parent base to the school's many generations of alumni. It also raises nearly \$30,000 a year through its Shabbat minyan, although some see this offering as stepping on the toes of local synagogues, as they claim it violates an earlier non-competition agreement.

Scheinerman also positioned his school to be eligible for funds

from the Rhode Island Scholarship Alliance. It's a corporate tax credit that allows donations upwards of \$100,000 in exchange for nearly a full credit, not merely a write-off. The program has a \$1 million cap for the five schools involved, but can grow over time. He is working with Larry Katz of the Bureau to facilitate this program with other private schools who have students in financial need. Katz said it would be primarily marketed to Jewish business owners and corporations looking for good returns on their philanthropy.

"Of all the ideas, this could bring some money very soon if it were supported," Katz said.

Other possible ideas might include renting some of the empty classrooms at PHDS to other Jewish organizations, creating an "Orthodox Council" composed of all the state's Orthodox institutions to problem-solve community issues, or perhaps creating a teacher-training program at the Yeshiva and have their students teach at PHDS.

The Women's Alliance of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island

Present the 5767 Rosh Hodesh Series
Women of Valor: How do they relate to our lives!
 January 23 ~ February 21 ~ April 12
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Tradition tells us that Rosh Hodesh (the marking of the new moon) was once celebrated by both Jewish men and women. In later years, Rosh Hodesh became primarily a women's holiday — a day for women to be together to enjoy meaningful introspection, dialogue and study.

January Shevat

Tuesday, January 23, 2007 • 12:00-1:30 pm
 Temple Beth El
 70 Orchard Ave. Providence
 \$14.00 (lunch included)
 Professor Judith Romney Wegner

Hagar the Egyptian:

Her place in Jewish and Islamic scripture and tradition. Most Jews are familiar with Abraham's concubine Hagar, handmaid of Sarah and mother of Ishmael, who is featured in the Torah reading on Rosh Hanukkah and also appears in Jewish oral tradition. Hagar likewise plays an important role in Islamic oral tradition (though not named in the Qur'an itself). Prof. Wegner will discuss the place of Hagar in Judaism and in Islam as gleaned from the sacred texts and traditions of both religions.

February Adar

Wednesday, February 21, 2007
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April Iyar

Thursday, April 12, 2007 • 7:00-9:00 pm
 Providence Hebrew Day School
 450 Elmgrove Ave. Providence
 \$5.00 (dessert included)
 Rabbi Elyan Wechsman
 Rabbi of Congregation Agudas Achaim

Judith Kaplan Eisenstein: Paving the way for Jewish women

The tradition of possessing a Bat Mitzvah has become a common rite of passage in modern Jewish life. This certainly was not always the case. Judith Kaplan Eisenstein, paved the way for Jewish women worldwide in their quest to play a more prominent role in Jewish ritual and tradition. Join us as we look at ethnographic Judith Eisenstein, whose accomplishments have opened doors for Jewish women.

*A snow date in March will be scheduled if so needed.

For directions or to register online, please visit our website: www.jfri.org
 Contact Shanna Yarnovsky at (401) 421-4111 ext. 206 or at nyarnovsky@jfri.org with any questions.

FOOD

'Jewish fruit cakes' for the seasonal baker

By Marylyn Graff

Tu Bi-Sh'vat, "the New Year of the trees" is a happy time in Israel, signaling the end of winter and time to plant young trees. It's traditional to eat the fruit of the trees, such as figs and dates, frequently made into a cake or dessert. I cut this recipe out of a magazine a few years ago. You can call it Jewish fruit cake.

Tu Bi-Sh'vat cake ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsps. baking powder
- 2 tsps. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. allspice
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 cup golden raisins
- 1/4 cup each dried figs, dates and apricots, cut small
- 3/4 cup chopped walnuts or

- pecans
- 3 large apples, peeled and shredded, not too fine
- 1 tsp. grated lemon peel
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Method:
Preheat oven to 325.
Spray a large tube pan with vegetable oil.
Sift the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, allspice and cinnamon onto wax paper.
In a medium bowl place the cut-up fruits and mix in 1 Tblsp. flour.
In the large bowl of an electric mixer, beat eggs slightly, mix in oil, sugar, apples, lemon peel and vanilla. Blend well on low speed and slowly add the flour



Dried figs, dates, apricots and other fruits give cakes a yummy, seasonal taste.



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mixture. Fold in the fruits and nuts.

Pour batter into pan and bake 50 — 60 minutes until top is golden and toothpick inserted comes out dry.

Cool 10 to 15 minutes, invert cake onto a rack and cool completely. Sprinkle top with confectioner's sugar or icing made with a cup of sifted confectioner's sugar and a couple of Tblsps. any fruit juice.

Honey orange upside down cake.

(This is not technically a Tu Bi-Sh'vat cake, but oranges are a main product of Israel and they grow on trees, so why not? It's another of my magazine finds and very good.)

- Ingredients:**
- 1/2 cup honey
 - 1/4 cup orange juice
 - 1 large unpeeled orange, sliced 1/8" thick

3/4 cup butter or parve margarine at room temp.

- 1 cup sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 Tblsp. grated orange peel (from another orange)
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/3 cup whole milk or milk substitute

Method:
Preheat oven to 350.

Put honey and orange juice into a 9- or 10-inch ovenproof frying pan, preferably non-stick, with sloping sides and stir over medium high heat until boiling. Cook without stirring until foamy and slightly thickened, 2 to 4 minutes. (This will be about 230 on a candy thermometer if you have one.) Remove from heat and cool until thickened, about 15 minutes. Arrange orange slices in a single layer in pan over syrup.

In large bowl of electric mixer beat butter or margarine and sugar until smooth and creamy. Beat in eggs one at a time, then orange peel. Mix flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt and sift onto wax paper. On low speed, mix half into first mixture, until just incorporated, stir in milk then rest of flour mixture until smooth.

Scrape batter carefully into pan and level. Bake 35 — 40 minutes. Cool 5 minutes and invert over a serving plate.

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Community

Agudas Achim plans Havdalah, movie

ATTLEBORO - Congregation Agudas Achim is inviting the community to two events on Jan. 20 and 27. Both will take place at Agudas Achim, 901 North Main Street, Attleboro.

Havdalah Happening, which will be held on Sat., Jan. 20, will show this month's special presentation of the film, *Keeping Up with the Steins*, a lighthearted look at the world of extravagant L.A. bar mitzvahs (not to mention dysfunctional L.A. families.)

The movie begins at 7:30 p.m. The showing is free and refreshments will be provided.

A Jewish Journeys discussion group will be held on Sat., Jan. 27, at 9:00 a.m. This group welcomes those exploring or deepening their relationship to Judaism.

Participants are welcome to stay for the service at 10 a.m.

For more information, call (508) 222-2243 or visit www.agudasma.org

Jewish War Veterans receives grant

CRANSTON — Edward F. Sanderson, executive director of the Rhode Island Historical and Heritage Commission has presented a check for \$950 to the Jewish War Veterans of the United States, Rhode Island Section. This represents a legislative grant under the 2007/2008 appropriations act to support the organization's operations.

The Jewish War Veterans of Rhode Island is composed entirely of volunteers, whose mission it is to preserve the rights and memories of all veterans.

Senior lunch gets new caterer

CRANSTON — The Jewish Family Service kosher mealsite is now having lunches catered by *Accounting for Taste*, a catering company run by Debbie Blazar.

The mealsite is a place for seniors to have lunch, participate in a wide range of activities and socialize with other seniors. Located at Temple Torat Yisrael, 330 Park Avenue in Cranston, it is open Mon. through Fri. from 11 a.m. — 1 p.m. Activities include yoga, exercise, dance therapy, cooking classes, health checks, discussion groups, entertainment and a special Sabbath meal on Fridays. Transportation is available for residents of Cranston and Warwick.

Reservations are required and there is a suggested donation of \$4 for the lunch. For more information, call 781-1771 (between 9 a.m. — 1:30 p.m.) or info@jfsri.org.

Kabbalah of Character

An eight week course on the Jewish Kabbalah of the Character will begin on Tuesday, Jan. 23, at 7:15 p.m.

The course will be given by Rabbi Moshe Laufer. For more information and to RSVP call Chabad of Barrington at 247-4747

A project of the Jewish learning Institute of RI. www.myjli.com.

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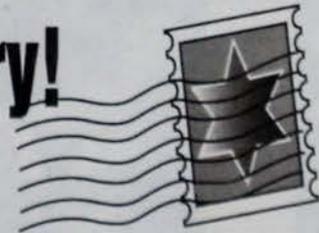
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Given long life, we are blessed (or sometimes cursed) with a variety of experiences. If you are lucky, the good outnumber the bad. Some experiences are forced on us. Some are the result of our own preferred actions. Luck plays a big part in what comes our way, but mostly we ourselves determine what will dominate our lives.

Except for the joys (and sometimes, the heartaches) that originate in our relationships with friends and family, nothing else influences the quality of living more than the work we have done, whether it is in the home or in the workplace. It is the lucky individual who can enjoy both work settings. Think about it. Did you have the privilege of picking your form of employment?



Tema Gouse

Did you enjoy or regret your choices? Did you adapt to forced demands of employment, or continue to resent them? Only in old age can we openly express feelings about our vocations.

Our parents and grandparents had their jobs and their roles mandated, not the products of choice. My mother and my grandmother never questioned the responsibilities of child-bearing, child-rearing, housekeeping and feeding the family. Their male counterparts were rarely free to follow personal interests and pursuits. Their mandate was to earn enough money to meet the family's needs.

That has changed for our children and our grandchildren. It has even changed for some of the over-50 generation-some-what. It is now possible for some of us to choose, rather than have imposed, how we will derive guilt-free satisfaction about changed roles.

We can "wear two hats" pursuing interests while maintaining the more traditional responsibilities. Women can combine marriage, motherhood, and be paid to perform work out of the home that will satisfy us.

This is not exclusively the option of women. Men can now earn a living and still have the time to develop other interests and enjoy an important role in child-care.

A sad story about the employment picture today is how many working people, men and women alike, dislike their jobs. Bad as that is, it was worse a generation ago. Their paid employment is essential to individual or family needs and many workers will "stick with it" out of sense of responsibility, but with resentment about their burden. What a sad story!

When I returned to my profession after nine years of "being

at home with the kids" I was filled with excitement—and tons of guilt. Fifty years ago Jewish mothers who had no major financial need stayed home with their children, no matter how unfulfilled or bored they were. I kept reassuring my boys (and my anxious mother-in-law) that I could manage both roles, would always be available to them and that NOTHING would be different at home. And with much effort (and a benevolent boss), I pulled it off. It was not easy. Two jobs (properly done) are harder than one.

Why did it work? I was lucky and did not have rotten kids. And maybe even more importantly, I loved my job. From October 1, 1959 to October 15, 1985, I never woke up one morning and wished I did not have to go to work. I was a satisfied lady and that provided the stamina for the demands of two roles.

If a working person feels trapped in unhappy labor, the dissatisfaction hampers their relationships with those who are dependent on them. Developing new skills with the potential for emotional reward and happier daily employment seems out of reach to many.

We hear this best described by retirees who bitterly (and frequently) recall intense dislike of the routine and the employer on jobs held for decades. Memories of the Depression years of the 30s deterred them from risking job change. Long-time employment on a job was equated with security.

Many ambitious women of the 40s and the 50s who might have pursued personal interests were not encouraged to explore their dreams. Finding a suitable husband was the choice that was encouraged. Their other abilities were not always valued.

Today's young women want the stimulus (and the income) that is not available in the kitchen. Young men are somewhat freer to consider options and are more willing to pursue opportunities (and risks) that could ensure their not resenting getting up each morning.

Satisfaction with whatever fills our days is what equates with happiness. Too many seniors were too timid to seek fulfillment. Our grandchildren (raised to never experience frustration) are wiser and will only pursue endeavors they will enjoy. With a few misgivings, I think that's just great!

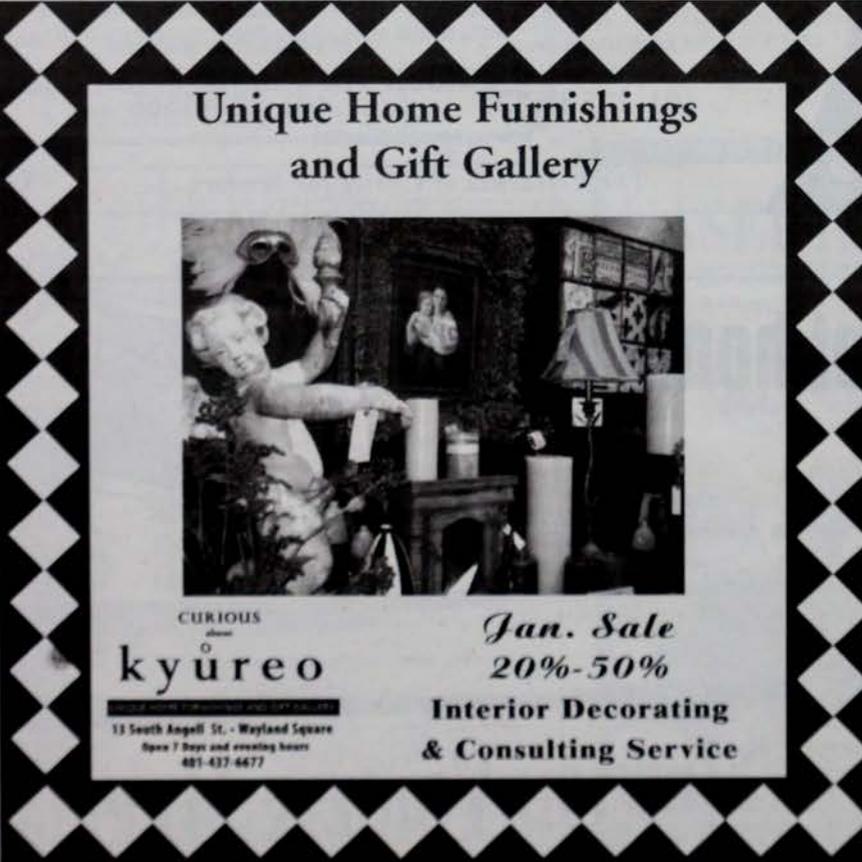



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Mazal Tov at community center



PROVIDENCE — Effi Rotem is a graduate student at Brown. His wife, Ronli was pregnant with their first child, but they weren't affiliated with any Jewish organization in town

and very much wanted to have a *brit Milah* (Jewish circumcision). They met some of the rabbis at the Providence Community Center of Rhode Island on Dec. 12.

Above, Effi, standing, watches mohel Shmuel Taitelbaum perform the *brit Milah* on his son Ariel, who is held by Rabbi Raphael Schochet.



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Jewish Healing group to meet

SEEKONK — On Sunday, Feb. 11, from 4-7 p.m., the RI Center for Jewish Healing will sponsor a potluck gathering and teaching of *Authentic Movement: Bringing Spiritual Practice into the Body*. The presenter will be Joan Webb, an experienced teacher of Authentic Movement. The practice and its connection to Jewish

mysticism will be explained, including these three points: movement from inner impulses, being witnessed without judgment, projection or interpretation, and developing one's inner witness.

Afterwards, participants will practice Authentic Movement with Joan Webb as their guide.

Those interested in participating are asked to RSVP about the food they plan to bring. The event will take place at 130 Jacob St., Seekonk, MA 02771. Attendance is limited.

Contact jganek@cox.net or (401)658-1640.

Kollel planning new classes

PROVIDENCE — On Monday, Feb. 12th and Wednesday Feb. 14th the Providence Community Kollel will begin the second semester of Judaism 2.0. This series of six-week courses is given on Monday evenings at Tamarisk and Wednesday evenings at Brown Hillel.

The classes will include Jewish living workshop; Exploring fundamental practices of Judaism; Tools for Life: Understanding the Jewish approach to interpersonal relationships; Milestones in Jewish Philosophy; Topics in Judaism, including the occult, medical ethics and more.

For more information, Call 383-2786, email J20@providencekollel.org or visit www.providenceKollel.org.

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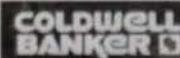
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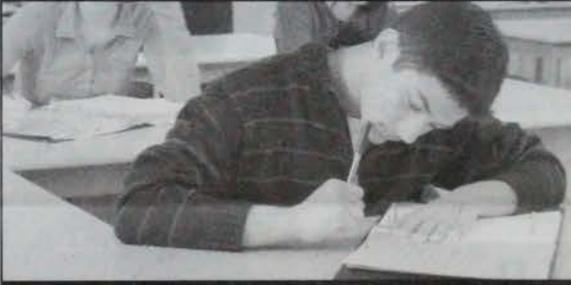
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Michele Keir of Jewish Eldercare of Rhode Island, a program of Jewish Seniors Agency, points to the display she designed for JERI and the JSA Women's Association's booth at the Temple Sinai Mitzvah Mall.

**Women's assoc.
helps fund
van for seniors**

PROVIDENCE — At last month's annual meeting of the Jewish Seniors Agency's Women's Association, the members voted to make a major gift to Comprehensive Adult Day Center, a program of Jewish Seniors Agency, of up to \$17,000 toward the purchase of a new, handicapped-accessible van. At the same meeting of the winning tickets of the WA annual raffle were drawn.

A report was made about the group's participation at Temple Sinai's Mitzvah Mall. All the volunteers that manned the Jewish Eldercare of Rhode Island and JSA Women's Association booth were enthusiastic about the experience and hope for more opportunities to publicize the organization.

Twenty-eight families volunteered to help distribute the quarterly holiday gifts the Women's Association provides to Jewish nursing home residents through Jewish Eldercare of Rhode and/or visit nursing home residents on a regular basis as part of JERI's Bikur Cholim and CHAVER programs.

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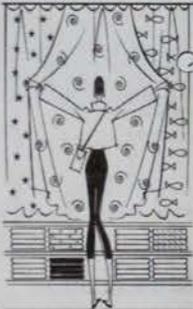
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Obituaries

Jay S. Alexander

HARWICH, Mass. — Jay S. Alexander, 67, died Jan. 5, at his home.

He was the son of the late Dr. Daniel and Florence Alexander.

He attended Brown University and graduated from Suffolk University with a B.S. degree.

Mr. Alexander was a technical editor for Allyn and Bacon publishers for ten years, where he edited college textbooks in computer science, engineering, and other sciences. He also had been a technical writer for Wang Laboratories and for Sanders Associates.

In 1985, at age 46, tired of the hectic world of greater Boston, he decided to re-orient his life and moved with his family from Melrose to Harwich to live a quieter existence. He re-focused his priorities to have his work more closely aligned with his hobbies, particularly his love for fixing cars, mopeds, snow blowers, lawn mowers, and all other things mechanical. He operated the Harwich Getty gas station for three years, repaired motors in a small engine repair shop, assembled and repaired bicycles at Benny's, and received considerable publicity for his work as the Car Nanny, advising people whether the used cars they were thinking of buying were lemons. His passion was to fix things. He could repair practically any mechanical object.

He played clarinet and saxophone in the Harwich Town Band for almost 20 years. He also enjoyed sailing.

He leaves two brothers, Dr. Paul Alexander and his wife Sheila of Providence and Lawrence Alexander and his wife Mary Alice of Marblehead; five nephews and nieces, Rachel, Zev, Ari, Katie, and David Alexander. Formerly married to Carol (Beckwith) Alexander, he was the stepfather of Scott Beckwith.

Contributions may be made in his memory to the Alexander Family Endowment Fund of the Jewish Community Day School of RI.

Albert Newton Bellin, 84

CRANSTON — Albert Newton Bellin, 84, died Jan. 9.

Born in Providence, a son of the late Harold A. and Rose (Adler) Bellin, he had lived in Cranston for 35 years.

He was a World War II Air Force veteran.

Mr. Bellin was a buyer for the former Metropolitan Photo Supply Inc. in Providence for 34 years, retiring in 1979.

He was a former member of Temple Torat Yisrael.

He leaves a brother, Arthur Bellin of South Palm Beach, Fla.; a sister, Trudy Katz of Cran-

ston; a nephew, Jeffrey Bellin of Cranston; and five nieces, Dr. Debra Katz of Humble, Tex., Dr. Marcia Katz of Houston, Tex., Elyse Katz and Michelle Katz, both of Venice, Calif., and Paula Bellin of Mass.

Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

Contributions may be made to a favorite charity.

Sondra Flink (Greenberg)

NATICK, Mass. — Sondra (Greenberg) Flink, died Jan. 4. A resident of Natick, she was the wife of the late Stanley Flink.

She leaves a son, Henry Flink of North Chelmsford, Mass.; a brother, Herman Greenberg of East Providence; a nephew, Jeffrey Greenberg; and a niece, Linda Killian. She was the aunt of the late Howard Greenberg.

Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

Contributions may be made to the Jewish National Fund, 42 East 69th St., New York, NY 10021.

Jeremiah J. Gorin, 89

PROVIDENCE —

Jeremiah J. Gorin, 89, a retired attorney, died Jan. 9. He was the husband of Rosalind (Fenton) Gorin. Born in Boston, a son of the late Samuel and Anna (Greenglass) Gorin, he had lived in Rhode Island for 60 years.

Mr. Gorin was a graduate of Christobal High School in the Panama Canal Zone, Duke University and Harvard Law School. He practiced law in Rhode Island for 50 years, retiring in 1995.

He served in the U. S. Navy during World War II.

Mr. Gorin was a member of the American and Rhode Island Bar Associations, a member of Temple Emanu-El and a past president of the Rhode Island Jewish Community Center.

Besides his wife, he leaves three sons, Stephen H. Gorin and his wife Cyndy of Canterbury, Conn.; Lawrence R. Gorin of Providence and David M. Gorin of Boston. He was the brother of the late Paul Gorin.

Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

Contributions may be made to the R.I. Bar Foundation, 115 Cedar St., Providence, RI 02903.

David Licker, 90

CRANSTON — David Licker, 90, died Dec. 27. He was the husband of Katie "Kay" (Exter) Licker. Born in Boston, a son of the late Simon and Sarah (Goldberg) Licker, he was the former owner of Sharon Plumbing Co.

An avid fisherman, he was a charter member of the Galilee Tuna Club. He was also a former

Mason and belonged to the Elks Club.

Besides his wife, he leaves a son, Joel Licker and his wife, Linda, of Cranston; a daughter, Sharon Garber and her husband, Perry, of Cranston; three grandchildren, Stacy, Marcy and Stuart; and three great-grandchildren, Katherine, Abby and John. He was the grandfather of the late Jolie Garber Savdie and the brother of the late Morton Licker.

Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

Contributions may be made to Hospice Care of RI, 169 George St., Pawtucket RI 02860.

James Sock, 93

NORTH SMITHFIELD — James Sock, 93, died Jan. 4. He was the husband of the late Grace (Brown) Sock. Born in Providence, a son of the late David and Eva (Karklin) Sock, he was a lifelong resident of Rhode Island.

Mr. Sock was the owner of the former Sock's Radio and TV Repair and of Sock's Auto Sales, a used car dealership.

He was a former member of Congregation B'nai Israel in Woonsocket.

He leaves two sons, Alan Sock and his wife Joyce of Danbury, Conn.; and Harold Sock of Framingham, Mass.; a daughter, Barbara Sock of North Smithfield; a daughter-in-law, May-Ronny Zeidman; two brothers, Sheldon Sock of Cranston and Nate Sock of Warwick; a sister, Irene Cohen of Cranston; nine grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. He was the father of the late Susan and Robert Sock.

Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

Contributions may be made to the Make A Wish Foundation

of R.I., 757 Park Ave., Cranston RI 02910.

Abraham "Al" Feld, 93

N. DARTMOUTH, Mass. — Abraham "Al" Feld, of 8 Merrymount Drive, died Jan. 11 at St. Luke's Hospital. He was the husband of Rebecca (Modiano) Feld.

Born in New Bedford, a son of the late Jacob and Rebecca (Liss) Feld, he had lived in North Dartmouth since 1971, previously living in New Bedford for 58 years. He was a World War II Army Air Corps veteran, earning the rank of First Sgt.

Mr. Feld owned Marlene Shoe Store for 37 years.

He was a member of Tifereth Israel Congregation. After retire-

ment, he volunteered at St. Luke's Hospital for over 20 years.

He is survived by his son, Ronald Feld and his wife Reta Noblett-Feld, of Iowa City, Iowa; his daughter Joyce Feld and her husband Charles Glisson of Knoxville, Tenn., a brother, Benny Feld of Warwick, and three grandchildren, Lisa, Matthew and Erin.

Funeral services were held at Tifereth Israel Congregation, New Bedford.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory may be made to Tifereth Israel Congregation, 145 Brownell Ave., New Bedford, MA 02740.

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D'Var Torah

Parashat Vaera — Exodus 6:2 — 9:35

Exodus 6: Bearing Fruit Even In Old Age

By Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson

Most of our lives are darkened by the shadow of aging. In our society we lose respect for the old, deride their physical condition, and are quick to put them into nursing homes. We associate the old with the incompetent, with a state of permanent boredom and irrelevance. By bleaching our hair, lifting our faces, breasts and stomachs, sucking off our fat, and dressing in the gaudiest apparel possible, we hope to "stay young" forever.

Our fear of age trails us everywhere, urging middle-aged women to undergo cosmetic surgery and middle-aged men to find a mistress. It whispers to us of "our last chance" — whatever the vice in question. There is a frenzied quality to our recreation, our relationships, and to our acquisition of property, since we expect all of them to ward off the inevitable — death.

There is one way to ward off death, but it doesn't lie in the distractions and the stuporifics offered by today's fashion magazines. We can ward off death, prevent its encroachment into the realm of life, only by truly living each and every day, only by refusing to see the elderly as the walking dead, or to view aging as equivalent to dying.

We can put off death by honoring the old among us. Look, for a moment, at how our Jewish tradition speaks of age. In today's Torah portion, Moses and his brother, Aaron, receive God's command to appear before Pharaoh to demand the freedom of the Jews. In what looks like an unnecessary digression, after discussing the conversation

The Torah mentions the ages of Moses and Aaron to teach us that age is a source of pride and that by honoring the elderly we bring richness to our own lives.

between the brothers and God, the Torah records that "Moses was 80 years old and Aaron was 83, when they made their demand on Pharaoh."

Why does the Torah stoop from the drama of statecraft and diplomacy at the highest levels to reveal something so mundane, so irrelevant as the age of these two leaders?

According to Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra (12th Century Spain), this reference to advanced age is unique. "We don't find prophets anywhere else in Scripture for whom the text points out that they prophesied while elderly, except here."

Only for Moses and Aaron does the Torah go out of its way to tell us that they were old. Why? "Because it attributes greatness [to Moses and Aaron] beyond all other prophets, for only to them did God appear . . . for only to them was the Torah given, and thus through their

hands do the righteous inherit the Coming World, while all other prophets either chastise or predict the future."

In the words of the Talmud, "at 80 — the age of strength." What is the strength of 80 years? Surely a teenager is stronger physically, and a child can run farther and packs more energy! The acumen of a 40-year old is more quick and deft, and a 60-year old is more keen to the ways of the world.

The strength of 80 is the wisdom that comes from experience and completion. Having run much of the course of life, having seen the follies and passions of the human heart rise and subside, having seen their own and their friends' dreams, limitations and achievements, an adult of 80 years is finally able to look at the human condition with compassion and some skepticism. At 80 years of age, we need no longer serve either passion or ambition.

Finally, at 80, we can review our life, taking stock of how those who cared for us as children paved our paths through life, for good or for ill. In our youth, each one of us was cared for by someone older. As links in the chain of the generations, we also care for others who depend on us to transmit what they need to establish lives of purpose, accomplishment and belonging.

Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson is the Dean of the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles. He is the author of *The Bedside Torah: Wisdom, Dreams, & Visions* (McGraw-Hill). For a free subscription to his weekly email Torah commentary, please send an email request to bartson@uj.edu.

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SIMCHAS

Birth



Julie and Matthew Bromberg of Barrington announce the birth of their daughter, Allison Flora, born on September 10, 2006. Grandparents are Susan and Howard Bromberg of Providence and Amy and Robert Hirsch of Potomac, Md. and Bristol.

People



Dr. Gary Frishman named to professional positions

PROVIDENCE — Gary Frishman, MD, of Cranston, interim director of Women & Infants' Division of Reproductive Medicine and Infertility, has recently been elected to serve on the board of directors of the American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists (AAGL), the premier society focusing on minimally invasive gynecology. As a member of the board, he will work with colleagues from around the world in advancing the mission of the AAGL, to ensure the safest and most effective diagnostic and therapeutic techniques that afford less invasive treatments for gynecologic conditions. In addition, Dr. Frishman has been selected to serve as an oral examiner for the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. As an examiner, Dr. Frishman is directly involved in ensuring the level of knowledge and expertise of the next generation of caregivers.



Ted Stein

Local business owner receives International award

PROVIDENCE — Ted Stein, owner of Allegra Print & Imaging in Providence, received an International Sales Growth Award for leading one of the top 10 businesses in increased sales volume for North America. Stein, whose business is a member of the Allegra Network franchise system, was recognized with this award from the company's world headquarters in Northville, Mich.

Eagle scout honored

WARWICK — Andrew Charles Garber became an Eagle Scout at the Warwick Baptist Church, Jan. 4. A member of Troop 117, Andrew's Eagle project was to rehabilitate the historical cemetery on Love Lane and Cowesett Avenue, near the Cedar Hill School.

Andrew is the son of Kenneth and Sharon Garber and he is a senior at Tollgate High School.

Daniel Katz wins JCDS-geography bee

PROVIDENCE — Daniel Katz, a 6th grade student at the Jewish Community Day School, won the first round of the geography competition of the 19th annual National Geographic Bee.

Engagement



Spater-Freedman

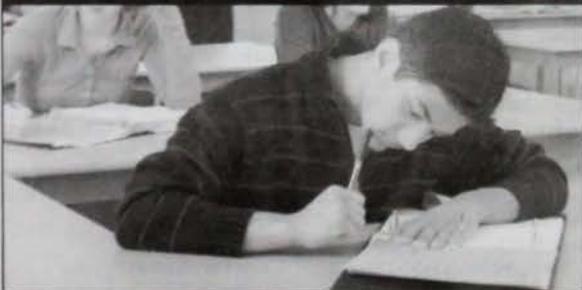
Mr. and Mrs. Albert Spater of Warwick announce the engagement of their daughter, Shirley Ann Spater, to Howard Bruce Freedman, son of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Freedman of Fall River.

Dr. Shirley Spater is a graduate of Fairleigh Dickinson University School of Dentistry and received her master's degree in public health from the School of Public Health, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She is director of the Samuels Sinclair Dental Center at Rhode Island Hospital.

Howard Freedman is a graduate of Syracuse University and received his Bachelor of Science degree in marketing management. He is President/CEO of New England Surgical, Inc., Fall River.

The couple is planning a January wedding and will make their home in Tiverton.

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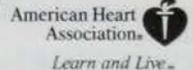
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MY VOICE

— No, evil is not genetic (not even for Germans) —

By Justin "Jay" Strauss

I spent the past two years traveling the world to discover how to come to grips with my feelings about Germany and history in the 20th century.

Do people have the ability to forgive, even if the memory still painfully remains? I believe the sacred Torah teaching that sons are not guilty of the sins of their fathers. My odyssey to seek out the roots of conflict, suffering, forgiveness and friendship has led me to centers of contention: Jordan, Vietnam, Ireland and others.

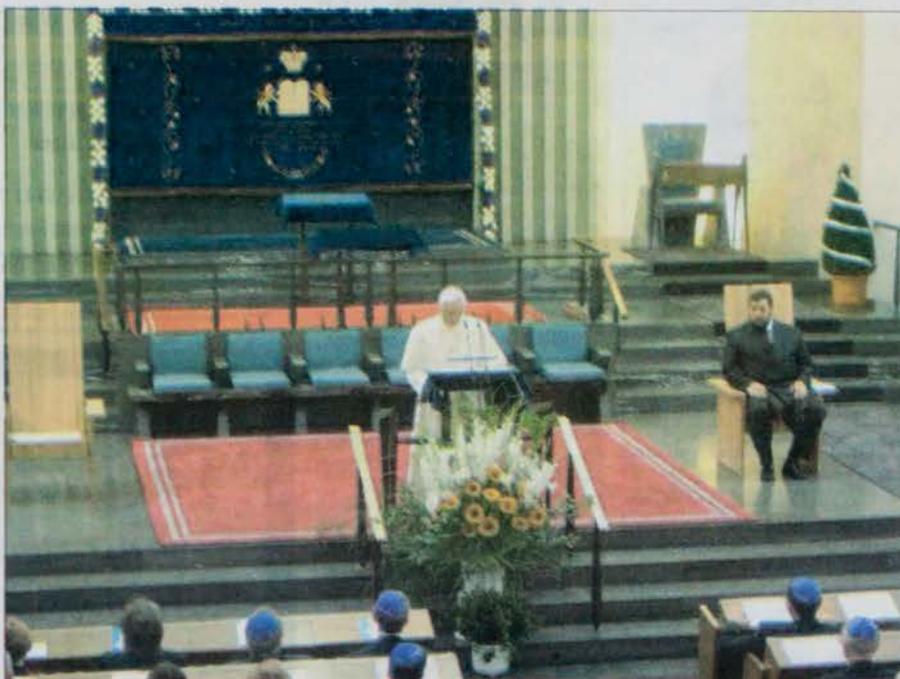
When in Jerusalem this last December, I noticed a sign that marked Konrad Adenauer Street and asked my friend Shlomi whether he knew who Konrad Adenauer was. He didn't. When he learned that, in the early 1950's, Konrad Adenauer became the first elected Chancellor of West Germany, Shlomi was stunned that a German official had achieved such an honor. I asked him to take the time, in the near future, to read about Konrad Adenauer's 1960's visit to Israel. The German Chancellor was responsible for reparations and publicly apologizing to the Jews for all the horrors the German people had inflicted upon the Jewish people.

Vietnam: A Forgiving Post-War Alliance

The United States of America invaded Vietnam in the 1960's and finally left in 1975. We may have killed over two million Vietnamese people. We used napalm, mines, cluster bombs, and many other instruments of death, sprayed 440,000 tons of dioxin on the people and countryside, and dropped more bombs on Vietnam than were dropped on everyone, everywhere during World War II. Do these people hate us? The truthful answer is no.

There is a great deal of optimism in Vietnam. American companies bring jobs and hope. The Russians could not do this. I saw brand new Boeing 777's at Hanoi Airport, not B52's. Vietnam is becoming a member of the World Trade Organization. They do not live in the past. They want jobs and peace. Isn't that what we wanted them to have?

Traveling throughout Vietnam, from the Chinese border to the Mekong Delta, I spent a great deal of time sleeping in private homes and sharing thoughts with as many people as possible. These were not arranged visits to a select few, but were with farmers, factory workers, business



Pope Benedict XVI speaks in a 2005 visit to the Cologne Synagogue in Cologne, Germany. Cologne Rabbi Natanael Teitelbaum looks on. Photo by JTA

owners, professors, teachers, and religious leaders.

While in Hanoi, I spent an evening next to West Lake, where John McCain landed when he was shot down. I slept in the home of an NVA soldier who had been shot and napalmed during a battle in South Vietnam. At 63, he was still recovering from his war wounds. When I first came into the room, I noticed that he was visibly hesitant to come forward to greet me. I sensed that because of my age he thought that I had been one of his enemies during the war.

After his son came over and acted as an interpreter, we shook hands. During the next eight hours we shared food, drink and opened our hearts and minds to one another. The next morning after breakfast, we said goodbye with a hug and even a few tears.

Ireland:

Overcoming Hatred

My next visit was to Ireland. Americans are truly loved in Ireland. This was a different type of experience, but it showed me what religious wars could bring to one of the most bucolic countries in the world. I spent a great deal of time learning Irish history, truly wanting to find out if paradise lost could become paradise found. Numerous bumper stickers touted "26+6=1", referring to Ireland's 32 counties that many want to see reunited into one country. Prosperity has come to Ireland

through the Common Market; plenty of high paying jobs are available. Education is now a great goal of the Irish people Irish. Catholics in Northern Ireland want the Brits out and peace and prosperity may transcend religious bigotry and violence. I believe that the British will allow Northern Ireland to join the rest of Ireland in the near future.

Israel: Tolerance and Understanding

One of the best speeches I ever heard was given (largely in Hebrew) by the Crown Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan at last year's Brandeis University graduation ceremony. Yehuda Reinhardt, the President of Brandeis and an Israeli citizen, personally invited the Crown Prince to the school. The prince urged the graduates to struggle for world peace, especially between Arabs and their Jewish neighbors.

I had to visit the country just to see if what the Crown Prince said was accurate. While there, I saw great possibilities in peaceful coexistence between Israel and Jordan. A poor country without the oil riches found elsewhere in the region, Jordan seems to want to separate itself from the hostilities in the Middle East. The royal family is well respected and educated in Western culture and science. (Of interest to us in Providence, is the fact that King Abdullah's brother graduated from Brown University.) A sign of alliances was that military per-

sonnel wore US style uniforms and most all of their equipment was English or American. The deep Western roots of the leaders of both Jordan and of Israel set the stage for more tolerance and understanding.

Jordan's population is almost 60 percent Palestinian. This could be problematic in the future, but peace and jobs seem to be an immediate goal. During my visit guides, business people, and the military, were very polite and respectful.

I strongly recommend visiting Jordan. When we left, the Jordanian customs and immigration officials even gave my Israeli friend a glass of tea. I was always greeted with a smile, even if I probably didn't deserve it. If nothing else is true, I never saw or felt any signs of unpleasantness towards myself as an American or Jew.

Germany: Action Speaks

This brings me back to Germany and its current relationship with the Jews and Israel. I can understand if anyone who may have directly suffered under the Germans in WWII disagrees with my conclusions, but in many ways things are different today. Since the establishment of the State of Israel, Germany has, in both word and deed, been only second to the USA in their support of Israel. This is above and beyond the three billion Deutschmarks they paid in reparations in 1952. Germany's many good

deeds and gifts are too numerous to mention. They assisted her in the Gulf War, with educational grants, and today, Germany is Israel's largest trading partner.

If you access the web site www.israeli-weapons.com and then click on "Naval Weapons," you will see that Israel has a large fleet of German designed "Gal" submarines and the newest Dolphin submarines. Three of these subs were built in Germany and two were outright gifts to Israel for the sum of \$365 million dollars each.

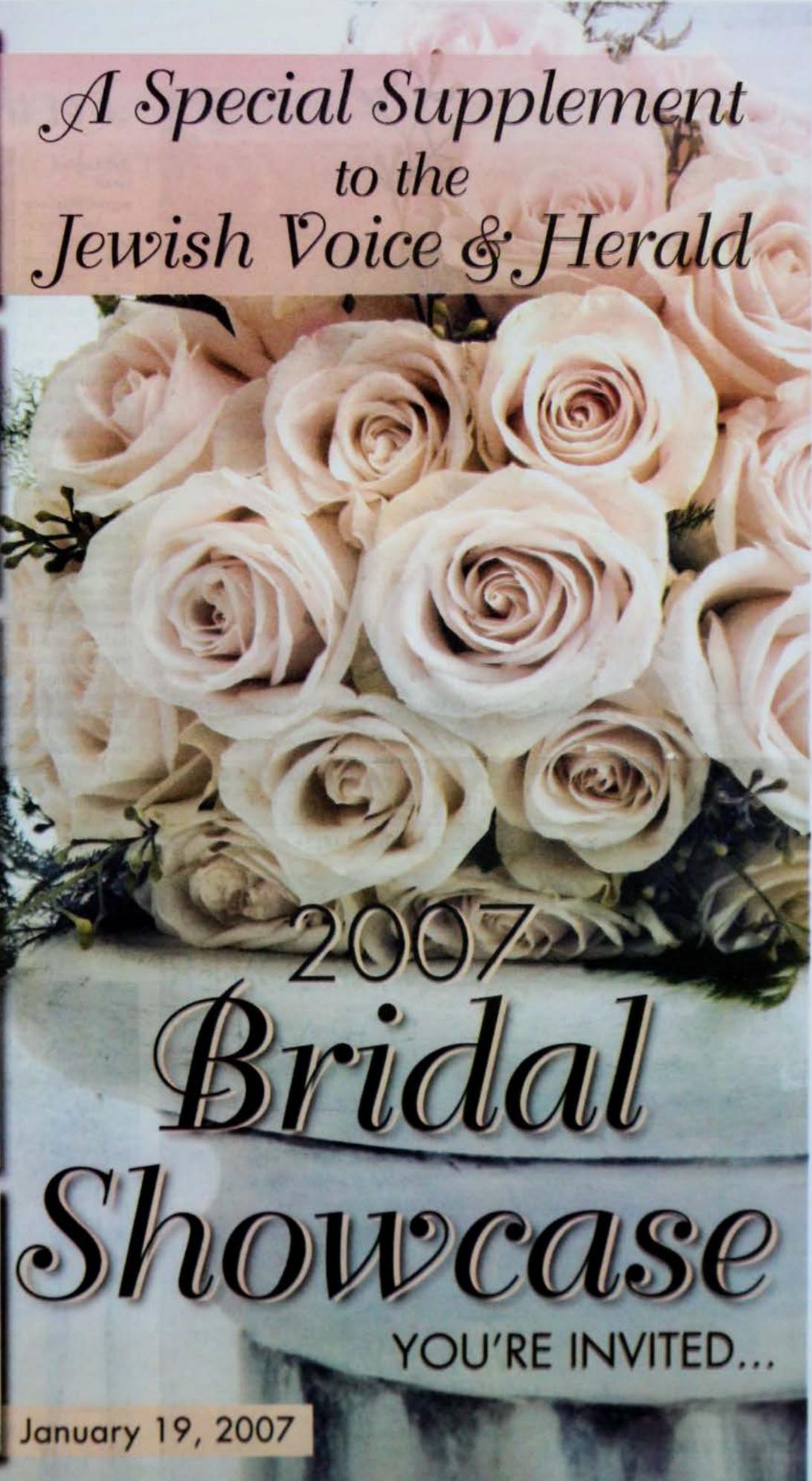
There is an old Chinese saying, "Look not to what the man says, look to what the man does." Talk is cheap, and we must surely watch what really happens with future generations. Sometimes, however, as in the case of Germany, the news is heartening; Young German tourists to Israel outnumber those from any other country. There are a number of large synagogues in Germany again, and an important Holocaust Memorial in the center of Berlin. I believe this is more than "blood money," but a long overdue and slowly evolving 50-year relationship. After all, as the saying goes, "Yesterday's enemies are tomorrow's allies."

Hatred puts you in a life-long prison, and you will never be at peace with yourself. It is all-consuming. There is a lot of hatred in this world, and our Torah gives us a way to go in the future.

"You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason with your neighbor, lest you bear sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord," (Leviticus (19:17-18)).

You may forgive, even if you never forget.

Justin "Jay" Strauss lives in Cranston.



*A Special Supplement
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YOU'RE INVITED...

January 19, 2007

Inside



Flowers of Love. See page 5



Gowns for Spring. See page 7



Wedding Rings-'C' how they shine. See pages 8-9



Honeymoon Spots. See pages 12-13



Etiquette Answers. See pages 15-16



Let them eat cake

By Marylyn Graff
mgraft@jfri.org

An important feature at every wedding is an imposing cake at the center of the festivities. Today, there is a much wider choice of flavors, shapes and decorations than there used to be. Most bakeries will personalize the cake to suit the couple, the season or the theme of the wedding. Here in the Ocean State some brides will elect to have frosting seashells cascading down the layers, and a veritable botanical garden of flowers, either fresh or formed of hard icing, is always in demand.



Wedding cakes at most bakeries are priced by the person rather than as a whole. They tend to run from about \$3 per person and up, depending on how elaborate the design is. Many brides come to the bakeries with pictures of cakes cut from bridal magazines, sometimes so elaborate that they will run up the price considerably.

Cheryl Manni at La Salle Bakery on Smith Street in Providence says that their most popular flavors are yellow, chocolate or almond-flavored white. Fondant, rolled smooth and applied to the layers is the current icing of choice and off-white or champagne often replaces white. A wide ribbon may be wrapped around each layer. Flowers may be hand-made of a hard icing that will keep its shape when molded. The layers may be round, square, heart-shaped or what-have-you.

The ubiquitous bride and groom on top of the cake have largely disappeared unless they are a special item made by somebody like

See Cake, page 4



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The best mitzvah we have:

A guide to Orthodox Jewish weddings

By Daveeda Goldberg

If you're an Orthodox Jew, getting married is incredibly easy; all you have to do is have the groom hand an object over to the bride and say a few magic words.

Everything else is, more or less, custom. So why go through the whole complicated and elaborate ceremonies? What is it all about?

Throne and Table

The typical Orthodox wedding starts with a bride's reception and a groom's *tisch*, Yiddish for table. At the bride's reception, guests line up to congratulate the bride, who sits on a throne surrounded by the women of both families, including mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and sisters-in-law.

At the groom's *tisch*, friends of the groom sing and offer words of Torah while the groom accepts and witnesses sign the *ketubah*, a contract detailing the payment owed to the bride in the event of divorce or widowhood.

But it's more than just the Original Pre-nup: The *ketubah* also lists all of the husband's material obligations to the bride, including clothing, housing, and conjugal relations. The formal engagement of the couple also takes place at the *tisch*. The engagement ceremony concludes when the mothers of the bride and groom join the *tisch* to

smash a plate over a chair.

Bedecking

One rarely thinks of "romantic" in the same breath as "Orthodox Judaism", but there are few things more romantic than the *bedekin* ceremony, which comes next.

Here, the couple's brothers, fathers, and the closest and loudest of their friends sing and dance backwards in front of the groom as they escort him to his bride. As he approaches the bride's throne, the groom may be pale and full of awe, or he may be trying to control an ear-to-ear smile.

And then the groom stands in front of his bride. If he follows the most prevalent Ashkenazi custom, he will not have seen her for a week prior to this moment. As he leans over her and reaches for her veil, he may take the chance to whisper something in her ear, to claim a small, personal moment in the middle of the crowd. The fathers of the bride and groom also wade to the front of the crowd to approach the bride with private blessings of their own. The groom then pulls the veil over her face and is danced away again, this time to await her under the wedding canopy.

Canopy and Seclusion

No one gives away a Jewish bride. Both of her parents escort her down the aisle, each holding a lighted candle. (Another

custom has both mothers walking down with the bride and both fathers with the groom. This custom can be convenient in cases where parents are divorced and may be uncomfortable walking together.) Under the *huppah*, the bride circles around the groom, the couple sips the wine, honorees recite the seven blessings, the groom hands over the ring and the *kitbag*, and then breaks the *kiddush* cup, inviting a moment's thought for the lamented and destroyed Temple of Jerusalem and then a rousing chorus of *mazel tov*. And then the bride and the groom are mobbed.

"Decorous" is not a term often used for Jews, and now is certainly no time or place for it. Friends and family rush up as the newlyweds step down from the canopy. Another backward-dancing gang forms to escort the couple to the *fichu* room. In *fichu* (seclusion), the couple may exchange gifts, and eat (they will probably have fasted all day, since the wedding day is described as a mini-Yom Kippur for bride and groom, atoning them of all sins). Most importantly, they will enjoy what may be their first moments entirely alone together.

The Essence of it All

And then comes the dancing. But first, let's go back to our initial question: why all this complicated ritual when there is little that a couple really needs to do to get married?

When my husband and I got engaged, my father-in-law suggested we invite only our closest family, and serve a modest, traditional fare of herring and chickpeas. This was his initial ideal of a wedding: modest, intimate, no-big-deal. My husband's little brother interceded. He called

his father on the phone and said simply, "Dad, you can't do it that way. The Jewish People want to dance."

The essence of the Orthodox wedding is the dancing. It is a positive commandment, a binding law, to make a bride and groom happy, and the dancing is where this happens best.

The gender-separated dancing at a typical Orthodox wedding may seem foreign to many readers, and it certainly entails a loss. I always loved foxtrotting with my great uncle at my

See Orthodox, page 6



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Cake

From page 2

Lladro. Flowers, fresh or molded, top many cakes.

Nancy Sepe of "Nancy's Fancies" of North Scituate, is able to offer kosher and non-dairy cakes in chocolate and white. Her other most popular flavors are chocolate cherry-or-cinnamon and coconut, although almost any flavor is available. Fillings may be raspberry mousse, various buttercreams, French crème or others.

Sepe will also design to suit. Her cakes may be almost any shape, bowed, flowered or even a stack of luggage. She shows a cake with Cinderella's shoe adorning the top. Another is decorated with a variety of icing seashells.

Since Nancy's Fancies only

bakes two cakes per weekend, it is recommended that she be booked at least six months ahead.

Anna Carreiro at "Scrumptions" in East Greenwich will also design a custom cake, which may be almost any shape. She even made a "falling-down" shape ordered for one wedding. She also bakes a cake to look like a stack of wedding gifts. Recently the requests for color have been all over the map, especially browns, pinks and blues. Among the special toppers now being asked for are bride-and-groom monograms or initials, either flat on the top layer or standing up. The cake may be adorned with fresh fruit or berries to suit the season, as well as with flowers. It may be

traditional or whimsical.

Scrumptions also feature groom's cakes, which are often served at the rehearsal dinner

The bakeries in Rhode Island that specialize in wedding cakes all seem to have a great deal of flexibility and creativity. Lisa Costantino at Pastry Gourmet in Providence says that her most popular cake is white with strawberry filling, and traditional designs are favored. Rolled fondant in a marble like pattern in off-white covers each layer, often with swirl or geometric designs applied in white, gold or a color. Costantino says that she is seeing



Ornate ribboned icing.



Tiered cake is multi-colored.

and have for a theme some interest of the groom. The cake may be decorated with the symbol of his *Alma Mater*, a favorite team, or be shaped like a football or a sailboat. Just about anything goes. Scrumptions also presents a first-year anniversary cake to each of its couples.

a come-back of the traditional bride and groom figures. She even made one of the bride chasing the groom around the cake. (She didn't say at whose request.) Sea shells instead of flowers are in demand in coastal communities such as Newport and Narragansett.

She recently made a large cake, about four feet tall, decorated with fuschia calla lillies.

Nicole Skrek at the Johnson and Wales "Johansson" bakery

says that a new trend is a wedding cake made entirely of cupcakes, individually frosted and stacked in a tower with a butter cream rose or other flower on each.

White is the most popular color and flavor for her regular cakes and the rolled fondant icing. She may fill her cakes with mousse or fresh fruit and decorate with cascades of icing flowers, fruits, shells, or other elements. She says that no one asks for the columns separating layers any more. Along with all the other bakeries in our area she will fulfill just about any request for a theme or individual request.

So all upcoming brides, you can use your imaginations and order a one-of-a-kind cake to grace your special wedding.

Marylyn Graff writes the food column for the newspaper.

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Flowers of love for the bridal party



rists to look at arrangements and bouquets. Some florists are much more creative and artistic than others. Many have books of photographs of their wedding work. It's nearly always better to choose flowers that are in season as they will be less expensive and often fresher, since they don't have to be shipped so far. Tulips are lovely in the spring as are chrysanthemums in the fall.

Consider also the style of the wedding, formal or on the casual side, indoors or out, and the color scheme.

All flowers are beautiful, but many have hidden meanings, which can vary by flower color. Roses, for example, portray love, joy and happiness in most colors, but, notwithstanding the Yellow Rose of Texas, that color also may represent jealousy. Orchids can mean love, beauty, and refinement. Camellias are very romantic and carnations speak of fascination and devotion, except for yellow, which signal rejection and disappointment. (It might be best to stay away from yellow flowers in general.)

Lilies, especially white callas, can represent innocence, but are, to some, a bit funereal.

The red and white rubrum lilies are always a favorite, for both bridal bouquets and table décor. Stephanotis often shows up in both bridal bouquets and the men's boutonnieres.

Most white flowers: baby's

breath, orange blossom, lilies of the valley, speak of purity and innocence but their function in arrangements and bouquets is mainly to fill out and add relief to the gaudier blooms.

Besides the bride's bouquet and the bridesmaids' flowers, you will want boutonnieres for the bridegroom and ushers,

corsages for the mothers, flower décor for the *bimah* and/or *huppah* and table decorations for the reception.

The important thing is that the flowers add their beauty to the joy of the occasion.

Marylyn Graff is a copy editor at the Jewish Voice & Herald.



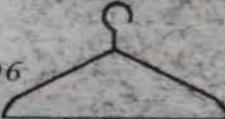


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By Marylyn Graff

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Orthodox

From page 3

cousins' Reform weddings, for example. However, there are also advantages to separate dancing. For example, no one has to worry about having a date or a dance partner. Most significantly, the gender separation of the traditional wedding creates the opportunity for a unique expression of the *mitzvah* to make a bride and groom happy.

If you look into an Orthodox wedding hall you will see the bride always at the center of the circle of women. The women whirl in elab-

orate patterns around and around her, everyone hoping to get a chance to dance with the bride at the center for a few moments. Often the bride's friends organize special entertainment, or "shtick." They may pull out cowboy hats and stage a sudden hoedown in the middle of the hora. Or, they may wave flags pre-printed with the bride's favorite sayings. Or, they may suddenly pull out a dozen smiley face balls, and throw them around the circle in honor of a particular bride's special love of



smiley faces.

On the men's side, you will see the groom likewise always at the center of the party. Everyone angles to catch his hand and involve him in a vigorous kick-step or Fiddler On the Roof-style *mazurka*. And, for those moments when he needs to catch his breath, the men will get him a chair, steal the bride from the women's side to sit beside him, and show off the back flips and juggling they practiced just for the occasion.

At the end of the night, when most of the attendees have gone and only the closest family is left, the *mechitza* (the curtains separating the men's and women's sides)

will often be wheeled off to the side and the bride will get her chance to dance hand-in-hand with her brothers and father, the groom with his sisters and mother.

On the one hand, an Orthodox Jewish wedding is about community: layers of ritual fold and incorporate bride and groom, bride's family and groom's family, into the wider group. On the other hand, it's all about the bride and groom. They are the queen and king of the day. In the end, it's both: It's about the community expressing its joy in order to enhance the joy of the newly married couple. And the best means of this expression happens in the

dancing.

At my own big, fat Orthodox wedding, we were lucky to have friends and family from across the spectrum of Jewish practice, as well as many non-Jewish guests. One Anglo-Canadian friend of ours announced his intention to have his own Orthodox wedding when his time comes, complete with a "mosh pit full of Rabbis."

In Judaism, we have a concept called "*kiddush Hashem*"; roughly translated it means "making God look good." There is no better *kiddush Hashem*, in my opinion, than the traditional Jewish wedding.

Darveeda Goldberg is a freelance writer in Providence.

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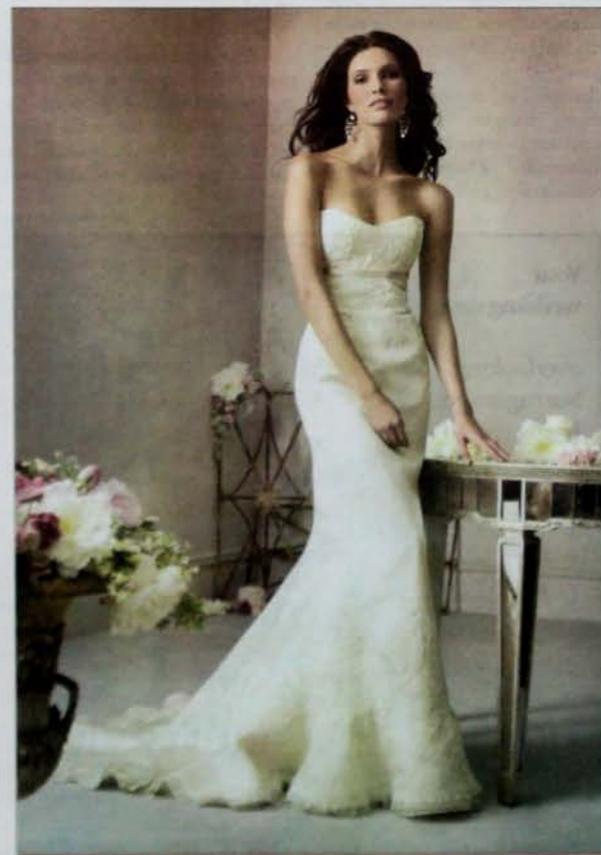
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- Feb. 11, Newport Wedding Exposition — Rosecliff Mansion, 548 Bellevue Ave. Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Fashion shows: 12:30 & 2:30 p.m. Admission price: \$5. Fashion shows, formal wear, outfits for the entire bridal party, mothers. Caterers, videographers, photographers. Check www.newport-weddingexpo.com for vendors.
- Feb. 19, Foxboro Bridal Expo — At Gillette Stadium, One Patriot Place. Fashion shows, live bands, samples of food and confections. Gowns, elegant formal wear, floral designs, fashion shows, DJs, photographers, videographers, and food samples from the region's top caterers and banquet facilities. Over 100 bridal and event planning professionals. Show hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and admission is \$5. Visit online at www.showevent.com/shows for link to complete listing of floor plans, exhibitors.



Slim and elegant, with traditional train, gives bride a chic, lustrous look.

Wedding Gowns of 2007



Designer Victoria McMillan is known for combining current trends with timeless beauty.

Timeless touch to today's trends

This season, veteran designer Victoria McMillan pleases brides and bridesmaids once again with her beautiful, ultra-romantic and timeless Spring 2007 Alvina Valenta Bridal and Bridesmaid Collections.

The Alvina Valenta Spring 2007 Bridal Collection is filled with McMillan's signature romantic touches like flower details, sweetheart necklines, empire waists and delicate bows. With years of successful collections to her credit, McMillan again offers a timeless sweet Rum Pink color that's perfect for spring. She also enhances the collection with details like scalloped edges, hand-beaded halters, bubble skirts, silk duchess satin ruffles, and stunning backs adorned with streamers, and flowers.

Also notable are lovely Chantilly lace torsos, gathered tulle hems, and a hand-embroidered sheath with full-gored tulle skirt. Using luxurious fabrics like charmeuse, silk duchess satin, silk organza and silk chiffon combined with classic lines and great attention to detail make the collection utterly breathtaking.

The Spring 2007 Bridesmaid Collection offers a variety of elegant silhouettes, from long, fluted gowns to playful, tea-length dresses. New hues such as Heather, Blue Moon, Irish Cream, Taupe, and Snapdragon complement classic Black and combinations of Ivory and Black.

Whether choosing a long sophisticated gown or a charming tea-length dress, each style is very versatile and can be worn even after the wedding day for cocktail parties or other events.

Elegant, polished feel highlights Hjelm gowns

The Jim Hjelm Spring 2007 Bridal and Occasions Collections present a beautiful, polished look that, once again, proves designer Francesca Pitera's ability to please even the most selective bride.

The Jim Hjelm Spring 2007 Bridal Collection makes an impression with its innovative shapes, including slim mermaid skirts, sleek A-line gowns, stunning circular skirts, asymmetrical draped bodices, flowing trumpet gowns, and a stylish tiered bubble skirt. Pitera adds just the right amount of embellishment with intricate beading, pearl detailing and delicate lace in all the right places.

She integrates crystal trim into everything from straps and

bodices right down to the hems. She provides exciting new pieces such as a lace wrap jacket, gowns with back and side inverted pleats, and a gown with a pleated, elongated torso. Pitera pleases with her silk satin skimmers, one of which has a wide, crystal-beaded band at the waist and a cowl neckline.

She uses many strapless scooped necklines, deep scoop backs, and front and back V necklines, as well as numerous chapel trains and some sweep trains.

The collection offers styles that flatter a woman's body and make her feel gorgeous with pleated bodices, A-line dresses, chiffon empire bodices and dropped waists. An emphasis

on tie sashes in bold hues gives the collection an extra feminine touch, while crisscross backs, ruffle hems and draped chiffon streamers accentuate the dresses while still maintaining a simple yet elegant look. Pitera uses soft chiffon, smooth satin, matte and satin-faced taffetas, silk shantung, and touches of tulle, mixed with lovely ribbon bows and lace accents. This season's palette includes Moss, Sienna, Scarlet, Eggplant, Teal, Pineapple, Bisquit and Chocolate. Pitera features long, sophisticated trumpet gowns and flirty, tea-length dresses, both of which are very versatile and can be worn as cocktail dresses after the wedding day.

Wedding Rings for the Bride

It isn't a wedding until you have a ring.

By Marylyn Graff
mgrafl@jfri.org

Once the future bridegroom has decided on the time and place to ask for his girlfriend's hand, he has to decide what to put on it. Should he choose the engagement ring by himself and have it ready at the right moment, or defer the important purchase so they can shop together, and be sure of a ring that she will like? The consensus of most of the Rhode Island jewelers polled is that the man usually has the ring ready to present when he hears the all-important "yes." They say that the future bride probably has some inkling that she is soon to be engaged and has done a little quiet scouting in the jewelry stores so she or a friend can drop hints.

The retail stores today face considerable competition from online jewelry companies, so many make extensive use of the internet as a display and sales vehicle. Ross-Simons has a detailed guide to diamond selection on their website. Most jewelers are willing to spend some time educating

the customer about diamonds as to how the "four Cs," color, cut, clarity and carat (weight) affect like being able to compare the actual merchandise.

Popular cut

with more facets than the emerald cut) has made some inroads according to Rod Baril of Place engagement rings, but others say that trend is often for an important anniversary, using the



At left, a diamond wedding band with brilliant stones. At right, a matching set with an emerald cut ring with baguettes.

cost. Many diamond shoppers will have already availed themselves of the internet for education although there is nothing

The most popular cut is still the 58 facet round brilliant although the newer princess cut, also called radiant (square but

Jewelers and Laura Love Rose of Field and Rose, where a multifaceted square diamond is called the Ascher. She says that micro pave, (tiny diamonds, often channel-set,) mountings are very much in vogue. There has been a recent interest in fancy yellow diamonds. Place Jewelers has considerable call for three-stone

original diamond as one of the stones.

Platinum

All of the local jewelers said that yellow gold settings are out of fashion and platinum is the metal of choice, with some white gold. White metals do not reflect yellow into the dia-

See facing page

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2007 Bride & Groom without a ring

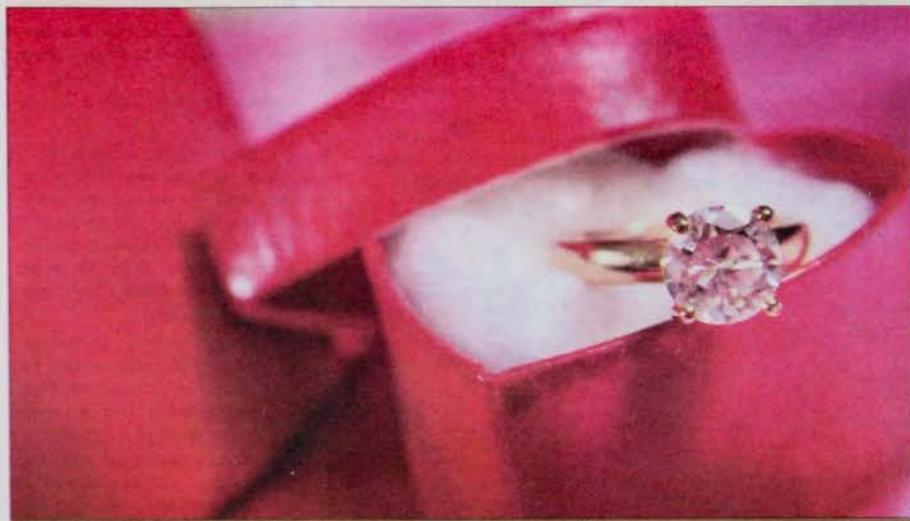
From facing page

mond. The traditional prong-set solitaire diamond has given way to cufflinks. Ross-Simons, with its nationwide catalog as well as retail stores, offers a wide selection of couples' gifts.

Hegeman says that pearl strands to be worn with the bridal gown are still popular, along with more modern pieces. Place Jewelers and M.R.T. say that diamond pendants or a large pearl pendant set with diamonds are current for the bride to wear with her wedding gown.

Sometimes there is a strand of pearls in the bride's or bridegroom's family which she will choose to wear for sentimental reasons.

Field and Rose noted that a pair of diamond solitaire earrings is a much-desired gift from bridegroom to bride.



The solitaire is the traditional symbol of love.

to a fancier mounting with diamonds set along the band. They all mentioned that a new style is the mini pave, tiny diamonds set into the band.

Wedding rings for the bride have also become more elaborate, usually set with diamonds, although matching sets have lost popularity, says Richard Hegeman, proprietor of Hegeman Jewelers. Rings for the bridegroom are still largely plain bands, but in white gold or platinum rather than yellow gold. He mentioned a new "invisible" setting that showcases the diamond.



Above, diamonds all around in this channel-set band.

At right, the ring bearer plays a most important role.

M.R.T.'s David Audette concurs that white gold and especially platinum are the metals of choice, probably, he says, due to a big TV campaign of De Beers, the world diamond house. He finds that the one carat stone has given way to a demand for 1 1/2 carats. He also said that there is interest among his customers for antique reproduction settings, adorned with small diamonds. Men's bands may be made of platinum, palladium, or other white metals, and may also be decorated with engraving or diamonds. All of the jewelers are willing to custom design and they stock extensive arrays of mountings.

Gifts

Wedding-day gifts today seem to be largely a one-way street, given by the bridegroom to the bride, where years ago the bride would often present her husband-to-be with a fine watch



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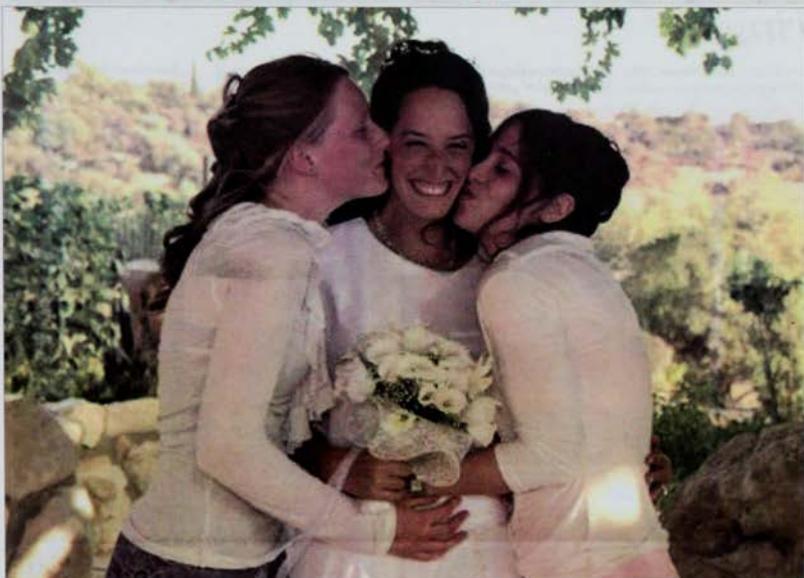
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Getting the most from your simcha photographer



Capturing the beauty of Israel with the joy of the bride and friends.

Photos by Yehoshua Halevi

By Yehoshua Halevi

There is a light-hearted argument among the main service providers at life-cycle celebrations as to who is most important to the party's success. Caterers will tell you unequivocally that guests always remember the food. Musicians boast that the celebratory mood is entirely in their skilled hands and voices.

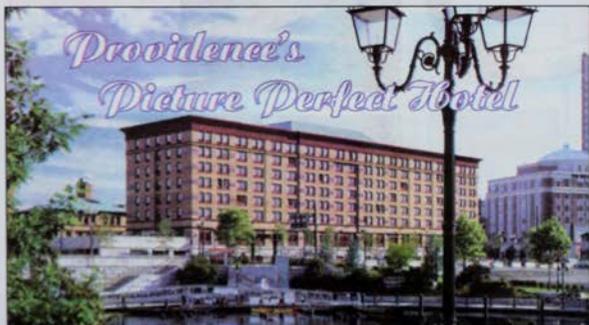
Photographers, like myself, advise our clients that after the band has packed and gone and the leftovers are no longer left over, what endures are the memories you hold in your heart and the photo album you hold in your hand.

Certainly it is important to give careful consideration to each of the professionals you hire for your simcha. This is especially true with photography, a field that has greatly diversified in the digital era so that many more styles and options for packaging the finished product are now available.

How then, do you filter through the myriad choices to find the best photographer to meet your needs? Here are a few simple suggestions to help you make the right choice.

Enthusiasm - The best photographer to record your

See facing page



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The bridal portrait.

From facing page

celebration is someone with energy and enthusiasm and who shows genuine interest in you and your family.

Style - Choose a photographer whose style and creativity you admire and whose photographs you would like to have adorning the walls of your own home. Images tell a story better than words ever could. Choose a photographer who shares your attitude about what is beautiful. Look at his work. If you don't see it in his portfolio you won't see it in your finished images.

Experience - It is important to find a well-qualified photographer who has ample experience photographing the particular kind of event you are hiring him to shoot. An experienced photographer will be able to produce high-quality images time and time again. Find out if he or she does this for a living or for fun. You need to be confident that your photographer has the versatility, the awareness and the sensitivity to capture the essence of your celebration.

Personality - Is the photographer that you meet someone that you can get along with? You should feel at ease with this person because you will be spending a lot of time with

him. The more comfortable you are with your photographer, the more relaxed and beautiful you will appear in your photos and the more you will enjoy your time in front of the camera.

Price - It's never wise to choose a photographer based on price alone. Photographers offer different price packages and it is important to understand what everything costs and exactly what you are getting in order to make a fair price comparison.

Getting what you want - Although years of experience has taught me to anticipate

special moments, I am always grateful when a client provides me with a list of things they want photographed or close friends and relatives attending the party. Your photographer should be available to do whatever you request, but don't leave him guessing what's important to you.

References - A final word of advice: Contact references from recent clients who hired the photographer for similar work.

Yeboshua Halevi is a Jerusalem-based simcha photographer

who finds great joy in creating photographic memories of family celebrations. View his award-winning pictures at www.goldenlightimages.com. He can be

reached at Golden Light Images Photography, 054-637-2170 or email smile@goldenlightimages.com.



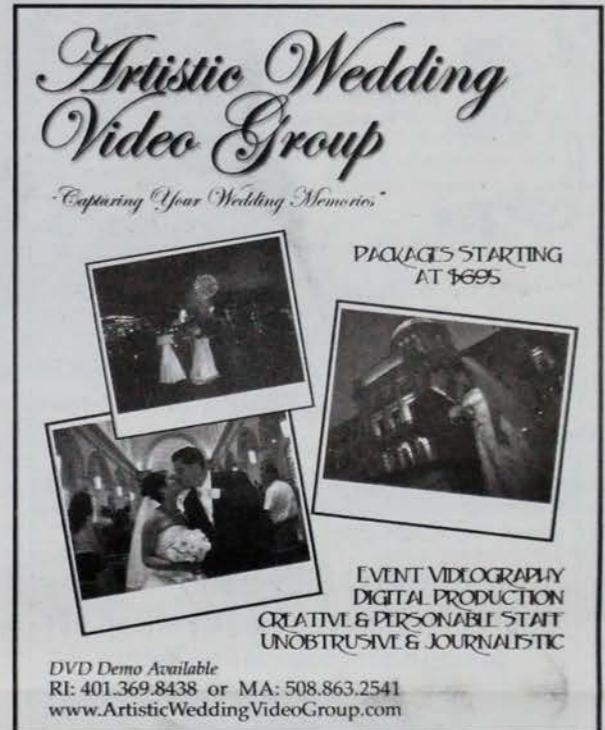
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For New England's Best Weddings

Sun shines on local honeymooners

Where did some local brides couples honeymoon over the past year? Many took to a place in the sun. **Lynda Jean Zenofsky and Jason Alan Golditch**, of Cranston, married May 28 at Temple Beth-El and took a cruise to the Eastern Caribbean on their honeymoon.

Emily Marion King and Joshua Michael Cohen, son of Patricia and Howard Cohen of North Kingstown, were married June 17 and honeymooned at Grand Cayman.

David Robinson and Sharon Stern, who live in Cranston, were married Oct. 15, 2005 at Temple Beth-El, honeymooned in France and Italy.

Julia M. Cotton and Joshua P. Sinykin were married on Jan. 1 at The Ocotillo Golf Resort in Chandler, Ariz. The couple honeymooned by cruise to Mexico.

Alexandra "Sasha" Miller Meltzer and Kevin Andrew Goldman, son of Stephan and Laurie Goldman of Warwick, were married on Aug. 21, 2005 at the New York Botanical Gardens, Bronx. The couple honeymooned in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.

Ariela Lev (granddaughter of the JV&H's Yehuda Lev) and **Clayton Gragg** honeymooned on a Mediterranean cruise.



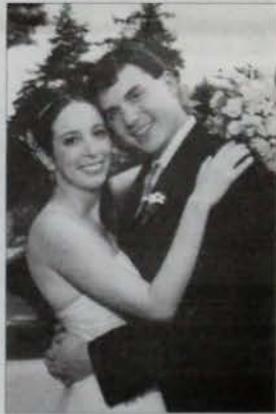
Ariela Lev and Clayton Gragg



David Robinson and Sharon Stern



Joshua P. Sinykin and Julia M. Cotton



Alexandra "Sasha" Miller Meltzer and Kevin Andrew Goldman



Joshua Michael Cohen and Emily Marion King



Lynda Jean Zenofsky and Jason Alan Golditch

Some choice hotels for honeymooners

Couples often focus on personalizing their weddings while neglecting to make their honeymoon uniquely theirs. Are you a formal sophisticate, a laid-back casual, or a romantic escapist? Travel expert Bob Boles of hotelbook.com says the key to a happy honeymoon, besides the companion choice, is to identify your travel style and match your destination accordingly.

The Internet has provided us with the most useful travel tool available, Boles says. Couples are now empowered to do their own research on destinations, local events, restaurants, and hotels with the click of a button.

Hotels dedicated to offering couples more alternatives,



The Carlton and Grand Canal Hotel in Venice, Italy is perfect for an international getaway.

this hotel also offers access to Golf Digest's No. 1-rated golf course in Hawaii, the Mauna Kea Golf Course.

The Caves in Negril, Jamaica, is an all-inclusive

property with vibrant roomy cottages built above natural volcanic caves overlooking the ocean. Complete with a salt-water pool, sauna, hot tub and Jacuzzi, the hotel's 10 hand-

crafted cottages are set in a garden on the edge of the sea.

Across the Atlantic in **Rome, the Boscolo Exedra Hotel** is a five-star white marble palazzo from the 19th

century overlooking Michelangelo's Basilica Degli Angeli and situated for discovering the city. The hotel features two exclusive restaurants, a wine bar and champagnerie, as well as a rooftop terrace with pool offering a stunning view of the city.

Another option for Italian travelers is the **Carlton and Grand Canal Hotel in Venice**, where 145 rooms in 18th Century Venetian style offer a splendid view of the Canal Grande and the Hotel's traditional courtyard.

Boles encourages couples to educate themselves before settling on a destination, and suggests www.hotelbook.com as a resource for finding and booking independent and boutique hotel finds.



Boles and his travel team have identified independent and boutique hotels worldwide at www.hotelbook.com for travelers to more easily find the right hotels for their post-nuptial escapes. Drawing from Modern Bride's list of top honeymoon travel destinations, Boles suggests the following hotels for discriminating couples:

Bermuda's Waterloo House is an elegant five-star destination with 29 luxurious bedrooms, a manor house and surrounding cottages dating back to 1815, amid four acres of terraced gardens by the famous Hamilton Harbour.

Maui's Prince Hotel Makena Resort is a five-star hotel secluded on a quarter-mile of crescent-shaped Maluaka Beach, and built around an Asian meditation garden. Rooms open to the garden and the ocean, and guests have access to the Makena North Golf Course designed by Robert Trent Jones, Jr.

On the Big Island of Hawaii, the 1800-acre **Mauna Kea Beach Hotel**, is a five-star destination on Kauna'oa Bay, considered by many to be the island's most beautiful beach. Besides the white sands and shimmering waters,



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Jews plan strategies after N.J. gay marriage ruling

By Robert Wiener
New Jersey Jewish News

Buoyed by a partial victory in New Jersey State Supreme Court, gay Jewish activists and their allies are planning an intense campaign to win the right of same-sex marriage in New Jersey — even as their Orthodox opponents weigh their next move in the battle.

The justices all agreed Oct. 25 that the "unequal dispensation of rights and benefits to committed same-sex partners can no longer be tolerated under our state Constitution."

But a prevailing 4-3 majority said the argument must shift from the courtroom to the legislature, giving lawmakers a six-month deadline to decide whether the legal title of "marriage" can be

conferred on homosexual as well as heterosexual couples.

Steven Goldstein, the gay activist and Reconstructionist rabbinical student who chairs Garden State Equality, announced a major effort to mobilize the Jewish community in support of gay marriage.

He said the court's decision — which left open the option of "civil unions" — "offends a majority of Jews."

"You have two movements within Judaism — the Reform and the Reconstructionist — that endorse marriage equality outright," said Goldstein. In refusing to give those movements' rabbis the right to perform marriages for same-sex couples, the government "is imposing values

that are antithetical to those two branches."

Orthodox

Reacting promptly to the decision, the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America issued a press release supporting "a federal constitutional amendment limiting marriage to the union of a man and a woman."

But Nathan Diament, director of the Orthodox Union's Institute for Public Affairs, told NJ Jewish News that the OU "has not fully processed a position on civil unions. We are going to be working on that as quickly as possible in the course of the next few weeks."

Rabbi Randi Musnitsky, regional director of the New Jersey-West Hudson Valley Council of the Union for Reform Judaism, said her organization will support and join the lobbying efforts of other groups that support same-sex marriage.

"I am pleased at the court's validation of the issue but I believe it didn't go far enough in terms of totally equality for spouses — absolutely," she said.

Some mainstream Jewish organizations may straddle the issue of granting full marital status to gay couples, even as they endorse equal rights for homosexuals.

"For us it is a complicated issue," said Shelley Klein, national

Hadassah's director of advocacy. "Our policy falls in line exactly with the court decision, and our policy is silent on whether we think civil status that is equitable should be called 'marriage' or not. Hadassah is a very pluralistic organization, and different congregations come down differently on it. We haven't taken a position on whether it should be called 'marriage.'"

Although nationally the American Jewish Committee "is completely for the civil rights of gays and lesbians and would go along with the notion of civil unions, it has not taken a stand on gay marriage," said Allyson Gall, the director of the organization's NJ area. "If they have not nationally, we cannot locally."

Mixed feelings

The ruling left one self-described "extreme activist" for gay rights with mixed feelings.

New Jerseyan Leslie Farber, a transgender female from Montclair, said she is "very glad we got what we did, but we didn't get it all. It all comes down to 'marriage' or 'something else.' They may be the same thing legally, but not really, because it creates second-class citizenship. Being able to use the same word — 'marriage' — is what full equality is all about."

Farber said she is preparing for an intensive lobbying campaign in Trenton.

Ron Weiss and his partner, Jack Greenberg, live in West Orange. They have been a committed couple for 26 years and plan to marry if the legislature permits them to.

Weiss works as a Judaic studies teacher, offering classes and private lessons to both adults and children in New York and New Jersey. "I always see myself as part of a double minority, particularly when I deal with people from other cultures who don't understand various aspects of being gay or being Jewish. On the other hand, I have a great deal to offer as a member of two minority groups," he said.

"It's a civil rights issue to me; that's the bottom line," said Weiss. "If you are not treated exactly the same as everybody else, then you're a second-class citizen. I want respect afforded to gay people on the same level as everyone else."

T-shirt: 'Real men marry rabbis'

Debra Rubin
Washington Jewish Week

Rachel Silverman found inspiration walking down the streets of New York City.

A rabbinical student at the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Silverman saw someone wearing a T-shirt that stated, "Real men marry doctors."

"Wow," she remembers thinking. "I need to make that for rabbis."

She found an online T-shirt imprinting company, and picked out a clover green shirt, with blue lettering — "Real men marry rabbis" — and trim around the sleeves and neck.

Within days, she was selling her creation, all through word of mouth — or, more accurately, word of e-mail (racharief@gmail.com). After one round of e-mail, she already had 29 orders, from men and from women. As of Monday, she had sold 77 since December, without any publicity.

Rabbi Janet Ozur Bass, a teacher at the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School in Rockville, ordered two: one for herself, and one for her husband, Cantor Henrique Ozur Bass of Congregation Har Shalom in Potomac. She would have ordered for her kids, too, she said. But, children's sizes aren't available.

"When people see the T-shirt, it forces them to rethink and reimagine who a rabbi is," said Ozur Bass. "It's important for people to rethink their stereotypes."

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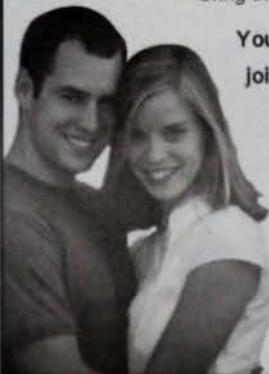
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75 Etiquette answers

By Joan G. Friedman

Besides the fun that comes with being engaged, you'll surely have a few questions regarding pre-wedding parties, attendants, costs, invitations, and (whew!) ceremony and reception details. Following is a list that offers some advice.

What needs to be done now that we're engaged?

1. Make the announcement! Tell your families, friends, and coworkers.

2. Get your parents together for brunch or dinner. (The groom's mother should invite the bride's parents first.)

3. Consider having an engagement party. Usually hosted by the parents of the bride, some couples opt to do this themselves. Popular with couples is a more casual approach with a barbecue in summer and a cocktail party in winter.

4. Announce your engagement in the local newspapers.

5. Select a wedding date. Remember that many synagogues and reception sites may be booked a year or more in advance.

6. Meet with your rabbi.

7. Begin shopping for a wedding gown at least nine months before the wedding. (After ordering, many take up to four months to arrive.)

Who pays for what?

8. The bride's family traditionally pays all wedding costs, although the groom's family offers to pay for some of the reception costs – most often the flowers, the liquor, and the band. With the costs of weddings skyrocketing, it is often a shared event by both families and, occasionally, the couple may pay for one-third of the costs as well.

9. The groom traditionally pays for the bride's rings and his own; the marriage license; ceremony fees; bride's flowers; mothers' flowers; boutonnières for him and his attendants; gifts for the bride, best man, ushers; hotel lodging for out-of-town ushers; and the honeymoon.

10. Remember to tip. The amount given to the caterer or banquet manager, if not already covered in the fee, is left to the discretion of the host, as is the tip for the captain or maitre d'. Coat and restroom attendants are tipped a flat fee that is prearranged with management. Florists, bakers, musicians, and photographers are not tipped. Limousine drivers receive a fifteen-percent gratuity. There is a flat fee for a civil wedding ceremony; most judges cannot accept tips. Clergy members usually receive a donation for the house of worship.

Does the bride's family host all of the pre-wedding parties?

11. Your parents may wish to host the first engagement party.

12. Your immediate family should not host a shower; it shouldn't appear that they are asking for gifts for the bride.

13. The best man and ushers host the bachelor party.

14. Bridesmaids may throw a shower or a bachelorette party.

15. The bride may thank her maids with a lunch or tea.

16. The groom's family hosts the rehearsal dinner (the night before the wedding).

17. Friends and relatives may host parties during a long-weekend wedding, or invite the couple and attendants to their hometowns for parties in their honor.

How do I select and involve my wedding attendants?

18. When planning begins, ask your maid of honor and other attendants to be in your wedding.

19. The matron of honor may be your mother, aunt, grandmother, or a person of honor – a man!

20. Bridesmaids may be sisters, cousins, or close friends.

21. Friends or relatives not honored as attendants may perform other special tasks [such as a ceremony reading].

22. The wedding party does not have to include an equal amount of bridesmaids or groomsmen.

23. Bridesmaids and groomsmen traditionally pay for their wedding ensembles, travel and hotel accommodations.

24. If an attendant is financially in need, you may help with some of the expenses.

25. Your maid of honor holds your bouquet and the groom's ring on the *bimah*. She and your bridesmaids might accompany you to dress fittings.

26. The best man makes the first toast, drives the newlyweds to the airport, pays the clergy for the groom, returns any rental items for the groom, and may deposit the wedding checks.

27. Ushers (one for every fifty guests) arrive one hour before the ceremony. They assemble at the entrance and help seat guests and make certain each guest signs the guest book and receives a wedding program. They may also drive out-of-town guests to the reception if held at a different location, dance with single guests and bridesmaids.

28. The bride is responsible for choosing the style of the wedding and the attendants' dresses. She should be certain, however, to select dresses that flatter all her maids' figures and be sensitive to their financial restrictions.

29. Out-of-town attendants usually arrive for at least one of the fittings.

30. The mothers of the couple should choose dresses that complement one another. The bride's mother selects her dress first, and then compares notes with the groom's mother.

31. You may have junior bridesmaids and their ages are from nine until fourteen. They precede attendants down the aisle, with or without partners.

32. The ring bearer and flower girl, ages four to seven, precede the bride down the aisle.

33. Thank attendants for their help with a gift you give to each at the rehearsal dinner.

What's the best way to handle wedding-planning professionals?

34. Always insist on a contract, whether hiring a florist, baker, musician, photographer, videographer, or other professional. To protect yourself, always put everything in writing.

35. Consider hiring a wedding consultant – a professional party planner who can help you make the most of your celebration. Ask for recommendations from family and friends. You will also find information on the internet.

36. Be sure to get the total cost and time needed for altera-

tions of bridesmaids' dresses.

What should I know about wedding invitations?

37. If you must trim your guest list, decide *not* to invite coworkers with whom you don't socialize.

38. Invite single guests without escorts (unless they live with a significant other).

39. Set an age limit for children, such as sixteen and over.

40. Order invitations at least six months in advance. Order fifty extra invitations for late additions and for keepsakes; one hundred extra envelopes in case of addressing errors.

41. Be sure to proofread the invitation before it's printed.

42. Allot one invitation per couple. In years past, we would expect a twenty-five percent refusal rate; however, in this decade, we are seeing a 90% acceptance rate!

43. Send long-distance friends and relatives a printed announcement, mailed on the wedding day. (If you send an invitation, be prepared for them to come!)

44. For standard invitations, fold across middle of engraved double sheet; insert in inner envelope with folded side down, engraved side up. Slip inner envelope inside larger envelope so guests' names "Mr. and Mrs. Cohen" are visible when envelope is opened.

45. Enclose response cards, maps, hotel and rain cards, and information about other parties, on top of invitations.

46. Guests over eighteen should receive their own invitation.

47. Addressing should be by hand – never typed. Ink should be in blue or black; bridesmaids may assist in this.

48. If you prefer, hire a calligrapher to do the perfect formal addressing. This will insure a professional job, and this information is usually available when your order the invitations.

49. Mail invitations six weeks (or eight weeks if near a holiday) before the wedding. Many also send a "save the date" card up to six months in advance.

50. When responses come in, give caterer a final guest count. If there are refusals, mail standby invitations no later than two weeks before the wedding.

What should I know about the wedding ceremony?

51. Your ceremony may take place at home, in a synagogue, outdoors, or in a banquet hall. If your choice is the synagogue and you do not belong to one, call the synagogue and ask the rules. Also, check with family and friends for suggestions.

52. Call early to ask about

See Etiquette, page 16

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Etiquette

From page 15

available dates, rules for flash photography, protocol in the sanctuary and on the pulpit.

53. Hold a rehearsal the night before the wedding.

54. The bride's grandparents proceed first, followed by the groom's grandparents, ushers, best man. Next, the groom's parents escort him down the aisle, followed by the bridesmaids, honor attendant. The mother and father of the bride walk down the aisle with her.

55. Do not hesitate to create the wedding rituals to your own liking. Most people have changed "Do you promise to love, honor and obey" to "cherish."

56. Consider personalizing your ceremony by writing your own vows and adding special readings.

57. Ceremony seating, as you face the pulpit: the right side is for the bride's family and friends and the left side is for the groom's. Parents, of course, sit in the first row;

grandparents sit in the second row.

58. The receiving line may take place at the wedding site just after the ceremony; however, in most cases the line is at the beginning of the reception.

59. The bride's mother, the bride, the groom, the groom's mother make up the order of the line. Fathers and attendants may join the line or circulate.

60. The best man gives the clergy the envelope with the

money after the ceremony.

61. Civil ceremonies differ from religious ones. They may be performed at home, in a hall, outdoors, or in the courthouse.

Is there a set timetable for a wedding reception?

62. If there's a time lag between the ceremony and reception, you should entertain guests during the interim.

63. The attendants and ushers, and next the groom's par-

ents, are introduced to a tune like Simon-tov. Next presented are the host and hostess. Finally, as the bride and groom are introduced, the words to Simon-tov are sung. After everyone is seated, the bride and groom lead off the dancing. The second dance is with their hosts: the bride with her father and the groom with his mother-in-law.

64. Cut the cake after the main course is over and dancing has resumed.

65. The bride tosses her bouquet right before she changes into going-away clothes. All single female guests (including bridesmaids) are assembled to catch it.

66. The groom may toss the bride's garter after the bouquet toss. All single males are gathered to try and catch it. The man who catches the garter then proceeds to place the garter on the leg of the girl who caught the bouquet.

Are there seating guidelines?

67. For a seated dinner, the table cards should be at the entrance to the reception. A suggestion for the bouquet of flowers at this table: choose silk in a large vase and the parents of the bride will enjoy them at home afterwards - forever!

68. Use place cards at tables to mark each seat at the bride and groom's table; they are optional elsewhere.

69. If the wedding party is small, the choice is sometimes to seat all parents and the clergy together.

70. If the wedding party is large, some select a head table for the wedding party with the parents sitting elsewhere.

Special situations or last minute advice!

71. Send a note or flowers to family or other guests who are ill and unable to be at your wedding. Tell them you are thinking of them.

72. Honor a deceased parent by dedicating a favorite poem in his or her honor during the ceremony.

73. Anticipate the needs of disabled guests. Look for reserved parking spaces, entrance ramps, wide aisles in sanctuary and rest rooms.

74. Respond in writing to an invitation that does not include a response card.

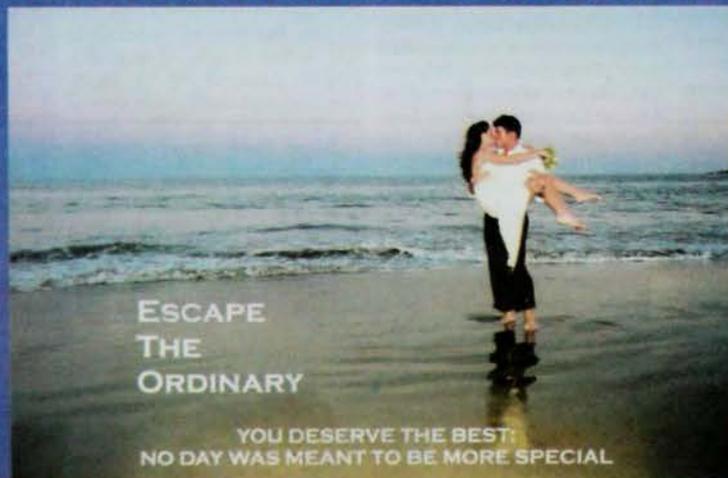
75. Do not call to ask if the gift has arrived, even if you have not received a thank-you note. Call the store or the local post office to see if there was a delay.

(Joan Greenberger Friedman, former editor of *Shalom newspaper*, Reading, PA, can be reached at joan@friedman.net.)



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