

# The JEWISH VOICE & HERALD

SERVING RHODE ISLAND AND SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

22 Tevet 5773

January 4, 2013

## U.S. Rep. Cicilline looks to the future

*Progress through compromise is goal*



OFFICE OF REP. DAVID CICILLINE  
U.S. Rep. David Cicilline

By PHILIP M. EIL  
Contributing Writer

PROVIDENCE – David Cicilline has a long list of New Year's resolutions. In a recent phone interview, the re-elected congressman told this reporter that, once he is sworn in with the 113th U.S. Congress in early January, his to-do list includes putting more Rhode Islanders back to work; fighting for funds to train and educate the state workforce to 21st century levels of competitiveness; rebuilding roads, bridges, ports and other pieces of the country's infra-

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## Reform movement, AIPAC differ on penalizing Palestinians

*Israel opposed cuts in aid to Palestinian Authority*

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) – Two major Jewish groups are at odds over the prospect of penalties for the Palestinians in the wake of their enhanced U.N. status.

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee in recent weeks has backed two congressional bids to at least shut down the Palestine Liberation Organization office in Washington in the wake of the Nov. 29 United Na-



BEN FINK SHAPIRO  
Rabbi Rick Jacobs, president of the Union of Reform Judaism

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JEFF KOLODNY PHOTOGRAPHY

Foundation for Jewish Camp Chairman Lee Weiss, Foundation for Jewish Camp CEO Jeremy J. Fingerman, Camp JORI Director – and valedictory speaker – Ronni Guttin and Bernie Marcus, co-founder of Home Depot and chairman of The Marcus Foundation pose, in Boca Raton, Fla.

## Guttin, Camp JORI director, shines in prestigious FJC program

*Valedictorian chosen to nurture new camp initiative*

By NANCY KIRSCH  
nkirsch@shalomri.org

PROVIDENCE – The valedictory speech that Ronni Guttin gave at the Foundation for Jewish Camp's Executive Leadership Institute almost didn't happen: She came close to bypassing the opportunity to apply to the program.

Guttin, Camp JORI's director since 1997, said that she feared ELI's mandatory 360-degree evaluation, which included sub-

stantial input from no fewer than 10 people who work with her. Proud of her self-awareness about her strengths and weaknesses, she feared that the intense evaluation would reveal some disconnect between her perceptions of herself and others' perceptions of her.

"The joke was on me," she said in her speech in Boca Raton, Fla., on Tuesday, Dec. 18, to a group that included 14 ELI Fellows and FJC staff, faculty advisors and coaches. "I discov-

ered that I knew myself pretty well, and had the confidence to approach my board president with the results."

Asked why Guttin was chosen to deliver the valedictory speech, Jeremy Fingerman, chief executive officer of FJC, said that Guttin "shined throughout as a leader in the group. The program truly impacted her; she grew a lot personally and professionally from

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## Local artist returns home with a new show

Leslie Friedman launches 'Exploring Jewish Stereotypes' at gallery (401)

By **NANCY KIRSCH**  
nkirsch@shalomri.org

PROVIDENCE – “I think whenever I make something, I wonder if he would have liked it,” mused Leslie Friedman, now 31, referring to her late father, Larry Friedman, who died when she was 15.

Her father, who had majored in industrial design at RISD, hadn't been able to find work in his chosen field and went to work in the family business, Paramount Industries. Nevertheless, he always had a darkroom and a workroom filled with industrial design supplies, she said.

Friedman, a silk-screener who lives and works in Philadelphia, added, “I don't know what he would have liked,

but I bet we would have had interesting discussions.”

The multi-tasking Friedman was breathless as she packed to come home to Providence for a few days and described her upcoming show, “Fun Guys: Exploring Jewish Stereotypes,” which opens at the Alliance gallery (401) on Thursday, Jan. 10. The opening reception, from 7–9 p.m., will include wine and light snack and is free and open to the community.

### From dabbling to working in art

The poor economy of a dozen years ago – when she and several other friends in college couldn't find paying summer jobs – opened up avenues for Friedman that she might never have expected.

“We were looking for stuff to do and saw a free-silk screening tutorial at AS220,” she said. “I was always good at art ... a jack-of-all-trades and master of none,” she said.

A political science major at Brown University, she found deep satisfaction in making silk-screening posters of local rock-and-roll bands with whom she was friendly. In fact, her art work is one of the reasons she cited for not taking a junior year abroad to study.

Having lived all her life in Rhode Island, she planned to travel around the world for a year after graduating from Brown. After visiting friends in Mexico,



LESLIE FRIEDMAN

Leslie Friedman

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**FRIEDMAN**, of Providence, now works and teaches in Philadelphia

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her second stop on her "world tour" was Argentina, which she liked so much she stayed for 2½ years – thus ending her around-the-world tour!

When people there asked her what she did, she told them she was an artist. "At first I was pretending," she said, "but I started to believe it."

Friedman, who earned her MFA in printmaking from Tyler School of Art, Temple University, talked about her upcoming show on Jewish stereotypes: "I hope [people who come] have fun with it. It pokes fun at our [American] Jewish community."

Even positive stereotypes – about Jews and education, for example – cautioned Friedman, are "potentially dangerous." She uses those and other stereotypes, she said, such as Jews' being responsible for Jesus' death and putting the blood of Christian children into matzah, to "shed light on ... the many weird ideas about the Jewish people."

She encourages anyone – Jewish or not – to attend the show, which she calls "a show about identity politics."



YOUR CAMPAIGN DOLLARS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Friedman believes that many stereotypes are "fed to us through advertisements and propaganda." The show, she said, puts issues on the table to provoke discussion, not to insult people, but "when talking about stereotypes, inevitably there will be sensitive topics."

Friedman, who explained that she generally is not inspired aesthetically by either Jewish artists or "Jewish art," believes much identity art is about being disenfranchised. "Jews are enfranchised," she quipped, so what do we have to complain about?"

Erin Moseley, director of arts & culture and next generation engagement, said that a panel discussion about Jewish stereotypes will be held on March 4, at a time to be announced.

"The goal of the panel discussion is to enhance individuals' understanding of stereotypes, and to enable them to see that they exist everywhere, across the spectrum," said Moseley. "Friedman's exhibit is being used a springboard for education, discussion and awareness."



LESLIE FRIEDMAN

Leslie Friedman in her studio

In addition, Friedman will teach a screen-printing class, "Pinot and Printmaking" for members of The RING (individuals in their 20s, 30s or early 40s) on Jan. 11, at 5:30 p.m. Although space is limited, Moseley said that participants in the fee-based class will learn about the art of printmaking and will have the opportunity to make an original piece of art.

Her parents played key roles

Of her mother, Marilyn Friedman Shealey, Friedman says, "My mother does not consider herself an artist, but she really is. She belongs to the Handicraft Club and does weaving, some painting and photography. When I was a little girl, she decorated my jean jacket to such perfection, kids came to school with knockoff versions of what my mom made. She is very, very talented, but she is too modest."

Calling her a huge inspiration "to me as a woman," Friedman added that her mother is strong, incredibly compassionate, patient and fair. "She is absolutely my best friend."

Of her late father, Friedman, who teaches at Muhlenberg College and Tyler School of Art, added, "One of my dad's best friends told me how proud he would be of me – making art as a career. The opportunities he gave me – going to Wheeler School and to Brown and to do what I wanted – helped fulfill his dream of being a working artist."

While this is not her first show in Providence – that was an AS220 exhibit in 2009, according to Friedman – this is her first "Jewish show" here.

**THE SHOW RUNS** from Jan. 10 – March 7. For more information, contact Erin Moseley, 421-4111, ext. 108 or emoseley@shalomri.org.

**VISIT FRIEDMAN'S WEBSITE:** lesliepvd.com.



LESLIE FRIEDMAN

An example of Friedman's work

The Jewish Voice & Herald

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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE EDITOR

## Is he kidding?

No gun novice, editor struggles to understand NRA viewpoint

BY NANCY KIRSCH  
nkirsch@shalomri.org

I'm not a complete gun novice. I spent my childhood summers at my maternal grandparents' beachfront home, which housed my grandfather's collection of rifles – empty of bullets – in a locked, secure cabinet. In college, I spent one weekend afternoon shooting at tin cans and bottles with a pistol. And a few years after that, I helped track a deer, which friends killed, dressed and prepared for a country weekend Thanksgiving dinner. Although I declined to participate in the deer killing, I admit to enjoying the delicious venison.



EXECUTIVE EDITOR

NANCY KIRSCH

Years later, when the first Million Mom March was held Sunday, May 14, 2000 in Washington, D.C., I willingly sacrificed Mother's Day with my young children to board a Million Mom March bus from Providence to D.C.

I am appalled by the proposal set forth by Wayne LaPierre, NRA executive vice president, in his recent press conference: Put an armed officer in every single school in this country to keep our children safe! Is he kidding?

• Assuming, arguendo, that we follow that ludicrous path, what happens when – not if, but when – an armed officer is fatally shot by a madman? Then what?

Does gun-totin' LaPierre remember that an armed sheriff deputy was on duty at Columbine High School? He may have done everything by the book – or not – but he didn't stop the massacre.

• Schools are clearly not mass shootings' only venues. When, not if, the next onslaught happens in another movie theater, a grocery store or a suburban street, will LaPierre's pistol-packing pals promote armed protection in those venues?

• For the NRA to point the finger of blame exclusively at other societal ills without looking at its own role is irrational and arrogant. Clearly, banning assault rifles – and getting existing assault rifles out of people's hands – is not the solution; it's one small step toward progress. Just as we can't ignore the role tobacco plays in lung cancer, we can't ignore the connection between guns of all kinds and homicides across this country.

• Why are other regulated products – cars, toys, including toy guns, medications, foods, etc. – pulled from commerce when they cause some number of deaths? Car companies would never be permitted to manufacture, distribute and sell defective cars that caused thousands of deaths each year. Why then, are guns, the sole commercially available products that are not defective when they serve their purpose – to maim or kill – so lightly regulated?

• A braver Congress once passed a ban on assault rifles. As such, the claim that any congressional restrictions on one's Second Amendment rights is a slippery slope from which gun owners won't recover just doesn't hold water. See, too, a column by Cass Sunstein in Bloomberg News and the Providence Journal: <http://tinyurl.com/c5443x7>.

• I invite any readers who support the NRA position to meet with me; I want to try to understand your perspective. Contact me at 421-4111, ext. 168 or submit a cogent and coherent letter to the editor (250 words, tops) or op-ed (500 – 700 words).

## 'Op-art' as op-ed

Consumerism run amok threatens us all

I have been a devoted reader of the New York Times for five decades; in all the years since the paper instituted its op-ed page in 1970, I have never seen that particular page look the way it did last Nov. 24: More than 50 percent of the space was devoted to a striking work of "op-art" by Barbara Kruger, identified as "an artist who works with pictures and words."



IT SEEMS TO ME

RABBI JIM ROSENBERG

Kruger's Nov. 24 piece, "For Sale," consists of an 11-inch by 11-inch black square, large enough to extend well below the fold. Within the square are nine words in 3-inch tall capital block letters, white letters that seem to leap out of their black background – three words on each of three lines: YOU WANT IT/YOU BUY IT/YOU FORGET IT.

I was surprised, even shocked, that the New York Times had chosen to devote so much space to highlighting just nine words. There was room for only one of the paper's columnists, Charles M. Blow, at the bottom of the page. What is the artist – and by extension, what is the New York Times – trying to say by shouting out these nine words to the reader: YOU WANT IT/YOU BUY IT/YOU FORGET IT?

As I sat down to work on this column at my "office" at the Wayland Square Starbucks, I asked some of the "regulars" for their interpretation of the nine words. The first person shrugged her shoulders and said, in effect, "It's too deep; it's beyond me."

The second person was not any more communicative.

However, when a third regular, who happens to be a friend of mine, approached my table, he responded to my question: "It's obvious; we live in a consumerist society," he said. "We buy, we consume and we dispose ... We find it difficult to make a distinction between wanting and actually needing."

My friend, without prompting from me, was seemingly able to zero in on the message of Kruger's op-art. The Nov. 24 publication date was two days after Thanksgiving and, more significantly, the day after that orgy of shopping we Americans have come to call Black Friday. It was within the context of the soul-suffocating frenzy of consumerism that the artist delivered her nine words of warning.

YOU WANT IT/YOU BUY IT/YOU FORGET IT. Although my friend seemed to have a firm grasp of the import of these nine words, he nevertheless was highly critical of the Times for "wasting so much

space" on a page that could have easily carried two additional columns by well-respected writers

To my way of thinking, my friend's criticism of the paper is off the mark, for he undervalues the role that art, especially op-art, can play in prodding the reader – perhaps I should say "viewer" – to plunge more deeply into the subject at hand. That is to say, the power of op-art makes itself felt in a totally different way than does the power of a well-written column. By reducing to nine words a complex national problem – indeed, a problem that extends throughout the developed world – Kruger challenges us to grapple with the problem of consumerism run amok. And what better day of the year to raise this challenge than Black Friday?

When my Starbucks' friend commented that we often find it difficult to distinguish between what we want and what we need, he was pointing to the very core of our problem. As Barbara Ehrenreich comments in her 2009 book, "Bright-Sided" (Metropolitan Books), if our consumer economy is to flourish, "people have to be persuaded to buy things they do not need or do not know that they need ..."

I am not suggesting that people should simply stop shopping, stop buying anything other than the bare necessities; that would be the path to economic ruin. What I am suggesting is that we consumers here and abroad begin to develop a better sense of balance and proportion in sorting out our wants from our actual needs. Consider, if you will, all of the gadgets, all of the electronic devices, all of the articles of clothing we have purchased during the past few years. Did we need them? Did we even really want them? Where are those gadgets, those electronic devices, those garments now?

Many of us confuse what we want with what we need. We all buy stuff that we throw away without using, stuff that we forget we even own. So what?

The "what" is that we are fouling our global nest with our garbage. The "what" is that our hyper-consumerism is to a large degree responsible for global warming. The "what" is that my small individual consumer indiscretions when added to yours and yours and yours a million times over have resulted in the colossal mess in which we now find ourselves, in which we are all implicated.

The "what" is that ultimately the earth does not belong to you and to me. As the Psalmist sings in Psalm 24:1, "L'Adonai ha'aretz u-m'lo'ah," "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof."

JAMES B. ROSENBERG is rabbi emeritus at Temple Habonim in Barrington. Contact him at [rabbiemeritus@templehabonim.org](mailto:rabbiemeritus@templehabonim.org).

## LETTER

## New York Times' corrections not reflected in Rosenberg's column

In his Dec. 21 column ("Netanyahu's fit of pique"), Rabbi James Rosenberg bemoans the recent decision of the Israeli government to build Jewish housing in the area known as E1. "Note well that such a development, if actually implemented, would put an end to the possibility of a two-state solution," he warns, adding that "[t]his proposed development of E1 would ... cut off the Palestinian capital [in Jerusalem] from its citizens on the West Bank."

Rosenberg concludes his column by declaring: "I would be derelict in my responsibility as a Jew were

I to keep silent while the Netanyahu government takes steps that will render a two-state solution impossible."

However, acting responsibly as a Jew also entails exercising some caution not to echo incorrect information about Israeli governmental actions. The New York Times issued corrections on-line on Dec. 10 and in print on Dec. 16 about the very same claims repeated by Rosenberg. The Voice & Herald should now print a similar correction.

The Times' correction states: "Development of E1 would limit access to Ramallah and Bethlehem,

leaving narrow corridors far from the Old City and downtown Jerusalem; it would not completely cut off those cities from Jerusalem. It would also create a large block of Israeli settlements in the center of the West Bank; it would not divide the West Bank in two. And ... the proposed development would not technically make a contiguous Palestinian state impossible."

Shai Afsai  
Providence

EDITOR'S NOTE: This letter serves as the correction Afsai seeks.

## OUR MISSION

The mission of The Jewish Voice & Herald is to communicate Jewish news, ideas and ideals by connecting and giving voice to the diverse views of the Jewish community in Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts, while adhering to Jewish values and the professional standards of journalism.

## COLUMNS | LETTERS POLICY

The Jewish Voice & Herald publishes thoughtful and informative contributors' columns (op-eds of 500 – 800 words) and letters to the editor (250 words, maximum) on issues of interest to our Jewish community. At our discretion, we may edit pieces for publication or refuse publication. Letters and columns, whether from our regular contributors or from guest columnists, represent

the views of the authors; they do not represent the views of The Jewish Voice & Herald or the Alliance.

Send letters and op-eds to [nkirsch@shalomri.org](mailto:nkirsch@shalomri.org) or Nancy Kirsch, The Voice & Herald, 401 Elm Grove Ave., Providence, RI 02906. Include name, city of residence and (not for publication) a contact phone number or email.

# Is time running out for Israel?

*One Jew offers two opinions on the nation's future*

With the U.N. General Assembly's Nov. 29 vote to recognize the "Palestinian State" as a non-member state, the question once again arises: Is time running out for Israel?

This question has two parts. First, is time running out for any sort of peace treaty and a two-state solution? Second, is time running out for Israel as an existing state altogether, precisely because of the lack of a peace treaty with all its neighbors?

The answer, I believe, is highly paradoxical, albeit logical. And if it seems to some to be "contradictory," well, then, as Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds."

## Question, Part 1

Yes, time is running out – and fast. With several hundred thousand settlers in the West Bank, and an Israeli public that shows no inclination to vote a "left-center" coalition into power, the point of no return is

fast approaching for any viable peace treaty to be signed with the Palestinians; the "facts in the field" leave them little space to have a viable state. Not that

Israeli policy is solely to blame for the current impasse.

First, the Palestinians show no inclination to renounce their demand for millions of refugees to be allowed to return to Israel; Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' recent "hint" to Israeli radio that this might change – "I don't see myself returning to my former home in Safed" – was immediately negated by his statement in Arabic to his local audience that the refugee demand was still in full force.

Second, Palestinian education textbooks evidence no softening of Israel's image; we are still the "devil incarnate" for Palestinian schoolchildren, even those in primary grades.

Third, and perhaps most relevant – from the standpoint of

peace negotiations – there is no "Palestinian partner" in the singular. Fatah and Hamas are barely talking to each other, much less united on even the theoretical possibility of suing for peace with Israel. Hamas' unwavering position is not

son. And meanwhile, Israeli settlement activity continues apace ...

## Question, Part 2

Time is not running out – at all. In 1949, after the War of Independence, Israel was a very small and militarily fragile state, economically almost destitute, with not even a million residents. It sat alone, surrounded by tens of millions of Arabs in heavily armed states bent on Israel's destruction.

Jump forward 64 years: Israel today has more than 7 million citizens, a high-tech economy that's the envy of the entire world and a military power with very few peers on the world stage. There is little reason to think that any of this will decline in the foreseeable future. Sure, Israel has its problems – growing economic inequality, a semi-dysfunctional political system, etc. – but regarding the country's macro-strength, the overall slope for decades has been in one direction: straight up.

Meanwhile, Arab countries around Israel are imploding. To be sure, the Arab Spring might ultimately lead to real democracy and flourishing economies, but at the moment that is more prayer than reality. One might even argue that it's the "prayer" that's holding back their modernizing reality. Syria has descended into civil war; Jordan – at peace with Israel – is at the cusp of revolution; Egypt's economy is a basket case of "world-class" proportions, with a military that can't even protect its citi-

zens in Sinai; Lebanon is a tinderbox ready to explode at any given moment; and the Palestinian split guarantees that its society will not advance very far until Hamas is somehow neutralized.

Yes, there's the Iranian nuclear threat, but aside from the probability (some would argue only a "possibility") that the United States will eliminate the threat and/or Israel will do great harm to Iran's nuclear infrastructure by itself, the actual chance of Armageddon is very slim. The Iranians are not completely suicidal; even if they are, Israel's anti-ballistic Arrow system can probably knock out of the sky anything the Iranians try to send over.

The bottom line: Israel may have to "muddle through" for several more decades without peace with its closest neighbors, but it will do so with ever-increasing economic strength and military security. Impossible? Read the biblical books of Judges, Samuel, Kings: They all describe entities engaged in frequent warfare while maintaining national sovereignty for centuries. For the State of Israel today, that's not the most pleasant of circumstances but one in which it could survive and even flourish in the decades ahead.

**PROF. SAM LEHMAN-WILZIG**, Bar-Ilan's School of Communication deputy director and Political Studies Department former chair, will be a visiting professor at the University of Maryland in spring 2013. Visit [profslaw.com](http://profslaw.com).



**REFLECTIONS  
OF | IN ISRAEL**

SAM LEHMAN-WILZIG

**"WE ARE STILL  
the 'devil incarnate'  
for Palestinian  
schoolchildren,  
even those in  
primary grades."**

even "no" – it's "never"! So with whom precisely is Israel supposed to sign on the dotted line?

Even worse, all indications are that Hamas is gaining strength in the West Bank as well. If you think matters are confused now, just wait until the next elections on the other side, elections that Fatah might not allow to take place for quite awhile, precisely for that rea-

## ONLINE COMMENTS...

**Re: "Senator Chuck Hagel might be Obama's defense secretary choice"** in the Dec. 21 issue: The proposed nomination of Hagel could have been predicted by a careful analysis of President Obama's attitudes toward Israel. Now, unhampered by the need for the Jewish vote, he is showing his true colors. Surely he could find a less anti-Se-

mitic, less anti-Israel candidate but he chooses not to... What does that tell us?? We can only hope that Netanyahu wins the election and is not intimidated by Obama.

Joan Lurie

**Re: "New England BBYO holds convention with New York-area teens"** in the Dec. 21 issue: ... I am glad to see the chapter and BBYO in Rhode Island is still going strong. Your article brought back many happy memories of my time in BBYO in the early 1970s.

Jill DeCoursey

## LETTER

### Family history explained at S&W

I read with personal interest the story in the Dec. 7 issue, "Family-owned company beats big-box prices."

It was a nice story, but unfortunately many of the facts about the family history are incorrect. Sam Schwartz, who started the company in 1946, brought his son-in-law Bill Winokur into the business – thus, S & W.

Later, Sam brought in his two sons, Walter and Nathan, and later Nathan's brother-in-law, Sid Exter.

After a long, rich history on Prairie Avenue in Providence, S&W moved to Seekonk, Mass. Nathan Schwartz realized Sid's

importance to the company and made him a full partner. It became clear that change was necessary and Sid, the grandfather referenced in the Dec. 7 story, bought out his partner. When Sid bought the company, he asked to keep the name – S&W – as a way of keeping the company's legacy alive.

Sid and his children and grandchildren have brought pride to the business called S & W.

Ira Kaplan  
Sharon, Mass.

The writer is the son-in-law of Nathan Schwartz.

### Errata Dec. 21 issue:

In "Touro, V&H announce 2012 Hanukkah Contest winners," Andy Lamchick was identified as a Touro vice president; he is a Touro vice chair.

In "New England BBYO holds convention with New York," the spelling of a local BBYO chapter was incorrect. It is the Judy Ann Leven BBG Chapter. The DJ should have been listed as the David Hochman AZA Chapter.

In "Remembering Louis Weissman's legacy," author Miriam Plitt's email was incorrect. It is [queenmiriam-miriam@gmail.com](mailto:queenmiriam-miriam@gmail.com).

## LETTER

### NCJW supports gun regulation

The National Council of Jewish Women/RI Section was deeply saddened to hear of the senseless shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. The fact that children were targeted in this violent act makes it all the more tragic, and our thoughts and prayers go out to the friends and families of all the victims.

The tragedy in Connecticut is yet another mass shooting in our recent history that has taken innocent lives, destroyed families and devastated communities. Gun violence has reached epidemic proportions in the United States due to the prevalence and ease of obtaining guns.

Guns are dangerous weapons and have no place on our streets, in our communities or in our schools. How many more tragedies will it take to spur lawmakers to take decisive and

effective action to address this problem?

NCJW supports laws and policies to restrict and regulate guns and urges Congress, the president and state lawmakers to act expeditiously on this issue.

NCJW is a grassroots organization of volunteers and advocates who turn progressive ideals into action. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW strives for social justice by improving the quality of life for women, children and families and by safeguarding individual rights and freedoms.

Ellie Elbaum  
Providence  
Nan Levine  
Providence

The writers are co-presidents NCJW/RI Section.

## RHODE ISLAND'S NEW VOICES

## Reflections on my call to Judaism

*Finding a corner of the 'Promised Land' through Torah's wisdom*

BY SANTINA VENTIMIGLIA FORTUNATO

I was born in Italy and raised Catholic by a traditional family who only fulfilled the "traditional" religious obligations of Easter and Christmas, and weddings, confirmations and baptisms. As a young adult, I felt like an outsider without a deep connection to my faith.

I had serious doubts about the dogmas, the mysteries, original sin, the constant fear of damnation and the idea of a life worth living only to gain the ultimate prize: paradise. I could not accept the hypocrisy and intolerance of the male-dominated Catholic clergy hierarchy.

My personal exodus delivered me here to Habonim after I wandered for more than five decades. Here, I found the courage to change; I freed myself from doubts, uncertainties and feelings of displacement.

At Temple Habonim, I have found my corner of the "Promised Land," where I breathe in the wisdom of the Torah.

After I met David Fortunato, an American studying in Bologna, we fell in love, married and moved to Providence in 1979. Adjusting to a new coun-

try, a new language and a new lifestyle, and studying, working and raising a family, I had no time for spiritual needs, for soul-searching and questions.

In 2008, I took an Introduction to Judaism class at Temple Beth-El that was the beginning of my transformative experience. I learned to celebrate life, enjoy the fruits of the earth and be grateful for Shabbat. Lighting candles on Friday night became a tangible experience acknowledging God's vivid presence in our home.

Then Rabbi Andrew Klein came to Beth-El for his classes on "The Meaning of Prayers." I knew there was no turning back: I had found the courage to redefine myself. I was thrilled when Rabbi Klein agreed to guide me in my spiritual quest.

I remember going to Habonim for my first Seder, where I experienced a sense of belonging. I loved the beauty of the building suspended between land and water, the synagogue's intimate interior and members' welcoming and nurturing hospitality.

At my first Hanukkah at Habonim, with so many beautiful menorahs and so many children with matches, my first impulse was to run for the fire

extinguisher. I should have known better. Rabbi Klein and the loving parents had everything under control!

My journey towards the shores of Judaism was no accident. After years of studying, the purifying and refreshing embrace of my immersion in the mikveh two years ago gave

**"MY JOURNEY TOWARD the shores of Judaism was no accident."**

me appreciation for my new Jewish identity.

I believe that one needs an entire year after a life-changing experience to be totally transformed. During last year's High Holy Days, I was "too young" – curious to see who my brothers and sisters were; overwhelmed by the liturgy's length and solemnity; inebriated by the new melodies and prayers and by the Shofar's dramatic sounds.

Painfully hungry, thirsty and tired, I was too distracted and disoriented to feel the Days of Awe's deep spiritual force. This year, fortunately, I have reached a new stage: "maturity." Now, I am able to focus and reflect on my *teshuvah*, on the process of self-judgment and transformation; on my gratitude for life and the creation; on the serious work of atonement before the Book of Life is sealed for another year. Now, I can even savor the fasting while the shofar's stirring and insistent ancient sounds have become a melodic wake-up call of introspection.

During the past year, I have realized that Judaism's gifts are bountiful: Every time the Ark is opened, every time the Torah is carried through the sanctuary, every time we sing prayers and psalms .... The beauty of Judaism is in the soothing and refreshing rest of Shabbat.

My great joys are when David, my Italo-Irish-American husband, prepares Shabbat candles and joins me in reciting the Kiddush, when my children call to wish me a good and peaceful Shabbat and when Laura, my daughter, wrote on her Face-

book page that her summer as a Camp JORI counselor was one of her best summers due to the many cool Jewish friends she made, the children she worked with and the spirit of Shabbat she enjoyed. Deep down, I feel that my Jewishness is touching and transforming my family.

I am deeply humbled by the embracing love, affection and inclusiveness that the Habonim community has shown my family.

I am truly empowered by the example of each one of you to be strong and responsible for "repairing the world" here and now on earth. I am empowered by the call to be a small but sturdy branch of the Tree of Life; by the call to be a "builder" and build a bridge that connects my Italian background and Jewish friends in Italy with the American Jewish community.

**THIS ESSAY IS EXCERPTED** from two speeches that Santina Ventimiglia Fortunato, a Providence resident, gave at Temple Habonim, a Reform synagogue in Barrington. Contact her at [santa.ventimiglia@gmail.com](mailto:santa.ventimiglia@gmail.com).

## Israel's election – as seen from America

*Current administration politically isolates Israel*

BY ALAN EISNER

WASHINGTON – There's an old Israeli song by Matti Caspi, sung memorably by Yehudit Ravitz, that sums up exactly my view of the upcoming Israeli election: "You took my hand in your hand and said to me, 'Let's go down to the garden.' You took my hand in your hand and said to me, 'Things that you see from there – you can't see from here.'"

Of course, I understand that this election is solely the choice of Israeli citizens living in Israel to make; those like me who make our homes outside the country do not have the right to vote. This is Israel's election and I'm not trying to intervene.

But, like the lovers in the song, our hands are linked and those of us in the Diaspora who love Israel have a vital and passionate interest in the path Israel chooses to take.

Perhaps the physical and psychological distance of living 6,000 miles away cuts me off from Israeli realities or maybe it gives me perspective that those caught up in the hurly-burly of daily life there have lost. But when I look at the Israeli election, there are many things I

cannot see and cannot understand.

How is it that Likud threw out some of their most moderate voices – people like Dan Meridor and Benny Begin – and replaced them with the likes of Moshe Feiglin?

How is it that the face of comparative reason in the otherwise militant "Yisrael Beiteinu," Danny Ayalon, was summarily dumped?

What is the appeal of "Habayit HaYehudi," a party with a platform of immediately annexing almost two-thirds of the West Bank?

What kind of future do its supporters imagine it will bring? Why can't the Labor Party muster any kind of argument on the two-state solution?

Why do Israeli voters, time and again, back untested new parties and leaders like D'ash in 1977 and Tommy Lapid in 2003 and this year Yair Lapid, only to invariably be disappointed once they reach power?

Why is the government continuing to announce new settlement after new settlement? They are casting Israel into almost total diplomatic isolation and making it difficult for its last remaining friend and

ally, the United States, to continue defending its behavior? Of course, there are many things I do understand. I have family living near Be'er Sheva so I understand (a little) what it's like to listen to air raid sirens and rush to take cover.

I understand that living through the Second Intifada, with its endless suicide bombings and terrorist attacks, was deeply traumatic and that nobody wants to return to those days.

I get it when people tell me that the unilateral withdrawal from Gaza brought Israel no peace and no quiet but only Hamas and rockets.

I know that many Israelis no longer believe that giving up more land will bring peace. I also understand that Hezbollah has 40,000 rockets and missiles lined up along the northern border ready to fire at Israel.

I know that the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran alarms many – if not all – Israelis. I see that the strategic threats to Israel from its neighbors have grown with Egypt turning to Islamists and Syria plunged into a destabilizing civil war that could bring heaven knows what new threats in its wake.

I know that the Palestinian Authority under Mahmoud Abbas has been far from a perfect partner and that Palestinian media still occasionally resort to anti-Semitic stereotypes and images.

But what is baffling to me is how the conclusions I draw from this set of agreed-upon facts are so different from those being drawn by the Israeli electorate, if one believes public opinion polls.

I believe that making peace with the Palestinians in a two-state solution will strengthen Israel internationally and domestically and help preserve Israel as a democratic state with a Jewish majority. I believe with goodwill on both sides that Israeli security can be maintained and that the two people can live together as good neighbors.

It follows that Israel should try to reach out to its partners instead of belittling, weakening and humiliating them. It should nurture moderate voices instead of sidelining them. It should look for chances to cooperate instead of always being ready to ratchet-up tensions. It should stop the destructive tit-for-tat with the Palestinian Authority that hurts both sides.

It should think of a word other than "no" to utter all the time.

Given that this government officially espouses a two-state solution, the settlements remain inexplicable. Why build on land that will eventually be evacuated – unless there is no true intention of ever relinquishing the territory?

Above all, I don't understand why Israeli voters put up with a set of leaders and political parties that offer them no vision for a peaceful future. How do these leaders imagine Israel's future to be? What do they offer except constant conflict, endless wars and military operations, children and grandchildren and great grandchildren forever marching off to fight?

Do they imagine their visions have any chance of preserving a democratic Israel with a Jewish majority?

If so, they should explain how. As the song says, "Things that you see from there – you can't see from here."

ALAN EISNER, J Street's new vice president of communications, wrote a slightly revised version of this piece, which appeared in the Times of Israel on Dec. 28.

# Lawsuit puts Congregation Jeshuat Israel's plans on hold

To build endowment and raise awareness of Colonial Jewish history, synagogue intended to sell goods to MFA

By NANCY KIRSCH  
nkirsch@shalomri.org

PROVIDENCE - A lawsuit challenging Congregation Jeshuat Israel's right to sell valuable and historic *rimonim*, final bells, to the Museum of Fine Arts, is making news, including the Dec. 28 story in the Providence Journal (<http://news.providencejournal.com/breaking-news/2012/12/newport-ri--a-dispute.html>).

That story - and other subsequent stories in other media outlets - have described pending litigation between Congregation Jeshuat Israel in Newport and Congregation Shearith Israel in New York over Jeshuat Israel's rights to sell the *rimonim*, finial bells that adorn the handles of a Torah scroll.

The Voice & Herald talked with David Bazarsky, a current trustee of the Congregation Jeshuat Israel board, a former board president and spokesperson on this issue, to learn more.

Bazarsky explained that the synagogue's plan to sell one of its two sets of *rimonim* would offer a "win-win-win" outcome: The *rimonim* are tangible evidence of the story of Jews who came here 100 years before the Revolutionary War, he said. Having the *rimonim* displayed in the MFA's Art of Americas Wing would allow the museum - with about a million visitors a year - to build a story

around the same history that the Visitors Center tells in Newport, he said.

In addition, the sale of the *rimonim* to the MFA would enable the synagogue to become endowed in perpetuity.

A prepared statement sent to The Voice & Herald from Bea Ross, co-president of Congregation Jeshuat Israel, notes, in part, "To ensure the fiscal security of the proceeds, the entire net amount from the sale will be put into an irrevocable endowment from which only the interest can be drawn ... We treasure our [synagogue]. The opportunity to secure its financial future while seeing the finial bells displayed as part of the history and culture of America is overwhelming positive."

"We see ourselves as different," Bazarsky said. "If Touro, the oldest synagogue in the U.S., were to close, it would send a very negative message to Jews and non-Jews alike."

We don't want people to visit the Visitors Center and then enter Touro and see that, at one time there were weddings, at



DAVID BAZARSKY

These are the *rimonim* at issue.

one time there were services, said Bazarsky. "That's not what we want. We want [people] to go in and worship as they did in 1758."

Asked how essential the funds - the bells had an anticipated sales price of \$7.4 million - are to the synagogue's future, Bazarsky said, "That's a tough question. Touro's survival at the moment is not at risk... like any organization, we want

to endow the synagogue so that ... 200 years from now the funds will be there for the property to be maintained, a rabbi in residence and services to continue."

With Touro hosting services every summertime day and thousands of people from around the world visiting each summer, Bazarsky said, "We want to guarantee that continues and that Touro doesn't evolve into a museum."

A \$3 million project to restore the synagogue was done, the Visitors Center was built and our third and final step, he said, is to endow it for the future.

Bazarsky said that the highly valuable *rimonim* lay unseen in a safe deposit box. Isn't it better, he asked, to have them on display where millions of people can learn from them about Colonial Jewish history and guarantee the synagogue's endowment?

The synagogue's existing endowment, he said, is not sufficient to accomplish what it could with funds from the MFA sale. He said the synagogue has

no plans to sell the second set of *rimonim*.

Asked about a "best-case, worst-case" outcome of the litigation, Bazarsky said that the best case would be a successful mediation that allows the synagogue to proceed with the sale to the MFA and a worst case would be no settlement, a contentious lawsuit and an inability to sell or lease the *rimonim*. As for what he expects will happen, he said that he can't anticipate the outcome.

The MFA will only consider proceeding with the purchase and sale agreement, he said, if the synagogue is able to provide clear title to the *rimonim*.

Steven Snow, a partner with Partridge, Snow & Hahn who represents Congregation Jeshuat Israel in this matter, could not be reached for comment during the holiday weekend.

The parties were scheduled to meet in a settlement conference with U.S. District Court Judge William Smith on Jan. 3. As of press time, there was no information about the results of the settlement conference.

A spokesperson for Congregation Shearith Israel in New York City declined to speak to The Jewish Voice & Herald about the issue, citing pending litigation.

## Senator John Kerry holds seemingly universal appeal to succeed Hillary Clinton

Advocacy groups and other legislative leaders laud choice of Kerry as Secretary of State

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON, D.C. (JTA) - On a wintry day at a small Iowa shul in November 2003, U.S. Senator John Kerry, a Democrat from Massachusetts, got all *farklemt* (overwhelmed).

The man whose opponents had taken to depicting as aloof and patrician, whose campaign for the 2004 Democratic presidential nomination had been all but written off by that point, leapt onto the dais at Tifereth Israel synagogue in Des Moines. Kerry delivered an emotional account of his then-recent discovery that his grandfather was Jewish and recalled how, on a visit to Israel standing atop Masada, he had cried out, "Am Yisra'el Chai!"

The bond Kerry has forged with the Jewish community because of his roots and because of his interest in the Middle East has helped smooth over rough patches when he has criticized Israel.



OFFICE OF SENATOR JOHN KERRY

Senator John Kerry, center, meets with Jewish war veterans from Massachusetts in an undated photo.

"We've had disagreements in the past, but on the whole he's a staunch advocate and defender of the U.S.-Israel relationship and Israeli security," the Anti-Defamation League's national director, Abraham Foxman,

told JTA in a telephone interview from Israel, where he was meeting with Israeli leaders.

Sen. Kerry rallied to win the 2004 nomination but lost the presidency, felled in part by images of him windsurfing and

tales of high-society living with his heiress wife, Teresa Heinz.

He won big among Jews, however - 75 percent of their vote, in large part because of a connection based on shared liberalism.

Staff close to his campaign at the time said the discovery by the Boston Globe of his Jewish antecedents - and the knowledge that relatives had perished

# Alliance launches a new logo; new website coming soon

*Unique icon recognizes Alliance's strengths and assets*

By **KARA MARZIALI**  
kmarziali@shalomri.org

PROVIDENCE – The Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island is unveiling a modern new logo and will launch a new website soon. Updating the Alliance image was not taken lightly; the decision was made with care, sensitivity and collaboration. So, why the

change?

"We needed a graphic representation that would identify us as the Jewish Alliance," said Brian Sullivan, marketing and communications associate for the Alliance. "Additionally, as a part of the Jewish Federations of North America, we wanted a unique icon that would complement the JFNA logo."

The new Alliance logo is contemporary, orderly and attractive – an accurate brand that truly represents the Alliance's main mission. Its primary color identity is "Israel Blue," and the central design incorporates two iconographic symbols within Judaism: the Star of David and the menorah. The two symbols are positioned to evoke feelings of growth and



**Jewish Alliance**  
OF GREATER RHODE ISLAND

strength. They are housed within a circle, representing the greater community. Lindsay Logan, of WOMA Design

reflects our principles and our identity as a Jewish organization."

The new domain (JewishAllianceRI.org) will reflect the name of the Alliance and offer many innovative features for end-users. The Jewish Voice & Herald will keep readers abreast of the launch in a future issue.

"It's the beginning of a new phase for the Alliance, transforming the power of our brand into relevant programs, activities and initiatives for our Jewish community," Savit said. "We hope you will embrace this new change as we move forward."

**"IT'S THE  
BEGINNING  
of a new  
phase for the  
Alliance."**

in Newport, was the chief creative designer.

"It's not a radical change; it just better communicates who we are as an organization," said Jeffrey K. Savit, Alliance president and chief executive officer. "Quite simply, it re-

**KARA MARZIALI** is marketing and communications associate at the Alliance. Contact her at 421-4111, ext. 170 or kmarziali@shalomri.org.

## 'Bring a friend to service'

*Congregation Agudas Achim hosts an open service*

ATTLEBORO, Mass. – Congregation Agudas Achim invites interested members of the public and family and friends of current members to attend its Jan. 11 service at 7:30 p.m.

Members of the area's only Reconstructionist Jewish congregation will be available to greet guests and provide information about the synagogue community, the award-winning religious school, High Holy Day services and programs for all ages offered throughout the year.

The Jewish Reconstructionist movement is a liberal offshoot of Conservative Judaism,

stressing Jewish traditions as they pertain to modern life, democracy and participation.

Congregation Agudas Achim, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2011, offers opportunities for a strong spiritual life, social and cultural programs and religious education for children and adults. The synagogue's membership comes from a wide geographic area that includes the Massachusetts communities of North Attleboro, Attleboro, Mansfield, Foxboro, Sharon, Norton and Wrentham and the Rhode Island communities of Cumberland and Providence.

Congregation Agudas Achim welcomes families of diverse backgrounds including interfaith families, singles, and people of all ages. Recent initiatives at Congregation Agudas Achim include family life support in conjunction with Jewish Family Service, a community service-oriented youth group for teens, adult education series and an expanded Hebrew school for toddlers through grade 12.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** about Congregation Agudas Achim, call 508-222-2243. The synagogue is at 901 North Main St., Attleboro, Mass.

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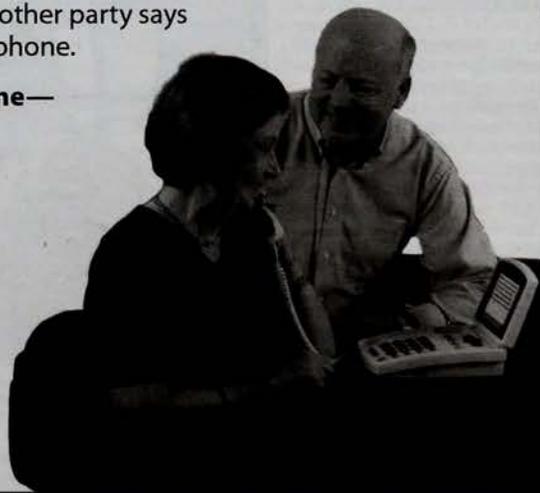
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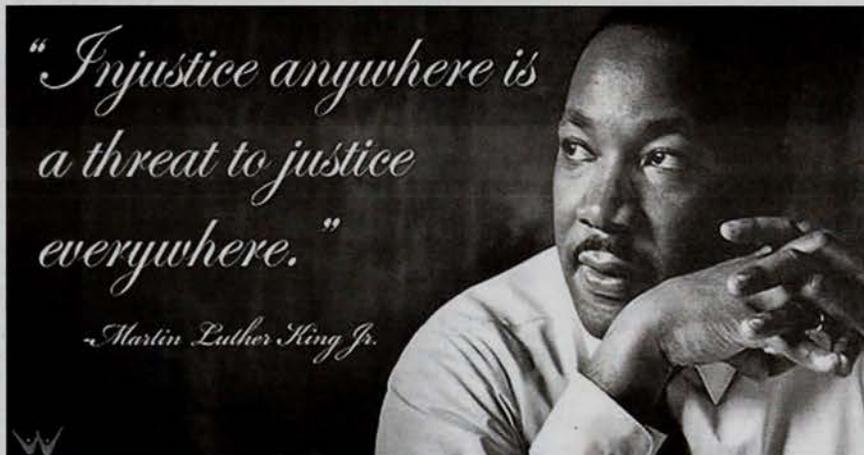
MLK, JR. DAY OBSERVANCES

Ministers Alliance hosts  
Jan. 21 MLK, Jr. breakfast

PROVIDENCE – The Community Relations Council of the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island invites community members to attend the Ministers Alliance of Rhode Island's Martin Luther King, Jr. breakfast. The Jan. 21 breakfast at Rhodes-on-the-Pawtuxet, 60 Rhodes Place, Cranston will feature Reverend Dr. Kirk Byron as keynote

speaker. Breakfast begins at 8 a.m.; tickets are \$35 per person; proceeds support the Ministers Alliance's MLK Scholarship Fund for deserving students.

**TO PURCHASE TICKETS,** (seating is limited), contact Marty Cooper, CRC director, at 421-4111, ext. 171 or mcooper@shalomri.org. RSVPs are required.



A musical tribute:  
'Singing the Dream'

PROVIDENCE – Six Rhode Island choirs will present "Singing the Dream," a musical tribute to commemorate the legacy of Dr. King, on Sunday, Jan. 27, at 3 p.m.

More than 150 voices – from Shir Emanu-El of Temple Emanu-El, Kol Kesem HaZamir, RPM Voices of Rhode Island, Providence Gay Men's Chorus, Beneficent Congregational Church and Central Congregational Church – contribute to a rich musical partnership. The diverse selection of works

includes gospel and Jewish hymns, klezmer, spirituals and contemporary compositions.

Temple Emanu-El's Rabbi Wayne Franklin will offer his reflections on Dr. King's life and work at the event, which will be held at the historic Beneficent Congregational Church, 300 Weybosset St., in Providence.

**TICKETS ARE FREE.** Visit <http://singingthedream.eventbrite.com/>

Civil rights then and now:  
Dr. King's Legacy

PROVIDENCE – Civil rights will be the focus of a Jan. 20 event, co-sponsored by the Rhode Island Civil Rights event features Imam Farid Ansari, president of the RI Council for Muslim Advancement, whose keynote address is "An Experience of Dr. King and Civil Rights: Then and Now." This free event includes a discussion of civil rights issues likely to be considered in

the upcoming General Assembly, music, refreshments and a birthday cake for Dr. King.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,** contact Dr. Toby Ayers at 467-1717, ext. 102 or ricj@ricj.org.

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For more information contact Larry Katz at 401.421.4111 ext. 179 or lkatz@shalomri.org.

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\* \$0 registration fee when you join by 1/31/13. Membership is a 12 month commitment. This offer is valid only for first time members and for those who have not been members of the Alliance JCC for the prior 12 months. All prior membership accounts must be in good standing. Cannot be combined with any other offers.

## CALENDAR

Friday | Jan. 4

**Shabbat Chai Shabbat Alive.** Interactive Shabbat service combines musical instruments with traditional and new melodies, followed by free dinner. Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Ave., Providence. 5:45 p.m. 331-1616.

Saturday | Jan. 5

**"Mishpachah Rishonah" Service.** Interactive Shabbat morning learning service for families; congregational lunch follows. Fishbein Chapel, Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Ave., Providence. 10:30 a.m. - noon. Bethany Sutton at [bl\\_sutton@yahoo.com](mailto:bl_sutton@yahoo.com), Miriam Abrams-Stark at [Miriam@teprov.org](mailto:Miriam@teprov.org) or [www.teprov.org](http://www.teprov.org).

Sunday | Jan. 6

**PJ Library in South County.** Congregation Beth David and South County Hebrew School partner with PJ Library. Toddlers (ages 2-4) and families enjoy a special book about Tu Bi-Sh'vat, 375 Kingstown Rd., Narragansett. 10:30 - 11:30 a.m., Stephanie at [sjmalinow@gmail.com](mailto:sjmalinow@gmail.com).

**Green Reel Film Series.** Congregation Agudas Achim hosts "The Great Squeeze" with discussant David Ammerman. Congregation Agudas Achim, 901 North Main St., Attleboro, Mass. 6:30 p.m. [www.greenreelfilms.org](http://www.greenreelfilms.org).

Tuesday | Jan. 8

**Author at Emanu-El.** William Miles discusses his book "Jews of Nigeria: An Afro-Judaic Odyssey." Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Ave., Providence. 7 p.m. [ebabchuck@teprov.org](mailto:ebabchuck@teprov.org).

Wednesday | Jan. 9

**Kosher Senior Café at Am David.** Topic: URI pharmacy program on memory. Temple Am David, 40 Gardiner St., Warwick. 11:15 a.m. - program; noon - lunch; program is free; \$3 lunch donation for 60+ and under-60 with disabilities. Elaine or Steve at 732-0047. **This location hosts a meal site every weekday.**

Thursday | Jan. 10

**Leisure Club.** Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Ave., Providence. 10 - 10:50 a.m. - Peter and Judith Romney Wegner discuss "Our Recent Trip to China"; 11:10 a.m. - noon - Ruth Goldstein discusses "Hidden Children of France: Saving Lives During WWII - My Family's Story." Miriam Abrams-Stark, 331-1616 or [Miriam@teprov.org](mailto:Miriam@teprov.org).

**The Mothers Circle.** For non-Jewish mothers raising Jewish children. Alliance, 401 Elm Grove Ave., Providence. Noon. Contact Kit Haspel, 421-4111.

Friday | Jan. 11

**Yiddish Shmooz.** New members welcome anytime. Enjoy Yiddish conversation. Alliance JCC, 401 Elm Grove Ave., Providence. 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Call Phyllis,

evenings. 738-8468.

**Shalom to Shabbat.** Wine and cheese before Shabbat service. Temple Torat Yisrael, 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. 7 p.m. 885-6600, [www.toratysrael.org](http://www.toratysrael.org).

**"Bring a Friend to Service."** Congregation Agudas Achim invites community members to service. Congregation Agudas Achim, 901 North Main St., Attleboro, MA. 7:30 p.m., 508-222-2243. See story, page 8.

Sunday | Jan. 13

**Conference for Jewish Women.** Keynote Speaker Chanie Juravel, "Coping with the Unexpected: Living Through the Parts of Life You Never Would Have Asked For." Brown RISD Hillel, 80 Brown St., Providence. 9:30 a.m. Rabbi Raphie Schochet, Kollel: Center for Jewish Studies, [www.providencekollel.org](http://www.providencekollel.org).

**PJ Library Birthday Celebration.** Birthday and Tu Bi-Sh'vat celebration. Alliance JCC, 401 Elm Grove Ave., Providence. 3 p.m. Michelle Cicchitelli, 421-4111. See story at right.

Monday | Jan. 14

**Scholastic Book Fair.** Alliance JCC Early Childhood Center hosts book fair. Social Hall, 401 Elm Grove Ave., Providence. 9 a.m. 421-4111.

**JERI Satellite Hours.** JERI Director Susan Adler and Assistant Director Ethan Adler counsel seniors and their families; Ethan is also available for pastoral counseling. Blenheim Newport, 303 Valley Road, Middletown. 11 a.m. - noon. Susan Adler at 621-5374 or [sadler-jeri@jsari.org](mailto:sadler-jeri@jsari.org).

**JERI Satellite Hours.** See earlier entry. Brightview Commons, 57 Grandville Court, Wakefield. 1 - 2 p.m. Susan Adler at 621-5374 or [sadler-jeri@jsari.org](mailto:sadler-jeri@jsari.org).

Tuesday | Jan. 15

**Temple Torat Yisrael's Lunch & Learn.** Topic: "How Do Jews Mourn? The beauty and wisdom of Jewish funeral and shivah laws and customs." Participants order from the menu; Rabbi Amy Levin leads discussion. T's Restaurant, 5600 Post Road, East Greenwich. Noon - 1:30 p.m. 885-6600.

Wednesday | Jan. 16

**Kosher Senior Café at Alliance JCC.** URI pharmacy program on memory. Alliance, 401 Elm Grove Ave., Providence. Noon - lunch; 12:45 p.m. - program. \$3 lunch donation for 60+ and under-60 those with disabilities. Neal or Elaine at 861-8800, ext. 107. **This location hosts a meal site every Wednesday and Friday.**

CALENDAR | 11

## PJ Library celebrates 6th birthday with a Tu Bi-Sh'vat celebration

PROVIDENCE - For the past six years, our greater Rhode Island Jewish community has been able to give children a truly remarkable gift - one that helps build family bonds through the power of reading PJ Library books together.

These high-quality books, with attractive and meaningful illustrations and text, arrive in PJ Library members' mailboxes each and every month and provide families the opportunity to explore the core values of Judaism.

For more than five years, this gift was free to all children - between 6-months-old and 6-years-old - who were being raised Jewish. Now, thanks to a Crown Foundation grant, the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island and generous community support, 7- and 8-year-old children are also eligible to participate.

In light of this expanded program, PJ Library is hosting a birthday celebration that not only recognizes the organization's growth in our community, but also pays tribute to the upcoming holiday of Tu Bi-Sh'vat, frequently known as the "new year for trees." The festivities will take place on Sunday, Jan.

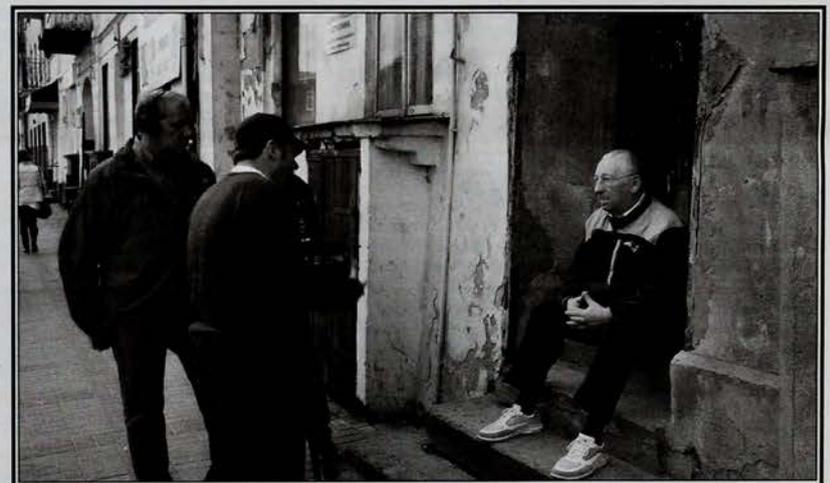
13, from 3 - 5 p.m. at the Alliance JCC, 401 Elm Grove Ave., Providence. Children are invited to an interactive puppet show, "Stories in Trees," which will be performed by Sparky's Puppets who bring favorite children's stories to life with colorful hand-puppets, lively humor and plenty of audience participation. Children will also get a taste of Shalom Friends, an award-winning, one-hour music



and movement class that meets weekly to introduce young children to a variety of songs, including those about Tu Bi-Sh'vat, and encourages them to dance and move. And no birthday celebration is complete without a cake and party favors!

This event is free and open to the public.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** or to RSVP to PJ Library's birthday celebration, contact Michelle Cicchitelli at [mcicchitelli@shalomri.org](mailto:mcicchitelli@shalomri.org).



Film producer Tim Gray and photographer Jim Karpeichik interview Holocaust survivor Israel Arbeiter in Plock, Poland in April of 2012

## World premiere in Boston: 'A Promise to my Father'

*A Holocaust survivor's incredible story*

BOSTON - The world premiere of the documentary, "A Promise to my Father," will be shown Sunday, Jan. 27 at 2 p.m. at the Seaport Boston World Trade Center.

The documentary focuses on Holocaust survivor Izzy Arbeiter's incredible story. In April 1912, the World War II Foundation took Arbeiter, now a resident of Massachusetts, back to Poland where unspeakable tragedies occurred.

Arbeiter's story began in Poland shortly before his parents and younger brother

were sent to Treblinka and murdered. His father's parting words to Arbeiter, then a teen, motivated him to survive his grueling experiences as a slave laborer in concentration camps.

During his trip back to Poland, Arbeiter visited the basement of his old home in the city of Plock; on Sept. 3, 1939 his family had buried several Jewish religious artifacts in an effort to hide them from the invading Germans. Although his home was condemned, it didn't stop Arbeiter from trying to unearth

those religious items.

The film screening includes a Q&A with Arbeiter.

Tickets range from \$35 to \$100, the highest-priced ticket includes admission to a pre-event VIP reception with Arbeiter, a copy of the film and preferred seating.

**TO PURCHASE TICKETS** or for more information, visit [www.ifoundation.org](http://www.ifoundation.org) and click on events.

## CICILLINE has a long to-do list

## From Page 1

structure; lobbying to end the war in Afghanistan as quickly and responsibly as possible and reducing corporate influence on elections through campaign finance reform.

With a hard-fought election season behind him – which included his primary opponent's Anthony Gemma's inflammatory press conference nicknamed "GemmaPalooza" – and his Republican challenger Brendan Doherty's TV ads reminding voters of the former mayor's claim to have left Providence in "excellent" fiscal condition – Rep. Cicilline seemed energized by the ideas of compromise and bi-partisanship in his second term.

Certain colleagues from across the political aisle "have equated compromise with being unprincipled," he said. "I don't know how you navigate a marriage or a friendship or a work relationship with that attitude. But that's just not the way the world works!"

Below are some condensed and edited excerpts from a conversation that ranged from currency manipulation in Asia to tensions in the Middle East to the perennial allure of Rhode Island's beaches, a staple of our local tourism economy.

**Q: You're the only Jewish congressman from our state right now. Do you feel a particular responsibility to look out for the interests of Jewish Rhode Islanders?**

**A:** When you're elected as a member of Congress, your responsibility is to represent your entire district ... But, you of course bring to the work

your passions and your life experiences. I'm Jewish and I certainly bring my set of experiences as a Jew to the work that I do ... in our religious tradition, the things that we care about deeply are, not coincidentally, the values that I think most Rhode Islanders share, [like] creating opportunity and

**"[T]HE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS really does reflect the diversity of America. It's African-American, Latino, Asian, white, men, women, gay, straight, Christian, Jew, Muslim ..."**

investing in education, protecting our freedoms and protecting our relationships with our democratic allies around the world.

**Q: One of the foremost is-**

sues in the minds of Jewish Americans and Jewish Rhode Islanders is the situation in Israel. For people who feel kind of helpless, what can you tell them about what you're doing?

**A:** I would say, first of all, that the interest we have in the security of Israel is, or should be, as important to non-Jews as to Jews. It's obviously particularly important (to Jews) as it is the Jewish state, but America has a strategic and security interest in strengthening and protecting the relationship between this country and Israel and ensuring Israel's strength in that region of the world.

I have been involved as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee [to understand] what we can ... and should do, both to bring peace to that region in the short term in terms of supporting the ceasefire, but also [asking], "What are the conditions that we can help to create for a long-term two-state solution in that part of the world?"

I was a co-sponsor of the Iran sanctions. The Foreign Affairs Committee [has] been very active in monitoring how those sanctions are being implemented and the impact [they are] having on the Iranian economy and ... working with the administration to address the very serious threat of a nuclear Iran.

I'm an original co-sponsor of the Iron Dome system – of the Iron Dome Support Act – which provided very critical resources to Israel for the development of the Iron Dome, which was a really important

part of the protection of Israel in this most recent [conflict]. (EDITOR'S NOTE: Rep. Cicilline was named to the Budget Committee after this interview took place.)

**Q:** For the first time in U.S. history, straight white men represent a minority in the U.S. House of Representatives' Democratic Caucus, to which you belong. (The Caucus nominates and elects the House Democratic leadership, approves committee assignments and serves as a forum to develop legislative priorities.) How do you think this will change the way the House functions?

**A:** I think it's a remarkable time to be here because the Democratic Caucus really does reflect the diversity of America. It's African-American, Latino, Asian, white, men, women, gay, straight, Christian, Jew, Muslim ... I think it's a tremendous strength. That kind of diversity just doesn't exist in the Republican Caucus. And I hope that it will also provide an opportunity for people on the other side of a lot of these issues to reflect on both the changing demographics of our country and to listen carefully to the views of people who might have a different set of life experiences.

**Q: Roll Call, a Capitol Hill-focused newspaper, called the last Congress the least productive in modern history (TinyURL.com/cc78d5a). What are ways that you hope to ensure [that] things are actually going to happen this time around?**

**A:** Well, there are a couple things that I'm doing. First, I founded something called the Common Ground Caucus. That's just an effort again to try to build relationships with colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I've [also] become more involved with an organization called No Labels, which is a national organization of Democrats, Republicans and Independents ... really committed to problem solving. Basically, the idea ... is to try to bring people together to solve some of the big challenges we face as a country and focus, not on our party affiliation, but just on solving problems.

**PHILIP EIL**, a contributing writer for The Voice & Herald, teaches English at Rhode Island School of Design. Contact him at Philip.edward.eil@gmail.com.

## CALENDAR

## From Page 10

## Thursday | Jan. 17

**Leisure Club.** Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Ave., Providence, 10 – 10:50 a.m. – East Side YMCA "Exercise for Better Health"; 11:10 a.m. – noon – Dr. Steven Kane's musical program. Miriam Abrams-Stark, 331-1616 or Miriam@teprov.org.

## Temple Torat Yisrael's Lunch &amp; Learn.

See Jan. 15 entry. Cozy Grill Restaurant, 440 Warwick Avenue, Warwick. Noon – 1:30 p.m. 885-6600.

**Adoption Options Meeting.** Informational meeting for those considering adoption and interested in hearing about available options. Jewish Family Service, 959 N. Main St., Providence. 6 – 7 p.m. Peg Boyle, 331-5437 or peg@jfsri.org.

## Friday | Jan. 18

**Free Shalom Friends Program.** Free music and movement class features singing and interactive movement to Jewish music, arts and crafts projects, storytelling, and celebration of Shabbat. For children, newborn to 5, accompanied by an adult. Jewish Community Day School of RI, 85 Taft Ave., Providence. 10 – 11 a.m. Dina Adelsky, 751-2470.

## Sunday | Jan. 20

**Film Screening at Emanu-El.** Jeff Lieberman, filmmaker of "Re-Emerging: The Jews of Nigeria" answers questions following the film. Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Ave., Providence; 7 p.m. RSVP: Rabbi Elan Babchuck, 331-1616.

## Wednesday | Jan. 23

**Hebrew Coffee.** Israeli emissary Matan Graff leads program for people who know basic Hebrew. Alliance, 401 Elm-grove Ave., Providence. 7 p.m.; Matan Graff, 421-4111, ext. 121.

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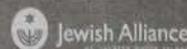
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# Netanyahu aide Dermer brings American sensibilities to Israeli politics

*Will right-leaning politico be tapped to succeed Michael Oren?*

By BEN SALES

TEL AVIV (JTA) – Like many Israeli politicians, Ron Dermer is an unapologetic defender of Israel's actions, even if it might mean being undiplomatic.

But like a seasoned diplomat, Dermer – senior adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu – knows his way through Washington's back channels and has cultivated relationships with senior U.S. policymakers.

Most important, say those who know him, he has Netanyahu's ear.

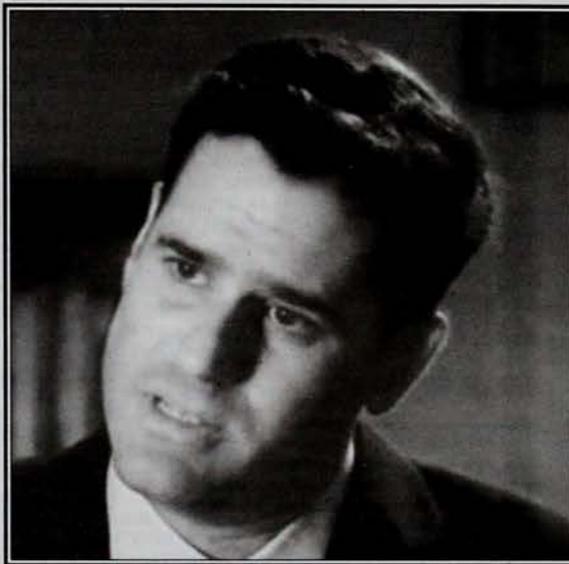
"Netanyahu likes him, respects him and listens to him," said Uzi Arad, Netanyahu's national security adviser until 2011. "I often asked for his advice. In many ways he was a guy to listen to. When it came to knowledge and being cultured and erudite and intellectually inclined, that's him."

Dermer's name was floated last week as a possible successor to Michael Oren as Israel's ambassador to Washington. Although the report about Dermer – published last Friday in Israel's Makor Rishon newspaper – was denied almost immediately, it could be a trial balloon. Oren is set to return to Israel in the spring, providing an opening at the most important overseas post in the Israeli diplomatic corps.

Netanyahu's office declined to comment on the report; the Israeli Embassy in Washington called it baseless.

If Dermer were to go to Washington, he would be the second U.S.-born Israeli ambassador to the United States in a row.

**"I WANTED TO help another nation I love defend the freedoms that Americans have long taken for granted."**



Ron Dermer

Born and raised in Florida and educated at the University of Pennsylvania, Dermer, 41, started his career working with Republican strategist Frank Luntz on the Republicans' 1994 midterm election victory. From there, he went on to earn a master's degree at Oxford, intermittently traveling to Israel to work on the Knesset campaign of Natan Sharansky, the former Soviet refusenik who then headed the Russian-immigrant Yisrael B'Aliyah party.

Dermer immigrated to Israel

in 1997 and stayed with Sharansky for his 1999 Knesset drive. He continued consulting after the election; in 2001, he began writing a weekly Jerusalem Post column, The Numbers Game, which became an outlet for his hardline views. In 2003, for example, Dermer wrote that in agreeing to the U.S.-sponsored "road map" plan for Israeli-Palestinian peace, Israel had given up its sovereignty.

"It is one thing for Israel to take into consideration what America says," he wrote. "In fact, Israel's national interest demands that it do so. But it is quite another to cede to a third party, no matter how friendly, the right to determine Israel's future."

In 2005, with Netanyahu serving as Israel's finance minister, Dermer returned to Washington to become the economic

charge d'affaires at Israel's embassy. He had to surrender his U.S. citizenship to take the job, and in a column in the New York Sun wrote that he "left America because I wanted to help another nation I love defend the freedoms that Americans have long taken for granted."

That conviction came through in "The Case for Democracy" (published by PublicAffairs, February 2006), a book Dermer co-authored with Sharansky in 2004 on the importance of democracy for newly independent nations. The book reportedly was a major influence on President George W. Bush's worldview.

Dermer returned to Israel in 2008 to work on Netanyahu's successful campaign for prime minister and has stayed with Netanyahu. Colleagues say he brings American sensibilities – and an acute understanding of Washington politics – to the job.

"He understands how Americans view Israelis and how Israelis view Americans," said Mitchell Barak, an Israeli pollster who met Dermer as an adviser to former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. "He knows how to work [in Washington] and has personal relations."

In his current role, Dermer has been a pugnacious public defender of Netanyahu, the

NETANYAHU | 28

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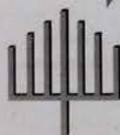


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## WILL Congress retaliate against Palestinian Authority?

From Page 1

tions General Assembly's overwhelming vote that granted Palestinians non-member observer state status.

Conversely, the Reform movement has emphatically urged President Obama not to retaliate against the Palestinians, JTA has learned. The Reform movement also has resolved to oppose the shuttering of the PLO office.

The lines dividing the two organizations are not necessarily set in stone. The Reform movement has suggested it might back penalties should the Palestinians use their new status to charge Israel in international courts. An AIPAC official suggested to JTA that the organization would wait and see whether the Palestinians go to international courts before it decides its next legislative moves.

Still, the markedly different tone in AIPAC's call to its activists to back the proposed congressional penalties and the Reform movement's plea to the president to ignore such calls could portend a split within the pro-Israel community's center.

An AIPAC official, speaking on condition of anonymity, would not directly address differences with the Reform movement. But the official noted that the congressional letter to Obama that AIPAC backed this month urges a resumption of peace talks in addition to calling for the closing of the PLO office and a suspension of funding to U.N. affiliates that similarly enhance the Palestinians' status.

"Everyone in the pro-Israel community should be pleased that a solid bipartisan majority signed a pro-peace talks letter in support of direct talks and opposed to attempts to delegitimize Israel," said the official.

Israel has made clear that the U.N. decision about the Palestinians should have consequences. It has announced a flurry of new building projects in eastern Jerusalem and the West Bank, and diverted millions of dollars in taxes earmarked for the P.A. to Israeli utilities providers that have been dunning the Palestinians for payment.

Michael Oren, Israeli ambassador to Washington, was asked in an interview with Jewish media during Hanukkah his view on congressional proposals to penalize the Palestinians. His answer suggested pique not just at the Palestinians' enhanced U.N. status but also at the speech by P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas that preceded the vote.

"We think that the Palestinians when they violate agreements, when they declare that Israel is a war criminal or when they describe Israel as a war criminal for defending itself against thousands of terrorist rockets without ever condemning those rockets, we think they should be held to task for that,"



Jeremy Ben-Ami,  
president of J Street



Rabbi Steve Fox, chief executive  
officer of the Reform movement's  
Central Conference  
of American Rabbis



Howard Kohr, AIPAC's  
executive director

he said. "We do not think they should be given a free pass."

But the leaders of the largest American Jewish denomination have called for restraint from the U.S. in responding to the Palestinians' U.N. bid.

In a Dec. 14 letter to Obama, Rabbi Rick Jacobs, president of the Union for Reform Judaism, and Rabbi Steve Fox, chief executive officer of the Reform movement's Central Conference of American Rabbis, noted a Dec. 3 resolution jointly approved by the boards of a number of Reform organizations.

**"WE DO NOT think [the P.A.] should be given a free pass."**

The statement, the rabbis note in the letter, condemns the Palestinians for moving ahead with the advanced status but also "urges Congress to eschew any action that would serve as an impediment" to resuming Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

The letter from the Reform leaders to Obama attaches the Dec. 3 resolution, which opposes funding cuts to the Palestinians, to the United Nations and "any reduction in the currently recognized Palestinian diplomatic presence."

The resolution also "opposes" Israel's retaliatory plans to build Jewish homes in eastern Jerusalem and the West Bank, and supports "appropriate measures if the Palestinians use their new status at the U.N. to initiate formal action against Israel via the International Criminal Court or other agency."

The Reform movement made public the Dec. 3 resolution, but the Dec. 14 letter to Obama was released by mistake to a JTA reporter. A spokesman for the group said the failure to publicize the letter to the president was an oversight, noting that it was sent when the nation was preoccupied with the massacre of first-graders the same day in

Newtown, Conn.

Some dovish Jewish groups also have made clear their opposition to penalties for the Palestinians, among them J Street and Americans for Peace Now.

In a fundraising letter, J Street President Jeremy Ben-Ami counted the 239 signatures on the AIPAC-backed congressional letter sent Dec. 21 as a victory for his movement, noting particularly that only 67 Democrats signed.

"We're seeing the impact in Congress where two-thirds of the Democratic Caucus refused to sign AIPAC's latest letter calling for closing the PLO's diplomatic mission in Washington," Ben-Ami said in the letter. "Such letters used to be signed by four out of every five members of Congress. Not any more."

A slate of recent AIPAC-backed letters indeed have scored signatures in the mid-300s, but letters scoring in the mid-200s are not exceptional, and the new letter was still signed by a majority of the U.S. House of Representatives.

The AIPAC official acknowledged that the organization had hoped for more signatures but added that the letter was circulated toward the end of a congressional session — one that was preoccupied with a compromise on spending and taxes.

"There's a confidence that [Reps.] Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Howard Berman would have gotten more signatures had there been time," the official said, referring respectively to the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Republican chairwoman and Democratic ranking member who together initiated the letter. Both are leaving their top committee posts, Berman after having lost an intra-party reelection battle in his home district and Ros-Lehtinen as a result of Republican caucus rules limiting the tenures of committee heads.

On its website, AIPAC touted the congressional letter as a key element of its legislative agenda.

"The Palestinians must face consequences," AIPAC said.

"The United States should continue to press the Palestinians to refrain from such harmful actions and outline repercussions if they move ahead, such as closing the PLO office in Washington."

The letter proposes the immediate closing of the office "to send the message that such actions are not cost-free and that, at a minimum, they result in setbacks to U.S.-Palestinian relations."

AIPAC is also backing a Senate amendment that would shut the PLO office and, if the Palestinians proceed to the International Criminal Court, cut P.A. funding.

AIPAC's professional leadership circulated a letter to senators urging its passage.

"The amendment does two things," said the letter, signed by Howard Kohr, AIPAC's executive director, and Marvin Feuer and Brad Gordon, its joint directors of policy and government affairs. "[First, it] would cut off aid to the Palestin-

ian Authority should it successfully pursue anti-Israel efforts at the International Criminal Court [and second,] it would close down all PLO offices in the United States unless the Palestinians reenter meaningful peace negotiations with Israel."

AIPAC, however, has not alerted its activists to the Senate amendment.

The amendment, proposed by Sens. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) on the same day as the U.N. vote, never made it to the Senate floor; it's not clear why.

Also not clear is why the House letter did not include a recommendation to Obama to cut funding to the Palestinians, although it has been the centerpiece of warnings over the last year to Palestinians should they press ahead with efforts to upgrade their status at the United Nations. The offices of Ros-Lehtinen, a Florida Republican, and Berman, a California Democrat, did not return requests for comment.

Israel in the past has quietly opposed cutting off funding to the Palestinians, and even after the U.N. vote, with the exception of the diversion of some \$180 million in taxes earmarked for the Palestinian Authority to Israel's electricity provider, it has refrained from imposing its own penalties.

Despite diplomatic tensions, Israeli and Palestinian Authority security forces continue to cooperate to keep the West Bank quiet, and Israeli security officials in the past have been vocal in their opposition to funding cuts for the Palestinians.

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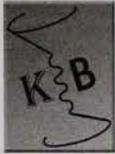
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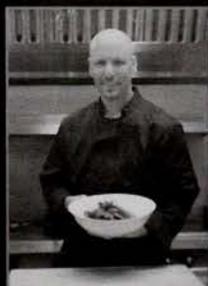
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# Veggie Fun is a kosher alternative to shlepping to Boston or Newton

*Vegan pan-Asian restaurant is in downtown Providence*

BY DR. HOWARD MINTZ  
Special to The Voice & Herald

PROVIDENCE – As a vegetarian, I was excited when I heard some weeks ago that Veggie Fun, a new restaurant in Providence, was kosher-certified. For years, the only alternative for individuals here who follow the laws of kashrut and wanted to eat in a restaurant was to make the hour-long trip to Boston or Newton; then after eating, they'd have to make the return trip.

Now, Veggie Fun, a pan-Asian vegan restaurant located at 123 Dorrance St. in downtown Providence, provides a new choice. According to a letter prominently posted on the front door of the restaurant, Rabbi Barry Dolinger of Congregation Beth Sholom, an Orthodox

## RESTAURANT REVIEW

synagogue in Providence, oversees Veggie Fun's kashrut practices.

We recently ate there for the fourth time. Since dinners include brown rice and a choice of miso soup or salad, my wife and I find that two entrees and a shared appetizer are adequate for us. When we ate at Veggie Fun recently to review it for The Jewish Voice & Herald, we wanted to sample more dishes, so we tried two appetizers, two entrees, a noodle dish, soup and desserts.

The Lemongrass Hot & Sour Soup we had that night was too peppery for my taste; I actually liked better the Miso Mushroom Soup that comes with

the main course. The Stir-Fry Udon Noodles we had that night were also quite good.

During our visits to the restaurant, we have tried five different appetizers at one time or another: Scallion Pancakes, Grilled Eggplant, Curry Samosas, Vegetable Dumplings and the Roll Sampler. We enjoyed all of them.

We have also enjoyed many of the main dishes: Sweet Citrus Soy Chicken, General Tso's Soy Chicken, Soy Cutlet Sizzling Platter, Eggplant String Beans and the Black Pepper Veggie Beef.

The Mango Soy Chicken was slightly sweet and did not have a lot of flavor. The only dish I truly disliked was the Ocean

VEGGIE FUN | 15

## Rabbi Dolinger is Veggie Fun's *mashgiah*

*Orthodox rabbi believes kosher restaurants enhance quality of life*

BY NANCY KIRSCH  
nkirsch@shalomri.org

PROVIDENCE – Always eager to "bring quality kosher options to the Jewish community here," Rabbi Barry Dolinger, of Congregation Beth Sholom, added that he believes it's a rabbi's responsibility to try to foster traditional Jewish observances. Being able to dine out with friends and family and having a night off from cooking, he said, enhances the quality of people's lives.

Shortly after Veggie Fun, a vegan Pan-Asian restaurant, opened, Rabbi Dolinger met

with its management to assess whether the restaurant would be willing to work with him to receive kosher certification.

Once in the kitchen, he asked, "Do you know anything about [keeping] kosher?"

The response from manager Lucy Zhu, "Look at our ice cream – it's Klein Parve Ice Cream."

The manager's family manages a kosher restaurant in Brooklyn, N.Y. under the supervision of another rabbi, Rabbi Dolinger said. As the two restaurants largely use the same suppliers and ingredients, there were only a few items whose sourcing Rabbi Dolinger required be changed.

The process of approving an entity for kashrut, he said, requires some knowledge of both food science and the laws of kashrut. He reviewed – on paper and in person – every single ingredient the restaurant used and explained in detail how vegetables should be washed and cleaned of bugs.

As the *mashgiah* (kosher supervisor), Rabbi Dolinger

checks in a couple of times each week to "make sure life is good." In frequent contact with Zhu, Rabbi Dolinger said, "I don't eat there every time I go, but whether I intend to or not, [Zhu] does her best to try to get me to eat."

"She'll ask me, 'Taste this, try this, what do you think?' She's a little bit of a Jewish mother!"

Rabbi Dolinger expressed some concern about a national trend he sees. "A lot of national organizations have been getting stricter in their approaches [to kashrut. Some] independent Orthodox rabbis – such as me – believe a stricter approach is not always a better approach; other values must be considered all while assuring that [the entity] is reliably kosher."

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** A future issue of The Voice & Herald will include an interview with Rabbi Noach Karp, kashrut coordinator of the Vaad of Rhode Island.



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THIS IS ONE of an occasional series of stories about local businesses, some of which advertise with The Jewish Voice & Herald.

**VEGGIE FUN** offers kosher food

From Page 14

Harvest; I didn't care at all for the slimy fake shrimp and oyster mushrooms. The salad that comes with the main dinner is nothing more than just iceberg lettuce and chopped mango, so I would choose the Miso Mushroom Soup every time.

The restaurant recently added a dessert menu, which includes freshly made Brown

Rice Pudding and Tempura Fried Banana with Chocolate Soy Ice Cream; they were both tasty.

The staff is very friendly and attentive, and the service is quick and pleasant. The restaurant is nicely decorated and not crowded and noisy as are many kosher restaurants. There is free parking after 5 p.m. in a lot across the street.

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**Susan DeMaio, September 2009**

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## KERRY is a popular choice to replace outgoing Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

From Page 7

in the Holocaust – deeply affected him.

His brother Cameron Kerry converted to Judaism before marrying a Jewish woman, Kathy Weinman. Cameron is active in the Jewish communities in Boston and Washington, where he is general counsel at the Commerce Department.

Jay Footlik, who ran the Kerry campaign's Jewish outreach, recalled that Kerry would take time out to be briefed on every new wrinkle in matters affecting Israel.

"He took a deep interest in the U.S.-Israel relationship," Footlik said. "The community ought to be thrilled."

These connections are helping Kerry win Jewish support for his nomination to replace Hillary Clinton as U.S. secretary of state. President Obama made the announcement that Kerry was his new choice on Dec. 21, after opponents decried the candidacy of Susan Rice, currently U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

In welcoming the nomination, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suggested an emotional bond with Kerry.

"John Kerry and I have been friends for many years," Netanyahu said. "I very much appreciated the fact that six months ago, after my father passed away, he came to visit me during the week of mourning."

As chairman of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee,

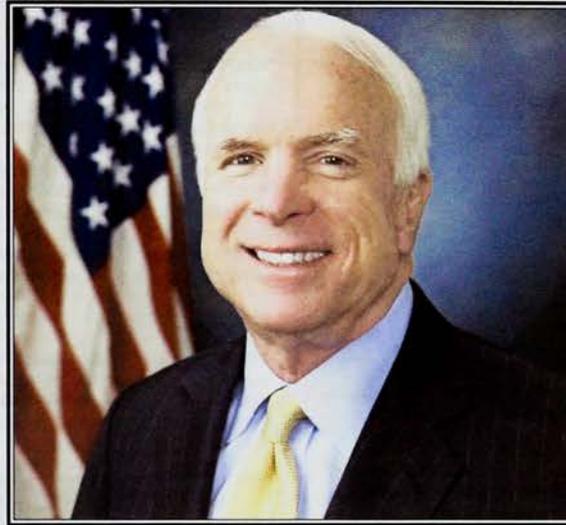
Kerry often has acted as an advance man for Obama's foreign policy, touting ideas the administration might not be ready to fully embrace. In March 2009, he called for a settlement freeze months before it became the centerpiece of tensions between the Obama and Netanyahu governments.

"Over these many years, [Sen. Kerry] has earned the respect and confidence of leaders around the world," Obama said recently at a White House appearance alongside Kerry. "He is not going to need a lot of on-the-job training."

In a statement, the ADL noted, "Kerry has consistently been an effective advocate for Israel's security in a dangerous region and demonstrated his commitment to fighting against anti-Semitism and bigotry all over the world." The statement said that Kerry's first visit to Israel was in an ADL congressional mission in May 1986.

Kerry's nomination also earned kudos from J Street, the liberal Jewish group that advocates for more U.S. involvement in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and encourages U.S. pressure on Israel to stop West Bank settlement expansion.

"Kerry would be well positioned to play a leading role should President Obama move to revive peace efforts aimed at achieving a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," J Street said in a statement. "Kerry understands that



OFFICE OF SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

Like Kerry, U.S. Senator McCain, a Kerry supporter, served in Vietnam.

peace is not only essential for Israel's survival, but also a fundamental U.S. interest."

Such agreement in the Jewish community on Kerry's nomination stands in contrast to another rumored Obama nomination: former Senator Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.) for defense secretary.

Little of substance distinguishes Kerry and Hagel, insiders say. Each has advocated outreach to pariah nations like Iran and Syria, and each has issued sharp criticism of Israel – Hagel in 2006 during the Second Lebanon War and Kerry in

2010, against what he saw as the gratuitous excesses of Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip.

What differentiates Kerry from Hagel, pro-Israel officials say, is his willingness to engage even when he disagrees, and his familiarity with the issues.

"Will we always agree? No," Foxman said. "But we're going to have in place someone who is knowledgeable, and that always works well for us."

Daniel Mariaschin, who directs B'nai B'rith International, said he hoped that Kerry, as secretary of state, would show awareness of the uncertainties roiling the region, particularly in Egypt, where the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood has asserted control, and in Syria, which is mired in civil war.

"I would hope that ... at least on questions related to Israel,

he would take into account the fast-moving variables," Mariaschin said.

Even before Obama's announcement, Kerry had the backing of Senate colleagues, Republicans as well as Democrats. He has a longstanding friendship with Senator John McCain (R-Ariz); both men are Vietnam veterans and in the 1980s paved the way to reconciliation between the United States and Vietnam.

The pick earned quick plaudits from a leading pro-Israel stalwart in the U.S. House of Representatives, Rep. Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.), senior Democrat on the Appropriations Committee.

"As chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he has worked to marshal support for tough sanctions against Iran and defend our ally Israel, and played a critical role as an envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan," Lowey said in a statement.

Kerry has a solid voting record on issues favored by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, but rarely has taken the lead on legislation AIPAC favors.

Kerry was a leader in the 1980s on Soviet Jewry issues in Congress, and he has maintained close ties with the successors to the Soviet Jewry advocacy movement, said Mark Levin, who directs NCSJ: Advocates on Behalf of Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States and Eurasia.

"For the last 20 years he's been intimately involved in every issue impacting the U.S.-Russia relationship," Levin said. "He's had an open door on Russia when it comes to xenophobia and anti-Semitism."

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NANCY KIRSCH

Amy Larson McGuirk and Andrew Mattera, a J-Fitness trainer

## From weight loss maintenance to weightlifting

*J-Fitness trainers working with Amy Larson McGuirk*

**BY NANCY KIRSCH**  
nkirsch@shalomri.org

PROVIDENCE – When Amy Larson McGuirk came into the Alliance JCC J-Fitness last February she wanted to train for fitness and weight maintenance. The Johnson & Wales culinary arts student had lost 60 pounds and wanted to keep it off, she said.

But after a few months into her training regime with Andrew Mattera, a J-Fitness trainer, the 23-year-old talks about competing in weightlifting in the 2016 Olympics!

As part of her training regime some months ago, Andrew suggested she do some deadlifts. An advocate of weightlifting for the

“amazing effects it has” on clients’ health, Andrew added, “I am extremely careful about the weight we use so as not to injure anyone.”

Andrew said, “She completely shocked me by deadlifting 200 pounds like it was a stick with pine cones on each end.”

Weightlifting has its own language, apparently, as Andrew explained. “We have been doing squats, clean and jerks, snatches, military presses and deadlifts, said Andrew, describing a variety of weight-lifting methods. “She deadlifted 255 pounds less than a month ago and squatted 200 pounds a week ago. Ev-

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# A slip can have disastrous consequences

*Skating and accepting one's physical limitations help injury heal*

By **NANCY KIRSCH**  
nkirsch@shalomri.org

PROVIDENCE — Although Sept. 22, 2011 began as a routine day for Providence resident Karen Feldman, it quickly spiraled out of control when she slipped and fell on a marble floor.

"I walked into the car dealership to have my car serviced [on a] rainy day. I put my left foot on the floor [but] because the carpet was pushed to one side of the shiny marble floor, I slipped and fell, slammed my entire left side onto the marble floor," said Feldman. "I thought I'd broken my spine; the pain was excruciating."

Relying on her instincts as an ice skater, yet fearing paralysis, Feldman asked to have some ice to alleviate some of her pain. Emergency clinic X-rays revealed that she had injured some discs in her lower spine, ripped tendons around her spine and sprained her left arm; Feldman also reported that she had several contusions as well. "My left side was pretty useless; I couldn't use my left arm," she said. "I couldn't walk or sit; the pain was so bad."

Before she learned the results of the X-rays, she knew, she said, that her life was going to change ... and accepting those changes was essential. Grateful that she wasn't paralyzed, she said, "I knew it would take a

long time to get through. Competitive ice-dancing, which is like figure-skating on ice with a partner, was one of the loves of my life for the past three years. I realized that it would have to go by the wayside ... I would have to accept the reality that I might have a lifelong spinal injury that might [prevent] a return to skating."

Feldman, who also works as an interior designer and cer-

**"I THOUGHT I'D broken my spine; the pain was excruciating."**

tified Feng Shui consultant, believes in the connections between mind and body. Healers, she said, remind us: "what we resist persists."

Had she resisted the information about her injury, she said, "I couldn't have moved forward. I realized right away that I didn't have any other options; the pain was a constant reminder of reality. My body was in charge."

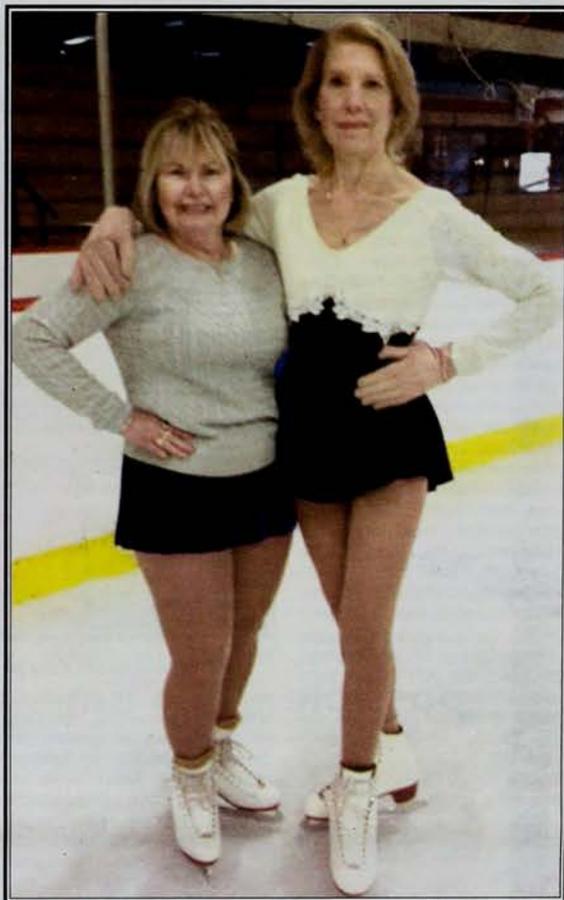
After several sessions of physical therapy, Feldman realized that she would eventually

be able to regain a more-or-less normal schedule, which could include ice-skating. During her recuperation, Feldman said that she struggled to allow the process of healing to take as long as necessary. "I needed to let my body be in charge; I couldn't keep to my self-imposed timetable of when I'd skate again," she said.

Six weeks after her injury and with the support of her physical therapist, she took her first tentative steps on the ice. Fearful and tentative, with atrophied muscles, Feldman said it took four times as long as normal simply to lace up her skates. "I'll give myself five minutes on the ice — if I can do that, I can get connected to the ice again," she told herself.

Feldman said that, though she was in "excruciating pain while walking," she continued her ice-skating schedule, increasing her time on the ice by a few minutes each week.

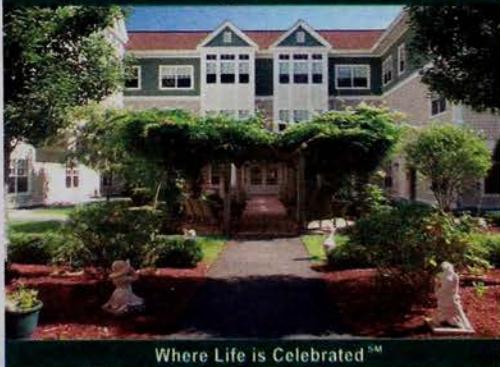
Skating, she said, "was very empowering [and] helped me heal. I got part of my life back and it gave me hope." Her desire to get back to her normal ice-dancing practice schedule of 60 to 90 minutes three times a week motivated her to push herself in physical therapy. Even as she worked her body hard, she said that she held fast to surrendering and detaching from outcomes. "Allowing your body to do what it needs to ... you get to



BARBARA SMITH

Karen Feldman, right, on the ice with her 79-year-old skating friend, Louise, after a recent ice-dancing competition.

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a better place faster," she said. "I visualized myself getting stronger, skating without pain and taking tests and passing, which I did."

Not only does ice-dancing allow Feldman to participate in U.S. Figure Skating Association competitions, but it also provides cardiovascular benefits, builds strength and improves focus and balance.

"For me, competing in ice-skating is a metaphor for expanding my horizons and not limiting myself. I'm working on my fourth dancing test [which Feldman said, she passed with flying colors several weeks after this interview]," she said. Skating has "encouraged me and supported me to always challenge my thinking and

push myself into new territories and assume that all will be well — to take more risks and more chances and be open to my potential" and, at the same time, "to learn to be much more respectful of my body ... to release rigid conceptions about what I should be doing."

What other lessons did she learn?

"Two big lessons: the power of intention and surrender and how quickly life can turn on a dime," she said. "In a few seconds, everything in my life turned upside down."

**KAREN FELDMAN** is a resident of Providence. Contact her at urbaneden@cox.net.

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# Food Bank teaches wholesome cooking on a budget

*Kosher Full Plate clients participate in eight-week nutrition education program*

By **CINDY ELDER**

Special to The Voice & Herald

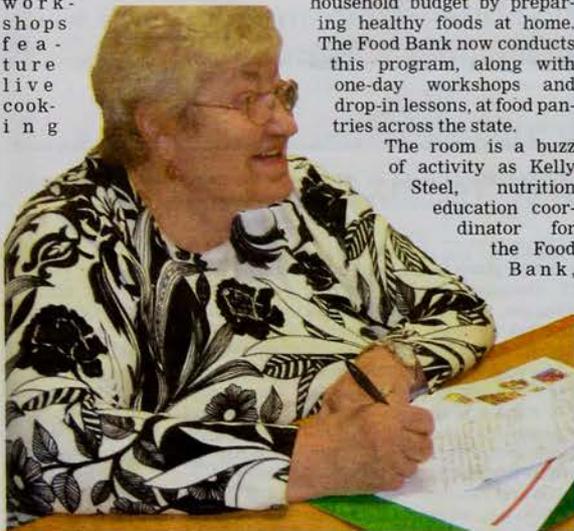
PROVIDENCE – This is not your typical cooking class.

Most of the participants speak Russian and use a food pantry to help fill their cupboards. The majority are senior citizens, joined by others who are cooking for their elderly parents.

Since mid-November, this unlikely group of students has been gathering once a week at the Louis and Goldie Chester Full Plate Kosher Pantry on Niantic Avenue in Providence for a free, eight-week nutrition education program offered by the Rhode Island Community Food Bank.

The Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island's Annual Campaign provides funds to the pantry, noted Susan Adler, the Louis and Goldie Chester Full Plate Kosher Food Pantry coordinator; the most recent annual allocation totals approximately \$20,000.

The program, called Community Cooking: Wholesome Eating on a Budget, empowers food pantry clients to cook and eat well. The workshops feature live cooking



Irena Pugachevskaya, a student in the Community Cooking: Wholesome Eating on a Budget class, takes notes on the recipe of the day.



The Food Bank's Kelly Steel demonstrates how much sugar a typical energy drink contains.

demonstrations and practical advice on how to stretch the household budget by preparing healthy foods at home. The Food Bank now conducts this program, along with one-day workshops and drop-in lessons, at food pantries across the state.

The room is a buzz of activity as Kelly Steel, nutrition education coordinator for the Food Bank,

prepares vegetable soup in front of the class. The students will sample the soup later in the morning and they'll leave the class with all the ingredients needed to make the soup at home.

Each step in the cooking process is read aloud in English before Tamara Kashina, Russian coordinator for the Jewish Seniors Agency's To Life Center Adult Day Services program, translates the instructions into Russian.

Questions come fast and furious – in English and in Russian.

"I noticed you wiped off [the] cans before you opened them. Why do you do that?" asked one student.

"What about fresh herbs? Can I use fresh herbs instead of dried herbs?" asks another.

"Can I use liquid broth instead of bouillon cubes?"

In something under 30 minutes, the soup is made and set to simmer while the class turns its attention to the sub-

ject of the day: fruit. Steel challenges them to think of all the ways they can get fruit into their diet: raw, canned, frozen, dried and juice. This leads to an eye-opening discussion about portion size and the sugar content in various beverages.

Steel lines up a dozen beverages on a display table and challenges the students, like contestants in a culinary game show, to rank them according to sugar content. Everyone guesses – correctly – that water has no sugar. But they're shocked to discover how much sugar is in beverages such as lemonade and energy drinks. Steel holds long rows of sugar packets laminated together to graphically display the sugar content in a single beverage.

Students come to the class with different levels of cooking experience. Donna Root, who cooks for her mother at home, considers herself an accomplished cook. But she still learned something she didn't know before. "I never knew two

kiwis have just as much potassium as a banana. I like kiwis."

The classes, Root said, "provide a lot of non-technical information you can easily understand. You don't need to have a degree. You're not using strange foods. She's using foods that a lot of us eat."

What was most surprising, said Root, was how quickly Steel could prepare a meal in front of a class while talking to them.

The Community Cooking program focuses on balance, moderation and variety. Lessons integrate learning in four key areas: nutrition (following the USDA's guidelines for healthy eating), healthy cooking, food safety and food budgeting.

Over the course of eight weeks, students should acquire a solid understanding of the nutritional value and cooking methods of grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy, proteins and healthy fats.

"This program goes hand-in-hand with what we do," said Adler. "When you're giving them food, it's important to also give them the skills to prepare a healthy meal. We're not just giving them a can of beans; we're giving them dignity. They feel good about what they pull off the shelf, because they know they can cook a nice meal for their family."

CINDY ELDER is director of communications at the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. Contact her at 230-1674 or celder@rifoodbank.org.

FOR MORE ABOUT the Rhode Island Community Food Bank, which distributed nearly 10 million pounds of food last year to area food pantries, visit rifoodbank.org or call 942-6325.

FOR MORE ABOUT the Louis and Goldie Chester Full Plate Kosher Pantry, one of the more than 300 programs in Rhode Island, Israel and overseas that the Alliance Annual Campaign helps support, visit jsari.org or call Susan Adler at 621-5374.

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# Alliance JCC unrolls new health and wellness initiatives

*Customer-driven programs include healthy eating workshops, online BeWell initiative*

By **NANCY KIRSCH**  
nkirsch@shalomri.org

PROVIDENCE – How often do people commit – in their New Year's resolutions – to get to the gym on a regular basis and then, after a few days of exercise, fall back into their "bad old habits"?

Recognizing that tendency among some individuals – members and nonmembers, J-Fitness, a program of the Alliance's JCC, is launching several new programs to get people committed to healthier life styles.

Vin Kilbridge, director of Alliance operations, said that J-Fitness is "rolling out a few new programs, all oriented toward our customers' needs and wants."



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## BeWell Program

"The BeWell Program offers our members fitness assessments, lifestyle questionnaires, health logs, exercise and meal planners, workshops, challenges, incentives and rewards," said Carlene Barth, director of health, fitness & aquatics. The free program, she said, is being launched in January.

Although directed primarily at new J-Fitness members, the free online program is open to all J-Fitness members, she said. The program, said Barth, allows your J-Fitness trainer to monitor your efforts and help you train toward a healthier life style, either through better nutrition, smoking cessation or increased commitment to exercise. "If you don't remember your training regime when you are on vacation but want to work out in the hotel gym," said Barth, "the mobile app allows you talk to your trainer who can make suggestions and recommendations – you're just a click away."

While J-Fitness members are neither obligated to give trainers access to their completed health assessments nor enroll in personal training at J-Fitness, Barth said individuals who do will get a fuller range of benefits from the BeWell program.

Once your assessment is completed, if you choose not to work with a personal trainer, you can look at boilerplate, pre-packaged workouts, said Barth.

As for rewards for full participation, Barth is currently looking to identify budget-friendly incentives.

## Healthy Eating Workshop Series



"Chef G" – Georgina Sarpong

BRIAN SULLIVAN

With healthy living requiring attention to both good nutrition and sufficient exercise, J-Fitness is launching a series of healthy eating workshops that J-Fitness personal trainer Jodie Thompson and the Alliance's Early Childhood Center's chef Georgina Sarpong ("Chef G") will host. Each workshop will select one main ingredient that will serve as the basis of several different healthy dishes. Workshop attendees, who will participate in food preparation and a food tasting, will leave with recipes for what was prepared. The hour-long work-

shops, said Barth, will be held in the evening and will charge a nominal fee of between \$15 and \$25 per person.

The first healthy eating workshop, focusing on how to incorporate leafy greens into several healthy menu choices – salad, snack and morning shake – will be held Monday, Jan. 21 from 6 – 7:30 p.m. The cost is \$15 per person.

## New J-Fitness equipment, different swim programs

Kilbridge noted that the Alliance plans to replace some J-Fitness cardio equipment.

Additionally, staff is looking at other JCCs' recreational and competitive swimming programs. "Our TigerSharks' competitive swim team is now in its second year," he said. "We want to see how we can continue to improve our swim programs."

While maintaining membership can often be challenging, said Kilbridge, the Alliance sent recruitment flyers to thousands of prospective new members late last month. "The Jewish Community Center Association [the national organization for all JCCs] is helping us target our membership and marketing initiatives," said Kilbridge.

For example, all J-Fitness members can receive Barth's monthly e-newsletter with healthy recipes, fitness tips and suggestions, etc. If you don't currently get it but want to be on the email list, contact Barth.

**CONTACT CARLENE BARTH** at 421-4111, ext. 210 or cbarth@shalomri.org.

**CONTACT JODIE THOMPSON** to RSVP for Healthy Eating Workshop at 421-4111, ext. 155 by Jan. 15.

**CONTACT VIN KILBRIDGE** at 421-4111, ext. 111 or vkilbridge@shalomri.org.

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*A Wimpel for Isaac (detail) by Jane Tringali, 2009*



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# 'Lose Weight Gain Life'

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## BUSINESS PROFILE

By **ARTHUR C. NORMAN**  
Special to The Voice & Herald

PROVIDENCE - Lifestyle changes are more important for successful weight loss than standard behavior management (dieting) programs, according to clinical psychologist Dr. Gabriella Rothman. Success with weight loss programs, she said, "requires self-examination of internal and external triggers, particularly the emotional ones." Stress, she said, is the key internal trigger. External triggers include social gatherings, holidays and celebrations.

Together with her colleague, Dr. Deborah Sepinwall, Dr. Rothman conducts 12-week outcome-based group programs, beginning with a free hour-long orientation. (The next orientation is Jan. 8; the next group begins Jan. 15.) She referred to their perspective on treatment as "acceptance and commitment therapy - ACT." The therapy focuses on deeply held core values (what is important) - kids, work, relationships, for example - and develops ways to cope with the triggers without turning to eating. It is not easy to do, said Rothman, but it leads to long-term success.

Group settings work best, she said, because they offer the greatest opportunity for support of like-minded men and women. Groups are limited to 15 participants and have included a full range of ages, from college students to septuagenarians, as well as a mix of backgrounds and motivations.

A 70-year-old pre-diabetic cancer survivor, who wanted to see her granddaughter's bat



ALISA GRACE PHOTOGRAPHY

Gabriella Rothman



Deborah Sepinwall

mitzvah and wedding, has adopted strategies that have not only helped her meet her goal of losing 36 pounds in eight

A teenaged client, who shared a bond of food with one of her parents and was about to undergo gastric bypass surgery, utilized the doctors' strategies of evaluating and reordering her core values and has, so far, lost 60 pounds - half her weight-loss goal - and is no longer considering the surgery.

Dr. Rothman's philosophy: "When we choose to live in deference to, or mindfully in sync with, our defining core values - integrity, self-respect, relationships, health - change is so much the easier to enact and sustain."

**"THE THERAPY FOCUSES on deeply held core values."**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** about Lose Weight Gain Life, call 273-3322, ext. 3 or 6.

**THIS IS ONE** of a series of occasional business profiles about Rhode Island-based businesses, some of which advertise with this newspaper.

**ARTHUR C. NORMAN** is an editorial consultant with The Jewish Voice & Herald. Contact him at [abcnorman@aol.com](mailto:abcnorman@aol.com).

months, but, perhaps more importantly, also helped stabilize her blood sugar levels to a point where her doctor proclaimed her "out of the diabetic woods."

Both doctors co-lead each group because, said Rothman, "When we are facilitating discussion, the second set of eyes and ears can attend to other verbal and non-verbal dynamics to better implement strategies for a successful outcome."



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## Slowly but surely, Phyllis Solod is taking off pounds

National organization – TOPS – has local chapters

PROVIDENCE – Phyllis Solod, a loyal volunteer with The Voice & Herald's advertising department, often bakes delicious goodies for the newspaper's staff – and insists that they are calorie-free!

Solod reported that she has found a slow-and-steady way to lose weight. On Aug. 6, 2010, she joined TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) with a friend. Over the past 27 or 28 months, she said, she has lost 28 pounds.

About 30 or so people attend Solod's TOPS' weekly meeting. The meeting, at which dues are assessed, begins with a pledge. If a member gains weight, he or she pays 5 cents for every pound gained; when a member loses weight, he or she will receive an incentive at certain intervals.

Solod said that she needs to lose about six more pounds to achieve her goal weight – the weight that her doctor believes is right for her!



NANCY KIRSCH

Phyllis Solod

The website – tops.org – has a search engine for those seeking a meeting in their area. It also describes what to expect at a typical TOPS' meeting:

- Each member has a private

weigh-in before the meeting. (If there are two times listed on a meeting, the weigh-in time is listed first.)

- Meeting starts with members sharing challenges, successes or goals (if they want).

- There's a brief program. TOPS gives each chapter engaging, professionally prepared programs covering a variety of health and wellness topics.

- Awards go to weekly or monthly best losers, contest winners and members who've reached goal!

- When needed, there's a quick business meeting before the closing.

- Meeting closes with a thought for the week or other inspirational activity.

VISIT [TOPS.ORG](http://TOPS.ORG) for more information or to find a meeting.

## OLYMPICS a potential goal for culinary arts student

From Page 17

ery week, she continues to break her own personal records."

### Ultimate goal: Olympics?

Describing Amy as someone built for lifting, Andrew said, "I tell Amy that she should look toward the Olympics. 'Go big or go home' is what I always say."

Noting that Tom Marchand, J-Fitness personal trainer, is also helping train Amy, Andrew added, "Tom and I throw our hands up in the air [with] jealousy" because she is so inherently good at these lifts.

Asked what her "ultimate goal" is, Amy said, "Andrew would say it is the Olympics, but he is much more of an optimist than I am... however, I think to myself, 'Why not?' So, why not have the Olympics be my ultimate goal? You might just see me in Rio in four years!"

Amy's upcoming school internship in Hilton Head, S.C. is near a gym in Savannah, Ga. A trainer at that weightlifting gym, Don McCauley, trained with and is still friends with Tom.

"Most of my training these days is going toward my first encounter with Don, to impress... him." She hopes to begin entering some weight-lifting competitions when she is in Georgia.

When she returns, New England competitions await, as well.

### Their best and worst days?

"Every day we work together is the best day," said Andrew. "I have never had a 'worst day' with Amy, only moments of in-

tense complaining. When it comes to exercising, Amy hates everything that isn't related to Olympic lifting."

However, when someone is training in Olympic lifting, he added, the individual has to do some kind of assistance work – short interval training like sprints, sled pulls and tire-flipping, for example.

Amy concurs. Before she began weight lifting, she said that she hated working out. "Now, my best days are when I am lifting, and my worst days are when I am not," she said. "I still have to do conditioning days, through which I complain for a solid hour. However, when I set new personal records during my lifting workouts, those are the best days." Seeing the pride her trainers take in her progress, she said, is also meaningful.

Expressing pleasure in training Amy and calling her "one in a million," Andrew added, "Through weightlifting, we have formed a bond that is going to last a long time. I believe wholeheartedly that she is destined for great things if she stays focused and continues to push herself."

As for Amy, she gets the final word! Having found lifting, she said that her athletic goals have changed. "While also training for fitness, I have different goals of how I want my body to look, how I need to maintain my body and what will work best for lifting in the future. I would like to continue on my path of Olym-

pic lifting and see where that takes me for the next five years. I do not see myself stopping any time soon!"

EVEN NON-OLYMPIC contenders can train in the J-Fitness Center. Contact J-Fitness at 421-4111 for more information.



NANCY KIRSCH

Amy Laron McGuirk lifts at J-Fitness

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Got car stories?

PROVIDENCE – Countless songs feature cars as their themes, from the Beach Boys' "Little Deuce Coupe" and the Beatles' "Drive My Car" to Chuck Berry's "Maybellene" and Bruce Springsteen's "Pink Cadillac," and dozens more.

Why are cars so iconic to American culture? Do you drive a Zipcar? Given up a car completely to rely on public transportation or your own two feet? Still remember the car in which you

proposed to your girlfriend? Do you have stories about "cruising the drive-in" on Saturday nights? Send your car stories to share with our readers for the Feb. 1 issue of The Jewish Voice & Herald.

SEND STORIES AND PHOTOS, if available, to Nancy Kirsch, nkirsch@shalomri.org by Jan. 20. Got questions? Call her at 421-4111, ext. 168.

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PROVIDENCE – We want your stories... For our upcoming bridal issue – published Jan. 18 – we welcome stories about:

- Wedding day blunders or honeymoon horrors
- Managing in-law relationships
- Handling interfaith marriage issues
- Creating blended families after death or divorce
- Juggling family holidays ... or any other advice you might offer a bride-and-groom. Fun or poignant vignettes about one's wedding day and years of marital bliss (or "wanna be" bliss) are most welcome!

We will select the vignette that has the best advice and award the recipient a \$50 gift card from an advertiser of the winner's choice! Send true stories, however brief they may

be – and pictures, please, if you have them, to share with our



readers.

SEND TO NANCY KIRSCH, nkirsch@shalomri.org, by Jan. 10 latest. Don't miss this opportunity to share your stories of your wedding day or of your marriage.

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## New York's a ghost town

We actually beat 'em to it with our own local Four Freedoms Park, across from the Providence County Superior Court and behind the World War II memorial. Our Four Freedoms Park consists of nothing more – or less – than four benches with the famous words inscribed upon them.

I announced my nostalgic and insistent and persistent obsession with those Four Freedoms in the pages of this paper a few years ago. My Rhode Island School of Design faculty colleague Merlin Szasz carved those words onto the contemplative and commemorative granite seats on the Providence River boardwalk along South Main Street at Canal Street. Louis Kahn designed Four Freedoms Park on Roosevelt Island in New York four decades ago, but the park was only completed and dedicated this very October.

Mel and Pat Blake went with my wife Michael and me to experience the exquisite and poignant monument at the southern tip of the former Blackwell, and then Welfare, Island. The thin strip of riverfront flat land had housed a prison and later a hospital for individuals with such dreaded diseases as smallpox.

The narrow island was renamed in honor of FDR, but the architectural conception of a plaque, a sculpture and a grove of linden trees had been postponed until a movie helped

raise awareness, attention and new respect for the proposal. The motion picture was "My Architect," a documentary



SKETCHBOOK

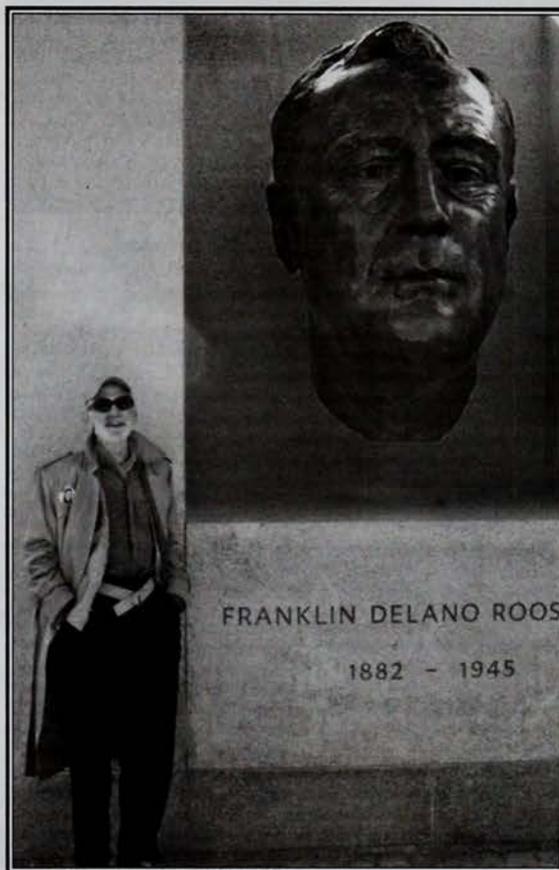
MIKE FINK

created by Kahn's son Nathaniel. (I saw it at the Cable Car.) It was followed by

another film narrated by Orson Welles about the history of the project. Louis Kahn had died before the installation, at long last, began in earnest.

A ruined medieval-looking prison structure abuts the entrance, hollow and echoing, at least in one's imagination. You walk up a grand, but simple, stairway. You follow a row of young trees, walking, beside a lawn, upon a gravel path, and then you come upon the thoughtful bronze head of the great leader. Behind the face you read on a wall the words of that famous speech delivered a year before our entrance onto the battlegrounds of World War II. Roosevelt pledged and promised that the alliance against the Axis forces would be based upon certain ideals of freedom.

You may be able to remember and recite, or you may study them and be surprised by certain key terms, which have become ironic in today's world. Freedom of religion and of speech. Freedom from fear and want. But FDR added the phrases "everywhere in the world" and "anywhere." And he claimed that these



Mike Fink stands beside the sculpture of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

freedoms were essential.

It is a glorious address, perhaps the highest pinnacle in the age of the radio antennae. Beyond those sharp and incisive words there is a space

known as "the room."

The little triangle of space faces the harbor and a tiny rocky island where seabirds perch, gulls and cormorants, packed closely, akin to something you might see at Narragansett Bay. Intimate and yet elegant and stately, rather like the famous voice of FDR, this pilgrimage place was both moving and also somewhat friendly. Do these Four Freedoms even yet guarantee liberty and justice "everywhere" or "anywhere"?

We lit candles in our hotel chamber together, and discussed our impressions.

Mel asked, "Why did it take so long to fulfill the dreams of the architect and the legacy of the president?" Mel posed this problem, thoughtfully and with candor, curiosity and his usual observant surveillance. In a way, he answered his own question. Mel explained that the sculptor, Jo Davidson, who had also passed away, had been indicted by the House Un-American Activities Committee and was a victim of that postwar revisionism.

Roosevelt's own renown had been critically revisited from both the right

and the left, often for diverse reasons. My lady Michael and Pat Blake added that liberty and justice for women, for minorities, for Jews, have not truly flowed and followed from the promises of World War II upon the geography of the world.

I want most especially to thank my companions on this journey, for managing to drive to this once forlorn island, successfully and succinctly, and for celebrating its beauty. It faces the United Nations building and seemed,

"... THE FAMOUS LIST of the Four Freedoms had been carved and chiseled right here in Rhode Island."

to me, to be rebuking it for not living up to the words of that speech of so long ago.

As we strolled past the little table that distributes pamphlets and pins about the new attraction, transforming a dismal landscape into a thing of meaning and dignity ... and a kind of joy, we passed by a tugboat with birds perched peacefully on the topmost "mast" and, of course, a flock of Canada geese floating proudly under a clear blue sky.

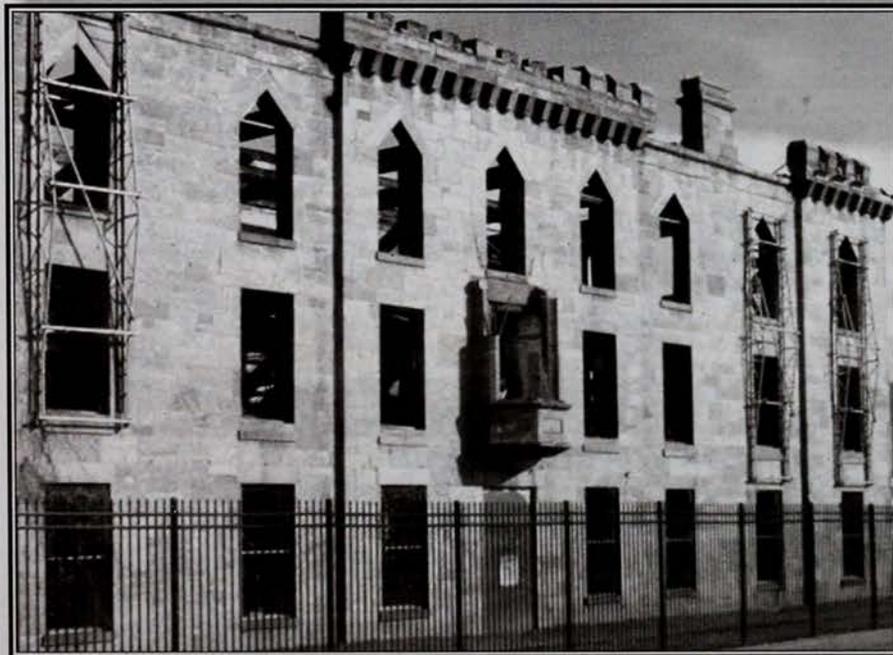
I told my lady Michael and our friends that I was so glad we came to see this and to remember.

En route homeward bound, we discovered in the pages of the dedicatory booklet that the famous list of the Four Freedoms had been carved and chiseled right here in Rhode Island by the stonemasons of the Benson Studio!

I recall a phrase from a song of the FDR four-term, "New York's a Ghost Town." It had many meanings, mostly romantic and personal. But New York City, for many Rhode Islanders, really is a ghost town, despite its vast population of buildings and cars, pigeons and pedestrians.

It remains a place that contains your family's historical past, and those Four Freedoms are as ever intrinsic and inspiring.

MICHAEL FINK is a professor of English at Rhode Island School of Design. Contact him at mfink33@aol.com.



This building – which once served as a prison and later a hospital – stands empty.

MEL BLAKE

# A history of leprosy, which some considered a moral affliction

*Disease gets far less attention than it did during biblical days*

Countless infectious diseases burden mankind; leprosy is distinguishable historically from others by its surrounding cloak of nameless fear.

The Bible mentions leprosy 68 times; Leviticus devotes two entire chapters (13 and 14) solely to priestly responsibilities following its diagnostic recognition.

In Numbers, chapter 12, a strange illness besets Miriam. She and Aaron, overwrought because their brother Moses had wedded a Cushite woman, speak out against him. The Lord admonishes them, and Miriam finds herself newly sickened by a curious skin disorder requiring her isolation for several days from kith and kin.

Miriam's scaly disease (called *tzara'ath* in Leviticus) is generally translated as "leprosy." It is unlikely, though, that Miriam's short-lived affliction was, in fact, leprosy. And so a question inevitably arises: Was this scriptural disease a disorder of human proportions such as tuberculosis or was it a metaphorical expression of divine displeasure? In many instances, such as the alleged leprosy of Uzziah, king of Judah (2 Chronicles 26:19), it followed acts of human arrogance, idolatry, blasphemy or abuse of power, making it more a moral deficiency than a pestilence.

True leprosy is a banal infection, caused by a specific bacterium (*M. leprae*). It is minimally contagious, chronic in nature and grossly disfiguring, but only if neglected for lengthy intervals. Thus, the common image of the hideously deformed, cloaked leper is an inaccurate portrayal. During the Middle Ages, lepers joined the itinerant beggars, the knaves, the mentally deprived and the religiously-haunted pilgrims as a marginal community of wan-

dering supplicants.

There is little doubt that a widespread disease called leprosy did exist during the Middle Ages when church leaders unnecessarily burdened its

remained the only disease that required permanent, relentless quarantining. In essence, it was a life imprisonment set apart from the general community.

Where is leprosy today? After World War II, the World Health Organization listed leprosy as one of those contagions that might be eradicated. And in the first step towards its extinction, the name of the disease was changed to Hansen's disease. Norwegian physician Gerhardt Armauer Hansen (1841-1912), who had discovered the germ that caused leprosy, was instrumental in freeing the disease of its oppressive reputation. Leprosariums on United States soil, such as those in Hawaii and Carville, La., were gradually abandoned.

As of 1960, an estimated 11 million humans globally suffered from Hansen's disease, with about 200,000 new cases identified each year. By the beginning of the 21st century, the total number of those with Hansen's disease had diminished to about 5 million, with cases found principally in Nigeria, Brazil, Myanmar, Indonesia and Bangladesh. In the United States, there are currently about 6,500 identified cases, virtually all of them immigrants living in Hawaii, California, Florida and New York. In Rhode Island, there are no current cases; in the 1970s, a middle-aged male, with an easily treatable case of Hansen's disease, was admitted to a Providence hospital. No one got excited; no street protests gathered and no demands for exorcism or banishment ensued.

Penikese Island, an undistinguished bit of rock off Cape Cod, now houses a school for New England's delinquent boys. Until 1921, it housed New

England's leprosarium – a reminder that people with Hansen's disease were still treated as lepers, even in the civilized

20th century.

STANLEY M. ARONSON, M.D., can be reached at smamd@cox.net.



SCIENCE & SOCIETY

STANLEY ARONSON, M.D.

victims with many harsh injunctions. By the 13th century, in Western Europe, lepers were seen as bearers of a loathsome disease in consequence of their many mortal sins – a disease distinguishable from all other

**"LEPERS WERE UNIFORMLY forbidden to enter into commerce or otherwise commune with mankind."**

ordinary pestilences. Lepers were uniformly forbidden to enter into commerce or otherwise commune with mankind. They were even deprived of the right to attend church, although they were allowed to watch the services through specially constructed slits in church walls. After death, their remains were not permitted burial in consecrated churchyards.

The leper became the universal symbol for societal banishment. And even in the highly secular United States, until the late 20th century, leprosy

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## D'VAR TORAH

## If we remain indifferent, we risk becoming modern-day Pharaohs

EXODUS 1:1 - 6:1  
PARASHAT SH'MOT

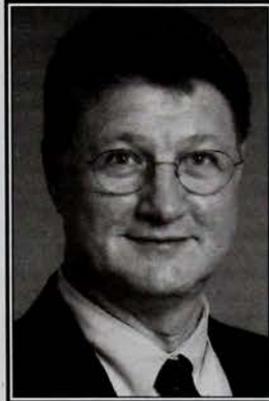
BY RABBI ALAN FLAM  
Special to The Voice & Herald

There is considerable debate today about the "fiscal cliff" and what constitutes the right economic direction for our country. The coming weeks are a critical time as congressional leaders and the president work to bring the federal government's revenue and spending more in balance.

As I write this d'var Torah in mid-December, our political leaders are locked in a fierce disagreement about how best to build our economy. I sincerely hope that by the time this is published in early January, our elected leaders will have crafted an agreement over a tax system that promotes shared prosperity and opportunity.

As I follow the news, I wonder if there is a Jewish angle that can help shape our response to this fierce debate, especially the question of higher taxes for the wealthiest 2 percent.

On the surface, the mitzvah of



Rabbi Alan Flam

*tzedakah* (the commandment to give) is a very simple one. The Book of Deuteronomy says, "If there is a needy person among you don't harden your heart, don't shut your hand against your needy kin. For there will never cease to be people with need in your land which is why I command you to open your heart to the poor and to the needy kin in your land."

According to the Torah, there

are simply people in need out there, and our job as human beings, as citizens and as Jews is to help them meet their needs, to help them live lives of dignity and fullness. It is our sacred obligation to provide sufficient food, shelter, education and care so that children grow up

**"YOU DON'T  
HAVE to be evil  
to be on the side  
of evil. You simply  
have to remain  
indifferent."**

to be productive and healthy adults, so that healthy and productive adults are able to keep the community and their families together and so that seniors are able to reap a rich harvest from all the years that they have already striven to make

our world a possibility.

On the surface, the Torah is very simple, but I am struck by its choice of terms. Twice, the verse in Deuteronomy says, "don't harden your heart." Ask yourself: In the Bible, whose heart is hardened? It is Moses who goes into Egypt and says, "Let my people go," and Pharaoh's heart is hardened.

When the Torah says, "Don't harden your heart to those who are needy in your midst," the Torah quotes itself. The timeless symbol of someone whose heart is hard is Pharaoh. Any Jew who can look at the enormous income gap between the wealthy and the poor, the human suffering and resentment that gap fosters, and not hear God's call to let my people go, to do something, becomes a Pharaoh.

You don't have to be evil to be on the side of evil. You simply have to remain indifferent. All that it takes for goodness to be vanquished is for us to ignore the suffering and desperation of our fellow human beings. To fail to act is all it takes to create a society of inequity and of callousness. By refusing to lend

a hand, to pay our fair share of taxes, we risk becoming the Pharaohs of our age.

The debate that is currently raging is less about a "fiscal cliff" and more about our "fiscal soul." What kind of nation do we want to be?

America certainly needs a path to fiscal sustainability; people on all sides of the political spectrum are in agreement. What we don't agree on is the moral math that leads to a path that includes all of us, especially the most vulnerable.

Jewish tradition and history provide a model of what government can and should do, and our value of *tzedakah* teaches that each of us has a responsibility to promote justice in our world. Let us raise our voices together, as Jews and as citizens, to convince our political leaders to commit to a path of justice to build an economy that works for all Americans.

**RABBI ALAN FLAM** is director of advising and community collaboration at the Swearer Center for Public Service at Brown University. Contact him at Alan\_Flam@brown.edu.

## NETANYAHU aide surrendered his U.S. citizenship

From Page 12

prime minister's speechwriter, and a liaison between the Prime Minister's Office and the White House.

"He's American-born, he brings with him a professional understanding of America and he's an admirable exponent of America," Arad said. "He has been working with the key Americans with this administration."

**"HE  
UNDERSTANDS  
HOW Americans  
view Israelis and  
how Israelis view  
Americans."**

Dermer has never been shy about promoting his political viewpoint. In a 2009 interview he gave to the Israeli daily *Yedioth Achronot*, Dermer criticized as "childish" the political focus given to the matter of two states for two peoples instead of dealing with core issues.

In a 2011 open letter to the *New York Times*, Dermer slammed the newspaper and its op-ed page.

*Times* columnists "consistently distort the positions of our government and ignore the steps it has taken to advance



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

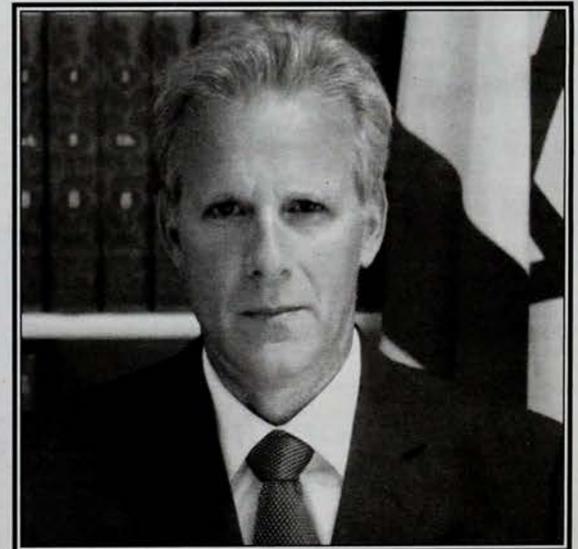
peace," Dermer wrote in the letter, which was published in the *Jerusalem Post*. "It would seem as if the surest way to get an op-ed published in the *New York Times* these days, no matter how obscure the writer or the viewpoint, is to attack Israel."

"He calls it like he sees it," Barak said. "It's widely known that he's heavily identified with the Republican Party and conservative politics."

The right-wing orientation could hinder Dermer if he is tapped for the ambassador job,

according to Bar-Ilan University professor Eytan Gilboa. Gilboa says U.S.-Israel ties have deteriorated during Netanyahu's term, citing as an example what some saw as Netanyahu's tacit support of Republican candidate Mitt Romney during the presidential campaign.

"People say that Netanyahu understands American politics, but judging from [his staff's] behavior, they don't understand American politics," Gilboa said. "When you have a president like Obama with an opposite



Michael Oren, Israel's ambassador to the U.S.

worldview, you cooperate as much as possible, but it seems like Netanyahu is fighting."

Gilboa said Dermer's philosophy in "The Case for Democracy" was "good for Bush, but it doesn't work with Obama."

But Aaron David Miller, who served as an adviser on the Middle East to Republican and Democratic secretaries of state, said that Dermer's personal views wouldn't have much effect on the U.S.-Israel relationship. Miller called Dermer a "tough, pragmatic hawk."

"I don't attach much importance to mid- or senior-level officials in terms of altering the nature of the relationship between leaders," said Miller, now a vice president at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars in Washington. "They can facilitate improvements or make matters worse through their own missteps, but leaders have an ultimate responsibility for how the relationship evolves."

**Avis (Baker) Cardozo, 84**

SURPRISE, Ariz. – Avis Cardozo died Dec. 26.

Both in Providence, she was a daughter of the late John and Lillian (Gluckman) Myers. She was the wife of John Cardozo and the late Benson Baker.

Besides her husband, she is survived by her children Peter and Gary Baker, her brother Howard Myers, two grandsons and one great-granddaughter.

**Phyllis (Israel) Chaskes**

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – Phyllis Chaskes of Las Vegas, formerly of New Bedford, Mass., died Dec. 20. She was the wife of the late Sidney Chaskes for almost 46 years.

She is survived by her daughter Madeline Ciaramello and her husband Peter of Las Vegas and her daughter Ilene Mascaro and her husband Daniel of Pooler, Ga. She was the grandmother of Allyson Carboni of Boston, Mass.; Amy Wrightington and her husband Torrie of Rochester, Mass. and Loni Gray and her husband Mason of Henderson, Nev. The sole survivor of her five siblings, she is also survived by many nieces and nephews, cousins and great-nieces and great-nephews.

Donations may be made to Tifereth Israel Congregation.

**Leon Goldstein, Ph.D., 79**

PROVIDENCE – Leon Goldstein died Dec. 30. He was the husband of Barbara (Goldman) Goldstein. Born in Malden, Mass., he was a son of the late Benjamin and Gertrude (Sugarman) Goldstein.

He was a graduate of Boston University Medical School and was a professor and chairman of physiology at Brown University and a director at the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory in Maine. A resident of Providence since 1969, he was a member of Temple Beth-El.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his children Pamela Goldstein Kato of Lancaster,

Calif., Jonathan Goldstein and his wife Jenny Chan of New Haven, Conn. and Susanne Goldstein and her husband Jacob Blumenthal of Columbia, Md.; and grandchildren, Jade, Rhinannan, Kyra, Li, Samuel and Hannah. He was the brother of the late Paul Goldstein.

Contributions may be made to Temple Beth-El.

**Claire M. Goodman, 91**

NORTH KINGSTOWN – Claire Goodman died Dec. 19. She was the wife of the late Karlman Goodman.

Born in Providence, a daughter of the late Meyer and Rose (Shenkow) Gordon, she had lived in Warwick for more than 25 years, previously living in Cranston.

A salesperson for Outlet & Peerless and a survey specialist for 45 years, before retiring 18 years ago, she was a former member of Temple Am David, Pioneer Women, Hadassah and Sparrow I Tenants' Association.

She was the mother of Gerald Goodman and his wife Pauline of East Greenwich, Joseph Goodman and his wife Rochelle of East Greenwich and Marshelle Bernardo and her husband Robert of Cornelius, N.C. The sister of the late Norman Gordon and Mildred Goldberg, she was the grandmother of Lori, Jason, Jaime, Seth, Brittany and Nicholas and the great-grandmother of Elliana and Landon.

Donations may be made to American Diabetes Association, 146 Clifford St., Providence, RI 02903.

**David Myron Marder, 91**

NORTH DARTMOUTH, Mass. – David Marder died Dec. 24. He was the husband of Ruth (Stone) Marder. Born in New Bedford, Mass., a son of the late Isaac and Ann (Winograd) Marder, he was a lifelong resident of the New Bedford area.

A graduate of Bryant College,

he was an accountant and the owner of a fleet of fishing boats. He was a leader in the fishing industry, retiring in 1990. He served in the US 5th Army in the Italian campaign during World War II.



A member of Tifereth Israel Congregation, he was a past president of the United Jewish Appeal and Israeli Bonds, a member of the Jewish War Veterans and the Wamsutta Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Masons. He was a 32nd degree Mason and a Shriner.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his children Daniel Jay Marder and his wife Lisa of Boca Raton, Fla., and Brian I. Marder and his wife Lisa of Dartmouth, Mass. and his grandchildren Ross, Eric and Brad. He was the brother of the late June Barroll, Miriam Handler, and Razel Small.

Contributions may be made to Tifereth Israel Congregation or the New Bedford Jewish Convalescent Home.

**Dorothy C. Nulman, 97**

WARWICK – Dorothy Nulman died Dec. 29. She was the wife of the late Samuel Nulman. Born in Providence, she was a daughter of the late Leo and Lena (Chusmir) Stern.

She was the mother of Leonard Nulman of Riverside, Elizabeth Cohn of Coventry and Charlotte Rubinoff of Sun City West, Ariz., grandmother of six and great-grandmother of 10.

Contributions may be made to a charity of one's choice.

**Lorraine Harriet (Cohen) Silberthau**

PROVIDENCE – Lorraine Silberthau died Dec. 25. She was the daughter of the late Philip and Kate (Berman) Cohen and the wife of the late Henry David Silberthau.

Born in Chicago, Ill., Oct. 4, 1925, she moved to Rhode Island in 1939 with her parents and her late siblings, Raymond, Eugene,



Harvey and Thelma. A graduate from Lincoln School in Providence and Wellesley College, she married in 1947.

A trailblazer for women in politics and public service, she played an active role in Democratic campaigns and held major positions in Rhode Island state government, serving as director of communications for former Governor J. Joseph Garrahy, staff director of the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission, special assistant for research and analysis for former Governor Frank Licht and a researcher at the Legislative Council.

She is survived by her two daughters Paula Silberthau and her husband Jeffrey Teitz, and Kathy Silberthau Strom and her husband David and four grandchildren.

Contributions may be made to Avodah or the Southern Poverty Law Center.

**Harvey B. Sindle, 82**

NEW YORK CITY – Harvey Sindle died Dec. 18.

Born in Providence to the late Joseph J. and Mollie L. (Gershtman) Sindle, he was an attorney in the entertainment field in New York for 54 years, retiring two years ago. A graduate of Harvard Law School and Brown University, he was a member of Park East Synagogue and the American and New York bar associations.

He was the brother of Sandra R. Sisitsky and her husband Joel of Boca Raton, Fla., the uncle of the late Jonathan E. Sisitsky, Hillary S. Monaghan of Boca Raton, Hope S. Cogen

of Roanoke, Va. and Dr. Alison S. Curcio of Winchester, Mass.; the great-uncle of Ari Jonathan Cogen and Beni Curcio and the cousin of James Gershtman of Warwick.

Donations may be made to the UJA Federation, 130 E. 59th St., New York, NY 10022.

**Nathan Stairman, 94**

PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. – Nathan Stairman died Dec. 18. He was the husband of the late Anna (Greenfield) Stairman and the late Thelma (Walker) Stairman. Born in Portland, Maine, a son of the late Abraham and Bessie (Belcher) Stairman, he had lived in Warwick and then Port St. Lucie, previously living in West Warwick.

A packer for the U.S. Navy at Davisville Construction Battalion Center for 25 years, retiring 38 years ago, he was a World War II Air Force veteran, serving stateside and in England.

A member of Temple Am David, Touro Fraternal Association and the Cranston Senior Guild, he was a volunteer for R.S.V.P. and the West Warwick School Department.

The father of Joan Gershtman of Port St. Lucie and Arlene Fleagle of Bolingbrook, Ill., he was the stepfather of Marc Feinstein of Narragansett. The brother of the late Freida Silverman, Fannie Einbinder, and Harry, Benny and Morris Stairman, he was the grandfather of Joel, Derek, Richard and Perri and great-grandfather of Delaney, Ethan and Riley. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

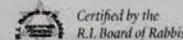
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## GUTTIN is a leader among leaders at FJC program

From Page 1

her participation in ELI."

### Chosen to participate

The 15-month program that began September 2011 and concluded with her valedictory speech last month, said Guttin, is something akin to "an MBA for camp directors." Guttin's cohort of Fellows – the third that FJC has convened – met six times, generally for three-day sessions. Each Fellow was provided 11 hours of one-on-one executive coaching as well, she said. "This whole process is incredibly expensive," Guttin said.

According to FJC staff, FJC runs the program with funding from The Marcus Foundation, which contributes approximately \$60,000 per Fellow; each camp pays approximately \$4,000.

### Camp JORI's growth

The ELI program offered Ronni the opportunity "to learn best practices in four camp leadership areas: personnel management, program development, Jewish education and resource development," said Rob Stolzman, JORI board president.

Calling the FJC "a terrific resource for Camp JORI," Stolzman noted that Ronni already was a recognized leader among camp directors.

"As JORI has grown during the last decade from a small camp [in size and budget] to a larger regional asset," Stolzman said, "remaining skilled



Ronni Guttin, Camp JORI director, gives her valedictory speech.

in current best practices for all phases of camp operations" was important to maintain JORI's competitive edge and fulfill its mission of providing affordable Jewish camping for all, regardless of their ability to pay.

As a year-round operation with a seven-figure annual budget and an eight-figure facility to manage, Camp JORI has "responsibility for the safety, care and education of hundreds of children each summer, and that requires excellence at the very top," Stolzman said. "Ronni has grown personally and professionally to be our recognized leader in this field."

Calling Ronni a "camp girl" who knows all there is to know about kids and camping, Stolzman identified opportunities for Guttin to gain additional expertise in budget, personnel, governance, risk mitigation and facilities' management.

Thanks to the program, Guttin said, "Excel spreadsheets are no longer a mystery to me."

One more visible change was the recent hire of Rachel Mersky Woda as JORI's assistant director who will have responsibility for a significant portion of teen programming and some staff training.

Along with welcoming Mer-

sky Woda, JORI will offer something else new this summer: A group of campers will spend four weeks in Israel with Authentic Israel, a BBYO travel program.

Asked to reflect on ELI program highlights, Guttin said that the weekend with lay leaders – Stolzman and Deb Salinger, board chair of the camping and program development committee – was particularly valuable. Too, Guttin relished having Doris Feinberg, a trusted former Jewish Federation of Rhode Island president, conduct a mock fundraising session. Feinberg, president of the Prospero Group, LLC, which provides fundraising counsel to nonprofit organizations, served as an ELI guest faculty member.

### Why did change happen?

Asked how she grew during

**"RONNI [PUT] LITTLE Rhode Island on the map of excellence in our Jewish world!"**

among her ELI Fellows as the chosen speaker ... but she has earned the respect of the entire Rhode Island Jewish community. Camp JORI is now viewed as a premier Jewish overnight camp among its peer camps," said Feinberg.

"The ELI experience has deepened her ability to create a lasting impact on our Jewish children," Feinberg continued, adding that Ronni absorbed lessons in board governance, communications, budgeting, philanthropy, marketing, spirituality, recruitment and leadership. "Thank you, Ronni, for putting little Rhode Island on the map of excellence in our Jewish world!"

Acknowledging the critically important roles that FJC and The Marcus Foundation played in recognizing and addressing the need for a national camp leadership-training program, Stolzman said, "We're very proud of her success at ELI, but, frankly, not surprised. We've been working on making JORI a nationally recognized leader in Jewish camping, and Ronni has been a key element to our strategy."

Stolzman said that those who know Camp JORI view Ronni as "the big sister and mom to our kids at camp." What's less well known, however, Stolzman added, is that Ronni has worked for the past decade to develop management skills needed to take JORI into its second century of providing Jewish children with a Jewish home away from home.

"That's Camp JORI and that's Ronni," he said.

Guttin was chosen to serve as a mentor for FJC's Specialty Camps Incubator II initiative to launch four new Jewish specialty camps, which will open in the summer of 2014. And so, the cycle of leadership continues.

the ELI program, Guttin said, "I gained confidence from working with my peers ... I valued their feedback and I had no ego involved."

Guttin explained that she lost some of her defensiveness and became more comfortable in seeking feedback.

Terry Rosenberg, Guttin's mentor during the ELI program, recognized that she really had avoided feedback. Getting it, however, "turned out to be a gift [that] she took to heart," Rosenberg said. "She has become a more self-aware, more flexible leader and, as she says, a happier one!"

### Earning plaudits

"Not only has Ronni earned her 'valedictorian' status

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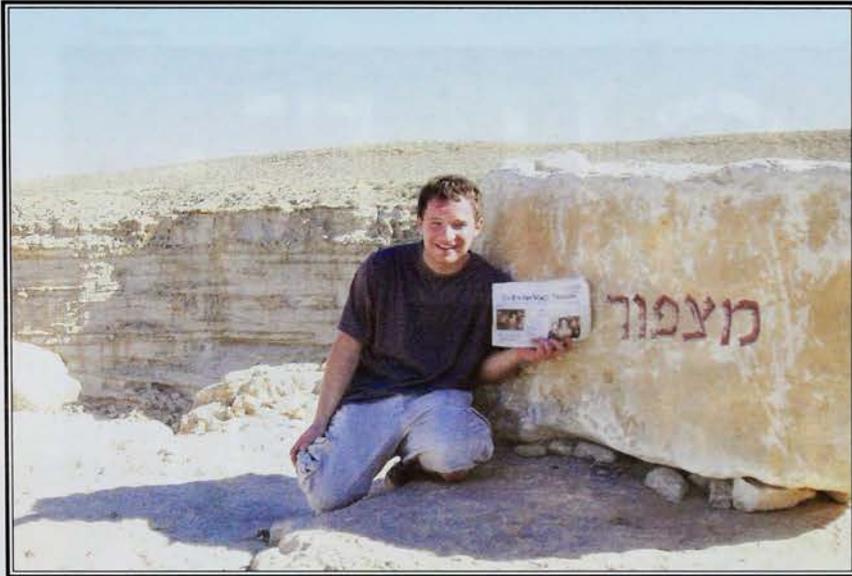
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Chase Denhoff

**HIKING IN ISRAEL** – Chase Denhoff, who grew up in North Kingstown and now lives in Nashua, N.H., hikes at Ein Ovdat – with The Jewish Voice & Herald – in mid-December. He was in Israel on a Taglit-Birthright trip with Israel Outdoors.



Harold and Anita Kerzner

**70TH ANNIVERSARY** – Harold and Anita Kerzner, of Pawtucket, celebrated their 70th anniversary at a party hosted by a friend on Oct. 20. The Kerznerns are Jewish Family Service Home Care Solutions and Kosher Meals on Wheels clients. The couple married on Oct. 25, 1942.



MARILYN SMITH

Monika Curnett, right, and her mother are among the many individuals at the Hanukkah party on Dec. 14. As a volunteer for Meals on Wheels, Monika delivers kosher meals to homebound senior citizens.

**Festive music, food and fun at the Alliance JCC Senior Café Hanukkah party**

**PROVIDENCE** – The Alliance JCC Senior Café hosted a festive kosher meal site for senior citizens on Friday, Dec. 4 with a Hanukkah party. Shalom Memorial Chapel sponsored the Stanley Freedman Quartet – whose Hanukkah music added to the party's gala air. The party drew some 100 people.



Afik Yahal Mandelkorn with her parents, Meital and Uri Mandelkorn

**NEW BABY** – Anne Schwartz of Providence announces the birth of her great-granddaughter, Afik Yahal Mandelkorn. She was born at Hadasah Hospital, Ein Kerem, Jerusalem on Sept. 16.

Her parents are Meital and Uri Mandelkorn of Jerusalem. Her maternal grandparents are Chaya and Shlomo Nacker of Jerusalem and her paternal grandparents are Chaya and Yacov Mandelkorn of Naveh Daniel, Israel. Her paternal great-grandparents are Tehila and Joseph Mandelkorn of Jerusalem and Anne and the late Charles Schwartz of Providence.

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